

BOOK REVIEWS

All communications regarding book reviews and review copies of books should be sent to Book Review Editor, *South Dakota History*, 900 Governors Drive, Pierre, SD 57501-2217.

The Last Days of the Rainbelt

David J. Wishart. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013. 224pp. Illus. Maps. Notes. Biblio. Ind. Cloth, \$29.95.

David Wishart has filled an important gap in the scholarship of the Great Plains. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, severe drought took its toll on croplands and homesteaders on the plains of eastern Colorado, western Kansas, and southwestern Nebraska, leaving a legacy of fallen dreams, outmigration, and newfound appreciation of the region's climate. Historians such as Gilbert Fite, Craig Miner, and Geoff Cunfer have considered the great drought of the 1890s as part of their larger works, but Wishart has finally given the subject the full-bodied treatment it has long deserved.

Wishart takes issue with Walter Prescott Webb's argument that settlement paused at the ninety-eighth meridian until barbed wire, windmills, and water and land laws adjusted to the semiarid climate. He demonstrates that settlers surged onto the western plains in the 1870s and 1880s, encouraged by a favorable weather pattern, railroad expansion, and public land laws that made land acquisition feasible for the masses. He is especially good at analyzing the ways in which newcomers took advantage of various land laws, especially the Preemption Act of 1841, the Homestead Act of 1862, and the Timber Culture Act of 1873 to acquire land for speculation or long-term ownership.

Wishart unravels the boosters' prevailing theory that planting trees would encourage

rainfall and that rain would follow the plow. Among the individuals he highlights are Richard Smith Elliott of the Kansas Pacific Railway and Samuel Aughey, a pastor and biologist at the University of Nebraska, who in 1880 wrote that "as pioneers take up government lands and encroach on the Plains, the line of abundant rainfall also moves west" (quoted on pp. 35-36). Such arguments bolstered the optimistic homesteaders who were moving into the region, bringing them into conflict with the ranchers whose own determination to dominate the land rested in part on their claim that the western plains were suitable only for grazing. This disagreement between ranchers on the one hand and small farmers and town boosters on the other circulated and replayed frequently during the 1870s and 1880s, becoming a loud debate, especially during the occasional year or two of drought.

In one chapter of this fine study, the author examines the social life and culture of the growing population of farmers and small towns nourished by railroads, boosters, and by the men, women, and families who dug wells, built sod homes, planted gardens, and created churches and schools.

Then, in the 1890s, the high hopes and aspirations of thousands in this region were punctured by years of drought and falling commodity prices. Finally, the hammer came down on the faulty theories of Aughey and Elliott, along with a grudging acknowledgment of the realities of the region's climate. Thousands of settlers left the area, others moved into small towns, and those "who couldn't afford to leave survived on charity,

state aid, and their resourcefulness” (p. 112). In his epilogue, the author asserts that survival in more recent times has depended heavily on tapping the Ogallala Aquifer and on federal subsidies while the cycles of drought continued.

Probing deeply into the great drought of the 1890s and its legacy, Wishart has produced a well-researched, engaging, and well-argued study of a critical decade in the history of the western Great Plains.

MARK HARVEY

North Dakota State University
Fargo, N.Dak.

Crooked Paths to Allotment: The Fight over Federal Indian Policy after the Civil War

C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. 248pp. Illus. Notes. Biblio. Ind. Cloth, \$39.95.

Crooked Paths to Allotment is a small book that makes a huge impact. C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa reads a variety of sources, including personal papers and reports by key policymakers as well as pamphlets by various groups of Indian reformers, through the lenses of postcolonial studies and American political development, rethinking entrenched narratives that have long described late nineteenth-century Indian policy as a “singular, linear path leading directly toward allotment.” Instead, he cogently argues, reformers and policymakers engaged in a series of hotly contested and contingent battles, making the trajectory of policy development between Indian removal and allotment “a crooked path with curves and bends” (pp. 3–4). The confinement of native peoples to reservations where they faced continuous assaults on their cultures, economies, and ways of governance, did not result from misguided efforts by well-intentioned policymakers, as has long been argued. Instead, confinement came from hard-fought and intentional efforts by mainstream assimilationists.

Genetin-Pilawa’s work explores three “constitutive moments” during which reformers proffered policy alternatives that were ultimately defeated by their mainstream counterparts. First, throughout the Reconstruction period momentum grew against rampant political corruption, creating a unique moment “for a potential recasting” of the federal/tribal relationship (p. 3). Ely S. Parker, a Tonawanda Seneca who became the first native commissioner of Indian affairs, wanted the government to respect treaties with indigenous peoples and let tribes integrate into American society on their own terms. However, mainstream reformers who believed in coerced assimilation had Parker removed from office and cleared a path for the continued confinement of Indian peoples.

Genetin-Pilawa’s second moment involves Thomas A. Bland, an influential but under-recognized reformer who, through his newsletter, *Council Fire*, and the National Indian Defense Association, rejected several tenets of confinement and advocated keeping communally held tribal land intact while equipping Indians for a smooth transition to the new Gilded Age economy. Powerful opponents and bad luck conspired to cap Bland’s accomplishments. Mainstream groups such as the Indian Rights Association successfully pushed allotment, which, they believed, would force indigenous peoples into the market economy and fully assimilate them. Finally, Genetin-Pilawa examines the Indian New Deal of the 1930s directed by Commissioner John Collier, whose administration, among other things, halted allotment and pushed for more widespread acceptance of native cultures and traditions. That the Collier years receive only passing treatment is perhaps the greatest drawback of this otherwise thorough book.

Readers should note the book’s brief but useful discussion of Valentine McGillycuddy, the controversial Indian agent who, according to one of his contemporaries, treated Pine Ridge as a “little monarchy over which he reign[ed]” in the 1880s (p. 124). A physician

by training, McGillicuddy famously treated Crazy Horse on his deathbed in 1877 and later served as mayor of Rapid City, South Dakota. Genetin-Pilawa frames the fraught relationships among McGillicuddy, the Lakota leader Red Cloud, and Thomas Bland as one of the period's key dramas. Anyone following the ongoing efforts to rehabilitate McGillicuddy's former home in Rapid City will appreciate the alternative narrative Genetin-Pilawa provides. Just as *Crooked Paths* does for the history of Indian policy more generally, it gives texture and meaning to what is too often a romanticized account of McGillicuddy's time in Indian country.

ERIC S. ZIMMER

University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

Call for Change: The Medicine Way of American Indian History, Ethos, and Reality

Donald L. Fixico. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013. 264pp. Figs. Notes. Biblio. Ind. Cloth, \$50.00.

In *Call for Change: The Medicine Way of American Indian History, Ethos, and Reality*, Donald Fixico continues his plea for scholars to open their minds and hearts to experience American Indian history through the eyes of indigenous people. Fixico challenges academics to be more open-minded and see American Indian history from a new third dimension, which he calls the "Medicine Way." The Medicine Way is nature's way—not a religion, but a way of life. With this thought-provoking, insightful methodology, Fixico encourages us to grasp historical truths as told through the hundreds of tribal oral accounts available in the United States alone. Their stories connect people to the land and to that which is holy. Oral histories recount particular world views and philosophies and are vital to a true understanding of indigenous people.

Fixico reminds the reader of the importance of the "circle of life," or the natural

balance of harmony in life (*wolakota* in Lakota) and how all decisions of a people affect the next seven generations and all of their relations (in Lakota, *Mitakuye Oyasin*), a concept he labels "Natural Democracy" (p. 32). In contrast, European American society looked to the individual as the organizing principle of its history, culture, and mythology, as noted by Gregory Cajete in his 1994 book, *Look to The Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education*.

Today, an unfolding paradigm of earth-centered mythologies is necessary for human survival. Harvard-trained ethnobotanist Wade Davis validates these indigenous perspectives in his 2009 book, *The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World*. The perspectives of Cajete, Winona LaDuke, and Kim Blaeser (writers typically associated with disciplines other than history) are influencing native history and encouraging restorative and sustainable ways of living respectfully with Mother Earth, thus ensuring the survival of future generations.

Fixico's new approach challenges historians to understand indigenous peoples, their histories, and their communities through the eyes and experiences of the people themselves. Reading indigenous people's stories through the lens of non-Indian theoretical frameworks violates the stories' integrity and performs a new act of colonization and conquest, according to Blaeser, an Anishinaabe poet. Perhaps for this Lakota, and other native folks, the Medicine Way is a common-sense way of dealing with "the other." Fixico continues to remind the academic world of this approach—a paradigm that views history and the contemporary native experience through a native lens.

"The major battle in this effort to revise history through Indian eyes," he writes, "is convincing scholars of the necessity as well as the opportunity of entertaining the Indian point of view. This revision is most difficult for academics who want to see only their own version of American Indian history; they see no need for pedagogical revision. At this

point, however, I hope they are beginning to see a cultural bridge of understanding waiting for them to cross" (p. 127).

JACE DECORY

Black Hills State University
Spearfish, S.Dak.

Witness: A Hunkpapa Historian's Strong-Heart Song of the Lakotas

Josephine Waggoner. Edited by Emily Levine. Foreword by Lynne Allen. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013. 824pp. Illus. Maps. Apps. Notes. Biblio. Ind. Cloth, \$85.00.

Josephine McCarthy Waggoner may require an introduction. Born in 1871 and named for her white father's sister, she lived for much of her life among her mother's Hunkpapa people, received a boarding-school education at Virginia's Hampton Institute, and, after her return to the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, married John F. Waggoner, a soldier stationed at Fort Yates, in 1889. Raising several children, the couple remained together until her death in 1943. Josephine Waggoner's life history, coupled with her gender, made her an unlikely and unconventional candidate for becoming a leading tribal historian of her day.

Deeply interested in her people's history and ethnography, especially the lives of Sioux chiefs, Waggoner dived into gathering and recording their stories on paper. Her oral history research included such fascinating topics as tribal legends, political organization, the 1854 Grattan fight, reservation life after the Great Sioux War of 1876-1877, and the Wounded Knee massacre, as well as tribal leaders Bear Ribs, Crazy Horse, John Grass, Little Crow, Red Cloud, Sitting Bull, Spotted Tail, and many more. Half of the book's main body consists of such biographical sketches, many containing details found nowhere else in the published literature.

After accumulating a wealth of information and making several attempts at preparing the narrative, Waggoner began the almost-heroic effort to get her work published. All such

efforts failed, a sad but not altogether unsurprising tale, the sleuthing and telling of which forms a critical part of editor Emily Levine's accompanying text. Waggoner's magnum opus, published long after her death, therefore joins other comparable works by single-minded "outsider" scholars, revived only recently after suffering several decades of dormancy since their genesis. Those titles, which also share a growing classic status, include *The Indian Interviews of Eli S. Ricker, 1903-1919: Voices of the American West* and *The Settler and Soldier Interviews of Eli S. Ricker, 1903-1919*, edited by Richard Jensen (2005); compilations derived from the Little Bighorn-centric collections of Walter Mason Camp by editors Kenneth Hammer, Paul Harbaugh, Bruce Liddic, and Richard Hardorff; *Autobiography of Red Cloud: War Leader of the Oglalas* (1997), by Charles W. Allen and Sam Deon, authenticated and edited by Eli Paul; Allen's own autobiography *From Fort Laramie to Wounded Knee: In the West That Was*, edited by Jensen (1997); and Susan Bordeaux Bettelyoun and Josephine Waggoner, *With My Own Eyes: A Lakota Woman Tells Her People's History*, edited by Levine (1998).

Levine pulls together all of the scattered Waggoner manuscripts to form this hefty yet coherent volume, the capstone of an exceptional research and editing effort and truly a labor of love. All details that could conceivably be uncovered about Waggoner's personal trials and tribulations are presented here, sometimes at the risk of retitling the book *Victim*, but that point is only a minor concern, as is the editor's implicit assertion (pp. 510-12) that the cache of Waggoner papers held by the Museum of the Fur Trade had been inaccessible or unknown to scholars before her. For all those interested in the history of the Lakota people, this book is a significant contribution and comes highly recommended.

R. ELI PAUL

Kansas City Public Library
Kansas City, Mo.

**The Dakota Prisoner of War Letters:
Dakota Kaskapi Okicize Wowapi**

Translated and edited by Clifford Canku and Michael Simon. Introduction and Afterword by John Peacock. Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2013. 224pp. Illus. Notes. Ind. Paper, \$27.95.

The papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in the Minnesota Historical Society archives contain letters in the Dakota language sent to missionaries Stephen R. Riggs and Thomas S. Williamson by Mdewakantonwan and Wahpekute Dakota prisoners captured in the United States-Dakota War of 1862 and held near Davenport, Iowa, from 1863 to 1866. Military tribunals had sentenced the majority of these men to hang. President Abraham Lincoln commuted the sentences of all but thirty-eight, who were hanged in Mankato, Minnesota, on 26 December 1862. Of the 329 prisoners in January 1863, only 203 survived captivity. Twenty-six men were released in 1864; the remaining 177 were freed in 1866.

Riggs had worked among the Dakotas for nearly three decades when conflict erupted on the Minnesota frontier in 1862. He had published a dictionary and grammar of the Dakota language in 1852. Riggs and his fellow missionaries taught the prisoners to write and carried letters between the captives and their Dakota relatives who had been exiled from Minnesota after the United States-Dakota War. They succeeded in converting many imprisoned and exiled Dakotas to Christianity.

Dakota scholars Clifford Canku and Michael Simon and a team of elders from Flandreau, South Dakota, translated over one hundred of the letters. Fifty letters by more than thirty writers (identified by Dakota and English

names) are published in this book. For each letter, the editors provide a Dakota transcription, a word-for-word interlinear translation, and a translation in "Dakota English," a concept explained in John Peacock's introduction.

The letters highlight the pastoral relationship between Riggs and his correspondents. True to his Presbyterian roots, Riggs had designated a group of elders among the prisoners who were Christian converts. Many of the letters are written by these men, reflecting their work teaching and preaching among their fellow prisoners.

The letters also reflect the uncertainty among the writers and the prisoners regarding the reasons for their convictions and imprisonment. One revelation for readers is that the participants had little or no sense of the war's larger context and were only aware of their own personal experiences. The letters also reveal the writers' concern for and lack of information about their relatives. Riggs's role as the sole conduit of information between the prisoners and their families is clear. The writers also expressed their angst over being in limbo, not knowing whether they would be hanged, imprisoned indefinitely, or released.

The published texts of these letters provide Dakota scholars with an invaluable resource for the study of the language. There is little context provided regarding who the writers were or what their life in prison was like, but perhaps this book will be the impetus for more research. The translation and publication of these letters is a monumental contribution to Dakota scholarship because the voices of these Dakota prisoners can now be heard.

CAROLYN ANDERSON
St. Olaf College
Northfield, Minn.

Book Notes

Always Plenty to Do: Growing Up on a Farm in the Long Ago. By Pamela Riney-Kehrberg. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2011. 152pp. Illus. Notes. Glossary. Ind. Cloth, \$21.95. Illustrated with period photographs, this account of rural childhood in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is intended for students in the middle grades.

The Canadian Sioux. By James H. Howard. New foreword by Raymond J. DeMallie and Douglas R. Parks. 2d ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014. 226pp. Illus. Ind. Biblio. App. Paper, \$30.00. Howard carried out important ethnographic fieldwork among Canadian Sioux bands in 1972. This revised edition of his work features previously unpublished photographs and drawings, as well as updated orthography for Siouan-language terms.

Care from the Heart. By Thelma Marguerite Ingles. Edited by Susan Haradon, Virginia Ingles Haradon, and Paula Wheeldon. La Mesa, Calif.: BTW Publishing, 2012. 380pp. Illus. Table. Apps. Ind. Paper, \$15.99. A native of Redfield, South Dakota, Thelma Ingles had a long and distinguished career in nursing education. Her memoir is supplemented with documents, testimonials, and other memorabilia.

Dakota Grown. By Elaine Babcock. Ellendale, N.Dak.: By the Author, 2012. 114pp. Illus. Paper, \$15.00. Author Elaine Babcock recounts her memories of growing up on a Stanley County ranch during the 1940s and 1950s.

Daughters of Two Nations. By Peggy Caravantes. Illustrated by Carolyn Dee Flores. Missoula, Mont.: Mountain Press, 2013. 138pp. Illus. Ind. Biblio. Paper, \$14.00. This collection of brief biographies of nine American Indian women, including South Dakota's Rosebud Yellow Robe, is suitable for readers age twelve and up.

Gentle People: A Case Study of Rockport Colony Hutterites. By Joanita Kant. Brookings, S.Dak.: Prairie View Press, 2011. 120pp. Illus. Figs. Sources. Ind. Kant's ethnographic study of the Rockport Colony Hutterite community in eastern South Dakota is an expanded version of her South Dakota State University master's thesis.

The Great Sioux Nation: Sitting in Judgment on America. Edited by Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz. Foreword by Philip J. Deloria. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013. 236pp. Illus. Map. Notes. Biblio. Paper, \$21.95. Ortiz's collection of testimony by Sioux people and others at the 1974 "Sioux Treaty Hearing" in United States District Court in Lincoln, Nebraska, was first published in 1977. This reprint includes a new introduction by Ortiz and a foreword by Philip J. Deloria, whose father, Vine Deloria, Jr., was among those who testified.

Harvest of Barren Regrets: The Army Career of Frederick William Benteen, 1834-1898. By Charles K. Mills. Introduction by James Donovan. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011. 440pp. Illus. Maps. Apps. Notes. Biblio. Ind. Paper, \$24.95. Mills's 1985 study of Benteen's military career is reprinted here in paperback with a new introduction. Benteen was the senior captain credited by some of his fellow officers with saving the remnants of the Seventh Cavalry in the wake of Custer's defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

The History of the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, 1600–2012. By David Miller, Dennis Smith, Joseph McGeshick, James Shanley, and Caleb Shields. Poplar, Mont.: Fort Peck Community College, 2012. 592pp. Illus. Maps. Epilogue. Apps. Notes. Ind. Paper, \$80.00. In 2005, the Montana Legislature directed each of the seven tribal colleges in the state to produce a history of the tribes they served. This second, expanded edition of Fort Peck Community College's contribution to the tribal history series is written primarily by enrolled members of the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux tribes.

Homesteading: Settling America's Heartland. By Dorothy Hinshaw Patent. Photographs by William Muñoz. Revised and expanded ed. Missoula, Mont.: Mountain Press, 2013. 48pp. Illus. Ind. Paper, \$12.00. This well-illustrated account of the Homestead Act and the daily lives of homesteaders is intended for students in the middle grades.

South Dakota's Challenges since 1960. By Charles M. Rogers. Sioux Falls, S.Dak.: By the Author, 2011. 136pp. Illus. Notes. Biblio. Ind. Paper, \$21.95. A longtime teacher of South Dakota history at the high school and community college levels, Rogers wrote his book as a continuation of Robert F. Karolevitz's 1975 book, *Challenge: The South Dakota Story*.

Spearfish National Fish Hatchery. By Booth Society, Inc. Foreword by Arden Trandahl. Images of America Series. Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Publishing, 2013. 128pp. Illus. Paper, \$21.99. This book is an illustrated history of a longtime Black Hills institution that began raising trout in the 1890s. Today, the former Spearfish National Fish Hatchery is the D. C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and Archives, a museum and repository of information on fisheries conservation.

IN MEMORIAM

Thomas R. Kilian

1924–2014

Thomas R. Kilian, educator, author, and former president of the South Dakota State Historical Society, died 26 April 2014 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Kilian was born in Vilas, South Dakota, on 23 March 1924, the son of Mabel and Ward Kilian. He graduated from Howard High School in 1941 and served in the United States Army during World War II. Kilian earned a Bronze Star for valor at the Battle of Okinawa in 1945 and reached the rank of first lieutenant before his discharge in 1946. After leaving the military, he completed a bachelor's degree at Augustana College in Sioux Falls. Kilian went on to earn a master of science degree from Boston University in 1950 and a Ph.D. from Michigan State University in 1969. He married Lorna J. Pearson of Brandon, South Dakota, in 1949, and the couple had five children.

Kilian's career in higher education administration began at Waldorf College in Forest City, Iowa. In 1952, he became director of public relations and admissions at Augustana, beginning thirty years of service to the college. In 1974, Governor Richard F. Kneip appointed Kilian secretary of the South Dakota Department of Education and Cultural Affairs. After his return to Sioux Falls, Kilian coordinated a partnership between Augustana, Sioux Falls College, and the North American Baptist Seminary that resulted in the creation of a new community college—now known as Kilian Community College after its founder and first president. Kilian was executive vice-president of Augustana before his 1982 retirement from the college. He founded the Rural Initiative Center, a consulting and educational resource center, in 1987.

Kilian was associated with over one hundred local, state, and national service organizations during his lifetime. He was a member of the South Dakota Hall of Fame and was a co-founder of South Dakota Public Television and the Center for Western Studies at Augustana

College. He served as president of the South Dakota State Historical Society from 1985 to 1996 and for several years was also president of the board for the South Dakota Heritage Fund, the society's fundraising partner.

IN MEMORIAM

James F. Nelson

1946–2013

Timber Lake newspaper publisher, local historian, and amateur paleontologist James F. ("Jim") Nelson died 3 October 2013 at Mobridge, South Dakota.

Nelson was born at Lemmon, South Dakota, on 27 June 1946 to Fred and Emma Sittner Nelson. He grew up in Corson and Perkins counties and attended rural schools, sometimes with his parents as teachers. Nelson graduated from Lemmon High School in 1964 and continued his education at Northern State College in Aberdeen. He completed his bachelor's degree in 1968, majoring in industrial arts and drafting with minors in history and mathematics. He married Kathy Snyder of Iroquois, South Dakota, in 1969.

After graduating from college, Nelson taught at high schools in South Dakota, Arizona, and Texas until moving to Wall in 1977, where he was employed as a carpenter. In 1980, the Nelsons moved to Timber Lake and purchased the local weekly newspaper, the *Timber Lake Topic*. Jim and Kathy Nelson published the *Topic* together for the rest of Jim's life.

In addition to his newspaper work, Nelson was an active local historian and genealogist. He helped to organize the Timber Lake and Area Historical Society in 1983 and served in various leadership positions, including its presidency. Nelson was a coeditor of the society's diamond jubilee history, *Timber Lake and Area, 1910–1985*, and contribut-

ed material for the updated *Timber Lake and Area: Centennial History, 1910–2010*. He also played a leading role in building and operating the Timber Lake and Area Museum and was instrumental in developing its paleontology collection, contributing to research on the Fox Hills and Hell Creek formations.

Nelson was a member of the South Dakota Hall of Fame board, the South Dakota Newspaper Association, and the Timber Lake Rodeo Association. A life member of the South Dakota State Historical Society, he made a lasting contribution to the society through his service with the Campaign for South Dakota Heritage, which raised funds to install the permanent exhibits at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre.