

BOOK REVIEWS

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Reveille for Sioux Falls: A World War II Army Air Forces Technical School Changes a South Dakota City

Lynwood E. Oyos. Sioux Falls, S.Dak.: Center for Western Studies, Augustana College, 2014. 220pp. Illus. Notes. Ind. Paper, \$21.95.

World War II impacted every region of the United States, but the greatest changes occurred in the trans-Mississippi West, where wartime manufacturing, mineral and petroleum extraction, and increased agricultural production revived a depressed economy. An additional boost to the western economy came from the construction of military facilities. What was seen as the region's least attractive feature—its isolation—became an asset as the War Department selected sites for the installations that prepared American forces for a global war.

Lynwood E. Oyos describes convincingly how a temporary military installation transformed a South Dakota community. With the establishment of a United States Army technical school (ATS) at its airport in 1942, the city of Sioux Falls, he writes, "would never again be the isolated, agricultural community it had once been" (p. 191). Drawing on material from the *Sioux Falls Argus Leader* and *Polar Tech*, the school newspaper, Oyos demonstrates how the presence of forty-five thousand radio operator/mechanic students enlivened the Sioux Falls business climate, spurred a housing boom, created thousands of jobs, and exposed a homogenous population to a variety of subcultures. He chronicles the city's rapid responses to the army's

construction plans and requests for off-post establishments to entertain troops. The army reciprocated by lending its support to the building of a local swimming pool and encouraging ATS student-soldiers to volunteer their services to area farmers during harvest time.

The student-soldiers themselves are the subject of chapters depicting living conditions on the base and outlining the school's training regimen. Social historians will appreciate the author's attention to women employees at the ATS and the contributions of the "Techettes" and other women's groups that accompanied soldiers to local United Service Organization (USO) clubs. A revealing chapter entitled "Race Relations" discusses the segregation African American troops experienced while emphasizing that some of these same men settled in Sioux Falls after the war because they received better treatment from local citizens than they did from the army.

The book's only shortcoming is the relatively small number of secondary sources cited. Though it is listed in the bibliography, Oyos does not appear to have extensively utilized the indispensable official history *Army Air Forces in World War II*, which includes studies of base facilities and technical training programs in the continental United States. The author's summary of Allied air strategy and B-17 bombing missions could have benefited from consulting a number of recent works on the European air campaign, notably *The Bomber War* by Robin Neillands.

These observations, however, do not

diminish this reviewer's hearty endorsement of *Reveille for Sioux Falls*, whose readers may choose to reevaluate their opinions regarding the impact of military bases on other Great Plains communities. They will undoubtedly share the author's conclusion that "Sioux Falls became a changed city" (p. ix) due to the military presence there from 1942 to 1945. Readable and well-illustrated, Oyos's work is a welcome contribution to the literature on South Dakota during World War II.

SEAN J. FLYNN

Dakota Wesleyan University
Mitchell, S.Dak.

The Life and Legends of Calamity Jane

Richard W. Etulain. Oklahoma Western Biographies Series. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014. 416pp. Illus. Figs. Maps. Sources. Biblio. Ind. Cloth, \$24.95.

As Richard W. Etulain states, Calamity Jane is "probably the most written-about woman of the nineteenth-century West" (p. xi). Much of this literature, however, is based on the "marriage of truth, distortion, and myth" (p. 199). During her lifetime and for decades afterward, few knew the full truth about this famous western woman, whose given name was Martha Canary. Calamity Jane contributed to the fictionalization of her life story with her own tall tales and sensationalized autobiography. The tide, however, has turned. Ten years ago, James D. McLaird produced the first well-researched and thorough biography of Calamity Jane, and now Etulain has written a readable and succinct version of her life. In some ways the two books overlap, with Etulain citing McLaird's work as the "definitive" study of Calamity Jane (p. 298). Even the titles are similar. McLaird's book is entitled *Calamity Jane: The Woman and the Legend*, while Etulain's is *The Life and Legends of Calamity Jane*.

The two books have significant differences, however. McLaird fully explains the disagreements swirling around the details of

Calamity's life to make his case for the truth. Etulain, however, avoids the controversies and presents what he calls the "most defensible position on the contested issues" (p. xv). This technique allows him to develop a more condensed and straightforward narrative. Etulain's treatment of the Calamity Jane legends is briefer since, as the author states, he has "no specific thesis" to advance (p. xvi). While both books are excellent, Etulain's is more direct and probably more accessible to the average reader.

Etulain's book is organized in two sections, the first of which deals primarily with Calamity's life. South Dakota history enthusiasts will notice that Etulain makes the importance of Calamity's time in the Black Hills clear. For example, he writes, the wagon train that brought Calamity to Deadwood "became the vehicle that carried her to the center stage of a romantic, sensationalized Old West" (p. 52). While in Deadwood, she "became an in-demand worker, hostess, and dancer" (p. 58), and her exploits began appearing in print, first in area newspapers. In 1877, "dime novelist Edward L. Wheeler learned of Calamity Jane and set out to make her the heroine of the first installment of his multivolume Deadwood Dick series" (p. 83). With this publicity she became an "overnight sensation" (p. 79).

The book's second section focuses on the growth and transformation of the Calamity Jane legend. Calamity's image has changed over time from a "romantic, adventuresome woman" (p. 206) of the West to a "more complex and ever-changing western woman" (p. 302). According to Etulain, three legends gradually coalesced around her: those of the "sensational Wild West woman," the "aspiring pioneer woman," and the softhearted "angel of mercy" (p. xii).

Etulain's well-done biography is an excellent contribution to the literature on Calamity Jane. If a complaint exists, it is the excessive plot detail provided in the discussion of fictional stories about Calamity, but Etulain argues that this detail helps the reader

understand how the legends were launched. Nevertheless, those interested in the Black Hills, South Dakota, and western history will find this volume enjoyable.

DAVID A. WOLFF
Black Hills State University
Spearfish, S.Dak.

Conflicted Mission: Faith, Disputes, and Deception on the Dakota Frontier

Linda M. Clemmons. Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2014. 274pp. Illus. Epilogue. Notes. Biblio. Ind. Paper, \$22.95.

Linda Clemmons has written a persuasive and carefully researched description of the experiences of Presbyterian and Congregational missionaries representing the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in various outposts ministering to Dakota people on the Minnesota frontier from 1830 to 1862. Although her subject—change and conflict between native peoples and the forces of “civilization”—has received significant historical analysis over the last fifty years, Clemmons’s arguments add nuance and complexity to the scholarly discourse. The clearly written narrative describes encounters between native peoples and white settlers, details evolving conflicts both among the missionaries themselves and between missionaries and the ABCFM, chronicles native people’s reactions to a rapidly changing frontier, and reports on tensions associated with the transition from frontier to settlement.

The author’s most compelling arguments concern conflicts on the middle ground between frontier and settlement. Her astute analysis of such disputes treats a complete array of provocateurs: missionaries, native peoples, federal officials, white settlers, soldiers, and ABCFM leaders. Frontier clashes revolved around multiple ideas and themes, including gender roles and domesticity, racial ideas about native peoples, interpretations of Christian theology, federal Indian policy, notions of hierarchy and compliance, views on cultural accommodation, and even dis-

agreements on what constituted a Christian conversion. Given the ongoing and expansive degree of conflict, it is no surprise that the ABCFM’s project to convert native peoples met with little success in Minnesota in the years before the American Civil War.

The Minnesota frontier conflicts are reported through the eyes of nine missionaries: Thomas S. Williamson, Stephen R. Riggs, Mary Riggs, Moses N. Adams, Robert Hopkins, Gideon H. Pond, Samuel W. Pond, Jedediah D. Stevens, and Lydia P. Huggins. These men and women adhered to Calvinist ideas and were fully committed to seeking converts among the Dakota people. These individuals’ growth and development during their tenure in Minnesota reveals a number of significant issues that have not been fully delineated in similar works, including tensions among family members, varied opinions on theological interpretation, polarized views on federal Indian policy, and the parsimony of the ABCFM, to name only a few. Because the narrative reflects the views and ideas of the missionaries, one can only surmise the native perspective from the reports of a few converts and from second-hand accounts. Even so, there are glimpses, particularly during the United States-Dakota War of 1862, of the Dakotas’ anger and frustration. This conflict has often been reported as a manifestation of native agency because the Indians mobilized their armed resistance during the opening months of the Civil War, a time when federal officials faced competing challenges that could have given the Dakotas an upper hand. Unfortunately for the Dakotas, the Civil War did not prevent the government from bringing military force to bear against them. The thread of conflict, disputation, and deception continued until the Dakota Indians were forced out of Minnesota.

Conflicted Mission is a fine account of missionary endeavors on the Minnesota frontier. Clemmons makes excellent use of archival sources, government documents, and appropriate secondary sources.

JAMES T. CARROLL
Iona College
New Rochelle, N.Y.

Transformation and Continuity in Lakota Culture: The Collages of Arthur Amiotte, 1988–2014

With essays by Arthur Amiotte, Louis S. Warren, and Janet Catherine Berlo. Pierre: South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 2014. 122pp. Illus. Paper, \$29.95.

In his acknowledgments, Oglala Lakota artist Arthur Amiotte describes this publication as the “voice” of his collage exhibition organized by the Museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society in 2014. Amiotte characterizes the artwork itself—a selection of some of his most notable collages produced from 1988 to 2014—as the “face” of the exhibition. This well-designed catalogue presents images of the collages accompanied by essays by Louis S. Warren, Janet Catherine Berlo, and Amiotte himself that provide cultural, historical, and autobiographical contexts for the artwork.

Amiotte finds his artistic inspiration in the experiences of his great-grandfather Standing Bear, his family, and other Lakota people during the early reservation period (approximately 1870–1930). During this period, Lakota and other Plains Indian peoples experienced tremendous cultural change and adaptation in languages, economies, lifestyles, spiritual life, education, and technology. Amiotte’s artwork explores the effects of cultural change, innovation, and cultural continuity on later generations of Lakota people.

A student of the Yanktonai Dakota artist Oscar Howe, Amiotte worked in painting, drawing, and textile and fiber arts until 1988, when he began his series of collages. These works are composed of family photographs, Standing Bear’s drawings, old magazine advertisements, ledger book pages, and his own photographs and paintings. They feature images of Standing Bear’s log home, early automobiles, changing fashions, the Ghost Dance, Indian rodeos, and the European travel experiences of the artist and his great-grandfather. The collages also contain

handwritten statements—reminiscent of those used in nineteenth-century ledger drawings—expressing the perspectives of Lakota people during the early reservation period. The exhibition and catalogue show Amiotte’s collages together with a muslin painting by Standing Bear that is currently in the collections of the Museum of the South Dakota State Historical Society. Amiotte’s essay “I Witnessed All This” provides an in-depth analysis of this interesting painting that, through detailed images, documents many aspects of Lakota life, including a bison hunt, a Sun Dance ceremony and camp, and a family procession packed up and traveling to a new camp.

Louis S. Warren’s essay “The Life of Standing Bear” provides biographical information on Standing Bear and recounts his experiences on a European tour of Buffalo Bill’s Wild West in 1889–1890, including the circumstances that led to his meeting and marrying a young Austrian nurse, Louise Rieneck. Janet Berlo’s contribution to the volume analyzes selected collages in the catalogue as well as the significant place of Amiotte’s work in American Indian art history.

Amiotte’s three essays elaborate how his research on the life and art of his great-grandfather intertwined with and reinforced his own artistic journey and continues to influence his collages. Amiotte adds to Warren’s biography, retelling the family story of how Standing Bear and Louise reared their daughters during a time of great change on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Amiotte has also identified several of Standing Bear’s muslin paintings currently in North American and European museum collections.
EMMA HANSEN
Buffalo Bill Center of the West
Cody, Wyo.

**Gifts from the Thunder Beings:
Indigenous Archery and European
Firearms in the Northern Plains and
Central Subarctic, 1670-1870**

Roland Bohr. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014. 488pp. Illus. Figs. Maps. Apps. Notes. Glossary. Biblio. Ind. Cloth, \$70.00.

This work is a classic cross-cultural study of the impacts of European metal weapons and firearms technology on traditional aboriginal "distance weapons" (pp. xi) or archery used for hunting and warfare from 1670 to 1870. Roland Bohr compares distance weapons usage and technological-cultural change in two culture areas, the Central Subarctic and the Northern Great Plains. The Omushkego or Swampy Cree Indians of northern Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Ontario provide the main Central Subarctic case study, while the Piegan Blackfeet of Montana and Alberta are the book's principal Northern Great Plains focus. The book examines the efficacy of the two distance weapons technologies as well as the differential acceptance and usage of European technology and its impact on North American Indian cultures in hunting, warfare, and society. Bohr demonstrates how native peoples adapted and incorporated European technology to their own distinctive cultural needs.

Bohr's study integrates the author's research of artifacts (including 113 bows and over 500 arrows), historic period documents (particularly Hudson's Bay Company records), ethnographic sources, tribal elder interviews, archaeological data, and experimental replication. The author's replication and testing of native North American archery equipment was informative, particularly in combination with descriptions and performance tests of muzzle-loading smoothbore firearms.

Bohr's first chapter critically examines the long-held ethnocentric belief in the innate superiority of metal tools (projectile points, knives, axes and muzzle-loading smoothbore firearms) over indigenous lithic (stone)

technology and archery, finding that the putative rapid replacement of native archery technology by European trade guns was by no means uniform. Chapter two examines the environmental settings and subsistence systems in the two culture areas. Chapter three presents an informative classification and discussion of aboriginal bow technology. Chapter four explains the technology of arrow manufacture, along with the use and cultural significance of arrows. Chapter five discusses aboriginal peoples' interaction with firearms, while chapter six compares wounds caused by archery and firearms. Chapter seven illuminates the evolving place of archery and firearms in native belief systems, and chapter eight explores archery and firearms in hunting in the two culture areas. Chapter nine examines the roles of archery and firearms in Central Subarctic combat, while chapter ten explores those roles in the Northern Great Plains. Chapter eleven discusses Native American adaptive changes in archery and the cultural modification of firearms use in their specific cultural settings.

Bohr's analysis of why the Swampy Cree rapidly adopted flintlock smoothbore firearms in their broad-based subsistence system with a concomitant diminution of archery, while the Blackfeet maintained archery as part of their cultural core despite the importance of firearms for warfare, is astute. This book is rich in data, well written and organized, and includes thorough notes. It is a fascinating read for anyone interested in the evolution of native North American hunting, warfare, and society after contact with Europeans.

JAMES DONOHUE

South Dakota State Historical Society
Rapid City, S.Dak.

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