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## R E V I E W S

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### *Following in His Steps: A Biography of Charles M. Sheldon*

by Timothy Miller

xix + 285 pages, illustrations, notes, index.  
Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987, paper  
\$25.95.

In an age when progressives ask, "What's the Matter with Kansas?" it might be easy to forget about the state's historic ties to social reform movements. But in fact, through the years a number of Kansans have assumed national and even international leadership in campaigns for a more just society. Their ranks include Julius A. Wayland, founding editor of the Kansas-based *Appeal to Reason*, one of the most widely read socialist newspapers ever produced in the United States. Perhaps no reforming Kansan achieved so much renown during his lifetime as Charles M. Sheldon, the subject of Timothy Miller's 1987 biography, *Following in His Steps*, which the University of Tennessee Press released this year in a new paperback edition.

Sheldon was the longtime pastor at Topeka's Central Congregational Church, where he was much beloved for his compassionate ministry, to be sure, but also for his work across the city. Miller highlights a number of ways in which Sheldon was ahead of his time. During a period when few protections existed for domestic workers, Sheldon was a vocal advocate for their fair treatment. Meanwhile, throughout the era in which "separate but equal" was the law of the land, he galvanized his congregation to expand the social services available to African American residents. Moreover, he insisted on the equal dignity of black Topekans. Miller argues that on this front Sheldon was ahead of even most of his colleagues in the Social Gospel movement, writing, "[he] believed that blacks and whites were equals and was one of the first Protestant ministers to welcome blacks into a fashionable mainstream church" (p. 156).

But it was not Sheldon's views on race that made him nationally famous. Rather, it was the publication of *In His Steps*, a serialized account of what happens in the fictional town of Raymond when a minister—newly sensitized to social problems by an encounter with an indigent man—challenges his parishioners to restructure the entirety of their lives around the question, "What would Jesus do?" First released in installments in the Congregationalist *Advance*, the story became an immediate sensation. The following year, in 1897, it hit the stalls in book form and remains in print to this day. While exact numbers are impossible to determine, Miller speculates that some 30 million copies may have been printed, including dozens of editions in languages other than English. Sheldon did not relish the attention but, like it or not, he soon became a household name.

Miller does not spend much time on questions about how and why a novel like *In His Steps* became—and has remained—

Timothy Miller



## Following IN HIS STEPS

*A Biography of Charles M. Sheldon*

such a phenomenon. Such lines of inquiry are beyond the purview of this biography, which is quite narrowly focused on Sheldon himself. Readers who are interested in getting to know more about the particulars of his life will no doubt find Miller's admiring treatment immensely satisfying. Those who want to understand Sheldon's significance vis-à-vis broader movements such as the Social Gospel will, by Miller's own admission, need to look elsewhere. Complicating matters somewhat is that—thanks to a bevy of excellent studies of female, black, and working-class Social Gospelers—our very sense of what that movement was has shifted dramatically since Miller first published this book. As the field continues to assimilate this new data, there can be no doubt that it is high time for a new history of the Social Gospel. Miller's book drives home the point that "St. Charles of Topeka" deserves a place in it.

*Reviewed by Heath W. Carter, assistant professor of history,  
Valparaiso University, Indiana.*

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*The Other Trail of Tears: The Removal of the Ohio Tribes*

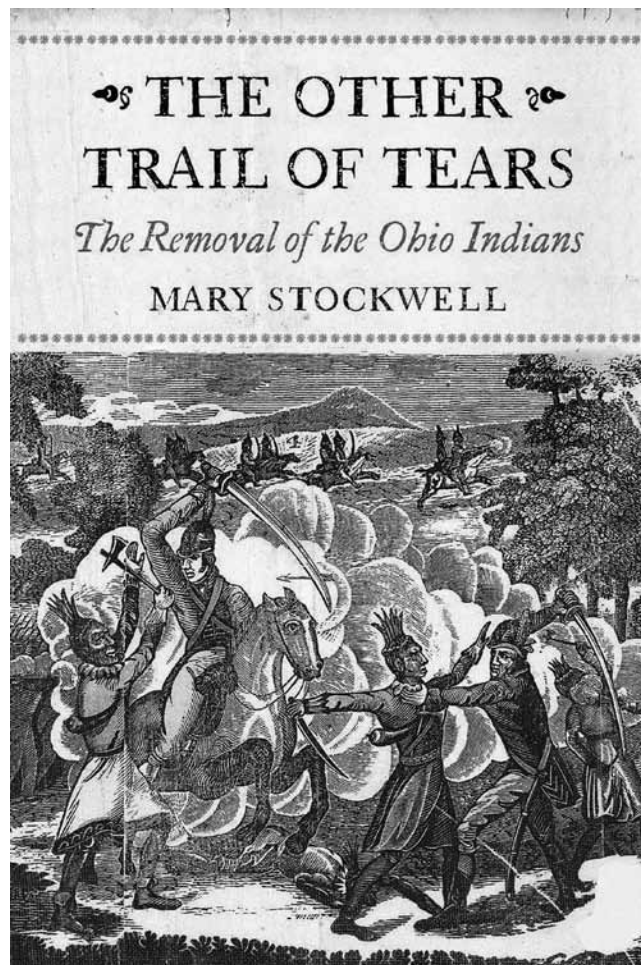
by Mary Stockwell

xi + 388 pages, illustrations, notes, index.  
Yardley, Pa.: Westholme Publishing, 2014, cloth \$29.95.

In *The Other Trail of Tears*, Mary Stockwell explores the creation and implementation of federal Indian removal policies during the mid-nineteenth century. Despite the familiarity of the topic, Stockwell's nuanced study reveals the complexity of Indian removal beyond that of the southern tribal nations and the well-known Cherokee Trail of Tears. Instead, focusing upon the tribal nations of Ohio, including the Seneca, Shawnee, Ottawa, and Wyandot Nations, Stockwell emphasizes a much larger pattern of forced indigenous relocation than that implied in the customary historical narrative. From the international nature of indigenous policy formation to the logistical problems of removal, Stockwell delves into the problematic and often haphazard implementation of federal policies, indigenous land cessions, and challenges to Native sovereignty.

Spanning nearly fifty years of American history, *The Other Trail of Tears* first assesses the culmination of the War of 1812 and British attempts to secure a measure of sovereignty for their indigenous allies. Despite British efforts, the Treaty of Ghent ultimately prompted the creation of indigenous polices that first established reserves in the earliest western territories and later led to removal. Far from unwitting victims in these negotiations, indigenous leaders eagerly reestablished peace with the American government in the wake of British retreat. For a time, the indigenous population of the Ohio River Valley accepted parcels of land to avoid confrontation with encroaching settlers, and in many cases this population thrived as family farmers. Some even adopted Euro-American educational practices and Christian religions. However, in this section of her narrative, Stockwell is careful to point out the perpetually untenable situation that the tribal nations faced, explaining, "while their reserves were in good country, much would have to change if the tribes were to hold onto them. They might still be able to retain their identity as a people, but only if they transformed their customs enough to be acceptable to the Americans who were heading their way" (p. 94). Ultimately, as in the South, no amount of acculturation would be enough to halt the direction of federal Indian policy or the ambitions of pro-removal politicians like Andrew Jackson.

While the notion of Indian removal did not originate with the Jackson administration, his implementation of the policy is well outlined in *The Other Trail of Tears*. Stockwell is careful not to vilify Jackson, but she aptly notes that "in Jackson's eyes, the more they [American Indians] tried to become 'civilized' the more dangerous they became" (p. 194). Throughout the 1830s, successive tribal nations debated the merits of relocation. Some went willingly with the promise of annuities, good land, and



freedom from encroaching settlers, while others resisted and were later forced from their homes. Throughout her study, Stockwell often discusses the tribal nations' removal from their homelands in the Ohio River Valley to reservations in Kansas through the lens of the Indian agents, or "conductors" who guided the tribal nations westward. While these perspectives offer a glimpse of the logistical problems of removal and the beauty of the "prairies that stretched all the way west to the Rocky Mountains," the true nature of human suffering and the heartbreak of indigenous dislocation, despair, and even death on the various "trails of tears" is not fully felt (p. 241). At the same time, Stockwell expertly draws attention to the all-encompassing nature of removal, moving well beyond the story of the southern tribes, and accurately highlights the implementation of these policies as a monumental undertaking. Ultimately, for the people who relocated to the region, Kansas represented a new start, but one that had to be hewn out of unfamiliar territory and at an unimaginable cost.

*Reviewed by Brandi Hilton-Hagemann, assistant professor of history, Doane College, Crete, Nebraska.*

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*Coronado's Well-Equipped Army: The Spanish Invasion of the American Southwest*

by John M. Hutchins

xvii + 374 pages, notes, illustrations, map, bibliography, index.

Yardley, Pa.: Westholme Publishing, 2014, cloth \$29.95.

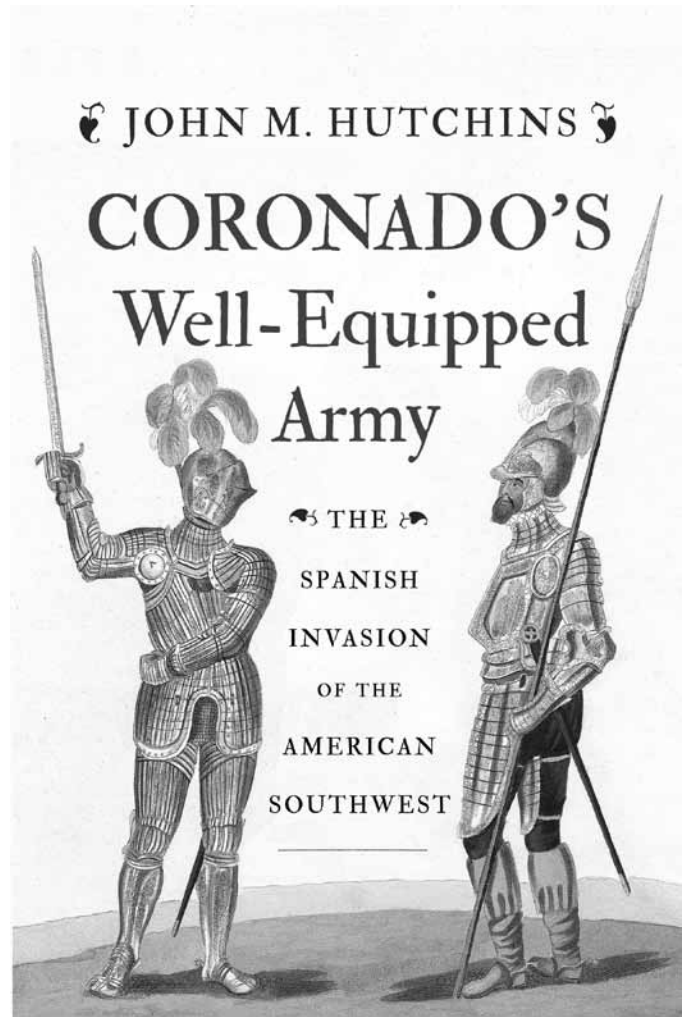
John M. Hutchins's treatment of the military logistics and details of Francisco Vázquez de Coronado's expedition in 1540 into lands that eventually became part of the southwestern United States is intriguing for two reasons. First, he gives serious and expert attention to aspects of the *entrada* that other historians have slighted or botched, because, not being military historians, they were not inclined to take them seriously. Second, Hutchins applies the distinctive analytic method developed by the British author and historian Alfred Higgins Burne—"inherent military probability." Where the sources are silent or inconclusive, the practitioner of the Burne method puts himself in the place of the military actors and asks: what would a sensible commander have done in this situation?

There are weaknesses in the research base for Coronado's *Well-Equipped Army*, but the method is sound. Hutchins writes with cultivated expertise and with common sense, sorting out the role of Indian allies, the types of armor worn by officers and soldiers, the difficulties of the arquebus (an early muzzle-loaded firearm), the virtues of the crossbow, and other details both significant and arcane. Hutchins is a disciple of what has come to be known as the New Military History, which gives serious attention to the soldiers in the ranks, not just commanders.

As for a thesis, Hutchins questions the common wisdom that Spanish soldiers, indeed European soldiers in general, were compelled to adapt to New World conditions and rapidly did so, abandoning Old World practices of warfare. Some customs they undeniably left behind. In the Americas, there were no masses of peasants bearing pikes. Furthermore, the Europeans had to concede that sometimes "their technologies did not always make up for the shortcomings of their regular modes of warfare." However, Hutchins argues the Europeans employed "adaptation rather than reinvention" (p. 17). They fought in the ways they had learned on European battlefields.

Students of Kansas history may be disappointed with Chapter 19, "Coronado's Flying Reconnaissance in Search of Quivira." It is a brief narrative, because there was no fighting with the Quivirans. For readers in Kansas, the point of interest in Hutchins's work will be the military technology and context of Coronado's column, rather than particular reference to events in their future state.

Serious historians of Spanish exploration certainly will fault Hutchins as to his research. The big problem: no use of Spanish language sources. The dependence on secondary accounts and on English translations undermines the author's credibility.



Hutchins also has tendencies toward jargon, anachronism, and digression. In one case, for instance, Hutchins recounts how the indigenous people of Cibola generously shared their prickly pear preserves with the Spanish, with disastrously diarrhetic results. Then he digresses to discuss the narcotic effects experienced by German troops eating too much honey while campaigning in the Caucasus in 1942 instead of considering the agency and motives of the Cibolans who fed the invaders such an explosive concoction.

In his conclusion, Hutchins advises that Coronado's action should be classified as a raid rather than an invasion. He also adjudges that charges brought against Coronado for cruelty to the Indians were unfair, given the habitual cruelty of Spanish warfare not only in the Americas but in Europe as well. Hutchins does not argue that Coronado was blameless in his conduct; rather, he offers context to suggest that practices of Spanish and European warfare typically involved acts just as cruel as those perpetrated by Coronado.

*Reviewed by Thomas D. Isern, professor of history, North Dakota State University, Fargo, North Dakota.*

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*The Great Medicine Road, Part I: Narratives of the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails, 1840–1848*

edited by Michael L. Tate

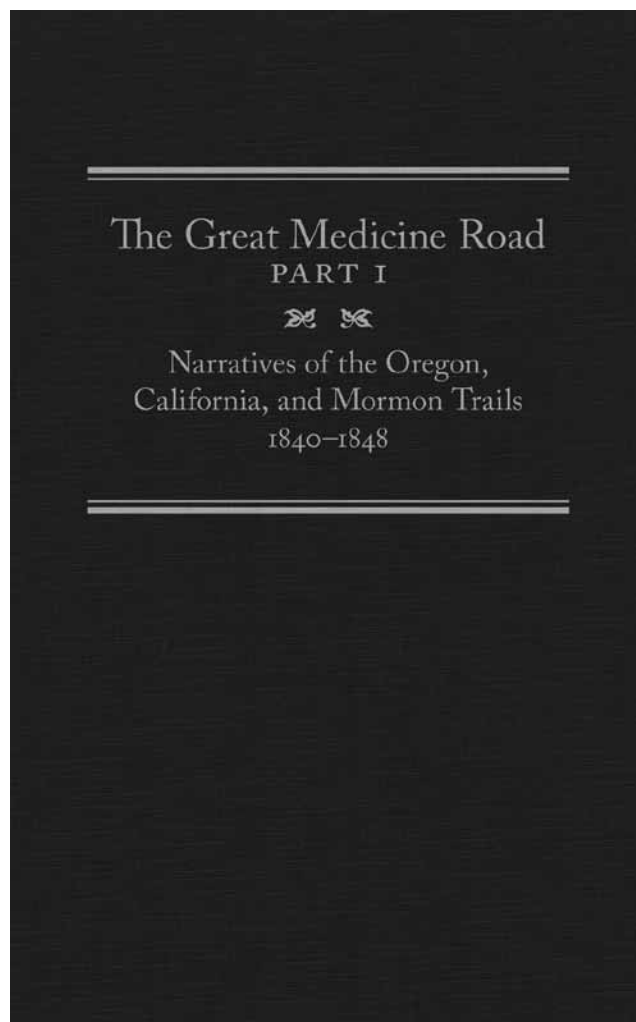
339 pages, notes, illustrations, index.

Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014, cloth  
\$39.95.

The Arthur H. Clark Company set the standard for edited Overland Trail narratives, and it continues in that tradition with *The Great Medicine Road, Part I: Narratives of the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails, 1840–1848*. This compilation includes documents from fifteen emigrants, meticulously selected by editor Michael L. Tate. Tate, an expert on the trails, has written an introduction to the *Best of Covered Wagon Women* and is the author of *Indians and Emigrants: Encounters on the Overland Trails*, among other books that focus on the West and on indigenous peoples. His stated goal for this anthology was to “choose primary accounts that were truly representative of the great migration . . . during the formative years” (p. 20). In doing so, he considered men’s and women’s writings, as well as authors’ ages, home states, reasons for heading west, and their adjustments to trail life (p. 20).

The great strengths of the book, other than making available these less-known stories from the trails, are Tate’s editions and annotations. He introduces each document with biographical information about its authors. Often readers of Overland Trail diaries are left wondering what happened to the emigrants once they reached the West. Tate’s introduction to each emigrant provides details about his or her life beyond the trails so that readers see the contributions these men and women made toward shaping the American West. His extensive footnotes provide historical context for the events and people mentioned in each document, and using footnotes instead of endnotes allows the reader to delve into the emigrants’ stories without the interruption of searching through endnotes. Within the text, Tate includes bracketed information that anticipates questions readers may have but does not interfere with the original text. He also provides bibliographic information specific to each Overlander, and an extensive bibliography for the book as a whole. The end result meets Tate’s goal to allow “the pioneer generation to speak directly to modern audiences,” while, at the same time, providing “detailed editorial content so that their accounts can assume a larger context than the writers originally intended” (p. 17).

Tate’s selection expands beyond traditional Overland Trail narratives. For example, Nancy Kelsey’s story is from an interview she gave shortly before her death in 1896. It focuses on her 1841 trip but also details the rest of her life in California through the 1880s. Richard Grant’s letters, spanning from 1844 to 1847, relate the professional and personal experiences of his time as a Hudson’s Bay Company member. Grant served at



the company’s northwestern forts and saw emigrants moving along the Oregon Trail. Lilborn Boggs’s account from 1846 was originally intended to promote emigration to the West, and contains advice and recommendations for travel, but it is not a traditional trail guide. And John Borrowman’s 1848 journal entries are told from the perspective of a Mormon who participated in the first diggings in California, where he kept track of the amount of gold he procured each day. The journal also chronicles Borrowman’s journey eastward via the Carson River Route as he headed to the Great Salt Lake.

This is not the first time that all of these narratives have been published. Some can be found online, while others have been published in edited collections or series, local historical society bulletins, books, and appendices. Many others have not been previously published, and the originals or transcripts are located in archives and historical societies throughout the country. It should also be noted for this journal that *The Great Medicine Road* does not focus primarily on Kansas history.

*Reviewed by Melody M. Miyamoto Walters, professor of history, Collin College, McKinney, Texas.*

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## *The National Council on Indian Opportunity: Quiet Champion of Self-Determination*

by Thomas A. Britten

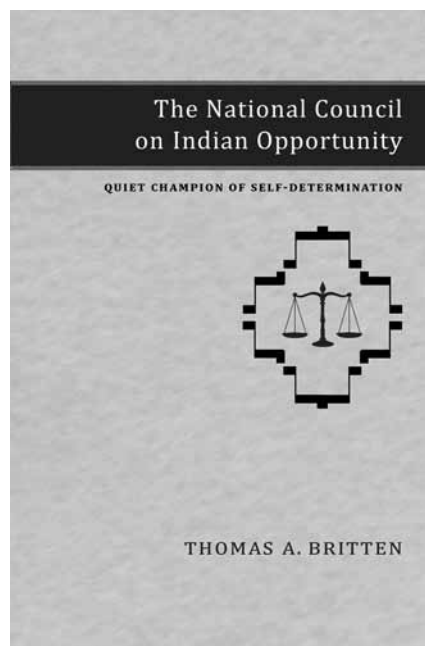
ix + 337 pages, notes, illustrations, index.  
Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2014,  
cloth \$45.00.

Upon first glance, a study about a federal committee acting as a quiet champion of American Indian self-determination has the makings of a disaster. How could a committee housed in the executive branch have had anything to do with American Indians creating and implementing their own programs? Instead, Thomas A. Britten has provided a solid addition to the written history of American Indian self-determination. Until this study, the National Council on Indian Opportunity (NCIO) was the little-known creation of President Lyndon B. Johnson, discounted by historians as a committee that accomplished nothing. Britten, however, shows that the NCIO played a critical role in helping the federal government address the economic and social needs of Indians during the early 1970s.

Britten sets the context for the study with a description of post-World War II America. President Johnson created the NCIO through executive order in 1968, as Termination, Congress's policy to withdraw federal funding for Indian tribes, was coming to an end. The Termination Era (1945–1970) also saw passage of the Indian Relocation Act of 1956, which moved many Indians from reservations to cities with grants from the federal government. These policies often left people living in squalor in their new urban homes because financial assistance from the Bureau of Indian Affairs quickly ran out.

Britten next describes the creation and make-up of the NCIO. The fourteen-person committee included six tribal leaders, seven federal bureaucrats, and the vice president. The tribal leaders were mostly tribal chairmen such as Raymond Nakai of the Navajos. The bureaucrats came from the executive cabinet. The president envisioned department heads on the committee, but, in reality, the only department leaders who served were Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall and Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz. Other cabinet chiefs sent representatives, illustrating their lack of respect for the new committee. Britten also demonstrates how tenuous the NCIO was in its early years. For example, since the vice president served as chair of the committee, the change in leadership after the 1968 presidential election could have killed the NCIO. Instead, however, Britten explains that the opposite occurred as Vice President Spiro Agnew successfully led the committee before his 1973 resignation.

The NCIO worked to fill the gap between the federal government and Indian tribes. For instance, in 1972 NCIO Chairman Bob Robertson, former executive administrator for Nevada, steered negotiations between the Yakamas of Washington, the secretary of agriculture, and the secretary of interior, to have Mount Adams returned to the Yakamas'



reservation. Additionally, from 1972 to 1973, tribes garnered \$20 million of government aid with NCIO assistance in grant writing.

The NCIO had a more difficult time assisting urban Indians mired in poverty. Robertson negotiated with urban Indian leaders, including members of the American Indian Movement (AIM), but they accomplished little. The two sides distrusted each other because urban Indian leaders like Dennis Banks of AIM, saw Robertson as just another uncaring federal bureaucrat. Robertson, in return, viewed most urban leaders as grandstanders.

The NCIO died on June 30, 1974, a victim of budget cuts. Congresswoman Julia Butler Hansen (D-WA), chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee, led the push to reduce NCIO appropriations; she claimed not to understand the mission of the NCIO and complained about a lack of legislation. The argument that the agency assisted tribes with grants and loans did not find merit with Congress.

Britten has written a book for scholars of Indian history and the federal government that successfully adds to our understanding of self-determination in the modern era. He also has explained the rivalries of federal agencies and committees, making the study a useful resource for students of American government. His subjects' voices come through in the use of the archived records of the NCIO, the papers of tribal chairmen, and interviews with key players, such as Bob Robertson. The Termination Era was disastrous for several tribes, but the response from the federal government proved to be useful for reservation Indians, even if only for a short time.

*Reviewed by Ray Nolan, PhD candidate, Kansas State University, Manhattan.*

*Railroad Empire across the Heartland:  
Rephotographing Alexander Gardner's Westward  
Journey*

by James E. Sherow, photographs by John R. Charlton

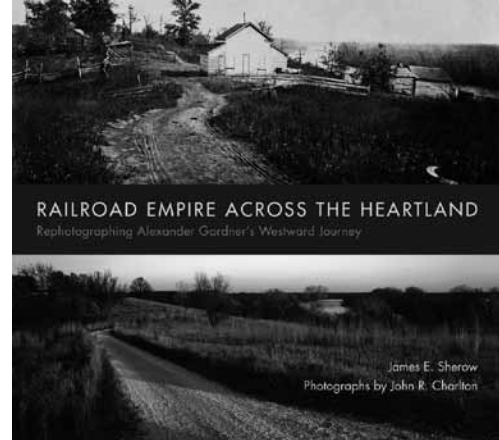
x + 212 pages, illustrations, index.  
Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2014,  
paper \$34.95.

In 1867 John D. Perry, the president of the Union Pacific Railway Company, Eastern Division, hired Alexander Gardner, an accomplished Civil War photographer, to photograph the construction of his railroad across Kansas. Perry's intention was to rally financial support in Congress for his line by illustrating how it would further the advancement of civilization into the Central Plains, bringing economic and social benefits. Alexander's photographs, which form the core of this book, are a magnificent depiction of the Kansas frontier in a transitional stage from Anglo-American urban settlements in the east to the unsettled High Plains in the west. Readers who have yet to view these images will be impressed not only by their resolution and composition but also by how effectively they convey the cultural and ecological realities of frontier life.

*Railroad across the Heartland*, however, is more than Gardner's photographs and Sherow's insightful analysis of them. It also includes the photographs of John Charlton, formerly of the Kansas Geological Survey, who engaged in "rephotography," painstakingly relocating the sites and vantage points of Alexander's photographs over about a twenty-year period beginning in the early 1990s and then reshooting them. In contrast to Alexander's glorification of the railroad, Charlton's photographs "demonstrate the effects of automobile transportation, and rapid urbanization" in the creation of a "landscape dramatically transformed by a culture of consumerism" (p. 23).

The book begins with a short preface and introductory essay, "The New Pioneer of Population and Settlement," in which Sherow discusses the technological power of railroads to transform ecologies and spearhead the coming of the great American empire, and how Gardner's photographs fulfilled the railroad's vision. In the first part of "Imperial Photographic Pairings," subtitled "Kansas on the Edge," the paired photographs, chronologically and geographically organized, depict various railroad features and associated townscapes of Kansas City, Leavenworth, Lawrence, Topeka, Manhattan, and Junction City. Smaller places, such as St. Mary's Mission, Wamego, and Fort Riley, are included too, as are rural views of the railroad along the Kansas River.

Other photographic pairings of rural scenes and the early townscapes of Abilene, Salina, Ellsworth, and Hays follow under the subtitle "Trails to Rails in Kansas." Sherow's paragraph-length commentaries on the paired images are insightful and revealing interpretations of 1867 Kansas, particularly the subtleties of townscapes. For example, he identifies the cattle



barn of the first governor of Kansas, Charles Robinson, on the treeless east slope of Mt. Oread; an African American maid among a cluster of people on a Wamego hotel veranda; and commercial signage on new clapboard buildings lining Walnut Street in Ellsworth, overlooking a line of laden oxcarts bound for the Santa Fe Trail south of town.

The photo of Ellsworth (55A) is an extraordinary perspective on the historical geography of a place that bridged, momentarily, the temporal and spatial gap between trails and rails. In two other photographs of the townscapes of Ellsworth (54A) and "Hays City" (56A) we can see with close scrutiny what the historical geographer John Hudson identified as a symmetric railroad town plan in which the business district faces the tracks. The use of this plan at Ellsworth and Hays, though less standardized than the prototype used by the Illinois Central, was one of the first Kansas examples of the extension of the railroad's imperial power into the realm of urban planning. With the original plat oriented to the tracks, even the powerful township/range grid was defied.

In the epilogue, Sherow writes, "As intended by their promoters, railroads did pave the way for people to domesticate grasslands, which changed their ecosystems forever" (p. 196). But as the historical geographer Walter Kollmorgen described in "The Woodsman's Assault on the Domain of the Cattleman," there were other forces at work, primarily the cultural imperative of the desire for land that required the formulation of a variety of geographic misconceptions and myths for the woodsman's settlement of the semi-arid steppe. We have been living with and treasuring these myths that fostered a romanticized Kansas frontier ever since. The value of this book is that it exposes us to a different interpretation of the frontier, one that forces us to recognize the realities of early but uncompromising corporate power that extended its long arms from the board rooms of mostly Yankee capitalists in Boston and New York to the Kansas plains. And through Charlton's meticulous rephotography, it asks us to look (literally) at what we have created—and what we have lost.

*Reviewed by Tom Schmiedeler, professor of geography, Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas.*

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*The 'People's Joan of Arc': Mary Elizabeth Lease, Gendered Politics, and Populist Party Politics in Gilded-Age America*

by Brooke Speer Orr

316 pages, notes, index.

New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2014, cloth \$91.95.

Since her rise to fame in the 1890s, Mary Elizabeth Lease has remained one of the most famous figures in Kansas history. Though she left no personal papers and few records of her private life, Brooke Speer Orr has accomplished the first book-length biography of Lease—an event long awaited by historians of American women and of Populism. *The 'People's Joan of Arc'* will be welcome to scholars in both fields, as well as to general readers interested in Kansas history, radical political movements, and the Gilded Age and Progressive Era.

Grounded in an array of primary sources, Orr's book is full of pithy quotations. Her use of Kansas newspapers is particularly extensive. She documents Lease's views—as reported by editors, both friendly and hostile—as well as the intense debates that raged around her. Orr gives in-depth attention to the Kansas campaign of 1890 that made "Mrs. Lease" a household name, as well as Lease's campaign tours on behalf of Populist presidential candidate James B. Weaver in 1892.

Lease was notable for the dizzying variety of her political commitments, and Orr covers these well. She documents Lease's early activism in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the women's rights movement, in addition to her Civil War memorial work. She also emphasizes Lease's anti-nativist views, her connections to Patrick Ford's labor-oriented *Irish World*, and her support for Irish nationalism, all inspired by her family's Irish immigrant background. Lease joined the Knights of Labor and then the Union Labor Party, a precursor to the People's Party that deserves more attention from historians than it has so far received. Orr's final chapters, on the rise of William Jennings Bryan, make clear why and how Lease chose to return to the Republican Party in the 1890s and pursue new strategies for Progressive reform.

An important strength of Orr's book is its emphasis on the gendered dimensions of political conflict. *The 'People's Joan of Arc'* shows that, despite the Populists' economic agenda and working-class base, Lease's enemies consistently chose gender rather than class-based attacks to try to damage her reputation. By comparing Lease to People's Party co-worker Annie Diggs, among others, Orr shows how Lease responded by forging a distinctively masculine campaign style, while simultaneously appealing to the values of motherhood and domesticity.

Some aspects of Lease's story could use more attention here. Orr is mistaken, for example, in repeating contemporary reports that the Leases tried to homestead in Kingman County in 1873; they only reached Kingman after nine years of severe hardship and poverty in Denison, Texas. It seems worth noting, also,



that when Mary Lease divorced her husband, exasperated by two decades of his business failures, her son Charles received a patronage appointment in the New York Customs House—almost certainly a Republican payoff for Mary's endorsement of presidential candidate William McKinley.

Orr sometimes accepts contemporary quotations, including those attributed to Lease, at face value. Additional analysis would situate these more fully in context. Nevertheless, Orr makes good use of recent feminist scholarship, such as Laura Lovett's book *Conceiving the Future*, on Progressivism and pronatalism. Additional recent works that would strengthen Orr's interpretation include Marilyn Blackwell and Kristen Oertel's biography of Clarina Nichols, who preceded Mary Lease as a Kansas feminist stump-speaker; Lara Vapnek's *Breadwinners*, on working-class women's activism; and Charles Postel's *The Populist Vision*, an acclaimed reinterpretation of the movement most associated with Lease's name.

*The People's Joan of Arc* nonetheless offers a detailed account of Mary Lease's life and political commitments. In the end, Orr offers an ambiguous portrait of this complex woman, showing how Lease was by turns courageous and mercenary, admirable and petty—a politician who could be destructively egotistical, but who also demonstrated far more acumen than many of her male Populist colleagues. Some of Lease's most memorable remarks seem relevant today. "There is plenty of breadstuff in the country for all," as she said in 1894, "if each individual just had his share."

*Reviewed by Rebecca Edwards, Eloise Ellery Professor of History, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie College, New York.*