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## BOOK NOTES

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*Chronicling the West for Harper's: Coast to Coast with Frenzeny & Tavernier in 1873–1874.* By Claudine Chalmers. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013, xiv + 229 pages, \$45.00.)

In *Chronicling the West for Harper's*, Claudine Chalmers recounts the journey of two French artists, Paul Frenzeny and Jules Tavernier, as they created one hundred images for the popular journal in 1873 and 1874. Granted the title “special artists,” or field artists, by *Harper's*, Frenzeny and Tavernier travelled through rugged western terrain depicting scenes that involved movement rather than producing stationary pictures of landscapes. Instead of romanticizing the West, they created iconic and sometimes gritty images of towns gone bust and the slaughter of bison. Nonetheless, later western artists with a stronger penchant for idealism, including Frederic Remington, still drew inspiration from their work. Richly illustrated with over one hundred black-and-white drawings and thirteen color plates, *Chronicling the West for Harper's* reveals the lasting impact that Frenzeny and Tavernier had on how Americans imagined the West.

*The Lost Cause: The Trials of Frank and Jesse James. Kansas City.* By James P. Muehlberger. (Yardley, Penn.: Westholme Publishing, 2013, xiv + 255 pages, cloth \$24.95.)

Attorney James Muehlberger is the first to unearth the actual court records of *Daniel Smoote v. Frank and Jesse James*, a private 1870 lawsuit in Daviess County, Missouri. We now know this case was the long-rumored first legal action against the notorious James brothers. In December 1869, two gunmen entered a bank in Gallatin, Missouri, and one (almost certainly Jesse James) murdered a cashier named John Sheets. Muehlberger argues convincingly that Jesse actually meant to shoot local Union hero Samuel Cox; fierce Confederate partisans since Bleeding Kansas, the brothers had vowed to avenge Cox's 1864 killing of William T. “Bloody Bill” Anderson, the leader of the pro-Confederate guerillas in Missouri. As Muehlberger details the legal saga of the Jameses until Frank's death in 1915 (Jesse was murdered in 1882), he effectively attributes the brothers' long criminal career to the postwar “Lost Cause” myth, which imagined Jesse as “a noble soldier turned political criminal, a defender of a Southern tradition of honor, family, and friendship” (p. 68).

*George Norris, Going Home: Reflections of a Progressive Statesman.* By Gene A. Budig and Don Walton. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013, xii + 116 pages, paper \$18.95.)

This enjoyably different book reviews the legendary political career of six-term U.S. senator George Norris of Nebraska, a leading Republican progressive of the 1920s who became an independent after throwing his support behind Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal. Based on much later interviews with the senator's wife, the authors imagine Norris's recollections during the brief period between his unsuccessful 1942 bid for a seventh term and his death in 1944. Norris was best known as a great supporter of public power—and thus of the New Deal's Tennessee Valley Authority and Rural Electrification Agency; the narrative begins fittingly with his post-defeat train trip home from Washington via the Tennessee Valley. The volume concentrates on Norris as senator but also touches on his personal life, his beloved Wisconsin summer home, and his leadership role in making Nebraska's legislature unicameral. Kansas editor William Allen White said of Norris, “I know of no other man in the United States who has done so much for this country in the last forty years” (p. 40).

*Osborne County Kansas Scenic and Heritage Backways: Eleven Tours for Explorers who Dare to Do Dirt.* Compiled by Von Rothenberger. (Osborne County Tourism, Inc., 2013.)

Funded by the Osborne County Commission, this volume seeks to promote tourism in Osborne County. It complements an earlier tourism-focused project—the Osborne County Historical Marker Project, completed in 2010. Osborne County has only ninety miles of paved roads, and thus this guidebook focuses on the dirt roads that crisscross the county and describes interesting “stops” along the way. The guide also offers several tips: potential explorers should know that all roads transect private property; be on the lookout for wandering herds of cattle, deer, turkey and other wildlife; and bring along extra clothing, binoculars, flashlights, folding chairs, and a very detailed map of the area. Entries offer ample historical detail. Stop twenty, for example, vividly describes the history of the state's first zoological park and the October 1879 tragedy during which the owner of the park, Hiram C. Bull, was gored to death by his own pet bull elk.

*Signs along the Way: A Biography/Memoir about Elizabeth “Grandma” Layton, Friend, Sister, Wife, Mother, Social Activist and Artist.* By Russell, Carla, Kathy Tracy, Judy Cross, and Elizabeth Layton. (Rantoul, Kans.: Globe Publishing, 2013, vi + 354 pages, paper \$20.00.)

Compiled and partially written from “hundreds of notes, poems, short stories,” (p. 2) and letters by three of Elizabeth “Grandma” Layton's real maternal granddaughters, *Signs along the Way* is both memoir and biography of a Kansas woman who gained considerable fame late in life as a folk artist. Grandma Layton was born Elizabeth Hope Converse on October 27, 1909, in Wellsville, Kansas, where her father Asa Converse published the *Weekly Globe*, and her mother May contributed a regular column, “Conversation,” excerpts of which are used in the “biography.” After her father's death in 1942, Elizabeth, by then divorced from her first husband, moved back to Wellsville and edited the *Globe* with her mother for the next fifteen years. “Most of this biography has been written by Grandma Layton herself,” write the granddaughters; “we've just filled in some blanks, provided some background and history, clarified what we know to be true, guessed at what we suspect, embellished as needed—and as an added treat have included a few photographs and some of her earlier sketches” (p. 2).

*Images of America: Manhattan.* By James E. Sherow. (Charleston, S. Car.: Arcadia Publishing, 2013, 127 pages, paper \$21.99.)

Arcadia Publishing's *Images of America* series “celebrates the history of neighborhoods, towns, and cities across the country” through “archival photographs” (back cover). Kansas State University professor of history James E. Sherow compiled many fascinating pictures from local and state archives that aptly illustrate Manhattan's development. The city's growth into a “regional center,” Sherow explains, was precipitated by its “New England heritage” and its “Midwestern industry” (p. 7). *Manhattan* includes numerous fascinating pictures such as those of the municipal brass band that regularly played in City Park, a Kansas State Agricultural College home economics class practicing military drill, and shopkeepers gathered around wooden tubs cleaning the mud off of merchandise after the 1951 flood. Any student of Kansas history will find this volume of interest because Sherow skillfully weaves the story of Manhattan into state and national narratives.