Rising from the Smoky Hill River valley in western Kansas are a grouping of limestone rock formations called the Monument Rocks. In 1867 T.R. Davis, an artist with Harper’s Weekly, wrote, “The Monument Rocks are considered the most remarkable sight on the plains. At a distance it is difficult to realize that they are not the handiwork of man, so perfectly do they resemble piles of masonry.” John C. Fremont’s 1842 surveying expedition reported that the Indians had covered the rocks with piles of buffalo bones. The monuments were known by the Cheyennes as “The Sacred Place,” near where their ancient ritual of the Sundance was held. The Cheyennes would often “mark” the monuments on their travels from northern to southern hunting grounds. In September 1865 a small army outpost and stage station known as “Monument Station” was located nearby; and within less than a month, a stagecoach was attacked by Indians, plundered, and burned along with the station house. This painting depicts members of the raiding party celebrating their success as they traveled north after the raid. On September 25, 2013, Northern Cheyenne descendants of those involved in the exodus of 1878, who attended the Punished Woman’s Fork Symposium (featured in this issue of Kansas History), blessed this site. It was a moving ceremony, one recognizing the ancestors who had preceded them. “The Sacred Place” is part of the Jerry Thomas Gallery and Collection (www.jerrythomasartgallery.com) that is located in Scott City, Kansas. As Rod Haxton states in his contribution to this issue’s “Remembering the Battle of Punished Woman’s Fork: The 2013 Scott City Symposium,” edited by Ramon Powers and James N. Leiker, the gallery houses “the most complete collection of historic items related to the site and the people who were involved” (p. 220). It contains rare items, including the “only known image” of Lieutenant Colonel William H. Lewis, who was mortally wounded in the battle, and his personal engraved sword. Also on display are Lieutenant Cornelius Gardener’s uniform, his 1873 West Point ring, and a beautifully beaded Northern Cheyenne tobacco/pipe bag that he found on the battlefield. The gallery also houses Northern Cheyenne clothing, artifacts, weapons, and photographs along with Fourth U.S. Cavalry and Nineteenth U.S. Infantry guns, weapons and signed photographs and ephemera.

“The Sacred Place,” painting by Jerry Thomas
Remembering the Battle of Punished Woman’s Fork: The 2013 Scott City Symposium
edited by Ramon Powers and James N. Leiker

B-25 Production and Test Flying at the Kansas City Bomber Plant
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Twenty-Five Years among the Indians and Buffalo
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