

nation's highest military award, and his conversations with them led to his research into Iowa's Civil War heroes who received the medal.

The federal government recognizes 30 Civil War–Era Medal of Honor recipients as being from Iowa, but Black takes the task further, including those who have even a slight connection to Iowa, resulting in 56 men and one woman who received the medal.

The book begins with a standard introduction to the war and Iowa's part in it, an introduction as good as most and better than many. Black then goes on to explain the history of the medal itself, an important part of the book that others might have neglected. He explains his thorough methodology and briefly describes the kind of actions that resulted in the medal being awarded.

The rest of the book — and its heart and soul — is a series of military stories from various aspects of the war, ranging from an Iowa connection to the famous “Andrews Railroad Raid” of 1862 to battlefield stories from many of the war's bloodiest struggles, even including stories of sailors with links to Iowa. Black's research is solid, and his writing style is comfortable. Readers will enjoy the rich illustrations, maps, and photographs that accompany the military adventures. Those seeking stories of their particular favorite Iowa Medal of Honor recipient will seldom be disappointed.

The book can be criticized on several points. First, Black's desire to find Medal of Honor recipients with Iowa connections might have gone too far. There is a crucial difference between those who enlisted from Iowa communities and served in Iowa regiments and those who served in regiments from other states and who only happened to settle in Iowa after the war. That distinction is too often blurred, which dilutes Iowa's role in the war. The book also lacks an index, something necessary for a book that will serve primarily as a reference work. Such criticisms aside, this is a fine contribution to Iowa history. It is a work that should be in every library in the state and would be a valued addition to the personal collection of anyone who is interested in Iowa Civil War history.

Legal Executions in the Western Territories, 1847–1911, by R. Michael Wilson. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2010. v, 222 pp. Addendum, bibliography, index. \$95.00 paper.

Reviewer Michael J. Pfeifer is associate professor of history at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, The City University of New York. He is the author of *The Roots of Rough Justice: Origins of American Lynching* (2011) and three articles in the *Annals of Iowa* on the history of lynching and criminal justice in Iowa.

The primary contribution of R. Michael Wilson's book is to collect succinct accounts of the crimes, criminal justice proceedings, and final moments of each of the men and women executed in the western territories of the United States from the mid-nineteenth century through the early twentieth century. Each case is summarized in a brief narrative composed from primary sources. Each territory's section is introduced with a short summary of territorial legal and political history.

The book succeeds less well as analytical history. Eight pages of preface and introduction begin to interpret the history of capital punishment around the world and in the American West, but only in curious and cursory fashion. For example, Wilson asserts, "If capital punishment is to continue we must come to realize that the U.S. Supreme Court got it wrong when they said that death by hanging was 'cruel and unusual.' When a hanging is done properly, death is instantaneous and any agonies perceived are in the eye of the beholder" (1-2). The problem with this, as will be obvious to any casual reader of the book, is that hangings in the West were in fact often not done "properly"; accounts of all manner of botched and redone hangings abound in Wilson's descriptions. Beyond this, many opportunities for analysis go unexploited within the book's pages. For instance, why were executions in Arizona so numerous, accounting for more than one-fifth of the book's length? Perhaps the extended length of Arizona's status as a territory and the combustible mixture of race, ethnicity, and nationality on a southwest borderland were factors, but those factors receive little attention here. In another example, Wilson includes, with no comment whatsoever, extralegal executions that occurred before the promulgation of legal institutions and official territorial status in particular locales, such as the trial and execution of Moses Young by a "people's court" in Denver on March 15, 1860 (Colorado would not become a territory until 1861). But surely such pre-territorial extralegal executions, which enjoyed no legal status whatsoever (an example of such an informal trial and execution in pre-territorial Iowa, that of alleged murderer Patrick O'Conner, occurred in the Dubuque lead mines in June 1834), require at least their own section, an asterisk, or some explanation. Furthermore, Wilson does not peer far beyond the perspectives of the white American newspaper correspondents and editors from whose accounts he composes his narratives of western executions. Such newspaper accounts often contained flowery and melodramatic true crime stories of whites, Indians, Hispanics, Chinese, and African Americans accused of homicide; such contemporaneous accounts need to be read and interpreted carefully, which is not particularly the case here. In short, this book is a good resource for those seek-

ing to do further research in the history of western capital punishment, but it cannot substitute for more serious scholarly approaches to the history of criminal justice in the American West.

Beyond the American Pale: The Irish in the West, 1845–1910, by David M. Emmons. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010. viii, 472 pp. Tables, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 cloth.

Reviewer R. Douglas Hurt is professor and head of the Department of History at Purdue University. His most recent book is *The Great Plains during World War II* (2008).

Irish immigration to the United States fostered social, economic, and political change in many cities. The great trauma born of British land policy and famine drove approximately five million Irish from their homeland between 1845 and 1910. They were poor and unskilled, and they considered themselves exiles, not willing immigrants. Most important, they were Catholic. Native-born Protestants resented them and relegated them to near the bottom of the social and economic scale. In turn, the Irish did not trust the American-born Anglo-Saxon Protestants. As a result, each group contested for social, economic, and political space and power wherever large numbers of Irish lived.

This story is well known. But another story about the Irish has been little told until now. David Emmons, who has written about Irish miners in Butte, Montana, has expanded his historical vision to encompass the role of the Irish in the settlement of the American West. He admits that relatively few Irish moved west, usually after a brief stop somewhere else after arriving in the United States. They sought any job that offered security and stability, if not prosperity, and they kept to themselves. In tracing their part in the history of the American West, Emmons asks important, penetrating questions about where they went, what they did, and how they fared, particularly in relation to their self-identity as Irish. Emmons also traces the ways the Irish immigrants differed from other immigrants and the effect of western settlement on Irish women. The Irish were always more feared than welcomed, and they always thought of themselves as Catholics and Irish in that order, with loyalty to local-based identity founded on counties and towns rather than the nation-state of Ireland. They looked backward rather than forward. In this context, the West was not a land of new beginnings but a place in which to hold on.

Emmons's West includes the midwestern states of Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and Iowa, with a passing nod to the Irish in Kansas and the Dakotas, but his emphasis is the Far West, in-