

rect the dynamics of social, political, and legal change" (67). To end the book, Pfeifer includes a short epilogue, suggesting how his research might serve as a springboard for understanding mob violence in other parts of the world.

Roots of Rough Justice is an important little book for three reasons. First, the research it presents on lynching in the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s is impressive, and a regionally organized chart in the appendix providing details of individual lynchings will prove invaluable for scholars researching mob violence in the antebellum era. Second, the book very clearly connects the history of lynching in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to its pre-Civil War history. This might seem a logical connection, but many lynching historians have neglected to analyze lynching's early career in America. Third, the book very loudly asserts that region matters as a historical context for lynching and that a comparative analysis of regional variation in the character of mob action is imperative. Examining the regionalized social foundations of vigilante movements in the 1830s to the 1850s makes clearer the dynamic ways in which lynching became a tool in a contested and violent struggle for social order after emancipation.

Crusade Against Slavery: Edward Coles, Pioneer of Freedom, by Kurt E. Leichtle and Bruce G. Carveth. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2011. xi, 268 pp. Map, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 cloth.

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Edward Coles is best remembered in the Midwest as the governor who between 1822 and 1824 fought to keep Illinois from becoming a slave state. Kurt E. Leichtle and Bruce G. Carveth's new biography demonstrates the heavy cost Coles paid for that brief episode. Coles spent most of his life in Virginia and Pennsylvania, but it was the decade he spent in Illinois and the actions he took there that indelibly marked his fate.

Edward Coles was born into Virginia's slaveholding aristocracy. Dolly Payne Madison was his first cousin, and he served as a personal secretary to President James Madison in what the authors describe as "the Republican Court." The description is apt: Coles lived in a rarified air at Washington City in daily presence with republican royalty. In 1816 his experiences became even more rarified when Madison sent him as a personal envoy to the czar's court at St. Petersburg, Russia.

When Coles landed in Illinois in 1819, after President James Monroe appointed him Register of Lands at the Edwardsville land office, he owned over 6,000 acres of land in the area and was among the handful of economic royalty in a young state still dominated by wild prairie.

But, as Leichtle and Carveth relate, the royal coat covered a great secret: his decision to emancipate his slaves. From an early age, persuaded by "the upbraiding of conscience" that slavery was a violation of natural rights, Coles determined to rid his life of the one institution that he believed sullied the fair name of Virginia republicanism. He communicated his antislavery sentiments in a now famous letter to Thomas Jefferson in 1814. Late in life he argued (mistakenly it turns out) that Jefferson penned the antislavery provisions of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, tangible proof that the founder intended the institution to be extinguished. Jefferson disappointed Coles by refusing to join his antislavery crusade. James and Dolly Madison disappointed him again when they decided not to free their slaves.

The institution of slavery marked Coles throughout his life. He was raised in the privilege it created, and his most famous moment came when, en route to Illinois, he freed his inherited slaves while he and they floated down the Ohio River. But emancipation never brought the closure Coles sought. Slavery stuck to him like a tar baby. He was known in Illinois as a man of privilege who sought political gain from his emancipations. One of the great virtues of *Crusade Against Slavery* is the care with which the authors trace the legal harassment Coles faced from his political opponents.

Coles's life in Illinois featured one misunderstanding after another. Most Illinoisans never understood him, and he never understood them, although he was elected by a plurality in the four-way governor's race of 1822. He founded the state agricultural society and advocated soil conservation but was derided as a poor potato farmer. He believed that slavery had been made illegal by the Northwest Ordinance, while many Illinoisans considered existing slavery to be secured as a pre-existing property right under the same ordinance. Most Illinoisans were proud of all things local; he was a cosmopolitan with mixed loyalties.

Coles died in 1868 after losing a son in the Civil War. The son fought for Virginia; the father lived in Philadelphia and voted for Abraham Lincoln. Leichtle and Carveth have produced a compelling portrait of that quintessential American character, the disappointed idealist.