

bloody raid on Lawrence, Kansas, on August 21, 1863 (from which Lane narrowly escaped with his life), Thomas Ewing Jr., the federal commander on the border, issued his Order No. 11 expelling virtually all civilians of four Missouri counties, the most sweeping violation of civilians' rights during the war. Spurgeon hedges on whether Ewing issued the order out of fear that Lane would make good on his vow to invade Missouri in an unauthorized war of extermination, despite strong evidence for just such a conclusion. Lane's support for Andrew Johnson's veto of the 1866 Civil Rights Bill was for the author less a personal protest against the Radical Republicans' racial egalitarian agenda than an example of his principled defense of the Constitution.

General readers will find this an enlightening study of a Kansas icon. Historians will likely be less charitable toward the author's conclusions about him.

*Awaiting the Heavenly Country: The Civil War and America's Culture of Death*, by Mark S. Schantz. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008. x, 245 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$24.95 cloth.

Reviewer Michael J. Steiner is associate professor of history at Northwest Missouri State University. He is the author of *A Study of the Intellectual and Material Culture of Death in Nineteenth-Century America* (2003).

Death has been the subject of renewed interest in recent years following a century of cultural aversion to the topic, particularly among American historians. There have been some notable exceptions, including Robert Habenstein and William Lamers's *History of American Funeral Directing* (1955), David Stannard's *Death in America* (1975), James Farrell's *Inventing the American Way of Death* (1980), David Sloane's *The Last Great Necessity* (1991), and Gary Laderman's *The Sacred Remains* (1996). In the early 1990s a trio of collections of post-mortem photographic images — Jay Ruby's *Secure the Shadow: Death and Photography in America*, Stanley Burns's *Sleeping Beauty*, and Barbara Norfleet's *Looking at Death* — focused attention on the peculiar practice of photographing the deceased in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Mark Schantz's *Awaiting the Heavenly Country* joins two other recent books, Drew Gilpin Faust's *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (2008) and Mark Neely's *The Civil War and the Limits of Destruction* (2007), in a wealth of recent study of death and the Civil War. The former two books focus directly on the carnage of the war itself; Schantz has instead crafted an interesting and perceptive analysis of the antebellum cultural context in which the slaughter of

the war occurred. He argues that the magnitude of death in the war was the consequence of a widespread tolerance, even celebration, of death, borne of the preceding four decades of religious and civic thought.

The book unfolds as a series of essays on facets of death culture in the United States, beginning with a discussion of the ways in which antebellum Americans became intimately familiar with death through varied sources of high mortality rates. Their response was to identify the goodness in death as a relief from suffering and to value submission and resignation to death. Schantz then examines how Americans elevated these attitudes with a vision of the afterlife in which heaven exists materially in close proximity to this life as a place where humans will be reconstituted much as they were in life. In this "heaven as home" conception, families and friendships would be renewed in a glorious communion.

By mid-century the "rural" cemetery became the landscape in which the living could join in this communion through the "melancholy pleasure" of maintaining an attractive physical space for the body while ironically also serving as a reminder of the physical resurrection of the body. Critical to Schantz's thesis regarding the Civil War also is the observation that the many speeches that accompanied the opening of new burial grounds, and the monuments therein, manifested a mid-century fascination with ancient Greek heroicism. The author argues that such speeches established the mental framework for sacrifice that propelled soldiers on both sides into battle. Curiously, these were among the few ideas upon which Northerners and Southerners agreed in the antebellum period.

Schantz follows with a study of death poetry, primarily from the *Southern Literary Messenger*, which provided "an imaginary landscape in which Americans could learn the lessons of life and death" (98). The lesson learned in the thousands of poems that appeared before the war was that there was beauty in death and life beyond the grave. Not only did Northerners and Southerners agree on this ethos but it extended across the color line as well into the slave population, which held widely the proposition that it was "better to die free, than to live slaves." Schantz concludes that after two centuries of the evolution of this idea among people in bondage, the Civil War tested the resolve of slaves and free blacks alike to sacrifice themselves to this truth.

The book's final chapter illustrates the embracing of death in American culture through the popularity of memorial imagery, including postmortem photography. Drawing on the work of Jay Ruby and primary sources, Schantz argues that such images affirmed the beauty

in death and provided opportunities to incorporate symbolic meaning in visual portrayal. The more graphic photographs of the Civil War provided opportunities for photographers such as Matthew Brady to pose corpses in ways that depicted the grotesque horror of war while at the same time giving heroic impression to the battlefield.

Given the centrality of the Civil War in American history, Schantz's work raises important questions regarding the cause-and-effect relationship between the war and culture. Historians have been inclined to view the war as the cause of the period's fascination with death and the accompanying commercial efforts to exploit the new funeral industry. It is a natural assumption; 620,000 deaths forced Americans to formulate cultural practices that made sense of such carnage and mitigated the pain. Schantz, however, makes a convincing case that the practices were firmly in place well before the war, drew on a variety of cultural impulses, and created an environment in which the grotesque lethality of the war was far more tolerable than it would otherwise have been.

*Pioneer Cemeteries: Sculpture Gardens of the Old West*, by Annette Stott. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008. xxx, 370 pp. Illustrations, maps, glossary, list of cemeteries, notes, bibliography, index. \$36.95 cloth.

Reviewer Loren N. Horton is retired senior historian, State Historical Society of Iowa. His research and writing on cemeteries and overland trails are among his many areas of expertise in the history of Iowa and the West.

This description and analysis of the grave markers in selected cemeteries in the Rocky Mountain West includes an enormous amount of detail. Although the title may be a bit misleading, the excellence of the content more than makes up for that deficiency. Matters of materials, artisans, sources, and places of grave markers and cemeteries in community life are all focused in the general period from settlement of towns to the outbreak of World War I. The illustrations are well chosen to help readers understand the text. The analogy of the cemetery serving as a community sculpture garden is reinforced repeatedly.

Many books have been published recently about grave markers and the art they represent. This book is very useful as a comparison with examples in other sections of the country. Many of the carvers emigrated to the West from the eastern United States and Europe; many grave markers in the West were supplied by eastern and mid-western monument dealers; and the styles, materials, and symbolism vary only fractionally from those everywhere else in the country during the same time period.