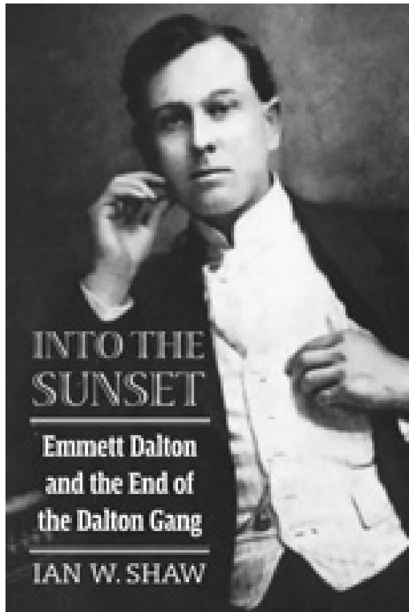
BOOK REVIEWS



Into the Sunset: Emmett Dalton and the End of the Dalton Gang

by Ian W. Shaw

248 pages, illustrations, notes, index.
Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2023, paper $29.95.

When I was in grade school, we often played recess games about Frank and Jesse James, the Younger Brothers, Billy the Kid, and the Dalton Gang. Today's Kansas kids are probably familiar with Jesse James and Billy the Kid, but I doubt that many today know about the Daltons. They should, however, because the Dalton Gang played an important (perhaps "notorious" would be a better term) role in the region's history.

Lewis Dalton and his wife, Adeline Younger, were married in 1852. They had a large family: ten sons and three daughters. Ben, the eldest, was born in 1852 and never left home; Cole was born a year later; Lewis was born in 1855 and died at age seven; Littleton (Litt) was born in 1857, Frank in 1859, and Gratton (Grat) in 1861. Following a four-year lapse during the Civil War, Bill was born soon after the war ended in 1865, Bob in 1869, Emmett in 1871, and Simon in 1878. Between Bill and Simon, the family added three daughters: Eva, Leona, and Nancy. A fourth daughter, Hannah, Simon's twin, died in childbirth.

Cole and Litt moved to California in the early 1870s, while the rest of the family lived at various places in Kansas, Missouri, and Indian Territory before moving to Coffeyville, where Emmett finished school.

In 1884, Frank was named a deputy U.S. marshal, as later were Bob and Grat, with Emmett as a posse man. Ironically, these three lawmen were the core of the outlaw gang. The transition of the Daltons to the other side of the law was enhanced by the long wait between arrests and payment for their work.

For some time, Bob had been thinking of a haul big enough for him to retire, probably from a bank, which would require fewer men than a train. He decided that on October 5, 1892, he, Grat, and Emmett, along with Dick Broadwell and Bill Powers, would simultaneously rob two banks in Coffeyville that were directly across the street from each other: the First National Bank and the C. M. Condon National Bank.

They rode into Coffeyville and immediately hit a snag: the hitching rails in front of the banks had been removed a day earlier to allow the street to be paved. They would have to tie their horses 150 yards down the street—ironically, in front of the jail. Another irony: four of the five robbers would need a coroner, not a jail cell, and the fifth would need a hospital.

In *Into the Sunset: Emmett Dalton and the End of the Dalton Gang*, Ian W. Shaw gives a thorough account of the ensuing events. The robbers were spotted by local citizens, and word spread quickly. The locals armed themselves, and as the gang members emerged from the banks, a gun battle commenced. When the smoke cleared, four citizens and four bank robbers had been killed. Emmett was severely injured. Had he not rid-

den back to help Bob, he may well have escaped.

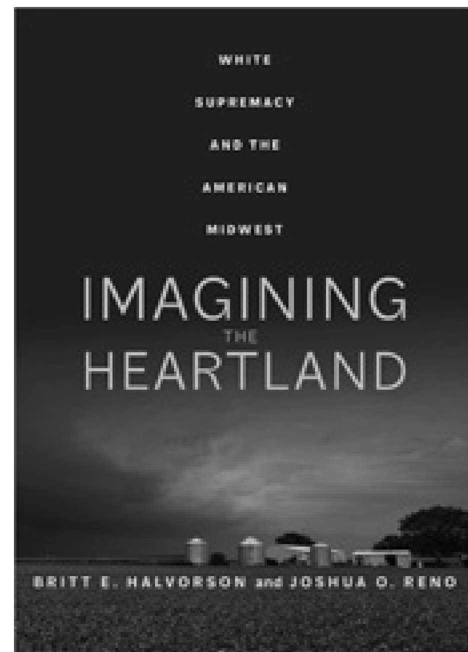
Because of his severe injuries, Emmett's trial was delayed for several weeks, but on March 8, 1893, he pleaded guilty and was sentenced to life in the Kansas State Penitentiary. Emmett proved to be a model prisoner, and after a time, he sought a pardon on the grounds that he was just a youth at the time of the robbery, that he wished to be released before he was too old to be useful to society, and that he wanted to be able to care for his aging mother. After several appeals were turned down, Governor Edward Hoch granted him a pardon in 1907.

In his life after prison, Emmett married and worked in Hollywood as an actor, producer, and writer. In 1937, he died peacefully in his Los Angeles home. He was cremated and wished his ashes to be interred beside those of his brother Bob in Coffeyville. Instead, his sister Leona had the ashes brought to Kingfisher, Oklahoma, to be buried with the "good" Daltons.

The author is Australian and includes at the end "The View from Downunder," an appendix from Australian newspapers. Published about a month after the event, these clippings give a not fully accurate account of the robbery. Fifteen years later, a Sydney newspaper published a piece about the relationship of Emmett and Julia, his wife, which had occurred after his release from prison, not before Coffeyville.

There are some additional inaccuracies in the text. For example, Shaw spells the Kansas town Chetopa "Chatopa," places the southeastern town of LeRoy in northeastern Kansas, and locates the far-southeastern town of Baxter Springs (just a few miles from both Missouri and Oklahoma) "deep into Kansas." But these are minor instances that do not detract from the book's overall worth. It's a good book and an interesting read. The Daltons were, after all, an interesting part of Kansas history.

Reviewed by Jim Hoy, *professor emeritus of English and director emeritus, Center for Great Plains Studies, Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas.*



Imagining the Heartland: White Supremacy and the American Midwest

by Britt E. Halvorson and Joshua O. Reno

xiii + 218 pages, illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index.
Oakland: University of California Press, 2022, paper $29.95.

The Midwest has always held a unique place in the American imagination. The "Midwestern nice" trope has, throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, gained widespread acceptance as a defining feature of Americanness. In this trope, the Midwest is a nice place to live and to raise a family, and it is populated by hardworking traditional virtuous Americans. However, there is another side of the Midwest that is left out of this narrative. In 2014, Michael Brown, a young Black man from the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson, Missouri, was killed by white police officer Darren Wilson. This led to weeks of protests, primarily by Black people. In response, white counterprotesters rallied in support of Wilson carrying signs that declared, "I am Darren Wilson." And in 2017, Savanna Greywind, a member of the

Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe in North Dakota who was nine months pregnant, was murdered by Brooke Crews and her boyfriend, William Hoehn, both white. Crews murdered Greywind, cut the baby from her body, and raised Greywind's child as her own until police finally arrested her. These are just two recent examples of racial violence in Midwestern communities of color.

How can a region such as the Midwest encompass the imagined virtues of kindness and Americanness yet also be the site of such egregious racial violence? This is one of the questions that anthropologists Britt E. Halvorson and Joshua O. Reno take up in their book *Imagining the Heartland: White Supremacy and the American Midwest*. Halvorson and Reno argue that the Midwest, as a region and as an idea, "has operated as a screen or stage on which to articulate whiteness and virtue, or white virtue through non-virtuous whites, across different time periods in US history" (p. 4). Central to their argument is that "the Midwest serves as a standard . . . that allows for normative claims about the state of the nation and fosters projects of structural violence from white supremacy to imperialism and nativism" (p. 2). Since the first frontiersmen sought to settle in what would become the Midwest, they did so through negative tropes of the Indigenous population as savages unable or unwilling to properly work the land. This is evident in John Gast's 1872 painting *American Progress*, which depicts white settlers traveling westward across the Midwest, guided by the white and virtuous Columbia, the female personification of the United States. As Columbia and the settlers advance, they bring with them the light of civilization, from which the Brown Indigenous people flee as they move further into the darkness of savagery.

This historical racialized imagining of the U.S. empire, or "progress narrative" of midwestern settlement, Halvorson and Reno argue, is epitomized in the myth of the midwestern "white farmer" who is "resilient, virtuous, and economical," in contrast to the savage Indigenous person or uneducated and lazy Black person (p. 59). This mythologized white farmer embodies what it means to be American, and the settlement of the Midwest becomes an expression of American progress or civilization based on racial exclusion and settler colonialism. Furthermore, argue Halvorson and Reno, the imagined Midwest becomes "an affective theatre or performative space in which to reference and secure forms of white supremacy" (p. 119). Thus, the idea of the Midwest can produce "racial fantasies" that serve to promote white supremacy, both domestically through ideas of belonging and exclusion and abroad through empire (p. 93).

Left out of the imagining of the Midwest and whiteness is the "central role of immigrant and nonimmigrant laborers of color in the settlement of the Midwest" (p. 56). In fact, this imagining conceals "all the failures, violence, and various kinds of opposition that characterized white colonization" (p. 59). Ideas of Black criminality and exclusion grounded in anti-Black racism and Indigenous exploitation are central to the idea of the Midwest. Indeed, whiteness relies "on an imagined Other unfairly working the system" (p. 135). In this way, the whiteness embodied by the imagined Midwest comes to represent a national identity that is predicated on racial exclusion, empire, and colonization.

Reviewed by Willie Mack, *assistant professor, Department of Black Studies, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri.*

Great Plains Forts

by Jay H. Buckley and Jeffery D. Nokes

xxxv + 216 pages, illustrations, suggested reading, index.
Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2023, paper $17.95.

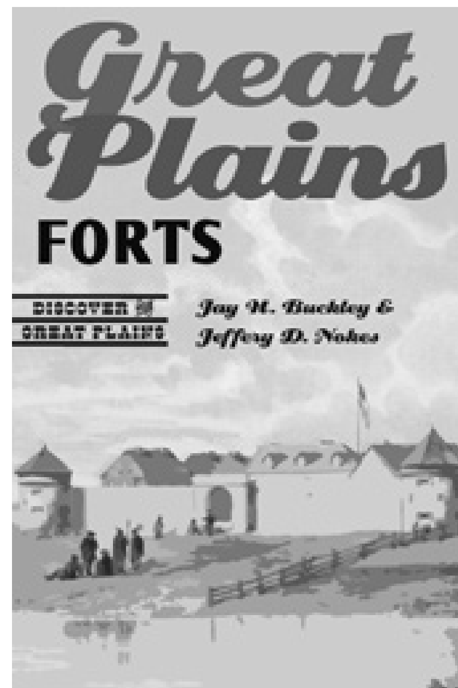
Great Plains Forts is the newest volume in the Discover the Great Plains series from the Center for Great Plains Studies and the University of Nebraska Press, joining seven other monographs in the series. The authors provide an overview of about 240 sites of Indigenous, Spanish, French, British, and U.S. forts, including trading posts and military installations in three Canadian provinces and nine U.S. states where the

conquest and domination of Great Plains Indigenous nations occurred. The types and styles of construction are included. After the narrative accounts, a "Site Guide" (pp. 129–194) lists all the forts and sites alphabetically by Canadian province and U.S. state, with two or three sentences providing the location, dates of use, and major purposes of each site. The authors wisely chose not to list the locations of many unprotected Indigenous sites to help preserve the artifacts and human remains there; only protected Indigenous sites are included.

The authors note that Indigenous fortifications were mostly defensive positions before and during Euro-American expansion into the Great Plains, and the text focuses on a few well-known sites, with brief mentions of other places. Spanish, French, and British forts were mostly trading posts, as were several early U.S. forts, including Fort Union, North Dakota; Fort Laramie, Wyoming; and Bent's Old Fort, Colorado, all of which are now National Historic Sites. Many U.S. military forts were located to protect overland trails (including the Santa Fe, Oregon-California, Smoky Hill, Bozeman, Butterfield Overland Mail, El Camino Real de los Tejas, and others). Kansas forts are included in the narrative portions of the book as well as in the Site Guide.

The narrative and Site Guide will induce readers to want to know more, which is a major purpose of the Discover the Great Plains series and a reason to read this book. Unfortunately, no documentation is provided for the contents, and there is no bibliography. The text and site descriptions appear to be based on secondary sources. The list of "Suggested Readings" (pp. 194–197) includes many books devoted to broad subjects. There are a few books about individual forts, but there is not one suggested book about any of the nineteen Kansas forts.

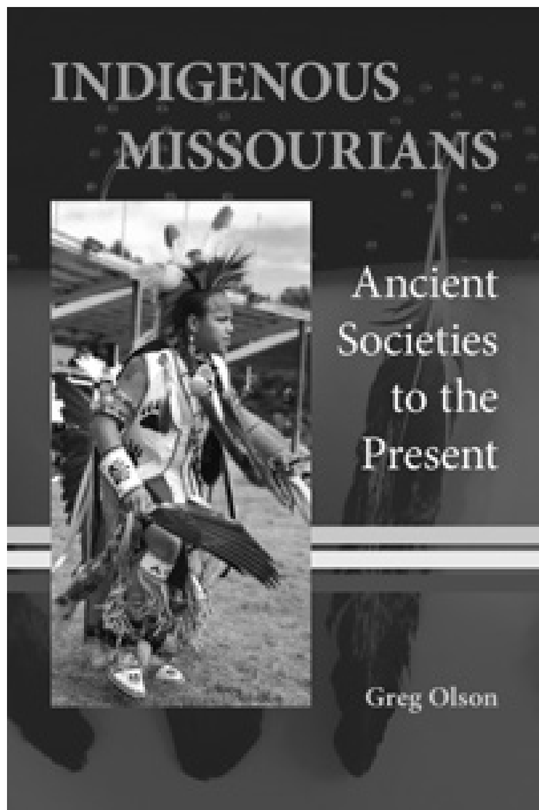
There are a few errors. Fort de Cavagnial, a French trading post in northeast Kansas, is mentioned in the text (pp. xxvii, 82) but omitted from the Site Guide. The site entry for Fort Thompson, South Dakota, states that this fort was "headquarters for the Creek Indian reservation" (p. 182), but the Crow Creek Reservation there was for Lakota and Dakota. The site entry for Fort Atkinson, Kansas, states, "Historic



Marker is 4 miles west of Dodge City" (p. 149), but the marker is actually on the western edge of present-day Dodge City. The site entry for Fort Mann, Kansas, states, "Station on the Santa Fe Trail halfway between Fort Leavenworth and Santa Fe, occupied by military teamsters to repair wagons" (p. 151). Fort Mann was a quartermaster depot and repair station for only a short time in 1847 before it was abandoned by the occupants because of Native resistance. Later, Fort Mann became a military post, headquarters for the Missouri Battalion of Volunteers commanded by Lt. Col. William Gilpin, commonly known as the Indian Battalion. This battalion persuaded several Indigenous nations to leave the Santa Fe Trail in 1848 and forcefully drove the Comanche, who were attacking wagon trains on the route, south into Texas, thereby making 1848 one of the safest years for travelers on the Santa Fe Trail for many years.

Great Plains Forts is written for and recommended to general readers who may be interested in a quick overview or who are planning to visit some of these important historical sites.

Reviewed by Leo E. Oliva, *former professor of history, Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas.*



Indigenous Missourians: Ancient Societies to the Present

by Greg Olson

xxiii + 424 pages, illustrations, notes, index.
Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2023, paper $40.00

As author Greg Olson notes, one of the more unintentionally difficult questions asked of American historians is "Who lived in this area originally?" The short, immediate counterquestion is "When?" Osage, Missouria, Otoe, Ioway, Quapaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Kickapoo, Sac, Fox (Meskwaki), Shawnee, and others at one time or another all called the land that became the state of Missouri home. Beyond that, for Indigenous peoples and modern states such as Missouri, the unsatisfying but accurate answer is "It's complicated."

In *Indigenous Missourians*, Olson crafts a narrative synthesis to answer those questions. He begins with a brief review of the prevailing theories regarding the peopling of the Americas. Did the first Americans arrive via the land bridge across the Bering Strait or the "kelp highway" across the Pacific? Olson also gives equal time to Indigenous views, such as Vine Deloria's assertion that the Paleo-Indians either originated here or at least arrived far earlier than twenty thousand years ago. Given the complexity of the event and the fact that paleoanthropologists continually date human origins earlier and earlier, perhaps some combination of those theories works best.

Indeed, Olson clearly seeks to be inclusive when it comes to the Native history of Missouri. One of the more interesting features of the book is that each chapter begins with a "Voices" section, wherein he reproduces multiple Indigenous oral traditions that set up the rest of the chapter. These voices—sometimes famous, such as Tecumseh and Little Turtle, sometimes anonymous, and sometimes contemporary (Osage scholar Louis Burns appears more than once)—reflect Olson's desire to consider Native opinions about Native peoples. One suspects that this simple but effective device is one many of us will kick ourselves for not having employed before.

Olson hits the highlights one might expect from a history of Indigenous Missouri. From the Mississippian Period city of Cahokia to the founding of St. Louis, the Louisiana Purchase, the removal of the eastern nations, statehood, the Civil War, and the Progressive era through the present day, he has read the latest scholarship and provides a very smooth, chronological narrative that should serve both novice and scholar. While one does not necessarily expect a synthesis to advance new arguments, Olson, though not shying away from the uglier aspects of settler colonialism and dispossession, nevertheless tries to emphasize Indigenous resilience and survival. Through the "Voices" sections, he relays the importance of attending powwows—these are especially significant for Indigenous Missourians, as there are no large central reservations in the state. As he notes, attending a powwow "can be a lot like going to a family reunion. . . . There are moments of

reminiscing, grieving, and laughing" in a gathering "that expresses ancient traditions while being entirely contemporary. Above all else, however, powwows are celebrations" (p. 330).

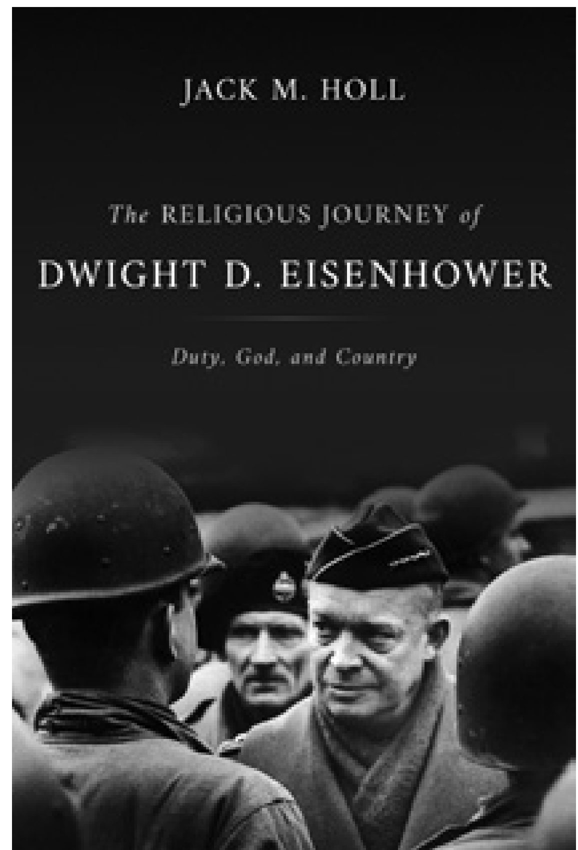
In addition to being a highly readable narrative history, the book provides two truly invaluable contributions that will no doubt be appreciated by history buffs, students, and serious scholars. One is the very thorough bibliography, which tips the scales at almost twenty pages. The other is the exceptionally handy and helpful maps—twelve of them, many crafted by the author himself, which should prove wonderfully useful for those trying to approximate the locations of various peoples over time. *Indigenous Missourians* would be a fine addition to the library of anyone with an interest in midwestern or Indigenous history, and because so many of the peoples described ended up either migrating or being pushed directly west, it should serve those with an interest in Kansas history as well.

Reviewed by Robert M. Owens, *professor of history, Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas.*

The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower: Duty, God, and Country

by Jack M. Holl

x + 345 pages, illustrations, notes, index.
Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmanns Publishing, 2021, cloth $29.99.



Scholar Jack M. Holl's well-timed religious biography of Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower: Duty, God, and Country*, is at its core a historical analysis and explanation of the thirty-fourth president's most famous (and arguably most controversial) declaration. In 1948, the fifty-eight-year-old war hero and burgeoning statesman described himself as "the most intensely religious man I know" (p. 9). How could he—or, for that matter, anyone with such a lifetime of interactions with believers of seemingly every tradition and ranging from the anonymous to the internationally esteemed—dare to be so sanctimonious? Surely Eisenhower's assessment of his own religious fervor was offered chiefly for the political returns it might yield. Such cynicism is misplaced, however, in the author's estimation. Instead, what emerges from the pages of Holl's study is a leader shaped by both the conservative religious tenets of his Kansas childhood and the evils he encountered later in life to believe that the world was essentially dichotomous: democracy versus authoritarianism, then America versus the Soviet Union and freedom versus tyranny. In Holl's telling, Eisenhower's embrace of such a generic but determinative religiosity and his efforts to disseminate the American "civil religion" that it underpinned shaped the course of U.S. Cold War history.

Holl begins his study with a brief recounting of Eisenhower's inauguration in January 1953. Tellingly, the newly confirmed commander in chief

used the occasion to recite his own theologically unsophisticated yet earnest prayer. In self-consciously assuming the role of national prayer leader, the author asserts, Eisenhower "opened a new chapter in the country's long history of civil religion" (p. 9). The remaining chapters detail a life spent in preparation for that role, examining Eisenhower's development as a youth, soldier, and statesman through a religious lens.

Eisenhower the soldier found in personal religion a source of courage and confidence. The burden of command before and after D-Day reminded him, for example, that religion "gives you courage to make the decisions you must make in a crisis, and then the confidence to leave the result to a higher power" (p. 138). Of course, in Eisenhower's providential understanding of the United States and the challenges it faced, religion could never be just a private matter. The breakdown of government's moral authority "was fundamentally a spiritual problem," Eisenhower believed, and his resultant "justification of the use of overwhelming force against the Bonus Marchers revealed the seed of his civil religion faith" (p. 97). A decade later, Eisenhower considered World War II a death match between good and evil for the fate of all humankind, describing the fight against the Axis powers that he led as a moral and religious "crusade in the traditional sense of that often-misused word" (p. 113). Finally, the separate strains of private and public religion came together most palpably in Eisenhower as national leader. In this last stage of his religious journey, and "more than any other modern president," Holl convincingly argues, Eisenhower shaped and defined "American civil religion as practiced after World War II" (p. 149).

While Holl's biography of Eisenhower is scholarly in subjectivity, sources, and method, the author himself is quick to note the contemporary lessons that Eisenhower can offer modern-day "patriots." Eisenhower's civil religion was vague in its edicts and prerequisites, requiring only a belief in religion (of any ilk) and a willingness to see America's national mission in the context of such faith. It was consequently moderate rather than radical, inclusive rather than exclusive, and held that individualism and "cults of personality" were inimical to the health and well-being of the nation (p. 1). Most importantly, while certainly not above calculating the political windfalls of serving as America's civil religionist in chief, Jack Holl's Eisenhower was motivated by real and deeply held religious beliefs.

Reviewed by Timothy Wesley, *professor of history and philosophy, Austin Peay State University, Clarksville, Tennessee.*