and markers of time as much as the grave markers that this book so richly documents.

Often photographers believe that pictures are strong enough without words. The text in the book is valuable and provides significant meaning. A strong introduction written by Jordan and an excellent interview with the artist conducted by author, poet, and editor, Bryce Mulligan, captures Jordan's voice. This dialogue expresses the commitment and sensitivity that Jordan has for the beauty and meaning of these sites and for the people who created them. He provides great detail about the people and the process of how the monuments are created. Within the text of the photographs there are also two short narratives.

Finally, two excellent essays enrich the volume. Martina Will de Chaparro, who has written extensively on death and dying in the Spanish-colonial world, contributes "Relics of Time," a piece that creates a strong sense of the historical significance of these sites and compares them to more-traditional eastern colonial monuments. "Broken Whispers and Dying Laughter," the essay by poet-historian E. A. Mares, gives a more poetic and personal meaning of these monuments tying them to Meso American history, as well as to the familiar. His prose also voices the Latino significance of these cemeteries and their markers. This book is much more than just strong images; the author and editors have tried to understand and feel places that often appear abandoned. Mares implies, "You glance once or twice and drive on." This book is more than a glance.

Miguel Gandert
University of New Mexico

---


At first glance, historians might dismiss Old Blue's Road as yet another travelogue describing the journeys of a well-nourished, middle-aged man bent on a voyage to describe the beauties of the West, the anguish of a midlife crisis, or the meaning of life from the saddle of his Harley-Davidson. What the reader will find, however, are the excursions of a happily married history professor who had rarely ventured beyond the confines of his native Denver and sought during his summer respite to discover the unexplored landscapes and histories of the "West" he knew only from books.

In 2005, on the eve of his fiftieth birthday, author James Whiteside purchased a seven-hundred-pound, deep-red Heritage Softail and christened it "Old Blue." Between 2006 and 2009, with each tour commencing and terminating
in Denver, he embarked on four circuits through the Pacific Northwest, from western Kansas to northern New Mexico, into the Four Corners region, and east to the Dakotas. The regions inspired Whiteside to apply his book learning to down-on-the-ground encounters with local inhabitants, tourists, wildlife, landscapes, and landforms. His vast knowledge of not only western history but of geography, geology, art, and the built environment, supported by impressive documentation and embellished with uproarious humor and profound tragedy, produces a wonderful and riveting saga.

Whiteside’s travels enabled him to raise many of the issues and debates important to historians and aficionados of the American West. Where does the “West” begin? With tongue-in-cheek, Whiteside suggests the ridge overlooking South Park in Colorado. Wherever the West begins, does it represent a place, a process, or a cultural idea? Whiteside argues for all three. He communicates age-old debates concerning confrontations among landowners and lawmakers, preservationists, conservationists, Native peoples, and all who arrived thereafter. The debates include traditionalist versus assimilationist strands within indigenous communities. All the debates struggle to find the significance of Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontier thesis, with its emphasis on individualism and conquest.

Whiteside is at his best when he discusses the West operating as a laboratory to illustrate how the powerful overwhelm the weak through their money and political clout. He tells the little-known story of the Colfax County War, which pitted Mexican and Euro-American squatters against agents of the Maxwell Land Grant Company. The company was in cahoots with a clique of New Mexican businessmen and politicians known as the Santa Fe Ring and their minions in law enforcement. Between 1875 and 1887, the weak and the powerful engaged in a vengeful series of murders, arson, vandalism, and cattle theft. The U.S. Supreme Court confirmed the land grant’s legitimacy. “With no hope of support from either the territorial or federal government,” Whiteside writes, “squatters had little choice but to buy or lease land at whatever price the company dictated, or they just left” (p. 109). With comic relief, an ability he duplicates throughout the book, Whiteside swiftly transitions from this penetrating account to an imaginative description of the Santa Fe Trail’s Wagon Mound.

Whiteside could have more artfully maneuvered his tale of a man in motion to capture a larger phenomenon of American culture, namely the remarkable mobility of its people. The pioneering work of historians George W. Pierson and Everett Lee stimulate and direct the conversation regarding movement and migration in American life. Women receive little attention in Old Blue’s Road, and Whiteside missed a grand opportunity to interpret his photograph of a sculpture depicting three women in Eads, Colorado. The white woman stands...
tallest followed by her Hispanic and Native sisters respectively. When Whiteside turns his discussion to the twelve identical Madonna of the Trail statues scattered throughout the United States, he briefly yet perceptively notes how this sculpture "is as much a monument to the process of white American expansion westward as a celebration of women as agents of that expansion and, as such, is also a celebration of American conquest and empire building" (pp. 99-100).

This well-documented and insightful tome comes recommended with real enthusiasm. New Mexico receives the lion’s share of attention in this book, which serves as an engaging read for any devotee of the state as well as the whole of the American West.

Laura McCall
Metropolitan State University of Denver


Few western authors can claim the kind of impact that Walter Noble Burns had on the mythologization of three of the West's most famous gunsmingers: Billy the Kid, Wyatt Earp, and Joaquin Murrieta. Burns's three classrics, The Saga of Billy the Kid (1926), Tombstone: An Iliad of the Southwest (1927), and The Robin Hood of El Dorado: The Saga of Joaquin Murrieta (1932), rescued these men from ambiguity and obscurity and crafted them into legendary western heroes whose stories continue to grip the popular imagination. Although Burns's contribution to western popular culture may now be largely forgotten, his contribution to the field of western history has been obscured, ignored, or discounted altogether. With American Mythmaker, Mark J. Dworkin seeks to offer a corrective that gives credit to the man Dworkin sees as the most significant contributor to the lore of the Kid, Earp, and Murrieta. By examining Burns's career, motivations, southwestern travels, research methods, and responses to his critics, Dworkin argues that, despite any shortcomings, Burns's "influence on enduring western American myths" should not be understated (p. xi).

Dworkin discusses the passion and enthusiasm with which Burns approached his subjects, the care he took to acquaint himself with the regions that spawned the events in his works, and the attention he paid to his sources. Dworkin also highlights the lasting cultural impact of the trilogy by discussing folk songs, operas, films, and other cultural productions based on Burns's sweeping tales and larger-than-life characterizations. Burns's penchant for writing epic narratives and his
love of the West and its heroes made his books wildly popular, especially Saga, his first and most widely read work. Its success substantiates Dworkin’s claim that Burns “turned the Kid into an international cultural icon” and shed light on what otherwise might have remained “a minor piece of arcane American folklore” (pp. 18, 19). Burns tackled the Earp and Murrieta stories with the same zeal. Although Wyatt’s reputation had always teetered between that of lawman and outlaw, Burns’s Tombstone unequivocally paints Earp as the quintessential western hero that Hollywood would later project on the silver screen. Additionally, he transformed the murderous Murrieta into a social bandit and revolutionary.

Despite Burn’s fervent research methods, he clearly took liberties with events and the dialogue of his principal characters. He created captivating and dramatic stories at the expense of historical accuracy, and his proclivity toward melodrama led Susan McSweeney, the wife of one of the key players in the Lincoln County War, to call Saga “ridiculous” (p. 26). Further controversy surrounded Earp threatening legal action due to Burn’s misleading Earp into believing his story would be about Doc Holliday. A number of critics alleged that all three works were plagiarized. Historians claimed that their stories had little semblance to historical truth. That said, as Dworkin demonstrates, Burns utilized the methodology of the history profession available at the time (interviews with contemporaries, newspaper articles, inquest reports, previous biographies) to craft richer and arguably more accurate characterizations of his three heroes. Indeed, prior accounts of all three men had been placed in the hands of dime novelists and tabloid journalists. For this reason, Dworkin argues that Burns deserves a place in Western historiography, if not solely celebrated as the most important “American Mythmaker” of the twentieth century.

Kara McCormack
Stanford University

---


In the early 1960s, a young California housewife was unhappy. Her husband and multiple children did not appreciate her. She fell into a dark depression. Other women across the country were experiencing similar disenchantment with the domestic bliss promised to them after World War II. Helen Andelin, however, did not join what later would be called the “woman’s movement.” Instead, she was given a set of booklets on femininity that lead her to improve her marriage.