

looked in historical literature, *Remember Me to Miss Louisa* goes beyond the mythologized narrative of the “fancy girl” and considers a broader definition of intimacy. By situating these relationships in the Midwest, Green challenges historiographies of slavery to consider regional analyses beyond the conventional North-South binary. Together, these novel frameworks for understanding a spectrum of interstate interactions between white men

and black women during slavery mark Green’s work as an innovative and productive asset to the field.

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The Rivers Ran Backward: The Civil War and the Remaking of the American Middle Border

By Christopher Phillips

(New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. Pp. xviii, 505. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95.)

In almost all Civil War books, “border states” are the four slave states that did not secede: Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri. In *The Rivers Ran Backward: The Civil War and the Remaking of the American Middle Border*, Christopher Phillips drops Delaware and Maryland and adds Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Kansas.

Phillips introduces his book by pointing out that “schoolchildren learn that the South lost to the North, with no role allowed for the third of the nation’s major nineteenth-century regions, the West.” He adds that “such binary definitions, northern and southern, obscure a third narrative of the war” (pp. 5, 8).

Phillips is right. A mix of solid scholarship and lively prose, his book presents readers with a narrative of a

civil war within the Civil War—one that bitterly split families, friends, and communities throughout the borderland. Probably most Americans with at least a passing knowledge of America’s lethal conflict believe that the North was well-nigh united for the Union, the South solid for secession, and that loyalties were divided only in the border states. Phillips reveals that many whites in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois were less than enthusiastic about the war, especially when President Abraham Lincoln made it a war to end slavery. Many of these whites who swelled anti-war and pro-slavery Democratic “Copperhead” ranks had migrated from Kentucky and other slave states.

While the Ohio River marked the border between slavery and free-

dom, Phillips cites the case of John Crenshaw, a rich salt-maker whose laborers were slaves in all but name. His “long perpetuation of unfreedom in Illinois challenges the image of the Ohio River as a powerful symbol of a divided America,” the author writes (p. 21). “Slavery and freedom are only the most obvious of presumed static barriers that mirrored the timeless cultural divide between North and South” (p. 21).

Phillips relies heavily on primary sources to weave his complex tapestry. Those sources show, for example, that many citizens of Kentucky and Missouri—from yeoman farmers to important political leaders—were simultaneously and stridently pro-Union and pro-slavery—a fact that never failed to mystify students in my Kentucky history classes at the community college where I taught for 24 years.

Too, *The Rivers Ran Backwards* highlights the savage guerrilla warfare that plagued my home state and Missouri for most of the war. While few big battles were fought in Missouri and Kentucky—Phillips writes about Wilson’s Creek in the former and Perryville in the latter as the notable exceptions—the Show Me and Bluegrass States were anything but placid backwaters of the war. Murderous guerrilla bands not only preyed on civilians of the “enemy” persuasion, they also used the war as a pretext to settle pre-war scores, including shooting antebellum enemies.

Phillips concludes that after the war, whites in Kentucky and Missouri “did more than distort a quasi-Confederate past” (p. 328). Rather, “they articulated a southernized narrative of their states in order to transcend the immediate celebration of a Confederate heritage and achieve cultural identification with the Old South” (p. 328). In this important respect, his book buttresses Anne E. Marshall’s superb *Creating a Confederate Kentucky: The Lost Cause and Civil War Memory in a Border State* (2010). To help drive home his point, he quotes E. Merton Coulter, who in *The Civil War in Kentucky* (1926) observed that “Kentucky waited until after the war to secede from the Union” (p. vii).

Phillips’ book is a worthy and welcome addition to growing scholarly interest in the borderland in the Civil War. It deserves a place on every Civil War bookshelf, perhaps sandwiched between Marshall’s book and Aaron Astor’s excellent *Rebels on the Border: Civil War, Emancipation, and Reconstruction of Kentucky* (2012).

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