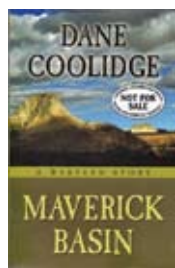


though, as Boggs writes from multiple viewpoints. His familiarity with the landscape—he lives near Santa Fe—is a definite advantage as he puts the reader right into New Mexico and particularly through the rugged landscape along the Río Chama. And while this may seem to be a fairly traditional Western, the conclusion is anything but. Another good read.

—CM

COOLIDGE, DANE. *Maverick Basin*. Five Star. Hardcover, 200 pps., \$25.95. ISBN 978-1-59414-818-7.



This is a welcome hardcover edition of this 1920 magazine serial by demi-classic author Coolidge (1873-1940) — but readers must understand up front that

it's very definitely a period piece. Despite his first-hand acquaintance with Native peoples which led him to co-author books about Navajo and Seri cultures, Coolidge is quite capable of having "Injuns" in this book say "Me no likum."

This is an increasingly complex story set in Arizona, made up of seemingly ever overlapping rivalries and feuds: not only the traditional cattlemen versus sheepmen tussle, but also imported "Kaintuck" blood feuds entangling with local ones, as well as various religious and ethnic hatreds that extend to Latter-day Saints, "Injuns," Mexicans, and even an over-fluent voicing of the "n" epithet which definitely causes the modern reader to pull his reins up short.

It's all somewhat quaintly framed by distinctly old-fashioned diction, in which an old bushwhacker who says things like "By cracky... that gives me an idee!" can be described by the author as "by nature a casuist." Our hero, Hall McIvor, is a stalwart who has a "strange light in his eyes" — in fact, when the heroine first meets the gaze of those eyes she drops the bucket she's carrying! (Excusably, since it

turns out that she'd thought him dead.)

Coolidge's background as a field naturalist, though, lends a flavor of verisimilitude to his descriptions of the landscape through which his characters move, and it might justifiably be said that *Maverick Basin* itself is the most truly felt and vividly realized character.

—Robert Pohle

CROSSLEY, DAC. *Return of the Texas Ranger*. Booksurge. Trade Paperback, 289 pps, \$14.95. ISBN 978-1-4392-1997-3.

Years after Red Regan and Whitey Wilson parted ways (Red quit the Texas Rangers and became sheriff of a small Texas town; Whitey continued in the Rangers), they meet again. Red is suffering from the bullet he took years ago, but has married his sweetheart, whom Whitey also loved. Their meeting is uneasy, and only comes about because of the murder of their old friend and fellow Ranger, Ygnacio (Nacho) Ybarra. Only it turns out Whitey has been discharged from his post and is there on false pretenses—or is he? Whitey is an agitator par excellence, and it isn't long until doubt is cast on Nacho's murder. Then the Chief of Police is murdered, and while some fingers point towards Red as the killer, he, too, has been ambushed and badly wounded.

Set in 1927, this story bridges Texas Ranger history from the raw, wild, and sometimes borderline legal action allowable on a raw frontier, to the beginning of modern day detection practices. A little of everything is thrown in here. Prohibition and enforcement of the law few actually believed in is at the crux of this tale, which pits Americans against Mexicans and even addresses discrimination against the Black population. Case in point, dumping a body in the Black part of town to stir up trouble. There's plenty here to keep the reader involved and entertained.

—CKC

CROW, PATTY. *Kootenai Spirit Rider*. PublishAmerica. Trade Paperback, 183 pps., \$24.95. ISBN 1-60813-082-7.



Grieving widow, Goldie Parker, is on a downhill spiral until she breaks away from her old life and moves to Montana. While exploring the countryside and taking notes for a series of

articles she means to write, she spots a man, a hunter, riding a sorrel horse through the mist near an abandoned graveyard. When he suddenly disappears, sensing something strange about his appearance, she checks for tracks. There are none, which puts Goldie on a quest that will lead her to her own heritage. Few people ever perceive Moody Smith, after all, since he's a ghost. Meanwhile, the story shifts to Moody, showing the details of his life in a heartrending saga of love and loss.

Well-written and including a fine depiction of Indian life and customs in the mid- to late-1800s, this book has a split personality. The set-up is odd, with the first chapter about Goldie, and from then on, until the very last, it is Moody's story. More strangely still, a modern-day librarian relates the saga, which distances the reader who may well forget Goldie by the end. A little of everything is thrown into the mix: mystery, adventure, history, contemporary plight, and quite a lot of the paranormal, an interesting, and mostly enjoyable blend.

—CKC

HOGAN, RAY. *Range Feud*. Five Star. Hardcover, 200 pps., \$25.95. ISBN 978-1-59414-735-7.

Here is a pair of stories that should appeal to the fan of traditional Western fiction. After four years of fighting under the command of Phil Sheridan, war-weary Jeff Burkhart just wants to settle back down on the family homestead in "The Calaveras Hills" and work alongside his father. That dream