with the double duplicity of faux false fronts or fitted with a boardwalk built on top of a cement sidewalk.

The seductions of communal mauvaise foi are also addressed by Amanda Nettelbeck and Robert Foster in their paper, “On the Trail of the March West: The NWMP in Western Canadian Historical Memory.” In 1874, the inaugural recruits of the North West Mounted Police trekked across the Canadian prairies on a shambolic maneuver that nearly ended in disaster but that has gone down in popular memory as an act of nation building. Current scholarship, by contrast, has clouded the Dudley Do-Right image of the NWMP by identifying the force as an agent of Canada’s colonizing power vis-à-vis indigenous peoples. Nettelbeck and Foster visited commemorative sites across the prairies—including elaborate reconstructions like the National Historic Site at Fort Walsh and Mountie-themed murals in little towns—looking for evidence that a new, “more nuanced” story about the March West was now being told. Unsurprisingly perhaps, they found the “authorized version” still very much in place, leaving “little room to ‘commemorate the marginalized’” (89). Disappointingly, these authors failed to report on the simmering discontentment that, in the four years since their research was completed, has led to the creation of a separate Cypress Hills Massacre National Historic Site, adjacent to Fort Walsh, at the instigation of the Nakoda people of Carry the Kettle First Nation.

Some wit once suggested that talking about the prairie provinces as a unified region is like trying to tie a bunch of watermelons together with a single piece of string. Something similar could be said of this collection of essays. Place and Replace is eclectic, fragmentary, and uneven, sometimes frustratingly so. If the notion of “western Canada” was problematic at the outset, it’s even more uncertain by the time we’re done. In the final analysis, however, the book’s frayed edges are a kind of strength. The Canadian prairies are a thousand kilometers wide and five hundred generations deep; it’s going to take a lot of strings to tell its stories.

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In the summer of 1821, soon-to-be famed novelist Catherine Maria Sedgwick embarked on a tour that brought her to key sites of the War of 1812. As she stood amid the decaying walls of Ogdensburg, New York, she observed, “American antiquities are so rare that we all felt some emotion as we stood under the shadow of these leaning walls” (127). But like most other Americans who happened upon the crumbling ramparts in those years, it was not history that had drawn her to the region. Rather, it had been the allure of
the preeminent tourist attraction of the nineteenth century—Niagara Falls—that brought her in proximity to the old battlefields.

Beginning with his own memories of visiting battlefields as a child, historian Thomas A. Chambers’s *Memories of War: Visiting Battlegrounds and Bonefields in the Early American Republic* examines why Americans visited and commemorated battlefields, or perhaps more precisely, why those of the Early Republic failed to do so. Examining the legacy of three wars—the Seven Years’ War, American Revolution, and the War of 1812—Chambers traces the evolution of battlefield visitation and memorialization over the course of a century ending with the onset of the Civil War.

In the aftermath of the Seven Years’ War, too few Americans encountered the bonefields to make them central to understanding American nationalism, he writes. It was the rise of the Northern Tour route in the wake of the Revolutionary War that finally brought battlefields into the American consciousness. In the South, few visitors even had the opportunity to marvel at the scenic sites of Cowpens or King’s Mountain (both in South Carolina), as the region lacked the transportation infrastructure to facilitate any but the most rudimentary travel to such off-the-beaten path sites. As Sedgwick revealed, by the 1820s, as the transportation revolution continued, more and more people were venturing to the battlefields to indulge in history and the region’s aesthetic beauty. “Sentiment and generic patriotism,” Chambers writes, “prevailed at the Niagara River’s battlefields, converting one of the War of 1812’s bloodiest and most contested theaters into picturesque tourist attractions” (184). By the 1850s, in the midst of the sectional crisis, such ahistorical responses to the fields would fade. Instead, Americans on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line would revive and transform interest in the fields in the name of sectional politics.

Aimed primarily at scholars, this book offers several insightful observations about visitors to battlefields in the Early Republic that might be useful to public historians, especially those who engage with visitors at historical sites. Chambers explains at great length the extent to which place was essential. It was not enough to read about Ticonderoga or listen to speeches by great orators about a battle; Americans needed to visit the sites to make them meaningful. “Without interaction with place,” he notes, “they lacked the materials from which to construct memory” (33). This was true for veterans who returned to the fields in later years, recalling events as they gazed upon some distinctive rock cropping or hillside. But it could be equally true for nonveterans. “Encountering place fosters corporeal rather than abstract ideas, forming a type of memory that is powerful and emotional,” he explains (14). The same might be said for contemporary visitors to historic sites—be they Revolutionary-era battlefields or the site of a Civil Rights march. Connecting with a place through sight, smells, sounds, or otherwise allows people to connect on a very visceral level, even if that event happened centuries in the past. This is, in fact, the very reason most people visit historic sites. Having a tangible connection, being able to see or at least imagine what a historic actor saw (even if it is obscured by
twenty-first century strip malls), is often imperative to understanding why something happened at a specific moment or place in time.

Similarly, Chambers argues that historic tourism was highly personal. His sources are rich with personal interactions with battlefields: speeches given at dedications, guide books, and perhaps most compellingly, diaries and letters of visitors to the fields. Visitors to these sites commented on the aesthetic qualities of places such as the Hudson River Valley or reminisced with aged veterans. In doing so, they came to understand the places in personal ways that sometimes differed from the “official” histories constructed by guidebooks and other authorities.

The same certainly holds true today. Visitors to Pearl Harbor, Colonial Williamsburg, and Shiloh all bring with them their own interpretation of the significance of those places. And most importantly—they leave those sites thinking about the past in new ways depending on their experience. Did a battlefield guide inspire some new appreciation for the depths of despair soldiers felt? Did the smells of a living history exhibit—smoke from a chimney or baking goods—sear a different image of the period into the visitor’s mind? Did the re-creation of Lincoln lying in state at his presidential library in Springfield evoke some unexpected emotional response from a visitor? In short, Chambers not only explains how those of the Early Republic came to construct memories of their past, but he also inspires public historians to think about how contemporary visitors do the same.

One small quibble: this book may have been more useful to public historians if he had provided an epilogue that explored the longue durée of Revolutionary-era sites. For instance, how did they evolve in the wake of the Civil War—a war whose battlefields were commemorated immediately after the war (in the case of Gettysburg, as early as a year after the battle)? How did they fare in the bicentennial? Is there a marked difference between those who visit Revolutionary sites today and those who visit Civil War battlefields or other sites? Has the memory of these sites changed in the wake of 9/11 or with the rise of the Tea Party? These questions aside, it is a fine look at how memory was constructed in the early nineteenth century.

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The Battle of the Little Bighorn has loomed large in the consciousness of Americans from the day it occurred, June 25, 1876. Nineteenth-century historians based their ideas of the events of the battle on accounts from military and civilian survivors. Eventually a narrative developed called “the fatalist theory” which had Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer killed early in the battle