THE UNFORGIVING ROPE
Murder and Hanging on Australia’s Western Frontier
by Simon Adams

According to author Simon Adams there could be no greater evidence of a society’s struggle with its historical demons than to look at whom it hanged and why.

UWA Publishing new release - The Unforgiving Rope: Murder and Hanging on Australia’s Western Frontier - offers just that through an intriguing exploration of Western Australia’s history through the lives, crimes and deaths of more than 150 doomed men and women.

Some had committed heinous crimes for profit or vengeance; some had killed out of jealousy, misunderstanding or madness. Others were hanged simply because they were victims of their times - prejudices and ill-fated circumstances leading them inexorably towards the gallows.

Focusing on the period from first settlement to the eve of World War I, Adams skilfully places the circumstances of victims and perpetrators against the backdrop of their era, revealing the stories behind the hangings.

We hear last words, feel the heartbreaking fear of the walk to the gallows and watch as bodies dangle at the end of a noose. This is a social history of the dark side of WA’s past.

The Unforgiving Rope is published under UWA Publishing’s new imprint UWAP and is now available in all good bookstores. As a division of The University of Western Australia, UWAP aims to expand the boundaries of academic publishing, striving for social, cultural and intellectual renewal.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Simon Adams has chosen to work in places most ‘normal’ people avoid - Cuba, South Africa, Northern Ireland, East Timor. Along the way he was a witness to the Eastern European anti-Communist revolutions of 1989, nearly died of dengue fever in Vietnam, and worked with former political prisoners in South Africa. Although he now lives in Johannesburg, his heart is in Fremantle, Western Australia. He continues to be actively involved in global issues of social justice. He is the author of four history books, and is a Professor of History at Monash University. He is currently serving as Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (International) of Monash’s South African campus.

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