Book Notes

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BOOK NOTES

Some time ago we reviewed Lucy Rebecca Buck's *Sad Earth Sweet Earth*. Comes now a communication from the publisher (Buck Publishers, 1112 South 19th St., Birmingham, AL 35205), that they have prepared an index to the volume. It is available for $5.50.

As usual, a number of interesting books have found their way to my desk. Among the most useful is *A Dictionary of Louisiana Biography*, edited by Glenn R. Conrad (Louisiana Historical Association, New Orleans, LA). Work on the DLB began in 1980. It contains nearly 2500 entries by 398 writers, mostly from Louisiana but several from other states, including your editor, who contributed a few articles on individuals who are also significant to Texas history but had a foot in the history of our neighbor to the east. Entries resemble those found in the *Handbook of Texas* for persons, and are signed. This will become the standard reference for historical biography in Louisiana history.

The 35 Best Ghost Towns in East Texas, and 220 Other Towns We Left Behind (Best of East Texas Publishers, Box 1647, Lufkin, TX 75901) is another in the series of interesting books about the life and culture of our area by our good friend Bob Bowman. "From Acol to Yuno, almost every ghost town that stood in East Texas" appears in this anthology. It mostly includes stories about sawmill towns left behind when the mills moved on, and is an elaboration of two earlier books, *This Was East Texas,* and *The Towns We Left Behind,* also by Bowman. This is one of his best efforts in a distinguished career of writing about East Texas.

The "35" towns include New Birmingham, Willard, Belgrade, Village Mills, Brookeland/ Browdell/ Remlig, Wiergate, Waterman, Turpentine, Oil Springs, Mechanicsville, Burning Bush, Ewing, Buena Vista, Swarthout, Fastrill, Marrion/Jonesville/Homer, Haslam, Manning, Plenitude, Ratcliff, Peach Tree Village, Cincinnati, Fort Teran, Sabinetown, Los Adaes, Kellyville, Harmony Hill, Jonesborough, Magnolia, and East Mayfield. There are several illustrations and there is an index.

A new reference book of significance is *Dictionary of Afro-American Slavery*, by Randall M. Miller and John Davis Smith (Greenwood Press, 88 Post Road West, Westport, CT 06881). It contains almost 300 articles "that reflect regional and geographic differences within the slave experience and changes in slavery over time. Social, institutional, intellectual, and political aspects of slavery receive considerable attention." Entries contain a bibliography, and are signed. There is an index and a Chronology of Afro-American slavery.
For the determined, and determination does bring its own reward, I recommend *Freedom, A Novel of Abraham Lincoln and The Civil War,* by William Safire (Avon Books, a Division of the Hearst Corporation, 105 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016). While liberties of the novelist allow for some prurient passages near the start of the book, for the most part this is about the best effort since *Gone With The Wind* to write good history as well as tell a good story. The book’s over 1400 pages make it into a commitment, but it is well worth reading.