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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS


Say what you will about E.D. Hirsch (and by now nearly everyone has) he did get us all talking about what’s important, did return our attention from the trees back to the forest. Tucked away in our ever narrowing disciplines, shoehorned into the most straitened of specializations, we amused ourselves with specious research and remote teaching while producing at least two generations of students who could not trace the broadest outlines of our history or culture. We’d go off to conferences in our respective disciplines to hear one after another dreary treatise on some infinitesimally small aspect of some microscopic slice of history, or literature, or art, then we’d all return to our classrooms, usually dispirited, to face students who thought, if they thought about it at all, that J. Edgar Hoover invented the vacuum cleaner and that Christ was born in the 17th century.

Academic reputations were made in this way; narrowness of knowledge (and often of spirit) was rewarded, careers were advanced or preserved, but insofar as nurturing and preserving a culture was concerned, it was no way to run a railroad.

Considering its high percentage of intellectuals, it is surprising that academia is so driven by unquestioned assumptions and buffeted by fashions of its own devising. The “cultural literacy” idea itself would constitute a dangerous fad were it not for the fact that there are vast pockets of academic vested interest that will fight the idea with their dying breath. The “critical thinkers” will fight it, as will those “politically correct” neo-Marxists who see any reminders of our history and culture as tacit approval of a corrupt heritage dominated by evil white males. And, of course, there are all of those people for whom anything that smacks of rote learning or anything requiring memory at all is some sort of submission to intellectual fascism, a strait jacket that binds creativity and fetters imagination.

As a corrective and an antidote to all that, *Historical Literacy: The Case for History in Education* is an important document. Having said that, however, it seems exceedingly strange that the case for history has to be made at all. Then, too, the case would be better made, at least for my taste, if it were not quite so clearly the work of a committee. Even though the book is comprised of separate chapters covering the teaching of history from elementary through graduate schools, and even though each of those chapters is written by real live people, the whole thing smacks of a committee’s consensus. Given the urgency of the task, a full blown *cri de coeur* is needed, not another bloodless report issuing even from so
prestigious commission as the one assembled here by Senator Bill Bradley.

Generally speaking, here is what the commission found:
a. a knowledge of history is good for us, individually and collectively, and
b. that history cannot be taught by people who don't know it themselves, and
c. history should not be taught as merely a compendium of facts and dates, and
d. it is going to take at least ten years for anything to change, and that change, if it happens, will require the unpaid energy, will, and devotion of teachers who may or may not be out there in the first place.

There is more to the book, of course, much more, including a review of educational attitudes and approaches to teaching history over the last hundred years, but finally the book left me depressed and discouraged. That we would have arrived on the shores of the twenty-first century still wondering whether there is value in looking back over our shoulders is astonishing. Who but educators could have lost sight of their own purpose so effortlessly?

For my money, some of the best writing about educational reform is being done by Dianne Ravitch, and her chapter in Historical Literacy is the most engaging and direct of all those found in this book; it is the closest thing to heartfelt advocacy in these pages. While the other writers share her opinion about the value of history, they tend to bog down in the usual discussions about how long it will all take — the curricular reform, the teacher training, the change in attitudes — until, by the end of the book, anyone familiar with the glacial movement of educational bureaucracies and the "how many angels can dance on the head of a pin" discussions that take place in humanities and social science departments, will despair of the prospects for real reform any time soon. Coupling those factors with a drying up of budgets everywhere, the good impulses and clearly stated needs of the Bradley commission seem destined to do little more than provide a bit more fuel for the fires of disputation.

But, for those history teachers who are trying to keep the faith, this book can provide moral support, and will serve as a reminder of those beliefs that set them to the task of teaching history in the first place. In the current climate, that is no small contribution.

Jamie O'Neill
San Francisco, California


"As this preliminary survey of writings on Texas history demon-
strates," conclude the editors of this avowedly revisionist volume, "Texans do not know themselves very well" (xxxiii). What follows is a hard-hitting analysis of Texas historiography. Written by some of the region's leading historians, the thirteen essays found here will surely stimulate discussion and further study.

The individual essays are organized along thematic (culture, race, gender, urban studies, and economic history) or chronological (Spanish Texas, the revolution and the Republic, Civil War and Reconstruction, post-1865 agriculture, progressivism, and recent politics) lines. As is often the case in a compilation of this nature, the essays vary in style and objective. Most, for example, emphasize the historiography of their particular subject, but Char Miller's "Sunbelt Texas" describes a theoretical model for analyzing the study of Texas cities rather than the history of urban studies. As is inevitable, occasional overlaps occur, but the editors have done a good job of reducing redundancies to an acceptable level.

Each of the essays is, however, linked by the central theme that much remains to be done. "Calm and dispassionate studies are needed," concludes Arnoldo De Leon when describing the study of Texas Mexicans (p. 48). "Recent Texas politics is a wide-open field for enterprising scholars," writes Kenneth E. Hendrickson, Jr. (p. 251). In a biting attack on fellow scholars, the editors attribute the sad state of Texas historiography to the overlong dominance of past giants such as Eugene C. Barker and Walter P. Webb. Rather than retain their once-lofty position on the cutting edge of research methodologies, complacent historians of Texas have, in the editors' view, refused to challenge the romanticized, white-male version of the past. The individual essays take a similar stance, describing most scholarship about Texas as being overly sympathetic to the South, unduly influenced by the frontier, and victimized by University of Texas in-breeding.

Academics will find Texas Through Time an essential addition to their collections. In placing their analyses within the larger national historiographical context, the volume fills a gaping void. Most contributors call upon their fellow scholars to employ the "new social history" in exploring and scrutinizing Texas' past. But this reviewer hopes this quest, valuable as it is, will not alienate those intelligent general readers once captured by Webb and his associates, who have little use for the jargon and verbiage which sometimes mars modern scholarship.

Robert Wooster
Corpus Christi State University

If someone asked me for a manifesto of the Texas Folklore Society, I’d not hesitate to recommend The Bounty of Texas. Editor Francis Abernethy has collected six seminal essays, which, when read in the following order embody TFS principles and intentions. First, J. Frank Dobie’s “Curiosity in Deer” and Bertha Dobie’s “The Pleasure Frank Dobie Took in [Native] Grass” give close, personal insights into the Grand Old Man of folklore and his conviction that modern man would benefit by recovering a sense of the “life andvitality” of the past (p. 82). Follow with trapper-and-hunter Rusty Hill’s “The Bounty of the Woods” and Paul Patterson’s “Hallelujah, I’m a Bum” for prime examples of personal folklore worth “putting ... down for posterity” (p. 1). Next turn to Paul Clois Stone’s assessment of Dobie’s contributions to cultural history, and conclude with Abernethy’s “Preface,” where the reader finds the purpose behind collecting — the philosophical and psychological interpretations of the stories folk tell.

Other essays in the collection are proof perfect of the bounty of Texas with essays falling into three categories: those dealing with the past, as Roach and Flynn’s dialogue on small towns, Leeper’s storm cellar stories, Von-Maszewski’s German Volksfest account, among others. Another group demonstrates that folklore is an ongoing process, as Tanner’s essay on Ollie North, Ricci’s on the Lone Ranger in current films, and Shafer’s on folk speech in Texas prisons. A third group pays tribute to some of Texas’ greats: Dorothy Scarborough and Ben Carlton Mead. Elmer Kelton contributed his own essay about authorial privilege to stoop to lies and theft in creating fiction.

The Bounty of Texas affirms “the magic of real experience, the real spiritual experience” (p. 82), in short, the value of folklore to the individual. Abernethy encourages readers to recall memorable times and instances — like Wordsworth’s spots of time — wherein lies the definition of self.

The Bounty of Texas is highly recommended.

Ernestine Sewell Linck
Commerce, Texas


Extensive bibliography and chapter notes show the extensive research
Elizabeth Silverthorne did for this book. It crosses over four centuries of Christmas and New Years celebrations by the people of Texas. It is a well organized work, richly filled with historical anecdotes and illustrated with pictures of early Christmas cards, many in full color.

In this age of homogenized society that has overly commercialized Christmas, it is refreshing to read how each arriving nationality or ethnic group brought their own customs, traditions, and beliefs about this most sacred of Holidays to Texas. It is interesting to see how many of these customs have survived to be taken up by neighbors and newcomers to become a part of Christmas in Texas today.

The chapter headings make it easy to find the particular ethnic group that suits your interest, but don’t stop there. The whole book is worth reading for the light it sheds on everyday life in early Texas.

Almost unbelievable is the number of legends that have grown up around Christmas. Who was Saint Nick, Kris Kringle, Santa Claus or whatever you call him? Where did he come from? Where did we get the Christmas tree and those lighted paper sacks that we see on people’s lawns? From where came the idea that bad children get switches instead of presents in their stocking? And we must not forget all the Christmas carols, for what would Christmas be without music?

Give this book to your favorite “Yankee” immigrant. They will find it helpful in understanding the Texas mind-set and learn a bit of Texas history, too. And keep a copy for yourself. You will find nostalgia and memories long forgotten in each chapter.

This book is number three in “The Clayton Wheat Williams Texas Life Series,” and a well chosen addition it is.

Cherry Coffman
Arlington, Texas


The author has provided a pleasant and succinct account about the troubled years 1842-1844 during which President Santa Anna sent raiding parties into San Antonio and the Texans retaliated with an armed expedition. A highly readable synthesis is derived from the many published and unpublished diaries, memoirs, and correspondence of participants, and is augmented with official documents from Texas, Mexico, and the United States plus pertinent comments from French and British diplomats endeavoring to quell the controversy between Mexico and its former province. Haynes has also digested what earlier historians have said about the disastrous incidents and come to some new conclusions.
While not unsympathetic to the plight of the volunteers who enlisted under Gen. Alexander Somervell, Haynes explains that they brought many upon themselves by exceeding the orders of President Sam Houston. Somervell and other officers failed to instill discipline on the often rowdy volunteers who ransacked towns along their route. Houston reluctantly had bowed to public clamor to retaliate against the second raid in the fall of 1842 but could do little to supply the endeavor because of the empty treasury. With winter coming and his army unruly and poorly equipped. Somervell ordered the men home in mid-December after capturing Laredo and Guerrero. The 300 men who refused to obey and crossed the Rio Grande to attack Mier thus were renegades.

In a revisionist mode, Haynes explains that the treatment endured by the Mier prisoners (including the black bean incident) was not unusually cruel for the time and place. Their quixotic adventure placed a heavy burden on both President Houston and the United States charge d'affaires in Mexico City, both of whom turned to British representatives to help free the surviving prisoners in Perote Prison. Haynes argues that Houston adeptly used the prisoners and the unexpected offer of an armistice by Santa Anna to gain time for the delicate behinds-the-scene negotiations in Washington, D.C. that led to the annexation of Texas in 1845. Unlike most general histories about Texas that view the Mier episode as an aberration, Haynes believes that the long incarceration of the Mier prisoners was a major event and convinced many Texans that the Lone Star Republic could not stand alone, thus paving the way for annexation.

Margaret Swett Henson
Houston, Texas

Cynthia Ann Parker, by James T. DeShields, foreword by John Graves (Chama Press, 3310 Fairmont St., Dallas, TX 75201) 1991. Notes. P. 60. $35.00-Hardcover.


Cynthia Ann Parker: The Story of Her Capture at the Massacre of the Inmates of Parker's Fort; of her Quarter of a Century Spent Among the Comanches, as the Wife of the War Chief, Peta Nocona; and of her Recapture at the Battle of Pease River, by Captain L.S. Ross, of the Texian Rangers represents "rescued history." Shields' 1886 account is taken from first hand sources including Gen. (then Capt.) L.S. Ross, Col. John S. Ford, and others acquainted with the principals in the story.

This historical account is important for several reasons. First, as John Graves points out in his "Forward," the story is the bedrock of a very real Myth, an extremely potent one. The story has a symmetry, the captive,
Cynthia Ann, would "not only marry a great warrior and bear his children; she pined away to death when forcibly removed from that way of life," and Quanah, her son, would become a great chief (ix). Secondly, and inherent in Graves' "Forward," is how the story "gripped public imagination" and thus, in Shields' firsthand revelations, reflects accurately the mind-set and hatred felt by frontier denizens for what they considered incredulous demonic acts of subhuman savagery. Here Cooperisms are absent; there is no Natty Bumpo/Hawkeye attempt to rationalize the violence of the times or the motivations of the enemy demons. Shields describes the possible participation of the captives in the battle of Antelope Hills (1878):

Did they flout the blood-drabbled scalps of helpless whites in fiendish glee, and assist at the cruel torture of the unfortunate prisoners that fell into their hands. Alas! Forgetful of their race and tongue, they were thorough savages, and acted in all particulars just as their Indian comrades did. (18)

Shields' historical narrative is a study in that fanatic mind-set as it was created by the myth in the making.

Shields offers an inaccurate, but probably accepted, account of the death of Peta Nocona at the hands of "Sul" Ross at the Pease River fight. (Ross actually killed Nocona's loyal capture, "Mexican" Joe.) His account of Quanah's newspaper "prayer" for a picture of his mother is certainly more Romantic than Victorian. The story is intensified by the (inaccurate) irony that Ross, the killer of Peta Nocona, Quanah's father, is the one who supplies the picture of Quanah. Included at this point is a long excerpt from William Cowper's poem to his mother. Clearly the sympathy and many strains of sentimentality are always with Cynthia Ann as victim.

Shields ends his work with newspaper accounts of Yellow Bear's asphyxiation and Quanah's near death in Fort Worth.

The price of the tiny volume is certainly prohibitive, but it should be on the shelf in every Texas library.

Kissinger's Quanah Parker, Comanche Chief, is, though tethered to the facts of the story, a historical fiction. The modus operandi is not new to the Parker story. (See Clay Reynolds Review of Jack C. Ramsey's The Story of Cynthia Ann Parker: Sunshine on the Prairie, Texas Books in Review, Spring '91.) The reconstructed narrative is smooth, though not particularly artistic, and hopscotches dates in order to cover the entire story. A reader wishing a full-blown romantic account might seek out Lucia St. Clair Robson's Spur Award Winner, Ride the Wind.

Kissinger's is the type of curiosity-whetting work sold at curio stores at historical sites. The historical underpinnings are certainly there, but it leaves the historical aficionado a bit high and dry—starving for fact, background, and interpretation—with a yen for happenings "between the chapters."
Such works, however, are not to be entirely denigrated. The worth of these you-are-there approaches is exactly in the creation of threshold interest among prospective followers of historical Texana—especially the young. Kissinger is to be thanked for that gift.

Quanah Parker, Comanche Chief would be a fine gift for a family about to visit Parker’s fort or for a youth entering that exciting time in middle school when Texas heros and heroines become historical figures. My daughter of eleven—true to Graves’ “Forward” to Cynthia Ann Parker—remembered distinctly a young friend’s report on Cynthia Ann during the last school year. I found myself sharing the pictures and some of the accounts in Kissinger’s book. History—as Texas myth—is to be found in many forms—among the most potent, a good story, the basis of all oral tradition and myth. Kissinger offers that—a good story, extremely sympathetic to her main character, Quanah (“Fragrance”) Parker. With my daughter, I offer a thank-you.

Lee Schultz
Stephen F. Austin State University


Of all legendary Texas heroines, none has captured popular imagination more than Cynthia Ann Parker and the tragedy of her “captivity.” Kidnapped near Groesbeck in 1836, Parker was reared by Comanche Indians from the age of nine. To the disbelief and horror of contemporaries, she embraces Comanche lifestyle, even discarding memories of her childhood and the bloody raid on Fort Parker. Had the story ended there, “Cynthie” would have faded into historical oblivion, but she was “recaptured” in 1860 and returned to the Parker family. Once again, she faced an unfamiliar culture, one which offered little solace for her loss and no understanding of her plight. Parker died in East Texas in 1870, weakened by the loss of two families and years of mourning.

These facts are again presented in Cynthia Ann Parker: The Life and the Legend, No. 92 in the Southwestern Studies series. Margaret Hacker Schmidt, an archivist for the National Archives branch in Fort Worth, speculates about Parker’s life between 1836 and 1860 for she can do nothing else—the “lost years” remain so. Hacker has uncovered no new sources, and her reliance on secondary materials and the Plummer account of the attack leads to a sparse footnoting style. Unlike other biographers, she possessed an understanding of Comanche culture, and the empathetic viewpoint is the major contribution of this small volume. Readers will
find a workmanlike recounting of a cultural tragedy, but little more.

Vista K. McCroskey
Southwest Texas State University


Walter Prescott Webb suggested in The Great Plains that the lives of farm women were not the stuff of fiction. Their existence as wives and helpmates was hard, too hard. An economics professor and a political science specialist offer a slender volume indicating that there were a significant number of women who took up land as single heads of households within a fifty-three year period in Texas. More interesting than the lists by date and land district is an explanation of the entire system, legal, social and political, by which women claimed a piece of land. No interpretation is offered and few case histories are cited which might have put flesh on bones. The scholars' intent, however, was never to tell stories or make social history out of the facts. A photograph printed twice in the book said more than all the lists. A woman is standing in front of wooden pens of the type found on a farm. Her hair is pulled back from a plain and unsmiling face. A once white apron covers a plaid dress and sturdy footwear appears from under her shirt. There is no evidence of anything growing. One must be careful not to attach personal interpretations to historical photographs of persons, but the face and figure attest to some kind of drudgery. The picture needs no words, but gives visual proof that whether a woman helped her farmer or whether she, for whatever reason, went it alone, life was hard, indeed, too hard. The book was published by Texas Western Press, which continues to offer volumes of facts about a variety of subjects which increase our knowledge about the West and which provide writers with a wealth of life and lore to write about.

Joyce Gibson Roach
Keller, Texas


Two of the best non-professional historians of Texas have published the first biography of Edward Burleson. He was born in North Carolina during 1798 into a family that moved with the frontier to Tennessee. Burleson matured amid conflicts, especially with Native Americans in the Mississippi Valley, where he married and began his family. Entering Texas
in 1830, he settled near Bastrop where he led frontier defense efforts and participated in protests to the Mexican government.

When the Texas Revolution began in 1835, Burleson rose to command the army that captured San Antonio in December despite conflicts over discipline and decisions. When Santa Anna entered Texas in 1836, Burleson led a regiment of Sam Houston's army in the San Jacinto Campaign, while expressing some differences over strategy.

During the period of the Republic, Burleson became friends with Tonkawa Chief Placido while directing Texas forces in struggles with Comanches on the frontier, including Plum Creek, and in driving the Cherokees from East Texas. In the Texas congress Burleson promoted a capital site near his home. After election as vice president in 1841 he clashed with President Houston over Indian relations, Austin as capital, and retaliation for Mexican raids. Opposition from Houston defeated Burleson in his race for president in 1843 as voting followed an East-West pattern. After annexation Burleson served in the legislature and as an officer in the war with Mexico. By 1848 he founded San Marcos, where he died in 1851. His burial opened the state cemetery in Austin.

This volume is well researched and clearly written. Though brief on Indian and Mexican views at first, later chapters are better balanced. In describing Burleson's differences with Houston, the authors' sympathies appear at times, but generally they remain fair-minded. This is an important contribution to the history of the Texas Republic and will be the standard biography of Burleson.

Alwyn Barr
Texas Tech University


This pleasant and popularly written book is designed to offend few people, American or Mexican. Indeed, the author reveals in his dedication his purpose is to foster "a better understanding between Mexico and the United States." He opens with a brief and desultory historiographical essay which does not include some of the major works that make up the large controversies concerning the war. Such opinions may not have concerned the author, but if they did not, one might wonder why he decided to bring up the matter at all. A bit more perplexing, perhaps, is the fact that neither does such material find its way to the bibliography. That particular paucity notwithstanding, the author apparently did a good deal of research on the war, albeit some of it unfocused and peripatetic. But no matter, occasionally we find light from the lamp of understanding in unlikely places. More to the point here, however, it is not that the reviewer
objects to diversity; it is just that when it comes to a review of works ger­
mane to a study, he would prefer see the full list somewhere.

Any book on war requires good maps, and the ones here are especially
well done. They are not really contemporary military maps as such; rather,
the reader's concept of the terrain relies on shaded hachures which makes
it easy to grasp even upon casual examination. There is not much new
in this book, but the book is engagingly written; and the author covers
all the ground — causes, support for the war and lack of it, political
maneuvering, Taylor's venture, Scott's massive campaign, the Polk-Trist
row, and the inevitable backbiting within the officer corps once the war
was over.

There are few villains in the piece unless perhaps one counts Gideon
Pillow. The portraits drawn, again, are done so pretty much in traditional
colors. The author finds a few shortcomings in some of President James
K. Polk’s actions, and he is wary of John C. Fremont; but that is about
it. Those who pick up the book in search of bold new interpretations or
exhaustive research in heretofore untouched sources will not find such
things. But if one wants to spend a pleasant evening with a plain but symp­
thetic account that tries to touch all bases and to do so without malice,
guile, or rancor, one could do no better than to read this volume.

James W. Pohl
Southwest Texas State University

Secession: The Disruption of the American Republic, 1844-1861, by James
A. Rawley (Robert E. Krieger Publishing Co., P.O. Box 9542,
$11.50.

James Rawley attempts to describe the disintegration and realignment
of America's political parties during the pre-Civil War period in Seces­
sion: The Disruption of the American Republic, 1844-1861. Rawley also
places the nation's party politics into the context of the sectional strug­
gles of the time.

Rawley attributes the beginning of secession in 1844 to the splinter­
ing of political parties along sectional lines due to the question of the an­
xexionation of slaveholding Texas. The split of the Democratic Party because
of the slavery controversy is described, as is the politics of the followers
of James K. Polk, David Wilmot, and John Calhoun, who vied for
political advantage. In his third chapter, "The Crisis of 1850," Rawley
describes the death of the Whig Party over slavery and the subsequent
split of the Democratic Party as the price of avoiding civil war. The
economic sectionalism which resulted from the industrialization of the
United States and the South's growing pro-slavery sentiment is credited
by Rawley for the development of the two-party system during the election of 1852.

In a subsequent chapter, "Party Realignment," Rawley describes the deterioration of the two-party system during 1854-1855 as the beginning of North and South party differentiation. This split was along the lines of the slavery arguments. Rawley asserts that the Democratic Party was unable to remain the national unifying force after the Republicans exerted power in 1855. Roger B. Taney's Dred Scott decision put the Republicans in the position of advocating the confiscation of property (which Rawley characterizes as unconstitutional) and placed the citizenship issue in the party's lap. Rawley cites the election of 1858 as a sectional prelude to the election of 1860. William H. Seward used his "higher law" rhetoric to solidify the Republican Party's position and to advocate the prevalent party view that the country must be unified under the banner of anti-slaveryism. Rawley points to the loss of Democratic Party power as a contributor to the South's defensive political posturing.

In his chapter, "The Critical Election," Rawley describes how the slavery issues further isolated the Democratic Party from the rest of the nation in 1859 and 1860. The Republicans exploited the fight between James Buchanan and Stephen A. Douglas in order to attack Southern militancy. The election of 1860, which Rawley describes with voting statistics, marks the clear division between Southern Democrats and the Republican North. Rawley devotes the remainder of his work to the secession of the Southern states. The order of secession is significant in Rawley's description of the sectionalist United States. The Lower South is designated as those states which seceded before Abraham Lincoln's inauguration and the Upper South as those states which left the union as a result of his military response to the Fort Sumter incident. Rawley similarly divides the North into the spawning ground of the Free Soil movement and the Republican parties (the Upper North) and the less politically assertive area of the Lower North. The work concludes with a series of readings which demonstrate the voting patterns and political platforms of the period.

Secession is both an enjoyable and engaging work which provides new insights into pre-Civil War politics.

Travis Lee Koscheski
Nacogdoches, Texas

During the Civil War armies clashed in the East, West, and the Trans-Mississippi, with the later receiving the least amount of historical attention because the battles there produced far less casualties. However, the "other side of the river" played an important role and demands more attention by Lone Star students because it was there that most Texans served. Between The Enemy and Texas is the best book this reviewer has found on that department.

Bailey's book sets the standard for future authors. In recording Parson's Brigade, she has given an excellent image of Texans from organizing during the atmosphere of excitement in the early days, to problems of command (Richmond commission opposed to a Texas Commission), logistics, and the vast territory these troopers were to protect.

Parson's Brigade served mainly in Arkansas, and the names on their battle flag, such as "Whitney's Lane" and "Cotton Plant," may seem to be minor engagements to most students, but to the men who fought and died there they were as important as Gettysburg or Shiloh. Bailey brings the battles and marches to life with narrative and quotes, demonstrating their significance to the Trans-Mississippi Department from their first fight in Arkansas to their last fight at Yellow Bayou during the Red River campaign. Between Texas And The Enemy should be added to the library of all Civil War students.

David Stroud
Kilgore College


Dr. Jerry Thompson, associate professor of history at Laredo State University has published what appears to be one of the better primary sources on Sibley's New Mexico campaign. Private Howell, a well-educated volunteer from Grimes County, kept a fairly complete record and in the words of the editor, needed very little editing. In fact, as Thompson points out, Theophilus Noel relied heavily on Howell's memory and journal to fill out his own Campaign From Santa Fe to the Mississippi.

In fleshing out Westward The Texans, Thompson began his book with an extensive annotation of extant primary sources of that fateful desert Civil War campaign. The chroniclers are categorized by diarists, letters, memoirs, official records, and newspapers, and ends with a discourse on Noel and Howell. This constitutes the first fifty-one pages and is quite
helpful as well as interesting for the serious student of that campaign. Additionally, there is an extensive bibliography at the end.

The dust jacket is illustrated attractively by Bruce Marshall and the editor has included several helpful maps and tables.

This book is recommended for colleges, universities, and anyone building their own library on Texas in the Civil War.

Robert W. Glover
Tyler Jr. College


In her two-volume biography of her husband, Varina Davis tells the life story of Jefferson Davis, using her own insights and the letters and speeches of her husband. While she did show a blind spot concerning her husband and the lifestyle she cherished, Mrs. Davis' belief in him and his work was unquestionable.

The first volume was devoted to the years from Jefferson Davis' childhood to the outbreak of the Civil War. She told of his middle-class birth and of a father who remained emotionally distant from his children. This helps to explain the character of Jefferson Davis, who followed closely that same pattern throughout his adult life. While at West Point, Davis was regarded as an average student, and unfortunately stories circulated concerning his tendency to drink in excess. Mrs. Davis points out that these stories were incorrect. His military career was brief, but Mrs. Davis believed him to be the hero of the Black Hawk Wars.

While the death of his first wife, Sarah Taylor, caused Davis to suffer severe depression, his courtship and marriage to Varina, in 1845, seemed to turn his life around. Mrs. Davis painted a rosy picture of their life on their antebellum plantation, and she promoted the idea that all their slaves were loyal and comfortable with their lifestyles. The issues of states' rights and slavery were key to Davis' political career and Varina supported her husband totally. Her account of his early political life in Washington provided sketches of many famous Americans, the most notable being John C. Calhoun. She also related the roll her husband played in the war with Mexico and how Southern states were responsible for the victory.

Davis returned to the Senate during the sectional debates of the 1850s, then became secretary of war. Mrs. Davis told of the mental and physical illness that plagued her husband throughout most of his adult life. She believed that this was directly related to the pressures of his political life, and increased during his term as president of the Confederacy.
The second volume was devoted entirely to the war years. Although her coverage of the war was sparse, the entire volume related the war through her husband’s letters and speeches. She was particularly critical of certain individuals who blamed her husband for the long, bloody war. After the collapse of the Confederacy, Davis was imprisoned in Fortress Monroe. With his release in 1867 and refusal to beg for a pardon, Mrs. Davis set the stage for her reasons in writing this book. She felt that her husband wanted vindication for his actions but would rather die a martyr than write in his own defense. Mrs. Davis failed to see any character flaws in her husband. Even if the book is a nostalgic review of his life, it is still a worthwhile interpretation of the events in the life of Jefferson Davis.

William Hartt
Garrison, Texas


Readers familiar with James McPherson’s Battle Cry of Freedom will recognize its themes in this collection of seven essays. Professors who may have found the larger work unwieldy as a text might choose these essays as supplementary reading in courses in the Middle Period, or the War and Reconstruction. The essays develop the main theme of the larger work, i.e., Lincoln’s commitment to war for the rapidly changing old Union accelerated its transformation into a new nation, forged in a revolutionary experience. Throughout, the issues of slavery and emancipation are dominant.

The lead essay, “The Second American Revolution,” introduces readers to the relevant historiography and goes on to cite indices of revolutionary change. In one, he cites studies showing that ending slavery meant the confiscation of $3 billion worth of property, as the principle source of wealth in one-third of the country. The second essay focuses on Lincoln as a revolutionary leader, committed to the destruction of Southern ideas of liberty, along with slavery and the social structure of the old South. “Lincoln and Liberty,” the third essay, includes a survey of pre-War American theories of liberty, concluding that Lincoln saw slavery as tyranny in our midst, even before he made its destruction his war aim. “Lincoln and the Strategy of Unconditional Surrender” argues that the Emancipation Proclamation, unconditional surrender, and the Thirteenth Amendment were all part of Lincoln’s “grand strategy” of total war. Comparing Lincoln’s role as commander in chief to that of F.D.R. in World War II should spark classroom interest.

Yet there always remained a conservative core in Lincoln. His utterances, from the Gettysburg Address to his many wonderful metaphors,
bear eloquent witness that he remained close to America’s political philosophy and to the language of its people. “How Lincoln won the war with Metaphors” and “The Hedgehog and the Foxes” lead smoothly into the last essay, “Liberty and Power in the Second American Revolution.” It argues that the enduring revolutionary achievement was “positive liberty,” embodies in the Civil War Amendments. McPherson argues that “positive liberty” survived the bitter “counter-revolutions” beginning in the late Reconstruction era, movements which only seemed to undo the revolutionary results of the war.

McPherson’s essays, including the digressions into American historiography and political theory, should help students and general readers understand the war in the widest possible context.

Brandon H. Beck
Civil War Institute
Shenandoah University


Alan Nolan, Civil War historian by avocation and lawyer by profession has put Robert E. Lee on trial in an effort to convince the jury that this great man was, after all, a mere mortal subject to human frailties. Claiming that Lee is unique in being the only actor in western history to have escaped serious historical questioning, Nolan meticulously cross-examines what he considers serious inconsistencies in the general’s life.

For example, Lee was supposedly antislavery but was a Southern aristocrat who fought for a government based on slavery; that he was a career officer sworn to defend the United States and was opposed to secession, yet he seceeded and made war on that government; that he was a master strategist but his offensive combat cost his army irreplaceable casualties; though magnanamous toward the North, he fought bitterly against it; that he continued the war long after he believed a Southern victory possible and that he was consiliatory after the war but defended the South’s war-time positions.

The author prefaces his work by acknowledging that Lee was a great man — able, intelligent, well motivated, and moral, etc., but he thinks that the Lee “tradition” has elevated the general to a state of sainthood mythology.

Nolan terms his book a “consideration” rather than a “reconsideration” of Lee, contending that historians have seldom questioned the general’s actions or motives which have left him immune from serious
historical inquiries, and that all biographers and historians have been guilty of this oversight - until now. The author contends that the Lee mystique is being perpetuated even by such redoubtable sources as the Oxford Companion to American History and The Encyclopedia Britannica. By the time the old general steps down from the stand, Nolan might have entitled his book "Shattering the Icon of Lee," or "Tarnishing the Marble Man." As counsel for the prosecution, Nolan went beyond questioning the general's actions and motives to accusing Lee of being a racist, a political activist, and of needlessly sacrificing human lives because he did not surrender sooner. About the only aspects of Lee that came out unscathed was his grade point average as a student at West Point and the pedigree of his horse Traveller.

Even so, I would recommend Lee Considered for undergraduate and upper level college and university libraries. Civil War buffs will find it thought provoking as well as controversial.

Robert W. Glover
Tyler Junior College


Texas A&M graduate Richard M. Hardison, class of 1941, has produced a first-class read which makes one want to keep turning the pages. Covering the last four or five months of ground warfare in the Europe of World War II with the 399th Field artillery Battalion of the 8th Armored Division, Hardison reflects well the realities of combat, not only gratuitous death but also humor. On one occasion, an officer appropriately named Jack Daniel, had been sent to pick up the officers' liquor ration: "... he had come back from Rheims drunk as a fiddler's bitch. He got out of his jeep and tried to throw Colonel Lilly a salute, fell down and didn't get up. He didn't even move. His driver ... got out of the jeep and he went down too. The jeep must have come home like a horse" (p. 69).

Much of the book is devoted to occupation duty in Germany and Czechoslovakia from the end of the war in May to the end of 1945. Not much has been written about this period or the displaced people with whom Captain Hardison dealt. His descriptions are more than a little poignant. He developed a lasting hatred of the Germans because of their "innocence" in the face of death camps and slave laborers who were everywhere.

Rotated home, Hardison was supposed to be discharged in San Antonio where his wife was waiting patiently, but the army quixotically sent him to Camp Fannin near Tyler.

My only quibble is with Hardison's methodology: trips to the National
Archives and lots of help from his comrades is fine, but his continual use of quotation marks for conversations that took place forty-odd years before is unacceptable. More bizarre is the self-hypnosis he used to retrieve incidents "from the dark corners" of his mind.

Aggie Hardison writes well. His next book should be a novel.

Robert L. Wagner
Austin, Texas


_Urban history doesn't leave a sentimental Texan much to romanticize._

Char Miller and Heywood T. Sanders, professors of history and urban studies, respectively, at Trinity University, remind us in this eighth volume of Texas A&M Southwestern Studies that Texas' past and present are rooted in its towns and cities. Even the Alamo and the Chisholm Trail, foremost symbols of our frontier heritage, sprang from urban exigencies.

Not many heroes walk these sidewalks. While the efforts of individuals and private organizations outweighed geography and other impersonal factors in the rise of cities, the disappointing result has been low-tax, low-service entities that sacrifice livability for economic growth. Accordingly, cosmopolitan Texans drive over flooded potholes to space age airports.

Nine essays by David Johnson, Amy Bridges, Cary Wintz, Robert Fisher, Robert Fairbanks, Elizabeth Hayes Turner, and the editors trace the urban phenomenon, with emphasis on Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio. An obvious selection for college classrooms, the well-structured collection will also serve the non-specialist. Readings are generally free of jargon, with statistical overkill evidenced in only a couple of instances. Some familiar themes are included in the analyses: the limitations of Progressivism; the human face of boss rule; the active role of women in reform movements; and a view of Houston's black community that validates C. Vann Woodward's delayed Jim Crow thesis.

The traditional Texan will arise from this volume better informed of the modern world, if perhaps depressed at the notion that his cities actually operate as intended. Urban history may replace economics as the dismal science. Elitism, reforms that separate the public from power, and a steady deterioration of the quality of life: surely this is not the Texas that beer and political commercials depict.

It is enough to make one saddle up Old Paint and head out Loop 610.

Garna L. Christian
University of Houston-Downtown

In this beautifully written and engaging account, Marilyn McAdams Sibley has examined the history of The Methodist Hospital of Houston from its founding in the early 1920s to its place of preeminence in the 1980s. During these six decades the hospital made the transition from a small community hospital to an internationally known institution that was to become "... the largest private, single-site nonprofit hospital in the U.S." (p. 205).

This in-depth chronological narrative depicts with great clarity the many trials, difficulties, and victories attendant to the growth and development of The Methodist Hospital. Of particular interest among the various topics examined are the history of the founding of the hospital in 1922 and its opening in 1924; the arrival of Dr. Michael DeBakey in 1948, an event which helped to give The Methodist Hospital an international reputation; the hospital affiliation with Baylor College of Medicine in 1950; the move to the Texas Medical Center in 1951; the beginning of organ transplants in the 1960s; the tremendous growth and expansion of the physical plant during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s; and the beginning of the multihospital system, with the creation of The Methodist Hospital Health Care System, Incorporated, in 1980.

In this skillfully balanced study, the author has taken a highly complex story and has crafted an extremely well-woven narrative from many and varied threads of interest. She exhibits excellent mastery of the material and writes with considerable sensitivity and erudition. Although scholarly and instructive in nature, the book is never dull or pedantic. In fact, the text moves very swiftly and is interspersed with a number of well-chosen and well-placed anecdotes, often poignant in nature, yet never sentimental, which serve to illuminate the topic under scrutiny and to offer a decidedly human touch to the narrative.

This thoroughly researched work which, according to the author, is drawn primarily from the archival and historical collections of The Methodist Hospital, evidences meticulous scholarship. The Bibliographical Note attests to the fact that the author's resources were, indeed, copious and varied. In this exhaustive, yet lively account Marilyn Sibley succeeds in making an important contribution to Texas history, not only in the area of business history, but also in the fields of urban and social history.

There is nothing provincial in the author's treatment of the subject. In fact, she is skillful in placing the story within a national and even global perspective, so that what emerges is a sophisticated and polished account that is both warm and sympathetic, yet sufficiently objective to be ap-
pealing. It makes one grateful that the author has given the public such an excellent and gracefully written account.

Brooke Tucker
Houston Baptist University

*Rice University, A 75th Anniversary Portrait*, Historical narrative by John Boles, commentary by Fryar Calhoun. Photographs by Geoff Winningham. (Rice University Press, P.O. Box 1892, Houston, TX) 1987. P. 160.

Rice University is at once proud, pretentious, combative, mindnumbing, and exhilarating, all at the same time, to any who have ever gone to study there. For a relatively young school they take their traditions seriously, be it something as new as the beer-bike races or as early as academic excellence. Part of their good fortune has to do with acquiring more than 300 acres of Houston prairie land before anyone cared about the southwest district of the sprawling Gulf Coast city.

As Houston grew, Rice was able to expand its physical plant and still provide green vistas and shady walks for staff and students alike. Geoff Winningham's photographs capture the moods of the campus and its denizens with verve and style. John Boles' Survey of the school’s history is surprisingly informative, considering how little of the book it occupies. Sections of this narrative have appeared in *Texas Monthly* magazine. But his broad brush strokes and intelligent observations fill in much of the basic information with which most purchasers of this beautifully made picture book will content themselves. Fryar Calhoun captures the tensions and stresses of academic life at Rice, even the stone and concrete sculptures on the building facades, such as the dragon-bodied professor clutching the form of a hapless student.

The photographs and commentary also capture the joy of achievement and the pleasure of being part of a great intellectual experience, from which even non-Owls of the Lone Star state may draw a measure of pride.

Rice is the product of an accident of fate which convinced its namesake to found a school in a part of the South where he had made a great deal of money. He had abandoned this region to return to a more benign summer climate at his farm in New Jersey and his office in New York City. He found himself a childless widower in 1896, when, at the advise of a friend, he endowed a proposed college with both money and land. Rice was murdered by a man-servant in 1900, as part of a conspiracy to steal his fortune, but the guilty parties were thwarted and in 1912 the Rice Institute opened for fall classes.

Edgar Odell Lovett was a young teacher of mathematics at Princeton University, when he was selected as the first president. From that time to this it has been one of the great undergraduate training grounds in math
and science. The most important change at the contemporary Rice University has been the growth of the liberal arts and fine arts in the educational emphasis of the school. Thus it has become a comprehensive training ground in many fields, as befits a multi-faceted intellectual resource seeking national prominence.

Allen Richman
Stephen F. Austin State University


East Texas fares well in this extravaganza of pictures and words from issues of *Texas Highways* magazine. Caddo Lake, Big Thicket, Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, and Armand Bayou Park comprise sections within the first half of the colorful volume devoted to a variety of environments in Texas. Part two concentrates on creatures and plants encountered within the landscapes: seagulls, egrets, butterflies, orchids, wild flowers, and native forests.

Equally as stunning as the full-color photographs of arresting clarity and depth is the prose of word artists. Tracy Owens Torma writes of Caddo Lake that "you can hear the quiet and feel the stillness in the air." Howard Peacock calls the Big Thicket a "mystical microcosm" while Barbara Hinton enjoys Armand Bayou for "its endless breezes, its timeless wilderness." For Jack Lowry, fall color in East Texas forests is "more than a rich visual tapestry;" for Peacock the forests are the "lungs of the planet."

In editing the pictorial nature anthology, Peacock wisely focuses on "elemental nature, not humanized activity." Echoing throughout the volume is a theme of reverence for the land, its fragile inhabitants, and its botanical wonders.

The result is a volume that attracts the eye first through fine photography and then sustains attention through a score of a perceptive writers. Familiar landscapes attain new levels of interest by the removal of human activity and emphasis on an unsullied Texas. Unfortunately, the editing process did not cite issues of *Texas Highways* containing the articles in their original, peopled form.

Peacock's commitment to a natural Texas is underscored by a biographical note indicating he resides in a modified dogtrot farmhouse under a beech tree in Woodville.

Fred Tarpley
East Texas State University
Ellen Rosenberg has written a remarkable ethnography of Southern Baptists. Her work shows intense research to discover the people who make up the Southern Baptist Convention. Her book is a valuable study which clearly delineates the contradictions of this beleaguered denomination.

Beginning with the observation that "the Southern Baptist Convention is cracking apart in reaction to the changes in the southern caste system" she notes the paradoxical success of a people bent on destruction.

Texans in particular will recognize the validity of her description of the Texas Connection. Generally, students of the denomination refer to four regional groupings within the convention. The South Atlantic, the Deep South, and Kentucky/Tennessee form three of those groupings. The fourth, the Southwest, is heavily influenced by Texas. One-sixth of Convention funds comes from Texas and one-third of new Southern Baptist churches are begun in Texas.

Rosenberg gives us chapters on Southern Baptists as the "Hyper-Americans"; a social history of the denomination; the polity and denominational structure of the convention; the typical congregations; the theological, social and aesthetic dimensions; and the new religious political right's influence on the convention.

Frankly, much of the book was unpleasant and uncomfortable for me. For the most part that reflects the accuracy and depth of understanding Ms. Rosenberg exhibited in her subject. With thirty-five years experience as a student in Southern Baptist schools, pastor of churches, bureaucrat in state and national convention agencies, I have been every place she looked through her magnifying glass. At a few points I could say she has erred, but that would be nit-picking.

The volume is a must read for anyone concerned about Southern Culture, the current relationship of politics and religion in our nation, or the fragmenting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Jerry Self
Nashville, Tennessee


Employing the voluminous Rosenberg Library archives and a multitude of other sources, Harold Hyman of Rice University has authored an exhaustive business history of the Jewish Kempner family of Galveston.
In the process he has illuminated the social, political, and religious life of the Island City.

Beginning in 1854, when Russian Polish emigrant Harris Kempner, in his middle teens, disembarked at Ellis Island, Hyman follows Harris' career from a thrifty hod carrier in New York City to a pre-Civil War peddler in Cold Springs, now San Jacinto County, Texas, where he established himself as an honest trader and won the respect of the rural folk among whom he labored. After valiantly serving with W.H. Parsons's 12th Texas Cavalry Regiment in the Confederacy and being wounded, Kempner became more successful and prosperous in post-Civil War Cold Springs when most others suffered economic deprivation. Settling in Galveston in 1871, he rebuilt his fortune and remained there until his premature death in 1894.

Kempner's oldest son, Isaac Herbert ("Ike") Kempner, barely twenty-one, became the patriarch of the Kempner fortunes and remained so until his death at age ninety-four in 1967, when Harris Kempner, his son, succeeded his father until his own demise in 1987, when his namesake, Harris Leon Jr., took the reins. Therefore, close family ties kept the empire intact and brought it to its present status as one of the leading firms in Galveston and Texas. The civic pride and contributions of the Kempners is impressive.

The Kempners' main interests were in Galveston cotton and sugar at Sugar Land, which they extensively developed into a model community. Parlaying their initial investments into banking, insurance, and other businesses, they weathered the Depression of the 1930s with hardly a ripple.

Inclusion of dates on all sources was needed. However, Hyman has produced a quite readable and enlightening work of the Galveston Kempners, which alongside other studies of the Moody and Sealy families, helps to form a more complete mosaic of the city's business history.

Ron Ellison
Beaumont, Texas

_The Edge of the West and Other Texas Stories_, by Bryan Wooley (Texas Western Press, University of Texas, El Paso, TX 79968-0633) 1990. $15.00 Paper.

Bryan Wooley's stories about Texas combine the perfect ingredients to please any connoisseur of Texana. This collection of twenty-four stories, originally written for the Dallas Times Herald, illuminates those state treasures that make us so proud and the rest of the world so envious. Who else but a Texan would know how to put together the winning combination for a beer joint? In "Burgers, Beer, and Patsy Cline," Wooley not
only lists the components, but tells us where to go in Dallas to find that little gem. What state can claim a county so big and so empty that no presidential candidate has ever campaigned within its borders? In “Miles Between Handshakes” we become acquainted with Loving County’s inhabitants: roadrunners, sage, mesquite, and ninety some people.

One does not discuss Texas without mentioning money, oil, and football, and the stories covering these take us from the past to the present. “The Edge of the West” is an attempt to explain the two wealthy cities of Ft. Worth and Dallas as it enlightens us to the differences between “Cowtown” and “Culture City.” In “The Fall of the House of Murchison,” Clint Murchison, Jr. lives up to the kind of oil boom wheeler-dealer that legends are made of. Doak Walker of S.M.U., the Dallas Cowboys, Tex Schramm ... all become real folks to us by means of Woolley’s seemingly effortless style. All of the stories, including those describing our state’s hauntingly beautiful geologic formations, give Texas readers a sense of home and foreigners the Texas experience.

Elizabeth Tierce
Nacogdoches, Texas

*Have Gun Need Bullets*, by Ruby C. Tolliver (Texas Christian University Press, P.O. Box 20776, Fort Worth, TX 76129) 1991. Children’s Book. Illustrations. P. 128. $10.95 Paper. $15.95 Hardcover.

In this story of 1930s East Texas, a young boy declares revenge against the unknown killer of his beloved school principal. Finding the rusty frame of an old six-shooter, Will Crete goes to work restoring it and vows to shoot the murderer of his friend. The Depression in rural San Augustine County hampers Will’s efforts to earn money for his project, leading him to discover the value of friendship.

While the premise centers on Will’s desire to take justice into his own hands, the action focuses on the drudgery of Will’s chores and the near impossibility of earning a penny, a nickel, or a dime. Will shows patient tenacity with small rewards as he scrapes together enough money to restore his gun and buy bullets; however, it is doubtful that today’s young reader, with his buying power and mall mentality, will identify with this virtue.

The concept of lawlessness in San Augustine County is loosely defined in favor of a detailed description of Will’s relationships with his guardian Miss Effie, Indian Joe, and the bullies Jeff and Bo, all of whom are stereotype characters in a slow-moving plot. The title of the book hints of a Texas-Style mystery of the past, disappointing readers who find instead a young boy who discovers frugality can lead to friendship.

Elizabeth Tierce
Nacogdoches, Texas

The Texas Committee for the Humanities has been sponsoring a multi-faceted effort to help Texas recover from its recent economic and spiritual malaise and prepare its people for the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century. A major facet of this effort has been the preparation and publication of this five-volume boxed set with the key subtitle, Building a Future for the Children of Texas.

Based on the preliminary work of special study groups, each volume has a different focus, but all find Texas inadequately prepared for the new century. A major theme of the entire work is the need to recapture a sense of community, one that is inclusive of all of Texas’ diverse elements. Another overarching theme is the need to humanize Texas society through the perceptions and resources of the humanities, including history. Each volume is illustrated richly with photographs of Texas’ number one resource, its children.

Volume I, Building Community in Texas, written by Catherine Williams, is introductory to the other volumes. Besides emphasizing the search for community, Williams stresses the need to come up with a new set of myths to replace the Alamo-Cowboy variety that are inadequate and downright harmful for the complex, multi-ethnic, mainly urban society Texas has become.

Volume II, Texas History and the Move into the Twenty-First Century, authored by Texas A&M University scholars Robert Calvert and Walter Buenger, is of special interest to historians. The authors argue that the currently disseminated history of Texas needs considerable revamping to reflect a more inclusive view of Texas society. They zealously promote the “New Social History” as the proper approach for Texas history in the new century. Their volume includes a fine historiography and bibliography of recent Texas social history.

Faculty and students of Baylor University spearheaded the study for Volume III, The Humanities and Public Issues, written engagingly by Glen Lich. The study identifies major issues facing Texas and sees them as opportunities as much as problems, opportunities for Texas to mature and brighten as a society.

The fourth volume, Global Connections, written by Gordon Bennett and prepared by a study group at the University of Texas, Austin, is heavy with the jargon and methodology of the social sciences, but it alerts Texans to the emerging poverty-environmental crisis in which the teeming populations of the Third World will insist on exploiting resources which the environmentally conscious Developed World will want to conserve.
The set concludes with the longest and most passionate volume, *Education for the Twenty-first Century*. James Veninga, TCH executive director, authored this hard-hitting volume and prefaced the analyses and recommendations of the study groups with an excellent review of recent reforms in Texas education, which began with the recommendations of none other than Governor William P. Clements in 1979. After identifying "pressing concerns" in Texas education, the volume offers many specific proposals and goals.

These volumes should be widely disseminated and taken to heart — and head — as Texans prepare for the next century.

Edward Hake Phillips
Sherman, Texas