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Book Reviews

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**BOOK REVIEWS**

*Indian Wars and Pioneers of Texas.* By John Henry Brown. (State House Press, P.O. Box 15247, Austin, TX 78761), 1988. 216 Photographs. Index. P. 182. $125.00.

This huge work (weight five pounds) is a facsimile edition of J.H. Brown's encyclopedic history of the Indian wars and many pioneers of Texas. It is not a book to be read for enjoyment but is more a reference tool. As such the first 100 pages deal primarily with combat with Indians. The balance is composed of brief biographical sketches of men (and a very few women) whom Brown perceived as "actors from the solitary explorer of seventy years ago to the men of to-day." [P. 3]

Of the hundreds of biographies provided, many are of well known Texans such as Sam Houston, James Bowie, and Richard King. Others were either men known to Brown whom he felt were significant or were friends whom he honored by including in his book. All areas of society are represented — political, military, commercial, medical, literary, etc. The figures who gained notoriety in Texas history as outlaws or criminals are shunned — rightfully so in keeping with Brown's stated purpose.

Brown knew his subject well as he himself had participated in various Indian campaigns on the frontier, serving as a volunteer under Captain Jack Hays. He later served on the staff of Henry E. McCulloch in the Civil War. Many of the personalities who appear in the work he knew personally.

As a reference work Brown's history serves as a precursor to the *Handbook of Texas*, although the former is almost exclusively limited to biography. Unfortunately an introduction or preface to this edition is lacking. It would have been of great interest to be provided with a biographical sketch of Brown himself (he modestly allowed his name to be mentioned in the text a scant four times!). It would have been of interest to learn about Brown's method of preparing his history, whether it was a solitary effort of his own or if many others contributed. It would have been of interest to know if Brown had certain standards for inclusion in his history. With no preface to this edition the readers may be somewhat disappointed that it is still strictly the John Henry Brown edition with no new material other than a complete index.

Nevertheless, State House Press has presented a beautiful edition of Texana. In the reasonably priced and limited edition of 750 copies, it too will soon become out of print.

Chuck Parsons  
South Wayne, Wisconsin

The Hasinal: A Traditional History of the Caddo Confederacy relates to the Indians who occupied lands extending from Louisiana into eastern Texas and the lower margins of Arkansas and Oklahoma. Following the Texas Revolution the Indians were placed on the Brazos Indian Reservation. In 1859 they were moved to Oklahoma Territory.

This book, in eleven chapters, provides a history of the Caddo Indians through a description of related tribal dances which take place at the Caddo Tribal complex near Binger, Oklahoma, during the summer. Each dance, re-enacted in a cycle of dances that fill one night, deals with the origins of the Caddo, hunting, agriculture, architecture, clothing, family relationship, tribal relationships, foreign relationships, health, language, contemporary affairs, and historical perspectives. In the dances, history is given of the tribe from earliest times to the final move to Indian Territory.

Only a few persons survive who know the history of the Caddo. Fortunately the record is preserved by Vynola Beaver Newkumet, a Hasinai, who died in 1982, and Howard L. Meredith, a student of American Indian studies. The authors visited early Hasinai sites, researched archival depositories and manuscript collections, and examined the primary printed materials relating to the Caddo Confederacy from earliest times to the present.

Hasinai has valuable illustrations, a Hasinai/English glossary, bibliography, and suggestions for further reading.

Arrell Morgan Gibson, of the University of Oklahoma, provided the foreword and wrote that “Caddo peoples survive as a vital, functioning community in the American nation” and that “this book exults in the Caddo deliverance.”

Dorman H. Winfrey
Austin, Texas


A member of a historic, honored New Hampshire family, twenty-one year old Thomas Pitts Sherburne received appointment in 1853 as “a meteorological observer and computer” to the Thirty-fifty Parallel Pacific Railroad Survey led by his remarkably talented brother-in-law, Lieutenant Amiel Weeks Whipple of the Corps of Topographical Engineers. Nepotism? Probably. But Sherburne neither wanted nor got special
treatment. He played a role in the scientifically exciting, government-sponsored exploration of the American west, and left a good account of the territory along the proposed railroad route from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to Los Angeles, California. For Texas readers, Sherburne's descriptions of the Canadian River country are especially valuable.

Although permitted to "resign" from West Point for twice failing the third-year examination in chemistry, Sherburne the explorer attended to his meteorological duties conscientiously, observed sharply, and greeted hardships of the trail and delights of New Mexican fandangos with equally high spirits.

Editor Gordon wields a restrained, wise pen, allowing Sherburne to speak for himself, but he amplified the text with rather elaborate footnoting and insertions of clarifying quotations from other accounts, including Whipple's. A biographical appendix sketches personalities mentioned by Sherburne and an inexhaustive but adequate bibliography supports the whole.

Sherburne's life and his great adventure are placed in perspective through the editor's introduction and afterword, which suggest that his youthful adventure on the Thirty-fifth Parallel was the grandest moment of an often trouble-plagued life span of only forty-eight years.

Frederick W. Rathjen
West Texas State University


This book is the outgrowth of a contract study for the National Park Service. The final report, says the author, "underwent thorough revision and refinement," and information was added to make this thin volume, the text portion of which runs to only fifty-nine pages.

The basic thrust is a tracing of the mission lands' title history from the first assignment of custody by the Spanish Crown to secularization and transfer to private ownership. The subject might have been covered adequately and less tediously in an article without the oft-repeated mission facts not directly related to land tenure.

Professor Almaraz utilized a considerable amount of original material, especially from Bexar County archives and deed records, San Antonio City Council minutes, and records in the San Antonio city clerk's office. At the core is a body of information that scarcely has been touched by previous researchers in Texas mission history. Better copy editing could have rendered it more easily digestible.

Robert S. Weddle
Bonham, Texas
The Brothers of Uterica. By Benjamin Capps. (Southern Methodist University Press, Box 415, Dallas, TX 75275), 1988. P. 315. $22.50 Cloth. $10.95 Paper.

The utopian communities of mid-nineteenth century America were intriguing, noble experiments, yet most were failures. This novel is the story of three hundred Socialists — French, German, and a few Americans — who attempted to establish a utopian village on the plains of northeast Texas. Their less than idyllic community was dubbed “Uterica,” a neologism created from the words Utopia and America.

The author introduces the reader to several of Uterica’s atypical settlers: Brother Bossereau, the idealistic French leader of the group; Mr. Finch, the hard-headed outsider hired to organize the colony’s agricultural efforts; Dr. Valentin, a man who wishes to wrestle control from Bossereau and establish a totalitarian regime; and Miss Harriet Edwards, a feminist who is only interested in the implementation of her ideas, not the goals of the society.

Brother Langley, the narrator, is involved in the lives of all the major characters and themes of the novel. Through his eyes, Uterica’s one year of continuous problems are recorded — crop failures, heat, storms, cattle stampedes, murder, apathy, and Indian troubles. He alone seems to understand the strong personalities within the society and the subsequent conflicts that lead to the eventual failure of the project.

The reader may find it difficult to sustain interest in the novel. There are an abundance of unique story lines, but overall the novel lacks life. Perhaps Langley’s journal entries and Bossereau’s speeches are too tedious and lengthy. The lackluster narrator may be the culprit; he is too passive. A more exciting work may have resulted if Miss Harriet Edwards or even Jean Charles Bossereau had served as the narrator. Still, the novel is unique in its setting, and Capps is adept at describing Texas topography and weather conditions.

Jonathan Jeffrey
University of Maryland

Turn Your Eyes Toward Texas, Pioneers Sam and Mary Maverick. By Paula Mitchell Marks. (Texas A&M University Press, Drawer C, College Station, TX 77843), 1989. Bibliography. Photos. Index. P. 323. $27.50 Hardcover.

In this account of a notable husband and wife in nineteenth century Texas, male and female roles on the frontier are explored. Sam Maverick, from a South Carolina merchant family, had been educated at Yale. Seeking land in Texas, he joined the Texan capture of San Antonio in 1835. He then served in the independence convention the next spring. In Alabama he wed Mary Adams and they returned to Texas in 1838.
Maverick became a successful land speculator, attorney, mayor of San Antonio, and participant in the Council House Fight with Comanches. After capture by Mexican troops in 1842, Maverick spent six months as a prisoner. Then in the Texas Congress, he opposed Sam Houston.

While in Congress, Maverick moved his family to the coast. His trips for business, surveying, and politics often left his wife to raise their family. When four of ten children died in the 1840s and 1850s, Maverick became withdrawn, while Mary turned to introspection and spiritualism. They returned to San Antonio and he promoted railroads and education while opposing the Know Nothings. Though a longtime unionist, Maverick supported secession and had three sons serve the Confederacy. Despite the war, he retained most of his land until his death in 1870. The author dispels myths of Maverick as the greatest land owner and cattleman in Texas. Mary remained active in church and historical groups until she died in 1898.

Paula Marks’ style is readable and her original research is sound, though some useful secondary works are not cited. The term “Mexicans” for Tejanos is debatable, and there are minor errors such as distances. There were not more volunteers from the United States than Texans at the battle for San Antonio. The general interpretation of Reconstruction lacks balance. More important, however, the author develops clear portraits of both Mavericks, which makes the volume a significant contribution to regional and family history.

Alwyn Barr
Texas Tech University


The University of Texas Press recently published in paperback two books regarded by many as classics in Texas history. These books were Herbert Gambrell’s Anson Jones. The Last President of Texas, first published in 1947, and Marquis James’s Pulitzer Prize winning biography, The Raven: A Biography of Sam Houston, published originally in 1929.

Recent scholarship and time have not substantially diminished the significance of these important works. In one of the great biographies of Texas history, Gambrell penetrated the mind and actions of that unsuccessful doctor who migrated to Texas. Here in 1833, Jones found success. His medical practice prospered, and people of his district elected Jones to Congress in the Texas Republic. His focus on education, transportation, and medicine soon turned to foreign relations. As minister to the United
States, Jones became the "Architect of Annexation." Later serving as Texas' Secretary of State, both Jones and President Sam Houston sought to obtain either an annexation offer from the United States or Mexican recognition of Texas independence. As the last president of the Texas Republic, Jones presented Texas with these alternatives, and the people chose statehood. While blessed with prosperity, Jones sought future service and fame which eluded him. Deeply hurt, he came to a tragic end in 1858. If history is the attempt to answer questions about human actions done in the past — and I think it is — then Gambrell performed the historian's art with brilliant penetrating insight, wisdom, and humor.

*The Raven* was the best biography of Sam Houston until the appearance of Llerena Friend's more objective *Sam Houston, The Great Designer*, in 1954. James portrayed the complex, controversial Houston with a flare of romanticism. Soldier, Cherokee, Tennessee politician, Houston crossed the "muddier Rubicon" into Texas just a few months before the arrival of Anson Jones. A man with charisma, sometimes uninhibited, with alcohol problems and some painful love experiences, Houston became commander-in-chief of the Texas army and led Texans to victory at the Battle of San Jacinto. Twice president of the Texas Republic, and a unionist, Houston served as United States senator and governor. With historic grandeur, James captured the spirit of Houston for the reader. *The Raven* is good history and good literature.

All people who are interested in Texas history — from the casual reader to the serious scholar — should read *Anson Jones* and *The Raven*.

Irvin M. May Jr.
Blinn College at Bryan-College Station


*A House Divided. Sectionalism and Civil War, 1848-1865,* is a study of the geopolitics of the period preceding the Civil War.

Hundreds of authors have given the world millions of words on various battles, generals, and political issues of the conflict between two incompatible societies. The basic context of "A House Divided." is the focus of slavery as the root of sectionalism and, ultimately the "dark and blood ground" of American history.

Richard Sewell traces the growth of bitter sectional discord in the years after 1848, when the acquisition of new American territories rekindled old controversies over the expansion of slavery. A series of compromises forestalled the crisis of secession but increasingly divided the country along slavery's lines. But the plain fact of the matter was that the North and
South had become so different — so damnably incompatible and antagonistic — that no amount of political ingenuity could avail.

President Jefferson Davis himself privately referred to slavery as an "evil," and once told a journalist: "We are not fighting for slavery. We are fighting for independence."

The Southerner's passion for independence spawned a variety of attitudes toward another of the War's driving issues: states' rights. Most Southern people, of course, were quick to affirm the rights of the Confederate states to withdraw from the Union and contest Federal dominance.

The rights of the Confederacy were one thing — but what, exactly, were the rights of an individual Southern state relative to its central government in Richmond? This is a question that plagued the Confederacy before, during, and even after the conflict.

Sewell's tome of information is rather stilted for the average reader, which slows the narrative, but for the historian there is a wealth of information.

James D. Lutrell
Nacogdoches, Texas


This Civil War biography focuses on Texas and its "Lone Star Guards." The work follows the history of Company "E", Fourth Texas Infantry Regiment of Hood's Brigade from its beginning through their victories and defeats in battles until their surrender in 1865. The work is narrated elegantly with evidence of the use of many primary sources and oral histories taken from descendants of the individuals presented. The author exquisitely sets the background for the work in the first three chapters by giving an accurate account of the birth of Texas with particular attention given to Waco and McLennan County. In these chapters the author unveils his skills as an historian by depicting the growth and life styles most characterized by the pre-war era of Waco and McLennan County.

Although the six maps and ten illustrations within this work give a fair description of battlegrounds and Texas personages, it is only after reading the author's vivid and picturesque scenes of the travels, camps, and bloody battles that the adventure begins. While the author takes care to cover the battles of Gaines' Mill, Second Manassas, Antietam, Gettysburg, Chickamauga, and the Wilderness, he also takes the time to discuss how the war affected life in Waco and McLennan County, Texas, during these years. It is obvious that the research involved must have been
painstaking, because this work includes references, appendixes, an selected bibliography, and in index. The work is valuable for those interested in local history, Texas history, military history, and the Civil War era. Moreover, the booms of Enfields, trickling of sweat, and the bashing of heads makes this work an true adventure for any reader.

Raymond K. Fogg
Washington, D.C.


The West of gunfighters, outlaws, and wild Indians is so filled with fantasy one might believe it impossible to get at the truth, especially when the subject is a legendary lawman such as “Bill” Tilghman. But that is exactly what Glenn Shipley has done.

Bill’s adventures started as a young buffalo hunter, an occupation that often found him crossing paths with Indian war parties, and ended in 1924 by a murderer who rode to town in a Ford rather than on horseback. In between is sandwiched a life more daring than most fictional heroes.

Tilghman’s reputation as a lawman grew from the day he pinned on a badge in Dodge City, Kansas, to deal with rough Texans at the end of a long drive. He walked the streets with Bat Masterson and Wyatt Earp before heading for Oklahoma Territory. From Perry to Oklahoma City the story was always the same; Bill Tilghman enforced the law.

When not wearing a star he found time to serve as a state senator, devoting his energy to law enforcement, and filming a movie, The Passing of the Oklahoma Outlaws, to counter a film which glorified the life of crime.

Tilghman wore his badge for the last time at the age of seventy. His wife saw the light in the old lawman’s eyes as he returned to the job he loved best. This time he did not return. Murdered by a prohibition agent he was attempting to arrest, the life of the man Bat Masterson once called, “the greatest of us all,” was over. Shipley has given the historian a gift, a story that tells of the West and Bill Tilghman as they really were.

David Stroud
Kilgore College

McGrath has approached the subject of violence on the American frontier differently from many of his predecessors. Instead of concentrating on the actions of well-known frontier personalities and their actions precipitating violence, he has analyzed two frontier communities and investigated all forms of violence within their confines. The two communities — Aurora, Nevada, and Bodie, California, were subjected to McGrath’s scrutiny from pre-Civil War until well into the 1880s. Because the two communities have left a surprisingly complete amount of contemporary records — essentially in the form of newspapers — McGrath’s efforts have resulted in a near complete analysis of what produced violence on the frontier. Chapters devoted to violence and the minorities as well as women and juveniles are especially insightful.

Although the two communities owed their existence to their mineral wealth, the towns could not be termed strictly mining camps. In fact, typical aspects of other geographic areas were evident: conflict with Paiute Indians; encroachment of cattlemen on others’ lands; Union vs Confederate sympathizers; the white desperado vs established law and order; the gunfighter who exhibited leadership among the lawless element. These are sub-topics within McGrath’s study but the personalities of the individuals do not overwhelm the work. Each individual is considered only in so far as he or she made a contribution to the study of violence itself.

With such an amazing array of source materials the style could have become encumbered with scholarly attributes, but the reader does become involved with the flow of action to a surprising degree. This is a book which can be read for enjoyment as well as a work of source material to locate additional source materials.

A most fascinating adjunct is an appendix contrasting two views of frontier violence: that the frontier was more violent than today’s society, and the opposing view. This conclusion is a fine ending to an scholarly and well-written book on violence in America.

Chuck Parsons
South Wayne, Wisconsin


This husband-and-wife author team have produced a fascinating family history which is well documented and illustrated. James G.
Thompson left more than 200 personal papers and a daybook which is reproduced by facsimile copies in the book. The Thompson and McDonald families lived and intermarried with Cherokee Indians, so this volume contains data on their Indian as well as Scot-Irish ancestors. James G. Thompson was a rancher, postmaster, ferryman, carpenter, and politician who eventually owned nearly 3000 acres of land located on the Red River in Grayson County, where he had a horse and cattle ranch.

In addition to the information on the Thompson family, there are separate chapters on the following families: Gresham, Dillard, Winfrey, Randolph, Burdine, and Anderson. Brief sketches are given on William Clark, Jr. (a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence), the Seale family, and the Stallings family, all settlers in the East Texas area.

A ten-page bibliography lists many newspapers, books, and documents which were consulted to gather data for this history. This volume would be a valuable addition to any genealogical library.

Carolyn Reeves Ericson
Nacogdoches, Texas


The Rio Grande, or Rio Bravo del Norte, has often been a significant, even romantic part of the history of Texas and the West. In 1954 Paul Horgan in Great River artfully traced the river's role in the development of North America. But in that work the author only tantalized the reader with a few brief passages regarding navigation along a major western waterway. Pat Kelley has satisfied that curiosity. In his River of Lost Dreams: Navigation on the Rio Grande he has written an interesting and important book on the efforts to use the river as an avenue for commerce and conquest. Although the author maintains his focus on river travel, he opens an historic window into the social, political, and economic history of the border region. Using excellent sources, both English and Spanish, he weaves into his tale the lives and ambitions of intriguing characters, such as Mifflin Kenedy, Richard King, and Charles Stillman, who, among others, played key roles in that region of the state Texans call simply The Valley. For the most part Kelley writes a straightforward narrative history, but occasionally he offers vivid, evocative prose, describing the natural features of the Rio Grande and its environs.

Richard Bailey
San Jacinto College


For an age enamored of nostalgia and American success stories, tales of the early oil business seem designed to order. Here, descendants of active participants from that tumultuous period test the waters with a reminiscence of daily life in the oil camps and a plea to install a neglected figure in the pantheon of industrial giants. Unsurprisingly, no hidden skeletons leap from opened closet doors, though a few family jewels do appear.

Stowe, a free-lance writer from Irving, literally played amid the derricks that dotted the Southwest in the 1920s and 1930s. Her poignant story of a laboring father, a seriously ill mother, and an observant daughter journeying through Oklahoma and Texas derives from memory rather than archival examination. Exacting scholars obsessed with data on the politics and economics of Big Oil are advised to return to their carrels, but others will delight in the portrayal of tent towns, long school bus rides, loving co-workers and relatives, and suspicious city folk. The author brings out the flavor of a hard but rewarding trade while avoiding the syrup of sentimentality. She effectively captures the mood of a bygone era while creating unforgettable characters in the father who strove to set aside enough money for a business, the fragile mother who managed a homelike atmosphere in dank, crowded, canvas shelters, and the precocious little girl always hopeful of remaining in one spot throughout the school year.

In a more academic vein, McDaniels, a consulting engineer to south and central Texas municipalities, successfully argues that his great uncle, Pattillo Higgins, receive due recognition for his role in the Spindletop discovery and other lucrative fields in which he profited marginally. The writer utilizes private papers and manuscripts to bolster more public sources, but his subject remains unlovable, if deserving of tribute. A youthful hell-raiser around Beaumont, Higgins lost an arm while taking the life of a deputy sheriff, attacked religious and scientific treatises with equal dogmatism, constantly litigated with business associates, and excited gossip by adopting and later marrying a comely teenager while in mid-life. In one of his more affectionate foibles, Higgins drove the same Model A Ford for twenty-five years and planned to rebuild it for another quarter-century’s service when old age forced him from the road.

From the diverging vantage points each creditable book celebrates the energy and optimism that America once claimed as its own.

Garna L. Christian
University of Houston-Downtown

In this eminently readable account, Keith Guthrie succeeds in lifting the fascinating story of Texas’ many forgotten ports from Corpus Christi to Matagorda Bay from the pages of historical obscurity.

The book is divided into three sections, each concerned with a major bay area and the various port cities that developed within that bay. In the first section, “Corpus Christi Bay/Aransas Bay,” the author presents an intriguing history of the area from the early 1500s to the late 1700s. In examining the port city of El Copano, as with the ten other port cities examined in this section, the author gives a history of the development of the port. With each port, Guthrie discusses who came to the area, why they came, why the port was built, the various problems encountered by the settlement through the years, and reasons for the continuing existence of the port or, more often, reasons for its subsequent decline and demise. Of the eleven ports examined in this first section, most, including El Copano, Aransas City, St. Mary’s of Aransas, Lamar, Port Preston, Black Point, and Sharpsburg have faded from view and largely have been forgotten.

In the brief second section of the book, “San Antonio Bay/Espiritu Bay,” the author concerned himself with only one port, that of Mesquite Landing, the only port to develop within this bay area and one which has been abandoned. Guthrie suggests that the first Anglo to use the port was probably Dr. James Long in 1821.

The third section of the book, “Matagorda Bay/San Bernardo Bay,” is devoted to the study of six port cities and several small river ports, each of which no longer exists.

This thoroughly researched work, which draws from many sources, evidences meticulous scholarship. Documentation is copious and varied, with numerous explanatory footnotes. In this exhaustive yet spirited account, Keith Guthrie makes an important contribution to Texas history. He succeeds in breathing life to an important but otherwise little known topic.

Brooke Tucker
Houston Baptist University


This book offers an insightful look into one American’s experiences during the invasion of, and eventual liberation, of the Philippines. William A. Owens, a native Texan and former English professor at Columbia University, as well as the author of several novels, recounts his personal
adventures in the Philippine liberation as a member of the American Counter Intelligence Corps.

Owens participated in several major military operations. As a CIC agent at Leyte Gulf, Luzon, and ultimately, Manila, Owens interrogated Japanese prisoners and read captured documents, prevented infiltration and sabotage, and as he continually came in contact with the conflicting factions left in the vacuum created by the war, came to know the major Filipino political leaders on both the left and the right. An English teacher before the war, Owens wisely maintained a journal during his time spent in the Pacific. Thus his recollections have not been dimmed by the passage of time.

The book reveals many unforgettable characters and experiences. There are tales of lepers, captured spies, daring escapes, and the savagery of war. Owens also offers accounts of various soldiers’ opinions of the American war effort and surprisingly, their lack of faith in General Douglas MacArthur.

This work, though fascinating in its remarkable story, is written in a blunt, choppy style that occasionally created boredom for this reader. Nevertheless, if one can overlook the style and simply concentrate on the telling of the story, *Eye-Deep in Hell* offers a unique account of one soldier’s experiences in the retaking of the Philippines.

Mark Choate
Nacogdoches, Texas


Say "Stars and Stripes" to those of a certain age and circumstance, and immediately come to mind Bill Mauldin and the B-Bag column in "the soldier" newspaper, *The Stars and Stripes.*

To those of later generations the name means something else, an international publication read by members of the military, their dependants, and civilian employees much as expatriates read the old Paris edition of the *Herald-Tribune.*

Ken Zumwalt has done a good job of recording the metamorphosis. As an enlisted man he served on six World War II editions in Europe, the last four as managing editor. He became civilian ME in 1946 and remained with the paper until 1955, when he resigned to return to the United States with his French-born wife.

*The Stars and Stripes* had a brief existence in World War I, operating under a mandate from General John J. Pershing that guaranteed it would be produced by and for AEF soldiers. It was reborn during World War
II as a weekly in Northern Ireland with the same mandate from General George Marshall.

Not that the brass did not at times try to subvert GI editorial authority, as witness Mauldin’s famous run-in with General George Patton! By and large, however, the paper was able to do what General Marshall had in mind.

Just as the WWI paper produced its share of well-known journalistic figures — Alex Woolcott, *et al* — the WWII paper nurtured distinguished alumni known to a current audience: Andy Rooney, Richard Hottelet, Louis Ruykeser, and Peter Lisagore, in addition to Mauldin, who appeared on a *Time* cover and won a Pulitzer Prize in 1945 for his Willie and Joe cartoons.

Call it nostalgia if you will, but this old soldier reveres the memory of the early S&S, as he cherishes Rooney’s and Bud Hutton’s little 1946 history which he was lucky enough to find for $6.50 in a used book store a couple of years ago. This one goes on the shelf alongside the earlier one.

Max S. Lale

Marshall and Fort Worth

*One Women’s Army, A Black Officer Remembers the WAC.* By Charity Adams Earley. (Texas A&M University Press, Drawer C, College Station, TX 77843), 1989. Illustrations. Photos. Index. P. 218. $19.95 Hardcover.

Strictly speaking, this book is a memoir, a collection of personal reminiscences by the author of her service during World War II as a black female officer in the Women’s Army Corps. The narrative is presented in a straightforward and succinct manner and reads very easily. The most dramatic moments came when Earley describes the slights and insults, some intentional and others not, that she and other black troops suffered in the course of doing their jobs. These incidents aside, however, the general tone of the book is both positive and up-beat.

Earley grew up in South Carolina. She was the daughter of a minister father and a schoolteacher mother. She received her college education at Wilberforce University and taught for several years in the public schools in Columbus, Ohio, but found after a while that the classroom lacked the excitement and adventure she wanted. In late spring of 1942, she applied to join what was then known as the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps, was accepted, and completed her training at Fort Des Moines, Iowa. She trained with other recruits at Fort Des Moines until late January 1945, when she and others from the WAC training center were ordered to England.

While in Europe Earley was placed in command of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Batallion, an all-black, all-female unit that had
responsibility for keeping track of United States personnel in the European theatre and making certain that each piece of mail reached the individual to whom it was addressed. This was a considerable task since many of the addresses on the mail were invalid owing to the rapid changes in battlefield conditions, troop locations and dispositions, and individual reassignments. The quality of her leadership was such that eventually she was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel, the highest rank possible short of the director of the WAC, who was a full colonel. Earley remained on active duty until March 26, 1946, when she left military service. She married in 1949 and her husband, a physician, and their two children made their home in Dayton, Ohio, where she has been active through the years in numerous civic and community affairs.

This book does not attempt to comment, except in very superficial terms, on the general state of black/white relations during the period. Nor does it seek to place the black military experience of the time in any sort of historical perspective. Information of that sort is available elsewhere. Nonetheless, it will be of interest to both specialists as well as general readers because of the eloquence with which it speaks in describing the profound courage and determination needed to overcome racial barriers and achieve success at a time when considerable antipathy prevailed among the races.

Donald R. Walker
Texas Tech University


The author’s account of this West Texas tragedy underscores the fear we all share of this particular weather phenomenon. Lane re-lives the quiet before the storm, then takes the reader through the frightening moments of the twister’s contact with this small Texas community.

The reader will feel empathy with survivors who afterwards must deal with the agony of searching for family and friends, pets, and personal belongings and keepsakes that were left in ruin by one of Texas’ most violent tornado occurrences.

Saragosa, the town killed by a tornado, is a compelling account that should be read by all, and especially by anyone who assumes such an event could never visit their community. It is an excellent real-life story of how a peaceful town was transformed — in less than a heartbeat — into a war zone, and the touching conclusion of how the townspeople bond together to rebuild their lives and their community.

Rusty Garrett
Lufkin, Texas
Weathercaster for KTRE-TV

In 1685 a “Gentleman by the Name of Woodward” (p. 8) delivered the first bag of rice to South Carolina. This seemingly inconsequential event started an economic revolution in American agriculture. Three hundred years later South Carolinians no longer farm rice. However, Woodward’s successors in other areas of the United States have transformed American rice fields into a billion dollar plus agri-business which controls over thirty-five percent of the world’s rice export market.

A History of the American Rice Industry, by Henry Dethloff, chronicles the development of rice production, milling, marketing, and distribution over three centuries. The rice industry in the United States experienced two distinct periods. The first era developed on the East Coast and centered in the Carolina-Georgia coastal region. This “Golden Age” began during the colonial period and reached its zenith in 1820. However, alternating cycles of hurricanes, excessive rain and flooding, along with the physical, social, and economic destruction wrought by the American Civil War sounded the death knell to this Southern enterprise.

The second era, which transformed the prairies of southwestern Louisiana, Arkansas, and southeast Texas into the Southwestern rice culture, began in the mid 1880s. Railroad expansion into southwest Louisiana, along with the successful transfer of Great Plains wheat farming machinery and techniques to rice cultivation assured the metamorphosis. As Louisiana rice production expanded and land prices skyrocketed, farmers moved into the cheaper lands in southeast Texas. Texans harvested their first commercial rice crop near Beaumont in 1886. The rice culture quickly developed in and around the Golden Triangle, then spread eastward into Louisiana and westward towards Houston, reaching the Bayou City by 1915. Rice farming crept southward until it reached Lavaca county.

The History of the American Rice Industry is clearly written. Dethloff’s use of interesting vignettes leads to a smoothly flowing and highly readable book. The research is solid and the author’s use of personal interviews adds a human dimension. Statistical tables strengthen the work; however, the inclusion of useable maps would have been a welcome addition. With the United States balance of trade woefully in the negative, it is comforting to know that at least one sector of our export economy still dominates world trade.

Donald Willett
Texas A&M University, Galveston

Teeming with thousands of beeves, the Fort Worth Stockyards have played an integral role in the development of Fort Worth since 1887. Without question, they have stimulated the growth of businesses and industry, especially such packing houses as Armour and Company as well as Swift and Company. They also have enhanced the frontier image with which Fort Worth has long been identified. Moreover, due to the sustained activities of the stockyards, “Cowtown” was recognized for decades as one of the leading cattle markets in the country.

In Livestock Legacy: The Fort Worth Stockyards, 1887-1987, J’Nell L. Pate, Professor of History and Government at Tarrant County Junior College, Northeast Campus, has accomplished a monumental task. Besides having performed rigorous research, she has compiled a mountain of detailed information. She has described the interworkings of the stockyards not only over the past 100 years but also on a day-to-day basis. Moreover, she has included the activities and contributions of those people — such as William L. Pier, Louville Niles, and Al Donovan — who helped build the stockyards. She also has interwoven the story of the stockyards into the history of Fort Worth ably and has demonstrated how each aided and complemented the other. Although her writing style could have been tightened to smooth out the choppiness in some of the text, she has created a valuable addition to both Fort Worth and Texas history.

Janet Schmelzer
Tarleton State University


Robin W. Doughty, associate professor of geography at The University of Texas-Austin, and co-author of The Amazing Armadillo, has produced a thin, fact-and-folklore packed volume on the characteristics of the Northern Mockingbird. Over a dozen short chapters cover every aspect of their lives as well as their incorporation into American culture, folklore, and how they came to be the state bird of Texas, Arkansas, Florida, Mississippi, and Tennessee. While other species have dwindled, the mockingbird has spread to Canada, Hawaii, and the British Isles. Aside from singing throughout the night, what makes mockingbirds unique are their personalities. They defend their territory and offspring with such a tenacious spirit that it is difficult to realize that they were the favorite cage birds of the nineteenth century.

Whether you are an ornithologist, folklorist, historian, or merely enjoy watching them or hearing their songs, for which Mexican Folklore
has a charming explanation, you will enjoy The Mockingbird and want to share it with others. Doughty claims the book has a message about "connectedness." (p. 72) Perhaps those of us who wore out our socks dancing to a tune Doughty failed to mention, "Mockingbird Hill," are the only ones who would notice this lovely, delightful, entertaining, and colorful book was printed in Japan.

Linda Sybert Hudson
Longview, Texas


As a youth in 1949, this reviewer stood entranced before a hazy, seven-inch picture tube in the lobby of the Metropolitan Theater in Houston as movie-goers streamed endlessly to their seats. As it turned out, the boy rode the tide of history: the moviehouse has since joined Houston's collection of demolished buildings, but a giant color screen now adorns most living rooms.

The Fault Does Not Lie With Your Set, authored by Channel Two personnel, is at its best depicting the inspirations and bobbles that make new industries fun. The opening chapters and the description of Lyndon Johnson at his ranch constitute a real treat, and a chronology and collection of early photographs strongly enhance the text. However, essays follow no discernible order, and some, particularly those of recent periods, border on puffery. Notwithstanding occasional mild jabs at the competition, the publication bears the imprint of careful tailoring and laundering.

Admittedly light reading, this lively-written account will conjure up happy memories to a generation not born into the video era. Young readers will profit from the knowledge that such a generation exists.

Garna L. Christian
University of Houston-Downtown