BOOK REVIEWS


Thad Sitton has created in Backwoodsmen: Stockmen and Hunters along a Big Thicket River Valley, in the words of one reader, the East Texas equivalent of the several outstanding commentaries on the development of New England cultural life. I think the comparison bears merit.

Sitton writes neither in the "first-family" mode nor about the area's prominent individuals who generally capture attention in regional histories. Instead his work details the hidden cultural world of the "river-valley bottom" East Texans who experienced the vital and dynamic living associated with being small stockmen, timber workers, rivermen, fishers, and trappers. A competent researcher, Sitton handles the topic's essential secondary works well. His vital strength, however, derives from the plethora of primary-source oral histories he has collected from numerous folks who actually have lived the river valley experiences about which he writes, and a writing ability that transposes the energy of the oral histories with imagination and interest.

Flaws in style and content exist. The writing style is jarred at times by a repetitive hammering home of similar information in various chapters. The reader should also recognize that this history records the experiences and observations primarily of white males. Sitton does include enough material from African Americans as well as women who shared this unique existence that one becomes aware much work remains for historians interested in East Texas topics of gender, ethnicity, and race. The writing style is well suited for the professional historian and the lay reader.

Sitton has taken a giant step forward in not only examining our regional culture but also preserving our regional heritage. The only other regional works that even approach the significance of Backwoodsmen: Stockmen and Hunters along a Big Thicket River Valley are Sawdust Empire: The Texas Lumber Industry, 1830-1940, by Robert Maxwell and Robert Baker, and Ruth Allen's East Texas Lumber Workers: An Economic and Social Picture, 1870-1950. One cannot comprehend the essential river-bottom influences as well as their significance in the development of the vital, unique culture of East Texas without studying Sitton's book.

Melvin C. Johnson
Texas Forestry Museum


You need to read this review closely because you probably will not be able to afford Flags Along the Coast, and it will be some time before it comes out in paperback. On the other hand, if you are just beginning a career, you might want
to invest in *Flags* for professional reasons – to impress cohorts and superiors with your intellectual pursuits, your good taste, and your financial stability.

Nobody draws a map unless he is planning for the future. The Europeans had come to the New World excited about the future and planning to stay; and they wanted some idea about where things were and where they were when they were looking for things. Alonso Alvarez de Pineda drew a pretty good line-of-sight map of the Gulf of Mexico in 1519, and for the next 150 years details were added to the Pineda chart to flesh out the pattern of the northern Gulf Coast. But it took a real French challenge and a panicky Spanish response to advance Gulf Coast cartography seriously.

Several times I’ve been in the woods and found creeks and trails running the wrong way and compasses defying the natural laws, so far be it from me to fault LaSalle for not being able to tell the difference between Matagorda Bay and the Mississippi delta. That misadventure changed the course of history drastically. The Spanish set out after LaSalle like crows after a hoot owl. One result was that they explored and colonized the northeastern part of New Spain and called it Texas.

Another result was that they drew some new maps, which is what *Flags* is all about.

When the first Spanish search-and-destroy fleet sailed along the Texas Gulf Coast in 1886-87 looking for French intruders, Captain Juan Enriquez Barroto drew a map and kept a log. The map disappeared but Jack Jackson makes a convincing case (with appropriate “perhapses” and “we may ventures”) that a map drawn by ship’s pilot Juan Bisente soon afterward was an accurate copy of Barroto’s. This map became the definitive chart of the Gulf of Mexico for the next half century. Pilot Bisente and his map passed into foreign hands when the Spanish flagship they were aboard was captured by the French in 1697.

The French capture of the Bisente map was fortunate, because otherwise the Spanish would have kept the map under wraps, and we might still be wondering where the Mississippi River entered the Gulf of Mexico.

*Flags Along the Coast* is a cartographic history of the Gulf of Mexico, focusing on the Barroto-Bisente map. Through a process of deduction Jackson shows how the Bisente map influenced early eighteenth-century French maps by Nicolas de Fer and the Delisles. And he shows how the English entered the cartographic picture as a result of their involvement in Gulf warfare.

The Barroto-Bisente map continues its influence in Part II of *Flags*, which is eighteenth-century French cartographic history of the Gulf coast, mainly between Matagorda Bay and Pensacola. This section features the work of engineer and cartographer Valentin Devin, as he mapped the Gulf Coast and planned construction in New Orleans and Mobile.

*Flags* contains a chronological and encyclopedic collection of Gulf coastal maps, rich and readable endnotes, and a definitive bibliography. Dorothy Sloan and the Book Club of Texas gave Texas cartography a distinct touch of class with Jack Jackson’s *Flags Along the Coast*.

You are welcome to look at – but not borrow! – mine.

Francis Edward Abernethy
Stephen F. Austin State University
William C. Foster has again turned to a passionate interest of his – Spanish expeditions into colonial Texas. The focus of his most recent effort is the translation and documentation of eleven expeditions that entered Texas from 1689 to 1768. Foster used seventeen diaries, logged by participants, to determine daily directions and distances traveled by each entrada.

Assuming that the expedition diaries “are the primary and most reliable source for determining the route that the expeditions followed” (p. 7), Foster systematically compares the routes and named campsites of expeditions spanning some eighty years. He has checked and cross-checked those routes with U.S.G.S. topographical maps, aerial photographs, and on-site inspections.

In translating the diaries, the author adds substantially to ethnographic information about Texas Indians, especially hunting and gathering groups encountered between the middle San Antonio River and the Trinity. Also flowing from the accounts is a wealth of information about vegetation, wildlife, and weather. In the case of the latter, geographers will be informed and amused by the incessant complaints of Texas’ first governor, Domingo Terán de los Ríos (1691-1692). Terán unleashed a veritable litany of complaints about drought, followed by torrential rains, snow, and ice storms. Upon reaching the piney woods of East Texas, he was annoyed particularly by the onslaught of ticks, mosquitoes, and chiggers.

The text is enhanced by twenty-two maps by Foster and thirteen illustrations by renowned artist and historian Jack Jackson. Four appendices provide information of value for biologists, botanists, and anthropologists, as well as epidemiologists. The University of Texas Press is well deserving of praise for publishing this valuable resource on colonial Texas. It has a rightful place in both public and private libraries.

Donald D. Chipman
University of North Texas


Texas has undergone many changes in its geographical boundaries, but how many? Today there are 254 counties, but why do so many organized governmental bodies exist? What determinants went into drawing the lines distinguishing one from another? Will there be more counties in Texas some day?

These are just a few of the questions considered in this examination of the 267,336 square miles known today as Texas. The maps have had to change many times since the earliest, a representation of the Texas Gulf Coast, drawn in 1519 by Alonzo Álvarez de Piñeda. As early explorers went deeper and deeper into the land the picture changed; boundaries were determined largely by rivers or changes in land characteristics, not population density, as is the
situation today. Several countries claimed the land – Spain, France, United States, Mexico. The original twenty-three Texas counties in 1836 had been municipalities under Mexican rule. By 1837 there were already additional counties, the last county – Kenedy – was created in 1921.

Gournay makes an interesting study of what could have been a boring recitation of factual geographical changes. Enough history of the conflicts bringing about changes in the boundaries is presented to enable the reader to comprehend why the lines on our maps are where they are. Each county is given a precise historical resume; those which once did exist but were absorbed into others also receive attention.

Gournay, who holds a Ph.D. in physics, has proven his ability to research and to write in the field of history. Secondary sources as well as extensive research in archival materials provided the data for this work. The fifty-two maps are clear and comprehensible. Historians and genealogists and all Texans will find this reference work valuable.

Chuck Parsons
Luling, Texas


This is the third and concluding volume of Weddle’s sweeping account of three centuries of “discovery and exploration in the Gulf of Mexico and along its coasts” (p. ix). Each book begins with an era of active exploration in the Gulf. This latest offering describes the massive territorial exchanges that followed the Seven Years’ War (1756-63), when France transferred the Louisiana country to Spanish hands and Spain ceded the Floridas to England. In keeping with the spirit of the Enlightenment, an atmosphere of rational inquiry and analysis can be detected in these late eighteenth-century explorations.

Weddle argues that Spain failed to recognize in the Mississippi River and its hinterlands the key to holding the northern Gulf. Traditionally, Spaniards saw Louisiana as merely a buffer for Mexico and a source of dangerous contraband trade, so the monarchy failed to assimilate the Mississippi country. The author suggests that some farsighted officials – notably the Galvez and Croix families – sought to strengthen the Empire by integrating Northern Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana late in the eighteenth century. If this was their goal, it foundered on bureaucratic inertia and the old fear of smuggling.

Texans may be forgiven a perverse pride upon learning that hardy Spanish mariners feared the Texas shore as the “costa brava,” the last unknown area between Yucatan and Florida. Those most familiar with this stretch of the littoral dreaded the nightmare of shoals, sloughs, swamps, and impenetrable scrub brooded over by the fearsome Karankawas. This small tribe made up in ferocity for what it lacked in numbers, and never bent the knee before a conqueror.

Some question whether this sprawling epic can be captured within one thematic framework. No matter; Weddle’s engaging trilogy captures beauti-
fully the drama of primitive vessels clawing along unknown coasts and resolute men striding into trackless wilderness.

D.S. Chandler
Oxford, Ohio


Austin Colony Pioneers is a standard reference work dealing with pioneer settlers of Bastrop, Fayette, Grimes, Montgomery and Washington counties in Texas. The original edition was done before the days of laser printers or carbon ribbons for typewriters and the copy is sometimes fuzzy or blurred. It is unfortunate that it is cost prohibitive to retype the entire manuscript in a format which would be easier to read.

Ray has compiled biographical and genealogical data on early settlers of Stephen F. Austin's colonies. Like his Tennessee Cousins, this work should be used as a basis for further research. Much of his compilation was done from personal interviews, without references, and sometimes it deviates from the facts.

An example of the type of data given is: "THOMAS LEWIS GILMER, born July 28, 1778; died November 27, 1847. The above wording is found on the large stone slab, lying full length on a grave in the old Chappell Hill cemetery in Washington County. This man has an interesting family history, and few people realize that a brother of George R. GILMER, who was Governor of Georgia, lived and died in Washington County. The genealogy of the THOMAS LEWIS GILMER of Chappell Hill runs as follows: Dr. GEORGE GILMER came to Williamsburg, VA in 1731; he died in 1757, at that place. He married three times. He left three sons: PEACHY RIDGEWAY GILMER, GEORGE GILMER, AND JOHN GILMER. Peachy Ridgeway GILMER had two sons: George Gilmer and Thomas Meriwether GILMER. Thomas Meriwether GILMER married Elizabeth LEWIS. He served in the revolution with Lafayette. He moved to the Broad River settlement in Georgia. He and Elizabeth LEWIS had these children: Peachy Ridgeway GilMER, Mary Meriwether GILMER, Thomas Lewis GILMER; George Rockingham GILMER; John GILMER; William Henry Strother GILMER; Charles Lewis GILMER; Lucy Ann Aophia GILMER m. Gibbs; and James Jackson GILMER.

"George Rockingham GILMER in the list shown above was the famous Governor of Georgia, who wrote the "GEORGIANS" the book from which the above data is taken, and other interesting books.

"Thomas Lewis GILMER is the brother who is buried at Chappell Hill." [p. 106].

Published originally in 1949, this book is much in demand. It contains sketches of various lengths of settlers of Austin's Colony. We owe a debt of gratitude to Genealogical Publishing Company for making this volume available again.

Carolyn Reeves Ericson
Nacogdoches, Texas

While John Garner described the vice-presidency as about as exciting as a bucket of warm spit, his idea was equally applicable to the governors of Texas, I thought. I was assigned to review a work of sketches on the governors, at least the ones who have died (how could one tell?), and, accordingly, I dragged my feet. Why would anyone want to be the governor of Texas? Why would anyone write a book about governors of Texas? Moreover, history of institutions tend to be dry and to rely on secondary sources, like material dug out of dissertations which is better left buried. But was I ever pleasantly surprised when I read this book.

Hendrickson wrote with a broad scope, depending on the literature (e.g. – DeShields, Phares, dissertations). Enough of the color of the governors and their ideas – or the lack thereof – was blended in to elevate the work above a dull gubernatorial chronology. Elections, policies, problems, and achievements were crafted in clean, easy prose to capture the moments with conviction. It was not that the author uncovered vital new data but that he synthesized it in a novel perspective. The narrative was best in sketches of outstanding leaders; others, the author graded mediocre, failures, or noble but thwarted.

The constitution dictated that the governor of Texas be weak, and then, too, many were unwilling or unable to lead. The effective governor grasped the problems, explained them, and worked through solutions. But many governors, instead, reflected or manipulated public opinion as they played to the moment and collaborated with powerful interests. Accordingly, with leadership lacking, Texas lagged behind; yet, historical myths continue to picture the governors of Texas as great.

William R. Enger
Trinity Valley Community College


The Boers of South Africa, part Dutch and part Hugenot, might have become one of the major ethnic and cultural groups that settled and developed Texas. Unfortunately Texas, although offering a warm welcome, had no funds to help them resettle after the Boers’ devastating war with the British.

A few did reach Texas eventually and became prominent farmers around Fabens and El Paso. Most, however, chose the area north of El Paso in the Mesilla Valley of New Mexico and their impact is still felt on that state today.

De Toit, a Florida anthropologist, reports on his studies of two prominent Boer families. Both escaped the Transvaal and the Orange Free State after the British killed many of the men and more than 26,000 women. They were victims of the “scorched earth” policy that followed the battles that began in 1880 and ended in 1902.
One family settled in northern Mexico; the other chose the Mesilla Valley of New Mexico. A group of more than 4,000 opted for Texas, hoping to settle on 20,000 acres along the Southern Pacific Railway east of El Paso. The project failed because neither the Boers nor the State of Texas could fund the effort.

Over the years, the Boers moved about seeking better farm lands and new challenges. These moves, plus marriages into other ethnic groups, decimated the community around Fabens. While many of their descendants still live in Texas, the small population is not recognized as one of the more than thirty ethnic and cultural groups that settled and developed the state.

Jack Maguire
Fredericksburg, Texas

_The Italian Experience in Texas: A Closer Look_, by Valentine J. Belfiglio

This work is an expanded version of the author's _Italian Experience in Texas_ (1983). The reader will not find a history so much as a blending of narration and description in a study of the Texan experience by the Italian immigrants of the nineteenth century and their descendants one hundred years later. The author, however, does ground his themes in time and space, following the story of the early Italian explorers in the New World and later the arrival of the immigrants to Texas.

Hampered by language difficulties and a darker skin than to which the Anglo-American of the South was comfortable, the newcomers began at the lower level of society. They worked in the East Texas lumber mills, labored in the mines and on the ranches of West Texas, and helped to build the vast railroad network that crossed the Southwest. They quickly recognized and began exploiting the economic opportunities of the urban areas, where one in every three Texas Italians were living by 1900.

The author's habit of shifting between historical narration and description of individuals and their significance can be jarring to the reader. The narratives, however, of Texas Italians, such as Louis Amateis in sculpture, Oscar and Frederick Ruffini in architecture, or Franco Eleuteri in international construction, are informative, interesting, and important to understanding the significance of the group in the larger society. The author includes a wealth of black-and-white photos that aid the work.

Belfiglio argues that Texas Italians have managed to keep a recognizable ethnic identity by blending old-world patterns of family, clan, and tradition within the framework of the Anglo-American culture of the traditional South. This book, then, is more than just a rework of an earlier edition. It details a rich insight into the transformation of an Italian peasantry from one imbued to the ethnic soul and bone in a heritage of Catholicism, feud, folk magic, and family into that of a recognizable Texas ethnic minority well-adapted to the mainstream of Lone Star life, yet still maintaining its European genesis of social
culture. *The Italian Experience in Texas: A Closer Look* is a good look into a small, noteworthy Texas minority.

Melvin Clarno Johnson
Nacogdoches, Texas


San Augustine County native Garland Perry presented *An American Saga* of William Hughes, a British immigrant to Texas in 1878. Hughes learned ranching the hard way, by camping out with a lot of sheep. The next year, he began with a 160-acre ranch in Kendall County that reached its peak of 7,281 acres in 1902.

Deeply devoted to his family, Hughes possessed a fierce competitiveness and a determination to do things right. A quick learner, he balanced high-quality livestock production with good land-use practices. Working dawn to dark, he spent his evenings reading by candlelight or kerosene lamps and planning his next business activity. Above all, he wanted the respect of other ranchers.

With common sense, vision, and passion, Hughes became a real estate agent and rancher with cattle, horses – including polo ponies and cavalry mounts – sheep, goats, and dairy cattle. Letters written by Hughes revealed his impressions, thoughts, experiences, successes, and failures, his style of living, and his changes of goals. For example, by 1887, Hughes had abandoned sheep raising in favor of Angora goats. While riding to deliver some prime Angora goats for a customer in 1902, Hughes was accidentally killed in a railroad crash. At the age of forty-three, a promising young rancher had come to the end of the trail. Soon after Hughes' death his family left Texas.

What is the significance of this book? Perry has presented a major contribution to the history of Kendall County and a well-written monograph in Texas agricultural history.

Irvin M. May Jr.
Blinn College - Brazos County


Nestled in the heart of the picturesque Davis Mountains of the Trans-Pecos, not far from the life-giving waters of Limpia Creek, Fort Davis was one of the most important military outposts in Texas, before and after the Civil War. Established at the “Painted Comanche Camp” by Bvt. Maj. Gen. Persifor Smith in October 1854, and until the post was abandoned and burned during the Civil War, it helped guard the Lower Military Road that stretched from San Antonio to Franklin (El Paso).

In 1867, the Ninth Cavalry, under baby-faced Lt. Col. Wesley Merritt, arrived to rebuild the fort. Four years later, Col. William (“Pecos Bill”) Shafter took command at the post and in 1880, Col. Benjamin Henry Grierson, best
remembered for his daring Civil War cavalry raids, arrived with men of the black Tenth Cavalry — the famous Buffalo Soldiers. Grierson pursued and fought the Apache chief Victorio in the region before Mexican soldiers killed the wily raider and most of his men in Chihuahua in the Battle of Tres Costillas. In 1881, West Point’s first black graduate, Lt. Henry Flipper, who was serving as commissary officer at the fort, was arrested and charged with misappropriating army funds. Although a court-martial was unable to find Flipper guilty he was nevertheless dismissed from the army for “conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman.” Four years later, the Tenth Cavalry departed the post in a grand review.

Long considered one of the healthiest posts in the Trans-Mississippi, Fort Davis was a favorite of army personnel who enjoyed the dry climate and serene isolation of the area. Yet in 1906, the “useless military reservation” was turned over to the Department of the Interior. In 1961, Fort Davis became a National Historic Site.

Robert Wooster, veteran historian of the military frontier, has written a readable and well-documented history of Fort Davis. Part of the Texas State Historical Association’s Fred Rider Cotten Popular History Series, Wooster’s study is brief but balanced. Those wanting a more detailed study of the post may want to consult his History of Fort Davis, Texas, which was prepared for the Southwest Cultural Resources Center in 1990.

Jerry Thompson
Texas A&M International University

Noble Brutes: Camels on the American Frontier, by Eva Jolene Boyd
(Republic of Texas Press, 1506 Capitol Avenue, Plano, TX 75074) 1995.
$12.95 Paper.

In the history of the United States military there have been a number of rather bizarre experiments utilizing the animal kingdom. For example, there were the infamous “bat-bomb” experiments in West Texas during World War II conducted by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) to determine if bats could be utilized to burn down Japanese cities. and the more recent secret U.S. Navy tests using dolphins to try to detect Russian nuclear submarines.

By comparison the U.S. Army’s camel corps experiment that began in April 1856, with the arrival at the Texas port of Indianola of the U.S.S. Supply loaded with thirty-four camels, was rather more prosaic. The previous year the Congress had appropriated $30,000 to send an officer to the Middle East to procure camels and bring them to Texas. The recounting of this rather extraordinary operation has been done before but the camel corps now has its historian. This delightful account by Eva Jolene Boyd apparently covers every available source, including scattered accounts of abandoned camels and escapees in the deserts of the West into the twentieth century.

In addition, she accompanied a reenactment in 1982 of the California/ Nevada Boundary Expedition (by camel) in 1861 and writes with real affection for the dromedaries. But the bulk of the monograph chronicles the Army’s success in utilizing camels as beasts of burden in the West.
One can surmise from her account that if fate had not intervened with the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 and the fact that only a relatively small number of camels were imported that conceivably there could be wild herds not only in Texas but throughout the southwestern desert today. Unfortunately it was not to be.

A final word: the monograph has excellent photographs, drawings, and maps.

Ray Sadler
New Mexico State University.


I first came to admire the work of Bill O'Neal back in 1983 when I purchased a copy of his fine *Encyclopedia of Western Gunfighters*. He has always put out good solid, readable nonfiction on the Old West. Now he has gone one step further and given us an excellent photo essay on ghost towns, a book which does not disappoint.

*Ghost Towns of the American West* is a compilation of travels the author has made to thirty-one ghost towns west of the Mississippi. The subject has fascinated the author for many years now, and by the time you finish reading this volume you will be just as fascinated as O'Neal has been. What makes this book different from most other books on ghost towns is the way it is put together. Interspersed with a short, readable history of the ghost town are black-and-white tintypes, many of them over 100 years old. And right alongside them are sharp, crisp color photos of the more interesting parts of the town that exist today. Most of the color photos also contain panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. At the end of each chapter are short sketches of those frontier personalities or events well known in that particular town. For example, Deadwood has “Wild Bill” Hickok while Tascosa has the less famous “Big Fight.” All are well written, authentic depictions.

If there is a shortcoming with the book, perhaps it is the lack of a bibliography for all of the interesting information put out about each ghost town. This reviewer not only enjoyed the photos but learned considerable about these ghost towns he didn’t know. Not being able to immediately refer to another book for more information was a sore spot.

Nevertheless, *Ghost Towns of the American West* is recommended reading for one and all, an enjoyable, readable volume that is sure to please.

James Collins
Aurora, Colorado


This is the second reprint in the Tumblewood Series of Will James’ books. After publishing twenty-four books between 1924 and his untimely
death in 1942, interest in James’ books languished and soon they were out of print. Recently, renewed interest in James’ works has emerged resulting in the creation of the Will James Society. This group is dedicated to preserving the memory and works of the cowboy author and artist.

In *The Drifting Cowboy*, James continues the stories of his own experiences as a working cowboy in the first two decades of the twentieth century on the big cow spreads of the American West. The stories are exciting and have the ring of authenticity. In spite of the recent vogue among psychologists that the cowboys’ pistols were obvious symbols of macho masculinity, one gets a different opinion that they were a part of the working cowboy’s tools-in-trade: “Our six shooters was a smoking and tearing up the earth in front of the leaders (of the stampeding cattle) trying to scare them into turning and milling ...”

One of the more interesting stories is about the time James hired on as a stand-in stunt man for the leading man of a Western movie. Filmed on location in the hills of California, the movie gave James plenty of opportunities to do what came naturally to him in the more dangerous scenes. He looked forward to the time when he and his cowboy friends could see the movie and recognize him. To his disappointment, his friends could never recognize him on the back of the bucking bronco.

This book is recommended for the general public, especially those who have an interest in real cowboy stories about western characters, special horses, and memorable cows.

Robert W. Glover
Flint, Texas


Will James was an authentic cowboy who worked, as he said, on some of the biggest cow outfits from Mexico to Canada. He was born in the West and grew up in various cow camps, breaking broncs and riding herd in a time when only cowboys could do the job right. He rode horses in the army of W.W.I. and never received much formal education. At the end of six months convalescence from being busted up by a particularly vicious bronc, he began drawing pictures of and writing about the things he knew best.

Gifted with a natural artistic talent and the ability to tell a good story in the unvarnished vernacular of the West, James published *Cowboys North and South* in 1924. It was an immediate success, eagerly read by a public wanting to know more about cowboys and the West. His pen-and-ink and charcoal illustrations captured the explosive excitement of the Wild West.

James wrote and illustrated twenty-three more books about western types, particular cowboys, horses, or cows. He accumulated literary success and fortune, which may have confused his sense of values and what he really wanted out of life. He began drinking heavily and in 1942 lost his wife, his ranch, and his life. He was fifty years of age.

Now Mountain Press Publishing Company, in conjunction with the Will
James Art Company, are reprinting each of Will James books in both cloth and paperback editions. The new issues will be true to the original texts, including illustrations. They will be released in the same order of the original publications under the name of the Tumbleweed Series.

The first of these, *Cowboys North and South*, is exciting reading for anyone interested in the American west. James' stories of bronc busting and of outstanding cow horses are reminiscent of the serials that ran in the *Saturday Evening Post*. His art work is similar to that of John W. Thomason, another greater writer. Now, a new generation of Americans who are continuing our great love affair with the West can look forward to each new release of the Tumbleweed Series.

Robert W. Glover
Flint, Texas


In *Black Soldiers in Jim Crow Texas 1899-1917*, Garna Christian examines in detail the racial conflict that accompanied the stationing of African American army units in Texas during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Christian argues that two of the most notorious racial conflicts in Texas, the Brownsville mutiny of 1906 and the Houston riot of 1917, were not isolated events but represented only the worst and most publicized of a series of conflicts that erupted wherever African American troops were stationed in the Lone Star State early in the twentieth century. Christian maintains that the source of this conflict was the antipathy that white and Mexican American residents felt toward the stationing of black troops in their communities. This racial intolerance precipitated responses by black troops that resulted in the incidents in Brownsville and Houston as well as others in Rio Grande City, El Paso, Del Rio, Laredo, San Antonio, and Waco. Each incident differed in its intensity and violence. But all were characterized by the willingness of black troops to use deadly force to retaliate against bigotry, racial injustice, and/or police brutality, and each resulted in a demand by the local community for the removal of black troops and the willingness of military authorities to hold black troops responsible for the incidents, even when testimony and evidence was ambiguous.

Christian begins his narrative with the arrival of the first black units in Texas following the Spanish-American War. Troops, traveling by train from Florida to postings on the Rio Grande, were involved in incidents in Huntsville, Alabama, and in Texarkana, Texas. Then a series of racial incidents followed black troops wherever they were stationed, from border communities with few black residents to Waco and Houston and large and stable African American communities. The only mitigating circumstance that Christian uncovered was the relative willingness to accept the presence of black troops by citizens in El Paso, San Antonio, and Waco – cities that were seriously vying to attract large military installations.
Black Soldiers in Jim Crow Texas is well written and meticulously researched. Christian effectively combined local records with military archives to depict social conditions in the communities where black troops were stationed, community response to the presence of black troops, and the military response to the resulting conflicts. The results are impressive and convincing. However, I do wish that he looked a little deeper and provided some comparison between the experiences of black and white troops in Texas early in the twentieth century. Was it only black troops who were involved in conflict with local communities and local law enforcement, or were the conflicts involving black troops more intense? Also, I am not convinced that these conflicts were antecedents to later civil rights struggles, as he suggests. However, these are minor complaints. Christian’s fine book deserves our commendations for detailing the extent of the conflicts involving black troops in Texas.

Cary D. Wintz
Texas Southern University


In Depression Desperado, the author is successful in educating the reader about the true character of Raymond Hamilton and of other “scalawag-hoodlums” of the era. The author does not attempt to excuse Hamilton’s evil and unconscious regard for human life and property during his criminal rampage. As I read along, I wondered how the man kept up the incredible pace of lawlessness.

Above all, Depression Desperado was a friendly reminder that criminals, the justice system, and to a larger extent human nature, have not changed significantly over the decades. The fact is as you read along you will feel hate, compassion, and even a sadness for the way things were then while discovering parallels to the way things are now. There are no easy answers.

At times, the author attempted to cover too much in too few pages, but perhaps that feeling arose from the significant geographical movement Hamilton and his cronies accomplished. The names of the small East Texas communities such as Arp, Broadus, Lufkin, Groveton, and others, brought a personal closeness to the areas these infamous people haunted, and complimented the author’s factual concerns.

From a police chief’s standpoint, I found the book exciting, informative, and well documented. A book of this type without factual research would have been just another fiction movie for the kids. On occasion, I found myself perspiring with anticipation while pursuing “Ol’ Raymond!”

John A. Walton, Chief of Police
Nacogdoches, Texas

Sitting at the intersection of Houston, Ninth, and Jennings is a Fort Worth curiosity — a triangular-shaped building on a triangular lot. The striking architectural design, the flatiron, by Sanguinet and Staats, was made even more dramatic by the carved panther heads just above the second floor. Over-shadowed now by much bigger, younger structures, this seven-story, one-time skyscraper was considered very tall when erected in 1907. Owned by physician Bacon Saunders, the building contained his medical office and laboratory, other physicians' offices, and a drug store.

In Fort Worth's Legendary Landmarks, Byrd Williams and Carol Roark have catalogued some of most historic structures in Fort Worth. With a keen photographer's eye, Williams has captured the beauty and majesty of homes, public buildings, churches, and numerous other edifices. Emphasizing architectural and interior design, Roark has recreated the background for each structure. By combining these talents, their collaboration has resulted in a book filled with wonderful illustrations and text which answered many questions about historic landmarks of the city. And in so doing they have made looking around the Fort Worth landscape even more enjoyable.

Janet Schmelzer
Tarleton State University


No Comanche or Kiowa warrior ever challenged the one-company dragoon outpost established by Major Ripley Arnold in 1849 on a bluff overlooking the Trinity River in what is now the heart of Fort Worth.

Four years later the army removed its presence simply by abandoning the "fort" named for General William Jenkins Worth, who never laid eyes on the installation. Never a model for the palisaded structure depicted by TV, it was at best a self-held accommodation thrown together by the troopers to shelter themselves and their mounts.

So why any interest in the post of Fort Worth? Because, unlike most such places on the Texas plains, it metamorphosed into a bustling metropolis, also known as Fort Worth.

In this handsome publication, Richard Selcer and William B. Potter have shown by text and illustration how the government, through its agent the Army, approached the problem of red horsemen marauding south of Red River.

Architectural drawings, some superimposed on a map of present Fort Worth, convey the sense of how it was to serve in that long ago army, and
Selcer's meticulously noted and documented discussion ranks with Robert Wooster's studies of the western military.

The book will be useful, too, for Fort Worth visitors and residents who wish to know where the post stood in relation to the present county courthouse and its support structures.

Max S. Lale
Marshall and Fort Worth


This slim volume traces the origin, history, and duties of the Texas State Guard in its various forms. As the organization currently exists, it is separate and distinct from the National Guard. The Texas State Guard is designed to take the place of the National Guard as the state militia whenever the National Guard is called into the service of the United States. Both state and federal law produced the State Guard, and membership requirements vary considerably from the National Guard.

The book is chronological with each chapter dedicated to that which the author deems significant during a particular period of development. In 1940, the United States Congress authorized states to create such militias, and here is where the importance of the volume picks up. The State Guard is particularly valuable in that it has served in many capacities such as riot control, fire and flood assistance, and general preservation of public safety. Specifically, the work outlines specific examples of the State Guard's preservation of peace, property, rescue, and crowd control in the aftermath of such disasters as the Texas City explosion of 1947, the Dallas tornado of 1957, and the frigid Central Texas winter of 1961.

By 1960, the State Guard gained authorization to receive monies from county and city governments, and it formed a closer liaison with the National Guard, even gaining access to the armories. The book is informative and a good sketch of the State Guard's activities, especially for those readers who may be unfamiliar with the subject.

James W. Pohl
Southwest Texas State University


The personal odyssey by Dr. Fields is a delightfully unique marriage of his autobiography and the chronicle of the great Texas Medical Center from its infancy to the present.

The scope and purpose enlightens the reader as to the uncanny association of Dr. Fields with Sir William Osler, General Douglas MacArthur, and many other great people while the content spells out the details of the
relentless growth of this all important medical institution.

The Houston Odyssey started in 1949 when after finishing his neurology residency at St. Louis, Dr. and Mrs. Fields responded to an invitation to visit Baylor Medical School. It was the only completed building resting right in the middle of a large area of undeveloped land. Soon philanthropic money, the life-blood of great institutions, began flowing from the Cullens, the M.D. Andersons, the Jesse Jones family, and there never was a cessation of building.

A dream in the heart of Dr. Ernst Wm. Bertner during the 1930s started it all. His vision was that a great collection of medical institutions, schools, hospitals, and research centers embracing multiple phases of medicine, all within easy reach of each other, would top off many other traits of Houston. In 1942 the M.D. Anderson Foundation was funded by the estate of the same name. A large community of Houston's most influential doctors asked Dr. Bartner to approach the Foundation about establishing a medical center. He persuaded the trustees to purchase 134 acres of city property adjacent to Hermann Park. A referendum was voted positively by the people of Houston and the dream became reality. In 1943 Baylor Medical School of Dallas moved into the old Sears, Roebuck Warehouse and the school's new building was the center jewel of the new complex. Bertner lived to see the completion only of the medical school.

As Dr. Fields treats the steady march of new additions - Children's, Methodist, St. Luke's, Hermann, M.D. Anderson and on and on - he brings in with candor tempered by gentleness and humor some of the monumental egos of the mighty scientists (like DeBakey) who came to the center.

This book, although full of detail and personal anecdotes, reads rapidly and satisfies.

Wayman B. Norman
Longview, Texas


In recent years several books have appeared on early Fort Worth and the Fort Worth stockyards. Here, written in a lively fashion, is the first full-length history of Fort Worth's Southwestern Exposition and Livestock Show. Without notes to research materials and only a short essay on sources, the book perhaps has only limited appeal to scholars. But it is a good study that, as the title suggests, treats the show's history over a one-hundred-year period with emphasis on individuals who have played significant roles in its long development. More than fifty pictures enhance the work.

In many ways the book is a business history of the stock show; it examines the show's financial struggles in its early years through the Great Depression of the 1930s and from then in greater detail its economic successes to the 1990s. But it also covers the show's rodeo events, its entertainers (who ranged from "Booger Red" Privett, Quanah Parker, and Bill Pickett in the early years to Roy Rogers, Dale Evans, and other national celebrities in more recent
years), its educational functions, and many other aspects.

Unfortunately for the author, a novelist, the show’s official records dating before 1942 were lost in a Fort Worth flood. But using newspaper accounts, secondary sources, and personal memoirs, he has, with the help of an English professor, put together an engaging study of the Fort Worth stock show that will be of interest to those who attend the annual event.

Paul H. Carlson
Texas Tech University


This handsome and well written book by the assistant director of special collections and adjunct faculty member at UTA is most aptly named. Certainly no other higher education institution in this state (and I suspect few in the nation) has changed its structure of control, name, and role and scope of academic offerings so frequently and dramatically as has UTA.

Arlington College was established by community leaders to provide elementary and secondary education in a town with no public schools until 1902. After then, it operated as a military academy/vocational school for the next fifteen years under four different names. In 1917 it became a state supported junior college branch of Texas A&M, which it remained (with three different names) until 1959, when it became a four-year campus. The college and the Dallas-Fort Worth area complained for decades that the A&M system held back Arlington State out of fear that the urban branch might threaten College Station. They were correct. So in 1965, a mutually acceptable divorce was enacted by the legislature and Arlington State became a part of The University of Texas system. It received its present name two years later and with the strong support of the UT system, embarked on a path of dramatic change into the large, complex, and comprehensive urban university it is today.

Saxon focuses his work on the administrative and academic aspects of the institution, but he certainly does not ignore student life and campus culture. Undoubtedly the book will appeal primarily to those with a UTA experience, but it offers important insights for anyone interested in the development of public higher education in the last century.

James V. Reese
Stephen F. Austin State University


Roy Stryker was appointed in 1935 as head of the Historical Section of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Farm Security Administration. Initially his purpose
was public relations, to sell the country on one of FDR's Depression programs, the Resettlement Program - housing developments for displaced farm workers. Believing in the power of the picture over the power of the written word, Stryker hired a battery of professional photographers and sent them throughout the forty-eight states to photograph the story of this new Democratic program.

*Picturing Texas* is the result of the coverage this state received by such outstanding documentary and artistic photographers as Russell Lee, Dorothea Lange, Arthur Rothstein, John Vachon, and Jack Delano. What began as assignments to cover a federal project, however, grew under the talents and personalities of these photographers into a study of Americans - Texans, in our case - in an intense period of their history. *Picturing Texas* is a photographic documentary of Texans coping with their environment, struggling to survive the Dust Bowl, the Depression, and a world war.

Editor Robert Reid wrote the excellent descriptive text and selected the pictures for this book. Fittingly, the Texas State Historical Association published it. Anyone interested in the social history of the 1930s should read *Picturing Texas* and soak up the personalities in the pictures.

*Picturing Texas* opens with a chapter on the Dust Bowl. Farmers had plowed and planted the Great Plains for over fifty years. In the 1930s, weather conditions were such that springtime northers could pick up the surface soil of Kansas and move it down to the Texas Panhandle. Great black clouds of dust rolled in and covered crops and fence lines and outhouses. Food, milk, clothes, everything was covered in gritty sand. Arthur Rothstein's "Fleeing a Dust Storm" pictures a farmer and two small children running to their shack as a grey sand tide rolls down to cover them. Dorothea Lange's "Migrant Mother" - as classic a piece of art work as any Renaissance Madonna and Child - shows the result of being dusted out by Texas dry-land farmers.

Author-editor Reid divided the book into chapters illustrating the cotton, cattle, and oil industries, migratory workers, and among other headings, "San Augustine." Russell Lee, whose photographic collection now resides at The University of Texas, took most of the San Augustine pictures and his coverage gives a vivid depiction of small town East Texas during the Depression.

John Vachon came to the Texas assignment late in 1941 and 1942, but his oil field photographs are the best of that industry before major mechanization.

Government interest shifted from the agrarian economy to wartime industrial economy in 1942, and the FSA was absorbed by the OWI, the Office of War Information. The purpose of Stryker's History Section became more and more pointed to wartime propaganda. In 1943 Stryker left the department, which closed down the picture project. The last pictures he supervised were of Americans going to World War II.

The world in *Picturing Texas* is a long way from our 1990s. Looking through these pictures, one sees a poorer and simpler time with fewer cars on the roads, fewer people on streets, less clutter in houses - fewer "things." In the pre-WWII agrarian Texas men's faces were white above the eyebrows and burnt brownish-red below from working ten-hour days in the sun where there was no air conditioning and when working outside all day was a necessity and
a norm. It is good history – and it is a Kodak book filled with our kinfolics’
pictures that bring back all sorts of reminiscences.

F.E. Abernethy
Nacogdoches, Texas

*Babe: The Life and Legend of Babe Didrikson Zaharias*, by Susan E. Cayleff
(University of Illinois Press, 1325 South Oak Street, Champaign, IL

The author of *Babe: The Life and Legend of Babe Didrikson Zaharias*,
Susan Cayleff, became interested in the East Texas sportswoman after seeing
the movie, *Babe*, on late-night television. Cayleff realized that she was living
in the Galveston area where Babe fought her valiant but losing battle with
cancer, and that she was in the area where the Babe was raised. Cayleff began
to search for what Paul Harvey calls “the rest of the story.” After much
research and many interviews, Susan Cayleff gives the reader two versions of
Babe’s life – “as she lived it and as she said she lived it.” Cayleff was greatly
assisted by the medical records of UTMB at Galveston and John Sealy-Smith
Hospital, the Babe Didrikson Museum, and the archives of Babe’s collection
of material at the Mary and John Gray Library on the campus of Lamar
University, Beaumont, Texas.

The book chronicles Babe’s life from her birth in 1911 to her death in
1956. Her early years were spent in poverty in Port Arthur and Beaumont.
Babe was one of eight children of Hannah and Ole Didrikson. The inconsist­
encies began early because, according to Cayleff, Babe began at an early age
to “fib” about the facts of her life – she claimed several different birth years,
she changed the spelling of her last name, and she denied her Scandinavian
heritage. Babe’s father was reportedly a notorious “story teller” and “stretcher
of the truth.” Some think Babe “caught” her habit of avoiding the truth from
Ole Didrikson.

Babe was a physical phenomenon from her early years until her death. She
could perform any physical skill better than anyone in the East Texas Gulf Cost
region. She shunned the traditional feminine gender role in terms of her behavior,
her looks, her dress, and her ability. Three primary traits described Babe from her
early life to her death: she was a fierce competitor; she was self-congratulatory;
and she expressed unconditional love and generosity of her family.

Cayleff chronicles Babe’s early athletic achievements as a track and field
star in high school and in the Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 1932, where she
shattered records in the javelin throw, the 80-meter hurdles, and the high jump.
She also describes Babe’s experiences as an outstanding basketball player in the
AAU league; her barn-storming days as a ball player for the all-male baseball
team known as the House of David; and her athletic success as a bowler and a
tennis player. The final chapter of the book are about Babe’s incomparable record
as the greatest golfer of all times – winner of eighty-two tournaments in eighteen
years. Babe also spent some time at boxing, wrestling, and football!

Cayleff follows the lead of recent sport historians by going public with the truth
of Babe Didrikson Zaharias’s personal life. Babe, however, fought the appearance
and label of masculinity and lesbianism even on her death bed. The once negative stereotype for women in sport emerged as a much loved, normal, sportswoman, "who made cancer mentionable and tolerable to the American people."

Cayleff is eloquent in her final summation where she states that "In death Babe achieved a level of public approval, purposefulness, and valor that transcended all of her athletic honors."

Babe changed the cultural perception of women who possessed strong athletic abilities and skill. She opened the door for women in sport and showed they could command money for their performance. Cayleff makes the case for and succeeds in convincing this reader that Babe Didrikson Zaharias was truly deserving of the title "the greatest female athlete of the first half of the twentieth century."

Carolyn Mitchell
Stephen F. Austin State University


H.L. Mencken's battle in 1926 against attempts by Boston's Watch and Ward Society to censor his "American Mercury" charged the intellectual batteries of a young Harvard student named Stanley Marcus.

Seven decades later, the batteries are still sufficiently charged to illuminate whatever First Amendment issues arise. At age ninety, the book-loving Neiman-Marcus merchant prince whose religion is the Bill of Rights just keeps on going, and going, and going.

Librarian of Southern Methodist University's DeGolyer Library, now housing the Marcus Papers, David Farmer writes a finely tuned appreciation of Big D's bearded author and bibliophile familiarly known as Mr. Stanley:

"H.L. Mencken's eloquent plea on behalf of freedom of the press gave Stanley Marcus an example and inspiration. When he returned to Dallas, his resolve would be tested by issues as diverse as the attempted suppression of art in the city's museum and the oppression of a high school student with long hair."

SMU Professor Marshall Terry called him a man of the world rooted in his city and region "who has stood for intelligence, grace, courage and culture in our midst... He early founded the Book Club of Texas and has continued to be a consummate bookman while defending at many strategic times the freedom to think and to express ideas and to publish, read and write."

This edition from TCU Press answers the need for a paperback version a hardback that in its original limited edition by Still Point Press sold for $115.

The author weaves into his narrative many leading book figures, among them Carl Hertzog, J. Frank Dobie, Henry Nash Smith, Tom Lea, Paul Horgan, Lon Tinkle, and Allen Maxwell.

I wanted to learn more about the bohemian friends of Stanley Marcus in Dallas in the late 1920s and early 1930s — artists Jerry Bywaters, Alexander
Hogue, Olin Travis, Tom Stell, Otis Dozier, architects David Williams and O’Neil Ford, and my favorite Dallas character from the period, Horace McCoy, who wrote “They Shoot Horses, Don’t They?”

I hope that will be another book.

Kent Biffle
The Dallas Morning News


The world according to coffee? It is more stimulating, it is wittier, and—well, it is downright the most aromatic thing imaginable. And it is altogether “documentable.”

Ernestine Sewell Linck’s coffee book, *How the Cimarron River Got Its Name and Other Stories About Coffee*, is one for the table, both the gastronomic one and the living area one even though its size and extent of illustration is less impressive than one thinks of as a “coffee table” volume. It’s a tasty read.

Did you know, for example, why tea became “the cup that cheers” in England instead of coffee, despite the fervor for that beverage found in its flourishing seventeenth-century coffee houses?

Are you interested in anecdotal lore?

Have you lost your recipe for “Mocha Frosted Punch?” Like to have a new coffee recipe or two?

Do you know where to find a bibliography of 100-plus items of material pertaining to coffee that includes such sources as *Texas Catholic*, *Indian Cookin’*, and Jean La Rogue’s *Voyage de l’Arabie Heureuse*? It’s there.

Would you like to know about—or be reminded of—J. Frank Dobie’s “Good Coffee Is a State of Mind?” Look no further than the Epilogue of Ernestine’s book for the complete text to this essay.

Furthermore, if you’d like some reinforcement for that argument to continue imbibing and/or otherwise ingesting those caffeine-laden coffee concoctions, you can readily find adequate resource material for your case in novelist-columnist Clay Reynolds’ Foreword, which is an encomium [a rambling encomium, if you will] to coffee.

Ouida Whitaker Dean
Nacogdoches, Texas