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Book Reviews

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Del Weniger, professor emeritus of biology at Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio, has researched Texas wildlife in the field and in literature for the past fifty years. This volume of The Explorers' Texas is based on his research in the early literature and the historical records of the first Europeans who began coming to Texas in the sixteenth century and continued until they had populated the state in the nineteenth century.

Weniger's purpose in The Animals They Found is to describe what the early Texas explorers saw on their travels, when the animal populations were in their pristine states, before Texans began to plow and plant.

What these first explorers of Texas saw was the prairies of Texas covered with vast herds of animals – like the teeming plains of the Serengeti in African wildlife films. Buffaloes roamed in herds of tens of thousands, seasonally migrating to greener pastures as the wildebeest of Africa still do. White-tailed deer boldly ranged the open prairies in immense herds, as did the antelope, only on a smaller scale. The mighty elk walked the northern part of the Texas plains and forests, and bighorn sheep climbed the mountains west of the Pecos.

The huge populations of buffaloes and deer – and all other wildlife, for that matter – diminished east of the Trinity, where a large, settled population of Caddo Indians not only harvested them for food but occupied their wandering, breeding, and feeding space.

Just as the Serengeti has lions and hyenas and leopards to control the mass populations, the Texas meat market had bears and panthers and packs of wolves. These predators followed the great herds, feeding on the old and crippled and the dying weak.

Weniger paints this large picture of the relations that exist among these animals, but he also describes in detail and with documentation the state of the individual animals. He talks about how they appeared to the explorers and the impact of settlement on their herds – how the great herds of prairie deer became the furtive bucks and does that haunt the wooded areas of nowadays Texas. And how millions of buffalo were slaughtered for their hides and humps and the grass they grazed on. And how the bears and cougars and wolves – the varmints! – were hunted to the very edge of extinction.

Javelinas came as far east as the Cross Timbers, jaguars stalked their prey in south Texas and the hill country, and ocelots prowled their way to East Texas and beyond. There were grey foxes in Texas but no reds, who were imported for Southern fox hunters. Also imported but quickly adapting to the Texas range were the feral hogs and wild cattle and horse herds that used the great Texas pastures. Badgers and squirrels and coons and possums and skunks – prairie dogs and jack rabbits – they were here then and are here now.
The mind boggles at the vision of the Texas wildlife before Europeans came and filled the state to the very corners of the brim. And part of Del Weniger’s purpose is to make the reader think not only of where we have been but where we are going. We have come some way, from abundance in the sixteenth century to a frightening scarcity in the 1930s, when folks farmed every tillable inch of soil just to survive. The movement to the cities from WWII onward has created large forested and uncultivated areas in the state, and the animal population is large compared to what it was during the Depression. At the same time, clear-cutting and industrialization have decimated the forests and polluted the streams that wildlife depends upon. So, who knows what madness or wisdom the future will come up with and what effect it will have on where the deer and the antelope play in Texas.

Del Weniger’s *The Animals They Found* is the very readable and scholarly beginning to any understanding of the way animals once were on the Texas frontier. We must not forget.

Francis Edward Abernethy  
Stephen F. Austin State University


While colorful images of Plains Indian lifeways are very much alive in most minds, explaining the complex history behind those lifeways is a daunting task. Paul Carlson’s *The Plains Indians* is the first serious attempt in several years. It fills the need for a fresh look at the traditional period of horse culture (A.D. 1750-1890), one that can interest lay readers or anchor a college class, and it is organized as a survey course might be. The chapters explore demographics, prehistory, horse and bison, the economy, organization, social conventions, ceremony and belief, trade and diplomacy, war and peace, and reservation life. An epilogue reviews twentieth-century developments.

A general text must show that Plains culture was at once uniform and highly dynamic, give complete coverage without resorting to laundry lists, and provide memorable specific examples. In this balancing act *The Plains Indians* is quite successful. It is beautifully crafted in prose that is clear, yet varied and pitched high enough for studious readers. It covers Southern Plains peoples better than earlier references, which are often “Sioux-centric.” The book reflects contemporary interpretive trends by heeding the economic and strategic motivations behind Indian activities. There is a fine debunking of Indian-cavalry warfare. Another strength is the thorough treatment of prehistory.

For detail there is much reliance on dated overviews, so in some spots the author is hampered by the literature he is improving upon. Few specialists today would apply the term “priest” to Plains ritualists as liberally as Robert Lowie did in 1954. The Comanches did indeed have military societies, though they were not as prominent as those of the Lakotas or Cheyennes. But such
matters are relative minor ones that can be addressed in the classroom, and *The Plains Indians* remains an effective narrative history.

Daniel J. Gelo  
The University of Texas, San Antonio


Montgomery County, located north of Harris County, is one of the most rapidly developing areas in Texas with Lake Conroe and the master-planned communities of The Woodlands and Kingwood particularly attracting new settlers. The past is often lost in the scramble for everything new. In view of this, the publication of *Montgomery County, Texas: Picture of a Dream Coming True*, attempts to preserve the heritage of the area through photographic record.

Margaret Simpson, on behalf of the Heritage Museum of Montgomery County located in Conroe, has prepared this table-top pictorial history. The book contains the history of Montgomery County from 1830 to World War II, focusing primarily on economic development. The extensive collection of historic photographs displays settlers, homesteads, the impact of the railroad on a rural area, and the establishment of several towns and communities long forgotten. Readers learn the early history of Montgomery County (the third county established in Texas); agricultural history, such as tobacco farms and the seven cigar factories that existed in Willis; the major lumber industry that transformed the area in and around Conroe, including The Woodlands; and drilling for oil. The photographic collection, especially of sawmills and farms, will appeal to all readers.

*Montgomery County, Texas: Picture of a Dream Coming True* fills an important niche in the preservation of local and state history. The book contains 300 photographs, contributed by area residents, descendants, and the Heritage Museum.

Theresa Kurk McGinley  
North Harris College

*Austin, A History of the Capital City*, David C. Humphrey (Texas State Historical Association, 2.306 Sid Richardson Hall, University Station, Austin, TX 78712) 1997. Contents. Notes, Index. P. 75. $7.95. Paperback.

After reading David C. Humphrey's *Austin: A History of the Capital City*, my first impulse was to write Southwest Airlines and all other air carriers serving Austin to recommend that all incoming passengers be provided individual copies of this brief volume. To new arrivals in the second fastest growing city in the United States, it offers an entertaining and highly informative introduction to Texas' capital city.
From a frontier outpost to a high-tech metropolis, Humphrey takes a broad overview of the city's century-and-a-half history. Within sixty-one, fact-filled pages, he examines site selection; accessibility, "roads that were 'impassable - not even jack-assable'" (p. 4); the first state-house, "'the abode of bats, lizards, and stray cattle'" (p. 7); Austin during the Confederacy; emergence as a seat of learning; last days as a frontier town, "'Austin was ... filled with cowmen, flush of money, rearing to spend it on gambling, booze, and the women of the night'" (p. 29); segregation, "'None but the best white society will be admitted'" (p. 36); and contemporary Austin, a residential mecca, high-tech hot spot, as well as the "Live Music Capital of the World." In conclusion, Humphrey explores the ongoing civic struggle between the no-growth and pro-growth factions.

Although this delightful little book provides a quick reference to the history of Austin, Texas, the footnotes contains a wealth of material for those who wish to explore the topic further.

Ken Ragsdale
Austin, Texas


Gary Cartwright does an excellent job in relating the story of Galveston Island. He discusses the "ghosts" that inhabited the island, starting with Karankawa Indians, Spanish conquistadors, pirates, and Jane Long. He then describes the development of society on the island, including the significant families who ruled economically and politically. Galveston has a rich heritage. At one time, the island was the biggest port city in Texas. It has had its share of natural disasters, especially the hurricane that destroyed the city in 1900, still considered the worst disaster in United States history. Cartwright also describes the casinos, clubs, prostitution, and speakeasies that enabled the island to prosper even in the depths of the Great Depression. He writes about the families who held a monopoly in banking, hotels, and exporting businesses on the island for more than a century, and concludes with the monopoly finally being destroyed by outside families moving to the island.

The book is written from the perspective of a journalist; it is a refreshing change. The style Cartwright uses makes this a page turner for the serious student or the lay reader, who discovers a city that had a great impact on the history of Texas as well as the United States. If the reader wants to research the history of Galveston Island further, they can not easily review Cartwright's sources because he does not include footnotes or a bibliography.

Liza T. Powers
Nacogdoches, Texas

While numerous accounts exist, an up-to-date book on the Battle of Goliad has been needed. In attempting to fill this void in Texas historiography, Hopewell ably narrated the story of Colonel James W. Fannin, his officers, and the soldiers commanded by them at the Presidio La Bahia. He correctly noted that the Goliad massacre solidified United States opposition to Mexico. Recognizing the indecisiveness and ineffectiveness of Fannin's leadership, Hopewell concluded that Fannin achieved authentic Texas hero status but not at the level of Sam Houston, Ben Milam, James Bowie, and William B. Travis. This interesting book also contains a helpful analysis of Harbert Davenport's "The Men of Goliad" from the Southwestern Historical Quarterly of July 1937, and biographical sketches of prominent people in the Goliad massacre. These are commendable contributions.

Did Hopewell fill the void? Regretfully, the cup has been half filled. In analyzing the impact of Goliad at San Jacinto, the author underestimated the number of Houston's soldiers, overestimated Santa Anna's forces, and omitted the important inspirational the rallying cry: Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad!

James Robinson deserved a better description than Hopewell's claim of disappearing into oblivion. Robinson moved to California where he promoted a transcontinental railroad from El Paso. This interesting book did not supersede the important entries regarding Goliad in the New Handbook of Texas, but, Hopewell has written the best book-length account of this important event.

Irvin M. May, Jr.
Blinn College at Bryan


There were over 10,000 separate engagements during the American Civil War. Large or small, each has a story to tell. The authors of The Battle of Glorieta Pass have written an interesting and lively account of a relatively small but important battle that effectively ended any Confederate threat to occupy lands farther west. The expansion of slavery into new territories and the need for Pacific ports prodded the Confederate government to move out of Texas into New Mexico. Glorieta Pass was a watershed in the war in New Mexico; the Confederate army was forced to leave, never making a serious effort to invade the far West again.

Glorieta Pass was (is) located at the southern end of the Sangre de Cristo
Mountains, twenty miles southeast of Santa Fe, on the Santa Fe Trail. The battle involved three engagements. March 26 saw a light skirmish at Apache Canyon, on the western slope of the pass. Major Charles L. Pyron lost one-fourth of his command of 300 Texans; the Union army of 400, led by Major John M. Chivington, incurred few losses. March 27 was a day that anticipated more fighting, but saw none, as both sides prepared to contest the pass. Reinforcements swelled Confederate ranks to 1100, now led by Colonel William “Dirty Shirt” Scurry, former San Augustine, Texas, resident. The Union army of 900 was led by Colonel John Slough and boasted superior artillery power. Both armies set out to attack on the morning of March 28, meeting at Pigeon’s Ranch. Heavy fighting continued for five hours; Slough and Scurry finally retreated to respective ends of the pass. The Rebels lost 111 men, four of whom were officers. The Union army counted 138 casualties. While the Rebels claimed victory, their ranks were depleted. Confederate supply wagons had been destroyed by Major Chivington.

Useful maps show the different phases of each day’s battle movements. The appendix gives a detailed account of the men who were killed, wounded, or taken prisoner. Twenty-eight pictures add a personal touch to the human drama. The writing is crisp, the story is exciting, and the scholarship is solid. Enough detail keeps the reader interested without getting bogged down in trivia. While the authors draw some interesting analogies between the Battle of Glorieta Pass and the Battle of Gettysburg (Pennsylvania), they do not claim that the two battles were equal.

Perhaps of special interest to readers of this journal is the fact that the Fourth Texas Mounted Volunteers infantry regiment was led by Nacogdoches merchant Major Henry Raguet. Fighting nobly, Raguet was killed late in the day on March 28. He was thirty-six years old. You will enjoy this book about an important slice of Civil War history.

Randy Harshbarger
Nacogdoches, Texas


In this carefully researched volume, Dale Baum of Texas A&M University traces the course of Texas politics from the late antebellum period through the election of Edmund J. Davis as governor in 1869. Baum’s work, which includes thirty-eight tables, nine maps, copious notes, and an appendix, is not for the casual reader but is designed for the serious student seeking a better understanding of the complexities of Texas politics during this troubled period of history.

Baum provides a rich storehouse of data along with numerous conclusions based upon utilization of a sophisticated statistical technique known as
ecological regression. This permits him to make estimates or probabilities of how individuals and groups of individuals voted in elections for governor, the Confederate Congress, and membership in various conventions during the Civil War and Reconstruction. Some of his findings are new, others confirm assumptions historians have made earlier. He shows, for example, that Sam Houston won the governor's race in 1859 not because of a shift in voter sentiment, as has been believed traditionally, but because Houston attracted new voters and previous non-voters while Hardin Runnels failed to mobilize one-third of his voters in 1857.

In analyzing the vote for secession, Baum points out that Germans and Disciples of Christ provided the strongest anti-secession vote. Support for secession was greatest in wealthy plantation areas with sizable numbers of native-born whites with Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian religious affiliations. Surprisingly, these secessionists favored moderate Edward Clark in the governor's race in 1861, while unionists and nonslaveholders backed Francis R. Lubbock, who had been an ardent supporter of Southern rights in the late antebellum period. Baum concludes that Lubbock's victory was due in large part to the "amazing, if not fraudulent, efforts for him" (p. 97) in his home county of Harris.

Baum skillfully describes the problems associated with registration and voting in the post-Civil War period. Although he found some evidence of corruption in the governor's race in 1869, he believes Edmund J. Davis would still have won in a free and fair election.

This is a solid piece of historical investigation that adds to our understanding of the Civil War-Reconstruction era.

Ralph A. Wooster
Lamar University


In *John Bell Hood And the Struggle for Atlanta*, David Coffey offers a bare-bones treatment of the Atlanta Campaign in which Union forces under Major General William T. Sherman captured this Southern stronghold city.

John Bell Hood was born to a prosperous family in Kentucky. His father, who was a physician, wanted him to pursue a career in medicine, but Hood "fancied a military life" (P. 14). With the help of an uncle who was in Congress, Hood obtained an appointment to West Point. He was not a good student and lack of discipline nearly resulted in his dismissal. Hood was graduated forty-fourth out of fifty-two in his class in 1853.

The young subaltern longed for a posting in the cavalry, but his class standing dictated otherwise, so he began his active career in the infantry. When he learned of the formation of a new cavalry regiment in Missouri, Hood man-
aged an assignment in it. Soon the regiment was transferred to Texas, where Hood was wounded in fighting against the Comanches.

When the secession crisis came in 1861, there was never any question which side Hood would follow. Since Kentucky did not secede, he resigned his commission and entered Confederate service from the State of Texas, his adopted land. Hood distinguished himself on the battlefield at Yorktown and quickly rose through the ranks. He was promoted to brigadier general in March 1862, and led a brigade throughout the Peninsula Campaign, Seven Days battles, Second Manassas, and Sharpsburg. After Fredericksburg, he was promoted to major general. At Gettysburg, where a wound rendered his left arm nearly useless, he commanded a division. At Chickamauga he lost his right leg. He became a lieutenant general in February 1864.

On July 17, 1864, Adjutant and Inspector General Samuel Cooper telegraphed General Joseph E. Johnston that the Confederate high command had lost confidence in his ability to repel or defeat the enemy approaching Atlanta, and relieved him. Hood took command of the Army of Tennessee and the forces around Atlanta. The following weeks produced a series of battles around Atlanta, but nothing, not even Hood’s battlefield talents, could stem the tide of the Union advance. On September 1, 1864, Hood was forced to evacuate the city.

Coffey’s book is light-weight, but that is not to say it is without value. The coverage is adequate for a biographical sketch of Hood and a basic understanding of the campaign. Also useful are the Orders of Battle for Union and Confederate forces during the Atlanta Campaign and the thumbnail sketches of the major participants which form a substantial portion of the text.

Dennis Bradford
Nacogdoches, Texas


These two novels are satirical, and both are serious explorations of a past which is all too often still present.

Jewel Gibson’s mock anti-hero, the aging “Uncle Josh,” operates in his small, provincial, early twentieth-century community as the East Texas embodiment of “Alpha male,” having long simultaneously served as the (white) constable, Church of Christ minister, president of the local school board, and otherwise arbiter of values, often including those of God himself. In contrast, Ed Shrake’s Pete Hermano McGill, the “Blessed,” struts on a larger stage, one that encompasses not only the San Antonio/Austin area, but
other Southwestern frontier and northern Mexican regions as well.

Joshua Beene contends with the town's Baptists, its Methodists, its infidels, and his own parishioners for local control; and, a young Negro man has his place in the plot. McGill's society, as might be expected, is more heterogeneous: it includes European immigrants, Spaniards, Mexicans, borderers, Indians from varying tribes, and persons of mixed-race.

McGill, another "Alpha male," is the son of an Irish immigrant who came to Texas in 1835 and participated in the storming of Bexar, having found New York City uninhabitable. His educated mother is a San Antonio Catholic of upper class Spanish descent. Growing up there on the Indian frontier among epic adventurers, "Blessed" becomes a fighter whose competence in communication and prowess in bouts of mortal combat gain him the respect of all manner of men, his nickname itself referring to his miraculous survival abilities. The novel abounds in, to this reader, interesting expository passages which may prove slow-paced to some. They are appropriate from a literary viewpoint in that the novel is in the form of a memoir being written by McGill.

The multicultural milieu created by Shrake enables him to depict a profoundly complex character in McGill, the explorer, gold seeker, sometime horse thief, lover, and writer. Despite the brutality encountered and participated in by "Blessed," he develops a remarkable capacity for tolerance, understanding, and philosophical inquiry into the ontological questions mankind continually raises — i.e., in his case, the lore of Presbyterian, Catholic, or savage.

"Uncle Josh's" aggression finds expression in less physically brutal confrontations, but it is nevertheless insidious in its arrogant certitude. Gibson ingeniously uses description, character, and plot by interweaving Josh's observations of the natural world and the subsequent "revelations" he interprets from them. Her novel is characterized by its authentic tone, created by an omniscient narrator using the vernacular language with which she was so familiar (Gibson also wrote Black Gold), and by the effective use of vernacular in direct quotes.

These volumes not only entertain; they cause us to look at violence and intolerance from the safe distance of time while obliquely reminding us that they remain problematic as the twenty-first century approaches.

Ouida Whitaker Dean
Nacogdoches, Texas

Land is the Cry!: Warren Angus Ferris, Pioneer Texas Surveyor and Founder of Dallas County, Susanne Starling (Texas State Historical Association, 2.306 Sid Richardson Hall, University of Texas, Austin, TX 78712) 1998. Contents. Illust. Append. Index. P. 248. $29.95. Hardcover.

Susanne Starling has written about the life of Warren A. Ferris from his early years in New York State to his last days in Dallas County. Warren Ferris made his way in Texas as a land surveyor and promoter of immigration into the
Republic. His appointment as District Surveyor of Nacogdoches District led him into the Three Forks of the Trinity River region to layout the tracts of land to be sold to the pioneer settlers in Dallas county. Skirmishes with Indians, mosquitoes, bitter cold norther, and impassable rivers were routine hazards of the work. The magic in Starling’s work is her ability to convey to the reader the mindset and the motivation of the pioneer immigrant into early northeast Texas.

Ferris was a learned man and a prolific writer of letters to family, friends, and business associates. This great body of correspondence has been preserved and is the primary source for Starlings’ recounting of his life and times. The tribulations of frontier life and the scramble to “make it” on the terms dictated by frontier conditions are brought to life in this recounting of Ferris’ tale.

Starling’s recounting of Warren Ferris’ life is a very interesting story. But it also stands out as a thoroughly researched and well-documented description of frontier Texas in the early days of the Republic. The voluminous footnotes attest to the vast amount of material from which the story is gleaned. For the surveying community of Texas, this book should be required reading. For the historical community it is desired reading.

Dan Hampton
Mt. Pleasant, Texas


Those who remember hearing the Light Crust Doughboys and the Early Birds on radio, or who were fascinated by the test patterns when television first was broadcast from WBAP-TV in Fort Worth in 1948, will appreciate the nostalgia Richard Schroeder recalls. A younger generation which finds it difficult to imagine life without radio and television will be fascinated by the brief, brash history of those industries in Texas.

Neither radio nor television was considered a legitimate money-making industry in the beginning. The first documented use of a “wireless station” was in 1911 at Texas A&M in College Station. Radio in that era was a toy “experimented with” by amateurs.

It was not until 1921 that Amon G. Carter, publisher of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, and executives of The Dallas Morning News became interested in radio because it was viewed as a threat to their newspapers. That same year, Alfred P. Daniel of Houston spoke into a set rigged up in a Quaker Oats box and asked anyone who heard to telephone him, and William P. Clarke of Waco listened to a series of dots and dashes on a crystal radio receiver and yelled the play-by-play of the Texas A&M football game out the window. The first Texas license for a radio station was granted to WRR in Dallas on August 4, 1921. Municipally owned WRR’s primary purpose was to reach Dallas firemen so trucks could be dispatched from one fire to another.
Amon Carter told his circulation manager, Harold Hough, to set up a radio station with the admonition, “We’ll put $300 in this radio thing, and when that’s gone, we’re out of the radio business.” By the 1930s, when the station started to make money, it was $500,000 in debt. WBAP-TV went on the air on September 27, 1948, to televise a visit of President Harry S Truman to Fort Worth when the FCC authorized the telecast as a “signal test.” There were 400 television sets in the Fort Worth-Dallas area at the time.

The first television license in Houston was issued to W. Albert Lee, who filed an application several months before Bill Hobby and the *Houston Post* did so. The station, called KLEE-TV, began broadcasting from a Quonset hut studio in 1949. In the spring of 1950, the *Houston Post* purchased KLEE-TV for $743,000 and changed the call letters to KPRC-TV.

Amon Carter signed a contract with RCA on September 23, 1949, to purchase color transmitting equipment—four years before the color television system was approved. Texas’ first color television was broadcast by WBAP-TV, Channel 5, on May 15, 1954. At that time, there were 125 color sets in the Fort Worth-Dallas area. At the annual convention of the National Association of Broadcasters in 1963, Harold V. Hough, the circulation manager who started WBAP in 1922 and television in Texas by building WRAP-TV, was named “Dean of American Broadcasters.”

The history of radio and television in Texas is filled with visionaries and risk takers who succeeded largely because “nobody ever told us we couldn’t.” Schroeder has recorded their amazing story.

Cissy Stewart Lale
Fort Worth


Hamilton Park is the story of a black community built by bankers, insurance company presidents, department store executives, and newspaper publishers. The first residents moved into the subdivision in 1954. Hamilton went through crucial changes in its development. “In a time of national and local racial transition, Hamilton Park shifted from a white-led project to a black-controlled community” (p. 53). Some thought the subdivision would create a ghetto; others viewed it as removing the blacks into their own enclaves to save them from daily racial cruelties.

Wilson was critical of historians for their misuse of the word community, stating that blacks are divided by income, class, status, and religion and are forced into a common mold only because the white majority denies them their full humanity. Therefore the blacks of Hamilton Park did not form a community in any meaningful sense of the word.

Wilson explained how the whites resisted blacks moving into their
neighborhoods by terrorizing them and not allowing them to develop and build houses close by. Wilson discussed problems concerning the development of Hamilton Park, such as FHA, utilities, roads, transportation, and loans. He claims that blacks were prevented from building closer than 200 feet of a white and that a "planting screen" would separate the races. "But if you set up a Negro community on an island in the Pacific Ocean," he concluded, "I guess the fish would rise in protest." Hamilton Park was viewed as one more straw in the wind bringing sweeping changes in many areas of life. Wilson achieved his purpose by informing the reader of the circumstances leading up to the development of the Hamilton Park subdivision. He is well informed, as he shows in his analyses and discussions. Readers will find the horrors that the blacks had to endure and the advances they made by building schools, gymnasiums, parks, shopping malls, churches, factories, and companies and organizing the black Civic League.

Wilson discussed all aspects of Hamilton Park from the beginning through 1990, and also showed the magnificent improvements through the years.

Faouzi Dhaini
Shreveport, Louisiana

A Frontier Texas Mercantile: The History of Gibbs Brothers and Company, Huntsville, 1841-1940, Donald R. Walker (Texas Review Press, P.O. Box 2146, English Department, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX 77341) 1997. Notes. Bibliography. Index. P. 181. $30.00. Hardback. [Signed, numbered. and boxed deluxe edition also available at $100.00]

This book is a thorough account of the first century of the business that the Texas Historical Commission has designated "the oldest...in Texas under original ownership and on [the] first site." Since the history of Gibbs Brothers is a microcosm of the economic activity of much of East Texas during the period considered, the book has more interest outside the immediate geographical area than do most grass-roots histories. The Gibbs Brothers acquired large holdings of land in the past century and continually added additional holdings. It is involved in timber, ranching, agriculture, mining, and resort development among, other things.

The first third of the book provides a general history of Huntsville as it touches on such events as martial law in 1871, cultural development (early colleges, including Austin College and Sam Houston Normal Institute), and societal attitudes (e.g, secession in 1861). The city's most celebrated resident, Sam Houston, makes an appearance in the ledgers of the firm, in addition to naming Thomas Gibbs - the founding brother - as executor of his will. Another economic activity of Gibbs Brothers grew out of the presence of a safe in the store. Sam Houston and other citizens of property left valuables there during their absence from the city, as the Gibbs probity was beyond question. This custom, and other bank-like activities, evolved into the Gibbs National Bank, predecessor of Huntsville's First National Bank.
Sandford Gibbs’ large personal fortune - his net worth at death was nearly $300,000 - laid the foundation for the modern company, but his widow, Sallie Smith Gibbs, put in place the mechanisms which allowed the land ownership, upon which the modern firm rests, to remain intact. This matriarch maintained an interest in every aspect of the business. She hired trusted deputies to keep an eye on the manner in which every parcel of land was used. Most important for the continued importance of the firm was the formal agreement that established Gibbs Brother and Company on December 30, 1916. The six Gibbs children pooled their inheritance in an ingenious manner as a result of Sallie Gibbs’ worries about the inherent unfairness of dividing land holdings, and the fact that descendants of less astute managers would not have the resources of other family members. This partnership agreement kept the wealth an organic whole, much the way primogeniture operated in Great Britain, except that ALL Gibbs descendants benefit.

The book is handsomely designed and has so many full-page photographs that it suggests a “mug book.” The award-winning author is a history professor at Texas Tech University; he is familiar to many in East Texas through his work on Texas convict leasing in the nineteenth century, *Penology for Profit*.

Paul M. Culp, Jr.
Sam Houston State University


Laurence Parent has written and illustrated with his own photographs a beautiful and useful guide to the state parks of Texas. The book does what it sets out to do; it provides a single-volume guide to the more than 125 state parks, natural areas, and historical sites administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Parent organized his subject into seven regional divisions with a view of making the guide most helpful to visitors. The general map of the state in the front of the book shows these regions and major cities, but unfortunately lacks locations of the individual sites listed, making it more difficult for motorists to plan routes across the entire state. Each regional section in the book, conveniently color coded, illustrates and describes its respective parks in alphabetical order. Included are not only the natural and historical features of the sites, but also facilities within the parks. Mailing addresses, telephone numbers, and basic operating schedules for individual parks also will aid travelers in taking advantage of these places.

The author must be commended for his efforts to describe the historic architectural features in Texas state parks which were constructed by members of the Civilian Conservation Corps during the 1930s. The parks with these resources are among the most appealing in the entire system. As an enthusiast of historic engineering works, however, I was disappointed that he failed to
point out that the Copano Bay State Fishing Pier and the Port Lavaca State Fishing Pier are both built on historic pilings from early 1930s highway bridges. The book also perpetuates the myth of Mother Neff State Park as “the first state park in Texas,” a honor which justly belongs to the San Jacinto Battleground, acquired by the state in 1897 and designated “the San Jacinto State Park” by the legislature in 1907. Minor quibbles aside, this is a fine guide which belongs on the dash boards of all Texans who travel and enjoy the Lone Star State.

T. Lindsay Baker
Texas Heritage Museum, Hill College


In the world of book reviewing it is derigeur that when critiquing anthologies the reviewer must intone piously that chapters are “uneven in quality.” Next, the reviewer must invoke that most cherished of clichés: “insights.” The book must offer “insights.” In the present instance every chapter is, like the youth of Lake Woebegone, “above average.” Moreover these chapters do indeed offer “insights.” So? If the topic is your cup of tea – and it is mine – then go forth and buy the book.

Kate Adams opens by describing how early Texas printers decorated newspapers and other items and cites the work of those who illustrated immigrant guidebooks, comic almanacs, blood-and-thunder adventure tales, and even sheet music. Much of this artwork – indeed most of it – was being executed outside of Texas. Richard Pierce-Moses ends the book by delineating problems attendant upon cataloguing the immense quantity of images held in Texas collections.

In between are almost uniformly excellent chapters by established authorities on such diverse topics as the pioneer German lithographers of San Antonio, the twentieth century pioneers of Dallas printmaking, and those two photographic giants of our own time, W.D. Smithers and E.O. Goldbeck. Peter Brink gives the literary history of Howard Barnstone’s classic book, The Galveston That Was, and tells of the impact it had on the local preservation movement. The last two chapters are devoted to poster and T-shirt art emanating from sundry Austin music halls in the fetid sixties. All accomplished with limited resources and unlimited imagination.

So what’s next? Perhaps a future volume will feature a paper on the transfer of photographic images to cake icing. If your child or grandchild hasn’t already asked for such a treat, just wait. And the paper might be more interesting than you think.

Al Lowman
Stringtown, Texas
Every Sunday School scholar, Baptist or not, will enjoy this work. Ron Ellison has produced an informative survey of the development of Baptist Sunday Schools in Texas. The use of numerous sub-headings gives the book an encyclopedic character, making it an excellent reference tool. The nine chapters take the reader from the pioneering efforts of Thomas J. Pilgrim to the current leadership of Bernard Spooner. Two appendices— a biographical sketch of current Sunday School Consultants for the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT), and forty pages of statistical material—add to the reference value of this book.

The book could have been strengthened by additional material in three areas. First, it would be interesting to see the influence of the School of Religious Education at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary on Texas Baptist Sunday School work. The school produced thousands of religious education graduates and a majority of them either worked at Texas Baptist churches while they were in school or took full-time positions in Texas upon graduation.

Second, some attention should have been given to the Sunday School work among the Independent Baptist churches. From the 1920s, when J. Frank Norris abandoned the use of Southern Baptist Sunday School materials, the Independent Baptists have pursued their own curriculum. Yet, they place the same emphasis upon the value of Sunday School as Southern Baptists.

Finally, some attention to Sunday School work within National Baptist churches in Texas would have been helpful. This, however, could well be a separate study in itself.

This is an useful book for both historians and lay persons. For the former it provides needed information; for the latter, memories of another time.

Gwin Morris
Baylor University

This book contains biographies of the sixty-three Roman Catholic bishops who served in Texas from 1841 through 1995 and explains their ecclesiastical role. Their activities outside Texas are covered, but lives of Texans whose entire episcopal service was out of state are not included.

In 1836, the diocese of Monterey supervised what is now Texas, and there was no bishop in Texas. In 1841, Pope Gregory XVI separated Texas from Monterey and appointed Jean-Marie Odin, a Frenchman, as Texas’ first bishop, to oversee Texas as a “Vicariat Apostolic,” an ecclesiastical jurisdiction less autonomous than a diocese. Six years later Odin’s vicariat was
Elevated to become the Diocese of Galveston, encompassing all that is now Texas plus New Mexico to the Rio Grande.

Later, as the Catholic population of Texas increased (presently about twenty-two percent of Texans are considered Catholic), eastern New Mexico was removed from the Diocese of Galveston and thirteen other dioceses were created, most recently the Diocese of Tyler (1986). San Antonio, the second Texas diocese (1874), became an archdiocese in 1926 with responsibilities over Galveston (redesignated Galveston-Houston in 1959), and other dioceses previously in the province of the New Orleans archdiocese.

The first third of the book explains ecclesiastical terms, how bishops are chosen, and their duties. To help users who might not read every section of this reference book, important points are repeated occasionally. San Antonio’s archdiocese and the East Texas dioceses of Tyler and Galveston-Houston receive slightly fuller coverage than others.

The material is treated positively but without shying away from unsavory topics such as the financial shenanigans of the first bishop of Austin or the recent Dallas homosexual/pedophile scandal. A few passages might have been pruned; for instance, some biblical exegeses seem unnecessary, and Catholic readers will be uninterested in a discussion of tithing.

It is an informative, well researched, institutional history.

Joseph A. Devine, Jr.
Stephen F. Austin State University


The old outlaw ballad about Jesse James lamented that the treacherous Bob Ford “laid poor Jesse in his grave.” But after Ford murdered the legendary outlaw in 1882, rumors quickly spread that the bearded victim was not Jesse, who instead escaped to live under an assumed identity. The most persistent pretender was J. Frank Dalton, who, for three years before his death in 1951, claimed to be Jesse. At last count there are six “Jesse James” graves in the United States.

Now Betty Dorsett Duke presents her great-grandfather, James L. Courtney, as the most recent candidate for a post-1882 Jesse James. In Jesse James Lived & Died in Texas, the author states that her great-grandfather Courtney came to Texas in 1871, perhaps with Cole Younger. Courtney married, raised a family, and lived until 1943 at Blevins in Fall County, on the western fringe of East Texas. Arriving in Texas in his mid-twenties, Courtney was a settled family man for the next seven decades of his life, exhibiting skill with firearms but no criminal tendencies. More than half of the book presents Courtney’s diary for 1871, 1872, 1874, and 1876. On September 7, 1876,
when the James-Younger Gang was engaged in their famous shootout at Northfield, Minnesota, Courtney recorded in his diary that he was working at his Blevins farm. Duke contends that Wood Hite, a gang member, was killed by Bob Ford in 1882, long after Jesse had established himself in Texas.

The author has done little research in primary sources, gaining information about Jesse James from biographies and other secondary works. She was unable to present conclusive DNA evidence, basing her speculations principally on family photos. There are thirty-two pages of photographs of the Courtney and James families, and the author offers considerable evidence of computerized photo comparisons.

The photographic analysis makes an intriguing case. Everyone loves a mystery, and some outlaw buffs may become convinced that Bob Ford did not lay poor Jesse in his grave.

Bill O'Neal
Carthage, Texas


Bob Scott's Leander McNelly: Texas Ranger is a book that will appeal to historians and the general readers. In telling the story of one of its legendary characters, Scott provides a good early history of the Texas Rangers. It is well-documented that the Rangers were not "choir-boys." Scott does not attempt to tidy their image, nor does he justify their sometimes outrageous conduct in the name of law enforcement; however, his graphic description of the Hobbesian world of post-Civil War Texas likely will lead most readers to conclude that "the times" called for tough men and tough justice.

The book also holds value for its detailed accounting of the Civil War battles of Val Verde and Glorieta Pass. Scott's description of the first battle, where McNelly became "a man through some sort of painful battlefield metamorphosis" (p. 14), likely will fill an important gap in the Civil War knowledge of most Texans — important since this battle's outcome meant the expulsion of Union forces from the state. The second battle, with casualties that may have numbered a thousand men, forestalled any Confederate hope of conquest in the western United States.

Scott relies on a number of first-hand accounts, especially diaries, in his book. His primary subject, however, did not leave an extensive literary record of his fascinating life, so the author frequently applies considerable license in relating the thoughts of Leander McNelly. While this practice may turn off the history purist, it enhances the reading and shows the influence of frequent reference to Shelby Foote. Leander McNelly: Texas Ranger covers fascinating historical ground in a Louis L'Amour-like, Old-West page-turner. It will leave
most readers wishing that McNelly had lived to chase outlaws beyond the age of thirty-three.

Michael Gandy
Nacogdoches, Texas

*Her Majesty's Texans: Two English Immigrants in Reconstruction Texas*,


In Texas, Leonard and Johnson planned to become lawyers. Having belonged to the working class in England, they entered this field as a means of social mobility. They began as teachers, as “anyone with a moderate education can teach school.” They fit into their new country’s society easily because Victorian England’s racial attitudes were the same as those in the Reconstruction South and because English culture and Southern culture were not far removed from each other. Johnson and Leonard became active in Democratic politics, and for them this was “an exciting new adventure.” The book deals with Bob Leonard’s insanity as a result of dabbling in spiritualism, and of Will Johnson’s successful social life. There is a chapter mentioning Johnson’s love for and marriage to Viola Ogden, “the best and sweetest girl in Christendom,” and a subsequent chapter mentions the ultimate failure of their marriage. A chapter is devoted to a history of the Episcopal Church in Texas. Robertson takes note of Bishop Gregg’s missionary activity in Southeast Texas, the rarity of Episcopalians in the Beaumont area, the Episcopal Church’s racial attitudes, and the fact that Johnson and Leonard were raised as Anglicans.

Robertson makes use of issues of the *Beaumont Enterprise* and letters written by Will Johnson to his sister, Sarah Ann, in London. He also corresponded with Paul Richards, author of a historical work on King’s Lynn, and Robertson makes use of such materials as census records, other newspapers, and historical works on the Episcopal Church. His writing is clear and his book reads like a novel.

Robert F. Wallace
Alto, Texas

Our friend Bill O’Neal has chronicled the founding, growth, and maturing of the institution where he has taught for more than half of its existence. This book is clearly a labor of love and contains ample evidence of why Bill, others connected to the college, and the citizens of Panola County have good reason to be proud. The tale provides an outstanding example of the positive relationship possible between a community college and the citizens of the area it serves.

Seizing on the circumstances presented by a growing tax base from recent oil and gas discoveries in the county and the opportunities for higher education offered by the GI Bill, a group of local citizens spearheaded a drive in 1947 to create a junior college in Carthage. It opened in 1948 with fifty-five students and with few exceptions grew every year to a recent level of more than 1700 students each semester.

O’Neal traces the college’s increasing academic and vocational offerings, improving physical facilities, advancingly qualified faculty, developing student-life activities, and ever-broadening community interaction. Former faculty, staff, students, and supporters surely will be stirred to fond memories by this account.

This reviewer has one complaint. Bill missed an opportunity to point out forcefully the enormous contributions of Panola College to the economic, cultural, and social life of the region. While such contributions are implied through the narrative, I wish he had “blown the horn” of the college more. I suspect it is one of the prime reasons Carthage is not Jasper.

James V. Reese
Stephen F. Austin State University


The purpose and scope of this delightful book of 171 pages shares with the reader the personal and professional interrelationship of the great cardiologist, Dr. Don W. Chapman, with the world-famous Texas Medical Center in Houston. The content takes the reader from the author’s beloved grandfather’s experiences in the Civil War through the most modern cardiology techniques and medicines.

Recently retired from fifty years of teaching and practicing cardiology, who better could write this history than the man who, more than anyone else, kept Dr. Michael DeBakey’s and Dr. Denton Cooley’s patients alive after surgery?
The first chapter captures the reader's heart with the description of the little boy (the author) holding the soft, worn, and hallowed pages of his grandfather's Civil War diary. Both terror and humor are spelled out. Quotations are plentiful. R.U. Chapman witnessed the short-comings of Civil War medicine so profoundly that he used his $100 of mustering-out pay to enter medical school.

Chapter two plunges immediately into the story of the author's father, R.R. Chapman, and his life as an old-fashioned, horse-and-buggy doctor. This great clinician, the author, idolized his doctor brother "Chap" and his father and grandfather.

Following is a whirlwind tour of pre-med, music, athletics, romance, and then his arrival in Houston while Baylor Med still resided in the old Sears warehouse. Amazingly, he and his wife were met at the train station by the whole faculty – all thirteen doctors and their wives. Today there are 1,000 faculty members.

The early history of the world-famous Baylor Medical School and the various entities of the equally famous Medical Center is fascinating. How Hermann Hospital, Methodist Hospital, and St. Luke's came into being arrests the reader's attention. Not only is the writer a splendid diagnostician and clinician, he is an innovator. In 1946 he did the first heart catherization in the Southwest; this, when the Medical School was only three years old.

The chapters devoted to famous and infamous patients, movie stars, and Arabian potentates are page turners.

The remainder of the book spells out the beautiful development of modern cardiology and its twin life-saver, open-heart surgery. Admittedly technical, the story is so skillfully told by this talented writer that it will not soar over the head of any layman.

Wayman B. Norman, M.D.
Longview, Texas


The History of Surgery in Houston, over 500 pages long and written by more than fifty Houston surgeons, sweeps the reader from the Texas Revolution to the present day. In this reader's opinion more innovations, inventions, and improvements have occurred in surgery during the last fifty than during the previous 500 years. The fabulous Texas Medical Center, encompassing many private and teaching specialty hospitals and medical schools, was the home for a great number of these changes. Doctors and patients from all over the world have made Houston a truly metropolitan city.

During our American Revolution, we remember Lexington, Concord, and
Bunker Hill; in our Texas Revolution we remember the Alamo, Goliad, and San Jacinto. The surgeons of these battles not only healed, they fought and died. The pathos and appeal of the letters from Dr. Amos Pollard to the Texas governor, Henry Smith, written a month before his death in the Alamo, stimulate honest emotions in the heart of any Texan. More surgeons would have been killed than were because they agreed to heal the wounded Mexicans as well as Texans.

Just as Dr. Benjamin Rush and five other physicians signed the Declaration of Independence, eight physicians were among the fifty-nine signers of our Texas Declaration of Independence. In fact, the second signer of our Texas document, Dr. Charles Stewart, designed both our Texas flag and Seal. Dr. Alexander Ewing, surgeon general of Texas, served at the Battle of San Jacinto and had the good sense to recognize "mortification" in Sam Houston’s ankle wound. This probably saved the great man’s life for future service. Ewing went personally with him to Galveston and sent him post haste to the advanced medical facilities in New Orleans.

In the mind of this reader, just the medical and surgical heritage section is worth the price of the whole book; but following is an intriguing and detailed story of many of the greatest improvements in surgery and the inventive minded surgeons such as DeBakey and Cooley who brought them to pass.

Dr. Kenneth L. Mattox, himself an active Houston surgeon, is such a skilled writer and editor that he has brought the multiple stories of many surgeons into a coherent book that reads like a novel. Because of the history between its covers, this book should have world-wide appeal.

Wayman B. Norman, M.D.
Longview, Texas

This book should find readers who are interested in its contents on many different levels: those who are directly interested in the past of the Vinson & Elkins firm, one of Texas' oldest, largest, and most prestigious law firms; those who are interested in studying the developing of large successful law firms, along with the politics, leadership, and foresight of the partners of those firms; and those who are interested generally in the legal profession.

Before reading this book, I knew of the powerful influence of the V-E firm; I was familiar with many of the names associated with the V-E firm; and I had a vague idea of how large law firms operated. Hyman's book provided me with detailed information about these areas and about the craft and characters that made the Vinson & Elkins firm endure.

Ben Z. Grant
Marshall, Texas


The reprint of the twenty-sixth publication by the Texas Folklore Society is a feasting table. As editor F. E. Abernethy says, "In the first half century of its life, members ... had all of Texas, like a tree full of ripe peaches, ready to pick of its traditional songs and stories, traditions and beliefs. They harvested with enthusiasm and thoroughness, and they saved for our present generation the best that was passing informally among their generations."

The book offers stories, songs, legends, sayings, superstitions, cures, and more that have to do with both man and beast, particular to Negro, Mexican, and White culture - labels which were, at the time, politically correct - selected from the first twenty-five volumes of the society's publications. Folklorists of the caliber of Dobie, Owens, Sonnichsen, Webb, Brooks, and Bedichek were never known to be politically incorrect when reporting history and folklore of the state. All viewed Texas as a triptych, panels hinged with the very folk life they collected.

Granted white folklorists reported on Negro and Mexican lore, although J. Mason Brewer's and Soledad Perez's names appear respectively as contributors. A few women's names appear, but none more important than Jovita Gonzalez, who was well known to the society but less known outside it. Her papers, housed in archives at Corpus Christi, contain a novel, Caballero, published in 1996 by Texas A&M University Press, which incorporates some of the lore she contributed to volumes VI and VIII in 1927 and 1930.
Indian tales, ranch, and oil lore complete the banqueting. The image of gathering the harvest when the fields were ripe but the laborers few underpins a volume representing oral traditions bound in print for the first time.

Joyce Gibson Roach
Keller, Texas

Between the Cracks of History: Essays on Teaching and Illustrating Folklore, Francis E. Abernethy, editor (University of North Texas Press, P.O. Box 311336, Denton, TX 76203-1336) 1997. Contents. Contributors. Index. Illustrations. P. 284. $27.00. Hardcover.

What is a folklorist? For that matter, what is folklore?

Francis E. Abernethy, Stephen F. Austin State University English professor and secretary of the Texas Folklore Society, in a witty but profound preface, proffers these among other definitions: "the leavings from academic historians," or maybe "the tales and songs and traditions that historians allow to fall between the cracks."

The sentiment seems sensible, but, unless the laws of physics have been amended, one must wonder how anything can fall between the cracks rather than through the cracks? This quibble aside, the book is a scholarly discussion for both lay and classroom readers. One section is entitled "Essays on Teaching Folklore," and a second is entitled "Essays Illustrating Folklore." Non-professionals will find the latter of most interest.

Try these, for example. In the "illustrations" section are to be found: "Repo Man," by John Lightfoot; "Dance Halls of East Texas: From Oral History," by Dennis Read and Bobby Nieman; "Punching Sticks, Flannel Wrapped Bricks, and Pink Powder Purgatives: Spring Rituals," by Ernestine Sewell Linck; and "Eating Over the Sink and other Marital Strategies," by James Ward Lee. And others.

Police funerals, it turns out, are folkloric, and so was Matty's Palm Isle, the revered and lamented oil patch honkytonk on the highway between Longview and Kilgore, among others.

What all this proves is that we all are folklorists at heart, even if we have attached to us no such formal label. The only requirement is that we recognize the "lore," hitherto unidentified, which makes us what we are.

Max S. Lale
Marshall and Fort Worth

David M. Horton is the long time professor and director of the Criminal Justice Program at St. Edward's University in Austin. Ryan Kellus Turner is a recent graduate of Southern Methodist University School of Law and briefing attorney for the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. The book's cover proclaims itself as "a comprehensive overview of the Texas Criminal Justice System." This puffery falls short of the reality. However, the volume has many positive attributes that would cause me to spend $21.95 and add it to my book shelf. It would likely rest next to such handy references as the Texas Almanac and How to Live and Die with Texas Probate.

The book contains useful kernels of information on Texas Justice. The area I found most interesting is the comparison of the Bill of Rights as found in the Texas Constitution with the Bill of Rights found as amendments to the United States Constitution. On a more macabre interest there is an extensive chart of vigilante hangings [lynching] from 1840 to 1942.

The short and interesting history on the foundations of Texas law from the Austin Colony to generally modern times is well written. The authors do as well with the history of Texas law enforcement.

The book is weak in discussion of the immediate present day problems of Texas Criminal Justice.

Patrick A. Mueller
Stephen F. Austin State University