Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS


The lights that shone on Spanish Texas history scholarship in the beginning were Herbert Bolton, Carlos Castañeda, and Charles Hackett. Present day scholarship in that field is led by Jack Jackson, William Foster, and Donald Chipman. Among the latest of the publications that all scholars of early Texas history must have for reference is Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas by Donald Chipman and Harriett Denise Joseph.

Notables contains detailed biographies of the major actors and personalities in Spanish Texas history. Their lives and their stories frequently overlap in history books. In this book, however, the authors focus on each personality and his part in the making of Spanish history in Texas from 1528 to 1821. The Notable Men are Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, Alonso de León, Francisco Hidalgo, Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, Antonio Margil de Jesús, the Marqués de Aguayo, Pedro de Rivera, Felipe de Rábago, José de Escandón, Athanase de Mézieres, the Marqués de Rubí, Antonio Gil Ibarvo, Domingo Cabello, José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara, and Joaquín de Arredondo.

If, as Thomas Carlyle said, “History is the biographies of great men” (and women), then these are the biographies that made the history of Spanish Texas. The stories start early, in 1528, with the almost unbelievable adventures of Cabeza de Vaca and his eight-year journey across Texas and Mexico. They follow the discoverers, the settlers, the administrators, the priests and politicians, the saints and the scoundrels — and it is hard sometimes to tell them apart. The authors close with Joachin de Arredondo and the story of his bitter revenge on the Texas republicans after the Battle of Medina.

The Notable Women did not get to Spanish Texas before French women arrived with LaSalle in Matagorda Bay in 1685. This does not count María de Agreda, The Lady in Blue, who visited Texas as early as 1723 through the miracle of bilocation, of being in two places, Spain and Texas, at one time. Women continued to come to Texas with Spanish entradas and settlements, and were well represented on the frontier by 1721 and the founding of Los Adaes, the first capital of Texas.

Notable Men and Women of Spanish Texas is a biographical encyclopedia of the beginning of Texas history and a necessary addition to libraries featuring early Texas history.

F. E. Abernethy
Stephen F. Austin State University


Did you know that in less than a year, in 1828, the number of deer hides
shipped out of Mexican Nacogdoches to Natchitoches, U.S.A., and on to New Orleans, was around 40,000? In one previous year merchants had shipped twice that many, all the result of trading with East Texas Indians. They shipped 1,500 bear hides, and in spite of the near extinction of the species, in 1828 1,200 otter pelts and 600 beaver hides.

These and many more fascinating details of colonial Nacogdoches history are the body of information that General Manuel de Mier y Terán included in his diary of his inspection of Texas in 1828-29. The original diary, now at Yale University, was edited and published by Jack Jackson as Texas by Terán, with Jackson’s rich introduction and endnotes. John Wheat, who must be one of the most talented men in Texas academia, made a beautifully readable translation of the diary.

Terán, who was a brigadier general and minister of war when he was thirty-five, was appointed by President Guadalupe Victoria to lead an expedition to Texas and report on the state of the Indians and the attitudes of the American settlers and to determine the U.S.-Mexican boundary between the Red River and the Sabine. Terán was interested in natural science and took with him Jean-Louis Berlandier, a biologist, and Rafael Chovell, a mineralogist. Among them they catalogued much of East Texas natural life-geological, botanical, and zoological. The Terán expedition was well officered and equipped, and its members contributed largely to our knowledge of frontier East Texas.

With the help of Peter Ellis Bean, Terán interviewed and visited most of the twenty-five different Indian tribes in East Texas. His official recommendation was that land be granted to the friendlies in order to make them into self-supporting, productive Mexican citizens and a balance against the incoming Americans. For the Lipans, Comanches, and other unfriendlies, he asked that 2,000 Mexican troops be sent to subjugate them and drive them beyond the Mexican borders.

Terán was depressed at the state of the original Spanish-Mexican settlers of East Texas. By 1828 the Mexican population was diminished. It had been forced to live on the fringes at a distance from Nacogdoches. Terán described these original Spanish settlers as an indigent and wretched class of people without hope who spent much of their time lying up in hammocks.

The newly arrived Americans were Terán’s worst fear and comprised the majority of the population. He bemoaned the size of their grants, their political hold on Texas, and their scornful attitude toward their Mexican neighbors and rulers. He saw Nacogdoches as being made up of scoundrels, debtors, and fugitives who had fled the justice of the United States to live unmolested in Mexican Texas. Terán feared the expansion of slavery. He was against slavery on moral principles and feared slavery politically. He recognized that were slavery allowed unconditionally the large Southern American plantation owners would expand into Texas and occupy land by the leagues.

Terán made his tour, with excursions to northeast and southeast Texas, and his recommendations, which were codified into the Mexican Law of April 6, 1830. This law prohibited slavery and closed the Mexican border to further American immigration.

Manuel de Terán was a man of principle and a loyal and patriotic Mexican.
When the Law of April 6, 1830 was rescinded in 1832 and Santa Anna’s Federalist forces were gaining victories in Mexico and Americans pouring over the border into East Texas, the political and social world became more than he could bear. Terán went behind the Church of St. Anthony in Padilla, Tamaulipas, and fell upon his sword.

General Manuel de Mier y Terán left a valuable legacy in his diary of his 1828 expedition into Texas. *Texas by Terán* is one of the few primary sources of pre-revolutionary Texas history. Jackson enriches this Terán volume by including another primary source, Théodore Pavie's account of his visit to Nacogdoches and East Texas in 1830. Terán and Pavie saw some of the same scenes. Besides being interesting and educational primary history, *Texas by Terán* is just a good read.

But there is not a single map in the book of Terán’s journey through Texas and Louisiana.

F. E. Abernethy
Stephen F. Austin State University


Texas is known for ranches founded in the time of Spanish land grants. Most of those ranches, however, have long since disappeared under the pressure of ownership changes triggered by revolution, drought, market collapses, family problems, and other difficulties. Joe Hipp has singled out a ranch he has every reason to believe is the oldest surviving ranch in Texas. Hipp, a Texas A&M University journalism graduate and a retired Air Force officer, has used that background and interest to write about a ranch located nine miles south of the historic Alamo between Leon Creek and the Medina River.

The ranch was begun in 1794 on land granted to Don Juan Ignacio Perez de Casanova, a soldier, rancher, Indian fighter, and interim governor. The ranch has had various names – Stone Rancho, Perez Ranch, Lynn Ranch, Rancho de Leon, and Walsh Ranch. The story of the ranch since its founding is complicated by the political turmoil that swept through this historic part of Texas. The revolution in Mexico, the Texas rebellion against Mexico, and even in more modern times the power move by the City of San Antonio to control the land – all of these are part of the history of this ranch.

Especially interesting is that time during the Texas war for independence when the family fled the ranch to the sanctuary of Mexico. When they returned they found that Anglo settlers had taken over much of the property along the Medina River. Even though the family pursued the matter in court, they never regained ownership of those lands.

Although the ranch is quite old, modern questions continue to be troubling. Part of the discussion includes the efforts of Henry Cisneros, the colorful figure from San Antonio, who led the move to condemn the land for use by the City of San Antonio.
Hipp’s look at this ranch reflects a considerable amount of archival research as well as discussions with individuals involved.

Lawrence Clayton
Hardin-Simmons University


In this reprint of a book published in 1964, accomplished writer of Texas history Robert Weddle ably recounts the history of San Saba’ Mission. Weddle contends that its destruction in 1788 at the hands of a coalition of Texas Native American tribes was a significant turning point in Spanish involvement in Texas. After the San Saba’ massacre, the Spanish began a southward withdrawal, giving up on subduing the fiercely warlike tribes of Texas.

Weddle’s research is impressive. Utilizing the personal papers of missionaries and Spanish soldiers as well as government documents, he creates a detailed and well written narrative that convincingly supports his thesis. The work reveals the international power struggle that existed in Texas in the mid-eighteenth century between Spain and France. Native Americans proved fully as capable as the Europeans at the game of power politics. Indeed, the cause of the San Saba’ massacre, Weddle asserts, was the Apache’s attempts to use the Spanish as a buffer against their dreaded enemies, the Comanches.

When Weddle wrote the original version, the location of the mission was a matter of speculation. Archaeological efforts since then have identified its location and an introductory chapter is included which details the exciting development. Overall, this is an excellent piece of historical research and writing on a pivotal event in the history of Texas.

Fred Allison
Lubbock, Texas


“Women and children first!” might be the motto of progressive social science. Gone are the days when even such a purportedly belligerent society as the Chiricahua Apaches will have its distaff dimension neglected. The women among “Geronimo’s people” have in fact always enjoyed high regard in their own culture for their roles in subsistence and family life, as epitomized in the famous girl’s puberty rite that takes place each July in New Mexico. Stockel’s account of the social position of Apache women begins with memoir and then drifts into culture history, with chapters on the puberty ritual, the myths that underlie it, and old-time domestic roles and child-rearing practices. A culturally sanctioned “alternative lifestyle” is also shown in the careers of four women who became renowned as fighters in the turbulent 1880s – Siki, Gouyen,
Dahteste, and Lozen. Their cases are significant in light of evidence that several other tribes also recognized women who pursued warrior status. Perhaps the most interesting chapter is the closing profile of the late Mildred Cleghorn, based on the author's acquaintance with the celebrated doll maker and Fort Sill Apache tribal chair; Cleghorn is cast as a modern counterpart to the "warrior women" of old. This is also the most original chapter, as much of the rest of the book is synopsis from more detailed ethnographic and historical works, demonstrating ironically that Apache women's roles already have been well recorded in context. Brief and approachable, with an assortment of photos, the present book serves up appetizers that will lead some readers to the classic entrees. It will also gain use as a convenient reference in cross-cultural comparisons of gender roles within Native America or beyond.

Daniel J. Gelso
University of Texas at San Antonio


This romantic historical novel follows Jane Long and her faithful servant, Kian, from Natchez to Texas and incorporates all the events and persons she met or could have met along the way between 1815 and March 1837. The author used standard popular works about Jane and the events of her time, and as a professional writer and producer of videos, she creates vivid scenarios for a popular readership.

This true story about a woman who waited on Bolivar Peninsula in 1822 for her husband to return, not knowing he had been killed in Mexico City, is standard fare in Texas history. Her subsequent story as a settler in Austin, Brazoria, and Fort Bend counties is less well known. In some ways, Petrick's novel is a Texas *Gone With the Wind* — or at least the movie rendition of that classic. It also reflects the imprint of John Wayne's "Alamo" on popular culture. In other words, it is an entertaining account of Jane's adventures based on what she told to Mirabeau B. Lamar in the 1830s when he gathered material of a history of Texas. Beyond Lamar's notes, the author has imagined Jane in other challenging situations to make the story dramatic.

Historians, even those of us who enjoy historical novels, are uneasy when novelists invent conversations between historical persons. Petrick effectively uses such interchanges to move Jane's story forward, but it is disturbing to hear Jane, Ben Milam, Jean Lafitte, Stephen F. Austin, William Barret Travis, and others speak in twentieth-century patterns and cadences. In particular, the use of first names among acquaintances is jarring at a time when wives often addressed their husbands as "Mr." While Kian does not say "Lawzey! Miss Scarlett! I don't know nuthin' bout' birthin' babies," she does speak in presumed dialect. She is, however, like Scarlett's "Mammy," in that she can do anything required. Somehow, she and Jane managed freshly ironed sheets and tasty meals under trying conditions.

Like most Western movies and television series, this novel is entertaining but historically inaccurate in many important portrayals of issues and events.
Contrary to known facts, Mexican authorities appear inept, most Indians dangerous, Empresario Austin has to send each application for land to San Antonio, and a debt collector tried to seize Kian for a debt contracted by Jane's deceased husband. These are stereotypes or contrary to practice or law. Romantic notions about how pioneer plantations and boarding houses looked, along with overly elegant food and clothing at festivities, reflect how Hollywood has portrayed history and has influenced modern-day writers.

In summary this book is a frothy modern romance novel about a plucky heroine who moved to the Texas frontier in 1822, but thinks, talks, and acts like it is the 1950s.

Margaret Swett Henson
Houston, Texas

Raw Frontier, Volume Two: Survival to Prosperity Along the Texas Coastal Bend,

"Raw Frontier" is a term that editors of the Houston Telegraph and Register used to describe the counties west of the Colorado River in ante bellum Texas. Longtime South Texas resident and former newspaper publisher Keith Guthrie selected sixteen of the counties for his two-volume study on early Texas. While the first work largely dealt with the Texas Revolution era, the paramount theme of the second volume is post-revolutionary happenings. Included in the chapters are brief discussions of the colonization period, the recounting of the emergence of the counties and the primary communities that evolved within the original empresario holdings, tales of savage Indian attacks, information on noted personalities, and accounts of hardships people experienced living on the Texas frontier.

The book has adequate endnotes and contains an extensive bibliography. The work is enhanced with maps that illustrate the streams, bays, and principal roads of the counties. It also contains anecdotal material that Guthrie acquired from local historians and descendants of pioneer settlers as he traveled throughout the sixteen-county region.

The volume does have flaws. First, the placement of counties such as Gonzales and Guadalupe within the Texas Coastal Bend is questionable. Second, the reader should be wary of historical inaccuracies – e.g., there are items cited from editions of the Victoria Advocate before the newspaper began publication in 1846. Third and perhaps most importantly, the narrative tends to ramble, posing a distraction for the reader. For instance, while discussing educational institutions in Lavaca County, the author interjects comments about Hallettsville which had nothing to do specifically with schools, namely, the town was featured in "Ripley's Believe It or Not." But, despite the book’s shortcomings, it is interesting reading.

Charles D. Spurlin
The Victoria College
In the aftermath of the secession of eleven Southern states, the Confederate States of America prepared to defend itself by organizing military units. Involved in the effort was a group of ministers who attended the soldiers' spiritual needs by holding services in camp to warn simpletons of the evils of drink and the waywardness of “loose women” or to comfort the homesick. The dawn of approaching battle found ministers hearing soldiers' confessions and assuring them of their place in heaven in case of their death. This is all to say that in the view of historians, ministers, with their unparalleled access in camp, the city, and the battlefield, often made excellent historical witnesses.

Nicholas A. Davis was one minister whose account of his service as a parson in the Texas Brigade personifies the above statements. Ably edited by Donald E. Everett with a foreword by Robert K. Krick, Davis' account affords readers a view of the war in the tradition of Bell I. Wiley. Readers are advised that Davis focuses on the Fourth Texas and not the whole brigade in the same way that the Texas Brigade's principle historian, Harold B. Simpson, does in his book Gaines' Mill to Appomattox: Waco & McLennan County in Hood's Texas Brigade.

Davis' account contains many features valuable to the student of history. First, the author provides a ministerial viewpoint of the organizing of troops in Texas, their journey to Virginia, initial introduction to military life, and reactions to the temptations of Richmond. Under the initial command of fiery former United States Senator Louis T. Wigfall, the Texas Brigade spent the Fall and Winter of 1861-1862 marching and counter marching to thwart "numerous" movements by the Union Army. Davis commented, “I don't know how the men felt, but I was very tired myself ... And was very glad to hear 'Halt'” (p. 49). Davis also chronicles his reaction to the promotion of the Fourth Texas Regiment's commander, John Bell Hood, to command the Texas Brigade and the impending campaigning season.

Davis' recollection of the Peninsula, Seven Days, Second Manassas, Sharpsburg, and Fredericksburg campaigns provide an unusual opportunity to observe the process by which raw troops hardened into a legend known as Hood's Texas Brigade. Davis' connection with the Texas Brigade ended shortly after the Battle of Fredericksburg when he returned to Texas to recruit replacements for the losses suffered by the Texas Brigade.

Davis' recollections are indispensable to the history of the Fourth Texas Regiment, essential to the Texas Brigade's history, and important to understanding the war from a “Johnny Reb's” point of view. Everett's endnotes enhance the value of this book by assisting readers toward an understanding of the personal impact of war. This book would make an excellent addition to any Civil War library and is a good companion to the classic Christ in the Camp.

Jonathan Hood
Texas Tech University

In April 1862, eleven East Texas companies formed in as many locations under their respective captains: Alto, G.W. Knox; Linden, J.R. Watson; Rusk, T.R. Bonner; Jefferson, J.K. Cocke; Bright Star, W.R. Buford; Mt. Pleasant, J.G. Wood; Rusk County, I. Dansby; Coffeeville, J.W. Duncan; Henderson, P.G. Whetstone; Jacksonville, J.C. Maples; and Elysium, J.G. McKnight. The companies, A through L, merged at Camp Sidney Johnston in Kellyville on April 21, 1862, to form the 18th Texas Regiment composed of 1,085 Texans under Colonel William B. Ochiltree.

A twenty-year old sergeant in Company H, John B. Porter from Pittsburg, Texas, kept a diary from his recruitment at Coffeeville until the war ended in 1865. James Davis has done an exemplary job of editing this diary which depicts the day-by-day hardships, pathos, poignancy, and humor of these foot soldiers as they plodded their weary way across part of Texas, most of Arkansas, Louisiana, and back to Texas. Sergeant Porter’s company never served east of the Mississippi River except when several of them were imprisoned in New Orleans.

Their first “destination unknown” turned out to be Camp Nelson, Arkansas. There they joined with several other regiments to become a part of General John G. Walker’s Division, also known as Walker’s Greyhounds.

No contact with the enemy yet, but an abundance of casualties due to accidents and disease caused Porter to observe that in war, “disease kills more than the sword.” He also stated that there was scarcely an hour in the day that they did not hear platoons firing over the dead.

In September 1862, the regiment marched eastward to De Vall’s Bluff, then up to Des Arc, then back to Camp Nelson, and still there was no enemy confrontation.

Porter left Camp Nelson for Little Rock just before Christmas, 1862, preferring possible action to nursing the sick. Colonel Ochiltree resigned and they found themselves under a General Hawes who replaced their former commander, Colonel Young. They marched west to Fort Smith and then back to Little Rock. On January 10, 1863, they were ordered to Pine Bluff, where the enemy threatened Fort Hindsman. They arrived a day after the surrender of the fort and marched five miles in retreat. The 18th next departed for West Monroe, Louisiana, and Trinity City, but retreated just short of encountering the enemy. They marched to Alexandria, Louisiana, then back to Richmond, Louisiana, to engage Union troops to take pressure off Confederates defending Vicksburg. This was their first real battle. Vicksburg surrendered on July 4, 1863.

Porter’s regiment retreated to Delhi, where they were ordered to attack a small garrison of Negroes, who, it turned out, had already been captured by another unit. From there they wandered around central and south Louisiana to Fort De Russy, where they became involved in a small skirmish. Porter’s detachment of twenty men was captured and transported by steamboat to New Orleans, then to Alexandria for exchange, then back to New Orleans because of impending battles at Mansfield and Pleasant Hill. After those two battles, the
prisoners, including Porter, were taken back up the Red River to Keatchie, where they were exchanged and sent home after a two-year walking tour of Arkansas and Louisiana.

Following a forty-two day leave, plus a thirty day extension due to sickness, Porter returned to his outfit, catching up with it at Camden, Arkansas, where they were in hot pursuit of General Steele's Union Division in retreat to Little Rock. They lost track of the enemy and returned to Minden, Louisiana, in February 1865. They Left Minden for Shreveport, then Keatchie, Mansfield, and Pleasant Hill, then back to Keatchie, where the entire brigade, consisting of eight or more units, including the 18th, was ordered to Hempstead, Texas, and the war ended. From Hempstead, Porter and his remaining fellow *Texans in Gray* went home.

Fred McKenzie
Avinger, Texas

*Horse Sweat and Powder Smoke: The First Texas Cavalry in the Civil War*,

Stanley McGowen provides a full history of the First Texas Cavalry from its organization in 1861 under Henry McCulloch until its remaining members mustered out, under orders, on April 30, 1865. The First Texas Cavalry was one of the earliest Texas regiments organized for Confederate service and one of the last to disband.

McGowen's history covers daily routine in the regiment, organizational and training practices, and reports of the numerous battles and skirmishes of the First Cavalry. He furnishes background information on the officers and many enlisted men in the regiment.

Of particular interest to East Texas readers is the detailed report of the regiment's involvement in the Louisiana Red River campaign in the spring in 1864. Union General Nathaniel Banks, in February and March, "planned to move overland across Louisiana; head up the Red River to Shreveport, Louisiana; and thence march into the agricultural regions of East Texas" (p. 122).

In chapters 10 and 11, McGowen reports the Confederate effort to thwart this Union invasion. He focuses on the significant part the First Texas Cavalry played in the successful defense. His descriptions of the battles at Mansfield and Pleasant Hill, where Banks' Union troops were turned back, are clear and helpful. Confederate forces harassed the retreating Union troops all the way to Yellow Bayou, located southeast of Alexandria. There, on May 18, the First Texas Cavalry - fighting dismounted - participated in their final major encounter of the war.

Also of interest is McGowen's report on the "Battle of the Nueces," August 9-10, 1862. He calls the encounter "one of the most lamentable acts perpetrated by Texans during the war" (p. 65). German Texans from the Fredericksburg, Kerrville, and Comfort areas organized the Union Loyal League at the beginning of the war. Henry McCulloch, commanding in the area,
sought to crush this opposition. On August 1, about sixty of the Union loyalists attempted to flee to Mexico. They were tracked by a mixed unit of Partisan Rangers and some companies of the First Texas Cavalry. McGowen describes the Confederate forces engagement of the Union loyalists as a significant skirmish with the German Texans making a determined defense. Following the heat of the battle, some of the Confederate troops “committed heinous atrocities on the fallen German settlers” (p. 70).

McGowen does not portray the German Texans as unarmed or non-combatant. He suggests that they had every intention of moving through Mexico to join Union fighting units. He does, however, recognize the violent excesses of the Confederate troops after the battle concluded. McGowen’s view of this often-debated encounter is balanced and valuable.

Stanley McGowen has provided a useful account of one Texas regiment and its involvement in Civil War action in and around its home state. Maps prepared by Don Frazier clarify the descriptions of military campaigns and engagements. Extensive notes and bibliography make the book an excellent beginning for more detailed research.

Milton S. Jordan
Houston, Texas


Lieutenant Colonel Thomas T. Smith, recently appointed as post commander of Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, knows more about the nineteenth-century army in Texas than anyone else alive. In the present volume, which will become a primary reference tool for Texas and military historians, Smith makes available some of the “elementary data base of essential information” (p. 1) he has compiled over the years.

Most valuable here is the opening essay, an updated version of a previously published article that used Fort Inge, Texas, as a case study for analyzing army combat operations against the Indians. Smith now applies the methodological techniques he used in that more limited study in the systematic collection of empirical data and formal training in small-unit command to the entire state. He finds that in the 219 army-led Indian battles from 1849 to 1881, most common were hasty attacks conducted by small mounted units. More often than not, these produced minor tactical successes but left the victor so disorganized as to render effective pursuit impossible. Native American or civilian scouts, Smith concludes, played a much more important role in these army battles than the more acclaimed Texas Rangers.

Other sections of *The Old Army in Texas* provide a handy guide to the nineteenth-century military presence in the state. A list of the army’s commanders and administrative organization from 1848-1900 is followed by brief descriptions of 230 army forts, sites, and best-known camps and outposts before 1900. A yearly accounting of the number and composition of the garrisons of
the larger posts, six maps, an extensive bibliography, and the most comprehensive list of battles and skirmishes fought between the army and Indians in Texas this reviewer has ever seen complete this useful reference tool.

Robert Wooster
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi


In eight short chapters, the dean of El Paso-area historians tells us why James Wiley Magoffin was El Paso’s most important pioneer. Born in 1799, Magoffin passed through Texas in 1821 and settled in the thriving port of Matamoros. When prosperity ended there in 1835 he moved west to Chihuahua and carried on as a trader in partnership with Stephen Courcier. In 1844 he left for Missouri. Two years later he returned with the Army of the West and is credited with helping persuade Governor Manuel Armijo to surrender New Mexico to General Stephen Watts Kearny.

By 1849, Anglo-Americans had established five settlements along the north side of the Rio Grande opposite El Paso del Norte. At one of these, Magoffinsville, James Magoffin built his mercantile business anew. His association with another prominent Chihuahuan merchant, Don José Cordero, failed when Cordero fell out of political favor. With the establishment of Fort Bliss at Magoffinsville, Magoffin became the post sutler.

Magoffin understandably sided with the South during the American Civil War and followed the Confederate forces when they abandoned west Texas. His El Paso home was stripped and his properties condemned and sold. He died in 1868.

This book reads well, although one notices internal contradictions, errors, and much that appears to be irrelevant. Little is said about Magoffin’s activities in Matamoros, his partnership with Courcier, or his relations with José Cordero, all important periods of his life. The author relies mainly on published sources, supplemented by documents at the Magoffin Home built by a son in El Paso, and elsewhere. It is to Timmons’ great credit that he writes about a merchant and community builder and leaves outlaws and gunslingers to others.

John P. Wilson
Las Cruces, New Mexico


Isaac Monroe Cline was the weather forecaster stationed in the bustling city and major port of Galveston, Texas, during the Great Storm of 1900, when a hurricane literally destroyed the city. Over 6,000 lives, including Cline’s wife, were lost that first week of September, one hundred years ago. Largely due to
the Storm, Houston gained prominence and replaced Galveston as the most prominent commercial port in Texas. Galveston gained a seawall to protect the island from future storm surges, but the city became known as a summer resort for Houstonians. Isaac Cline can be viewed as a scapegoat for the collapse of Galveston for not forecasting the path of the hurricane, and more importantly, for not providing advance warnings to the citizens of Galveston Island. At first read, this autobiography appears as a defense for Cline's actions and an attempt to preserve his reputation as a scientist and weather forecaster. Only one chapter is devoted to the Galveston Hurricane, with little, though traumatic, reference to his wife and the peril of his immediate family. The descriptions of a flooded Galveston are beyond belief, as perhaps are his actions. Cline writes that he personally warned 6,000 people to evacuate the island. However, no official emergency or hurricane warnings were posted in Galveston. He also failed to evacuate his family to higher ground, believing his home to be an impenetrable fortress. As a defense, the book raises more questions than it provides answers.

The majority of the work revolves around Isaac Cline's fifty-two-year career with the U.S. Weather Service - but includes also humble beginnings as a plowboy on his family's farm in Tennessee to a distinguished gentleman who collected and restored oil paintings in New Orleans. There is a sadness throughout the work, almost as if Cline was trying to prove to himself that he was a good man. Like an aging scrapbook of memorabilia, the book contains abundant reference to news clippings of praise and accolades. The book is dedicated to his daughters, who survived the Galveston Storm with their father. Cline's most renowned scientific work, *Tropical Cyclones*, also accompanies the text. But overall, is the book successful?

During the centennial of the Galveston Hurricane, Cline will undoubtedly be in the forefront of the news - recognized as hero or villain. New books, such as *Isaac's Storm*, acusingly point the finger in the latter direction.

In one century’s time, technology has advanced significantly in the field of weather monitoring. NASA has launched a multi-million dollar Environmental Weather Satellite and Doppler radar has proven itself as a useful tool in tracking storms. In contrast, meteorological science in 1900 relied primarily on observation, utilizing the barometer, and gauging the wind. Isaac Cline, the weather forecaster, was helpless against the forces of nature, but he devoted his life to the study of it. In *Storms, Floods and Sunshine*, it is apparent that Cline's meteorological work was his life's passion. He was a scientist in a field of inexact science. Because of the Galveston Storm, Cline diligently sought to prevent future disasters by establishing weather-warning systems. With new technology, and the start of hurricane season each year, can we be so sure that future disasters can be prevented? Though history teaches otherwise, man still believes he is invincible against the forces of nature. In this sense, the book is effective. It is the David-and-Goliath story of man against the weather, only this time Goliath wins.

Theresa Kurk McGinley
North Harris College
Often the centennial anniversary of a significant event in United States history brings to mind wonderful memories of achievements, milestones, or successes. The centennial of the West Indies storm in 1900 that leveled Galveston does not invoke such a remembrance. This book, edited by Nathan Green, reveals period observations of unbelievable, although undeniable, destruction and devastation unleashed by a monstrous hurricane that came ashore and entered the record books as the worst natural disaster to strike the United States to date.

Green highlights three important sources of information to detail the gruesome events caused by the storm. Feature stories from local and national newspaper and wire services were used to set the stage. The stories represented journalists’ attempts to put into words what many eyewitnesses stated about a storm so imposing that it was impossible to describe fully. Galveston Island’s population was subjected to an unmerciful onslaught of tidal surge, pounding rain, and winds that turned wood and metal pieces into lethal projectiles. These stories gave the world at least a suggestion of the plight of the most important port city along the Texas Gulf Coast in 1900. Each day the death count grew in the stories but they seldom exaggerated the actual loss of souls. Heroic rescues and ghoulish thievery were detailed in stories that pointed out the extremes of human behavior that occurred under the catastrophic conditions. Within a week the media had stirred thousands of Americans to come to the aid of the stricken Galvestonians.

Green also included reports provided by professionals, such as Adjutant General Thomas Scurry, that recounted the storm’s devastation and pointed out strategies put into effect to deal with the dead, protect business and property, and cleanup efforts.

Lastly, the book contains personal accounts of victims that demonstrate the horror experienced by Galvestonians. Included are stories about babes being ripped from parents’ arms and families huddling together for protection only to drown in the tidal surge or be buried when buildings collapsed.

Green has given the reader a glimpse of the worst natural disaster to strike the United States. All through Galveston’s history its residents have rebounded from epidemics, hurricanes, fires, and economic hardships to create a tropical haven on the Texas Gulf Coast. One has to admit that the storm in 1900 was by far the most serious event that Galveston citizens have faced. This book should be read by anyone who wishes to grasp the cultural resilience of Galvestonians and evaluate more recent treatments of individuals and the events associated with the West Indies storm 1900.

Darrel L. McDonald
Stephen F. Austin State University

Competition between the "Dream City of the Gulf" – Indianola, and the "Queen City" – Galveston, has helped define the history of Indianola and of Matagorda Island. Although each tried to gain recognition as "the fairest of them all," Indianola and Galveston differed significantly. While Galveston was a commercial port, Indianola was tied to "land grants in the Hill Country, forts on the Texas frontier, and efforts to establish trade with Mexico and even the Pacific Coast" (p. 3).

Linda Wolff works in helping develop tourism on Matagorda Island. Her book contains five sections, including the histories of Indianola, Sulluria, and Matagorda Island. Section one contains a brief introduction of Indianola, followed by a timeline that traces the development of Old-Town Indianola, Matagorda, the island before, during, and after the Civil War, and the storms of 1875 and 1886.

In the second part, Wolff presents the history of Sulluria and Matagorda Island from 1837-1887. She includes an interesting section on the history of the Matagorda Island Lighthouse. In the last three chapters, Wolff lists the known shipwrecks that have occurred off Matagorda Bay, cemetery inscriptions in Matagorda and Indianola, and a wildflower and birding list for the island.

Wolff's work offers both a brief local history and a visitor's guide. Although the information in the timeline might have been presented better in a narrative form, the author includes an index, photos, and a useful bibliography. Anyone interested in Indianola, Matagorda Island, and the surrounding area should examine this book.

Stefanie Lee Decker
Oklahoma State University


This compilation of about 2,500 profiles of "Texas veterans of Czech ancestry who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States" originated in 1986 as the project of Victor Peter, a retired businessman and trustee of the Czech Heritage Society. Before he died in 1996, Peter turned over his research to a Society committee of volunteers, and the result was this impressive resource book that, like previous CHS publications focusing primarily on Czech immigration to Texas, will be of considerable value to Texans of Czech heritage interested in pursuing regional history and genealogy.

As might be expected in a work covering veterans of "all American wars since the Civil War and in the 20th Century, including World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the more recent Desert Storm" (as it was described recently in Cesky hlas, a CHS newsletter), coverage is uneven and mistakes inevitable. The length of entries ranges from one line to a substantial paragraph; many are illustrated with photographs. Beyond the impossibility
of completeness in such a project, even if criteria for inclusion were firmly established, the category of “Czech ancestry” is a tricky one in marginal cases. Of course, many Texas veterans of mixed ethnicity and without Czech surnames may yet acknowledge their Czech heritage. In the end, it is naturally the veterans whose families or descendants are most interested in their Czech heritage who are most likely to be included in a collection such as this.

This publication is very much in the tradition of patriotism that has characterized Texas Czech culture through the generations. There is no conflict between pride in one’s Czech ancestry and pride in being a patriotic United States citizen who is willing to serve his nation in time of need.

Clinton Machann
Texas A&M University


In the spring of 1988, Clyde McQueen attended a Junior Historians Fair at the University of Texas in Austin. His wife, Connie, was one of the judges. Two students from Galveston, Lavern Moore and Eugene Williams, presented a paper on the history of the Ave. L Missionary Baptist Church, organized in Galveston in 1840. This experience prompted McQueen’s effort to learn more about the black church in Texas. With the help of data collection teams in each region he gathered the information for this book over the next ten years.

McQueen considered five regions covering one-third of the state from the Brazos Valley eastward. A majority of the 374 congregations listed are located east of the Trinity. Each section begins with information about the region, including details of its history and geography, and a profile of one distinguished individual from an historic congregation in that region.

Each of the churches McQueen locates is a congregation that has been organized and meeting for at least one hundred years. About two-thirds of these are Baptist. Various denominations, including Methodist, Roman Catholic, and others complete the study. A few of the listings include only the name of the church and its founding date and address. Most are described with a paragraph or two of history and some are a full page or more. They include names of founding members, trustees, pastors, and denominational and local church leaders. Sixty-four photographs of the churches reflect denominational and geographical styles of architecture.

The material collected here comes from cornerstones, historical markers, local and denominational records, news articles, and church and pastoral anniversary programs and documents. The study fills an informational gap and provides a beginning for a comprehensive history of the African American church in Texas. The bulk of the research data is available in the Texas A & M University archives in College Station.

William Montgomery has written a useful introduction which gives historical perspective to the details. Extensive notes. an alphabetical listing of
state historical markers, and a sixteen-page index help make McQueen’s book valuable as a reference and travel guide.

Milton S. Jordan
Houston, Texas


Labor history in Texas has received relatively little attention from historians; African American labor has received even less attention. Ernest Obadele-Starks addresses this issue with a thoughtful and informative study of the effort of African Americans to achieve equality in the workplace along the Texas Gulf Coast during the first half of the twentieth century. Obadele-Starks examines five key industries – the docks, railroads, oil, steel, and ship building – and focuses his study on the upper Texas coast from the Houston-Galveston area eastward to Beaumont and Port Arthur. Obadele-Starks argues that black workers were engaged in a constant struggle for equal opportunity in the workplace and that this struggle involved a variety of tactics and encompassed not only black workers but also black political and community leaders. He further argues that this struggle involved class and racial issues, pitting black workers against management and white workers and their unions.

Obadele-Starks organizes his study around the five industries that form the basis of industrialization along the Texas Gulf Coast. He details the efforts of African American workers to achieve equality in the workplace in each industry. Tactics varied not only from industry to industry but among workers within an industry, especially among various factions within the leadership of the African American community. Black workers and their supporters faced three choices: attempting to force white unions to integrate; creating separate black unions; or working through company unions. The choices were complicated. White unions often had more resources, but rarely gave black workers a voice in union management or prioritized the needs of black workers. Black unions addressed the needs of black workers but perpetuated a Jim Crow labor force. Company unions generally were dominated by management but sometimes paid more attention to African American interests than did white unions. During the 1930s the rise of the CIO with its commitment to racial equality seemed to bode well for black workers; likewise, during World War II the creation of the Fair Employment Practices Committee brought the federal government into the struggle to end racial discrimination in defense industries. In both cases Obadele-Starks notes that the results fell far short of the promise. By the end of the war, black labor was organized and politically aware but had not attained its goals.

*Black Unionism in the Industrial South* is well researched and argued.Obadele-Starks makes effective use of minority newspapers, union records, and oral history to present labor issues from the perspective of the African American community. His work provides a clear picture of the struggle of black workers for equality during the first half of the twentieth century.

Cary D. Wintz
Texas Southern University
African Americans participated in the cattle industry from the slavery era into the twentieth century, but unfortunately have received little attention from historians. Indeed, their contributions to western ranching economics were vast, varied, and valuable. Sara R. Massey has chronicled the status and progression of black cowhands throughout much of the Lone Star State’s history in *Black Cowboys of Texas.* Considering the disadvantages under which they labored, both black men and women made remarkable efforts to imprint their style upon American cattle ranching. This work provides the background and panorama for this particular aspect of the black heritage.

The major controversy surrounding black cowboys and cowgirls is determining what percentage actually participated in the cattle boom at its height from 1866 until 1895. The initial estimate in the 1920s suggested that African Americans and Mexicans comprised one-third of all the cowhands involved in the cattle drives. Additional research indicated that blacks outnumbered Mexicans two to one, or twenty-five percent to twelve percent, as trail-herders. The actual number of black cowboys who assisted in driving cattle out of Texas was approximately 5,000. Quintard Taylor, Jr., disputes these numbers and percentages. He contends that black Texas herders constituted four percent of the total in 1880 and but only 2.6 percent by 1890. Apparently Taylor misread and misused the available evidence.

Collections of essays naturally vary in quality and usefulness; *Black Cowboys of Texas* is no different in this regard. But whether African Americans toiled on open or fenced ranges or as trail drivers, this book covers their disparate experiences. One strength of the twenty-seven essayists is that their backgrounds encompass a spectrum from folklore to film producer and from historian to museum director. *Black Cowboys of Texas* provides a somewhat eclectic approach to its subject. Nevertheless, it is successful, interesting, and occasionally innovative, in short, a marvelous and fascinating study. Massey has done an excellent job in bringing together the historical background and occupational diversity of Texas’ black cowboys.

Barry A. Crouch
Gallaudet University


I am tempted to write that I am a poor if logical choice, for this review. Because the author and I shared a moment in time on the north shoulder of The Bulge — though unknown to each other — I may be accused of less than unbiased honesty. I plead innocence, however.

Neill, who as a retired newsman shares another association, has written a profane hymn to the infantry rifleman — The Doughboy, The Grunt, The GI, to
whom even an artilleryman can and does pay obeisance. His dedication is to "those who served in the front line." His recollections tell it all.

Though a resident of California at his induction, the author served his World War II basic training in Texas, at Camp Wolters, his aborted ASTP "education" at John Tarleton College, and his stateside stint with the 99th Infantry Division at Camp Maxey, near Paris. But this was a Texas prelude only.

The real story of how Neill and other front line infantrymen served and suffered during the Battle of the Bulge began when the 99th was introduced to combat in the "quiet" Ardennes region of Belgium. There he and his comrades began to learn why infantry suffered most of the casualties though constituting only six percent of the U. S. Army in Europe.

The real test came on December 16, 1944, when crashing artillery fire and ghostly German foot troops appeared out of a fog to begin Hitler's infamous Ardennes offensive. For their role in holding the north shoulder (with monumental assistance from the 2nd Infantry Division) in what military historian Charles McDonald has called "the greatest battle ever fought by the U. S. Army," the 99th earned a measure of immortality.

The price for the 99th and the 2nd was high. Neill tells the grim story from first-hand knowledge of the bitter weather, hunger, danger, and sleep deprivation perhaps better than any account with which I am familiar. Present, too, is the pervasive attitude of many rankers toward shortcomings, as they saw them, of officers above them.

Not least of the latter were senior generals who counted gasoline above adequate winter clothing and rear echelon types who pilfered Arctic galoshes and "water proof" boots before the front line had a chance at them. At one stage, 1,000 men were lost every day to trench foot.

Unfortunately, Bastogne has come to be equated with The Bulge in popular wisdom, and it is good to see here the north shoulder given its due attention.

As with Congressional Medal of Honor winners who rank a salute from all, even from generals, so too, do combat infantry and the artillerymen who served with them as forward observers. Herewith my salute to Neill and his comrades.

Max S. Lale
Marshall and Fort Worth


Over the past two decades students of Chicano history have worked to eliminate stereotypes that assumed this group was monolithic in economics and politics. Writers such as George J. Sanchez, Richard A. Garcia, and David Gutierrez have examined differences within barrios regarding consumerism, acculturation, and immigration. To this important body of literature we now add Ignacio M. Garcia's _Viva Kennedy_. This study carves a niche for reformers who
struggled to improve life between the eras of the Mexican American generation (the 1930s-1950s) and the Chicano Movement (late 1960s-1970s).

In the first four chapters Garcia details the aims and tactics of Viva Kennedy club members to place them within their own "political time and space" (p.10). Like their predecessors and successors, they hoped to improve life for Mexican Americans and tie their reform agenda to a broader movement. The major difference lies in how they worked to bring about social change in 1960. Unlike earlier activists, members did not seek remedies through the courts. Unlike Chicano militants, they wished entry into the "mainstream" of American politics. Their ultimate goal was to become part of the governing "system" in order to bring increasing levels of benefits to their communities.

The final three chapters examine the disappointments of activists when the new administration did not provide "sufficient" rewards to those who had supported John F. Kennedy's candidacy ardently. Herein lies the work's most vital contribution. As the presidential election in 2000 approached, Garcia reminded the comunidad that, as in 1960, politicos would approach Latinos lusting for votes. This work suggests that community needs will not be served, in fact they may be betrayed, shortly after ballots are cast. Perhaps, Garcia argues, it is necessary for Latinos to seek other avenues outside the mainstream to achieve their Camelot.

Jorge Iber
Texas Tech University


Frankie Randolph of Houston was a contending force in Texas politics for twenty-five years after World War II. Because of her ability to organize on precinct, county, and state levels - and through seemingly tireless work - she enabled liberal Democrats to wield significant power regarding the implementation of party policies and the selection of candidates. Partly as a result of her efforts, Ralph Yarborough challenged conservative Democratic candidates during these years, crowning all such efforts with U.S. senatorial victories in 1958 and 1964. In fact, Yarborough acknowledged her efforts by writing that "Mrs. Randolph's support and encouragement more than that of any other one person was a major factor in my going to the U.S. Senate" (p. 56).

Mrs. Randolph was also a continual source of contention within the Democratic Party. Over the years she battled the conservative or moderate forces led by Governors Allan Shivers, Price Daniel, and John Connally, as well as the congressional leadership of Lyndon Johnson and Sam Rayburn. Though seldom successful, she was a formidable opponent, worthy both of their fear and admiration. During those postwar years Randolph battled for important but at times unpopular causes in Texas such as integration for blacks, equal rights for women, and civil rights for all - and often she ran afoul of the "male establishment." She was even instrumental in establishing - and sustaining financially - the Texas Observer, a journal renowned for "tackling progressive issues, exposing corruption, informing the public on issues concerning civil and
human rights, and, most importantly, covering the peccadilloes of the Texas legislature” (p. 37). And, again, such an activity was part of her liberal legacy.

Frankie is a worthy contribution to Texana. Ann Fears Crawford, a professor of history at Houston Community College and Wharton County Junior College, has presented clearly a study of the liberal-conservative fight in Texas from 1946 to 1970. And even though often eulogistic of her subject, an uncompromising leader who was by no means a saint, Crawford has provided insight into one of the significant “movers and shakers” in the Democrat Party in post-World War II Texas, Frankie Carter Randolph.

Ben Procter
Texas Christian University


Nancy Baker Jones’ and Ruthe Winegarten’s Capitol Women is more than a simple compendium of the lives of the eighty-six women who served in the Texas legislature from January 1923 to January 1999. It is a gateway to understanding and appreciating the role of women in the state legislature. Both authors are historians in the field of women’s history and Winegarten has eleven books to her credit. The authors, in readable, objective, and well-researched biographies, show how famous and obscure women won elections which advanced democracy for all. These women legislators used their political office to challenge traditional roles and fought for the removal of restrictions against women. Jones and Winegarten concluded that women officeholders did make a difference. But with only twenty percent of the Texas legislature composed of women after seventy-six years of having the opportunity to serve in politics, the authors urged more women to run for office and to organize a women’s caucus (p. 22).

Jones’ and Winegarten’s work is most useful to historians and researchers in women’s history in the field of government and politics. The women whom Texans elected came from a wide variety of backgrounds and occupations. They generally endeavored to advance the interests of the counties they represented. Many women ran for office to advance women’s and children’s issues which they felt had been neglected. At the same time, they did not want to be known as “feminists” or limit themselves to a single group. Barbara Jordan’s retort is fairly representative of women’s feelings about fitting in with the male members of the Texas government: “I’m not a black politician. I’m not a female politician. I’m a politician. And a good one” (p. 6).

Capitol Women begins with four essays which give context to women’s struggles to maneuver the maze of male Texas politics. These essays are a thoughtful analysis of the achievements of women officeholders and of how much farther society needs to go to reach equal representation for the great variety of people living in Texas. This section could have been expanded into a book-length work.

The limited information in the section titled “Snapshots” posed the only
drawback to the work. Although the women listed in that division were still serving in the legislature at the time of the writing of the book, a brief biography of each and the issues they sponsored would have balanced the past with the present. Using interviews and an extensive bibliography, Jones and Winegarten have written interesting biographical information and informative statistical appendices on Texas women legislators of the twentieth century.

Priscilla Myers Benham
North Harris College


East Texas would be a much better place, at least from a historian's perspective, if each of its counties had a history as good as the two-volume set James Smallwood of Oklahoma State University produced for Smith County.

Few of today's county histories are as complete or as interesting as the work begun by Smallwood in 1969 when, as an graduate student at East Texas State University, he wrote an article for Tyler's renowned Chronicles of Smith County at the request of his instructor, the late James Smyrl, who later became an administrator at the University of Texas in Tyler.

From that initial piece, Smallwood developed a number of close friends in Tyler and began to accumulate a foundation of knowledge about Smith County. He was eventually asked by the Smith County Historical Society to produce a history of Smith County from its origin in 1875 to its centennial year.

Smallwood has produced a history that begins much earlier than where most county histories start: The Pleistocene Age. It ends with a prologue to the twenty-first century. Sandwiched between the first page of Volume 1 and the last of Volume 2 are pages and pages of fascinating material, including a chapter about Tyler's role in shaping the postbellum political landscape in Texas and the influence of Governor Richard B. Hubbard, who became so well known in America that he gave the Fourth of July address at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876.

Smallwood has included an excellent chapter on Camp Ford, the largest Confederate prisoner-of-war camp in the Trans-Mississippi Theater of war, and a section on Tyler's immigrants and ethnic groups, which created a unique cosmopolitan corner of Dixie.

While Smallwood deserves considerable credit for this landmark work, he has graciously given credit for much of the material to the Chronicles, which has published two issues a year for more than thirty years.

Bob Bowman
Lufkin, Texas
In this local history, the author gives a "musical chairs" account of Mt. Vernon's changing business section from its beginning as Keith in 1848 to the end of the millennium. The buildings tend to remain the same but the occupants are continually changing with the times.

Located on (old) Highway 67, known as the "Broadway of America" in its prime, Mt. Vernon has seen many changes in its century and a half existence, most of them for the better. Beginning with the arrival of its first train in February 1887, the St. LSW (Cotton Belt) R.R. played a major role in the town's development by opening new markets for its products.

Interstate 30 by-passed Mt. Vernon, inhibiting its economic growth and progress in general. Franklin County's location on the dividing line of the pine belt and the post-oak prairie (Savannah), puts it in the unique position of having a varied economy based mostly on agricultural products and timber, with some declining oil production. It was once a major cotton center, but fruit growing has taken that great cash-generating commodity's place.

The author takes you on an interesting journey up one street and down the other, relating numerous tales of murders, fires, robberies, and all else that goes with small town life. You hear the names of various characters, both famous and infamous, such as Colonel Henry Thruston, "tallest man in the Confederacy" at seven feet seven and one-half inches; Don Meredith, Dallas Cowboys, star quarterback in the 1960s; Lefty Frizzell, country-western singer; Dr. J.M. Fleming, world traveler; and State Representative Tom Ramsey. Other lesser known characters with intriguing nick names are: "Mutt" Tedder, barber; "Cap" Newsome, gas station owner and cattleman; "Lucky" Ramsay, star auto salesman; "Watermelon" Mills, grocery man; and "Jimmy" Sowell, eightyish shoeshine entrepreneur, who attended all Mt. Vernon home football games as the only black person there.

Fred McKenzie
Avinger, Texas

Under the Man-Fig, Mollie Moore Davis (TCU Press, TCU Box 297050, Fort Worth, TX 76129) 1895. Reprint 2000. Contents. Notes. P. 332. $15.95. Paperback.

Mollie Moore Davis' late nineteenth-century mystery novel encompasses the scope of Texas history - more specifically, southeast Texas history - from immediate post-statehood to the 1870s. Davis' style evinces the tastes of an audience accustomed to a society that moved far more slowly than ours, yet the book itself does not leave the modern reader without a rich array of interesting characters or a broad view of a pre- and post-Civil War, semi-frontier community.

Beginning with an historical fable about a surging Brazos River, the narrative quickly moves under the shade of the Thornham's (perhaps West Columbia, according to the book's jacket), "man-fig," the local "council tree."
Thornham is described in terms of a typical river town comprised of wealthy land-owning, up-and-coming professional-and-mercantile, and poor sharecropping whites, and, as in much literature of Davis’ time and region, loyal, virtuous, carefree, enslaved, and later freed blacks.

The man-fig shelters the poor whites who pass judgment on the rest of the town’s folk, and the mystery of stolen jewelry and the otherwise incomprehensible rise in fortune of one of the town’s main attorneys/politicians is “rumored out” in the shade of this tree. Though this presumed theft is the main plot of the novel, Davis’ depiction of characters and personalities in this book is most interesting and most successful because of its focus on the female members of Thornham’s community. The characterizations reflect humor, pathos, and tenderness, but Davis’ insistent portrayal of the strength of her women is perhaps the most endearing trait of Under the Man-Fig.

W. Dale Hearell
Stephen F. Austin State University

Oil and Ideology: The Cultural Creation of the American Petroleum Industry,

To quote a recent pop culture icon, “image is everything.” The oil industry, according to Roger M. Olien and Diana Davids Olien, is certainly no exception. In Oil and Ideology: The Cultural Creation of the American Petroleum Industry, they demonstrate how collective perception sometimes becomes more important than reality.

The Oliens contend that government regulatory policy reflected a biased image of the oil industry. During the nineteenth century the development of resources, especially those such as oil that seemed destined to concentrate wealth in the hands of a small group of entrepreneurs, was considered by many who longed for a simpler, Jeffersonian past to be immoral: monopoly, the apparent outgrowth of such development, was likewise wrong. Having attracted the attention of muckraking journalists, Standard Oil became the monopolistic model for an entire industry for most Americans. Progressive conservationists also criticized the petroleum business, focusing their attention on the industry’s waste and pollution problems that served as cultural metaphors for crass materialism and disregard for the future. During the 1920s this criticism became more strident as the industry suffered much blame for over speculation in stocks and the growth of a shallow, consumptive society. Attempts at government regulation of the oil industry during the 1930s and 1940s, the authors contend, were simply reactions to the false image that critics had constructed of the business over the previous several decades.

The authors pose several interrelated questions in this book: How was the social and cultural construct of the American petroleum industry formed? By whom? Why? And how did it affect the formulation of public policy in the years before 1945? They do a fine job answering each of these, and their ultimate conclusion insists that public policy created on the basis of a culturally constructed image, rather than the reality of the industry, was, and continues to
"It is time," the authors state in closing, "to reconstruct the cultural construction of oil." Anyone who reads this carefully crafted book likely will agree.

Mark D. Barringer
Stephen F. Austin State University


For many people of middle age or older, the phrase "bring 'ern back alive" recalls jungle adventurer Frank Buck, a powerfully-built man who sported a pencil mustache and a pith helmet. Frank Howard Buck was born in 1884 in Gainesville, Texas, and died sixty-six years later in Houston. During the years between his Texas beginning and finale, Buck became famous for a career that took him to exotic locales in search of rare and dangerous creatures.

As a boy growing up in nineteenth-century Texas, Buck avidly trapped and collected small animals, birds, and snakes. He quit school after the seventh grade and found work as a cowpuncher on a train to the Chicago stockyards. In Chicago he associated with unsavory characters, engaged in barroom brawls, and, at seventeen, took a forty-one-year-old bride. The couple divorced, allowing Buck to marry soulmate Muriel Reilly. In 1911, with the profits from a poker game, Buck journeyed to Brazil to buy exotic birds, which he sold in New York. Buck began traveling to the jungles of India, Borneo, Sumatra, and the Philippines in search of animals, reptiles, and birds he could sell to zoos and circuses. At this time the jungle animal business was dominated by a German company, Hagenback. But the First World War curtailed the activities of Hagenback, and Frank Buck aggressively seized this opportunity. Soon he was the most notable animal supplier in the world, and in 1922 the city of Dallas commissioned him to populate an entire zoo.

"I have made it my business to bring them back alive," wrote Buck, in explanation of the painstaking care he gave the creatures he purchased and trapped. The first of eight autobiographical books, Bring 'Em Back Alive, appeared in 1930. The next year, with 125,000 feet of film he shot in the jungle, Buck produced a hit movie with the same title. He served as the model for a character in the legendary motion picture, King Kong. Buck had a network radio show, appeared with Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey Circus, and was a popular subject of comic books. By the time he died of lung cancer in 1950, Frank Buck had achieved worldwide fame. That this hardy Texan's celebrity was earned is made evident in a new version of Bring 'Em Back Alive, which is a compilation of exciting and often chilling first-person adventures excerpted from five of his books.

Bill O'Neal
Panola College

Things built in Texas are as diverse as the people who built them. The early folk came to Texas, some driven by necessity, some fired by ambition, but once here, they needed shelter and safety and they desired comfort and convenience. So they built.

In twenty-four essays, *Built in Texas* describes what they built, how they built, what they built from, why they built the way they did, and some efforts at preservation and restoration of Texas-built treasures.

Described are types of shelters Texans built from teepees to tie structures, from dugouts to double-pen dogtrot houses, from lean-to’s to log houses, shotgun houses to salt-boxes, sotol to catslide – adobe, board-and-batten, rock, brick, palisade, and anything else available.

After shelter, other necessities discussed include fences to keep things out and to keep things in, stiles, gates, cattleguards, wells, windmills, cisterns, tanks, ponds, barns, cribs, smoke houses, root cellars, and outhouses.

To provide a measure of comfort, Texans built fireplaces, porches, bridges, balconies, and such furniture as tables, chairs, benches, and beds.

The book describes how they did all of this with the axe and broadaxe, adze and foot adze, maul and wedge, mallet and froe, and draw knife, plane, and chisel.

Editor Francis E. “Ab” Abernethy also wrote the priceless preface and introductions to the seven sections. The book is generously illustrated with over 250 photos and about fifty line drawings. Most of the photos were taken by “Ab,” many running full page – and many of the drawings are by Reese Kennedy with some by Ben C. Mead.

When the opportunity presents itself to be entertained and to become better informed about how things were and how they got to be as they are, one should seize it. *Built in Texas* is just such an opportunity.

R.G. Dean
Nacogdoches, Texas

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Imagine yourself in a happy place as you let the power of mineral waters relax your legs, your torso, your entire body. Feel the negative energy release as you go deeper and deeper into relaxation.

Even though mineral spas have completely vanished in Texas and largely disappeared in the rest of the United States, due mainly to modern medical technology, “taking the waters,” a colloquial term for balneology, the study of
the therapeutic effects of baths and bathing, is still enticing. Just ask anyone who has visited the bathhouses of Hot Springs, Arkansas.

In *Taking the Waters in Texas*, a dissertation turned into a book, Janet Mace Valenza takes the reader on an interesting journey. She touches first on prehistoric times when pictographs denoted healing practices, then moves to the medieval and classical periods in Europe when many wells were considered the sacred abodes of gods and the period in the United States when leaders such as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson visited spas. Lamenting the fact that she finds little research on the numerous Texas watering holes, Valenza carefully documents their history. She begins with mythical stories and Indian legends such as warring tribes meeting in peace to bathe at Sour Lake, through the frontier years of the Republic of Texas when towns sprang up around the mineral waters, through the “Golden Age” of the late 1800s when many of Texas’ natural wells became pleasure resorts, and concludes with the virtual disappearance of spas during the postwar years of the twentieth century.

In addition to detailing daily spa life at the popular resort towns of Lampasas, Mineral Wells, Marlin, and San Antonio, Valenza offers a list by counties of all the known mineral wells and springs in the state as well as a regional guide with numerous photographs from her postcard collection.

Well written and researched, this book is indeed a historical treasure!

Wanda Landrey
Beaumont, Texas


People like rivers. Rivers provide things people enjoy – scenery, travel, recreation, adventure, food, and sustenance. Verne Huser’s *Rivers of Texas* relates the natural history, geography, uses, and benefits of Texas rivers. Commentary on the attitudes of Texans toward their rivers and environmental problems with them makes the book informative and enjoyable reading.

The diversity of Texas rivers is emphasized by the categories in which the writer groups them for discussion: the long border rivers; major heartland rivers; some regional streams; and those short coastal plains rivers which run directly into the Gulf of Mexico. Each is treated in a chapter that introduces its river by giving a summary list of details on location, length, tributaries, watershed, flow, origins of its names, recreation uses, public lands and parks, and special features.

The author provides an engaging discussion of the history, people, and wildlife of these rivers. In this setting, Huser’s advocacy for the preservation of these riparian ecosystems is presented well. The writer’s concern for the future of the rivers is apparent. The timeliness and pertinence of Huser’s book is evident in the current controversy over whether the Texas Committee on Natural Resources should retain the designation of the Angelina River as “high quality” as to wildlife habitat or lower it to “intermediate quality,” thus permitting a local industry to continue dumping waste into the river.
The flora and fauna of each Texas river is narrated in colorful detail in this book, and people who were prominent in the areas of the rivers are important in Huser's discussion of the river's history.

This book is an interesting blend of facts about Texas rivers. Reading it is nearly as good, maybe better in places, than a lazy river drift across these prairies, canyons, and towering forests.

C.P. Barton
Nacogdoches, Texas


This concise contribution to the Fred Rider Cotton Popular History Series encapsulates the life of Thomas Freeman McKinney and the story of his home in what is now the city of Austin. A Kentucky native, McKinney arrived in Texas during the 1820s and eventually entered into a business relationship with Samuel May Williams in Galveston. McKinney, who also served in the Texas legislature, built his Travis County stone house during 1850-1852. By 1860, the McKinney Ranch on Onion Creek encompassed 1500 improved acres. After his death in 1873, his widow remained on the property for a few years and later sold most of the land, including the house, to James W. Smith. The latter's heirs donated 682 acres to the state of Texas in 1974.

This study sketches the prehistory of the Santiago Del Valle grant that became McKinney Falls State Park in 1976, briefly considers "the Onion Creek community" (p. 40), and contains a map of the nineteenth-century ranch. One would like to know more about the property's recent past, including problems associated with agricultural economics, urban growth, and water pollution. Nevertheless, the author has drawn from rich primary sources such as McKinney family papers, census reports, legal records, and newspapers to construct an informative narrative about the historic site that now lies in the shadow of Austin's new airport.

Paul M. Lucko
Angelina College


Those of us who are Texana bibliophiles are familiar with the stories by Elmer Kelton. Some of his works have merited reprinting, as is the case with *Dark Thicket*, originally published in 1985. This edition includes an afterword by Laurie Champion which sheds light on Kelton and his other books.

*Dark Thicket* concerns a wounded Texas Confederate taking convalescent leave home somewhere west of Austin. While he is dedicated to the Southern cause, his family and friends frequently take refuge in a nearby thicket because of their Unionist sympathies. The hero, Owen Danforth, has to reconcile the
conflicting sympathies without violating Confederate law. This scenario is of special interest to this reviewer since his own great grandfather was caught up in similar circumstances in Parker County in 1865.

Great Grandad solved his problem by migrating to Indian Territory, but Danforth stays to fight the forces of evil, help his people, and romance a local belle. In fact, it is Kelton's weaving of subplots throughout the main theme that gives *Dark Thicket* an exciting as well as plausible story. He has combined his own definition of truth, being fiction, folklore, and fact, in this novel.

This book is recommended for anyone who likes a good story about Texas or the Confederacy. It is highly recommended for public school libraries.

Robert W. Glover
Shiloh Ranch


Of all the lawmen who have served Texas since its inception, county constables largely have been overlooked by historians and writers. Few, if any, serious studies have been made of this special group of peace officers.

Allen G. Hatley, a free-lance writer and a twice-elected constable in Bandera County, has tackled the history of constables in Texas and, in doing so, filled a gap in our knowledge about Texas peace officers. We learn, for example, that the word "constable" comes from the Latin *comes stabuli*, which means master of the horse, master of the stable, or count of the stable. Early constables in France were, in fact, military officers.

The history of constable in Texas reaches back to 1823 when Thomas V. Alley was appointed constable in Stephen F. Austin's colony to summon witnesses and bring offenders to justice. The first constables in the Republic of Texas – William Chissum, E. Fitzgerald, E.E. Hamilton, and A. Waters – were elected in Nacogdoches in 1838. Texas' present system of county constables was created by the Texas legislature when Texas became a state in 1846.

Hatley provides readers with a history of how the office of constable evolved in Texas and serves up a collection of famous and interesting constables, from El Paso's John Selman, a contemporary of Wyatt Earp and Bat Masterson, to Garrison's Darrell Lunsford, whose murder in 1991 by three drug dealers was recorded by a video camera in his patrol car.

Allen Hatley has produced a valuable book, one that should be on the shelf of anyone who loves the Old West.

Bob Bowman
Lufkin, Texas
Paula and Michael Grauer have compiled a directory of who was who in Texas art late in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. The Dictionary of Texas Artists, 1800-1945 identifies more than 2,500 artists whose names appear in professional art-exhibition records in Texas. With extensive research and a comprehensible format, this publication is a valuable reference tool for readers interested in Texas art and history.

The roster of artists stretches to the beginnings of Texas art history to include artist-explorers, military survey artists, itinerant portrait painters, and early immigrant artists. It extends through the Texas Centennial Celebration in 1936 to encompass the influx of artists and sculptors lured to Texas by the prospect of lucrative Centennial commissions. Also included are a number of contemporary Texas artists. Names are arranged alphabetically followed by the person's curriculum vitae. At the end of each entry a list of sources facilitates further study of a particular artist's life and work.

In addition to biographical sketches, the Dictionary provides the first published inventory of major art exhibitions in Texas before 1945. The inventory records the names and dates of thirty-two exhibitions and identifies the artists who participated in each event.

More than 150 color plates supplement the written material. Since most of the works pictured pre-date the modern-art movement in Texas, they record in eyewitness fashion the people, events, architecture, rural landscapes, and city street scenes associated with the state of Texas before the mid-point of the twentieth century.

Michael R. Grauer is curator of art at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum. Paula L. Grauer is a columnist for the Canyon News.

Carol Morris Little
Longview, Texas