

# New Mexico Historical Review

---

Volume 3 | Number 2

Article 7

---

4-1-1928

## Book Reviews

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr>

---

### Recommended Citation

. "Book Reviews." *New Mexico Historical Review* 3, 2 (1928). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr/vol3/iss2/7>

This Review is brought to you for free and open access by UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in *New Mexico Historical Review* by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [amywinter@unm.edu](mailto:amywinter@unm.edu), [lsloane@salud.unm.edu](mailto:lsloane@salud.unm.edu), [sarahrk@unm.edu](mailto:sarahrk@unm.edu).

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Spanish-American Frontier, 1783-1795.* By Arthur P. Whitaker. (Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1927) 255 pp., 3 maps.

To readers of the *Historical Review* the title of this recent publication might seem misleading. The point of view is that of the Atlantic seaboard immediately after the Revolutionary War, and the frontier of which the book treats is that between the new American republic and the adjacent holdings of Spain, namely, East and West Florida and Louisiana. It was these parts of the country, including as they did the habitats of the Cherokee, Creek, Chickasaw and Choctaw Indians, which constituted "the old Southwest," with its western limits along the Mississippi river from New Orleans to St. Louis. The interplay of American, Indian and Spanish participants in the struggle for this region gives the material for a most absorbing study, which is described in the sub-title as "the westward movement of the United States) and the Spanish retreat in the Mississippi valley." The story is developed under the chapter titles of Rival Empires, Protagonists and Field of Action, The Spanish Barrier, the Westward Course, Gardoqui's Mission, The Chevalier of the Order of St. Louis, Intrigue and Immigration, The Union Preserved, Yazoo, Nootka, Hector Baron de Carondelet, The French Revolution and the Spanish Empire, The Intrigue Infallible, San Lorenzo: a Frontier Treaty. An excellent summary of the history presented by Dr. Whitaker is given in the introduction by Prof. S. E. Morison of Harvard University:

Through an amazing web of intrigue and diplomacy the irrepressible frontiersmen of the old South-West burst their way to the Mississippi. When Roosevelt wrote his *Winning of the West*, little that was certain could be told of this story. Dr. Whitaker has pursued every clue to the

Spanish archives, where the servants of a declining empire carefully recorded every letter and interview and bargain concluded in their colonies on the Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi. From the material so gathered, he has reconstructed a fascinating story of relations between rough-necked backwoodsmen of the Daniel Boone breed and courtly representatives of the King of Spain; Scots fur-traders and the half-breed chiefs of the Creek and Cherokee; picturesque rascals like O'Fallen and Tom Washington, and venal legislatures. The influence of this frontier underworld on the formal diplomacy between Spain and the United States has been clearly brought out; and the significance of it, as a conflict between two different civilizations, adequately appreciated. Twelve eventful years of this conflict are concluded by the Madrid negotiations of 1795 between Thomas Pinckney and Manuel de Godoy, and the treaty of San Lorenzo, which cleared Spanish obstructions from our westward advance.

As early as the beginning of the Revolutionary War, Spanish officials were sounding the warning that New Mexico might become an object of interest to the American colonies, and in this history of "The Old Southwest" we have a preliminary stage of that westward expansion of which the expeditions of Rogers and Clark, and Zebulon Pike were but later developments. It is a pleasure to commend such a book to students of the Spanish Southwest.

L. B. B.

---

#### NOTES AND COMMENT

##### THE PAGEANT OF AMERICA

The library of the Historical Society is in receipt of Volume VI—"The Winning of Freedom,"—and Volume IV—"The Evolution of American Commerce"—of "The Pageant of America," a monumental publication of *The Yale Press*. The Society owes its subscription to the entire series to the late Roberts Walker. Space does not permit review at length of these sumptuously illustrated books