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Reviews and Notes

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REVIEWS AND NOTES

Fray Alonso de Benavides' Revised Memorial of 1634. With numerous supplementary documents elaborately annotated. By Frederick Webb Hodge, George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey. The University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1945. (Pp. 368. Illustrated. Bibliography and Index. \$6.00).

This, the fourth of the Coronado Centennial Publications, edited by George P. Hammond, in itself, is justification of the foresight and wisdom which motivated the Coronado Cuarto Centennial Commission in making provision for a series of historical works bearing on the history of the Spanish Southwest from 1540 to 1940. This, the first publication in any language of the 1634 Benavides Memorial, was planned as early as 1929, by the Quivira Society, to whose credit stand a number of valuable historical volumes on the Southwest. As stated in the preface to the present publication: "The reader will have profited by the long postponement, as much new material has come to light in the intervening years. These materials will make Benavides' work more interesting, more complete, and we believe, more valuable."

In 1916, there was published a limited edition of 300 copies, magnificently illustrated, of the 1630 Memorial of Benavides, as presented to Philip IV of Spain by Fray Juan de Santander, Commissary General of the Indies. There had been previous publication of English translations of this early Memorial, but it remained for Mrs. Edward E. Ayer of Chicago, to make the standard translation with the aid of Charles F. Lummis and Frederick Webb Hodge, who carefully edited the manuscript, read the proof and annotated the volume, which unlike the present first publication of the 1634 volume, also printed the Spanish text. As stated by Lummis in his introduction to the 1630 Memorial: "To the student of the Southwest it is as precious as to the collector—an indispensable source. Benavides was an eye witness and a part of the history-making era he

records." This can also be said of the present volume, the 1634 Memorial, which incorporates new information from the missionaries whom Benavides had left behind when he departed from Santa Fe. Quoting the editors: "Much of the importance of the present work rests on the numerous historical documents which have been revealed in recent years, and which have been added as appendices. It may not be too much to assert that they are as important as the Memorial itself for the additional light which they shed on New Mexico and mission work on the northern border before 1634." In fact, the volume is a historical library in itself, covering that early period in Southwestern history, scholarly, authentic and as broad in its scope as it is meticulous in its detail. The editors, whose well-earned reputation as historians of the Southwest, places them among the foremost authorities in this field, give generous appreciation in their foreword to Dr. France V. Scholes of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, to Professor Lansing B. Bloom of the University of New Mexico and editor of the NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW, and to Dr. Edgar L. Hewett, director of the School of American Research at Santa Fe and professor emeritus of archaeology and anthropology at the University of New Mexico.

The typography, press work, binding of the volume are of the finest and set a new standard for University publications. The bibliography and index give evidence of much painstaking work and are of prime value to the student who, perforce must refer to this unsurpassed source of early seventeenth century history of New Mexico.

Mexican Gold Trail. The Journal of a Forty-Niner. By George A. B. Evans. Edited by Glen S. Dumke. (San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1945 pp. xx, 340, bibliography, illustrations, index. \$5.00).

Here is a most interesting book from the voluminous store of manuscripts written by the gold-hunting pioneers of the forties. Many of these diaries and notes were kept

and many of them are prosaic and somewhat dull, factual records. But not this volume which lives on every page.

George W. B. Evans of Defiance, Ohio joined a group of gold seekers headed toward California and in February, 1849 left for New Orleans and the first lap of a momentous overland journey. His record, he makes clear, has a dual purpose. First, it is a record of the journey including personnel, route, prices, and much additional information gathered by the author, and second, Mr. Evans wrote for publication, he hoped. Another factor which adds interest to this journal is the less well known route followed by "The Defiance Gold Hunters Expedition." They went from New Orleans to Port Lavaca, Texas by boat, thence overland to San Antonio; southwest into Mexican territory and across the difficult, sparsely populated arid wastes of northern Mexico. From the upper valley of the Sabinas they cut across desert country to the Rio Conchos thence northwest into the valley of the Santa Cruz and down that river to the Gila. Here they came into the more frequented trails to California and followed them north to the Stockton area, east of San Francisco.

In good flowing style the author not only records the happenings along the trail, the usual difficulties encountered in packing, the high costs of food and supplies, the constant fear of Indian attacks, intense suffering from cold, heat and thirst but he also includes excellent observations upon the vegetation, land formations and the beauties and the natural grandeur of the country. From this close observation he, at times, slips in philosophical comments:

"I love the night, the glorious night, when the camp is hushed and its fires low; 'tis then that thoughts of home and its domestic pleasures steal over our minds and with its balm softens man's harsh nature and hushes the tumults of his breast."
(p. 27)

His rather religious and provincial background is evidenced in his comments upon certain customs, and the importance of the church and religious ceremonies which he happens to observe. (pp. 111, 122-23, 125). Some

insight into social differences are clear from his entries on Texas hospitality, treatment of slaves, Mexican women, gamblers in the mining camps, and the general law enforcement in the "diggings." Of interest and value, too, are the descriptions of various Indian groups, appearance, customs, and in one instance, sketches of the Indian costumes (p. 153). There are too descriptions of the daily life at the mines, the "Maripose diggings," the methods used by the miners are explained (p. 233) and the returns per day are shown to be quite disappointing. These slim returns ultimately led Mr. Evans to leave for San Francisco to take a job as inspector in the customs service. From there he goes to Sacramento and settles but hardships, worry and overwork bring his untimely death in 1850.

Returning to the journal, humor is often apparent, as, for example, after vain attempts to hook a shark in the Gulf of Mexico the author concludes the day's entry with:

"The land is no longer in view
But the clouds they do not frown;
For fear I get sick too,
I'll go straight off and lay down." (p. 14)

Recurring references to home and country add to the human qualities which the record shows throughout.

On the whole the volume is well edited, and documented with references to other contemporary accounts. Some corrected misspellings ("muskeet" p. 23) makes one curious as to the number of corrections of English made by the author in comparison to the number mentioned. We wish too that the editor might have made reference to the correct spelling of the Rio Conchos, Rio Conchas in the diary and Rio Conchos on the map which serves as end papers. The spelling of unfamiliar words is largely phonetic and often amusing for example for Yuma *Umah* (p. 183), *Oomah* (p. 167).

Certain omissions in the editing are regretted such as an explanation of Hutchinson's Salve (p. 55) *higote* (p. 123) and the obvious error of Mr. Evans in confusing wild lavender and soapweed (p. 140).

Mention should be made of the pen sketches the author includes in illustration of new costumes and plants. Also to be commended are the fine selections of contemporary illustrations included by the editor. A short bibliography of other journals and an adequate index concludes a fine volume which is good reading and a worth while addition to the literature of the gold-rush trails. DOROTHY WOODWARD
University of New Mexico, January 1946.

Diario y derrotero de lo caminado . . . en el discurso de la visita general de Prescidios, situados en las Provincias Ynternas de Nueva España, que . . . Executó D. PEDRO DE RIVERA, . . . 1724-1728. Introduccción por el Lic. Guillermo Porras, textos y notas por Guillermo Porras Muñoz (Mexico, 1945). Pp. 171, with appendices, maps, itinerary, and index.

The original Spanish edition (Guatemala 1730) has a much longer title but the above will suffice; and among American scholars this volume will doubtless be known as Rivera's *Diario* of 1945. Shortly after we had arranged with Dr. Woodward for the review of the Evans diary (see above), a copy of this book came to our desk by courtesy of the authrs and we noticed the similarity in certain parts of the routes followed by the two parties more than a century apart, and it occurred to us that our readers might like to do some collating. We are glad to call attention to the book, moreover, because of its fine scholastic and intrinsic merit as a contribution to the history and geography of our Southwest.—L. B. B.

Fenix.—"Out of the ashes" of the National Library at Lima, Perú, in 1943, oldest library in the New World, come to us the first issues of the new review with this courageous title, which that library was directed to initiate, under direction of Dr. Jorge Basadra. The result is impressive,—in Spanish, of course, yet we feel that we should note it as an important event and offer our congratulations and best wishes in the very important work which the new *Revista* has undertaken.—L. B. B.