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Book Reviews

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Ten Texas Feuds. By C. L. Sonnichsen. Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1958. Pp. 248. $5.00.

Feuds and feuding have been a part of society since the dawn of time, beginning with the biblical record of human waywardness and continuing through the ages to the latest news accounts of teenage violence. The tendency to correct intolerable conditions and grievances by extra-legal means appears to be basic in human history, and, regardless of the justice of existing protective agencies, revenge is looked upon as a duty and a point of honor between conflicting parties. Feuding is neither a characteristic nor a privilege of any particular racial or national group. Evidence of it is found in the historical literature of all nations, regardless of the levels attained through culture and civilization. Since it is not confined to certain individuals or groups, it may be found in all geographical environments—mountain to plain—wherever law and order is defied, absent or suspended, and man prefers to survive.

Dr. C. L. Sonnichsen, author of *Ten Texas Feuds,* writes in the Prologue, "You won't find a better laboratory for the study of feuds than the State of Texas," and then, skilled technician that he is, expertly reveals the patterns of a segment of society at its best and worst as it deals out folk justice. At times the clinical detail—names, places, and contingent incidents—compound and confuse the basic issues of the feuds, but this is understandable in light of their complexity and the length of time over which they extend. In the case of the "War of the Regulators and the Moderators," the first and worst of the Texas feuds, the violence lasted nearly a half-century, while "The El Paso Salt War," bitter and bloody, culminated in a half-dozen years. For the reviewer, "A Feud for Miss Sue Pinckney," proved the most compelling vendetta. On the surface it mirrors much charm, gen-

tleness, grace, and naivete of the late Victorian period; however, the rhythm of repeated tragedy produced undertones which carry the subtle terror of the Gothic novel. Miss Sue, in the words of the author, was "as much a victim of the feuding spirit as if she had fallen in the 'Courthouse Tragedy' with a bullet in her heart."

Ten Texas Feuds adds new names to the long list of violent men in the West—they appear more virile, sincere, and colorful than the much exploited killers. Now perpetuated these lucky individuals will escape the damnation or deification of their less fortunate but better known brethren who, at the hands of those who will write, still ride forth.

The book is beautifully designed and is a credit to the author and publisher. Fully footnoted and adequately indexed, only illustrations (photographs, if possible, of some of the participants) could have added to the reader's interest.

University of Arkansas CLIFFORD P. WESTERMEIER

Richard Wetherill: Anasazi. By Frank McNitt. Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1957. Pp. xii, 321. Six appendices. Bibliography. Index. $10.00.

From the threads of facts, hearsay, and postulation Frank McNitt has woven the fabric of a very readable story about an almost legendary character in Southwestern Archaeology. The facts were garnered by meticulous reading of the correspondence of the Hyde Exploring Expedition and numerous other letters, searching through all available pertinent field notes, reading archaeological reports, studying the files of the Indian Service in the National Archives, examining court records, going through the files of local newspapers, and interviewing people who had been closely associated with the principal character and his activities. The hearsay was derived from many sources, some reliable, others questionable, and required careful sifting to separate truth from fiction, half-truth from slander. The postulation

is that of the author when he suggests the thoughts that passed through the minds of various individuals on numerous occasions, their reactions to different situations, the words they spoke, and reconstructs the trend of unrecorded events.

Richard Wetherill is probably best known for his part in the discovery of the Mesa Verde and the digging which he and his brothers did there. Subsequent activities in Grand Gulch, Utah, Tsegi Canyon, Arizona, and Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, probably were more significant but they did not catch the public fancy the way the finding of the great cliff houses in southern Colorado did. The Grand Gulch work resulted in the discovery and recognition of the Basket Makers and the preliminary investigations in the Chaco Canyon led to the series of excavations in Pueblo Bonito and Pueblo Peñasco Blanco by the Hyde Exploring Expedition with George H. Pepper as field director. Thus was started an interest in the Canyon which reached its peak in the activities of the School of American Research, The National Geographic Society, and the University of New Mexico long after Wetherill and the Hyde Exploring Expedition had passed from the scene.

The organization, experiences, and results of the various field parties is discussed in detail by Mr. McNitt. He also gives considerable information about the Hyde Exploring Expedition and its many ramifications. Because of the longer time spent there, and the fact that Wetherill not only attempted to homestead the area but also established a trading post near Pueblo Bonito, the Chaco Canyon receives more attention than the other localities where he operated. In that connection an interesting historical and archaeological background is presented for the Chaco Canyon. It summarizes the results of all of the parties which have excavated there and includes much knowledge unknown to the Hydes and Wetherill. However, their contributions are duly noted. The material is well presented and should be helpful to those desiring to know about the archaeology without having to plow through long, and not always available, technical reports.

Specialists may not agree with all that is said, but actually there is little in that chapter with which to find fault. Wetherill's troubles with the Indian Service and the General Land Office as a result of the Bonito project are given full consideration.

The personal side of the story begins with the coming of the first Wetherills to the American Colonies, and from the birth of Richard's father follows that branch of the family in the series of moves that ultimately led to the Mancos Valley and the Alamo Ranch in southwestern Colorado. The trials, vicissitudes, and pleasures of life on the ranch are described, and some of the difficulties Richard had with neighboring ranchers and local authorities are discussed at some length. Mention is made of numerous visitors to the ranch, including the family of itinerant musicians whose oldest daughter, Marietta, was later to become Richard's wife. The courtship and marriage of the couple and their following family life are touching parts of the story. The tragic death of Richard, Marietta's anguish and subsequent tribulations make affecting reading.

The murder of Wetherill by a Navaho Indian and all of the ramifications of the attendant investigations and legal proceedings are thoroughly covered, and it is evident that Mr. McNitt spared no efforts in obtaining as complete information as possible on that much debated and generally misunderstood sequence of events. The material presented casts considerable doubt on the integrity of some of the principal characters and removes much of the stigma that was attached to Wetherill's name.

The appendices consist of short articles pertaining to some of the Wetherill discoveries, letters written by Richard Wetherill, and a discussion of Chaco burials by Mr. McNitt. The latter is a useful contribution in that it brings together and summarizes all of the available data on that subject. However, the question of where most of the Chaco Canyon dead were buried still remains unanswered.

Mr. McNitt's purpose in writing the book on Richard Wetherill was to make available as true an account as pos-

sible about the man who played so great a part in attracting attention to and stimulating work in Southwestern Archaeology. He has done well in that respect and there certainly will be a better understanding of the man than heretofore.

Bureau of American Ethnology FRANK H. H. ROBERTS, JR.

ERRATA

Vol. 33, no. 2, p. 140—should read: wire fencing was *not* economically . . .