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Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

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NAVAJO WARS: MILITARY CAMPAIGNS, SLAVE RAIDS AND REPRISALS. By Frank McNitt. Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1972. Pp. i, 477. Illus., apps., bibliog., index. \$15.00.

THIS BOOK is probably the most detailed and most richly documented account under one cover of the sorry history of mutual raids, reprisals, broken treaties, murders, and massacres between Navajo Indians and the European invaders of their country from their earliest contacts with the Spanish to the final massacre of Navajos by United States soldiers just before the removal of most of the tribe to the Bosque Redondo, Fort Sumner, in eastern New Mexico in 1864. Speaking of documentation, it is a comfort to the reader to have the many footnotes on the pages to which they pertain instead of the all too common practice of ganging them at the end of the book or of chapters.

During his eight years of research in preparation for this book Frank McNitt examined some thirty thousand military and civil documents. It is the author's contention that, more than the rising tide of land encroachment beginning around the turn of the nineteenth century, the principal cause of the troubles was the pattern of enslavement of captive Navajos begun by the Spanish and continued to greater or less extent throughout the period covered by the book. Although against Spanish law, slavery was encouraged by corrupt governors and even some clergy, who, calling it the repartimiento instead of slavery, hypocritically pretended that it benefited the Indians since they were paid (about half a cent a day) for their labor and were advanced into civilized society and conversion to Christianity.

During the sixty-five years of struggle with the forces of the Spanish, Mexicans, and Anglo-Americans following 1800, fourteen treaties were signed, eight by the Spanish (1805, 1819, 1822, 1824, 1835, 1839, 1841, 1844), and six by the representatives of the United States (1846, 1848, 1849, 1855, 1858, 1861), of which only two were ratified by Congress. The

complete text of one of them (Treaty of Laguna Negra, 1855) is published for the first time in this book (Appendix C). All of them were unworkable, decidedly one-sided in the Europeans' favor, doomed from the start by the Europeans' ignorance of fundamental Navajo values, and soon broken by Navajos and Europeans alike. McNitt says that the terms of one of them "ranked in scope somewhere between the bolder aspirations of Captain Kidd and lesser visions of Napoleon I" (p. 151). The Navajos felt that their war with the New Mexicans was "none of the Americans' business" (p. 130), an opinion summarized by Zarcillos Largos in his famous response to Colonel Doniphan's threats: "You now turn upon us for attempting to do what you have done yourselves" (p. 118). The whole sorry mess culminated in Colonel Canby's insistence that the Navajos either surrender unconditionally or be exterminated and his orders that all male prisoners were to be executed at once (p. 429), a harsh policy which was later executed by General Carleton.

Part 1 of this book, which relates the encounters between the Navajos and the Spaniards and later the Mexicans, mainly because of scattered and fragmentary documentation, is much condensed and would appeal as fire-side reading only to hardened historians or military campaign buffs, but as a source it is of great value. The remainder of the book, and the larger part of it (pp. 93 ff.), is enlivened by much more detailed accounts, interesting anecdotes, and unusual bits of information of interest not only to historians but to Southwestern enthusiasts in general.

Scattered throughout are accounts of the personalities and activities of many Navajos whose names are well known and who were influential Navajo leaders or headmen, among them Segundo, Narbona, Zarcillos Largos, Cayetano, Barboncito, Mariano, and, of course, Manuelito, the great war leader. Some of these were staunch advocates of peace, notably Narbona and Zarcillos Largos who were treacherously murdered.

Likewise there are many accounts of the careers of well-known American military men, beginning with General Stephen Watts Kearny, followed by Colonel Doniphan, Captain Burgwin, Colonel Washington, Major Carleton, Colonel Miles, Colonel Fauntleroy, Colonel Canby, and, of course, Kit Carson. Also included are Lieutenant Emory, author of the well-known *Notes of a Military Reconnoissance*; Lieutenant Simpson who made the first survey of the ruins of Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, whose journal has "enduring value," and who also made the first record of El Morro (Inscription Rock) and named Mount Taylor; Colonel Sumner, who founded Fort Union in 1851; and Major Brooks, who distinguished himself by alienating Manuelito (the murder of Brooks' black slave Jim precipitated a major conflict with the Navajos). The proclamations of

reprisal or aggression by these military men, and their expeditions, campaigns, and encounters with the Navajo are all recounted. One of their less savory practices was to employ Pueblo Indian, Ute, Comanche, Apache, and Navajo defector auxiliaries, and to encourage hostile tribes to make war upon one another in order to divert their attention from Americans.

Among the civilians mentioned are James S. Calhoun, the first Indian agent in New Mexico and later the governor of the territory, who was the first to recommend confining hostile tribes including the Navajo to reservations; and Spruce M. Baird, the first agent to the Navajo tribe (1852). Another Navajo Agent whose family background, career, and death at the hands of Apaches are told in detail is the famous Henry L. Dodge, who is believed by McNitt to have been the actual father of the late great Navajo leader, Henry Chee Dodge (p. 295 n). One military man expressed the opinion that if Henry Dodge, who was killed in his forty-sixth year, had lived, the subsequent Navajo wars would never have occurred (p. 269).

Among the numerous items of interest to be found in this book two are worthy of special mention here. One is the origin of the ancestors of the present-day group of Cañoncito Navajos who live apart from the main tribe on a small reservation between Cebolleta and Albuquerque. They were the Enemy Navajos, "Diné Ana'aii," a renegade band first under the leadership of one Joaquín (p. 49) and later led by the unreliable "many faced" Sandoval (p. 71), who were known to the Americans as "friendly Navajos" and who were encouraged by them to kill their kinsmen. The other is the invention of a system of signaling with flags by Major Albert James Myer and his successful test of it under field conditions in 1860 and 1861 which led to the founding of the U.S. Army Signal Corps (pp. 404, 412). It was also Major Myer who with others persuaded Congress in 1870 to establish the U.S. Weather Bureau under Signal Corps direction. Finally, the usefulness of this book is enhanced by an excellent bibliography and a very detailed index.

Professor Emeritus, Boston University

LELAND C. WYMAN

THE ZUNIS: SELF PORTRAYALS. By the Zuni People. Alvina Quam, Translator. Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1972. Pp. xx, 245. Illus., maps. Cloth, \$7.95. Paper, \$3.95.

THE GENESIS of this volume is an example of a complex cooperative effort between an Indian group and several Anglo organizations. The Zunis began the task of collecting and taping their oral literature in 1965 with funds from the Office of Economic Opportunity. In 1968 the Duke Indian Oral History Project joined the venture in order to support the translation of the material. Further funding and administrative aid came from the Research and Cultural Studies Development Section (Bureau of Indian Affairs) and the Center for Studies of the American West. Each stage in the preparation of the manuscript, however, from dictating the material in the Zuni language to selecting and editing the content, is the work of the Zunis themselves.

The result is an attractively printed book of folk history addressed to the general public. It is not intended for professional historians or anthropologists, though some of the content may be useful as raw data. The 46 numbered items are presented in six sections (Society, History, Fables, Fables of Moral Instruction, Religion, and War and Defense), but the selections do not always fit comfortably in their assigned rubrics. Most of the items are either folktales—animal stories and myths of Zuni deities—or narratives telling of Navajo and Apache raids, battles with Anglo outlaws and horse thieves, and adventures involving members of Zuni settlements. These selections are interspersed with ruminative comments and traditional sayings. The organization is casual rather than systematic, as is proper enough in a volume of this type: thus, the place names mentioned in the text do not always relate to those indicated on the two maps; no index is supplied.

As a work prepared for a popular audience, however, the book manages to convey a broad and varied picture of the Zunis. The folktales include examples of their sacred literature, humorous stories, and tales with a moral attached. Some of the accounts of recent times present a nostalgic view of the old days when Zunis were strong and brave and upright in contrast to their less worthy descendants of today. Other narratives, presumably told by different storytellers, depict the old days as times of hardship, famine, and bloodshed in contrast to the relative peace and plenty enjoyed in modern times. This variety of content and attitude should help to counteract any stereotyped image of the Zuni.

THE SUN DANCE RELIGION: POWER FOR THE POWERLESS. By Joseph G. Jorgensen. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1972. Pp. xii, 360. Illus., maps, tables, app., bibliog., index. \$20.00.

PROFESSOR JORGENSEN has constructed an elaborate apparatus to explain the phenomena clustered around the Sun Dance as practiced by the Ute and Shoshone Indians, and when the analysis and argument are completed, the apparatus proves to have been irrelevant; it intrudes upon an orderly discussion.

The sections dealing with the Sun Dance—as religious experience, as a moral force countering tribal dissolution, and as the context in which tribal values are ritually celebrated—are told with meticulous care and understanding. Jorgensen explains that he witnessed the Ute Bear Dance and Sun Dance as a youth growing up in Utah and later, as a student of anthropology, he returned to the Ute country to investigate the conditions which gave rise to the ceremonies. He then realized that the Sun Dance was a “complex and beautiful ritual” persisting in an environment of “poverty and oppression.” So it is with a compassionate concern for detail and meaning that he enters upon his analysis of the Sun Dance community. And what emerges is one of the best documented accounts of this religious drama ever reported.

In his explication of the Sun Dance, however, Jorgensen looks for causes arising in forces beyond the Indian community. He sees Indians caught up in the “mechanics of the metropolis-satellite political economy” which brings on the “withering” of urban centers and the “shriveling” of rural areas to feed the growth of the world metropolis. Indian communities, captured within these orbiting forces, must continue to wither away. The Indian status is defined as “neocolonialism,” characterized by excessive controls. In the author’s analysis, “Reservation Indians are not only the subjects of local, state, and federal government, but they are also the subjects of tribal governments (chartered by Congress under the Indian Reorganization Act), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (a federal bureau commissioned to administer Indian land and resources, among other things), the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs (which appropriates budgets for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and approves the expenditures of tribal funds), and the Secretary of the Interior.”

The Indian situation in United States law and polity is complex enough without introducing confusion. Reservation Indians are not subject to local and state governments. They are subject to Federal laws and regulations, as are all other citizens, but here a different relationship obtains, in that the United States is trustee for tribal resources. This trusteeship is in part based on treaties, many of which antedate the development of “cap-

italist democracy," and in part on constitutional provisions empowering the national government to make treaties with the Indian tribes and to regulate commerce between the tribes and the United States. The tribes without exception insist that the treaty relationship be respected.

Indian tribes operated under systems of social control, or government, long before the United States was established. Congress did not "charter" tribal governments under the Indian Reorganization Act but in that act recognized the right of tribes to form governments of their own choice, with or without written constitutions. A number of tribes today operate under customary law and practice, as do the people of England.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs was created as the agency responsible for administering the trustee responsibility assumed by the nation with respect to tribal lands and other property, such as hunting and fishing rights. This is still the central responsibility of the Bureau, and while tribes are more and more insistent in their demands for greater control over their resources, they vigorously oppose eradication of the Bureau. It is the buffer between their internal governance and the outside and frequently hostile world.

Strangest of all in Jorgensen's enumeration is his statement that the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs "appropriates budgets for the Bureau . . . and approves the expenditures of tribal funds." The appropriation committees of House and Senate would be surprised to learn that their primacy in fiscal matters had been moved elsewhere.

What is most disappointing in Jorgensen's book is the elaborate scaffolding he has contrived to explain some Indian history. The Ute and Shoshone Indians dance, in his view, because the metropolis-satellite mechanism has grabbed off their resources, robbed them of self-esteem, denied them access to economic opportunity, brought political oppression—in a word, deprived them of the chance for a good life. He summarizes: "It is argued here that a measure of power, of autonomy, of status, and of esteem can be achieved by individuals within the beautiful Sun Dance religion, and that these achievements are possible only because the religion is simultaneously communitarian and individual, public and private, spiritual and mundane, and Indian rather than white."

Whether deprivation imposed by the white man explains the particular form which the Sun Dance has taken among these Plateau-Basin tribes, as is argued, can be questioned. Had there been no white man, no impact upon the Ute-Shoshone world by an aggressive intruder, it cannot be assumed that change would not have occurred, in dance forms, in status relationships, in economic adaptations, or otherwise. The rate of change might have been more leisurely, less traumatic, but that is speculative.

Jorgensen describes a tribal universe shattered by cataclysmic events, but

crisis events must have been experienced in pre-contact times, as in the prolonged droughts that occurred late in the thirteenth century, or the disappearance of big game animals at a still earlier period. The people survived those perils by turning in upon themselves for the strengths which today they find in the Sun Dance. The author is aware of this inward dynamic reality, as when he writes: "The Shoshone-Ute interreservation Sun Dance community has been maintained for about seventy years. It is this Indian community that Shoshone and Ute elders extol as the ultimate group of people to whom Indians are obligated and within which each person should work and sacrifice in order to maintain general well-being."

The only Indians who suffer deprivation at the hands of the white man, in spite of the impoverishment and the indignities endured, are those individuals who abandon their own "ultimate group" and accept the "code of conduct demanded by whites." Quoting Jorgensen again, when that code "cannot provide for Indians the goals the whites claim adherence to their code will produce," then the individual Indian knows deprivation. He has no place to go, not even to the Sun Dance.

Center for American Indian History
The Newberry Library

D'ARCY McNICKLE

SAND IN A WHIRLWIND: THE PAIUTE INDIAN WAR OF 1860. By Ferol Egan. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1972. Pp. xviii, 316. Illus., bibliog., index. \$8.95.

WITH the exception of Jack Forbes, who compiled a useful collection of the views of Nevada Indians, recent historians have shown little interest in the history of the Paiute and Shoshone people of the Great Basin, although several good anthropological studies are available, most notably those by Julian Steward, and most recently Margaret Wheat's fascinating *Survival Arts of the Primitive Paiutes*. A widely scattered people inhabiting a hostile environment, the Paiutes did not engage in a long period of warfare with the whites. Moreover, the simple political structure and the independence of the scattered bands probably has prevented the preparation of a comprehensive history of the Paiutes. Ferol Egan has concentrated on the Paiute War of 1860 in the vicinity of Pyramid Lake, and the result is a microscopic study of the history of a portion of the Paiute people.

The gold rush to California and the development of mining communities on the eastern slope of the Sierras brought occasional incidents and mounting tensions, and by 1860 both sides were ready for war. Although

Egan finds that whites were largely responsible for the conflict, Numaga, the Paiute war chief, sought to prevent warfare. When he failed, he organized a trap for the unorganized party of white civilians who moved against him in May 1860. The battle on the Truckee River was a rout (whites called it a massacre) and caused panic throughout the Sierras. Volunteer units were organized, and a detachment of regulars was sent from California. After a series of inconclusive skirmishes peace was negotiated.

Although the publisher erroneously claims that "Only at Little Big Horn did Indian Warriors shed more white blood than in Numaga's greatest triumph," the battle and indeed the entire "war" are relatively unimportant in the broad picture of Indian-white conflict. There is some question whether these events deserve book-length treatment. Egan has told the story in considerable detail, but unfortunately he has not related it to the history of other bands or tribes in the region. By writing primarily for a popular audience, he has also taken certain liberties such as the creation of a large amount of dialogue and the description of the thoughts of various participants in these events. As a result, it should be used with care.

The University of New Mexico

RICHARD N. ELLIS

SOUTHERN UTE LANDS, 1848-1899; THE CREATION OF A RESERVATION. By Gregory Coyne Thompson. Occasional Papers of the Center of Southwest Studies, No. 1. Durango, Colorado: Fort Lewis College, 1972. Pp. v, 62. Illus., maps, bibliog. Paper \$2.00.

It is appropriate that this publication should appear as the first in a series by the Center of Southwest Studies, since it documents a portion of the history and culture of one of the native peoples of the area, the Southern Utes.

Actually the research connected with preparation of this material for submission as a master's thesis at the University of Utah was part of a larger program to locate and acquire materials that were to become an archival collection for Southern Ute history and culture. This archive then became a primary source for the recently published *The Southern Utes, A Tribal History*, which is a product of and is owned by the tribe. Mr. Thompson's study provided background information for the tribal history, by carefully documenting the period from 1848 to 1899.

This study not only analyzes the exchange between the representatives of Colorado to the Congress of the United States and the members of Congressional committees, but reproduces statements of the Ute leaders themselves in connection with committee hearings, with treaty negotiations, etc. The role of representatives of the Bureau of Indian Affairs is included in a way that helps to illustrate the influence members of Congress have on actions taken by that agency.

Also included in the study are references to the role played by friends of the Indian groups, and their influence on the Indian policy of the United States during that period. Their involvement became an important factor in the eventual decision that the Southern Ute bands should be allowed to remain in a portion of their own homeland in southwestern Colorado.

It may not be a pleasant experience to have our past actions placed in the limelight in such a well-documented manner, but undoubtedly it will be good for our White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant and Catholic souls to be given the opportunity to publicly memorialize our past sins against our Indian neighbors. We understand that the history of the Southern Utes is to be included in the curriculum for the public schools of the area. We trust that this will be made a rewarding experience for both the Indians and their neighbors.

Mr. Thompson is presently engaged in a study that will attempt to further weave the record of the Southern Utes into the more general background of the Indian Policy of the United States, and thus help us to view that policy in its application to particular Indian communities.

The four maps included give us helpful reference points, and the illustrations add meaning to a useful work. We recommend this study to libraries, to schools in the Mountain West, and to general readers with an interest in the Indians of the American West.

The University of Utah

S. LYMAN TYLER

GENERAL CROOK AND THE SIERRA MADRE ADVENTURE. By Dan L. Thrapp. Norman: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1972. Pp. xxv, 196. Bibliog., illus., maps, index. \$7.95.

DAN THRAPP'S third book will be welcomed by students of General Crook and the Army's operations against the Apaches of Arizona and northern Mexico. Focusing on Crook's expedition of 1883, which brought about the surrender of Geronimo, this volume is based not only on Thrapp's

earlier researches but also on study of Mexican documents and personal reconnaissance, both air and ground, in the remote and rugged Sierra Madre country where the campaign reached its climax. Aerial photographs add to the text, as does a newly discovered contemporary map by Crook's engineer officer, contained in an endcover envelope.

Even though Geronimo had to be run down again, in 1885-86, Thrapp sees the 1883 expedition as by far the more perilous, more creditable to Crook, and more historically consequential than any other. Indeed, he regards it as "the most important and dangerous United States Army operation against hostile Indians in the history of the American frontier," a judgment with which General Custer or Captain Fetterman might have taken issue.

Although containing some new material and fresh insights, this book still retraces terrain that Thrapp traveled with commendable thoroughness in *Al Sieber* and *The Conquest of Apacheria*. The specialist will doubtless want this latest work. The general reader who has read either of the earlier books will probably not find enough of additional interest to reward his attention.

National Park Service

ROBERT M. UTLEY

THE EMIGRANTS' GUIDE TO CALIFORNIA. By Joseph E. Ware. Reprinted from the 1849 Edition. With Introduction and Notes by John Caughey.

New York: Da Capo Press, 1972. Pp. xxiv, 64. Illus., map, index. \$7.95.

THE PAST AND PRESENT OF THE PIKE'S PEAK GOLD REGIONS. By Henry Villard. Reprinted from the edition of 1860. With Introduction and

Notes by LeRoy R. Hafen. New York: Da Capo Press, 1972. Pp. xx, 186. Illus., map, index. \$10.00.

SCENERY OF THE PLAINS, MOUNTAINS AND MINES. By Franklin Langworthy. Edited by Paul C. Phillips from the edition of 1855. New York:

Da Capo Press, 1972. Pp. xviii, 292. Illus., index. \$12.50.

THE THREE VOLUMES noted compose part of the American Scene Series, whose general editor is Wallace D. Farnham of the University of Illinois, and consist of facsimile reissues of the *Narratives of the Trans-Mississippi Frontier*, originally published in 1932 by Princeton University Press. Such reissuance is most welcome in view of the growing scarcity and alarming costs of the original Princeton editions, and makes that much easier the task of building appropriate collections. Since 1945 the mushroom growth of

higher education with its demand for research facilities, together with the proliferation of private libraries of Western Americana have put so much pressure on the book market that virtually any reissue of such respectable offerings as these is a great help to the scholar and the serious collector. May the reviewer express the hope that the Da Capo Press and Professor Farnham will keep up the good work?

A brief résumé of the three will be offered for the benefit of readers who lack the time to review the standard bibliographies. Ware's *Emigrants' Guide*, the first such printed for the benefit of prospective California gold rushers, is typical of its category, and much improved by an introduction and explanatory notes by John Caughey. It is a plains and mountains "pilot" which offers a description of the Overland Trail from the Missouri to Sutter's Fort, with additional remarks upon the Isthmian route to the gold fields. Ware's advice was realistic, he having relied both upon J. C. Frémont's reports and a review of his manuscript by Solomon P. Sublette; ironically, when he himself attempted to follow his own advice, he died on the trail before reaching Fort Laramie.

Langworthy's *Scenery of the Plains, Mountains and Mines* is a characteristic "Overlander" somewhat rewritten from a diary he kept during his circular travels to California by way of the Overland Trail, and a return to the United States via the Isthmus. His—for the day—excellent education, renders the book superior in many ways to what might be called the average Overlander narrative, but Langworthy's dispassionate detachment from events makes his account less interesting from the human side than many another.

Villard's *Pike's Peak Gold Regions* is, strictly speaking, a journalist's résumé of events occurring before his appearance upon the scene, but since he interviewed many of the people who had actually participated in the events he described, it may be used—given caution and crosschecking—as a quasi-source. Villard is, of course, better known as the reorganizer and builder of the Northern Pacific Railroad. The book has an introduction and notes by LeRoy R. Hafen.

Arizona State University

OTIS E. YOUNG

SOUTHWEST HERITAGE: A LITERARY HISTORY WITH BIBLIOGRAPHIES.
 Third Edition. By Mabel Major and T. M. Pearce. Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1972. Pp. x, 378. Bibliogs., index. Cloth \$12.00. Paper \$4.95.

THE THIRD EDITION of *Southwest Heritage* is first of all a climactic effort for the authors—two retired professors of English who have been working with regional literature for almost half a century. It is also a valiant attempt to accomplish an almost impossible task: the digestion and evaluation of everything of literary significance that has been produced in the area south of the Arkansas River and between the Mississippi and the Colorado. The orientation is toward the dominant “American” culture, but the Indian and the Spaniard are not neglected.

In 1936, when Rebecca Smith and Mabel Major of Texas Christian University and T. M. Pearce of The University of New Mexico issued their first edition, it was possible to cover the ground with reasonable thoroughness. In 1948 the second edition had to be expanded considerably and new categories—Biography, Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and Literature for Children—were added to original chapters dealing with Chronicles, Tall Tales, Folk Ballads, History, Archaeology, Belles Lettres, and Narratives of the Cattle Country. By 1970, as the authors themselves point out, literary activity had accelerated until “more books in the field are published in a year than during decades in earlier times.” As a result Part Four (1948-1970) is hard pressed to get everything in.

Since Drs. Pearce and Major have developed special competence in poetry and folklore, they handle these subjects particularly well. Biography and history are competently done. Children’s literature, where some real pioneering was necessary, will be a revelation to non-specialists. Fiction was particularly hard to handle briefly. This reviewer’s collection of Southwestern fiction, concentrating on titles published since 1918, contains over seven hundred titles, and since an equal number of commercial westerns might be added, the problem of selection and evaluation was full of traps and pitfalls. It is to the authors’ credit that they have included most of the first-rate people and few borderline figures.

For the user, the book has one special difficulty. The 1948 edition, the authors explain, “is reprinted virtually unchanged in this third edition as still valid for the periods covered.” True enough! But a reader has to thumb a good many pages to assemble all that is said about such a writer as, for instance, Paul Horgan. A complete rewriting would have added many additional hours of labor, but much would have been gained.