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Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

SAINT VIBIANA'S CATHEDRAL: A CENTENNIAL HISTORY. By Msgr. Francis J. Weber. Los Angeles: Westland Printing Co., 1976. Pp. 73. \$5.00.

AMERICA'S CATHOLIC HERITAGE: SOME BICENTENNIAL REFLECTIONS, 1776-1976. By Msgr. Francis J. Weber. Hong Kong: Libra Press Limited, 1975. Pp. vii, 146. \$4.50.

THE JEWEL OF THE MISSIONS: A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO. Compiled and edited by Msgr. Francis J. Weber. Hong Kong: Libra Press Limited, 1976. Pp. x, 223. No price listed.

SOME CALIFORNIA CATHOLIC REMINISCENCES FOR THE UNITED STATES BICENTENNIAL. Edited by Msgr. Francis J. Weber. Los Angeles: California Catholic Conference, 1976. Pp. ix, 165. \$5.00.

THESE FOUR SMALL BOOKS of unequal length and merit have the unifying factor of having been written or edited or compiled by the prolific Archivist of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, Monsignor Francis J. Weber. Two employ the bicentennial theme.

The first book, which sketches the history of the Los Angeles Cathedral of Saint Vibiana, is notable more for the thirty-five well-presented illustrations than for the text. The historic church, founded in 1876 and patterned after Barcelona's San Miguel del Mar, was the dream of early Bishop Thaddeus Amat who as a youth had worshipped at that Catalonian chapel. Earlier in Rome, the then recently unearthed remains of Saint Vibiana were entrusted to the bishop for transport to California where the church eventually to be built in her honor would become the final resting place for this early virgin-martyr of Rome. The book is complete with the vicissitudes of the church as a center of religious life in Los Angeles, though never did the institution have the full support which it deserved.

Bicentennialism brought forth the second book, that on America's Catholic heritage. It contains fifty brief, California-oriented vignettes written by Weber plus three other longer sections. These seem to be rather "random glances at American ecclesial history," without focus, strongly biased and written for a strictly Catholic audience. Who else could concur that "the Shroud of Turin continues to be the single most fascinating artifact in the Christian world" or that

handing over to Episcopalians of the ruins of the Church of Saint Augustine in Florida was "one final degredation"? The final sections of the book deal equally unobjectively with "Catholicism in Colonial America," "The Catholic Church in the U.S.A. since 1866" and "Catholic Presence in the American Lifestyle."

The documentary history of Mission San Juan Capistrano, a more substantial book and of greater length, provides a change of pace. The mission is among the most interesting, but Weber overbills it when he claims that it "has long enjoyed the distinction of being the most entrancing ruin on the American continent." However, the sixty-one separate subsections of this book contribute substantially to an understanding of one of the key missions in the California Franciscan chain. Skillfully, Weber has brought to bear on his topic the combined opinions of a veritable parade of visitors who dealt with the mission over a span of two hundred years. Heard from in these pages are the ancient founding Fathers, foreign and local visitors, authors, journalists and observers. The contemporary flavor of these selections make them exciting as firsthand accounts tend to be. In the words of George Vancouver, Juan Bandini, Helen Hunt Jackson, Charles F. Lummis, or even of twentieth century writers, there is much said about the venerable mission. The result is satisfying. Surprisingly, the great legend of the swallows, their punctuality and their association with the mission first appears in the book in a section from 1939 by Ed Ainsworth, almost at the end. Many other details of the San Juan Capistrano story are found in this compilation.

Most important of the four books is the series of scholarly essays concerning California Catholic Reminiscences. Though there is no effort at editing, scholars of repute need little of this sort of help. Mathes, Engstrand, Geiger, Guest, Nunis, McGloin are all scholars of national reputation, while other contributors have high standing in regional historical circles. If the American Revolutionary Bicentennial year brought forth considerable foam and froth, academically it provided the pretext to create lasting contributions such as this book. Special recognition is due several authors for interesting sketches. James Robert Moriarty on Luis Jayme, the protomartyr of Franciscan California; Sister Magdalen Coughlin on the paradoxical role of the Franciscans in revolutionary California in a thoughtful article entitled "Missionary and Smuggler: Agents of Disobedience or Civilization?" and Ray Brandes's treatment of historical and archaeological discoveries at Mission San Diego, all are commendable. This is a book well worth its price.

University of New Mexico

DONALD C. CUTTER

DODGE CITY: THE MOST WESTERN TOWN OF ALL. By Odie B. Faulk. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977. Pp. xi, 227. Illus., index, notes, bibliog. \$9.95.

THE SCENARIO IS FAMILIAR. A lawman, dressed neatly and wearing a white Stetson, his six-shooter strapped tightly to his thigh, walks slowly down the center of deserted Main Street for the inevitable showdown with a desperado. Guns are

drawn—invariably the bad man slapping leather first—and the silence is shattered by thunderous and virtually simultaneous reports. No one familiar with Hollywood westerns need await the clearing of gunsmoke to know that truth and justice have won. The setting, often as not, is Dodge City, aptly described by Professor Odie B. Faulk as “the most Western town of all.” Indeed, had Dodge City never existed, screen writers would have been forced to invent it.

Founded in 1872 as “Buffalo City,” Dodge catered to a hell-raising crowd of buffalo hunters, soldiers, railroad construction crews, and cowboys. Its emporia—from the Lady Gay to the Long Branch saloons—provided a vast array of questionable if not outright illegal pleasures to those who would spend their money—liquor (Kansas was legally dry after 1880), gambling, and prostitution. Its free-wheeling spirit was characterized perhaps best by Mayor Alonzo B. Webster, who in 1884 promoted a bull fight in Dodge. When informed by the U.S. attorney that such a spectacle was illegal in the United States, Webster wired the official, “Hell, Dodge City ain’t in the United States” (p. 138). Its reputation was hardly enhanced by the likes of Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson, and Dave Mather who, from time to time, followed a curiously selective approach to law enforcement.

And yet Dodge City simultaneously erected churches, held revivals, and offered a startling contrast to the community’s popular image as the Gomorrah of the Plains. A school system was created, medical care provided, newspapers founded, social and fraternal orders organized, and cotillions held. And farmers, although initially ignored by Dodge City businessmen, eventually settled in sufficient numbers to provide a countervailing influence to drovers and to those who catered to the cowboys’ baser needs. But ultimately it was the Kansas quarantine law of 1885, which forbade the importation of diseased Texas livestock, that closed the cattle trail and forced Dodge City to join the rest of Kansas and the United States.

Professor Faulk, in *Dodge City: The Most Western Town of All*, has effectively separated Dodge from the modern re-creation associated with popular literature, motion pictures, television and even tourist-oriented Dodge City itself. Reminiscent of Faulk’s treatment of Tombstone, *Dodge City* is serious history—serious history written entertainingly. Because it will have a far broader appeal than the typical scholarly work, it should go far toward acquainting the interested layman with the real American West—where the acrid odor of gunsmoke did not offend the nostrils from dawn till dusk.

Wichita State University

JIMMY M. SKACGS

AMERICAN INDIAN STORIES. Zitkala-Si (Gertrude Bonnin). Glorieta: Rio Grande Press, 1976 (1921). Pp. 182. Illus.

THIS WORK’S TITLE misrepresents its limited scope. One should not infer that the stories include sketches of several different native groups, for all stories are about

the Sioux people. Originally published in 1921 by Gertrude Bonnin, a Yankton Sioux, *American Indian Stories* is a collection of her previously published short stories which appear to be autobiographical and depict personal memories of reservation life and the Indian boarding school in the late nineteenth century. Other excerpts illustrate certain aspects of the life of a daughter of a Sioux warrior, the continual occurrence of land fraud, and the non-Indian's lack of understanding of Sioux culture. Most vivid are the author's descriptions of a young Indian girl's first experiences at an off-reservation boarding school. In addition, the writer realistically portrayed the Sioux as soft hearted, having lost their will after locating on the reservation.

The episode entitled, "The Blue-Star Women," is Bonnin's most biting criticism of non-Indian attitudes toward the Sioux. She develops the irony of Indian-white relations through the Statute of Liberty, facing eastward for Europe's downtrodden, while the American Indian "was the voiceless man of America" (p. 178).

In her own manner, Bonnin's life has several unusual turns. No explanation is offered for the writer having remained in the East after going to school, although she continued to write about the Sioux. The publisher's introduction fails to develop her life and construct the applicable need for the reprint in context of today's awakening interest in the history, art, and literature of the Native American. Only one reproduction of the author in native dress does not justify the work's claim to be illustrated. Physically, the narrative is attractive as the publisher continues to demonstrate printing quality.

Yankton State College

RICHMOND CLOW

THE END OF INDIAN KANSAS: A STUDY OF CULTURAL REVOLUTION, 1854-1871. By H. Craig Miner and William E. Unrau. Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1978. Pp. xiii, 179. Illus., notes, bibliog., index. \$12.50.

ON MAY 10, 1854, Kansas achieved territorial status. Virtually all of its land area, however, was guaranteed by treaty to several Indian tribes. Indeed, occupying Kansas Territory were more than 10,000 Kickapoos, Delawares, Sacs and Foxes, Shawnees, Potawatomis, Kansas, Ottawas, Wyandots, Miamis, Osages, and a number of smaller tribes. Within twenty years, most of these tribes were removed from Kansas, and by 1875 fewer than one thousand Indians remained in the state.

H. Craig Miner and William E. Unrau, both members of the History Department of Wichita State University, examine this largely neglected subject of the forced removal of thousands of Indians from eastern Kansas between 1854 and 1871. Their findings reveal the exploitive methods used by land speculators, railroad men, timber operations, and others to obtain Indian Kansas.

Many whites justified the seizure of Indian land by arguing that Indians did not use the land as God had intended. Oftentimes factionalism and poor tribal leadership as well as incongruities in federal Indian policies and land laws

assisted the insatiable appetites of the land-hungry whites. Using legal loopholes, settlers and railroad companies frequently engaged in court battles with each other regarding which group was "legally" entitled to the Indians' land.

The authors have written an important study. The book is based largely on primary materials, and it contains several relevant illustrations. A better map locating the various Indian reservations in Kansas would have enhanced the work. There are also several sentences which could have been written or constructed in a clearer manner. Moreover, the authors could have presented more information on the actual hardships the Indians endured during the actual removals. Perhaps space dictated their rather selective examples. Aside from these minor shortcomings, both the general and more serious reader should find this book highly informative and interesting.

Sam Houston State University

RAYMOND WILSON

FLOWERS OF THE WIND: PAPERS ON RITUAL, MYTH AND SYMBOLISM IN CALIFORNIA AND THE SOUTHWEST. By Thomas C. Blackburn. Socorro, N.M.: Ballena Press, 1977. Pp. 194. Illus., notes. Paper. Ballena Press Anthropological Papers No. 8.

THIS IS BALLENA PRESS'S eighth publication in its anthropological series and the first in which contents are not exclusively limited to California. An expansion of the geographical and cultural scope of the series is welcomed and probably results from the relocation of the press from Ramona, California to Socorro, New Mexico. A California emphasis, however, will probably remain for some time in that the editors, Lowell Bean and Thomas Blackburn, are anthropologists with strong California interests. Indeed, this bent is reflected in the current issue, for only two of the seven papers deal with Indian peoples outside California. This is not a criticism of the issue, but certainly its contents will be of more interest to California Indian scholars than to those concerned with the Southwest.

The papers originated at a symposium on "Mythology, Ritual, and World View in Native California and the Greater Southwest," held at the annual meeting of the Southwestern Anthropological Association in San Francisco in April, 1976. And given its origins, it is not surprising that the publication lacks conceptual unity, even though all the papers have something to do with the world views of Indian peoples. The titles reflect this common, if very broad, theme: "The Role of Secrecy in a Pueblo Society," "Breath in Shamanic Curing," "Heart and Feces: Symbols of Mortality in the Dying God Myth," "The Supernatural World of the Kawaiisu," "Behavioral Patterns in Chemehuevi Myths," "Native California Concepts of the Afterlife," and "Wealth, Work, and World View in Native Northwest California: Sacred Significance and Psychoanalytic Symbolism."

These are certainly not bedtime reading, but the papers are generally of high quality and range from the cautiously interpretative to the highly analytical. Elizabeth Brandt's paper on secrecy at Taos is the least theoretical and perhaps

the best argued. The political factionalism of present-day Taos is viewed as a result of a religious secrecy that has deep roots in pueblo culture. Of an entirely different nature and perhaps the most profound of the papers is the one on wealth, work and world view in northwest California by John and Donna Bushnell. Their use of psychoanalytic concepts in understanding the quest for wealth and status among the Hupa, Yurok and Karok is certainly controversial but very stimulating nonetheless. Most of the other papers fall somewhere between these two in regards to their degree of theoretical and inferential audacity. "Flowers of the Wind" may not have a wide audience but for those interested in Indian ritual and symbolism it should be given close scrutiny.

University of Colorado

GEORGE HARWOOD PHILLIPS