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WALTER PRESCOTT WEBB: HIS LIFE AND IMPACT. By Necah Stewart Furman. Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1976. Pp. xiv, 222. Illus., notes, bibliog., index. $12.00.

WALTER PRESCOTT WEBB would have enjoyed this book. So will his many friends, and so will anyone else who appreciates a sensitive biography, thoroughly researched, sparklingly written, and attractively presented. This is not to say that Necah Furman has written the last word on the subject. She sees her book as "the initial attempt from which the definitive composition will evolve." Other scholars are already at work on other biographies; Webb was sufficiently important and sufficiently complex to justify their efforts. But those biographers now have a lofty challenge, for this is a volume that is not only a delight to read but that tells us a great many things about Walter Webb that we have not known.

Written by a Texan who understands Texans, it mirrors the land that produced Webb and that left its stamp upon him. Mrs. Furman has built on this essential foundation by making thorough use of the plentiful records he left behind: an unfinished manuscript autobiography, abundant letters and documents at the Barker Texas History Center in Austin and the C. B. Smith Collection of Webb Papers at the Texas State Library, fugitive documents in other depositories, interviews with his friends. She has also immersed herself in the historiography of Webb's day to the degree that she can tell us not only why Webb thought as he did but the effect of those thoughts on traditional historical interpretations.

Perhaps the most entrancing chapters deal with Webb's formative years. Mrs. Furman skillfully appraises the impact of the harsh rural environment of West Texas on a sensitive young man as he discovers the world of books and writing, aided eventually by that unlikely angel, William E. Hinds, who responded to the youthful Webb's plea for help in his education. She recognizes that his unorthodoxy was partially traceable to his unique educational experience as he wandered from school to school with

his peripatetic parents, skipping grades, neglecting essential subjects, and developing an individualistic taste in learning that persisted through his lifetime. Mrs. Furman is at her best when she analyzes the surprisingly abundant collection of Webb's undergraduate essays, term papers, and examinations preserved among his documents, reconstructing, as she puts it, "a fertile mind in the process of maturation." Webb too often did what he pleased, rather than what his instructor suggested, to set the academic world on fire.

This habit of unorthodoxy, she correctly points out, persisted through his long teaching career at the University of Texas. From the first he refused to march in the academic lock-step, preferring to publish in *Frontier Times* rather than the *American Historical Review*, whatever the dictates of the publish-or-perish tradition; singling out the Texas Rangers as a subject for his master's thesis instead of "The Texas Land Office" proposed by his supervisor; refusing to enroll in essential courses during the unhappy year at the University of Chicago that should have earned him a doctorate, but that ended in failure—"one of the hardest blows that Webb would ever receive." And, most important of all, continuing his rebellion against the commonplace by writing the two books on which his fame rests and will rest for generations to come: *The Great Plains*, and *The Great Frontier*. Mrs. Furman traces the genesis of these masterpieces in his mind and details their composition, just as she tells us of his teaching experiences (including two thoroughly unpleasant years in England) and of his sometimes unhappy family life. It is all there, perhaps too briefly told, but always touchingly, and with a wealth of anecdotes to liven the narrative.

To those of us who knew and respected "Mr. Walter" (none but a few intimates dared a greater degree of familiarity) the charm of this book is the wealth of behind-the-scenes information that the author has unearthed: the role played by Ginn & Company editors in the appearance of *The Great Plains* (they demanded this rather than the book on the Texas Rangers that he had planned); Webb's private reaction to the cruel attack by Fred A. Shannon on the Great Plains volume (he went so far as to call Shannon a "Kansas Jayhawker" in a letter to a friend but later offered him a summer school post at Texas); his venture into movie land which was rumored to have made him wealthy (he received 80 per cent of the $11,000 paid for film rights to *The Texas Rangers* and was not invited to the gala premiere at San Antonio); his legendary business acumen (he invested wisely in local real estate and was properly rewarded financially). And, best of all, the exchange that occurred when Webb was dining with a group of Texas Rangers at a small-town greasy-spoon restaurant. The appearance of the

bill was greeted with shouts of "Give it to the professor, give it to the professor." Webb, trying to rise to the occasion, fished two crumpled bills from his pocket and asked the waitress: "How much will you take off for cash?" "Everything but my shoes, Baldy," she shot back. Such tidbits make history worth reading.

They should not, however, obscure the message of this book: the author's conviction that both Webb's greatness and the continuing impact of his ideas on historical thought can best be explained by the fact that his two major books "elicited not only passive esthetic enjoyment, but stirred emotions." So they did, and so they will continue to do long after the solid orthodox histories written by his contemporaries are forgotten. Shake loose the shackles of traditionalism, Mrs. Furman is telling us, and adventure along untrodden paths, no matter what the criticism. This is sound advice for those bold enough and reckless enough to explore virgin intellectual territories as did Walter Prescott Webb. For such souls, and for the rest of us mortals, this book will be richly rewarding; for all it will provide solid fare and delightful entertainment.

The Huntington Library RAY ALLEN BILLINGTON

BROTHERS OF LIGHT, BROTHERS OF BLOOD: THE PENITENTES OF THE SOUTHWEST. By Marta Weigle. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1976. Pp. xx, 300. Illus., maps, app., notes, bibliog., index. $12.95.

IN THE LATTER PART of the 18th century in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado, there appeared groups of Christian believers loosely formed as the Pious Fraternity of Our Father Jesus Nazarite. Known as the Penitentes or Brothers, they attracted the attention of students of New Mexican history and social mores as well as casual visitors to the region. A large literature has developed, some factual and much not, whose object it is to describe and explain the origins, practices, and beliefs of the Brothers.

Marta Weigle, who has published previously on the Penitentes, in this study does a thorough job of tracing the history of the groups and accounting for their existence. She also has the good judgment to leave unexplained those questions which are not publicly explainable, notably matters dealing with the secret rituals themselves. She is, indeed, dealing with a lay organization of Catholics whose heritage goes back into Medieval Spain. She concludes that its practices and faith have been little touched by the religious practices of the Indians with whom the invading Spaniards came in contact.

The brotherhood resulted in part from the isolation of the Hispanos on the New Mexican frontier of the colony of New Spain. Though Franciscans accompanied the first settlers to New Mexico, the friars were in short number. The church, overextended, withdrew or at least did not replace friars as quickly as it might. Thus local religious leaders took upon themselves the continuation of basic ritualistic activities and social responsibilities. The transfer of New Mexico to the United States compounded the isolation felt. Foreign priests began appearing who seemed culturally out-of-tune with the Hispanos, and the resulting suspicion and, perhaps, rejection, pressed the brotherhood activity partially underground. The vitality of the local chapters or moradas lay in the fact that they "were organized to serve community needs *and* to enact spiritually beneficial rituals. They were to imitate the life *and* the suffering and death of Jesus. Their highest good was an ethical *and* a mystical complex." [pp. 152-53]

Weigle's description of the Brothers of Light and the Brothers of Love is informative, judicious, and exhaustive. On many points, where there has been controversy or at least misunderstanding concerning the activities of the brotherhood, she patiently presents evidence on each side and then gives us the benefit of her own conclusion. The enormous amount of information she has encountered led to the publication of a companion volume of bibliography. She has organized this volume into three parts. First describing the geographical scene of Penitente activity, she proceeds in part II to outline historically the origins of the brotherhood, introducing the section with a helpful chronology. Much of the history, of course, is ecclesiastical. In the third part she describes the organization of the brotherhood, the work of the local chapters, and the rituals. She concludes the part—and the book—with an intriguing chapter entitled "The Legends and the Sacred," which attempts to explain some of the seeming phenomena of the brotherhood. Twenty documents appear as appendices to support important portions of the book, while a bibliographical essay sets the literature about the Penitentes into manageable form. Copious endnotes both of sources and explanation enhance the text. The index is complete and useful.

Texas Tech University DAVID M. VIGNESS

PAPERS CONCERNING ROBERTSON'S COLONY IN TEXAS. VOL. II. LEFTWICH'S GRANT. Comp. and ed. by Malcolm D. McLean. Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1975. Pp. 687. Notes, bibliography, illustrations, index. $20.

IN THE SPRING of 1822 in Mexico City, Robert Leftwich of Kentucky represented the interests of a Nashville-based company, The Texas Associa-

tion, which needed to obtain formal permission to settle families in Mexican Texas. Two years later, when the National Colonization Law delegated responsibility for this program to the states, Leftwich transferred his operations to Saltillo, capital of the dual-state of Coahuila and Texas. In the meantime, having exhausted the funds which The Texas Association had allotted for routine expenses, Leftwich petitioned the state government to award a colonizing contract in his own name. As a result of effective lobbying techniques, in April, 1825, he received authorization to settle eight hundred families in the Brazos Valley near present-day Waco. Four months later, Leftwich sold his contract to The Texas Association for eight thousand dollars and the nebulous condition that the land area be identified as Leftwich's Grant. In the autumn of 1825, the empresario from Kentucky died, and the land in question, through custom and popular allusion, became known as the Robertson Colony in tribute to the president of The Texas Association, Dr. Felix Robertson.

Leftwich's Grant is the second volume in a documentary series edited and translated by Professor Malcolm D. McLean, focusing on the colonization of central Texas. The first volume, subtitled *The Texas Association,* contained documents from 1788 through 1822, which traced the origins of the immigration movement in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Alabama that culminated in the organization of the land company. The documents then outlined the activities of the company agents in Mexico City seeking permission to relocate in Texas, leaving one member of the group, Leftwich, to conclude the details of colonization and to return to Nashville with a copy of the formal contract.

The new volume continues the story, covering the period from 1823 through September, 1826, during which Leftwich lobbied in Mexico City and Saltillo before he succeeded in obtaining a contract. Available for the first time in English is a complete documentary account of Leftwich's negotiations with officials in the national and state capitals. Also included are papers concerning Dr. Robertson and associates who emigrated with him to Mexican Texas in the winter of 1825-1826 to explore the grant and to survey the land for the stockholders.

Without question the contents of the present volume complement those of earlier documentary publications such as the correspondence of Austin, Houston, and Lamar. A factor which makes *Papers Concerning Robertson's Colony in Texas* particularly noteworthy is that Professor McLean, a sensitive and creative scholar, radiated light on numerous Tejanos who lived long upon the land before the arrival of English-speaking immigrants. Some Texana readers and collectors may find the price of the volume

excessively steep, but it is definitely within budgetary considerations of university and public libraries.

University of Texas at San Antonio FELIX D. ALMARAZ, JR.

THE STORY OF MINING IN NEW MEXICO. By Paige Christiansen. Socorro: New Mexico Bureau of Mines & Mineral Resources, 1974. Pp. 112. Illus., maps, bibliog., index. $2.50.

LESS inclusive than its title indicates, this little book ranges from the primitive era of non-metal-working Indians down to 1900. It embraces the period of the Spaniards, a time of much legend and some actual mining, especially in the eighteenth century, and continues into the age of expanding American influence beginning in the 1820s, with most of the volume's emphasis on the years from 1880 to 1900—"the most romantic, the most exciting, the most lawless, and certainly the wildest period in the history of mining in New Mexico." [p. 56] A final chapter, "Mining Potpourri," deals with a number of topics, but so superficially as to be almost useless. Treatment of mining law, for example, does not go beyond 1872. Discussion of technology is limited to early primitive methods, including the *patio* process, which, Christiansen points out, was "rarely used in New Mexico," but is included to give a "clearer understanding of more advanced processes" [p. 95]—processes which unfortunately never appear. Consideration of capital accumulation, speculation and fraud avoids specific names and cases lest it "embarrass some of the important figures in mining history, political life and professional circles. . . ." [p. 97]

Well illustrated and based on a wide range of sources, including mining journals, government documents and a smattering of manuscripts, the book contains much interesting material but has obvious shortcomings. Its organization is lax and it does not come to grips in any analytical way with many of the basic questions of the nineteenth century mining and smelting industry in New Mexico. There are far too many petty errors: the use of "Marston" for "Mastin" and "Hardpending" for "Harpending," [pp. 38, 50] for example; the setting of the great diamond hoax of 1872 in New Mexico, [p. 50] instead of along the western part of the Colorado–Wyoming border where it belongs; or the misdating by about twenty years the operations of the Santa Fe Dredging Company. [p. 51]

No doubt designed for the public and the tourist trade in specific, this slim and readable volume does not preclude another more serious study of the same subject.

University of Illinois CLARK C. SPENCE

PLAINS INDIAN MYTHOLOGY. By Alice Marriott and Carol K. Rachlin. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1975. Pp. xiii, 194. Illus., map, bibliog. $7.95.

THE RECENT EMPHASIS on studying American Indian history "from the Indians' point of view" has resulted in the increased publication of anthologies of Indian speeches, mythology, and other forms of native oral literature. While many of these collections are inadequate in terms of presentation and analysis of the American Indian oral tradition, the same cannot be said of this work, written by two anthropologists who have spent decades living among, and listening to, the Indian tribes of the Great Plains.

The title of the work may be a bit misleading; the authors include forms of oral literature other than mythology, such as legendry and folklore. Organized in an historical context, beginning with the great creation myths and shorter tales delineating how people should properly behave, and going on to the more recent legends of a people's remembered past and the present-day strivings to hold onto that past, the authors' selections show how the "artistic expression" of Indian oral tradition relates to the rising emotionalism of the Indians' ethnic identity with their history. The last section of the book, entitled "Freedom's Ending," is particularly significant in showing how the Indians' struggle for recognition of their cultural identity entwines modern aspects of tribal life with the traditional oral communication of their culture.

The tribes whose stories are included in this collection are mainly of the southern Plains—Kiowa, Comanche, Southern Cheyenne—with whom Marriott and Rachlin have had closest association. Yet there are also stories of the Sioux, Arapaho, and Crow, and an interesting section on the intertribal Forty-nine Songs. Together they form a compact history—from the Indian point of view—of a way of life that has come to represent the "typical" Indian culture for Western society.

The authors' foreword, giving an overview of the importance of the study of oral literature, their introduction—a concise discussion of the development of the Plains Indian culture—and their epilogue, summing up the present-day Indians' concern for the preservation of that culture, will be interesting and informative to scholars and the more popular audience alike. More significantly, the short statements introducing each story place the tales in a proper perspective in relation to the tribal culture involved. The only disappointment is that, with the authors' insistence on the importance of "the *telling* of a tale, . . . the why and the how of the telling, the choice of words and their combination," [p. xi] there is little analysis of such contextual matters.

This short work is meant to be a popular anthology, yet a careful reading by scholars will provide them with a deeper understanding of the Plains Indians' cultural past as seen from within that culture. And there is little doubt that this sort of understanding is increasingly needed in the field of American Indian history.

University of Alaska GARY C. STEIN

KATY NORTHWEST: THE STORY OF A BRANCH LINE RAILROAD. By Donovan L. Hofsommer. Boulder, Colorado: Pruett Publishing Co., 1976. Pp. xiv, 305. Illus., maps, notes, index. $26.95.

KATY NORTHWEST is a transportation saga, the chronicle of railroads on the Southern Great Plains. The author considers his study a "collective model" which portrays the fiscal operation and corporate vicissitudes of regional rail lines. Thus it reveals the inevitable pattern for Southern Plains railroad lines following construction—status as an independent line prospering from heavy local traffic followed by absorption by one of the major railway companies dominating the region (Santa Fe, Rock Island, and Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railway Company) and becoming a branch line, then gradual decline and eventual abandonment due to "diversion of tonnage" to motor trucks operating on "state and nationally-supported systems of highways."

Katy Northwest as a branch of the Katy system began in 1906 when two Wichita Falls, Texas businessmen, J. A. Kemp and Frank Kell, began construction of the Wichita Falls and Northwestern Railroad, an "energetic policy of urban imperialism" to concentrate the grain, cattle and petroleum products of northern Texas and western Oklahoma on Wichita Falls's markets. About the same time a Kansas promoter, Jacob A. Achenbach, began construction of the Beaver, Meade and Englewood Railroad, an Oklahoma Panhandle line extending from Beaver to Keyes by way of Forgan. After prosperous operating lives as independent railroads, both lines by 1931 had been absorbed by the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railway Company (the Katy line) as its Northwest branch. The Katy was the first rail line to cross eastern Indian Territory, completing its roadbed from Kansas City into Texas during 1872. The Katy competed with the Rock Island and Santa Fe for control of these two independent lines and triumphed in 1931 to establish itself in the rich Southern Plains grain, cattle and oil region. Besides extensive freight facilities, the Katy Northwest also provided some passenger service to the scattered towns of the Southern Plains.

The author concludes that the evolutionary pattern of existence first as an independent short line railroad then as a branch line of a larger system

for these two railways is "representative of the heritage of every branch line railroad on the Great Plains." Katy Northwest became a casualty of corporate evaluation during the early 1970s. Katy executives applied the "parasitical mileage" standard to this Southern Plains transportation conglomerate and ordered its abandonment.

University of Oklahoma ARRELL MORGAN GIBSON

THE U.S. CAMEL CORPS: AN ARMY EXPERIMENT. By Odie B. Faulk. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976. Pp. x, 213. Illus., maps, notes, bibliog., index. $9.75.

THE USE of camels as a means of western transportation in the years prior to the Civil War is usually considered a colorful but insignificant chapter of frontier history. Odie B. Faulk now attempts to give importance to this unusual experiment. The proposition has some validity since camels were considered by a few government officials as the solution to long distance freighting and travel. The beasts were known to travel long distances without water, eat anything available, and carry great loads. As a result, under the administration of Secretary of War Jefferson Davis, some seventy camels were brought to the United States and used in various military tasks, the most spectacular being Lt. Edward F. Beale's trek to California in 1857. But the camel experiment never captured the interest of traditionalist military experts, and with the outbreak of the Civil War the army divested itself of the animals.

Faulk covers the experiment in considerable detail. He notes the efforts of early promoters, the politics of getting a congressional appropriation, and the acquisition, use, and disposition of the animals. What emerges, despite the author's contrary view, is the impression that the camel experiment was indeed an insignificant chapter in Southwestern history. The fault rests not with the camels, they performed exceedingly well; but Congress, military leaders, and the average soldier gave the experiment no chance of success. In the era of the horse and mule army, camels were an unwanted invasion of military tradition. Consequently, the animals never achieved their fullest potential and no experiments such as breeding better animals for future operations were permitted. Those animals in use often received inhumane treatment from soldiers who despised the animals and hated being assigned to such unorthodox outfits. In all, with the exception of a few officers who appreciated the camel's potential in western military operations, the army was decidedly happy to end the experiment.

The book is primarily based on the records of the camel experiment in the National Archives and is fairly well researched, although the author

has missed such items as C. W. Webber's early attempt in 1850 to create a private camel transportation company. Much more annoying, however, is the considerable amount of superfluous material. Long biographies of all the principal characters include information that has no discernible relationship to the subject. The reader also learns much more about the camel than even the most devoted students could wish. Not only does one read of all their habits, some of which were extremely obnoxious, but you also receive graphic descriptions of such interesting items as the results of autopsies performed on dead animals (p. 90), long lists of wounds and sores, and other unessential material. Such descriptions add length to a manuscript whose main subject matter would be best suited to a lengthy article.

Arizona State University ROBERT A. TRENNERT, JR.

A TRACE OF DESERT WATERS: THE GREAT BASIN STORY. By Samuel G. Houghton. California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1976. Pp. xi, 288. Illus., maps, app., glossary, bibliog., index. $17.75.

A TRACE OF DESERT WATERS deals with water history of the Great Basin from late geologic time to the present with special emphasis on the origin and demise of prehistoric lakes that filled portions of the basin during the Wisconsin Age (25,000 to 75,000 years ago). It then carries a brief account of the major remnants of those lakes down to the present. Largest and most spectacular of the ancient lakes were Lake Bonneville and Lake Lahonton. Likewise, the two largest present-day remnants are Bonneville's Great Salt Lake in Utah and Lahonton's Pyramid Lake in Nevada. In addition to these large lakes, the author examines other Great Basin areas: Northwest Lakes (Burns, Oregon vicinity), Central Basins and the Death Valley System including many small basins within the Great Basin.

Author Houghton correctly points out that water is the Great Basin's most important natural resource, the availability and volume of which determines population, agriculture and industrial developments. The current status of available water and some forecasts into the future are included.

The volume also correctly describes the Great Basin in terms of its drainage system: eastward drainage from the Sierra Nevadas on the west (Truckee, Walker and Owens rivers); the northern tributaries of the Humboldt on the north; Silvies River and Lake Malheur in the northwest corner; the west end of the Uinta Mountains (headwaters of the Bear, Weber and Provo rivers) and the westward drainage from the high plateaus south of the Wasatch range (Sevier River) on the east. No major stream flows north-

ward from the south basin rim, the only one being the Mojave which loses itself in the desert south of Baker, California.

Several maps depict the basin as a whole as well as detailed portions of it. These include descriptions of the extent of the Pleistocene lakes and portrayal of present-day remnants. Some scholars will doubtless disagree with Houghton for extending the Basin's southwest boundary beyond the Salton Sea into Baja California.

In treating each basin segment the author deals with the flora and fauna (past and present), minerals, evidences of prehistoric human habitation, a very brief sketch of present Indian tribes and an equally brief account of the advent of the white man. Adequate maps depict the routes of major Basin explorers as well as overland wagon roads. In addition to the maps, the volume contains numerous photographs, some old, some current. Also included is a three-page glossary, an extensive bibliography and a complete index.

Most readers will find this book to be thoroughly researched and well written. Its weakest part is that dealing with the advent of the white man in which the author makes some mistakes in dates and, in places, cites outdated sources. But in spite of these minor flaws the volume must be considered as a worthy contribution to the literature of the West.

University of Utah DAVID E. MILLER

200 TRAILS TO GOLD: A GUIDE TO PROMISING OLD MINES AND HIDDEN LODES THROUGHOUT THE WEST. By Samuel B. Jackson. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1976. Pp. xii, 348. Illus., index. $8.95.

THIS is a strange, frustrating book, somewhat akin to the stories of the lost mines the author spend so much time discussing. The dust jacket calls it a "comprehensive and authoritative guidebook" to lost mines, gold-prospecting opportunities, and the histories of past bonanzas. Jackson has tried to do all of this for every western state, with Alaska thrown in for good measure. The result is a potpourri of fact, fiction, legend, story, and anecdote.

Looking for or dreaming about lost or undiscovered mineral deposits can be an intriguing hobby, and author Samuel B. Jackson has caught a bad case of the fever. He obviously has some experience in mining and knows some of the areas about which he writes. These are the best parts of the book—California and Nevada—which constitute nearly half of the volume. As he goes along, Jackson includes all types of mining hints and information: how to identify gold and fool's gold, smelting problems, and warnings about desert prospecting. The reader is well advised to pay heed to what

he has to say here; a headlong dash for the gold at the end of the rainbow could be frustrating and dangerous.

Despite these little nuggets, this remains a frustrating book. One of the obvious problems is a lack of maps—not maps telling where to find the lost mines, simply maps showing the areas under discussion. The reader is left adrift and the author resorts to putting directions into his text, which dulls his style and gets pretty tiresome after a few pages. Nor is the writing sparkling, even after the directions have been given and a story is being told. People and places tend to pop in and out, which makes the story hard to follow.

Jackson is more at home with story-telling than with mining history; he simply does not have enough experience or knowledge to discuss all of western mining. He is guilty of careless research, changing history to suit the story, and accepting stories and statistics at face value. He includes no bibliography, no footnotes, and only occasionally slips a few citations into his text.

Jackson holds out hope to the reader that many previously overlooked or lost deposits still exist. Perhaps they do, although this reviewer doubts it. Jackson has great faith that modern technology can develop these deposits. What he does not elaborate on is the cost of mining, which puts development well beyond the means of the average dreamer of lost mines. An old timer, when asked once about why he had not found gold, replied, "Gold is where I ain't." Jackson's volume "ain't" with it either. He has bitten off too much. The story of western mining has been told better elsewhere and so have the legends.

Fort Lewis College DUANE A. SMITH