

# New Mexico Historical Review

---

Volume 49 | Number 1

Article 5

---

1-1-1974

## Book Reviews

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr>

---

### Recommended Citation

. "Book Reviews." *New Mexico Historical Review* 49, 1 (2021). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr/vol49/iss1/5>

This Review is brought to you for free and open access by UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in *New Mexico Historical Review* by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact [amywinter@unm.edu](mailto:amywinter@unm.edu), [lsloane@salud.unm.edu](mailto:lsloane@salud.unm.edu), [sarahrk@unm.edu](mailto:sarahrk@unm.edu).

# Book Reviews

- COOK, *Flood Tide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*, by Mathes 79
- BARKER, *The French Legation in Texas: Vol. II. Mission Miscarried*, by Stout 81
- KELLY with CHAUVENET, *The Buffalo Head: A Century of Mercantile Pioneering in the Southwest*, by Spence 83
- FARRINGTON, *The Santa Fe's Big Three: The Life Story of a Trio of the World's Greatest Locomotives*, by Greever 84
- SMITH, *Horace Tabor: His Life and the Legend*, by Larson 85
- TYLER, ed., *Western American History in the Seventies*, by Smith 87
- GILBREATH, *Red Capitalism: An Analysis of the Navajo Economy*, by Kelly 88

FLOOD TIDE OF EMPIRE: SPAIN AND THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST, 1543-1819.  
By Warren L. Cook. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973. Pp.  
620. Illus., maps, apps., bibliog., index. \$17.50.

POSSIBLY the most neglected area of research in the history of the Spanish Borderlands has been that of the Pacific Northwest. Monographic works and documentary studies have been published; however, Professor Cook's work is the first broad, in-depth study to appear relative to the Spanish advance to British Columbia and Alaska in the eighteenth century. Employing documents from the Museo Naval, Archivo Histórico Nacional and Archivo General de Indias in Spain, the Public Records Office in London, the Archivo General de la Nación in Mexico, as well as various United States depositories such as the Yale University Library, Bancroft Library and Newberry Library, *Flood Tide of Empire* is well researched and extensive in scope.

The first two chapters treat of early Spanish exploration along the coast of the Californias from 1540 to 1769 and the apochryphal voyages of Ferrer Maldonado, Fuca, and Fonte. Several aspects of this early period are neglected, however, and some errors appear in these chapters. This

section might well have been more appropriately titled an introduction, with the scope of the text limited to the period 1769-1819 rather than 1543-1819, as is the case. Despite the lack of documentation and full bibliography for these two chapters, the author does provide some provocative data relative to Fuca and the possibilities of early castaways on the Northwest Coast from Manila galleons.

Professor Cook comes into his own in the third chapter dealing with Gálvez' plan and the advance of Spain to the Pacific Northwest to halt Russian expansion. The voyages of Pérez, Hezeta, and Bodega are well covered, although recent works by Cárdenas de la Peña and Landín Carrasco are absent from the notes. The fourth and fifth chapters treat of the competition of Spain, England, Russia, and the United States for control of the sea otter trade in the Northwest, particularly in Nootka Sound. The voyages of such men as Cook, Arteaga, Bodega, Portlock, Dixon, Colnett, Kendrick, Gray, Meares, and Martínez are described in detail, as are the claims and international conflicts arising from them. The arrest of Colnett and the impounding of his ship by Martínez is well treated, as is the plan of the second Count of Revilla-Gigedo for Spanish occupation of Nootka.

With the stage thus set for conflict between England and Spain, chapters six and seven detail the intricacies of diplomatic negotiations between the two nations and their effects upon the balance of power in Europe and Eastern North America. Here the author again excels in tracing the many threads of causality in the Nootka Sound Controversy and the ensuing conventions, the internal political maneuvering in Spain, England, France, and the United States as related to the Nootka question, and the beginning of the end of Spanish expansion in the Northwest.

The last attempts of Spain to hold Nootka Sound are treated in chapters eight and nine, with much attention to the voyages of Eliza, Fidalgo, and Quimper, the Malaspina and Valdés-Alcalá Galiano expeditions, the settlement of Neah Bay, and the important role of Bodega in this final phase of occupation. The personality of the latter, and his dealings with Vancouver, his English counterpart, are of particular interest.

Despite Spain's ultimate inability to hold the Pacific Northwest following the Nootka Sound Conventions, her tenacity in the retention of her legal claims to the area and her isolated settlement at Nootka are the subject of chapter ten. Supply to the area by Saavedra and Eliza, the dealings of Alava with Vancouver and Pearce, and the actions of Maquinna at Friendly Cove are well treated, as are the withdrawal of Spain and the filling of that void by the United States traders.

Of less direct concern for the history of the Northwest are the topics of chapters eleven and twelve. Here Professor Cook discusses Spanish advances westward from the Mississippi Valley, attempts to halt Lewis and Clark, and the activities of Wilkinson, Burr, and Pike as related to Spain's defense of the interior of the Northwest, although this relationship appears at times somewhat remote. California is the central theme of chapter twelve, with much attention to the Russian advance southward, the fur trade on the Oregon-California coast, and the Transcontinental (Adams-Onís) Treaty of 1819.

In his final chapter the author presents a summation of the factors leading to Spain's failure in the Northwest, as well as her few successes. This is followed by appendices relative to Fuca, the Nootka Conventions, the sea otter trade, vessels on the Northwest Coast, and the genealogy of the Spanish Bourbons, an extensive bibliography of primary and secondary sources, and an analytical index. Fine plates and two folding maps further enhance this volume.

*Flood Tide of Empire* represents a monumental effort by the author in compiling and treating in a well reasoned manner extensive data on the exploration, ethnology, and diplomatic history of the Pacific Northwest. It is a fine contribution to the history of the Spanish Borderlands and should be in the library of all persons interested in that field.

University of San Francisco

W. MICHAEL MATHES

THE FRENCH LEGATION IN TEXAS: VOL. II. MISSION MISCARRIED. By Nancy Nichols Barker. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1973. Pp. 359-711. Illus., app., index. \$12.00.

ALPHONSE DUBOIS DE SALIGNY was the French *chargé d'affaires* to the Republic of Texas from 1839 to 1846. As a diplomatic failure the opportunistic, self-proclaimed nobleman neglected his duties, quarreled with Texans, and was involved in endless imbroglios. Thus he did not consistently and effectively represent his government or the interests of French nationals in Texas. Absent from his post much of the time, he engaged in society life in New Orleans more than in his duty. From January 1843 to January 1844, he was absent officially from his post and was replaced with a different kind of diplomat. The Viscount Jules de Cramayel, *chargé d'affaires ad interim* during this period, was a man secure in finances and family who long had served the French diplomatic corps.

One-third of this volume contains reports Cramayel sent to his government. Although disappointed with his assignment in Texas, and chagrined about the raw living conditions in the new Republic, Cramayel served his country well. Even while critical of conditions in Texas, he saw considerable merit in Texans and believed they were a people with potential. And, because he was a man of considerable means, it was unnecessary for him to become involved in petty intrigues and money-making schemes. Furthermore, unlike Saligny, Cramayel was a conscientious public servant whose major interest was in France—not self-aggrandizement. Cramayel wrote four comprehensive book-length manuscripts treating the Texas military, civil administration, naval organization, and commerce. Each of these works reflected his dedication to duty. In his voluminous reports can be found information about individuals in Texas, the climate, the topography, and estimates of the vast potential of the fledgling Republic. He worked diligently writing his reports and his effort was superb, but unfortunately his literary talents were few. Convoluted sentences, factual but colorless, characterized his reports. Still, his contribution to the understanding of Texas and diplomacy during the era of the Republic is significant.

Saligny returned to his post, at least officially, in January 1844, but thereafter spent most of his time in New Orleans. Many of his official reports were gleaned from material he read in Texas papers; therefore the editor of this volume omitted this obviously superfluous information. Also included in the present work are excerpts from documents between the French Foreign Minister and his ambassador in London, and between the British Foreign Secretary and his ambassador in Paris, demonstrating different approaches toward Texas annexation and subsequent actions of their countries to preserve the independence of Texas.

With the completion of this volume, one is able to understand more effectively the affairs of European governments as they were involved with the difficulties of the Texas Republic. If Saligny failed to represent his country efficiently, and if some strain existed between the French and rival governments in Washington and London as a result, no such frailties exist in the editing of this volume. Editing of any work is a difficult task, and one has only to attempt translation to learn the pitfalls and pains involved. Carefully annotated and translated, this work will long be a standard source for anyone researching Texas or diplomatic history in this period.

**THE BUFFALO HEAD: A CENTURY OF MERCANTILE PIONEERING IN THE SOUTHWEST.** By Daniel T. Kelly with Beatrice Chauvenet. Introduction by Paul Horgan. Santa Fe: The Vergara Publishing Company, 1972. Pp. xviii, 288. Illus., maps, app., index. \$7.95.

MUCH OF THE HISTORY of the West has been written in terms of the gaudy and the dramatic. Gamblers, gunslingers and powdered madams have tended to overshadow less glamorous merchants, bankers or livery stable keepers and only in more recent years have the more prosaic players on the western scene begun to receive their due. This contribution by Daniel T. Kelly is another step in that direction. Unlike William J. Parish's *The Charles Ilfeld Company* or Arthur Throckmorton's *Oregon Argonauts*, it is not a detailed scholarly treatment, but rather the story of a particular business firm seen through the eyes of one intimately associated with it. Taking its title from a shaggy trophy mounted in the home office at Las Vegas (the gift of the Russian Grand Duke Alexis), *The Buffalo Head* is the informal history of Gross, Kelly and Company, a New Mexican mercantile house that spanned the 1867-1954 era.

This was a family enterprise, or more properly a two-family enterprise, long dominated by the Kellys and the Grosses and tracing its lineage to the Kansas frontier of the late 1860's, when the pioneering merchants Miguel Otero and John Sellar pushed southwestward along with the railroad to lay the foundation of a mercantile empire in New Mexico. In 1881 Otero and Sellar were bought out by several younger entrepreneurs, including their bookkeeper, Jacob Gross; within another year or so, the author's father, Harry Kelly, had replaced one of the new partners; and by 1902 the firm was incorporated and operating under the name Gross, Kelly and Company.

It was a vigorous and expanding enterprise. From the beginning it distributed goods of all kinds and handled whatever products were available for shipment east, especially wool, sheepskins, and buffalo hides. As it grew, it broadened its activities. It became a major supplier of important Navajo and Zuni traders and regularly shipped Navajo wool, blankets and rugs or such unpredictable commodities as piñon nuts and chili peppers. Sheep clip and cowhides were always prominent, and although in later years the company confined its selling mainly to grocery wholesaling, from time to time it was engaged in a variety of enterprises ranging from Mexican telephone franchises, timber operations, and the financing of subsidiary concerns to fatten feeder cattle for the packing house. Until its sale in 1954 to Kimbell Products Company, it remained one of New Mexico's major respected and generally profitable firms.

*The Buffalo Head* is as much family as corporate history. The Kellys are naturally in the forefront, although the Grosses are not neglected. Much is autobiographical and describes the life of Daniel T. Kelly: his education, his contributions in two wars, his civic responsibilities in Santa Fe, as well as his family and business affairs. It is no tightly constructed narrative based on the 120 linear feet of Gross, Kelly and Company records in The University of New Mexico Library, but a more loose-jointed, anecdotal approach, built upon memory, personal diaries, some papers and printed materials. It includes many pictures and some fine thumbnail sketches of people like the radical and profane labor agitator, "Mother" Jones, and the roughewn Indian trader Emmet Wirt. Not a "warts and all" treatment, it nonetheless gives a fair idea of the functioning of an important mercantile endeavor from its inception through maturity.

*University of Illinois*  
*Champaign-Urbana*

CLARK C. SPENCE

**THE SANTA FE'S BIG THREE: THE LIFE STORY OF A TRIO OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST LOCOMOTIVES.** By S. Kip Farrington, Jr. New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1972. Pp. 287. Illus., tables, charts, app., index. \$17.95.

RATHER LATE in the era of steam power the Santa Fe Railway had built three unusually efficient types of locomotives. This book is devoted to the initial performance tests of a sample engine of each kind, rather than the "life story" suggested in the subtitle. No. 3461, a 4-6-4 type for passenger service, was built in 1937 and given twenty-five tests during November and December. No. 3766 was outshopped in 1938 and promptly had eighteen trials; it was a 4-8-4 model for passenger trains. No. 5011 was manufactured in 1944 as a 2-10-4 type for freight service and had thirteen runs. All of these trials, handling regular trains, were designed to determine pulling capacity, speed, fuel consumption, and comparative performance with older types of Santa Fe locomotives. A test covered a trip of about a hundred to four hundred miles, somewhere between Chicago and Los Angeles. For each locomotive the book gives first a general descriptive narrative of the trials, followed by detailed statistical tables for each run. The tests indicated that each engine had been well designed, that only minor modifications or adjustments were needed, and that it fully met the railway's expectations.

Subsequently each type performed excellently for the company, especially during World War II, but this is only vaguely hinted at in the text. Certainly there has never before been a book devoted in such

detail to locomotive tests and it is a valuable record for those who wish it. For the general reader there is almost nothing of interest nor was there intended to be. Most of the material is difficult for the layman to absorb and only stray bits of information make a real impression. Thus at the chart showing the amount of pull exerted on the first car behind No. 3461, at every increase of five miles per hour in the speed, is the statement that below twenty miles the rate of acceleration was so fast that no worthwhile records could be obtained. Nothing is said about those who conducted the tests, so there is no elaboration on the statement that No. 5011 on trial number 2 was delayed twenty-three minutes at Burbank, Oklahoma, because it first missed picking up the orders awaiting it there and then was given those intended for another train.

The author of this specialized book for the expert is a railway and sports enthusiast with important Wall Street connections. He has ridden thousands of miles in the cabs of engines on the Santa Fe and other railways, which gave him the inspiration to make this factual record of outstanding locomotive performance.

*University of Idaho*

WILLIAM S. GREEVER

**HORACE TABOR: HIS LIFE AND THE LEGEND.** By Duane A. Smith. Boulder, Colorado: Colorado Associated University Press, 1973. Pp. xiv, 396. Illus., maps, notes, bibliog., index. \$12.50.

AT LAST A BIOGRAPHY has been written about Horace Tabor that covers all dimensions of his career and separates the legend that has grown up around him from the facts. For the casual student of Colorado history, who can associate only the famous Little Pittsburg and Matchless mines with Tabor's business career, there is a wealth of information about his other mining enterprises. Tabor was an irrepressible speculator whose optimism about making another big strike never diminished. Even after his business empire had collapsed and his only source of reliable income was his salary as Denver's postmaster, he was still acquiring "promising" lodes in Gilpin, Clear Creek, and El Paso counties and working his Eclipse Mine at Ward, Colorado. Smith quotes from *The Ballad of Baby Doe* to emphasize his reckless optimism. His first wife Augusta protested in the opera that her husband was "idiotic." "Lord-a-mighty, no! He wants to buy another mine." Tabor had, in addition to his Colorado holdings, mining properties in Mexico and in such Western states and territories as Utah, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico.

In this biography Smith's major contribution is to give an exhaustive account of all of Tabor's known business activities. His early career in the small mining camps of Buckskin Joe and Oro City is detailed as well as the feverish speculative activities that characterized his years of prominence in Leadville and Denver. Careful attention is given to his numerous investments from the time he sat in his special box at the Tabor Grand Opera House as a multimillionaire to those desperate days in the nineties when he strove to save his business empire from collapse. Tabor's other business rôles also are emphasized. At different times during his life he was a farmer, storekeeper, postmaster, real estate developer, newspaperman, banker, railroad builder, investor, and promoter. Outside of his varied business activities he was a generous patron, a philanthropist, a legislator, a lieutenant governor, and even a United States senator for thirty days in 1883. It is to Smith's credit that he makes a conscientious effort to examine all these rôles; the result is the first balanced biography of Tabor.

Smith does not overlook Tabor's controversial divorce from Augusta and his marriage to Elizabeth "Baby Doe" McCourt in 1883, which violated the moral standards of so many people in Victorian America. Using legal records and other primary sources, he carefully examines this aspect of Tabor's life, which has been overworked by earlier biographers. He shows commendable objectivity in handling the unhappy rift between Horace and Augusta, refusing to concentrate all the blame on either of them.

Indeed, objectivity characterizes most of Smith's evaluations of the Colorado mining magnate. Although generally sympathetic with his subject, the author recognizes his serious weaknesses. He admits that he participated in some deceptive, unethical business dealings, comparing him with the other so-called Robber Barons of the Gilded Age. He chronicles his acts of generosity, but acknowledges that Tabor had lost touch with his humble beginnings when he broke a strike in Leadville in 1880. He stresses Tabor's daring and vision, but concludes that his silver investments failed not because of hostile government policy, but because Tabor had frittered away his capital in unwise investments. If there is a weakness in Smith's biography, it is his rather incidental handling of Tabor's three families: the Vermont family in which he was reared and the ones he raised with Augusta and Baby Doe.

This well-documented book reflects Smith's extensive research in primary sources in Colorado and in the Bancroft and Huntington libraries of California. It is an attractive volume with helpful photographs and a map of the Colorado mining camps associated with Tabor's career.

WESTERN AMERICAN HISTORY IN THE SEVENTIES. Edited by Daniel Tyler. Colorado: Robinson Press for Educational Media & Information Systems, 1973. Pp. iv, 82. \$2.95.

READING THIS small volume is like going on a summer picnic where a variety of dishes tempt one's appetite. Ten articles, plus an introduction by Daniel Tyler, are proffered for the reader's attention. The subject matter ranges from the American bison to Yellowstone Park, from touring the Oregon Trail in 1851 to women's rights on the range. Some are carefully footnoted studies, others lighter, after-dinner types; some are interpretive, a couple are narrative only. There should be something here to satisfy the historical appetites of all.

These papers were presented at Colorado State University during the summer of 1972, which the University dedicated to the American West, climaxing with a conference in August. Scholars and interested laymen from throughout the Rocky Mountain West and beyond came to participate in what is hoped will become a biennial meeting.

Space prohibits a discussion of each of the contributions, but a few must be mentioned to give the flavor of the work. One of the most challenging is Clyde Dollar's look at Indian history from the viewpoint of the Indian, and his idea of history and its uses. Certainly there will be historians who disagree with this presentation, but few who seriously study Dollar's ideas will come away uninformed. On a completely different issue, Liston Leyendecker shows the problems that can be encountered when historical restoration is undertaken. He focuses on the work at Black Hawk and Central City, Colorado. Of interest to New Mexicans is Myra Ellen Jenkins' examination of how Spanish and Mexican period records can be used to uncover the history of the southern portion of Colorado, once the northern rim of New Mexico.

Colorado State University is to be congratulated for hosting the conference and for arranging the publication of these papers. Overall, the ideas presented are thought provoking and worthy of consideration by scholars of the West. This reviewer has only one tiny personal bone to pick. Could you not, John Porter Bloom, have identified Fort Lewis as that small college in extreme southwestern Colorado which has the large microfilm collection (p. 56, n. 3)?

*Fort Lewis College  
Durango, Colorado*

DUANE A. SMITH

RED CAPITALISM: AN ANALYSIS OF THE NAVAJO ECONOMY. By Kent Gilbreath. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973. Pp. 157. Tables, figs., app., bibliog. \$2.95.

AS EVERYONE KNOWS, books on Indians are very much "in" these days. As a good many people are learning the hard way, many of these books are not worth reading, let alone buying. What is not so well known perhaps, is that the University of Oklahoma Press, for many years the leader in the field of quality Indian-oriented books; has succumbed to the lure of the market place in the past year or so by publishing a number of distinctly second-rate books. *Red Capitalism* is such a book.

Kent Gilbreath should not be faulted for the cupidity of his publisher. It was his modest purpose to survey "small retail, wholesale, and service oriented businesses" on the Navajo reservation, to analyze their problems and their potential for future growth, and to make some "suggestions about possible solutions to their problems." (Pp. 8, 11) His purpose in doing this, presumably, was to write an acceptable dissertation for his doctorate in economics. This task he accomplished very well with the exception of a somewhat simplistic chapter dealing with the impact of Navajo values on small business operations. But the University of Oklahoma Press has blown this analysis of 196 business establishments (100 of them trading posts; another 42 gasoline service stations) into *Red Capitalism*. Not even the subtitle, *An Analysis of the Navajo Economy*, hints at the highly restricted nature of this study, which mentions the important corporate activities of the tribe in oil and gas, uranium ores, and coal only in passing.

For whom then was this book intended? For Navajo small businessmen? For federal and tribal administrators? For educators, whom Gilbreath thinks should introduce basic economic concepts into the school curriculum? Perhaps. But this is the sort of report that circulates all the time in typescript, without being made into a book. (This is perhaps the appropriate place to note that this book is a photo-offset reproduction of *typescript* pages.) But, for the general public interested in Indians or Indian economic problems? Definitely not.

Someone in the promotion department of the Press wrote for the back cover: "this [is] one of the most important economic studies of the American Indian to appear in the past ten years." Come on fellows, stop pulling our leg. Why not spend some of your advertising budget on some of the basic things that you used to do so well, like proofreading? It's not nice to fool with loyal readers by subjecting them to such obvious spelling mistakes as "bussinessmen" (p. 41) and "agressive" (pp. 89, 90).

Denton, Texas

LAWRENCE C. KELLY