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Book Reviews

THE SPANISH ROYAL CORPS OF ENGINEERS IN THE WESTERN BORDERLANDS: INSTRUMENT OF BOURBON REFORM, 1764-1815. By Janet Fireman. Glendale, California: The Arthur Clark Company, 1977. Pp. 250. Maps, appendices. \$16.95.

DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, the Spanish Bourbon reformers employed professional army officers to implement new programs and to serve in a wide variety of administrative posts. On the northern frontiers of New Spain, chronic violence with the Indians, dangers of foreign intrusions into sparsely settled territories, and scientific curiosity, presented enormous challenges. Accurate data and technical expertise to carry out projects became essential prerequisites in provinces which had not been fully explored let alone developed. Within the Spanish army, the elite Royal Corps of Engineers was recognized as the unit best suited to perform these tasks and to support the implementation of imperial policies. Janet Fireman is the first historian to fully appreciate the impact of individual engineers on the frontier and to suggest the importance of their work. Not only did these men plan fortifications and draft accurate maps, but they surveyed roads, planned bridges and hydraulic works as well as teaching, governing, and preparing reports which brought modern scientific methodology to the isolated Provincias Internas.

As Professor Fireman points out, each engineer assigned to the frontier provinces had to be willing to accept a term of harsh life on the trail. Beginning with Francisco Alvarez Barreiro, who in 1718 and 1719 travelled 8,000 miles in 45 months, the tradition of hard work and comparatively little personal recognition or gain was established for the engineering officers. Following the Seven Years' War with the rapid expansion of the military presence throughout New Spain, additional engineers were required to supervise the construction of fortifications along the coasts and inland from Veracruz to Mexico City. The visit of José de Gálvez with his interest in northern development and defense brought the engineers into a central role. Francisco Fersén evaluated the western borderlands and, in Fireman's view, set the pattern for future engineers' reports. He was followed by Nicolás de Lafora who accompanied the Marqués de Rubi on his mission to evaluate the northern presidios and defenses. Lafora kept an excellent diary of the 7,600-mile tour and prepared the detailed maps which went into the Reglamento of 1772 restructuring the frontier defensive system.

Of all the army engineers to serve in New Spain, Fireman devotes most attention to Miguel Costansó, whose career spanned the late colonial period and whose activities were particularly important and varied. Reflecting Galvez's concern about Russian or British penetration into Alta California, Costansó was sent with the first expeditions to prepare plans for settlement and defensive works. In the process, he became a great exponent of California settlement as well as a specialist on matters dealing with the northern province. Long after he departed from California, he was able to play a significant advisory role on frontier policy. Unlike many observers, Costansó promoted immigration schemes and envisaged trans-Pacific trade between Alta California and the Orient.

Unfortunately for Spanish interests, the labors of a few talented engineers could not in itself strengthen the northern frontiers. Detailed reports went unheeded and plans were not implemented because funds were diverted to more pressing concerns. Later reports portrayed a rather pessimistic outlook: in 1795, for example, engineer Alberto de Córdoba found that the California defenses were useless; fortifications were weak, cannons could not fire across harbor entrances, and some of the artillerymen were incompetent to fire their cannon.

The subject matter of this book does cause the author some problems. Many engineers spent only a few months or years in the Borderlands and then went on to other commissions in New Spain or elsewhere in the empire. Professor Fireman is tempted to trace their careers—occasionally drifting away from the frontier subject matter at hand. Costansó's career, which spanned fully seventeen viceregal terms, contributed more to projects in central New Spain than on the frontier. Besides preparing plans for roads and fortifications, he was consulted on diverse matters such as park planning, building maintenance, or when needed he could be pressed to lecture on mathematics and architecture. While this material is of considerable interest for the history of eighteenth-century Mexico, it might be better integrated into a more general study of the engineers and of the army of New Spain. There are a number of published sources available which might have added a little more scope. At the same time, however, the author has done an excellent job in pointing out the importance of the army engineers in the Borderlands. The primary research in Spanish, Mexican, and United States archives is thorough—particularly in light of the fact that access to some collections is difficult and indexes are often poor or nonexistent. Both the monograph and the eight appendices, which give an accurate flavor of the engineer's enlightenment and curiosity, should be of considerable interest to specialists and general readers.

University of Calgary

CHRISTON I. ARCHER

SPANISH MISSION CHURCHES OF NEW MEXICO. By L. Bradford Prince. Glorieta: Rio Grande Press, 1977. Pp. 386. Illus., index. \$25.00.

ACCORDING TO HIS DIARY, LeBaron Bradford Prince, newly appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Mexico Territory, arrived in Santa Fe on Saturday, February 8, 1879, totally exhausted from the long cross-country

railroad trip. Two days later, at the age of thirty-nine, he presided in court. As Chief Justice, then Governor for four years, and active Republican leader for forty years, Prince became well known regionally and nationally. Political involvement, however, did not interfere with his infatuation with the history and culture of New Mexico. Among many other activities he found time to write eight books and monographs, all dealing with this area. This volume, published seven years before his death in 1922, is the last and possibly the best of his writings which, interestingly enough, he sold personally.

Prince not only visited the mission sites but carefully measured them as well as other noteworthy structures nearby. He mentions that he took "kodak pictures" of as many of them as possible but these, unfortunately, did not reproduce well. In addition, he researched and wrote a history of each based on the documents then available to him. Since 1915, the year of publication, different spellings of place names have been adopted and more accurate information has become available but these weaknesses do not detract from the main objective Prince had in mind, which was to convince the people of New Mexico that their sacred edifices were far superior in antiquity and variety to those of California and that something had to be done quickly to preserve those still standing from destruction by vandals and the elements and even from those with the urge to remodel or replace. One can sense the author's pride of the region throughout the volume but especially in the first four chapters in which he offers a brief general history. The major portion of the book, twenty-eight chapters, is devoted to a description of each mission or church. There is some unevenness in coverage along with occasional long quotations probably stemming from the fact that Prince wrote segments or chapters at different times during his long residence in New Mexico. The lawyer-historian did a creditable job.

After much thought and planning the publishers of Rio Grande Press, specialists in facsimile reproductions of out-of-print but significant historical writings, decided to offer Prince's work to aficionados of New Mexico history. A handsome new edition it is, indeed. The original photographs have been superbly supplemented by the addition of 123 new ones (forty-five in color), and by seventeen excellent, first-ever reproductions of mission paintings by Gerald Cassidy, William P. Henderson, Regina Tatum Cooke, and especially Carlos Vierra. In addition, there is a new publisher's preface, an interesting introduction on Governor Prince, an up-to-date 11 x 16 location map, and a twelve-page index prepared by Kirk Ellis. The new edition is considerably larger in size than the original, beautifully bound and well worth the price.

College of Santa Fe

WALTER J. DONLON

WILDERNESS CALLING: THE HARDEMAN FAMILY IN THE AMERICAN WESTWARD MOVEMENT, 1750-1900. By Nicolas Perkins Hardeman. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1977. Pp. xiv, 357. Illus., maps, notes, index. \$14.95.

NICHOLAS HARDEMAN'S STORY is blessed not only with a favorable geography—the American West—but also with a family whose experiences create in

microcosm a social history of frontier America. Beginning with the patriarch of the family, Thomas Hardeman of Albemarle and his migration to the North Carolina backcountry, and continuing through four generations of Hardemans, the author skillfully chronicles their movement across the continent. Hardemans settled the Cumberland valley, extended their enterprise into Missouri Territory, helped draft constitutions for Tennessee, Missouri, California and the Texas Republic, travelled wagon roads to Santa Fe and the Oregon country, took part in the fight for Texas independence, sojourned in the diggings on the Yuba River in 1848, fought on both sides during the Civil War, and, down to the official close of the frontier in 1890, worked on cattle drives and helped to man military posts from Arizona to Montana. Few families, within the present limit of historical research, played such a conspicuous part in the development of the West over a longer period of time.

Yet *Wilderness Calling* is more than a simple tale of westward expansion. It is rather a family history that combines various themes and events in a panoramic view that reaches beyond the parochial limits of western Americana. The author's final chapter on the theoretical burdens of western history is of added usefulness. He rejects the usual explanations for western migration—Manifest Destiny, free land, "safety valve," economic determinism—in favor of a culture-based analysis that looks to the family, the principal social institution of nineteenth-century America, for the source of migrating tendencies.

Professor Hardeman (California State University, Long Beach) maintains a family tradition for gifted storytelling, with the added maturity of a competent scholar. If at times he seems to endow his forebears with many of the rugged virtues traditionally associated with the frontier, he has tempered the celebration with a more objective analysis of their proper place within the history of each region successively occupied in the family's advance to the Pacific barrier. Taking his material from a variety of sources, both public and private, the author has created a work that should be of great interest to students of Western history, and should also serve future scholars as a model for continuing research into the "westward impulse."

Northern Arizona University

L. G. MOSES

HAMLIN GARLAND'S OBSERVATIONS ON THE AMERICAN INDIAN, 1895-1905. Edited by Lonnie E. Underhill and Daniel F. Littlefield, Jr. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1976. Pp. x, 214. Illus., maps, bibliog., index. Cloth \$9.95, paper \$4.95.

WHEN HAMLIN GARLAND came to the Far West for the first time in 1892, he reacted to the Rockies and the West Coast like a school boy on the first day of vacation. And his enthusiasm increased as he visited other parts of the West in the next two years. But a different purpose impelled him west in 1895: he and artist friends came to see Indians, to visit reservations, and to write about and

sketch what they saw. This trip was a turning point in Garland's career. For the next decade or so, he toured many reservations, wrote numerous essays, stories, and a novel about what he saw and heard. And for the remainder of his life he drew upon these experiences for his fiction and autobiographical writings.

In the volume under review, Underhill and Littlefield collect thirteen essays that Garland wrote between 1895 and 1905. Four of the articles appeared in magazines during that decade, four were edited and published in historical journals in the 1970s, and five appear here in scholarly form for the first time. Seven of the essays recount Garland's travels to reservations in Arizona and New Mexico, and four center on Indian groups in Montana. The two remaining essays—"The Red Man's Present Needs" (1902) and "The Red Man as Material" (1903)—deal with general topics and are the most significant pieces in the volume; significant for understanding Garland's views and notable for application to the continuing discussions of ethnic diversity in contemporary America.

In the opening fifty pages of the volume, the editors show how Garland used the materials gathered on his visits in his subsequent writings. Also, each essay is introduced with background information, and the meaning of each article is augmented through useful explanatory footnotes. These notes are drawn primarily from the work of Frederick Webb Hodge, a few secondary works, agency reports, and newspapers. Some manuscript research is evident in the notes dealing with an incident in Montana that Garland used in his novel *The Captain of the Gray-Horse Troop* (1902).

A few additions would have made the volume stronger. The introduction is narrowly focused on Garland's writings and lacks comparisons and contrasts between his works and those of contemporaries such as Owen Wister, Frederic Remington, Jack London, and Mary Austin, who wrote about Indians at the same time that Garland was recording his observations. Nor do the editors make use of secondary sources on the literary treatment of Indians at the turn of the century. Material in recent dissertations by Brian Dippie, Priscilla Oaks Shames, and Charles Roberts would have added a great deal on this subject. And for those readers unacquainted with American Indian history of the late nineteenth century, the discussions of the Dawes Act and policies of allotment are too skimpy to be of much help. Underhill and Littlefield frequently refer to conflicts in racial relations and hint at Garland's part in the cultural dramas of his times, but these references are vague. Had the editors been more detailed and explicit, their book would be more useful.

On the other hand, the essays do illuminate Garland's reactions to the Indian. They reveal a thoughtful, sympathetic liberal who attempts to make sense of Indian-white relations, who criticizes current policies, and who suggests better alternatives. Generally, Garland thinks allotment is not working well because whites are land hungry and unwilling to help Indians make the slow and uncertain steps toward adjustment. Garland wants more schools, more women as administrators on reservations, and a larger willingness on the part of agents and missionaries to allow Indians to retain their social and religious customs.

Garland changes in the 1895-1905 period; he seems to recognize the prejudices of his cultural background, and he moves beyond these barriers in his later and more positive comments on the nature of Indian culture. His points of view have a contemporary ring, and for presentists the volume contains lessons from the past that are applicable to present dilemmas.

Idaho State University

RICHARD W. ETULAIN

TRAVIS. By Archie P. McDonald. Austin: Jenkins Publishing Company, 1976. Pp. 214. Notes, bibliog., illus., index. \$12.50.

IN 1836 William Barret Travis became inextricably linked with the Alamo and Texas. As commander of the beleaguered San Antonio garrison facing General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, he became a symbol of courage and freedom, of man's age-old fight against oppression, of the American belief in dying as free people rather than living as slaves. Then with his famous letter of February 24 "to the people of Texas & all Americans in the world" he achieved instant renown; for few statements in history have ever carried a greater emotional impact than his concluding literary comment—"I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor and that of his country—VICTORY OR DEATH" (p. 165).

Yet Archie McDonald, an American historian at Stephen F. Austin State University, has sought to humanize Travis, to strip away the rhetoric and drama surrounding the Texas Revolution so that the reader might separate myth from reality. He has therefore revealed an impulsive, vainglorious, extremely ambitious individual who was determined to build a noteworthy reputation. Most likely fleeing from an unhappy marriage in 1831, Travis arrived in Texas only to demonstrate further his lack of understanding concerning women. His "physical appetites" and immense egotism even prompted him to number female conquests and describe such amorous encounters in a diary (p. 58). In June, 1832, his precipitous actions at Anahuac, which forced Captain Antonio Tenorio and twelve soldiers to surrender, caused him much embarrassment and public censure, that is, until the Mexican military foolishly ordered his arrest; Travis thus eluded the "goat" appellation and moved toward the "hero" category. Then during the summer and fall of 1835 his quick promotions from second lieutenant to lieutenant colonel in the Texas army, which ultimately placed him at the Alamo, demonstrated clearly, as McDonald points out, his ambition "to make his mark in the world, to assemble a fortune, and to be remembered" (pp. 99-100).

So in *Travis*, the reader will find the best biography written thus far on this Texas hero. Although not a literary work of art, it is clear, direct, and objective. In fact, McDonald discusses in detail all myths connected with the Travis legend, thereby explaining the man without debunking him.

Texas Christian University

BEN PROCTER

A CLASH OF INTERESTS: INTERIOR DEPARTMENT AND MOUNTAIN WEST 1863-96. By Thomas G. Alexander. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1977. Pp. 256. Maps, notes, bibliog., index.

IN A STRIKING ANALYSIS of territorial government in the United States Thomas G. Alexander has examined the collective experiences of Idaho, Utah, and Arizona to argue his hypothesis that the federal government in the years 1863-1896 forced a political and institutional conformity that ran against the best interests of the actual settlers of these territories. Contrary to the situation in the twentieth century, when citizens of these states dutifully and even thankfully altered certain cultural patterns in return for substantial federal spending, their nineteenth-century counterparts resented the strong arm of Washington, even though more federal money came into these territories than went out.

Because of this paradoxical response the author contends that an understanding of the problem is beyond the realm of quantitative economics and analysis. Rather, it came down to ideological constructs and practical considerations. The principal ideological failure was the inability of Washington bureaucrats to perceive that conditions in the underdeveloped Mountain West militated against the application of yeoman farmer models and state-making strategies used in the Midwest and elsewhere. This was especially the case with regard to land policy, irrigation, and the group-oriented cultures of the Mormons and Indians; and, to a lesser degree, in the areas of ranching and timber management.

On a more practical level federal insensitivity was aggravated by the lack of political power in the territories which in turn created a vacuum that allowed Congress to ignore real needs almost at will. External political considerations too often dominated local political affairs, with the result that the normal functioning of territorial government was disrupted. In a strong indictment against the federal "fetish" of efficient, central organization, author Alexander concludes with a plea for greater utilization of creative energies at the local level. Then, and perhaps only then, will conflicting ideologies be tempered by more practical solutions to the day-to-day problems of the Mountain West.

That this study is an important contribution to Western institutional history is undeniable. The author has marshalled an impressive body of evidence without taking cover under the umbrella of empirical certainty. Yet nowhere is there any serious consideration of the basic constitutional issues involved. No mention of Calhoun, who surely deserves some mention whenever the problem of regionalism in American life comes up. No mention of the work of Arthur Bestor or Dwight Morrow as they have dealt with the issues of regional autonomy and territorial expansion. And no mention of James Malin who years ago decried the withering impact of technology and centralization at the territorial and early statehood levels.

For a book that purports to deal with a major region of the Mountain West there is too much emphasis on the Utah experience. Some important journal literature on Indian policy and the federal bureaucracy has been ignored, and

the analogy between beleaguered Mormons and Indians *vis-à-vis* well-known Interior Department ineptitude is more suggestive than supportive of the cultural pluralism so strongly advocated by the author.

Wichita State University

WILLIAM E. UNRAU

CONTACT AND CONFLICT: INDIAN-EUROPEAN RELATIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1774-1890. By Robin Fisher. Vancouver: University of Columbia Press, 1977. Illus., bibliog., index. \$18.00.

ROBIN FISHER offers the reader the opportunity to examine the long, rich history of the Indians of British Columbia from the early days of the fur trade through settlement by Europeans. Fisher shows a scholar's detachment and does not accept most of the preconceptions common to so many works that touch on Indian-European relations. For example, while his chapter on the maritime fur trade offers only a brief analysis of the trade, it is clearly demonstrated that the characterization of the trade as exploitation of the Indians, so common to historical literature, is not supportable. True, there were some traders who may have made remarkable profits, primarily in the early days of the trade; and there were others involved in incidents that could be described as exploitive. However, as a whole, the trade was a mutually profitable enterprise in which the Indian was in a position to exert a degree of independence and equality. Fisher traces the theme of Indian-European relationships through the period of land-based fur trade and demonstrates that the Indian societies continued to be viable. While there were changes, particularly of an economic nature, the Indians continued to enjoy traditional values.

With the coming of the miners, followed by the settlers and the usual retinue of missionaries, bureaucrats, etc., the lot of the Indian peoples of British Columbia deteriorated steadily. With essential religious traditions, particularly potlaches, outlawed, the Indian societies were hard-put to retain their integrity. The author examined in detail the decline of various Indian groups as traditional trade, hunting, and fishing patterns were disrupted until one sees men and women of once prosperous groups reduced to drunkenness and prostitution. It is perhaps ironic that once the Europeans had reduced the Indian to this sad state, they then used the condition of the Indian as a justification for his removal from desirable lands which were then developed by Europeans.

By 1890, the end of the period examined by the author, little was left of the native societies in the region. At this point, American readers may be inclined to view the development as parallel to the pattern in their own country. One should be cautious, however. While there are many instances of violence perpetrated on the Indians examined in this study, the severity and frequency hardly bear comparison to the usual patterns in the United States. Libraries with an interest in North American Indians will find this volume a valuable addition to their collections.

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