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Book Reviews

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The Folklore of Spain in the American Southwest: Traditional Spanish Folk Literature in Northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado. By Aurelio M. Espinosa, ed. by J. Manuel Espinosa. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985. xiii + 310 pp. Illustrations, map, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. $24.95.)

In 1598 the Southwest was settled by Spaniards from New Spain (Mexico). For more than two centuries these colonists remained an isolated frontier outpost of the Spanish empire. It was to this community that Aurelio M. Espinosa was born in 1880 in southern Colorado. He went on to become the first folklore and linguistic scholar to study the Spanish folk literature of the Spanish-speaking people of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. His scholarly research and publications made him a respected leader in his field and an important source in the study of Spanish folklore in the Southwest.

J. Manuel Espinosa, the son of Aurelio Espinosa, and a folklorist in his own right, has done an excellent job of preparing this important book for publication. In part one of the book he presents Aurelio Espinosa's life, education, research and writings. In part two he brings together previously unpublished material of his father, writings that cover all of the major types of traditional Spanish folk literature found in the Southwest region. Together, the two parts are harmonious, and the book forms an interesting and educating whole. The book will appeal to students of folklore, and it will be of interest

to the general public. It has much to offer in relating the history of this scholar and his work to the contemporary status of the literature of the Hispano community today.

Aurelio M. Espinosa taught at the University of New Mexico from 1902 to 1910. In 1909, he received the degree of doctor of philosophy in Romance languages and literature from the University of Chicago. His dissertation, "Studies in New-Mexican Spanish" was a pioneer work in dialectology, and it remains a seminal work in the field. Stanford University offered Espinosa a teaching position, and there he spent most of his professional career. Espinosa never forgot his roots; he was an early promoter of the teaching of Spanish language and literature.

In "Studies in New-Mexican Spanish," the editor states, "Espinosa showed that the Spanish spoken by residents of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado, who were isolated for over two centuries from the direct influence of the urban centers of Spanish America, developed from the languages of Spain's Golden Age during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with local dialect traits that are also found in Spain, as well as other parts of Spanish America." His search was for the origin of the folktales he had heard as a child growing up in southern Colorado and his later collections of these tales along the Rio Grande. The search took him to Spain, which he established as a pivotal country for the dissemination of folktales that found their way into Europe from the Orient.

Espinosa chose to study ballads, other poetic folk material, and the folklore of the Pueblo Indians. Eventually he collected material all along the upper Rio Grande Valley from Socorro north to the San Luis Valley of Colorado. In 1920 he made a field trip to Spain and later published the folktales he collected there. The *Cuentos populares espanoles* are his "most significant single contribution to Hispanic folk literature." Throughout, he remained steadfastly a student of the Spanish language of New Mexico and a proponent of the idea that both the language and the traditional folk literature he found in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado had their source in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth century of Spain.

Those of us who read folklore as general readers will appreciate the breadth of intelligence of this man and his scholarship; and we will appreciate the faith he had in the people from whom he collected. Espinosa said: "The people do not confuse, as some believe, a popular and traditional tale or ballad with a version from a literary source or one popularized from such a source, no matter how similar they may be." In other words, it is the folk and their folktales which have fed this generation of writers from this community.

J. Manuel Espinosa has done a most credible job of presenting an objective rendering of the life and writings of his father. One feels the love and respect. For those who choose to read further in the work of Espinosa, the editor has provided a complete bibliography of Espinosa's writings on Spanish and Spanish American folklore and dialectology.

RUDOLFO ANAYA
University of New Mexico

Doctors of Medicine In New Mexico: A History of Health and Medical Practice, 1886–1986. Jake W. Spidle, Jr. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986. xvi + 384 pp. Illustrations, maps, charts, tables, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. $29.95.)

Jake W. Spidle's book is more than a fascinating story of medical practice in New Mexico. It is also a chronicle of its physicians. It is a happy tale of progress and clearly one that pleases its author, whose pleasure is passed on to his readers.

The story begins in Las Vegas during what the author terms the pioneer period (1882–1912) and describes the state of the healing art as well as its practitioners. A description of the sad state of medical education in the United States leaves one with a sense of horror, but one must conclude that New Mexico was no worse off than the remainder of the country.

The late pioneer and early middle periods (1912–1941) saw a marked increase in the state's overall population as tuberculars in droves immigrated in the hope of finding the cure. Among the immigrants were large numbers of tubercular physicians, some of whom did find the cure and continued to practice in the state. Between the influx of physicians and lax licensure regulations, the doctor/population ratio fell to 1 per 693 people in 1921. Thereafter, tightening of licensure regulations resulted in a decline in the number of practicing physicians and along with a growing population, the physician/population ratio increased so that not until the late 1970s did the state enjoy such a ratio again. The middle period saw the entry of federal government into the health care of the state with provision of public health nurses for the education of both midwives and young mothers in an attempt to lower the horrendous infant mortality rate which was described by one official as "the slaughter of the innocents."

The story of the late middle and modern eras (1941–1986) is based on the author's interviews of many physicians who, though now retired, were active in private practice then. One cannot help but admire the courage of "las doctoras" and the vision of the twentieth-century pioneers who included among their deeds a new school of medicine, recertification of physicians, and the foundation of a group medical practice. At the time of inception, these events were at best debatable. Spidle portrays the spirit of those people and their times vividly and enthusiastically. Clearly he is pleased with the accomplishments of the doctors of medicine in New Mexico and so will be his readers.

RAYMOND C. DOBERNECK, M.D.
University of New Mexico

Enchantment and Exploitation: The Life and Hard Times of a New Mexico Mountain Range. By William deBuys. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985. xxii + 394 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. $27.50 cloth, $14.95 paper.)

As of late, environmental historians have shown increasing preference for the "case study" approach to the relationship between human culture and the

environmental resource framework of land, water, and atmosphere that materially sustains human activities over time. In this growing body of literature New Mexico can now boast a prominent place.

This book addresses problems of mountain ecology. William deBuys examines the Sangre de Cristo (Blood of Christ) Mountains. Here the clash and assimilation of cultures—Indian, Hispanic, and Anglo-American—occurred. More to the point, the subject is the mountain environment and its ability to sustain the social systems that drew a livelihood from it. The mountain ranges of northern New Mexico nurtured a culture that was both frighteningly parochial and satisfyingly self-contained. This is not a new revelation for New Mexico historians, but what the deBuys book does, and rather superbly so, is to evoke a mood, striking chords of sympathy in the reader for the experiences and travail endured by the mountain people. This evocative quality is one of the great gifts of the author's expertly crafted writing style.

Although much of the beauty of this book lies in style and the well-turned phrase, it also possesses content. A third world or pre-industrial societal sentimentalism might be expected as deBuys discusses environmental degradation in the mountains. But his tough-mindedness does not permit him to fall into the trap of assuming that pastoral, pre-industrial societies lived in serene harmony with the land. From the beginning grazing economies and their nomadic enemies caused depletion of forage cover, erosion, and pressure to push higher into the more fragile mountain pastures.

Much of the best content in these pages concerns attempts by modern twentieth-century governmental resource management agencies to impose regulation upon the uses of the land. These regulations demanded attention to numbers grazed, type of stock, and length of the grazing season. Ultimately decisions to move away from goats and sheep to less labor intensive cattle grazing, however, were a function of a changing economy rather than pressures from governmental agencies. Since the beginning of the century the U.S. Forest Service has been at the center of these changes. As the Forest Service attempted to regulate grazing and timber cutting, it came into head-long conflict with the traditional societies that lived on the land. At first it saw virtue and healthy social values in the issuance of permits to a multitude of small graziers. But these socially sensitive policies did not protect the land; in the midst of great outcries it sought both stock reductions and the elimination of economically unviable permits.

On balance deBuys sees the Forest Service as a well-intended, blundering bureaucratic giant caught in a "no-win" position between villagers and a mandate to regulate use for the long range protection of the resource. He rejects conspiratorial explanations for Forest Service policies and understands that the roots of these accusations grow out of an underlying conviction by villagers that the mountains really belong to them. There are no sweeping answers for the standoff between government bureaucracy and the people of the mountains, except for the possibility that the Forest Service can increase its credibility and the hope that it will not give way to political pressures for ever increased resource use. In this respect, deBuys places himself decidedly upon the side

of science and administrative regulation of the land. He emerges a modernist in spite of the nostalgic romanticism of his prose.

WILLIAM D. ROWLEY
University of Nevada, Reno

Cadillac Desert: The American West and Its Disappearing Water. By Marc Reisner. (New York: Viking Penguin, 1986. viii + 582 pp. Illustrations, map, notes, bibliography, index. $22.95.)

In 1986 the American trade press seized upon the current fetish for western water development history by releasing two vastly different studies of the subject. Donald Worster's *Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity, and the Growth of the American West* engaged the reader in an almost metaphysical exploration of the soul of American water resource policy. Marc Reisner, on the other hand, utilized his journalistic training to fashion a dramatic but flawed popular narrative of the players in the game of western water.

While Worster's discussion of Chinese hydraulic economics may satisfy academics, most beneficiaries of the federal largesse of western water projects will turn to Reisner for guidance. Therein lies the strength and weakness of *Cadillac Desert*. The author attempts an epic sweep of water development, from preColumbian irrigation techniques to futuristic intercontinental water transfers. He also employs the advocacy method of journalists that has permeated much of environmental history. The result is powerful prose, burdened by few efforts at balance or perspective.

One reason for this reliance on the apocalyptic vision is the sheer magnitude of the projects in question. What began in the mid-nineteenth century as small community diversion ditches by Mormons in Utah or Greeleyites in Colorado, evolved into the massive multipurpose reservoirs and hydroelectric power facilities of the New Deal. The awesome landscape that dwarfed the hardy pioneers thus metamorphosed into the vast canvas upon which engineers and politicians could paint the prosperous future of the modern West.

Reisner's resort to journalistic narrative requires a giantism not unlike the subject he studies. He sees individual figures as pivotal in the process, from John Wesley Powell to Floyd Dominy, commissioner of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in its postwar golden age. This makes for effective storytelling but begs the question of an organizational society on the march disguised as a haven for individualism. The only motives Reisner can ascribe to these figures, therefore, are greed, stupidity, and a mawkish pandering to the dark side of the American Dream.

To correct these and other problems in such an ambitious work, students of western water policy can use *Cadillac Desert* as a point of departure. Too few scholars analyze the urban dimension of the twentieth-century western landscape, preferring to emphasize the traditional Jeffersonian myth of the small farmer. Competition between federal agencies, like the Bureau of Reclamation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, led to excessive construction and continued dependence upon Washington.

Finally, Reisner fails to answer the question that Worster posed in *Rivers*

of Empire. Why would Americans strike such a Faustian bargain with their environment, their government, and themselves? Both books end on a "neo-romantic" note of fatalism: one day the American people will come to their senses, or else face Armageddon in the arid West. They do not realize that the twentieth-century culture of comfort, which western water projects both symbolize and promote, has little place for diminution or retrenchment. Jimmy Carter learned that lesson, as Reisner points out, but its meaning has been lost in the 1980s of Ronald Reagan.

Reisner's work ultimately disappoints the curious reader, as much for promises unfulfilled as for the problems inherent in such a comprehensive work. There are no footnotes for the student to consult, nor are there maps intermingled within the body of the text. The chapters do not flow together, but instead digress between chronology, river basins, regions, and projects. The lack of American historiography also hinders the continuity of Reisner's story, as movements like Progressivism, Populism, the New Deal, and even the environmentalism of the 1960s and 1970s stand as isolated and at times disjointed forces.

Cadillac Desert remains an ambitious enterprise undertaken by an author unashamed of his personal bias against the practices of western water developers. The questions raised are provocative, but the solutions proffered are wanting. Yet Reisner is to be applauded for tackling such a gargantuan topic as western water. Too often it has been journalists like Carey McWilliams, Neil Morgan, William Kahrl, or Neal Peirce that find the modern West worthy of attention. Readers should consider *Cadillac Desert* a volume that would not be written a decade from now. But its popularity, evidenced by its selection by the History Book Club, stands as testimony to the youthfulness of twentieth-century western scholarship, and of the distance the profession has yet to travel.

MICHAEL WELSH
University of New Mexico

At Home on the Range: Essays on the History of Western Social and Domestic Life. Edited by John R. Wunder. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985. xiii + 213 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. $29.95.)

The title of this modest collection of articles is somewhat misleading since with two exceptions the selections focus on the southern plains, especially the Texas panhandle. Some readers may also be confused by the use of the expression "history of western social and domestic life." Clearly, this is not social history in the newest mode; there are no examples of demography or family history included. Instead, the emphasis is on the more traditional definition of that term. Various articles discuss, for example, innovation in frontier housing construction and the importance of such items of material culture as sewing machines and cast iron stoves on the frontier. Contributions from newer fields, however, are also recognized, notably in Jacqueline S. Reinier's discussion of "Concepts of Domesticity on the Southern Plains Agricultural Frontier, 1870–

1920." Other offerings demonstrate sound, if sometimes less innovative, scholarship.

This volume is one of a series dedicated to the late Charles Wood, the editor's former colleague at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. All of the authors were individuals who worked with Wood at that institution, a laudable example of mentoring on the part of the editor. But this editorial decision creates some question about the choice of topics included. It is often not clear whether these subjects were picked with regard to their larger importance to the field of western history or rather to reflect the research interests of the authors themselves. Since these scholars worked, for the most part, in the regional archives, the result is to make the collection of greatest interest to those with a specialization in the history of the southern plains.

Some articles, however, do break out of this narrower mold. Rebecca J. Herring's discussion of "The Creation of Indian Farm Women: Field Matrons and Acculturation on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation, 1895–1906" fits well into recent studies of female agricultural education in the early twentieth century and points up the need for additional research at the juncture between women's history and agricultural history. Robert C. Williams' consideration of "Farm Technology and the 'Great Debate': The Rhetoric of Horse Lovers and Tractor Boosters, 1900–1945" addresses the vociferous nationwide debate regarding adoption of this new technology, concluding that non-economic factors may well have been more significant than the presumed economic benefits in prompting individuals to switch from animal to mechanical power. George Q. Flynn's description of "Drafting Farmers in World War II" also deals effectively with an important national issue, though offering little that is specifically "western" about that conflict. Selections such as these make *At Home on the Range* a useful contribution for the casual or the scholarly reader.

CYNTHIA STURGIS
Texas Tech University

The Salvation Army Farm Colonies. By Clark C. Spence. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985. vii + 151 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $19.95.)

The Salvation Army, under the inspiration of General William Booth and the supervision of Emma and William Booth Tucker, established in the late 1890s three farm colonies to "create a body of self-sufficing, land-owning farmers" out of victims of urban poverty (p. 8). Yes, the Army wanted to save souls but recognized that people needed decent lives and where better than in the country, where Americans have so often—and so romantically—envisioned their salvation.

The colonists at Fort Romie (California)—nearly 300 in number, a mix of religions and ethnicities—had some farm experience but were offered three months of farming lessons before moving in 1897. Each colonist rented an acreage and buildings for either cash or labor and agreed to lead a sober and industrious life or face forfeiture.

The Army investigated prospective colonists for Fort Amity (Colorado) to

ensure that they were "worthy poor" who were responsible and dependable. These people received a cottage, a horse, a cow, and farming tools and agreed also to a "morality clause." Some colonists, instead of farming, provided other services: a store, hotel, restaurants, weekly newspaper, school, orphanage, but, true to Salvation Army beliefs, no saloons or dance halls.

Fort Herrick in Ohio attracted fewer settlers than either of the others. After a few years it abandoned the "poor farmer" idea and turned itself into a "Farm for Growing Men as Well as Grain," a drying-out center for alcoholics. For a short time, the farm provided a place to live and work that was a safe distance from liquor.

The Army hoped that colonists would eventually buy their land and become self sufficient. A few colonists succeeded, but most were defeated by the twin trials of most farmers: shortage of capital and the vagaries of nature. Even with the constant fund raising of the Booth-Tuckers and generous contributions from Army supporters, the colonies failed. Forts Amity and Romie collapsed and Fort Herrick was turned into an open air park for children.

Spence skillfully puts these colonies in the tradition of nineteenth-century utopian farm colonies and adheres to the traditional belief about the curative powers of rural life (contrasted with the corruptions of the city). He demonstrates, too, the good faith effort by the Army to cope with an urban poverty that it seemed fundamentally to misunderstand.

Spence's spare storytelling keeps the book focused and moving. One wishes only that he had drawn out his analysis. He might have looked at the similarities with nineteenth-century poor farms, for example, or wondered about the "poor" that the Army was trying to help. Why farm colonies when farming was failing so many and being abandoned so often? The speculations of such an experienced western historian would be valuable.

ANNETTE ATKINS
St. John's University

Life In the Oil Fields. By Roger M. Olien and Diana Davids Olien. (Austin: Texas Monthly Press, 1986. 263 pp. Illustrations, map, index. $19.95.)

Twentieth-century social history is a challenging and relatively young field that cannot be handled successfully with traditional approaches. Conventional materials—letters, diaries, and even manuscript census records—are sparse when available at all. Yet, as *Life in the Oil Fields* convincingly demonstrates, nontraditional sources like oral histories and photographs can tell a story admirably.

This volume has a clear and consistent focus. It deals mainly with the period from World War I to the 1950s. The technique is to allow those with oil field experiences to tell the story themselves, from interviews conducted by the authors or housed in public depositories. The Oliens supply a good introductory chapter and sufficient explanations to weave the narratives together. The bulk of the accounts deal with West Texas, but neither eastern Texas nor eastern New Mexico are neglected. The latter region is referred to in at least fifteen different places, with Hobbs receiving considerable attention. More than

eighty photographs, selected from over a dozen private and archival collections, adorn the volume and illustrate its themes. The pictures themselves are worth the price of the book, but the interviews are equally fascinating.

The interviewees include a wide spectrum of old field folk. Mostly they were "boomers" seeking higher wages and escape from the drudgery of rural life. The narratives also present the stories of wives and mothers, teachers, waitresses, cooks, cafe owners, physicians, and hotel owners. Even those who are suspicious of oral history as potentially self-serving will no doubt be impressed by the great variety of experiences that are depicted. Not all were successful in dealing with the problems of inferior housing, isolation, crime, poor schooling, and most of all, movement—the restless, rootless fact of oil field life. Likewise, all the boom towns contained a sizable population of gamblers, prostitutes, and bootleggers, whose stories are also told, at least in a secondhand way. The frank and open way in which the interviewees speak of these realities lends credence to the pride that pervades their recollections as they reflect on their success in making a life for themselves. Most of all, they generally say, we persevered, finding humor amidst adversity and overcoming tensions and sneers through basic human decency.

This book should find a wide readership. It is appropriate for the scholar's bookshelf and the coffee table of the more general audience, for the Oliens and the publisher have done their work well in every respect. For ex-boomers and their descendants and residents of the communities which are emphasized, *Life in the Oil Fields* should be particularly fascinating.

PAUL LACK
MacMurray College

The Chief: Ernest Thompson Seton and the Changing West. By H. Allen Anderson. (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1986. xii + 363 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $35.00.)

Several generations of young people, including this reviewer, grew up loving wild creatures and camping lore through two books by Ernest Thompson Seton: *Wild Animals I Have Known* (1898) and *Two Little Savages* (1903). In this most recent biography of Seton, H. Allen Anderson contributes substantially to an understanding of the "paradoxical, mysterious, and complex individual" behind those best-selling books for boys (p. xi).

Ernest Thompson Seton, rebelling from a rigid Calvinistic household presided over by a tyrannical father, turned to the field of natural history for both solace and inspiration. He combined scientific and artistic interests with a marked flair for storytelling to become a popular figure, particularly among the youth of his day, and a fighter for Indian rights and wilderness preservation. Seton was a leader in launching the Boy Scouts of America and he worked actively on their behalf even after the organization moved away from his insistence on woodcraft and turned toward urban and semi-military emphases. As his life blood began slowly to ebb, Seton found his right, good place on 2,500 New Mexican acres near Santa Fe where he built a thirty-room "castle" out of wood, stone, and adobe that housed 13,000 books, nearly 800

of his paintings, sketches, and sculptures, and about 3,000 bird and animal skins. From there as a base, he worked along with other ardent converts to the Southwest, like Mary Austin and John Collier, to preserve the integrity of the region and its native peoples in the face of rapid change.

Anderson claims to be primarily concerned with Seton as "a people's man [whatever that is], family man, and social commentator" (p. xi). As a matter of fact, the author is concerned largely with the many facets of his subject's public career. Anderson gives thorough and balanced treatment of the controversies that marked Seton's stormy path. This is true especially of the "nature fake" dispute that pitted Seton against his friend and fellow naturalist John Burroughs and of the running argument over whether it was Baden-Powell or Seton who was the genuine father of the Boy Scouts.

The book has weaknesses. Too often Anderson indulges in superficial and trite efforts to provide historical background with textbook summations of the New Deal and the rise of Hitler. Also, Anderson argues dubiously that Seton's *Biography of an Arctic Fox* is a parable of the age of the Great Depression. On the whole, nevertheless, this is an informative, well-researched, and competent life of an influential and fascinating man.

The bibliography includes an exhaustive listing of Seton's published writing.

EDWIN R. BINGHAM
University of Oregon

Buckskins, Bullets, and Business: A History of Buffalo Bill's Wild West. By Sarah J. Blackstone. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986. 257 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $27.95.)

Buffalo Bill Cody claimed that his "Wild West" was genuine, but it was based "almost entirely on illusion," writes Sarah Blackstone in her introduction. Although most of the performers were genuine participants in the western movement, the "show was full-blown propaganda—glorifying the process of winning the American West. . . ." True, but we must not lose sight of the fact that Cody's West was devoted to the post–Civil War era and ignored the pre- and post-Revolutionary period when there really was a "wilderness" to be "subdued."

The author's research is sound and she presents a fascinating insight into events leading to the formation of Cody's Wild West, its structure, and almost military organization. Her approach, however, is both the book's strength and its weakness. Its strength lies in the blow-by-blow, tent-peg-by-tent-peg description of the formation and daily running of an organization that, despite many rivals, for nearly thirty years captivated audiences worldwide. Its weakness is its "thesis" approach, for little attention is paid to the needs of the general reader. We get snatches of information about the personalities involved in the "Wild West" and wish there were more. Hopefully, the general reader (or buff) will be encouraged by the content to pursue the subject further.

As a historian I found only minor disagreement: Cody did not feed the crews laying the tracks of the "Kansas Pacific Railroad [*sic*]"—at the time he

worked for the company it was the Union Pacific Railway Company, Eastern Division. It became the "Kansas Pacific Railway" in 1869. It is doubtful (based upon modern research) that Cody rode for the Pony Express. As for Doc Carver, his biographer, Raymond W. Thorp (without the final "e"), learned too late that Carver invented his "life" prior to 1878, and Thorp died an embittered man. Blackstone appreciated Carver's negative approach to Cody, put perhaps she was not aware of his fiction, or that he blamed Cody for his failures rather than accept that he himself was the root cause of most of his problems.

But these are minor points, for Blackstone deserves our praise for her efforts, and her book is a must for all students of Cody and indeed anyone even half-interested in the history of Wild West shows and the myth-builders of the Old West.

JOSEPH G. ROSA
English Westerners' Society, London

"Pidge" A Texas Ranger from Virginia: The Life and Letters of Lieutenant T. C. Robinson, Washington County Volunteer Militia Company "A." By Chuck Parsons. (South Wayne, Wisconsin: Chuck Parsons, 1986. 147 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. $25.00.)

This work by Chuck Parsons, a well-known member of the National Association for Outlaw and Lawman History, with a brief introduction by another historical buff, Robert W. Stephens, can be read with interest by both scholars and the general public. The author should be congratulated on making available to the research community an annotated version of the correspondence of T. C. Robinson, *alias* T. Chanders, *alias* "Pidge" (with the last pseudonym probably showing his affection for a woman named Pidgie E. Mitchell). Parsons knows his subject and has done a first-rate editorial job.

The book can be viewed from several vantage points: as a narrative of Robinson as person and ranger, as a study of "Pidge" as newspaper writer, and as a piece of editorial work by Parsons. After migrating as an adult to Texas from Virginia in the 1870s, Robinson did two things of note: he joined a company of Texas Rangers under the command of Captain L. H. McNelly, and he wrote letters and poems for two Texan newspapers. Although the author has painstakingly put together bits and pieces of Robinson's life in his introductions, "Pidge" remains an elusive character. More is known about Robinson's professional career than his upbringing and his personality traits. As a newspaper correspondent, "Pidge" covered with wit and satire topics that ranged from a cattle drive and the state insane asylum to the operations of the Texas Rangers. At one point, in an attempt to play down his ability as a ranger, Robinson wrote, "The captain said he would shoot the first man who ran from the fight, and I look upon my death-warrant as already signed and sealed; I am as good as dead already, for my only hope is cut off" (p. 37). Literate rangers in the late nineteenth-century were less an enigma than some historians believe.

The heart of the book deals with Robinson's service and writings as a Texas Ranger in the Sutton-Taylor feud in DeWitt County and in Captain

McNelly's move against cattle thieves on the Rio Grande frontier. What happened here was not much different from ranger operations at other times and places. Less shoot-outs took place between rangers and Anglo Texans than with those individuals of Mexican descent. In the feud the rangers could send out patrols, make arrests, and guard witnesses and participants. Yet without a commitment to stop the violence by local officials the feud would go on. In the operations against cattle thieves in southern Texas, Ranger Robinson participated in gun battles and joined his comrades in their famous crossing of the Rio Grande into Mexico in 1875. These adventures showed, to go beyond the meanings seen by Parsons, that the rangers acted not only as citizen soldiers but also as organized peace officers, as seen in the use of various words in Lieutenant Robinson's reports to his superiors: "muster & pay rolls," "invoices," and a "monthly return" (pp. 121–23). In 1876 Robinson took leave from his ranger duties, returned to Virginia, and was killed in an exchange of gunfire with Jesse E. Mitchell (brother of Pidgie). The end, though, should come like this (p. 80):

> By night he sought the ranger's camp.
> Admitted by the sentinel—
> "Pass weary stranger—all is well:
> Go in, the midnight dew is damp."
>
> "Pidge"

HAROLD J. WEISS, JR.
Jamestown Community College

U.S. Army Uniforms and Equipment, 1889: Specifications for Clothing, Camp and Garrison Equipage, and Clothing and Equipage Materials. Foreword by Jerome A. Greene. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986. ix + 375 pp. Illustrations, tables, index. $24.50 cloth, $9.95 paper.)

A serviceable reference for museum professionals, historians, collectors and others who curate and interpret militaria, *U.S. Army Uniforms and Equipment, 1889* is a reprint of a rare book distributed at the time of its printing to fewer than sixty officers in the U.S. Army Quartermaster Department. The book, originally published in 1889 under the title *Specifications for Clothing, Camp and Garrison Equipage Materials, and Clothing and Equipage Materials* by the Quartermaster General, was something of a waypost as a guide for the procurement of military clothing and equipment. The present volume is a reprint with illustrations of and specifications for military accoutrements including headgear, stoves, tents, gauntlets, cavalry guidons, uniform articles, tools and accessories, chevrons and ornaments, and 150 or so other non-weapon items.

In the early nineteenth century, the procurement and supply of military clothing and equipment was dealt with unsystematically to meet national exigencies at hand. The lesson of the Civil War especially convinced the Quartermaster Department that strict standards for the procurement of military clothing and equipment should be devised. After Lincoln's call for volunteers swelled the ranks of the army to record proportions, countless civilian contractors scrambled to fill orders for military clothing and other articles. In many

cases the items produced were of inferior quality, although they imitated those produced by the three army clothing depots. It was often found that civilian-manufactured garments and equipment fell to pieces from poor quality and/or poor workmanship within a few weeks of issue. Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs had no alternative at this juncture but to enter into agreements with European contractors to outfit the U.S. Army. At this time manufacturing standards were written into individual contracts; Meigs tried to develop overall specifications to guide production, to no avail.

Following the Civil War the Quartermaster Department was glutted with stockpiles of clothing and matériel left over from the rebellion. The stockpile diminished through issue in the 1870s and the need for large scale production arose once more, due also to the adoption of a new uniform in 1872. This new production period proceeded similarly to the contractual production during the Civil War, with specifications written into the individual contracts, while the Quartermaster Department once again rushed to develop standardized specifications. Finally, in 1877, Quartermaster General Meigs published the first large body of standards to guide procurement of clothing and equipment in the Quartermaster General's annual report accompanying that of the Secretary of War. In the years following, any changes in specifications were published in the yearly report of the Quartermaster General. In the early 1880s another body of specifications for uniforms and matériel was published, but by 1886 was dated. The present volume thus came into being.

Jerome A. Greene is to be commended for adding this extremely scarce book to the literature of the field. His five-page foreword helps to place the volume into perspective. An index tops off this excellent University of Nebraska Press Bison Book which will prove to be a useful tool to anyone researching the material culture of the late nineteenth-century U.S. Army.

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The Baltimore Affair. By Joyce S. Goldberg. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986. xiii + 207 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $19.95.)

This fine first book, the outgrowth of an Indiana University doctoral dissertation, recounts the story of the U.S.S. *Baltimore* affair in full detail and seeks to place it within the context of United States diplomatic history. The riot outside the True Blue Saloon in Valparaiso, Chile, on the evening of October 16, 1891, made North American sailors the victims of attack, resulting in a toll of two dead, a number injured, and many arrested. The ensuing crisis brought the United States and Chile to the brink of war and raised important questions about the conduct of United States diplomacy at the end of the nineteenth century.

Joyce S. Goldberg, a historian at the University of Texas, Arlington, has mined the archives in the United States and Chile and has presented the evidence with singular evenhandedness. For example, the controversy over the causes of the violence set North Americans and Chileans at odds as each pinned responsibility on the other. According to the former, the Chileans,

acting out old grievances from the War of the Pacific and the more recent civil war, attacked the mariners without provocation; according to the latter, drunken and insolent behavior by the foreigners brought about the assaults. After summarizing the rival testimonies, she concludes, "the truth will never be known."

The remainder of the volume effectively explores consequences and implications. Among the principal actors, personality quirks contributed to the conduct of diplomacy, especially in the cases of Patrick Egan, the United States minister to Chile, James G. Blaine, the secretary of state, and Benjamin Harrison, the president. Because of rival judgments and insufficient evidence to account for motivation, historians have never agreed whether the United States leaders acted with rash imprudence or with legitimate regard for the interests of a developing great power. Characteristically, Goldberg shows fairness and balance in her assessments.

She also attaches historiographical importance to the study of the *Baltimore* affair because it "contributes significantly to an understanding of the emerging themes of late-nineteenth century U.S. foreign policy." Notable among them, she considers the impacts of political partisanship, sensationalistic journalism, big navy pressures, emotionalism, and the ongoing rivalry with Great Britain over commercial concerns in South America. She adds also to the debate over questions of continuity and change. For some historians, the acquisition of an overseas empire culminated in "a long and continuing trend in U.S. history," while for others, it appeared as the outcome of "a complex, largely unforeseen process." Somewhat ambivalently, she concludes that the *Baltimore* affair constituted "an extraordinarily important episode in U.S. diplomatic history." Ranked with the Hawaiian revolution, the Samoan problem, and the Venezuela boundary dispute, "it fits into the longer sweep of the United States' accumulation of power and influence—the complex of events that marked the prelude to greater assertion of U.S. ambition in the Spanish-American War." The action of 1898 affirmed and confirmed the acquisition of great power, and the *Baltimore* affair marked a step along the way. This useful book tells how and why.

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The Mountain Man Vernacular, Its Historical Roots, Its Linguistic Nature and Its Literary Uses. By Richard C. Poulsen. (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1985. 328 pp. Appendixes, notes, bibliography. $36.00.)

This innovative study is the first effort to examine the language of the mountain men, applying the science of linguistics. In three tightly written, fact-filled, interpretative chapters, the author traces the historic, linguistic, and literary uses of mountain man speech prior to 1849, followed by a like number of chapters which emphasize utilization of this vernacular, first in George F. Ruxton's *Life in the Far West;* then in the post-Ruxton period by such writers as Lewis H. Garrard, Emerson Bennett, William Drummond Stewart, and Mayne Reid; finally up to the modern period as reflected in Harvey Fergusson's

Wolf Song, Stewart E. White's *The Long Rifle*, and A. B. Guthrie Jr.'s *The Big Sky*, "possibly the best novel of the American fur trade yet to appear" (p. 142).

Richard Poulson takes the position that "mountain language has genetic antecedents in Southern folk speech as well as the Ozark dialect" (p. 59). He further opines that "mountain man dialect was a jargon, one which proved confusing to a handful of early observers such as Samuel Parker and Rufus Sage" (p. 63). This may explain in part why Ruxton was led astray along with others. In this respect, Poulson is sharply critical of Ruxton and like writers.

To correct this distorted body of published literature which has long been cited and heralded as reliable sources, the author weaves folklore strains and linguistic methodology to reconstruct what he deems to be a valid mountain man oral style. The end product, fashioned by this insightful scholar, although a "re-creation" in itself, has the ring of authenticity about it, an authenticity underscored by an appendix devoted to a discussion of oral narrative style into which is woven solid documentary support. Lastly, to buttress both his argument and interpretation, Poulson provides a handy dictionary of mountain terms.

In sum, this study has produced an important palliative to what has long been accepted as mountain man speech from Ruxton to the present. The solid and thorough documentation, coupled with careful textual analysis and criticism, bolstered by cautious and judicious reasoning insures the usefulness of this book to historians, linguists, and literary scholars. The net result is a work which casts new light on a highly romanticized subject and blows away the "magpie mythology" of past literary decades. The history of the American West is enriched by it.

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Book Notes

The Wetherills of the Mesa Verde: Autobiography of Benjamin Alfred Wetherill. Edited by Maurine S. Fletcher. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987. 333 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendixes, bibliography, index. $9.95 paper.) Reprint of the 1977 edition.

I Married a Soldier. By Lydia Spencer Lane. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987. 193 pp. Map. $9.95 paper.) This classic memoir was first published in 1893. Darlis A. Miller has contributed an introduction to this new edition.

The Custer Story: The Life and Intimate Letters of General George A. Custer and His Wife Elizabeth. Edited by Marguerite Merington. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987. xii + 339 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, index. $9.95 paper.) Although heavily edited by Merington, these letters nevertheless provide marvelous insights into the lives of the Custers, as well as a vivid depiction of life in the Civil War and frontier army. This Bison Book edition reprints the 1950 imprint.

Voyages of the Steamboat Yellow Stone. By Donald Jackson. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987. xxiv + 182 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendixes, notes, index. $7.95 paper.) Reprint of the 1985 edition.

Ordeal by Hunger: The Story of the Donner Party. By George R. Stewart. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986. xii + 320 pp. Maps, notes, bibliography, index. $7.95 paper.) Reprint of the 1960 edition.

A True Picture of Emigration. By Rebecca Burlend and Edward Burlend. Edited by Milo Milton Quaife. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987. xxxi + 167 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. $5.95 paper.) Reprint of the 1936 edition of this classic account of a woman's life on a midwestern farm.

Historic Ranches of Wyoming. By Judith Hancock Sandoval, T. A. Larson, and Robert Roripaugh. (Casper, Wyoming: Nicolaysen Art Museum and Mountain States Lithographing Company, 1986. 97 pp. Illustrations. $25.00 cloth, $14.95 paper.) This fully illustrated exhibition catalog is based on over 800 interviews and 10,000 photographs taken by Judith Sandoval of 450 Wyoming ranches.

Mister, You Got Yourself a Horse: Tales of Old-Time Horse Trading. Edited by Roger L. Welsch. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987. xi + 207 pp. Bibliography. $5.95.) Reprint of the 1981 edition.

Touring the Old West. By Kent Ruth. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986. 218 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, bibliography, index. $21.95 cloth, $7.95 paper.) Reprint of the 1971 edition. Maps and drawings by Robert MacLean.

American Sportsmen and the Origins of Conservation. By John F. Reiger. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986. 316 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. $11.95 paper.) Revised edition of the book first published in 1975.

Principles and Methods of Reclamation Science with Case Studies from the Arid Southwest. Edited by Charles C. Reith and Loren D. Potter. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986. xix + 224 pp. Illustrations, charts, tables, bibliographies, index. $30.00 cloth, $17.50 paper.)

Pattern and Process in Desert Ecosystems. Edited by W. G. Whitford. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986. ix + 139 pp. Illustrations, charts, tables, bibliographies. $22.50 cloth, $11.95 paper.)

Kid Stark. By Greg Tobin. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1987. 149 pp. $12.95.) A Double D western novel.

Gunfighters. By H. B. Broome. (New York, Doubleday & Company, 1987. 180 pp. $12.95.) A Double D western novel.