

1951

A Handy Guide and More

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Recommended Citation

Bunting, Bainbridge. "A Handy Guide and More." *New Mexico Quarterly* 21, 3 (1951). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol21/iss3/18>

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reviews—of, among others, Thomas Merton's *La montaña de los siete círculos*, Henry James' *El sitio de Londres*, George Orwell's *Mil novecientos ochenta y cuatro*, César Vallejo's *Poesías completas*, and Lavoisier's *Memorias sobre el oxígeno, el calórico y la respiración*, all recently published in Buenos Aires.

Congratulating *Sur* on its twentieth birthday we can only express the hope that the "patience" of its editors will endure, and that in the next twenty years it will continue making available to Latin American readers so much of the best of European and American thought and literature, ever aware, as Camus stated in earlier pages of *Sur*, that "the artist is freedom's witness," that it is the artist who "is on the side of life, not death" and who is "by vocation condemned to understand even the enemy . . . who feels that it is better to be wrong without killing anyone than to be right amidst silence and corpses" and who will go on proving that while "revolutions may be won by violence, they can only be maintained by dialogue."

Bainbridge Bunting

A HANDY GUIDE AND MORE

THE TITLE of Trent Sanford's *The Architecture of the Southwest: Indian, Spanish, American*¹ is somewhat misleading. It is, in reality, a traveler's handbook which would better be entitled "A Guide to the Early Architecture of the Southwest." As such it would announce itself directly as a useful traveling companion with explicit information on highway numbers and road conditions, an aid in locating out-of-the-way buildings which might otherwise be missed. For the visitor interested in relating the architectural development of the region to its

¹ W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1950.

history and changing cultural pattern, Mr. Sanford's book performs a useful service. He includes, for example, a fairly full account of the Spanish explorations in the region which is now within the limits of the United States, and he constantly tries to assist the reader to repopulate the existing structures and ruins with the people who built and early inhabited them.

Although the title implies that the book deals with the three civilizations which have flourished here, the emphasis is on the architecture of the Spanish. Indian building is considered concisely but the discussion of the American builders is a rather hit or miss affair. There is, for example, scarcely mention of twentieth century architecture beyond the revivals of the Spanish style in California in the mid-twenties and the current Spanish-Pueblo revival in New Mexico. The Territorial style is dismissed as degenerate Spanish colonial rather than recognized as a charming though adulterated version of the Greek Revival. Similarly, the author repeats the popular notion that Albuquerque's Huning Castle is a copy of a German castle rather than identifying it as a belated edition of the Italian villa style which flourished along the eastern seaboard in the 1840's. Beyond Santa Fe's Cathedral, the author does not mention the strong French current introduced into New Mexico with the coming of French-born Bishop Lamy, an influence which was responsible for such unfortunate remodeling of various Rio Grande churches as the "cardboard gothic" bell towers added to San Felipe in Albuquerque.

The buildings of the Spanish colonials separate themselves logically into four chronological and geographical divisions: New Mexico, Texas, Arizona and California. A meager architectural analysis of these monuments hardly gets beyond description and the author's passion for dimensions, and, although this may be sufficient for a popular book, it is disappointing not to find some account of how the decorative and structural forms of Mexico and Spain were modified by the material and cultural environment of these outlying regions which we now call the Southwest. If the

author felt such technical considerations exceeded the scope of his book, it is regrettable that he did not pause to refer the reader to sources.

Despite these shortcomings the book succeeds in introducing the visitor to the history and architecture of the Southwest. George Kubler's standard reference, *The Religious Architecture of New Mexico*, although a splendid sociological as well as architectural study, will overwhelm by its detail the reader not already conversant with the subject. Rexford Newcomb's *The Spanish Colonial Architecture of the United States* is profusely illustrated, but it does little more than catalogue architectural features and record building dates. Mr. Sanford's style is enlivening; he tells a story well and humorously, although sometimes this latter quality becomes mere flippancy. The volume has many good photographs which illustrate almost every major building mentioned in the text. An appendix includes a chronological summary of southwestern history as well as four annotated lists of pueblos and missions of the region.

In short, Mr. Sanford's book is ideal for the cross-country traveler or inhabitant of the region who is interested in exploring the architectural monuments of the Southwest. In addition to being a handy guide, well organized and illustrated, it is perhaps the best popular introduction to the colonial architecture of the Southwest yet to appear.