

BOOK REVIEWS

South of Forty. From the Mississippi to the Rio Grande: A Bibliography by Jesse L. Rader (University of Oklahoma Press, 1947, Pp. 336).

Mr. Jesse L. Rader, librarian of the University of Oklahoma since 1909, has for twenty-five years been gathering source material on the American Southwest, with the intention, as the University of Oklahoma Press declares, that, on its publication it may "prove of greatest usefulness to scholars, collectors and booksellers."

Any one who is fortunate enough to receive this book, limited to one thousand volumes, will agree that Mr. Rader has achieved this purpose. Because of its broad range of subject matter, its complete covering of specific territory, (an area defined on the North by the fortieth parallel, on the West by the Rio Grande, on the South by the Gulf of Mexico and on the East by the Mississippi River) and compact accessible arrangement, has offered to students and writers a book all but indispensable on subjects touching this area.

The period covered extends from the time of discovery until 1939. The earliest exploration, immigrations of Indian tribes, individualism of the earliest settlers, sagas shaped by the years, eye witnesses of dynamic events, views of writers of authority—all this and more—are placed at the command of the seeker of source material on this region.

It seems for fear the searching mind might not be served, the author pushes his way to the very outer rim of history of the Southwest and lists almost innumerable individuals who contributed to its history.

A brief presentation of subjects and characters dealt with should not be attempted. The work lists nearly 4000 individual titles. Beginning on page 1, with, "1. Abbott, Aaron. The Lure of the Indian Country, etc.", it ends on page 323 with "3791. Zitkala Sa. Oklahoma's poor, rich Indians, etc." The author in interesting preface dated March 15, 1947, says "No previous attempt has been made towards an exhausting bibliography". Of course to the reviewer or critic no work of this or any other kind is wholly satisfactory. It seems at times that in his long list of almost four thousand names of men and women contributing to the history of the land South of Forty he left out names he might have inserted. In listing under the name of each author it appears he omitted good books, articles by that author. However before too much of such criticism of this kind is offered it might be well in simple justice

to let the author set forth the basis upon which he made this selection.

Mr. Rader, like thousands of Oklahomans, is an Oklahoman by adoption, a Missourian by birth. The University of Oklahoma Press on its tasteful cover announcement of the book says: "Starting as a student assistant in the University of Oklahoma Library in 1904, he became Librarian in 1909 and organized the School of Library Science in 1929. He holds B. A. and M. A. degrees from the University of Oklahoma, has been a member of the Oklahoma Library Commission since 1920 and was one of the founders and charter members of the Oklahoma Library Association. He has edited texts of Sheridan's, 'The Rivals' and Goldsmith's 'She Stoops to Conquer', and collaborated with Edward Everett Dale in preparation of 'Readings in Oklahoma History.'"

Any person or library fortunate enough to get a copy of this work will have something not only beautiful in print and binding but also will be definitely as useful.

Charles Evans,
Oklahoma Historical Society.

Muskogee and Eastern Oklahoma. By Grant Foreman. (Muskogee: The Star Printery, 1947. Pp. 78. Maps.)

When the Muskogee, Oklahoma, Chamber of Commerce, decided to publish a small book that might tell something of the fascinating early history of said city, as well as point out the historical surroundings, they went the whole way, and chose to edit that book, Dr. Grant Foreman, Director Emeritus for Life of the Oklahoma Historical Society; charter member of the Society of American Historians; Fellow of the American Geographical Society; honorary membership in the Mark Twain Society, Phi Beta Kappa at the University of Oklahoma, and honorary degree of Doctor of Literature from the University of Tulsa, and himself a resident of Muskogee.

In this small, neatly bound book, he has lifted from his wealth of historical knowledge, vivid, dramatic scenes of early Eastern Oklahoma history, and presented them in a way that one feels that he must see, and know more about the setting of these stirring events.

For action, there is the danger and excitement of warfare between the different Indian tribes; the coming of the United States Troops, to establish Forts to aid in maintaining order; the establishment of Indian trading posts by such men as Joseph Bogy, the Chouteau's, Nathaniel Pryor, and others.

He describes the huge, flat-bottomed boats, that were built by skilled workmen in the shipyard on the banks of the Verdigris, on which the skins and furs obtained in trade with the Indians, were floated down the river to market.

The coming of the missionaries; the founding of schools and churches; the establishment of the first printing press; names of some of the distinguished visitors in this part of the country included the Naturalist, Thomas Nuttall, George Catlin, the celebrated painter, and the great writer, Washington Irving, and the names of famous generals who commanded troops in the Indian country and events concerning the Civil War, are specifically mentioned.

The Texas Road, the Abilene and the Chisholm trails to well known points in the Indian Territory, as well as the colorful panoramas that once moved over these roads are specifically mentioned. Great herds of cattle driven to market, freighter's wagons, prairie schooners, stage coaches and little mules, with kegs of Spanish coins strapped to their back, and strong Indian women, bending beneath the weight of the green peltries they carried to the trading posts, are described.

Interest is added to the book by the maps which were drawn from data supplied by the author, the early settlements in the region, and from the visible remains of old trails and settlements, and as well as the names of early settlers. The maps will be appreciated by the student of history, as well as the tourist.

By Robert L. Williams,
Durant, Oklahoma

The Cross Timbers. By Carolyn Thomas Foreman. (Muskogee: The Star Printery, Inc., 1947. 123 pp. Map, Notes, and Bibliography.)

Extending northward from central Texas to the Red River, and far beyond it into Oklahoma, are two broad belts of forest known as the Cross Timbers. The more western of these wide strips of woodland, called the Upper Cross Timbers, seems to divide the more rolling and humid area of central and northern Texas and a part of Oklahoma from the wide stretches of dry, level plains extending westward to the base of the Rockies. From the early part of the nineteenth century, or even before, many travelers and explorers have referred to the Cross Timbers but this book gives the first comprehensive account of these regions and of their effect upon those who visited or sought to traverse them. In seven chapters the author describes these wooded areas and gives a colorful account of the various individuals or expeditions that penetrated them on their way farther west, or established settlements, trading posts, or forts near their border or within their limits. Here is told the story of Aaron B. Lewis who in 1831 left Fort Towson for Santa Fe and described the Cross Timbers which he traversed in the course of his journey. The following year Washington Irving, Charles Joseph Latrobe, and Henry L. Ellsworth made their famous journey to the prairies and all three of these men have left us vivid descriptions of their ex-

periences in crossing this "iron bound region" of the Cross Timbers. Two years later, or in 1834, the artist, George Catlin, accompanied the Dodge-Leavenworth expedition and both he and Lieutenant Thompson B. Wheelock, an army officer with the expedition, wrote interesting accounts of this "timbered thicket" and the difficulty of traversing it with "fifty litters in our train; men in them extremely sick." Many other accounts are given of expeditions that traversed the Cross Timbers as well as of the activities of the army or of settlers in or near them. These include an account of the establishment of Camp Holmes, the Gregg and Kendall expeditions through the Cross Timbers, Randolph B. Marcy's expeditions, and the reports on these wooded areas made by Whipple, Marcy, Cooper, and Edward F. Beale. To nearly all of those who sought to penetrate them the Cross Timbers proved a difficult barrier and almost every traveler breathed a sigh of relief when he emerged from these gloomy forests upon the open prairie. This book, though small, is a significant contribution to the historical literature of the Southwest. Its value is considerably enhanced by the map in the back of the volume. To the casual observer, it might appear that the wooded area extending north from the Canadian just east of Norman and Oklahoma City to a point far beyond Guthrie is really an extension of the Cross Timbers and in consequence, this strip of forest might logically be shown as extending considerably farther north. This reviewer whose boyhood was spent on a farm at the western edge of the lower Cross Timbers would have welcomed some account of the life of the people of this wooded area during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The purpose of the author, however, was only to give a description of this interesting region and of its significance in the history of the Southwest, and in this she has succeeded admirably. Perhaps she, or some other writer, may in the future give us an account of the social and economic life of the people who have occupied the Cross Timbers region as contrasted with that of those residing beyond its borders on the open prairie. Such a study could hardly fail to prove interesting and would be a fitting sequel to this delightful little volume.

Edward Everett Dale
University of Oklahoma