WESTERNERS
LOS ANGELES CORRAL
The Branding Iron
J. GOODMAN

WINTER 2004 LOS ANGELES CORRAL NUMBER 238

2000 Commemorative Coin. Courtesy of author.

Out of a Few Dry Bones: The Sacagawea Myth and Historical Scholarship

by Eric Greenberg
2004 Student Essay Winner

In 1976, medical doctor and amateur Lewis and Clark historian, E.G.Chuinard, writing in the summer edition of *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* claimed that Sacagawea was "the best known and most written about Indian woman in American history." If true, Chuinard's claim reveals little about the significance of Sacagawea's celebrity. Indeed, America's knowledge of its aboriginal inhabitants is so poor, that if you asked an American to name merely *one* Indian woman they would, almost invariably, alight on either Pocohantas—of Jamestown, Virginia fame—or Sacagawea of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Nevertheless, the image of Sacagawea looms large on the American consciousness. According to an epigraph in Ella Clark's book, *Sacagawea of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, from the 1976 edition *of Colliers Encyclopedia* "Sacajawea has become a national heroine;

(Continued on page 3)

THE BRANDING IRON
The Westerners Los Angeles Corral
Published Quarterly in
Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter
OFFICERS 2004

Address for Exchanges & Material Submitted for Publication:
The Publications Editor, Ronald C. Woolsey
395 Cliff Dr. #100, Pasadena, CA 91107
The Branding Iron solicits articles of 2,500 words or less, dealing with every phase of the Old West. Contributions from members and friends welcomed
Publication Design & Layout by Katherine Tolford

EDITOR'S CORNER

Both of the articles in this issue deal with the Lewis and Clark expedition, 1804-1806, although each in a somewhat peripheral manner.

The long student essay on Sacajawea debunks the myth of the famous "Bird Woman." Remember the Sacajawea dollar coins issued by the United States Mint that were so much like a quarter in that the slot machines in Las Vegas had a terrible time trying to figure out what was what? Whatever happened to those coins? Sacajawea has had a rough go in recent years. In 1980, the magazine, *The American West*, in its March/April issue published an article entitled, "A Charbonneau Family Portrait," by Irving W. Anderson, which stated essentially the same point as the student essay. The point being that with the publication of Grace Hebbard's book on Sacajawea in 1933 the myth of Sacajawea became an integral part of most American History textbooks. Due to the fact that Dr. Hebbard was an academic with apparently good credentials and that people wanted to believe the myth, high school students throughout America learned how the "Bird Woman" pointed the way for Lewis and Clark and that without her help they would have certainly never found their way to the Pacific and back. This is a classic example of bad history repeated until it takes on the veil of truth. Obviously our government would never indulge in such deceptions.

The second article is a letter written by Corral member Art Cobery describing his attendance at the OCTA convention in Vancouver, Washington last year. The Oregon/California Trails Association is an excellent organization and deserves our support. We envy you, Art, and wish we could have been there.

Tom Tefft
TRTefft@aol.com
38771 Nyasa Dr.
Palm Desert, CA 92211

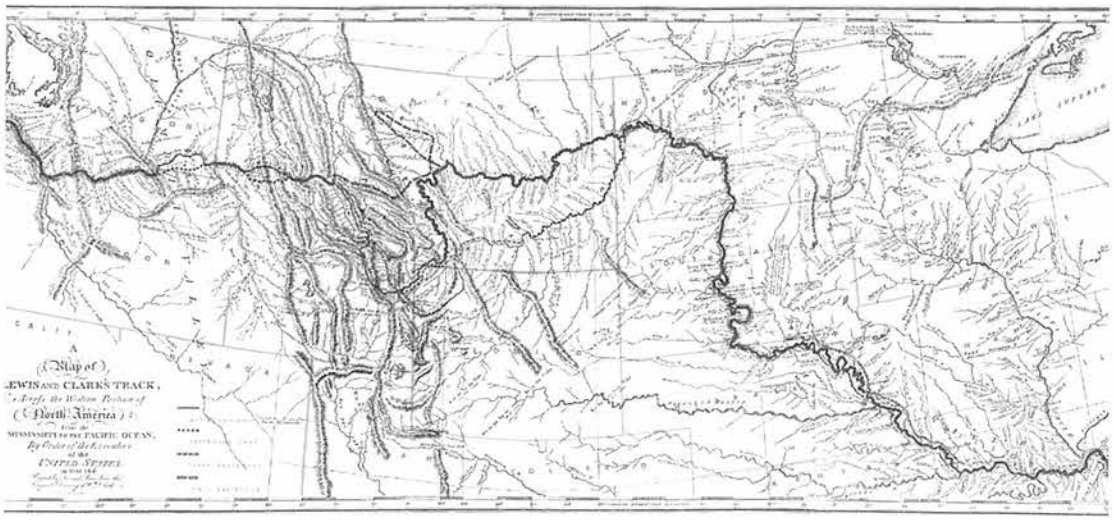
Ron Woolsey
rcwoolsey@yahoo.com
395 Cliff Dr. #100,
Pasadena, CA 91107

there are more statues to her than any other American woman." The prominence given "The Bird Woman" in American popular culture also extends to written histories about
her life and her role in Lewis and Clark's expedition. As prominent Lewis and Clark historian, Gary Moulton noted, in a field of study filled to overflowing with volumes on every conceivable aspect of the journey, "Sacagawea has probably received more attention than any other member of the expedition, save the captains." Unfortunately, an abundance of historical writings on a subject guarantees neither quality nor accuracy. In fact, an examination of the scholarship on Sacagawea reveals a very uneven field of study based on two myths posing as history, both of which developed approximately a century after the completion of the expedition. These myths (though frequently discredited) proved remarkably resonant throughout most of the twentieth-century until a few definitive studies on both the expedition, and Sacagawea reinforced a more empirical, historically accurate portrayal of the sole female member of the Corps of Discovery.

Historians writing about Sacagawea can generally be placed in one of two schools, expeditionists and Sacagaweists. Expeditionist authors write general studies about the expedition and, therefore, incorporate Sacagawea into their narrative and analysis. Sacagaweists write monographs about Sacagawea. Their works may begin prior to the Bird Woman's joining the expedition, and, in all instances, they extend beyond the completion of her work with Lewis and Clark in a zealous (some might say misguided) effort to determine her post-expedition existence and affix an exact date to her death. It is interesting to note that most Sacagaweists are women. While this fact does suggest some gender identification with the sole female member of the Corps of Discovery, it does not lend credence to Bernard Devoto's wild assertion that, "Almost every woman who has written about her has become Sacajawea in her inner reverie." Despite their differences, both schools fashioned their own Sacagawean myths. The expeditionist legend overemphasized the Bird Woman's importance to the journey, while the Sacagaweist version claimed that Sacagawea lived well beyond the historically accepted date of her death, in essence asserting that her post-expedition life is a subject worthy of serious historic debate.

National interest in the Lewis and Clark expedition, and Sacagawea, lay dormant for nearly a century after its completion until the nation's centenary celebration of the Louisiana Purchase at the St. Louis Exposition of 1904 (originally scheduled for 1903) and the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition of 1905 in Portland, Oregon. Three years prior to the 1905 celebration, however, Clackamas County Oregon resident, Eva Emery Dye, published, *The Conquest: "The True Story of Lewis and Clark,"* an historical romance novel which gave birth to the expeditionist, Sacagawean myth that continues to pervade American popular culture. The novel, and Dye's mythic interpretation of the Bird Woman, might have drifted off into obscurity were it not for the suffragist aspirations of its author. Eva Emery Dye's romantic vision of Sacagawea compelled her to raise funds for the creation of a Sacagawea statue in conjunction with the Lewis and Clark Exposition and the annual meeting of the National American Woman's Suffrage Association (NAWSA) also held in Portland in 1905. The subsequent unveiling of the statue proved a veritable "who's who" of suffragettes from all over America including Susan B. Anthony herself and NAWSA president, Dr. Ann Howard Shaw. Shaw's speech at the unveiling—later published in the *Women's Journal*—helped reinforce the mythic themes laid out in Dye's novel. She concluded her oration with a tribute linking Sacagawea's supposed position as expedition guide to the role suffragettes would need to play in order to attain equal rights:

> *[P]atient and motherly woman, we bow our hearts to do you honor!... May we the daughters of an alien race...learn the lessons of calm endurance, of patient persistence and unfaltering courage exemplified in your life, in our*



Lewis and Clark Trail Map (circa 1880's). Courtesy of the author.

> *efforts to lead men through the Pass of justice, which goes over the mountains of prejudice and conservatism to the broad land of perfect freedom of a true republic[...]*

The Sacagaweist myth actually formed within a few years of Dye's book with the publication of an article in the September 1907 issue of the *Journal of American History* (that periodical's inaugural year). The article was written by a forty-six year old Professor of Political Economy at the University of Wyoming, Grace Raymond Hebbard. Dr. Hebbard proved quite an accomplished woman for her time. She was the first woman admitted to the Wyoming Bar Association, as well as the University of Wyoming's first librarian, and served as a school trustee for more than a dozen years. Like many Americans, Hebbard's initial interest in Sacagawea grew out of the renewed national curiosity in the Lewis and Clark expedition created by the 1904 St. Louis Exposition. Hebbard confessed that her exposure to the story of the Bird Woman created an "interest in the career of that remarkable woman...[that] continued un-abated for nearly thirty years." Her passion compelled Hebbard to, in her words, "rescue Sacajawea from the semi-oblivion into which her name had fallen and to give her a legitimate place in the history of the great northwest." This romantic calling to save the Bird Woman from historic obscurity resulted in her 1907 article. In order to reinforce the expeditionist myth of Sacagawea as the all-knowing guide, Hebbard literally invented passages, stating for example that:

> *[A]fter travelling many days, no one of the expedition knew where he was or the true direction to pursue, the party depended entirely upon the instincts and the guidance of the Indian woman. The homing bird knew the direction.*

Over her three decades of work on Sacagawea, Hebbard weaned herself from the most obvious falsehoods in Dye's novel. The culmination of her work, a 1933 book entitled, *Sacajawea: A guide and interpreter of the Lewis and Clark expedition, with an account of the travels of Toussaint Charbonneau. and of Jean Baptiste the expedition papoose,* reveals little of the traditional Sacagawean myths. But in her zeal to bring to life one of history's forgotten names, Hebbard created her own myth—a legend that, because of the academic credentials of its author, frequently passes for historic fact.

Structurally, Hebbard's book presents the traditional model of the Sacagaweist School. After her grand introduction, in which she professed her admiration for the Bird Woman, explained her methodology (which extensively utilizes oral histories), and gave a brief account of the history of the

Lewis and Clark Journals, she proceeded to examine those few sections of the expedition writings that mention Sacagawea. Her examination of Sacagawea's role in the journey actually proves quite restrained. While she acknowledged Dye's assistance in her preface, Hebbard's book does not suggest that the Bird Woman single handedly guided a band of brave, but ignorant, white men through the Rockies. In essence she allowed the journal entries to speak for themselves. Unfortunately, subsequent sections of the book prove less restrained. In an effort to create a fully realized vision of the Bird Woman, Dr. Hebbard examined information of little historic importance, or accuracy. She dedicated an entire chapter to the life of Sacagawea's children, an appendix questioning the proper pronunciation and meaning of her name (Sacagawea—Bird Woman, or Sacajawea—Boat Launcher), and even wrote six pages about the location of various Sacagawea memorials. Yet these antiquarian pursuits pale in comparison to the main thrust of Hebbard's book, which was to prove (despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary) that Sacagawea did not die in December of 1812, as generally believed, but instead lived another seventy-two years, dying on April 9, 1884 at the Wind River Reservation in Wind River, Wyoming.

Hebbard's book was very poorly received by scholars. In a September 1933 review of the book Milo Quaife, writing in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* noted that Dr. Hebbard's work had been called into question nine years earlier by Doanne Robertson in volume twelve of the South Dakota Historical Collections. Quaife added that despite skillfully marshalling her evidence, Hebbard's work contained, "Errors of detail...too frequent to be compatible with a high order of historical workmanship, or of historical editing." Whether or not Dr. Hebbard's thesis on the date of Sacagawea's death was correct, the very fact that she felt compelled to study the Bird Woman's life beyond the Lewis and Clark expedition is, in fact, the central flaw of all Sacagawean monographs. Once Sacagawea left the Corps of Discovery she ceased to possess any true historical importance. Furthermore, no journal entries about the Bird Woman exist beyond the Captain's 1806 departure from Fort Mandan, effectively ending all reliable primary source documentation about her. Despite this impediment, Sacagaweists continued the work of Dr. Hebbard into the 1970s.

Sacagawea and Child. Artist Tom Saubert. Courtesy of author.

Both Dye's and Hebbard's work exerted tremendous influence on both popular perceptions of, and scholarship on, Sacagawea, but Dr. Hebbard's book inspired greater study than did Dye's. As Irving Anderson, vice president of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, noted in 1980, "Hebbard's writings have served as the popular authority on Sacagawea in libraries and schools throughout the world." That is not to say that a majority of academics favored these mythic constructions. By the last third of the twentieth-century, the publication of Harold Howard's monograph entitled, *Sacajawea*, and James Ronda's seminal expeditionist work, *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians*—would debunk the Sacagaweist and expeditionist myths.

Structurally, Harold P. Howard's 1971 book, *Sacajawea* closely resembles Hebbard's 1933 study. Howard began his work with an examination of journal accounts to establish Sacagawea's true role on the journey, fol-

Sacagawea Statue located in Bismark, North Dakota. Courtesy of the author.

lowed by several chapters focused on post-expedition minutiae including a character sketch of Sacagawea's husband, Toussaint Charbonneau, her son, Jean Baptiste, and an examination of the two conflicting accounts concerning the date of her death (1812 or 1884). He was aided in his study, however, by a new piece of evidence discovered after Hebbard's death. According to Howard,

> *In 1955 a notebook belonging to [William] Clark was discovered. The book was apparently used by Clark between 1825 and 1828. On the outside of the book, in his writing, appears a list of names of members of the expedition, with notations about what happened to each one after the journey or his residence at the time the notes were made. Beside Sacajawea's name, which Clark spelled, "Sacajaweau," he wrote one word: "Dead."*

Faced with such evidence Howard concluded that, though native "oral traditions" may insist that the Bird Woman lived another seventy-two years, in all likelihood, Sacagawea died at Fort Manuel in December of 1812. Even more striking than Howard's acceptance of Sacagawea's 1812 death is his contention that "whether Sacajawea died in her twenties...or at an old age.... In a sense her chapter in history ended in 1806, with the successful conclusion of the Lewis and Clark expedition." His recognition of this fact, in essence, rejects the entire Sacagaweist School, debunking Hebbard's attempts to rescue Sacagawea from the depths of obscurity by constructing an unknowable, post-expedition life for the Bird Woman. His closing sentences helped return Sacagawea to her significant, if somewhat less dramatic, role on the expedition. Howard stated that, "Perhaps the most enduring picture that can be conjured up of this remarkable woman is of an Indian girl bearing a baby on her back, gathering berries along the riverbank..."

Several academic articles from the 1970s-1980s similarly debunked Hebbard's Sacagaweist legend, but Howard's *Sacajawea* is generally touted as the best book length treatment of the subject. Scholars overwhelmingly rejected a 1979 book, Ella E. Clark's and Margot Edmonds' *Sacagawea of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, that attempted to reinvigorate the myth. Clark and Edmonds' book presented some excellent historiographic analysis, but their insistence that, "based on the recorded investigations of Dr. Charles Eastman ... [they could] certify that she [Sacagawea] lived to an old age and died in 1884," resulted in widespread criticism, including Gary Moulton's 1998 characterization of their piece as, "a regrettable book."

Unlike Hebbard's myth, the expeditionist fable of Sacagawea had been widely discredited for years. Those scholars familiar with the journals knew first hand that no evidence existed to support Dye's account. But one book in particular, James Ronda's 1984 study entitled, *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians* effectively put to rest any lingering doubts about Sacagawea's role on the Lewis and Clark expedition. Ronda studied the expedition as an ethnographic history of extended cross-cultural contact. He asserted that his book intended to restore the voices

of those Native Americans that assisted the captains in their journey so that, "the story of the expedition and the nation not be half-told." One of the most interesting aspects of Ronda's book is the minimal amount of attention paid to Sacagawea. The author addressed this scarcity in an appendix entitled, *A Note on Sacagawea.* Here, Ronda observed that in a book dedicated to the role Indians played on the Lewis and Clark expedition, "Readers...will undoubtedly wonder why the most famous Indian associated with ...the expedition is noted so infrequently." The author then went on to debunk much of Dye's myth of Sacagawea as *"the guide"* of the Corps of Discovery, noting the Bird Woman was, "Not as important as George Drouillard or John Ordoway ... [still she] did make significant contributions to the expedition's success." Ronda divided Sacagawea's contributions into four categories, suggesting that, 1) her Shoshone origins helped the captains negotiate for needed supplies (especially horses), 2) her ability to speak Shoshone allowed her to interpret even with other tribes (since many of these groups possessed Shoshone prisoners), 3) her familiarity with certain regions enabled her to recognize a few landmarks, and 4) the presence of a woman and child on the journey signaled to the Indians the expedition was not a war party.

The publications of Howard's and Ronda's works appear to have ended the proliferation of Dye's and Hebbard's myths. Both Stephen Ambrose's sentimental, 1996 account of the expedition, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis. Thomas Jefferson, And The Opening Of The American West,* and Ken Burns' beautifully filmed, 1997 documentary, "Lewis and Clark: The Journey of the Corps of Discovery," closely followed Ronda's interpretation of Sacagawea's role. Even Donna Kessler's 1996 Sacagawean monograph, *The Making of Sacagawea: A Euro-American Legend,* eschewed the traditional structure of a Sacagaweist book, employing instead post-modern textual analysis to determine the origin, and document the proliferation of, twentieth-century, mythic accounts of the Bird Woman. But legends die hard. Even now, two centuries after their mission, the Lewis and Clark expedi-

Lewis and Clark Trail. Courtesy of author.

tion continues to offer the nation a mythic vision of our westward expansion. The journey presents a legend of discovery without conquest, of manifest destiny devoid of its accompanying racism, blood, gore, and ecological destruction, of a beneficent nation at peace with its indigenous inhabitants. Eva Emery Dye and Grace Raymond Hebbard believed in the westering myth. Their Sacagawea, whether native suffragette or hundred-year-old "noble savage," transcended her role as "the other," becoming instead the innocent, yet capable, individual that personified the American vision of the pioneers. Faced with such powerful symbols, it seems unlikely that we have seen the last Sacagawean myth. Perhaps she will represent some vision of inherent innocence in our current drive towards global hegemony, or, if our course leads to failure, she might symbolically *guide* the country to some "native vision" of humility. Whatever the myth, the only facts we can truly know about the Bird Woman are that, in 1804, she became the only female member of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Her presence on the journey proved useful, and when she returned to Fort Mandan in 1806, her historic role ended.

Suggested Readings

Ambrose, Stephen. *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis. Thomas Jefferson, And The Opening Of The American West.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.

Clark, Ella E. and Margot Edmonds. *Sacagawea of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.

DeVoto, Bernard. *The Course of Empire.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952.

Dye, Eva Emery. *The Conquest: The True Story of Lewis and Clark.* Chicago: A.G. McClurg & Company, 1902.

Hebbard, Grace Raymond. *Sacajawea: A guide and interpreter of the Lewis and Clark expedition, with an account of the travels of Toussaint Charbonneau, and of Jean Baptiste the expedition papoose.* Glendale: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1957.

Howard, Harold P. *Sacajawea.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971.

Kessler, Donna J. *The Making Of Sacagawea: A Euro-American Legend.* Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1996.

Moulton, Gary E. "On Reading Lewis and Clark: The Last Twenty Years." In *Voyages of Discovery: Essays on the Lewis and Clark Expedition.* Edited by, and with introduction and afterword by James Ronda. Helena: Montana Historical Press, 1998.

_____ed. *The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, vol. 2 August 30, 1803-August 24, 1804.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986.

Ronda, James. *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984.

Log Wagon reportedly made from wood of Ezra Meeker's discarded wagon. Courtesy of Art Cobery.

Along The Oregon Trail

The following letter was submitted by Corral member Art Cobery. Art and his wife recently attended the Oregon, California Trails Association Convention. The subject is of particular interest since our student article indirectly concerns the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Art's letter and photos are herewith printed as a timely anecdote to our understanding of the Corps of Discovery.

Dear Ron and Tom:

We attended the Oregon, California Trails Association Convention (August 8-15) at Vancouver, Washington. The Northwest Chapter of the OCTA organized the event which included a variety of speakers and interesting tours of Fort Vancouver and the Columbia River Gorge. Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery received special attention since 1804 marked the bicentennial of that remarkable event. There was also focus on the Chinookan Nations who lived along the Columbia River for thousands of years. Tour guide Pat Courtney Gold offered an indigenous view of their rich culture and how the Corps of Discovery "gravely misunderstood" the Chinookan people.

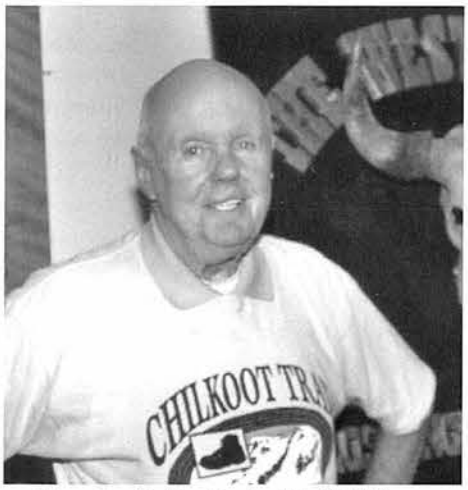
Attention was also given to the discovery of the Columbia River by Captain Robert Grap in 1792, as well as the arrival and departure of the Astorians in 1811 and 1812. It was the returning Astorians who discovered what was to become of the Oregon Trail in the 1830s. The arrival of the Hudson Bay Company and the establishment of Fort Vancouver in 1829 proved to be both a help and a hindrance to the thousands of American immigrants making their way into the fertile Willamette Valley. A British doctor, John McLoughlin, gave the new arrivals ample assistance from his post at Fort Vancouver. Being a "company man," he made certain they settled south of the Columbia River since Great Britain claimed the territory to the north. After the English agreed to the 49th parallel settlement in 1846, Dr. McLoughlin remained and became the founder of Oregon City, where he eventually attained United States citizenship. He richly deserved the title "Father of Oregon." The statues of McLouglin and the missionary, Jason Lee, represent Oregon at Congress in Statuary Hall, Washington D.C.

We particularly enjoyed "Re-enactors night," featuring Tom Laidlaw as "William Cannon," the first American at Fort Vancouver, along with Carl Allen playing Woodie Guthrie and singing Columbia River songs of the 1930s. A grand barbecue was held at the Pearson Air Museum on the grounds of Fort Vancouver where we witnessed another colorful reenactment of Ezra Meeker who came over the Oregon Trail in 1843. At the age of seventy-six Meeker decided to retrace his journey in reverse with a typical wagon drawn by two oxen. In the process he raised funds and established markers along the trail, including a large one at South Pass. This journey of trail preservation was to last twenty-two years.

See you at the next Westerners dinner.

—Art

Dinner Party and "local color" at Fort Vancouver. Courtesy of Art Cobery.



Photograph by Froy Tiscarelio.

November Meeting Speaker John W. Robinson

November Meeting

John W. Robinson, former sheriff and editor of Brand Book 22 spoke at the November meeting on the subject entitled "The Klondike Gold Rush - The Last Great Gold Rush". Included in his presentation were slides showing events which occurred at the time, as well as photos from his trips to the region.

In 1896, Canadian Robert Henderson found a small amount of gold in the Klondike River area, but felt it was not profitable. The larger strike was discovered by American George W. Carmack at Rabbit Creek (renamed Eldorado Creek) and the Rush was on. The town of Dawson City sprang up.

Gold panned from the Klondike River area, coming down on ships for processing, only fed more excitement, leading to more people rushing to the Yukon River. By 1898, 50,000 people were in the Dawson City and Bonanza Creek area.

Although the inland passage route to Dawson City was available, most miners chose White Pass or the Chilkoot Pass, two treacherous routes. Each miner needed to carry 1000 pounds of supplies and provisions to get over the passes to reach Lake Bennett at their northern terminus. John showed slides of the long lines of miners climbing the pass on foot with their supplies, taking as much of their supplies as they could carry at one time, leaving them in the snow, sliding back down the trail to gather another load, and so on until all 1000 pounds were at the top. Beasts of burden were used, if available: oxen, dogs, even sheep. Other men towed their sleds. Of the many animals used, all but perhaps a handful of dogs perished on the way. Once at Lake Bennett, the miners camped out and started building rafts so that once the ice broke they could cross the lake and continue on an arduous journey of over 400 miles on lakes and rivers to Dawson City, to fulfill their dreams of riches.

Following slides showing pictures of the event at the time, John displayed slides taken from his two trips over the Chilkoot Pass to Lake Bennett and back. Although more modern conveniences were available, the trip looked like no easy task.

December Meeting

Historian Remi Nadeau took corral members on a journey to the Mother Lode Country of California. Remi is author of several works on California history, and he taught for years on the college level. The presentation was illustrated by dozens of photographs that span nearly six decades of visual history of the region.

Professor Nadeau began his presentation with a discussion of early gold discoveries, including the often misunderstood chronology dating to the 1842 find in Francisquito Canyon, the James Marshall discovery in January 1848, and a later gold rush of 1853. The various routes to the gold country were highlighted, including the protracted Cape Horn voyage and sea-land-sea route across the disease-infected Isthmus of Panama. Remi also noted the international aspect of the gold rush in terms of Chinese, Latin American, and European immigrants who came to California in search of riches and opportunity.

Corral members were treated to a variety of slides that documented the mines at Angel's Camp and Murphy's, coupled with

Photograph by Froy Tiscareño.

December Meeting Speaker Remi Nadeau

the boom towns such as Coloma, Placerville, Sonora, and Jamestown. Placerville, known for vigilante lynchings, also was a stage-coach stop for Horace Greeley on his trip west in 1859.

During the 1850s, the gold rush spawned urban growth, industrial activity, along with resultant problems of crime and extralegal responses. Professor Nadeau noted the railroad construction from Sacramento to Folsom, hard rock and hydraulic mining, and the various claim disputes in Mariposa County, especially those involving John C. Fremont and the Merced Mining Company. Of course, the notorious Joaquin Murietta and Three-fingered Jack were two of the most celebrated bandits of that era. Remi noted that far too many references to Murietta have been claimed over the years, creating a celebrity status throughout the state when, in fact, Joaquin's exploits were most likely limited to Calavares and El Dorado counties during the early 1850s.

With a quaint look back in time, Remi Nadeau offered a gold rush ambiance to a winter evening of fine food and Christmas goodwill to all.

The Heart Of New Mexico

It had been a long, tough ride
I couldn't stay in the saddle if I tried
I tied Old Bamey to a big oak tree
Looked to see what I might see

Knew I was close to Blazer's Mill
Near Mescalero just over the hill
Where Buckshot Roberts met his fate
And Regulators kept a shoot-out date

Tomorrow I'd have to decide
Which is the way that I should ride?
The Rio Ruidoso to Dowlin's Mill?
Did that mean hill after weary hill?

Or the Hondo Valley to Resell
That could be a better sell
Fort Sumner to the Pecos River Trail?
I could get there by dusk without fail

Good Lord, what's this all about?
Seven River's Crossing, Los Portolos Spring Hideout?
Bamey, we're in the heart of New Mexico
Tomorrow <u>you</u> decide which way to go !!!!

—Loren Wendt

Photograph by Art Cobery.

Jerry Selmer and Michael Patris doing their best to make the auction a success.

Photograph by Art Cobery.

John Robinson and Bill Warren.

Rendezvous 2004

The October gala was again held at the wonderful historic late-nineteenth century home of Ramon and Mary Ann Otero. Over seventy members attended the Rendezvous and the book and art auction was a success due to the work of Hugh Tolford, Jerry Selmer, and Loren Wendt. Photography was provided by Art Cobery. Michael Patris, Paul Rippens, Mike Gallucci, and Eric Nelson were among the many corral members who graciously volunteered their time and energy in making the Rendezvous a memorable event. Andrew Dagosta generously donated several paintings for auction and raffle. Of course, Sheriff Gary Turner did his best to keep the "watering hole" stocked with plenty of spirits. Elmer Taylor was properly honored for his many years of involvement with the Los Angeles Westerners. Over the years, Elmer has shared his travel experiences in the West and memorabilia from the many trips across Arizona and New Mexico, along with his time and talents in service to the corral, including a past tenure as sheriff. The auction was poignant, since many items from the late Mary Gormly's Native American art and book collection were made available for auction.

Many thanks to all corral members who made the 2004 Rendezvous a great success.

Photograph by Art Cobery.

Andrew Dagosta and Art Cobery.

Photograph by Art Cobery.

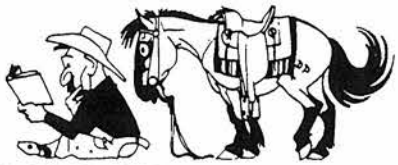
Gary Turner and Honoree Elmer Taylor.

Photograph by Art Cobery.

Tom Bent at the Piano Bar.

Photograph by Art Cobery.

Is that really water in Abe's bottle?



DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL . . .

BOB BLEW has undertaken a variety of projects for the Autry Museum and the Historical Society of Southern California. He spent several months working on a web site index for the *Southern California Quarterly*, and is finishing an index for the Autry Museum. In addition, Bob is also working on an updated index for *The Branding Iron*, which will be a wonderful addition to our organization.

JAN PORTER is active in high school curriculum. She recently participated in an International Baccalaureate training conference for Visual Arts. Jan also earned a grant from the Pasadena Educational Foundation to attend the California Art Educators Association Conference. She is especially proud that one of her students at Blair High School won first place in the Martin Luther King Art and Essay contest. Jan is currently working on a series of pastel paintings to submit to the Pastel Society of America.

In December, **ABE HOFFMAN** received the "North Star" Award for teaching from Los Angeles Valley College. This commendation recognizes a teacher's efforts in helping students in their studies.

Not only is **PAUL RIPPENS** our new sheriff of the Los Angeles Corral, but he continues to work with the San Dimas Corral of Westerners as their newsletter editor. Paul recently gave a program on Heninger Flats to the Crescenta Valley Historical Society. In January, he presented a program on the health of our forests to the Altadena Historical Society, and a new power point program on Lewis and Clark to the Masonic Lodge in Arcadia, and a presentation to the La Verne Friends of the Library on the Saint Francis Dam.

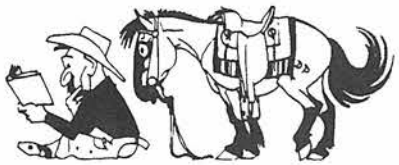
Directory Changes

Address Changes
William Escherich
391 Taylor Drive
Claremont, CA 91711

Dick & Linda Meyers
230 Wells Fargo Drive
Jacksonville, OR 97530

New Member
Richard G. Doyle, M.D.
8525 Louise Avenue
Northridge, CA 91325

Joan Newbro
534 E. Cornell Drive
Burbank, CA 91504



DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL ...

WILL THRALL AND THE SAN GABRIELS: *A Man to Match the Mountains*, by Ronald C. Woolsey. San Diego: Sunbelt Publications, 2004. 152 pp. Illustrations, Index, Notes and foreword by John W. Robinson. ISBN 0-916251-67-5. Paperback cover, $14.95. Sunbelt Publications, Inc. P.O. Box 191126, San Diego, CA 92159-1126. (619) 258-4911.

During my thirty-seven years working in the mountains of Los Angeles County, I had heard the name *"Will Thrall"* mentioned many times. As I became friends with John Robinson and Willis Osborne, I again heard the name and many references to *"Trails Magazine,"* but I never took the time to find out more about this person -*Thrall.* However, in reading Ron Woolsey's book about this very interesting person, I soon found out what I had been missing.

Will Thrall had a passion for the mountains we take for granted as just part of our backyard. He hiked virtually all the canyons and peaks, always searching for more ideas for his writings and for an opportunity to take another picture of the mountains he loved so much. He became an activist in the preservation of our mountains and yet, encouraged visitors to come see what he had seen and to enjoy being outdoors and to be with nature.

Thrall held a variety of jobs, seemingly never being able to make enough to make ends meet, but always found time to enjoy his time in the mountains. In 1933, he started the Mountain Information Service under the direction of the Superintendent of the Los Angeles County Department of Recreation Camps and Playgrounds, and as such, became editor of his *"Trails Magazine."* He prompted his friends, such as Glen Dawson, to write articles for his magazine, which soon found a wide audience. Thrall, often outspoken, angered the County Board of Supervisors with opposition to a county plan to construct a road through San Gabriel Canyon. Even though he backed down on his opposition to the plan, the funding for his job and the Mountain Information Service was soon removed from the budget and his "Trails Magazine" would soon end. The final edition of this fine magazine was released in the spring of 1939, fittingly, with Will Thrall on the cover.

The number of books on the mountains of southern California are many, but *"Will Thrall and the San Gabriels"* brings a new dimension to the collection. If you love the outdoors and the mountains of Los Angeles County, add this book to you collection. You will not be disappointed.

—Paul H. Rippens

THE NOT SO WILD WEST: *Property Rights on the Frontier*, by Terry L. Anderson and Peter J. Hill. Stanford University Press, 2004. 263 pp., cloth, $24.95.

This book could be referred to appropriately as a text on the economics of Western America and, as such, contains much technical economic material. The premise of the book is that of the evolution of the West into institutional entrepreneurship, i.e. collective action by groups organized to reduce costs and increase efficiency in the use of natural resources in the West.

The authors discuss the various groups of individuals in the West, attempting to show why the West was "not so wild" as depicted by Hollywood and some historians. The groups discussed include the Indians, trappers, hunters, miners, wagon trains, cattlemen, and land claimants.

As examples of their theory, the authors discussed how Indians developed communal and individual use rules for lands which they occupied or property rights which they

used. In the case of fur trappers and hunters, even though there were no property rights in wildlife and, therefore, no ownership rights in such resources or in the land on which the wildlife lived, trappers and hunters coexisted among themselves by informal agreement. Miners rapidly established and enforced property rights through rules for peacefully establishing claims and resolving disputes. Wagon train members created rules governing the pooling of responsibilities, combining resources, and arranging for dispute resolution. Cattlemen established their own rules concerning brands, trail drives, law enforcement, use of ranges, and cattle sales. Finally, the authors discussed the means by which land was claimed privately through associations and "land clubs" before enactment of Homestead Acts.

Perhaps the West was not so wild if one considers the arguments posed by the authors. On the other hand, it could be argued that the groups of individuals discussed, while driven economically, sought overall mutual protection against outside forces and interests, thereby forming enclaves of their own within that same "Wild, Wild West". It was the sheer numbers of people moving West to establish new lives which actually overcame the wildness of the West. Notwithstanding, for the reader less motivated by economic theory, the descriptions of life and times within the groups discussed are worth the reading.

—Eric A. Nelson

ALONG THE OLD ROADS: *A History of that Portion of Southern California that became Riverside County*, 1772-1893, by Steve Lech. Published by author, 2004. 902 pp., photos, maps. Hardcover, $38 + $5 for shipping. Order from Steve Lech, P.O. Box 21168, Riverside, CA 92516-1168.

Riverside County stretches over a good portion of southern California, from Corona eastward through Riverside, Banning, Palm Springs, and Indio to Blythe on the Colorado River. Established in 1893, Riverside was the 55th of 58 counties created in California. In southern California, only Imperial County, founded in 1907, is more recent.

Steve Lech's *Along the Old Roads* is a massive, detailed, well researched study of the region from Spanish times to 1893. The pioneering *entrada* of Pedro Fages in 1772 and Juan Bautista de Anza's two expeditions in 1774 and 1775-76 are well covered. Although there were no Franciscan missions in the immediate area, both Missions San Gabriel and San Luis Rey maintained a number of outlying cattle ranches in the inland area: San Bernardino, Jurupa, San Gorgonio, Temecula, and San Jacinto were the major ones. The Mexican era saw a great number of land grants made from all or parts of the ex-mission ranches. Settlers from New Mexico formed the first community in the area, Politana, later moved to the banks of the Santa Ana River, just northwest of present-day Riverside and known as Agua Mansa, in 1844-45.

With the American conquest, the development of what later became Riverside County accelerated. A sprinkling of settlers, mostly ranchers along with a few miners, came to the San Jacinto, Anza, and Menefee valleys in the 1860s. The first real community was San Jacinto, credited to Proko Akimo, a Siberian exile who founded a trading post/store around 1868. Riverside, which became the largest community and later the county seat, was the only true "colony" development, founded by Midwesterners Judge John Wesley North and Dr. James Porter Greves in 1870. Precious water, brought into the community by large-scale irrigation projects, allowed Riverside to boom. A major factor in Riverside's success was the introduction of the Washington Navel Orange by Eliza Tibbetts in 1878. For more than two decades citrus was the most important and most profitable industry in all of southern California.

In the chapter "Railroad Boom Times in Southern California," Lech covers the building of the Southern Pacific and California southern railroads and the development of

towns adjacent to the rails such as Banning, Beaumont, and Indio along the S.P. line and Temecula, Murrieta, and Perris along the California southern route. Five additional railroads were proposed, only two of which reached fruitation: the rails from Riverside through Corona and Santa Ana Canyon, which became part of the Santa Fe system, and the San Jacinto Valley Railway.

The highlight of Lech's lengthy volume is a detailed study of the formation of Riverside County. From 1853 until the great population boom of the 1880s, southern California was dominated three "megacounties": Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and San Diego. Many new towns, particularly those far away from the county seat, wanted to free themselves from distant bureaucratic control and form more localized governments. Orange County was first to do so, breaking away from Los Angeles County in 1889.

Proposals were put forth to form a Pomona County, a San Jacinto County, and a Riverside County, the latter to extend on-ly from Riverside east to Banning and south to Elsinore. All of them were opposed by the big three counties and failed to pass muster in the state legislature. The year 1893 proved to be a time of destiny for proponents of Riverside County. In January a pro-Riverside County convention met in Perris. Delegates were more united and determined than ever, and they received support from some who had previously championed a San Jacinto County. The fight now went to Sacramento, where a bill to establish Riverside County passed both houses of the legislature and was signed by Governor Henry Markham on March 11, 1893. The new county was formally born when voters overwhelmingly approved the legislative act on May, 2, 1893.

Why was this campaign successful while previous efforts failed? Lech believes there were several reasons, the main one being a Faustian relationship with the Southern Pacific Railroad, the major political force in California at the time. The Southern Pacific wanted access to the burgeoning citrus export market, then monopolized in southern California by the Santa Fe. In return for support on the Riverside County proposal, the Southern Pacific in tit-for-tat action and within days of Riverside County's founding, was granted rights of way into Riverside, center of the booming citrus industry. Another reason was that proponents of the new county, energized by the Perris convention, were better prepared while the anti-divisionists in San Bernardino, San Diego, and the proposed San Jacinto County were fragmented and less organized. A third factor may have been overconfidence in the big counties: they had won before and saw no reason why they should not win again. And they overlooked the powerful clout of the Southern Pacific.

Lech has done a masterful job in weaving together the story of mission ranches and Mexican land grants, the birth and early development of Riverside and other communities, the building of railroads and their effect on regional growth, and best of all, a blow-by-blow account of Riverside County's origin.

On the debit side, the author almost totally neglects the Cahuillas and other Indian peoples. The Cahuillas and Luisenos lost most of their ancestral lands to land-hungry whites during the book's time period (1772-1893). In 1874 the Mountain Cahuilla, were pressured to move from the San Jacinto Valley to the Anza Valley. A year later the Luisenos of Temecula were forced off their land. The Soboba, who lived on the edge of the San Jacinto Valley, barely survived several eviction attempts. Sam Temple's killing of the Indian Juan Diego in 1883 would have been soon forgotten had not Helen Hunt Jackson learned of it. Jackson used the incident as the climax in her immensely popular novel *Ramona*, published in 1884. No other single book has ever had as much influence on southern California; a virtual mythology grew around the novel, and tourists from around the nation flocked to visit "Ramonaland" (the author assures me that the Native American story will be covered in a future book).

These shortcomings aside, Steve Lech makes a solid contribution to the history of

Riverside County right up to its founding. One hopes the author, in a succeeding volume, will continue the saga of the county after 1893.

—John W. Robinson

MY ARIZONA ADVENTURES: *The Recollections of Thomas Dudlley Sanders, Miner, Freighter and Rancher in Arizona Territory*, edited by Al Bates. Prescott: Prescott Corral of Westerners International, 2003. 134 pp. Paper, $17.84 (discounted). Order from Xlibris Corporation, 436 Walnut Street, 11th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19106-3703 (888) 795-4274; or www.Xlibris.com.

In October 1863 Thomas Dudley Sanders, a teenager whose father had come down with a heavy dose of gold fever, preceded his parents and siblings to Arizona Territory. While his father worked on a placer claim, young Tom hired on as a wagon driver, and before long went into the freighting business for himself. Through the 1860s Tom transported freight by mule team between Fort Whipple and other lonely outposts and Los Angeles, bringing needed supplies to soldiers and settlers. He did so in a frequently hostile environment, as Indians contested the presence of the intruders on their ancestral lands. From Tom Sanders's point of view, he had a business to run, and transporting freight was hard work. If fighting Indians was part of that work, then it had to be done.

More than sixty years later, Tom Sanders dictated his autobiography to his son, Edward. The handwritten manuscript was lost, but not before several typescript versions were transcribed. Al Bates, a member of the Prescott Corral of Westerners, found one of the typescripts in the archives of the Sharlot Hall Museum in Prescott in 1999. Doing some detective work, bates collated the Sharlot Hall typescript with another version, in the end utilizing three different versions and reconciling their differences. He edited the work into the manuscript that became this book. Bates concedes what is presented here is "dealing third-hand with the oral reminiscences of an elderly man taken down in longhand and later manipulated to an unknown extent by a third party." As it turns out, readers need not be concerned with this cautionary note about the provenance of the autobiography. Bates has done an excellent job of editing the manuscript, and his occasional annotations are unobtrusive. In the course of his research he located Mrs. Roberta Badger, great-granddaughter of Tom Sanders, who granted permission for publication.

What is so striking about Tom Sanders's story is his readiness to do very hard work. He gives an insider's view of the partnerships that came and went, mule trading, the sense of isolation in crossing long stretches of desert. Most of his memoir covers the period 1863-1877. He married and had a large family, and he helped Arizona grow from a frontier territory to the nation's 48th state. Bates remains faithful to the story, ignoring modem political correctness to include Sanders's comments about Indians that reflect the tensions between the two cultures in confrontation in the 1860s.

The Prescott Corral took on the task of publishing the book, and the end product is a story anyone interested in Western history will find compelling. My only concern is the lack of a map tracing Sanders's peregrinations across Arizona and California; and apart from the small picture of Sanders on the back cover and one of a mule team on the front, there are no any illustrations. Sanders merited a full-page picture. After all, it's his story.

—Abraham Hoffman

GENTLE ARTIST OF THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY: *California History Preserved Through the Life and Paintings of Walter P. Temple, Jr.* by Josette Laura Temple with Laura W. Brundige. Hong Kong, China: Stephens Press, 2004. 142 pp. Illustrations, Addendum, Bibliography. ISBN 1-932173-31-5. Cloth $34.95. Order from Stephens Media Group Company, P.O. Box 1600, Las Vegas, Nevada 89125-1600. www.stephenspress.com.

THE NOT-SO-STILL LIFE: *A Century of California Painting and Sculpture by Susan Landauer*, William H. Gerdts, and Patricia Trenton. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2003. 225 pp. Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index. ISBN 0-520-23938-5. Paper $34.95. Order from University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, California 94720. www.ucpress.edu

Gentle Artist of the San Gabriel Valley is an engaging look at Walter P. Temple, a descendant of the Workman and Temple families. Walter Temple's life reflected the history of these two famous families, highlighting the relatives who played an important role in the development of La Puente and southern California in general. As an artist, Temple cataloged the importance of local history through vivid paintings of Puente hillsides, historic buildings, and city landmarks.

The reader is treated to a wonderful collection of art work that reveals Temple's special talents. The striking landscapes of frontier La Puente includes bold strokes and bright colors that accentuate the eucalyptus trees, plush meadows, and rolling hillsides. Of particular interest are the old structures that Temple visually documented through his art. Here, the reader finds Rowland ranch barns, catholic churches, old hotels, early restaurants, the Puente store, and school houses of days gone by.

Temple's paintings often involve ordinary scenes of picnics, children playing, open country, a lone Ford Model-T, and remote mailboxes dotting the dirt roads. These everyday scenes of early twentieth century La Puente are faintly reminiscent of the Ash Can School of Art.

Josette Temple's intimate narrative complements the visual dimension of this book, providing an overview of the Workman and Temple family history, including a background of the homestead and ranch properties that were owned by these families. The use of materials gathered from the Workman-Temple Homestead, including the research of curator Paul Spitzzeri, coupled with the editing of Laura Brundige, provide a satisfying chronological context to the colorful illustrations.

If Walter Temple's art is a celebration of the unique aspect of southern California, then the San Jose Museum of Art exhibit, *The Not-So Still Life: A Century of California Painting and Sculpture*, captures the important themes that have dominated California painting and sculpture in the twentieth century.

California artists have defined, and been defined, by the unique geographical and cultural dimensions of the West. The expanse of California's topography, coupled with the diverse peoples that have marked that landscape are themes that consistently dominate California art. Even in still life subjects, topography and diversity are dominant ideas that have shaped the far western schools of art.

With the support of the Pasadena Museum of California Art and the University of California, this richly illustrated book captures the spirit of that San Jose exhibit. The wide dimensions of still life art celebrate everything from the counter top of a fifties diner, a leisurely breakfast scene at Malibu, to the portended danger of imaginary Nazi "Seig Heil" salutes that ominously rise in a 1940 California desert scene. Luvena Vysekal, Edgar and Elsie Payne, Alice Brown Chittenden, and Karl Julius Yens are a few of the dozens of artists profiled in this work.

A montage of essays by Susan Landauer, William H. Gerdts, and Patricia Trenton offer a chronological context for the various schools of art and intellectual movements that framed the century.

Trenton's essay is notable for its discussion of the diverse cultural trends in California art as seen in the Chinese Revolutionary Artists' Club of the 1920s, Miki Hayakawa's quiet influence in the San Francisco art world prior to her forced relocation during World War II, muralist Alfredo Ramos Martinez impress on the Los Angeles scene, and the widespread influence of the Postsurrealist movement in the mid-twentieth century.

The University of California Press has compiled a rich combination of color plates and black and white illustrations that complement the text. Indeed, the San Jose Museum of Art exhibit has broadened an understanding of the

still life as more than just a singular genre, but as a metaphor for the larger dimensions of intellectual and creative diversity that marks the state's artistic evolution in the last one hundred years.

—Ronald C. Woolsey

A DANGEROUS PLACE: *California's Unsettling Fate* by Marc Reisner. New York: Pantheon, 2003. 181 pp. Maps, photographs. Hardcover, $22. Order from Kimberly Burns, 212-572-2685, Kburns@randomhouse.com

Marc Reisner, the author of *Cadillac Desert*, in this posthumous work, catches the reader's attention by building a doomsday scenario. He asserts that because San Francisco and Los Angeles were settled where they should not have—both atop violent fault lines—California is destined for cataclysmic destruction.

To build his case, Reisner has divided his book into three parts: Part I is primarily Reisner's own theory of why and how San Francisco and Los Angeles were settled and the resultant population explosions of both; Part II gives a cursory history of earthquake activity in both regions; and Part III describes a "Delta Doomsday" earthquake and blames the vulnerability of both regions' structures and water supplies on the lack of good planning and corrupt leaders.

Part I opens with a few pages of curiosity-catching statements revolving around several aspects of California's inhospitable conditions, lawlessness and its current state of comparatively overwhelming productivity. The author tantalizes the reader with tidbits of information about various unscrupulous characters that used the West as a breeding ground for the propagation of corrupt governmental practices and un-policed swindling. Reisner's descriptions of these characters and their adventurous profiteering make for some page-turning reading, but the book's roots in reality are quickly uprooted due to his sloppy research.

The credibility of Reisner's writing was destroyed for this reviewer with his blatantly biased, pessimistic, and incorrect description of the westward expansion. He also quotes folklore as fact. For instance, Reisner writes, "Azusa, a place that still exists, the smoggiest city in the country, was created from the first and last letters of the alphabet, followed by U.S.A." (p. 27) This commonly quoted but inaccurate bit of information renders suspect everything else in the book, especially since there is no bibliography to substantiate his claims.

Part II, which should have been the foundation upon which he built his theory of mass destruction by a devastating earthquake, is a mere twenty one pages long. Here he traces California's earthquake activity from "the first notable earthquake mentioned in mission-era records" (p. 62) in 1800 to the 1994 Northridge earthquake citing in each (to give the impression of careful research) lives lost, epicenter location, horizontal displacement, and monetary damages. Citing the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, he finally begins to hint at the overlying premise supporting his predicted "Delta Doomsday" earthquake "...it was the latest lesson in the risks of laying gargantuan infrastructure atop a migratory landscape." (p. 80)

Part III contains an admission to Reisner's "reckless leap... into fictional reality... and literary liberty." (p. 102) Although this admission is designed to be a precursive warning that the last half of the book describing the complete destruction of San Francisco is fiction, it can be easily misunderstood that the entire printing is merely an imaginative work of literature. Although, in light of the recent staggering loss of lives and damages in Indonesia caused by an earthquake-generated tsunami, Reisner's claim that earthquakes can be very dangerous and destructive goes without saying—the problem lies in the way he says it. Therefore, this book cannot be recommended as an historical reference tool.

A Dangerous Place is reminiscent of watching a local news broadcast in that it greatly exaggerates danger in order to instill a sense of urgency, fear, and related paranoia to sell news stories and in this case, a book. One thumb up for interest, two thumbs down for sloppy research.

—Jan Porter