

the first six chapters , which discuss the author's first seventeen years, are of the most significance to folklorists. Hendrickson has an excellent memory which enables him to provide a rather detailed account of the routines of life in early twentieth-century Indianapolis. Included are reminiscences of a truck farm, streetcars, ice wagons, peddlers and home deliveries, retail stores and their practices, church services, clothing, foods and food preparation, holiday celebrations, railroads, children's games and pranks, dances, vaudeville shows, and various other forms of recreation and entertainment. Hendrickson writes well; as a result, his book provides more interesting reading than most such memoirs. Moreover, to the scholar interested in urban material culture and folklife, the book is a valuable source of information.

**Vance Randolph: An Ozark Life.** By Robert Cochran. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985. PP. 284. Introduction, sources and notes, acknowledgements, index. \$22.50.

Reviewed by Norma Ortiz.

Robert Cochran, in the tradition of folklorists at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, is by training an English professor. By avocation, however, he is a lover of delta blues, admirer of the late folksinger Emma Dusenbury, and keeper of the folklore fires at the University of Arkansas. His predecessor, founder of the Folklore Research Project, Mary Celestia Parler Randolph, was also trained in English. Having come to folklore from outside the discipline, Bob Cochran and Mary Celestia were freed, in a sense, from some of the academic constraints of the discipline, and like Vance Randolph, their attachment to the folklore

of the Ozarks was first and foremost one of empathy and comradery. Both were drawn to Randolph; Mary Celestia became his wife and collaborator, and Bob Cochran his friend and confidant in the last years of his life. And it is when Cochran draws upon his personal experiences with Vance the man, that this biography of Mr. Ozark is at its best.

In *Vance Randolph: An Ozark Life*, Cochran succeeds in establishing Randolph as an American folklorist and securing his rightful place in the history of folklore scholarship. Randolph was not only a collector--which in folklore circles often has had the connotation of "amateur"--but was also a complete folklorist whose scientific background helped him develop and present the "context of folk genres, in function and performance." In scope and contextual integrity, Randolph's techniques in Ozark collecting and regional studies serve as models for all students of American folklore. Randolph's Ozark materials range from folk songs and folk superstitions to dialectal studies and ribaldry at folk dances. Cochran sums it up when he reflects that Randolph's work "was in the Ozarks, but he lived an American life."

The most beautiful parts of the biography are those sections where Cochran is personally involved with Vance Randolph. Who can read "Embers," the last chapter of the book, and be unmoved by the description and sense of loss at the passing of a great man. In sharp contrast is the middle section of the book, which reads like a biography of the bibliography of Vance Randolph. There is much valuable information about the context of Randolph's works. We learn about Vance's relationship with Haldeman-Julius and the Little Blue Books, those books that he wrote under various pseudonyms to make money, and the life and travails of his Ozark books, those books he wrote for sheer love and personal creative necessity. These sections are enhanced

by the excellent investigative skills and compact organization of the scholarly Cochran. But may I suggest that while this biography certainly is the definitive work on Vance Randolph to date, the complement to this volume which would delve into the inner world of Randolph--his impulses, motives, fears, loves..., is still to be written. Hopefully for us, Bob Cochran has this on the agenda.

**On a Slow Train Through Arkansaw.** By Thomas W. Jackson. Edited by W. K. McNeil. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1985. Pp. xi + 137. Preface, introduction, notes.

Reviewed by Norma Oritz

**On a Slow Train Through Arkansaw**, originally published in 1903, is an interesting book in its own right, but what makes this latest edition a must for anyone interested in the popular culture of the early nineteen-hundreds are the enlightening preface, introduction, and annotations by the folklorist-in-residence at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View, Arkansaw\*, W. K. McNeil. Placing this book in the context of popular history, McNeil says that it "offers a glimpse into the popular culture and popular attitudes of the past. It is a source of historical insight that is all the more valuable because it was intended not as a historical document but as a compilation of material designed to appeal to the masses."

The materials used by Jackson in this jest book came from both the popular tradition of minstrelsy and vaudeville, and folk traditions, as well. Although an uneducated brakeman himself, Jackson was a skillful joke teller adept at getting much of his material from crew members and passengers. He used an interesting method of pre-testing jokes: If the conductor