

In 1949 in *Steamboats on the Western Rivers* Louis C. Hunter challenged this view when he declared: "such evidence as is available suggests that Shreve's boats, so far as major structural features are concerned, did not differ materially from other steamboats of their day" (p. 76). If the author has new evidence that refutes Hunter, she fails to present it. Rather she footnotes sparingly and relies heavily on secondary sources published before 1949, such as Emerson W. Gould's *Fifty Years on the Mississippi* published in 1889. Hunter has said that the case "made in behalf of Shreve is overstated" (p. 15), and this reviewer has found no evidence in McCall's study to refute that judgment. On the contrary, the author's heroic presentation of Shreve perpetuates the overstatement without substantial justification.

In writing this book McCall set as her purpose to reveal in a combined narrative the story of the opening of the inland rivers and the life of Henry Miller Shreve. In this she has succeeded. Her well-written effort cannot help but renew popular interest in two highly interesting and interwoven phases of American history.

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*The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846-1890.* By Robert M. Utley. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984. Pp. xxi, 325. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. Clothbound, \$19.95; paperbound, \$10.95.)

Robert M. Utley faces an enormous task in synthesizing the literature of the western Indian frontier. Quite appropriately, he uses the Mexican War and the Massacre at Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge reservation as the chronological limits of his newest book. To give unity to his narrative, Utley identifies two theses around which he organizes his account. He maintains that "the frontier condemned the two [Indians and Anglo-Americans] to a physical union, while a great cultural chasm condemned them never really to see or understand each other" (p. xix). Disagreeing with Frederick Jackson Turner's concept of the frontier as a "single line," Utley hypothesizes that in the American West Indians and Anglo-Americans met in "groupings of frontier zones" where they mingled and changed, "in ways never really perceived as attributable to the other" (p. xx). The last pages of *The Indian Frontier* are devoted to a critique of Turner, concluding that "modern America is uniquely, as Turner failed to perceive, a blend of its immigrant and native heritages" (p. 272).

Yet, *The Indian Frontier* is principally an account of the western Indian wars. Those conflicts intensified as the United

States government attempted to restrict the movement of Indians and to place tribes on reservations. The reservation policy with the government's attendant bungling, corruption, and inefficiency culminated in a series of guerilla-like wars which were fought in small skirmishes and with relentless pressure by slow-moving army columns. The Navajo, Cheyenne-Sioux, Kiowa-Comanche, Nez Perce, Apache, and other campaigns finally drove the tribes to western reservations and dependence upon the federal government for the necessities of life. President Ulysses S. Grant's peace policy and the programs of the eastern "Friends of the Indians" never succeeded in transforming the Native Americans into self-supporting farmers, Christians, and citizens who owned and tilled individualized tracts of land. Indians were torn between two conflicting desires of whites: reformers wanted to acculturate and assimilate the Indian people, but the westerners wanted Indian land and resources. However sincere and well-meaning the reformers were, their policies were carried out by an Indian Service riddled with greed, corruption, patronage, and incompetence.

Admittedly this book was written for general readers and students, not for specialists in Indian history. Utley writes lucidly, providing the reader with ample facts and deft characterizations of Indian leaders, army officers, Indian Service personnel, and eastern politicians. To produce this volume the author has utilized his previous books, weaving other pertinent secondary works into several of his early and later chapters.

Occasionally, brevity leads the author into incomplete or erroneous statements. Usage of the term "Southern Comanches" connotes a political cohesiveness which never characterized Comanche organization (p. 56). The Comanche divisions were autonomous, and a treaty with the Penateka possessed no significance to the Nokoni or Kwahadi who shared portions of the Comanche domain. The Cheyenne-Arapaho Sand Creek reservation of 1861 extended north and south of the Arkansas River (p. 86). Red Cloud was not the leader of all the Oglala Sioux in 1865-1868 because the tribe was divided into two groups, the Bear People and the Cloud People, with Red Cloud having ascendancy among the latter (p. 100). The Cheyenne-Arapaho Darlington Agency was not located on the 1867 Medicine Lodge Treaty lands but on the 1869 executive order reservation (p. 173). Sale of Indian allotments began well before the expiration of the twenty-five-year trust period provided in the 1887 Dawes Act. United States statutes of 1902, 1906, and 1907 led to early alienation of the Indian land base, which severely jeopardized the intent of the Dawes Act

sponsors. These limited errors, however, do not diminish the excellence of this perceptive, original, and interpretive study of the western Indian frontier.

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*The Land before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630-1860.* By Annette Kolodny. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984. Pp. xix, 293. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Clothbound, \$28.00; paperbound, \$9.95.)

On the morning of July 20, 1846, George Donner's party of eighty-two left the Oregon Trail to strike off on a wholly untried shortcut to California's paradise. They were pursuing a fantasy set down by Lansford Hastings, a speculator in human dreams whose *Emigrants' Guide to Oregon and California* (1845) capitalized on generations of American mythologizing about the thrill of possessing virgin land. All but Tamsen Donner were "elated and in fine spirits" at their quickening fortunes. Tamsen was "gloomy, sad, and dispirited."<sup>1</sup> She could not shake her fear that, by abandoning the known road and the larger wagon train for a speculator's promise of easy going, her husband was making a terrible mistake. Caught straggling in the wilds four months later by early winter snows, thirty-five of the party died hideous deaths. Forty-seven survived, nourished in their gruesome mountain refuge by the flesh of the dead. For Tamsen Donner the disjunction between fantasy and experience was fatal.

Annette Kolodny, in *The Land before Her*, makes it possible to see Tamsen Donner's apprehensions as part of a rich legacy of women's fantasies, fears, and imaginary projections of the American frontier. Although Kolodny does not discuss the portentous conflict between Tamsen's rationality and George's adventurism, she does find in women's voices precisely the sensible fears of the unknown, the communal values, and the domesticating instincts that might have restrained such "American Adams" as George Donner in their reckless assault on the continental wilderness. The book begins with captivity narratives from the early woodland frontiers. Women held captive by Indians experienced paralyzing fear, sexual displacement, and despair in the wilderness, but almost never the seductions of the forest or heroic liberation

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<sup>1</sup> The quotations are from the diary of Jessy Quinn Thornton, who had traveled with the Donners since Illinois but who stayed on the Oregon Trail. Bernard DeVoto, *The Year of Decision, 1846* (Boston, 1942), 315.