

It is unfortunate that an index was not included in the volume. A biographical index at least would have made the book more valuable to students of genealogy in the Detroit area. Factual and typographical errors are few. Three of the latter were noted, while the "John Hay" mentioned on page 41 is more correctly given as "Jehu" Hay on page 73. The eleven illustrations are most appropriate and add considerably to the interest and value of the book.

Evansville College

Orville J. Jaebker

The Early Histories of St. Louis. Edited by John F. McDermott. (St. Louis: St. Louis Historical Documents Foundation, 1952, pp. 171. Index, end maps, illustrations. \$4.00.)

This collection of the first historical sketches of the founding and early years of St. Louis which are based on the primary sources is made up of selections from the writings of six of her original citizens. Not intended as a history of the city, its purpose is, instead, to bring together under one cover all such accounts for the benefit, primarily, of the scholar.

The basic document, and the only eyewitness account of the founding of St. Louis is Auguste Chouteau's "Narrative," a fourteen-page fragment which is possibly part of a longer journal which has never been located. Written during the first or second decade of the nineteenth century, after the events which it mentions had taken place, the narrative covers the years 1762-1765. The original document in Chouteau's handwriting is now in possession of the St. Louis Mercantile Library. Four of Chouteau's depositions made in 1825 before Theodore Hunt, Recorder of Land Titles, are also given in this volume in their chronological sequence and these, together with the "Narrative" and some recorded conversations with Chouteau form the basis for most of the later accounts.

The five other selections included are: (1) John A. Paxton's "Notes on St. Louis," an unpagged preface to his *St. Louis Directory of 1821*, the first part of which very clearly depends on Chouteau's "Narrative"; (2) Lewis C.

Beck's ten-page historical and descriptive account of St. Louis in his *Gazetteer* of Illinois and Missouri published in 1822, which says little about the opening years of the city; (3) a brief article, obviously based on Chouteau's "Narrative" in the *St. Louis Beacon* of January 24, 1831, written by "A Creole," in which he corrects a statement he had seen about the founding of St. Louis; (4) a lecture given by Wilson Primm before the St. Louis Lyceum probably in December, 1831, giving a history of the town based on Chouteau's depositions but rejecting his statement that he had been in charge of the beginning work on the St. Louis settlement; and (5) Joseph N. Nicollet's excellent account written in 1842, rich in details derived from the Chouteau papers.

In McDermott's scholarly "Introduction" of forty-three pages, he has enumerated and given the significance of some twenty-five other historical comments on St. Louis written before 1860 by historians and travelers. Also included is a chronology for the years 1729-1821, and a list of selected references for the early history of St. Louis. This introduction is invaluable for, although the "histories" could be located and read elsewhere, their significance might be largely lost without the orientation given here. Few authors would be as ably qualified as Professor McDermott to edit such a volume for he brings to bear on the subject years of research on St. Louis and Mississippi Valley history. He has used footnotes with discretion, confining them in the "histories" to those of the authors themselves.

The book is well executed on good paper with clear printing and is carefully indexed.

State Historical Society of Missouri Floyd C. Shoemaker

The Quiet Life of Mrs. General Lane. By Victoria Case. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1952, pp. 319. \$3.75.)

Two years ago, A. B. Guthrie, writing in the *New York Times*, asked some significant questions concerning the function and limitations of the historical novelist: "Should he deal with the actual figures of history and the actual events, or shall he go outside them? . . . If he employs the record,