

losophy, their methods, and their programs were rejected," they left behind a heritage for those who were to come after them.

University of Chicago

William Warren Sweet

The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill. By Hermann Hagedorn. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954, pp. 435. Illustrations and index. \$5.00.)

This book is not another political biography of Theodore Roosevelt or of his family. Instead it is mainly an account of the personal life of the Roosevelts, of their day-to-day existence, of their relations with one another and with their friends, and of their private triumphs and tragedies. Theodore Roosevelt, of course, holds the center of the stage, but public affairs are introduced usually only when necessary to provide the setting of the family history. Since the author probably knows more about the personal life of the Roosevelt family than any other American writer, the book makes a certain contribution to American biography. A more detailed picture of Mrs. Roosevelt is given here than in any other work, as well as of the children when they were young.

During his early college days the author of this book, Hermann Hagedorn, seized upon Theodore Roosevelt as his chief hero. In some nine books written about Roosevelt and his family over the next fifty years, he has kept his youthful loyalty unimpaired. Hagedorn is at present executive director of the Theodore Roosevelt Association. This book is not critical, nor does it introduce jarring notes of uncertainty about the motives or actions of its characters. Evidence which points in such directions is ignored. Consequently, it is not history, nor was it meant to be. Rather it is a last act in a lifetime romance.

Taken in the spirit in which it was written, this volume is an excellent one. In public or in private, Theodore Roosevelt just could not be dull. The eternal adolescent in him made an adventure out of the smallest things. Whether digging for corruption in Washington or for clams on the Long Island beach with his boys, the very air around him was full of excitement. He loved both life and youth with an enduring intensity, and he imparted his feelings to those

close to him. Moreover, there was a rare and almost unmatched warmth in Roosevelt's relations with his family, which the author has caught. Well written and full of interesting details, this volume will delight practically everyone interested in an unabashed admiring account of one of America's most colorful and prominent families.

University of California, Los Angeles

George E. Mowry

The Old Country Store. By Gerald Carson. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954, pp. xvi, 330. Illustrations, bibliography, and index. \$5.00.)

The academic historian is likely to approach Gerald Carson's *The Old Country Store* with skepticism if, before reading it, he has taken note of its somewhat loose-jointed style and the author's background as an advertising executive. What, he might ask, could possibly be added to the story of this peculiarly American institution as related so well in several other works, among them Professor Thomas D. Clark's *Pills, Petticoats, and Plows*. If these doubts still exist 300 pages later, however, the reader must be either totally lacking in imagination or unreasonably demanding.

This reviewer was pleasantly surprised to find *The Old Country Store* both historically sound and extremely entertaining. But it is more than interesting economic and social history. What might appear at first glance to be a casual assemblage of random anecdotes and factual data is in reality a mirror of everyday life in much of the United States of the nineteenth century. By his deft focusing of this literary looking-glass, Carson has caught the flavor and atmosphere of the country store as our forebears knew it and at the same time he has placed it in its proper historical perspective.

Carson's professional experience inspired his interest in the general store and stimulated a quest for knowledge that led him to libraries, museums, and out-of-the-way communities. During his years as vice-president of Benton & Bowles, Inc., and later of Kenyon & Eckhardt, Inc., while he was promoting automobiles, cereals, and soaps, he was also attracting attention with his articles on business, advertising, and historical subjects. The avocation finally gained the upper hand and he retired from the business world to devote his