

Men and Trade on the Northwest Frontier as Shown by the Fort Owen Ledger. Edited with an introduction by George F. Weisel. Montana State Studies, Vol. II. (Missoula: Montana State University Press, 1955, pp. xxxix, 291. Appendices, illustrations, maps, bibliography, and index. \$5.00.)

Fort Owen was established in 1850 as a trading post by "Major" John Owen, a frontier sutler. It was located in the Bitter Root Valley in what is now western Montana. The post was well situated on land bought from Jesuit missionaries, among peaceful Flathead Indians, and in an area undergoing a shift from fur-trading to agricultural operations. The post was commodious, fortified, and well stocked with trading goods. Owen's annual business transactions varied considerably and ranged in amount from less than \$1,000 to nearly \$10,000. One surprising and decidedly esoteric feature of Fort Owen was its library. Owen not only liked to read books but he was discriminating in his library selections, which included Charles Darwin's *Journal of Researches into the Natural History*, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, John Milton's *Poetical Works*, and John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Lieutenant John Mullan, who examined this library, declared it was "the finest library I have seen on the north Pacific coast" (p. 247). Due to Owen's mental failure, the post was sold in 1872, and changing conditions thereafter caused Fort Owen to join the list of frontier institutional relics.

As indicated in the title, the core of this volume is the Fort Owen Ledger. Entries into this ledger were made by Owen from the time of the beginning of the post in 1850 and for a decade thereafter. In presenting the material of this book, the editor has, in addition to his introduction and notes, reproduced major portions of the ledger and provided brief biographical sketches of those carried on account. The book as presented has the obvious value of providing the specialist with information on persons or customers in the area, variety of livestock, merchandise bought and sold, and at what prices. And out of this ledger one may likewise glean interesting tidbits of social history, such as amounts paid "woman" for making shoes, amounts paid to find lost or stolen livestock, kinds of cloth available for sale, amounts carried on credit (whites, as compared with Indians), who bought liquor and who did not.

Much effort has been expended by the editor to make this volume useful in the ways indicated. There are minor

inconsistencies in the spelling of place names, especially between those appearing in the introduction and in the main fold-in map, as for example Bannack and Bannock, Bitter Root and Bitterroot.

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The Livingston Indian Records, 1666-1723. Edited by Lawrence H. Leder. (Gettysburg: The Pennsylvania Historical Association, 1956, pp. 240. Illustrations, maps, and glossaries. \$5.00.)

Many of the studies of the Iroquois nation stress the role of these Indians in the Anglo-French struggle for supremacy in America. The questions of the allegiance of the Iroquois to the English or of their relations with the French have received much attention. As a result the relationship of the Iroquois to the various English colonies has often been slighted. It is the contention of the editor of *The Livingston Indian Records* that these documents will help to restore "some balance to Iroquois history" and that they will throw additional light upon their relations with the English colonies. In the opinion of the reviewer the documents by themselves are often disappointing in this respect.

Robert Livingston who served as secretary of Rensselaerswyck, town clerk of Albany, and secretary for Indian affairs had the task of transcribing the conference minutes and documents concerning the Indian relations into the permanent record book. *The Livingston Indian Records* consist of the drafts and copies of these conference minutes and documents which Livingston retained for his personal file. He also retained material inherited from his predecessor as secretary of Rensselaerswyck. Since the first two volumes of the permanent record books have disappeared, the Livingston documents now on deposit in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library assume an additional importance.

One series of documents deals with the concern of Virginia and Maryland over the Iroquois raids against friendly Indians and whites on the Maryland-Virginia frontier. Others indicate the interest of New Englanders toward the tie of the Iroquois with the New England tribes which were friendly to the French. The bulk of the documents contain information about New York-Iroquois problems over land, trade, and the French question. So the question of the French-English struggle and of the position of the Iroquois appears again and again. Scattered throughout the records