

Sam Houston: American Giant. By M. K. Wisheart. (Washington: Robert B. Luce, Inc., 1962. Pp. xiv, 712. Illustrations, notes, note on sources, bibliography, index. \$10.00.)

Nineteenth-century America produced many soldier-statesmen; Sam Houston ranks among the greatest of them. Major general, governor of both Tennessee and Texas, president of the Republic of Texas, and United States Senator from Texas, Houston combined in his life great valor, public service, and principle along with alcoholism and despair.

Prior to Wisheart's biography, the chief lives of Houston were by Lester (1846), Crane (1884), Bruce (1891), Williams (1893), Creel (1928), and James (1929). Of this group, *The Raven*, by Marquis James, was undoubtedly the best. Wisheart's study is not as interesting nor his selection of material as good as James's. It is, however, more definitive and accurate. For example, Wisheart, unlike James, does not have Anson Jones committing suicide on his hotel steps or Houston setting out to acquire Texas for Jackson at the latter's request. In addition, Wisheart's extensive notes and bibliography indicate that he did more exhaustive research than James into the abundant and scattered materials relating to Houston's life.

Wisheart's book contains much material on Houston's personal relationships with Eliza Allen, Tiana Rogers, and Margaret Lea, as well as on his public relationships with such political giants of the period as John C. Calhoun, Daniel Webster, Andrew Jackson, and Henry Clay. It also covers some of the major political issues of the period 1840-1860 and Houston's positions on them. Wisheart relates Houston's struggle for Texan independence; his desire for United States annexation of Texas; his advocacy of the Mexican war and the Compromise of 1850; and his opposition to Calhoun's ideas on secession and to the Kansas-Nebraska Act and Texas secession from the Union. Wisheart also stresses the lawlessness and erratic nature of the Texas populace during its early development and the continual violent verbal attacks against Houston throughout his career.

This most recent Houston biography with its extensive index, notes, and bibliography should be welcomed by scholars. General readers should also find it interesting even though it is long. It is highly recommended for all general historical collections.

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Ignatius Donnelly: The Portrait of a Politician. By Martin Ridge. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962. Pp. x, 427. Illustrations, notes, selective bibliography, index. \$7.95.)

When Ignatius L. Donnelly was seventeen years old, he received a letter from the popular New England author, Oliver Wendell Holmes, predicting that "by and by we shall hear of Ignatius L. Donnelly" (p. 1). Holmes was commenting in 1848 on Donnelly's promise as a writer, and while the prophecy was accurate enough as regards the future author of *Caesar's Column*, *Atlantis*, and *The Great Cryptogram*, much more was to be heard of Donnelly as a politician and advocate of reform than as a poet or novelist.