terrain came not from travel so much as study. Whatever Allen's sources, he reveals a masterful grasp of western physiography. Among the forty-five maps carefully reproduced is the previously unpublished 1803 King map of western North America. The bibliography, although far from inclusive, is satisfactory. Although geographers and historians will make the greatest use of this work, it suggests a variety of fresh approaches to humanistic study. Poets, biographers, even authors of the durable "western," will find Allen's book a stimulating experience.

San Jose State University, San Jose


The early decades of the nineteenth century witnessed many important changes in the republic but none more significant than the emergence of the West as a discrete section contending for political and economic equality with the older areas. With the exception of a few hardy pioneers who braved the uncertainties of life beyond the mountains during the colonial period, the population push into the trans-Appalachian West do not begin until the War of 1812. During the half century which followed, the population of the West increased from approximately one million to more than twelve million! It was indeed a period of spectacular growth.

The quickening tempo of life in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys was inexorably intertwined with improved transportation. Although many scholarly accounts chronicle the importance of canals and railroads to the rise of the West, few works attempt to isolate and appraise the economic significance of river transportation. Haites, Mak, and Walton correct this omission, presenting a detailed analysis of those natural highways and assessing the role played by both private and public sectors as precipitants for internal improvements. The authors begin with the premise that the broad economic growth which characterized nineteenth century
America resulted from an expanded market economy, and they point to the unique relationship between the emergence of the West and ease of access. Although the West was linked to national and world markets by three natural routes, Haite, Mak, and Walton conclude that during most of the antebellum period the southern artery was dominant. From Pittsburgh and Cincinnati, Louisville and St. Louis, goods moved in increasing volume down the Ohio and Mississippi to the southern gateway, New Orleans. Although the canals and railroads finally resulted in a reorientation in the flow of traffic from south to east in the 1850s, the Crescent City remained an important commercial center to the West throughout the period.

Demand for cotton and wheat was also among the factors which contributed to the lure of the West, and the book notes the influence that commodity prices exerted on land sales in both the Southwest and Northwest. And yet, without a dependable and inexpensive transportation system linking the land to the outside, favorable prices were meaningless. Thus, perhaps the rise of the West can best be told in terms of the keelboat, flatboat, and particularly the steamboat. Although the relative importance of steamboating slackened in the 1840s, it was still judged responsible for “an impressive surge of productivity to inland water transportation” (p. 72). The authors challenge the long accepted view that railroad competition forced steamboating into an actual decline in the 1850s. Inevitably the history of transportation on western waters is filled with attempts to restrict competition and create monopolies, but these efforts failed largely because of “the subtle interplay of market forces that takes place in situations where ease of entry is not cut off by government regulations . . .” (p. 47). Few will question the conclusion that the emergence of the West was inseparable from the history of the rivers.

The authors make extensive use of primary sources and possess an excellent knowledge of secondary works which deal with the subject. The work is further enhanced by numerous tables and appendixes which support conclusions in the text. Economic historians and those with an interest in this period of history will find the book of great value.

Miami University, Oxford, Ohio  Richard M. Jellison