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A Journey through Texas: Or, a Saddle-Trip on the
Southwestern Frontier (review)

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development Texas emerged as a fluid society of yeoman farmers, planters, herds-men, and stockmen. Stretching from the Red River to the Rio Grande, sprawling from the waters of the Sabine to the grasslands of the Llano Estacado and beyond, the Texas heritage is presented in cultural layers. Beginning with the Caddoan-speaking gardeners and gatherers of East Texas and continuing with the Spanish missionaries and their neophyte converts in South Texas, the sediments of a new society were successfully laid long before the arrival of Anglo Texans in the 1820s. Then, by the time of the Texas Revolution and the foundation of an independent Republic, a herding and hunting culture from the Upper South complemented and altered the long-standing agricultural and ranching traditions that had endured for decades during Spanish colonial rule.

Jones takes the reader on a journey across the primitive landscape of antebellum Texas, cutting a broad swath across the development of a plantation economy, the role of slave labor, the prevalence of subsistence agriculture, the importance of river and road transportation, the evolution of farming tools, fencing techniques, and methods of cultivation. He offers a glimpse into the daily lives of people in remote, wooded river bottoms and isolated prairie regions. He even examines the routines of their domestic chores, their diet, the dwellings that they hewed from the wilds, and more.

But notably absent is a treatment of the separate set of challenges that faced women on the Texas frontier. Despite that flaw, however, *Texas Roots* is a welcome addition to our growing library of Texas historical literature—a library that still holds so many empty shelves, providing ample room for contributions that enhance our understanding of the Texas experience.

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A Journey through Texas: Or, a Saddle-Trip on the Southwestern Frontier. By Frederick Law Olmsted. Edited by Randolph B. Campbell. (Dallas: DeGolyer Library and William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies, 2004. Pp. 344. Editor's introduction, preface, maps, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN 1929531095. \$60.00, cloth.)

Praise for this book has been almost universal (in the North at least) since its publication in 1857 and continues to this day. John H. Jenkins (*Basic Texas Books*, pp. 421, 424) calls it a "splendid enlightening book" and says that it is the "most civilized of all 19th century books on Texas . . . also the most interesting and the most dependable." We are fortunate in the choice that the DeGolyer Library & William P. Clements Center at Southern Methodist University made for the editor/annotator of the latest edition: Randolph B. "Mike" Campbell. This is especially true because few other Texas historians have Campbell's grasp of the slavery situation in the 1850s, when Frederick Law Olmsted and his brother John Hull Olmsted made their "saddle-trip" journey across Texas.

In his introduction, Campbell sets the scene for the Olmsteds' 1854 visit and places their antislavery views in perspective. While making it clear that the brothers opposed slavery and advocated a free labor system, Campbell accepts

Frederick's statement that he was not a "red-hot Abolitionist" but rather a "moderate Free Soiler." He acknowledges, however, that Frederick "began his travels in the South determined to show the superiority of northern society" (p. xvii). They were also obsessed with showing how free labor was more profitable than slavery, while calling attention to the moral degeneration of both blacks and whites that attended the latter.

These attitudes, of course, had a bearing on what the Olmsteds wrote in their book—"their" because John Hull deserved coauthor status with his brother. Numerous references to the actions of "F." show that John was doing the writing, although he styled himself as "editor" in a note to the first edition. Frederick's preface also tells us that John had a free hand in preparing the volume for publication (pp. 3-4). They could find virtually nothing worthy of praise (the food especially) in East Texas west to the Colorado River, where slavery was most entrenched. Upon entering the German settlements of the Hill Country, however, it was as if they had found the Promised Land. To them, the German colonists were doing everything right, and it was only a matter of time until prosperity resulted from their slave-free, cultured, and industrious ways.

Campbell's annotation is helpful in identifying many of the settlements and homes visited and individuals mentioned. But in other instances he seems reluctant to venture a guess, such as with the prosperous farmer/innkeeper at "Manchac Spring" below Austin (pp. 92-93), the up-and-coming young German family near Seguin (pp. 117-119), or the priest living in poverty at Goliad's ruined church (pp. 158-159). I was particularly frustrated that he offered no clue to the identity of the "First-Class Texas Grazier" living between Lynchburg and Liberty, as this is one of our best descriptions of ranching on the coastal plains (pp. 209-212). In other cases, tax rolls and censuses are cited to verify what the Olmsteds reported but not here.

There are also a few things missing from this otherwise handsome edition: the camping scene used as a frontispiece in the original edition and present in most subsequent ones; Colton's "Map of Part of the State of Texas," which even the 1978 University of Texas Press paperback edition has; the Appendices (thirty-two pages); and the "Scraps of Newspapers" (nineteen pages) at the end of the book. The latter is sorely missed, as these clippings gave us immediate understanding of a wide range of Texas affairs during the 1850s. This loss is somewhat lessened by a series of maps showing the route taken by the Olmsteds (Natchitoches is badly misplaced on the first one, p. 48) and by an excellent index.

All told, this version of *A Journey through Texas* is a welcome addition to our bookshelves, and much of this is due to the broad knowledge and editorial skills of Mike Campbell. Typesetting and design was done by Bradley Hutchinson.

Austin, Texas

JACK JACKSON

Oi Callie: The Civil War Letters of Brandt Badger. By Rex H. Stever and Barbara M. Stever. (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 2004. Pp. 86. Acknowledgments, preface, illustrations, photographs, epilogue, appendix, index. ISBN 0965871916. \$22.00, cloth.)