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Texas Roots: Agriculture and Rural Life before the Civil War
(review)

Michael L. Collins

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and their construction. Having investigated historic steamboat wrecks and having analyzed the remains that survived from them, Kane brings to the study of these vessels the trained eye and intellect of the archeologist. Combining written sources, archeological evidence, and historic photographs, he provides insights into these vessels and their development that no one else has been able to synthesize.

Kane explains to readers how steamboat builders adapted their vessels to the conditions that they found in the wilderness of the trans-Appalachian West. The formerly deep-draft steamboats of the East became shallow-draft vessels across the mountains, where rivers were often shallow and filled with driftwood "snags." The builders of these vessels enhanced their usability in the West by fitting them with high-pressure steam boilers, which weighed about 60 percent less than the low-pressure boilers used in the East, thus making it possible for them to have more shallow draft. These boilers consumed large amounts of wood as fuel, but the boatmen viewed the forests along the rivers in the West as having inexhaustible supplies of this inexpensive fuel.

Historic photographs, engravings, and easily understood drawings assist readers in understanding the technical aspects of this book. It also includes a helpful glossary, tables of known Western river steamboats with their specifications, and carefully prepared endnotes and bibliography.

Adam I. Kane, combining expertise in both nautical archeology and history, has shared insights into the Western river steamboats that will benefit all scholars working in the region and time period.

Tarleton State University

T. LINDSAY BAKER

Texas Roots: Agriculture and Rural Life before the Civil War. By C. Allan Jones. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2005. Pp. 264. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN 1585444189. \$40.00, cloth. ISBN 1585444294. \$19.95, paper.)

Through the generations, and over the expanse of centuries, Texans have forged an identity that stands unique among others. So much has been said and written about the distinctive character that defines the Lone Star State. It is a legacy unlike any other in the American story, a heritage that is as vast, diverse, and magnificent as the land itself. As author C. Allan Jones, director of the Texas Water Resources Institute explains, Texas roots run deep.

A readable survey of the state's rural and agricultural beginnings is long overdue. Jones should, therefore, be commended for offering a thorough examination of this much-neglected yet critically important chapter in the Texas experience. His aptly stated objective—"to bring alive a part of Texas history that is rarely addressed: the relationship of Texans to their land before the Civil War" (p. 3)—is one worthy of the scholar's serious attention, even if the topic is not one that lends itself to a more popular appeal.

Despite the fact that the wilderness world Jones explores has been largely lost to the present generation, the legacy of that rural society remains relevant and instructive. To be sure, it is a story worth telling. In its earliest stages of

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.

Midwestern State University

MICHAEL L. COLLINS

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