PROJECT MUSE®

Preserving Western History (review)

Dan K. Utley

Southwestern Historical Quarterly, Volume 110, Number 1, July 2006,
pp. 141-142 (Review)

Published by Texas State Historical Association

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/swh.2006.0033>

➔ *For additional information about this article*

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/203065>

because of the Southern cotton trade but the disruption of the Civil War and Reconstruction brought hardships to the town. Through the letters and memoirs of its citizens, Chicoine brings to life the thoughts, actions, and emotions of individuals from this town throughout these trying times. The author previously published several books and articles on military history, including the edited letters of Rufus King Felder, a Confederate soldier and leading citizen of Chappell Hill after the war, in the *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*.

Men from Chappell Hill served in every theater of the war and in all the famous Texas units including Hood's Texas Brigade, Terry's Texas Rangers, and Sibley's Brigade, to name a few. The men participated in famous battles such as Vicksburg, Gettysburg, Galveston, Chickamauga, Wilderness, and Petersburg. Chicoine devotes the majority of the book to the men's perspective of their particular units and the battles they fought. Included in this section are the effects the war had on the homefront and how civilians supported their soldiers on distant battlefields. The last five chapters examine how the men reacted to coming home after the war, reconstruction, and how they contributed to the reconciliation between North and South through the establishment of veteran organizations. Chicoine concludes the book with the contribution of the Confederates' children and grandchildren to the reconciliation of the country through their actions during the Spanish-American War and World War I.

Chicoine's concept of examining Confederates from a particular town is not unique, but the greatest strength of his book is examining their lives after the war and how they adapted to the changes the war created. His research is impeccable. The author drew from many different sources to examine these Texas soldiers' lives, especially the letters of common soldiers and newspapers from the area. Another positive attribute of the book is the number of photographs incorporated throughout its pages. Pictures of soldiers, families, locations, and buildings within the town bring the story to light and provide a physical connection for the reader. Chicoine organizes the book both topically and chronologically. This style allows him to focus on the numerous groups of Texas soldiers spread across the South while containing a narrative that shows the progressive changes that occurred to the men and the town they called home. The book attempts to examine Confederates from this town, but does not explain why the men from the community joined a wide array of units instead of joining local companies or a particular regiment. Overall, this book contributes to the literature of the Civil War but better serves general readers and students of Texas history.

Texas A&M University

CHARLES DAVID GREAR

Preserving Western History. Edited by Andrew Gulliford. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005. Pp. 415. Acknowledgments, personal reflections, illustrations, maps, notes, authors' biographies, list, index. ISBN 0826333109. \$34.95, paper.)

Public historian Andrew Gulliford has compiled an important collection of essays on a wide variety of topics focused in general on the preservation of

regional history. While the backdrop is the American West, an area that lends itself to such a regional study, the examples contained in the essays are broad enough to provide interest to those from other areas as well. Using both new research and previously published papers, Gulliford has provided a college reader that celebrates both the West and the profession of public history.

The essays are timely, focused, provocative, and far-reaching. Topics reflect the broad scope of historic preservation and include archeology, material culture, ecotourism, cultural landscapes, heritage tourism, interpretation, and even the political correctness of public monuments. Among the essayists are several whose names will be familiar to Texas readers, including William Gwaltney, formerly associated with Fort Davis, who contributed "The Lunatic Fringe and Fringed Lunatics: Reenacting Western History in Buckskin," and Lonn Taylor, with past connections to Texas Christian University and the University of Texas, who wrote "New Mexican Chests: A Comparative Look." There are also essays by National Park Service chief historian Dwight T. Pitcaithley and former U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell of Colorado. The scope of experiences and perspectives are as diverse as the topics themselves.

Of particular interest to students of Texana are three essays by Texas-based authors: Peter Dedek, Richard Francaviglia, and Art Gómez. Dedek, currently with Texas State University and formerly with the Texas Historical Commission, provided important contexts for understanding the need to preserve the diminishing vestiges of Route 66, the iconic mother road. His analysis places the road's history in the usual contexts of cultural landscapes and modern transportation, but also weaves in characters like Jack Kerouac and Fred Harvey, and brings the story up to date with recent historical survey information. Historian and geographer Francaviglia, who has written extensively on the environmental history of mining in Texas and the Southwest, contributed an essay on boomtowns and ghost towns, with special emphasis on the transgenerational landscapes of celebrated mining communities like Bodie, California, and Thurber, Texas, both now ghost towns. His work raises intriguing questions about the viability of interpretation against backdrops of selective preservation and historic imagery. Gómez, a historian with the National Park Service, challenges the reader on matters related to the process of memorialization by focusing on Chamizal National Memorial, but broadening the context to include the complexity of considerations as current as those surrounding the World Trade Center site in New York City.

Preserving Western History succeeds on several levels, but particularly in the stimulation of thought through the realm of public history and in the introduction of new perspectives on a regional sense of place. With diverse contributions from historians who obviously value the analytical strata of interpretation and historic preservation, and with the guidance provided by seasoned editor Gulliford, the book makes a significant contribution to the fields of public history and regional studies. Designed perhaps for students, it is a worthy read for others as well.