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Texas Water Atlas (review)

Jane Manaster

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many rapid changes in contemporary politics and modern economic life make it hard to marshal a reasoned history. One result is that portions of the final chapter are a bit awkward or dated—oil prices, for example. Moreover, the nature of current topics too often leads, as it sometimes does here, to an encyclopedic presentation of the material.

Still, if it is a historian's task to describe, analyze, and explain, and I think it is, the authors of *The History of Texas* perform their task well. The book in its current edition remains a solid work, popular among college instructors and balanced in its chronological approach to the state's past. And importantly, by its selection and treatment of the material it includes, it is reflective of the state's modern demographic trends. It is a fine book.

Texas Tech University

PAUL H. CARLSON

Texas Water Atlas. By Lawrence E. Estaville and Richard A. Earl. Preface by Andrew Sansom. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008. Pp.148. Color maps, tables, charts, bibliography, index. ISBN 9781603440202, \$24.95 paper.)

Our earth is imperiled. Natural resources are diminishing. The message is repeated so often we become immune to the warnings. Lawrence Estaville and Richard Earl's *Texas Water Atlas* jolts us back to awareness. While statistics can be manipulated to give a false interpretation, maps can hide facts only by omission. Here there is no omission. By dividing the book into seven discrete sections the authors ensure that every aspect of the Texas water supply and reserve is addressed. Each of their series of maps is prefaced by a brief narrative explanation to place the topic in a practical context. Here it may be forgivable to say "a map is worth a thousand words."

Before even glancing at the introductory paragraphs, I would suggest turning to the timeline that appears towards the end of the book to relate how history ties in to the present and future of our water resources. The chronology advances from prehistory to early human settlement by Lake Lubbock. The irrigation systems laid by the Spanish missionaries were later exchanged for new methods and more of the state's major river systems and creeks became an increasingly valuable asset. By the mid-twentieth century three million agricultural acres were irrigated and today a continuously increasing number of organizations and institutions (with acronym succeeding acronym) monitor and control usage and the potential for extravagance and exploitation. The color maps, singularly easy to interpret, identify changes and the further demands anticipated as the population grows.

The chapters explore the impact of the Texas climate, the extent of surface and groundwater supplies along with the quantity and quality and the water-related hazards. The pivotal chapter, "Water Projects, Pollution, and Protection," intimates what is likely to occur in the coming years. When the authors look to the importance of water from a recreational perspective, the contribution to the quality of life is secondary to the substantial income that accrues from fishing and water sports. The final pages map projected change in supply and demand

from the perspective of the livestock industry, manufacturing and mining, agricultural irrigation, energy needs, per capita use, and municipal demands. Their predictions, while cautionary, are not wholly pessimistic.

Mapping can reveal small differences that are far harder to explain in words. For example, the regional disparities indicate concerns that may be magnified or reduced according to whether the location is a heavily or sparsely populated area. Coastal problems differ from those in the High Plains, Houston and El Paso share some issues, others are wholly dissimilar. Although this may be obvious to anyone who gives such matters a thought, it is sobering to see the reality on an illustrated page.

Lawrence Estaville and Richard Earl are geography professors at Texas State University, and Estaville served as the department's chairman for several years. The clarity of the maps owes a measure to advances in cartographic technology, but it is their consummate skill and experience that enables us to recognize the complexities of this precious and irreplaceable resource. The atlas's approach and organization take it beyond the classification of a reference book.

Austin, Texas

JANE MANASTER

Historical Atlas of Texas Methodism. By William C. and John Wesley Hardt. (Garland, Tex.: CrossHouse Publishing, 2008. Pp. 248. Maps, figures, references, index. ISBN 9781934749074, \$ 34.95 cloth.)

The Methodist people, long influential in the history of the frontier and the United States, have a proud and storied chronicle of struggle and achievement. The Texas portion of this struggle has been well documented by William and John Hardt. William, the younger of the two, is retired from a career in public schools and as a writer of educational materials, and the elder Hardt, John Wesley, is a retired bishop and currently serves as Bishop Emeritus at the Perkins School of Theology in Dallas. The Hardts' roots in Methodism run deep, almost from the beginning of the Methodist presence in Texas, and it is obvious that this work for both historians is a labor of love.

Covering the entire history of the denomination in Texas from its beginnings in Austin's colony through the present time, the authors use a short and tight chronology in an effort to give a concise historical account of Texas Methodism. As a reference book it is not strong on narrative; rather, it is quite the opposite. Nevertheless, readers can sense throughout the authors' love of their subject, but those same readers, due to the terse writing, may not share that love and have difficulty perusing these pages. There are, however, some anecdotal and humorous quotes in the text, which give relief from the litany of facts. An example is when William Stephenson, a presiding elder and missionary, sought to establish a Methodist mission in Austin's colony, to which Austin remarked that "one Methodist preacher would do more mischief than a dozen horse thieves" (19). After Austin's imprisonment in Mexico, the Methodists proceeded to begin their "mischief" in Austin's colony.

It is disappointing that the writers do not delve more deeply into the work of