

out before she resumed her public addresses. They convinced her that such traits were sinful; when she conquered them, God would call upon her to speak. This religious and psychological pressure was compounded by her failure as a mother and Sarah's need to assert dominance in rearing the children. Lumpkin rejects the idea that ill health prevented Angelina from continuing her mission, Weld's chief explanation for his wife's withdrawal.

In the late 1840s she resumed correspondence with some of her friends who had signed the Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments in 1848. During the Civil War she became one of the vice presidents of the Woman's Loyal League, an organization supporting the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Following the Civil War, she joined in petition drives for woman suffrage and headed a march of women to the polls on election day. In her later years Angelina Grimké became a supporting player in a drama with a new cast of personalities. Her reappearance on the woman suffrage scene, however, was a personal triumph over almost insuperable obstacles.

Some of the story of Angelina Grimké has been told before. What is significant in this book is the author's explication of the tragic event that prevented this woman from achieving her potential. For this reason, *The Emancipation of Angelina Grimké* adds an important dimension to the life and times of a pioneer for human rights.

—Louise Lex
Iowa State University

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Death Song, The Last of the Indian Wars, by John Edward Weems. Garden City: Doubleday, 1976. pp. xi, 268, notes and index, \$10.05.

Alternative to Extinction. Federal Indian Policy and the Beginnings of the Reservation System, 1846-1851, by Robert A. Trennert, Jr. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975. pp. ix, 263, \$15.00.

Literature dealing with the history of Indian-white relations on the Great Plains during the last half of the nineteenth century is expansive and varied. It runs the gamut from scholarly and journalistic surveys, to tribal histories and biographies of the major antagonists, to personal memoirs and travel accounts. While the topic has encouraged brilliant scholarship, it has also produced trite and inane publications. The books under review exemplify the variety.

A native Texan, John E. Weems has written on a wide variety of subjects, including histories of the battleship "Maine," the race to discover the North Pole, the Texas Republic, and the U.S. war with Mexico in the 1840s. In

these previous works Weems established a pattern of sweeping drama presented in an entertaining style. He relied heavily on eyewitness accounts.

Written in a narrative mode, *Death Song* surveys many incidents in the struggle between the United States and native plains people. Weems concentrates on seven individuals who become the central characters. They include two cavalry officers, John G. Bourke and Robert G. Carter; three Indian leaders, Geronimo (Apache), Quannah Parker (Commanche), and White Bear (Kiowa); George Armstrong Custer and his wife Elizabeth. Except for the Custer fight on the Little Big Horn, the emphasis is clearly on the Southwest and southern plains. Struggles of the Modac, Bannock, Shoshone, Nez Perce and others are briefly mentioned, but seem like awkward appendages to the general narrative.

Physically it is an attractive volume. A map on the endpiece depicts the trans-Mississippi West and identifies forts, rivers, and communities essential to the story. In addition, two portfolios present twenty photographs and drawings of the most prominent people and examples of the physical surroundings.

Unfortunately the documentation is very thin. A section of "Notes" outlines very general secondary sources and offers editorial comments. There is little reference to some of the most recent scholarship. The author acknowledged he "invented no dialogue or other direct quotations," but took them "directly from reliable sources as having been said at the time and the place indicated." Unfortunately the reader is expected to take these conversations on faith since they were written and published years later under extremely different circumstances.

Simply stated, *Death Song* contains nothing new. Even an attempt to write with a sympathetic eye on the Indians' viewpoint is not carried out consistently. The book can be recommended for nothing but popular reading.

Alternative to Extinction, on the other hand, is a reasoned, well-written study of a complicated period in the history of Indian-white relations. It is the author's thesis that, although the modern reservation system was not developed until after the Civil War, the philosophical foundations were established in the five years between 1846-1851. This was a period of policy formulation and experimentation.

Trennert is especially interested in the work of Indian commissioners William Medill, Orlando Brown, Luke Lea, and Thomas Ewing, the first secretary of the newly created Department of the Interior. They possessed little if any prior experience in Indian affairs and had, more often than not, been appointed for purely political reasons. These federal officials faced a difficult task in answering citizen calls for greater protection while at the same time trying to prevent the total destruction of Indian people in the trans-Mississippi West.

The heart of this study is four chapters in which Trennert looks at the background of the reservation system in specific areas: the plains of northern

and western Texas, New Mexico, the border area along the lower Missouri River, and the central plains.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, federal authorities had reached several general conclusions based on experiences of the past half dozen years. They believed tribes had to be gathered together in areas away from the routes of United States' expansion. Here they could be prevented from attacking whites or harming each other. Most officials had concluded that the end results of such a policy was clear, either extermination or civilization. All seemed pleased with the restricted atmosphere except the Indians, and they are were not asked.

Trennert has looked at a period of Indian-white relations usually ignored or passed over lightly by most authors. He has asked some significant questions, probed a wide variety of primary and secondary sources to offer some answers, and hopefully stimulated additional work in this period of concentrated American expansion.

—David A. Walker
University of Northern Iowa

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Years of Struggle: The Farm Diary of Elmer G. Powers, 1931-1936, co-edited by H. Roger Grant and L. Edward Purcell. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1976. pp. 158, \$6.95.

The social historian in recent years has utilized quantitative methods to analyze behavior patterns and arrive at an understanding of the past. But for all the raw data obtained from tax assessors' lists, census manuscripts, and plat maps, there is nothing quite like a "personal document" to add some life and fire to the rows of numbers. Thus it is especially fortunate for Iowa historians that a state so well endowed with quantifiable materials should now have as rare a document as a twentieth century farm diary to use as a benchmark for research into rural life.

Although the editors claim that Elmer Powers "was almost a stereotype of the midwestern farmer," in fact his background, and particularly his membership in the Church of the Brethren, made him and his family hardly typical of the run-of-the-mill Iowa farm operators. A Brethren community, for example, was singled out in the early 1920s by both the United States Office of Education, and the rural sociologists at Ames, as a model farm neighborhood—indeed, one from which all Iowa farm folk could learn. In many ways the members of the Brethren community were atypical of the Iowa rural population: they had social consciences, they were interested in educational achievement for their children, they were community orientated, their farming was of a high standard, and unlike many of their Yankee peers, they tended to stay on the farm to concentrate on the accumulation of property.

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