

## Book Notices

by Michael D. Gibson

*The Beaver Men: Spearheads of Empire.* By Mari Sandoz. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978. Reprint of 1964 edition. xv, 312 pp., illus., notes, maps, bibliography, index, \$4.50 paper.)

*The Buffalo Hunters: The Story of the Hide Men.* By Mari Sandoz. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978. Reprint of 1954 edition. x, 367 pp., bibliography, \$4.50 paper.)

*The Cattlemen: From the Rio Grande Across the Far Marias.* By Mari Sandoz. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978. Reprint of 1958 edition. xii, 498 pp., notes, bibliography, index, \$5.95 paper.)

Mari Sandoz, a native of Nebraska, has long been regarded as one of the best writers of Western Americana. Her awards are too numerous to mention, but four of her books were singled out by Westerners in a nationwide poll as ranking in the 100 Best Books on the American West. The three books mentioned above are part of her Great Plains Series which opened with a biography of her father (*Old Jules*) and concluded with *The Cattlemen*. The University of Nebraska Press in their highly acclaimed Bison Book series has reprinted these books, thus making them more accessible to the readers. These three books alone give the reader a portrait of the Great Plains. The author's research is thorough and the narrative fascinating and entertaining. Most readers will agree that few writers command such evocative prose about the Plains as does Mari Sandoz. These books, and others by Miss Sandoz, are essential for any serious student of the Great Plains experience.

*Looking Far West: The Search for the American West in History, Myth, and Literature.* Edited by Frank Bergon and Zeese Papanikolas. (New York: New American Library, 1978. xx, 476 pp., illus., index, \$2.50 paper.)

The varied images of the American West are brought to life through more than 200 selected writings ranging from poetry and fiction to diaries and reminiscences. An excellent selection of primary source materials with perceptive introductions to each section are collected in this handy volume.

*Story of the Great American West.* Edited by Edward S. Barnard. (Pleasantville, N.Y.: The Reader's Digest Association, Inc., 1977. 384 pp., illus., bibliography, index, \$14.95.)

This book adds a new dimension to the history of the American West with such graphic descriptions of how to build a log cabin, how to load a Ken-

tucky rifle, or how a trapper takes a wife. The book goes beyond the usual topics to the everyday life of the pioneers. The work is further supplemented with excellent color illustrations, firsthand quotations, anecdotes, and newspaper accounts. A real credit to Reader's Digest.

*The Authentic Wild West: The Outlaws.* By James D. Horan. (New York: Crown Publishers, 1977. 294 pp., illus., notes, index, \$12.95.)

The third in a series of books about the "Authentic" Wild West the book contains 250 rare and heretofore unpublished photographs and documents which strip away much of the legend surrounding the outlaws of such fame as Jesse James and Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

*The Outlaw Trail: A Journey Through Time.* By Robert Redford. Photography by Jonathan Blair. (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978. 219 pp., photographs, index, \$25.00.)

The name Robert Redford is associated with movie acting, but in this, his first book, Redford shows his ability as a writer. Redford, who lives in Utah, has always been active in conservation of our natural environment. In this handsome volume, he shows his fascination with the West—its past and its future. He retraces the Outlaw Trail through Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah. He presents vivid images of the legendary outlaws—Butch Cassidy, Calamity Jane, etc. Yet he speaks to modern day men and women who tell of their concern for what the future holds for the land they love. This is Redford's personal testimony to the dying of the Old West and his attempt to call attention to the beauty of the West he has come to dearly love. A provocative work and one that merits careful reading by historians, conservationists, and those interested in the West.

*Wheels West 1590-1900.* By Richard Dunlop. Foreward by Ray Allen Billington. (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1977. 197 pp., illus., bibliography, index, \$16.95.)

The author, an avid backpacker and nature-lover, describes the importance of the wheeled vehicle in the westward movement from Conestogas, handcarts, freight wagons, to buckboards, buggies, and the iron horse. The text is supplemented by numerous illustrations.

*The Frontier: Comparative Studies.* Edited with introduction by David H. Miller and Jerome O. Steffen (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977. viii, 327 pp., maps, tables, notes, index, \$14.95.)

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