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bits more errors than it should. The strangest, in my view, is in dividing the index into two parts. The second part is called "Index of Names," but should be called "Index of *Personal* Names" because it contains only the names of people. It is only four pages long, and the single entry on Hervey Johnson requires almost a quarter of it. The first part is entitled "Index of Subjects," also a misnomer because it consists chiefly of names, excluding only names of people. It is only ten pages long, and the "Index of *Personal* Names" could certainly have been incorporated into it to avoid confusion.

Another unusual and unfortunate publisher's decision was to print on the inside of the dust jacket the only complete map-diagram of the area where Johnson lived and wrote most of the letters. Two sections from this map are found in the book, but they do not encompass the whole area shown on the dust jacket. One government map (pp. 13-14) was so poorly reproduced that most of the river lines dropped out.

But these are mere cavils. The letters are interesting and important. They have been expertly edited and, for the most part, packaged in this book. They present insight into various facets of history that are not obtainable elsewhere.

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Ten Years in the Saddle: The Memoir of William Woods Averell, edited by Edward K. Eckert and Nicholas J. Amato. San Rafael, California: Presidio, 1978. pp. xi, 443. Photographs, maps, bibliographical notes, index. \$16.95.

William Woods Averell was a Union cavalry general with considerable writing ability and a penchant for collecting and saving his own memorabilia. His memoir, *Ten Years in the Saddle*, reflects this. It is articulate, rich with detail, and painstakingly accurate.

Ten Years in the Saddle depicts three periods in Averell's life: his student life at West Point, his exploits as a cavalry officer in the New Mexico Territory, and his role in the Civil War. Throughout the book, Averell's prose rises above the level of mere reminiscence. The chapters written about his West Point days supply us with insight into the traditions and esprit de corps that are characteristic of the academy.

THE ANNALS OF IOWA

This portion of Averell's memoir is replete with names of faculty members, fellow students (including the artist James Whistler), and military personalities of the day. Averell's sketch of General Winfield Scott is touching as he recounts with awe the general's charisma and imposing presence.

Upon his graduation from West Point in 1855, Averell received short assignments in Missouri and Pennsylvania. He was then given command—his first—of a regiment in the heart of the New Mexico Territory at Fort Defiance. On his journey to Fort Defiance, he visited Bent's Fort, passed near the Spanish Peaks (the first mountains to be seen from the Santa Fe Trail), and saw the territorial capital, Santa Fe, for the first time. Averell, like others before him, was amazed by the landscape before him as he topped the Raton range. Here again, Averell's writing ability declares itself as he describes the view of the Spanish Peaks, Long's Peak, and Pike's Peak from Raton Pass.

Averell's stay in the desert frontier was cut short by a bullet wound in his left leg two years after his arrival at Fort Defiance. He returned home to New York to recuperate. His leg had not yet healed completely when Fort Sumter was fired upon two years later. Averell was bored and, hoping to serve in the impending war, he applied to General Scott, his acquaintance from West Point, for the opportunity. Averell volunteered for a mission while waiting in the general's office. Averell, an accomplished rider, was to travel three hundred miles—mainly on horseback—through Confederate territory to order the commander of Fort Arbuckle in Arkansas to leave his post with his troops, destroying everything they could not take with them. This "long and perilous ride" to Fort Arbuckle, is an impressive chapter in Averell's life.

In 1861 Averell was made colonel of the Third Pennsylvania volunteer cavalry, after having previously fought in defense of Washington and at the first battle of Bull Run.

Averell was at his best when he was training raw recruits. Discipline and order were the prerequisites to any Averell-led campaign. Averell's Third Pennsylvania cavalry notched many victories. But in 1862 at Fisher's Hill, Virginia and at Oldsfield, West Virginia the Union troops sorely needed substantial victories—not just victories, but overwhelming victories. These victories were within Averell's grasp. But because he could not overcome his belief in well-ordered troops, he held back his men to regroup and, in each case, the decisive victory was lost.

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Averell was subsequently removed from command by General Philip Sheridan, a controversial action which crushed Averell psychologically. General Sheridan, according to a secondhand report uncovered by the editors, later regretted this action. Averell's dismissal, an event too painful to recall himself, cut short his original intention to extend his memoirs through 1865. An account of this time in Averell's life is detailed in the editors' epilogue as is Averell's post-military career as an inventor, entrepreneur, and consul-general to British North America at Montreal.

The editors of *Ten Years in the Saddle*, Nicholas J. Amato and Edward K. Eckert, have explained Averell's removal this way: "William Averell was not a failure during the Civil War; he was a victim of change. He had been just what the Army needed early in the conflict—disciplined, capable, and cautious." The editors should also be complimented for letting Averell tell his story in his own words. They have changed little of Averell's typewritten text and have skillfully focused their attention on the manuscript's readability and accuracy. In doing so they have provided us with a valuable document of Civil War history.

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Iron Road to the West, by John Stover. New York: Columbia University Press, 1978. pp. xii, 266. \$14.95.

John Stover is no stranger to transportation history. Indeed, he has produced eight books on the subject; *Iron Road to the West* is the latest. Like those before it, this volume is clearly an important contribution to the literature.

Stover's thesis is that "no decade was more important in the history of American railroads than the antebellum 1850s." (p. xi) He points out that the railroads of that decade forged a new east-west trade axis; that along with improved implements, railroad transportation served to advance the farmer's frontier and foster the development of western commercial agriculture; that railroads facilitated an accelerated exchange of food for manufactured goods; that the rails provided adequate periodicity on a year-round basis; and that they resulted in the rise of Chicago as queen among aspiring western cities. Moreover, this modern, new transportation device contributed to the passing of the

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