

Striving for party loyalty, Polk incurred the displeasure of the "whole-hog" White supporters in Tennessee and fully expected them to mount a strong opponent against his reelection to Congress in 1835. He escaped this danger and went on to win election as Speaker of the House in December, but White's personal popularity was sufficient to carry Tennessee against Van Buren in 1836. Polk did his best to hold the state in line, exchanging numerous letters with Democratic leaders in the counties and aiding in the creation of loyal Democratic newspapers to offset the heavy Whig preponderance in the state's press. Though unsuccessful at this time, his correspondence from Tennessee and elsewhere shows him emerging as a major party figure in the state and nation.

The overwhelming focus of these letters is politics, yet ordinary life shows through from time to time in Polk's business dealings and family affairs. One sees many things in the volume which bring to mind the problems of today: the constant clamor of minor politicians for patronage; complaints about slow mail service; the limited rights of women; dunning letters about students' unpaid bills at college. Yet frequently the reader is yanked back to the antebellum years by a reference to Indian lands being overrun by illegal white settlers or to slave children being bought and examined like livestock.

There are no flaws in the production of the book by Vanderbilt University Press, although the price has jumped 67 percent from the first volumes.

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Siskiyou Trail: The Hudson's Bay Fur Company Route to California.

By RICHARD DILLON. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975. Pp. xv, 381. Maps, illustrations, acknowledgments, introduction, selective bibliography, index. \$8.95.)

The Siskiyou Trail attains its rightful place in the history and geography of the United States in this excellent book by Richard Dillon. The author has managed to fill a void in our appreciation of the overland routes which led to the eventual settlement of the North American west. Writing with a flair that does justice to his subject,

Dillon has presented a panorama of adventure which will amuse and excite even the most discerning reader. The book, volume twelve in the American Trails Series under the general editorship of A. B. Guthrie, maintains the high standard of literary merit and scholarship which characterizes the other works in this series.

Dillon has given the reader an opportunity to examine the history and development of the Siskiyou Trail. The hardy men, who used it to reach "castor" in the no-man's land between the British Northwest and the future Pacific coast states of the emerging American republic, are almost brought to life in this very readable narrative. The policy of Dr. John McLoughlin and other employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, deliberately to exterminate the beaver in the zone between the British and American spheres of influence, is brought out in detail. Jedediah Smith, John Sutter, Alexander R. McLeod, Thomas McKay, Peter Skene Ogden, Michel Laframboise, George F. Emmons, David Douglas, Ewing Young, and a host of other adventurous souls who traversed all or a portion of the Siskiyou Trail are portrayed in their moments of triumphs and failures on the trail. The reader is able to observe the character of each major figure in the book as the travelers attempt to surmount the obstacles inherent in this treacherous route.

Few will fail to sympathize with the frontiersmen as time after time they met the awesome task of avoiding annihilation. What drove the Irish, American Indians, French-Canadians, Scots, English, Norwegians, and men of many other national origins, to attempt this journey year after year, for such minuscule wages is amazing. Although the monetary rewards were small for common trappers, the desire to participate in this occupation was strong. However, some of the trappers deplored the wasteful policies of the British as is evident when Peter Skene Ogden wrote, "It is almost a sin to see the number of small beaver we destroy and to no purpose. Some of the females taken have no less than five young . . ." (p. 63).

Dillon maintains that the man who pioneered a large portion of the trail in California and whose exploits persuaded the Hudson's Bay Company to make it a permanent trail was Jedediah Strong Smith. In a chapter entitled, "A Sly Cunning Yankee," Dillon rates Smith as the greatest American explorer after Meriwether Lewis.

The author, the head of the Sutro Library in San Francisco, is to be commended for his excellent achievement. He has contributed an important and readable addition to the literature about the early years of American and British participation in the settlement and exploita-

tion of the Pacific region of the far west. It will be welcomed by readers interested in the history and geography of the Pacific coast region of the United States.

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Settlement Houses and the Great Depression. By JUDITH ANN TROLANDER. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975. Pp. 216. Preface, introduction, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$12.95.)

Settlement houses were founded in the late nineteenth century as agencies of reform. Middle and upper class settlement workers started kindergartens and vocational training programs to supplement inadequate public schooling. English language classes helped Americanize recent immigrants. The houses initiated public recreation programs in poor neighborhoods and encouraged the passage of housing laws. Labor issues such as child labor, working conditions for women, and the right to unionize drew the support of settlements. In most cities, settlement workers actively supported government reform. In summary, according to Judith Trolander, settlements "emerged from the Progressive Era with a strong heritage of social reform" (p. 13).

Something happened to this reform orientation between the Progressive Era and the New Deal, however. By the 1930s, settlement houses were established institutions, providing recreation and some relief for their neighbors, but their response to the Depression was essentially "hollow and irrelevant" (p. 16). Most settlements either opposed or refused to support New Deal programs involving unemployment, relief, and labor relations.

What brought about this dramatic change in social outlook and action? Trolander discusses various explanations that have been offered by other scholars — from the professionalization of social workers to the influence of psychology — but finds that the determining factor was the changing source of settlement house funds. From the 1880s to World War I, the innovativeness and enthusiasm of settlements made them attractive to wealthy philanthropists. By the 1920s, however, budgets had increased tremendously and donations had be-