
Books

THE WESTERN JOURNALS OF WASHINGTON IRVING, Edited and annotated by John Francis McDermott, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1944. \$3.50.

Seldom does a reader pick up a book in which the arts of illustrating and book-making and of finished scholarship are so becomingly joined as in this work. For the first time in 112 years we can now read and enjoy Washington Irving's five extant journals. Mr. McDermott tells us in an introductory chapter all we need to know about Irving and his traveling companions, and why he made the trip. He shows that Irving's now famous *Tour on the Prairies* was spun largely from his imagination. Irving scarcely used the journals.

The first journal entry was made 3 September, 1832, as Irving left Cincinnati. The last entry bears the date of 17 November, six days after leaving Fort Gibson for the last time. "Creole Village" is the last chapter. At the end is a map of the Irving itinerary, locating and dating campsights and showing Fort Gibson, the Canadians, Little River and so on.

Using broken sentences and jotting down numerous accurate details, Irving fascinates his reader with constantly changing scenes enlivened by brief glimpses of Black Hawk, Gen. William Clark, Col. A. P. Chouteau, Gen. Matthew Arbuckle, and so on; of Osages and Creeks; of steamboats and forests. You can fancy hearing wolves howling at night; seeing herds of buffalo, deer, elk, wild horses in full flight; marveling at clouds of passenger pigeons; hearing great bee trees falling to the ax; and watching a frontier military company making the tour from Fort Gibson.

Illustrations from Catlin and Stanley and Lewis and Irving, vignettes depicting frontier scenes, paper of choice quality, a good index and a complete and classified bibliography are worthy of note.—R. H. RECORDS.

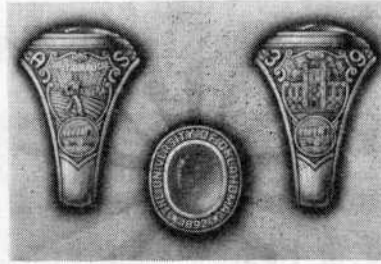
► WESTERN WORDS: A DICTIONARY OF THE RANGE, COW CAMP AND TRAIL. By Ramon Adams, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1944. xiv—182 pp. \$3.00.

This volume is a unique contribution to the literature of the American West. In many respects it is more nearly an encyclopedia than a dictionary, since a quarter to half a page is often given to defining and explaining a single word or expression. References are also frequently given to further sources of information. The book is as colorful as a Great Plains sunset, and has all the tang of camp coffee and the salty flavor of bacon broiled over a fire of mesquite wood.

The section included under each letter of the alphabet is headed by a range aphorism, or pungent epigram, not unlike some of those in *Poor Richard's Almanac*. Examples are: "Brains in the head save blisters on the feet," "It's the man that's the cowhand, not the outfit he wears," "Success is the size of the hole a man leaves after he dies," "A change of pasture sometimes makes the calf fatter," and "Nobody ever drowned himself in sweat."

The life of any people is undoubtedly reflected in their speech. Here in the nearly 3,000 words and phrases defined may be seen in clear perspective the daily work and play, problems and responsibilities of the cowboy and ranchman and the "range philosophy," or attitude toward life, which was developed by their environment and vocation. This is a remarkable book, beautifully printed and bound, which everyone interested in the West will love and wish to look into again and again.—EDWARD EVERETT DALE.

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