

BOOK REVIEWS

Broken Hand: The Life History of Thomas Fitzpatrick. By LE-ROY R. HAFEN and W. J. GHENT. (Denver: The Old West Publishing Company, 1931. Pp. ix+316, including preface, notes, index and three appendices.)

The fur traders were the real pathfinders of the great West. They revealed the sources of the Yellowstone, Missouri, Greene, Colorado, and Snake Rivers, reconnoitered their tributaries, discovered South Pass and filed geographical reports of tremendous importance to the permanent settlers who came in the forties. Hafen and Ghent in their brilliantly written book, *Broken Hand*, represent their hero, Thomas Fitzpatrick, as perhaps the outstanding figure among mountain men during this colorful epoch of the Fur Trade (1825-1840). Interesting and quite convincing is the comparison drawn by the authors of Fitzpatrick with his most merited rivals for this position of highest acclaim, Kit Carson and Jim Bridger. (The colorful Jedediah S. Smith is omitted because of his short service and his untimely death at the hands of the Comanches on the Cimarron Desert in 1831.) "All three (Carson, Bridger and Fitzpatrick) had the photographic mind, the ability to register a scene once viewed and to describe it in terms of amazing exactness. Equal in courage, Carson was the most impetuous; Bridger, the most wary; Fitzpatrick, the most cool and balanced in judgment. In native ability to outguess his savage foes or to surmise when danger most threatened, it may be that Bridger somewhat excelled the two others. Of the three, it seems Carson had the most appealing personality. Carson won the affection of men; Bridger their interest; Fitzpatrick their admiration and regard. In all around capabilities, however, Fitzpatrick was much the superior of the other two."

The active career of Fitzpatrick (known among the Indians as Broken Hand,—a nickname applied because of his crippled left hand, the result of an accidental explosion of his rifle), covered the thirty year period from the opening of the rich country west of the Rockies to the beginning of settlements beyond the Great Bend of the Missouri. He was with Ashley on his famous expedition up the Missouri in 1823; a year later, with Jedediah S. Smith and nine others, he discovered South Pass, future gateway to the Great Basin, Oregon and California. For the next two years, he trapped with Ashley in the Green River, Uintah, and Weber Val-

leys of Western Wyoming and eastern and central Utah and attended the first two rendezvous ever held in the mountains at Green River and Ogden's Hole. Associated with the Rocky Mountain Fur Company from its inception in 1822, he became its head in 1830.

At the close of the fur trade period, Fitzpatrick became the most famous and sought-after guide in the West. He directed the Parker-Whitman and Whitman-Spaulding parties across the Plains to Green River in 1835 and 1836 and in the early forties he led the first two emigrant trains to Oregon.

In 1841, he piloted Father De Smet and his Catholic priests northward along the Snake to Pend Oreille Lake where the first mission in Idaho was founded among the Flatheads. He was official guide to Fremont on the Pathfinder's longest and greatest exploring expedition, 1843-44; he showed Colonel Kearney and his Dragoons the way to South Pass in 1845 and in the same year he was with Lieutenant James William Abert in No Man's Land, the Panhandle of Texas and Western Oklahoma. In 1846, soon after the declaration of war against Mexico, he guided the Army of the West under Kearney to Santa Fe and the California Expedition as far as Socorro. Returning from New Mexico, he was appointed first Indian Agent to the tribes of the Upper Platte and the Arkansas and in 1851, with Colonel Mitchell, he negotiated the important Fort Laramie Treaty, at what was undoubtedly the most colorful council of Plains Indians ever assembled in the West. His death occurred at Washington, February 7, 1854. He was then in his fifty-sixth year.

This monograph is the only biography of Thomas Fitzpatrick ever written. Therein lies its value for perhaps no other man so dramatically characterized the spirit of the West. Trapper, explorer, Indian fighter, guide, government agent, and negotiator of treaties, Fitzpatrick's life is the story of thirty years of trail-blazing and pioneering in the Trans-Mississippi West.

The book is well written. Nine chapters are devoted to Broken Hand as trapper and trail-blazer, four to his career as adjutant and guide and four to his experience as Indian Agent.

There are several excellent illustrations, some copious but well arranged footnotes, and an excellent map which shows the location of the important posts and trails of the Old West. Three appendices are added: the first, a brief resume of the life of Friday, the Arapahoe, the little Indian boy of nine years found by Fitzpatrick on the Cimarron Desert, Friday, June 3, 1831 (hence the name

Friday), at the time Jedediah S. Smith was killed; the second an article by John S. Robb in the *St. Louis Reveille*, March 1, 1847, on the discovery of South Pass; and the third, the main draft of the will and testament of Thomas Fitzpatrick. It is the opinion of the reviewer that this monograph will be welcomed by scholars as an important contribution to the history of the West.

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The Cattle King. By EDWARD F. TREADWELL. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931. Pp. 367. \$3.00.)

In his "Foreword" the author says: "The West has produced many men who have reached the top of the ladder in many walks of life, but, when measured by actual achievement in connection with the development of the material resources of the West, Henry Miller holds a preeminent place. To own over one million acres of land situated in five states, over one million head of livestock, two banks and their branches, reservoirs, and other properties, all operated as a unit, appraised at fifty million dollars, and acquired, developed, protected, reclaimed and irrigated by the sole efforts of one man starting in life with nothing but his natural endowments, is an achievement which cannot but attract attention and wonder."

The title-page carries as subhead: "A Dramatized Biography." Certainly there is plenty of drama throughout the pages and there are no dull ones. Inside the covers is the "Map of the Principality Henry Miller, the Cattle King Owned and Developed." It shows that his main holdings were in the States of California, Nevada and Oregon.

A History of Colonial America. By OLIVER PERRY CHITWOOD. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931. Pp. 811. \$3.75.)

This volume in "Harper's Historical Series," edited by Dean Guy Stanton Ford, of the University of Minnesota, is the work of Professor Chitwood of West Virginia University.

As the title indicates, there would be scant occasion to mention in it the Pacific Coast or the Northwest, the field of this *Quarterly*. The "Westward Movement" is mentioned but, quite appropriately, only in Massachusetts. One brief sentence appears on page 44 as follows: "The Pacific Coast as far as Oregon was also explored by the Spaniards before the middle of the century (by 1543)." A generous footnote cites the work of Professor H. E. Bolton of the University of California.