Book Notes- Fall 2007

August Scherneckau's diary presents a view of the Civil War in the Trans-Mississippi theater through the eyes of a German immigrant serving with the First Nebraska volunteers from 1862 through 1865.

***


Army scout, explorer, Indian agent, gold prospector, and family man, Luther "Yellowstone" Kelly earned his name scouting for the U.S. Army along the Yellowstone River. Independent historian Jerry Keenan's biography includes Kelly's exploits in the Great Plains.

***


In November 1868 the U.S. Cavalry under Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer attacked a peaceful Southern Cheyenne village along the Washita River in present-day western Oklahoma. Richard G. Hardorff presents a range of views of the Washita battle through firsthand testimonies by both Indians and whites, each accompanied by an introduction and extensive annotation. A general introduction and fourteen historical maps are also included.

***


Donovin Arleigh Sprague offers a collection of nearly two hundred images of people and events connected with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

***


Through transcripts of radio broadcasts, business documents, and nearly two hundred telegrams to family, friends, and notable figures, this final volume of The Papers of Will Rogers follows the career of the popular Oklahoma entertainer during the height of his fame to his death and beyond.

***


Felix Cohen, who assisted John Collier in drafting the New Deal's Indian Reorganization Act in 1934, formulated his "Basic Memorandum
on Drafting of Tribal Constitutions" that same year. David E. Wilkins's introduction and editing highlight what Cohen's "Memorandum" reveals about the thinking of federal officials regarding Indiana policy at the time.

***

Road, River, and Ol' Boy Politics: A Texas County's Path from Farm to Supersuburb. By Linda Scarbrough. Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2005. xi + 404 pp. Maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index. $39.95.

Linda Scarbrough examines Williamson County, Texas, just north of Austin, and what happens when a diverse agricultural economy is transformed through large-scale public works projects into a homogeneous supersuburb dependent on computers and other high-technology products. It becomes a cautionary tale about adequately planning for all the environmental, economic, and cultural effects of large public works projects.

***

Literary Austin. Edited by Don Graham. Fort Worth, TX: TCU Press, 2007. xv + 461 pp. Bibliography, index. $29.50 cloth, $17.95 paper.

Editor Don Graham's collection showcases literary responses to the history, color, and character of Texas's capital city. Included are essays, fiction, and poetry by such writers as O. Henry, J. Frank Dobie, Larry McMurtry, Molly Ivins, Walter P. Webb, and many others.

* * *


Gene Wunderlich tells the story of early Swedish settlers constructing a house of worship in the harsh environment of northern North Dakota. More than a century after its construction it still stands as a monument to the skills of its builders.

* * *


The memories and history of South Dakota's historic buildings are captured in seventy-eight vivid black-and-white photographs by Scott Myers. Authors Jay D. Vogt and Stephen C. Rogers give context and relevance to the buildings and places pictured here.