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## Review of More True Tales of Old-Time Kansas

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*More True Tales of Old-Time Kansas.* By David Dary. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987. Photos, notes, index. viii + 280 pp. \$19.95 cloth, \$9.95 paper.

"Henry Born married Ida Dillabaugh from Montague, Michigan, in July, 1900. They had four children—two boys and two girls. They lived beside a beautiful trout lake in the San Juan Mountains about twenty miles above Pagosa Springs during the spring, summer, and early fall. They spent their winters in town." If this type of clean, factual, detailed historical writing appeals to you, I'd recommend *More True Tales of Old-Time Kansas* by David Dary for your reading pleasure.

This handsomely clad volume contains forty-one narratives about interesting people

and outstanding events that have left their mark on the scroll of Kansas history. It is broken down into six sections: Over the Trails; Buried Treasure on the Plains; The Lawless and the Lawmen; The Famous and the Obscure; Tornadoes, Floods, Grasshoppers, Blizzards, and Prairie Fires; People, Places, and Things.

Between the covers of this book, you will meet such people as William Becknell, Seth M. Hays, Lizzie Johnson Williams, and Horace Greeley. There are also many lesser known characters. Mr. Dary has a penchant for working the obscure person or fact into a tale. Reading these, one becomes fascinated with the author's devotion to his self-imposed duty of finding all the material possible to substantiate his narrative.

There is no attempt to embellish the truth for effect here, though the reader may sometimes wish there were. Dary is quick to explain, often apologetically and within the narrative itself, if his sources are less than reliable. I found myself wanting to say, "Don't worry about it, the version we dare to write is the only truth, the only relationship we have with the past," echoing Patricia Hampl. On the other hand, the plain Kansas honesty of such statements as "How many cattle were actually shipped out of Waterville during the summer and Fall of 1868 is not known," is commendable.

Perhaps it is the honesty, the integrity of language use that becomes the volume's greatest appeal. It is that "attempt" to get at a solid basis for truth that one sees over and over in the Great Plains people and in this book. It should provide good reading for Kansans everywhere.

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