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## Review of *A Buffalo Round-up: A Selected Bibliography* By George W. Arthur

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*A Buffalo Round-up: A Selected Bibliography.* By George W. Arthur. Regina, Saskatchewan: Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, 1985. v + 153 pp. \$35.00.

Compiling a bibliography of the buffalo might seem an impossible task, given the immense number of authors who have dealt with the subject. Certainly knowing what to

leave out is as important as knowing what to put in. George W. Arthur has tried to set some limits to the scope of his "buffalo roundup" by excluding much (but not all) fiction and being highly selective about his inclusion of European sources. A large proportion of his titles comprise works of historical importance, either by nineteenth-century (and earlier) visitors to the North American Plains or by more recent historians. The fields of paleontology and veterinary medicine are also conspicuously represented, perhaps disproportionately so.

Although the final entry in Arthur's book is numbered 2521, many of the titles are duplications. A 1934 reprinting of Henry Hastings Sibley's article on a buffalo hunt, originally published in the *New York Spirit of the Times* in 1846, appears three times, once under the author's proper name and twice under variations of his *nom de plume*, Hal, a Dacotah: "Dacotha [sic], Hal-a" and "Hal (a Dacotah)." The date of the hunt, 1842, is the user's only clue that the work actually dates from the mid-nineteenth century.

No such indication is present in some cases, where a modern reprint is listed in preference to the original edition. Nor is the most readily available reprint always given. An 1892 edition of David Coyner's *The Lost Trappers* (originally published in 1847) is listed, rather than the 1969 Rio Grande Press reprint. Sometimes one wonders if an entry was included merely because the word "buffalo" appeared in the title. Alvin Josephy's *Now That the Buffalo's Gone*, for example, is listed, though it contains only a single passing reference to the animal.

Such flaws diminish but do not seriously impair the usefulness of Arthur's bibliography. Even the student of the Great Plains without a special interest in the bison may derive benefit from it, for its entries necessarily include many works on related subjects such as topography and climate, the Plains Indians, and the early phases of white settlement. Although most of these will be well known to the specialist, there is a good chance that nearly every user will encounter some unfamiliar titles. Even the

buffalo "buff" is unlikely to be acquainted with every entry in this compendium.

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