BOOK NOTES


As Professor Nancy G. Cott wrote regarding volume one, in The School of Anti-Slavery, 1840–1866, in a spring 1998 review for Kansas History, The Selected Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony "serves as a valuable accessible source of primary material, particularly relating to the relationship between Stanton and Anthony," and volume two should prove of even greater value and interest to Kansas readers. The latter contains considerable correspondence pertaining to the two women's involvement in the Sunflower State's ill-fated 1867 suffrage campaign, demonstrating clearly the central place Kansas held in these early struggles for equal rights. In addition to the wonderfully telling letters themselves, with correspondents such as Charles Robinson and Samuel N. Wood, editor Ann Gordon, an associate research professor at Rutgers University, again follows each document with remarkably enlightening and useful footnotes. Gordon and the university press are to be commended for a highly successful second volume in their six-volume series.


According to National Geographic photographer Joel Sartore, The Nature of Nebraska is "the new reference book on Nebraska natural history. You'll need no other." And he may be correct. Foundation professor of biology at the University of Nebraska, Paul A. Johnsgard here offers us a rich celebration of his state's ecological and biological diversity that includes fourteen maps, fifty-two illustrations, a "Checklist of Nebraska's Flora and Fauna," and a "Guide to Nebraska's Natural Areas and Preserves."


Gary E. Moulton, professor of history at the University of Nebraska, puts the finishing touch on his monumental series with the publication of this Comprehensive Index, which naturally enhances the value of this remarkable project that began in the mid-1980s. Moulton's will be a hard act for forthcoming bicentennial events to follow, and his scholarly contribution will be long used and admired.


Volume one in The Oklahoma Western Biographies series was first published in 1988; this revised paperback edition, by one of America's best-known historians on things military in the American West, does not offer a new portrait of George A. Custer; rather, it "provides the opportunity to recast the story of the Little Bighorn in light of...more recent scholarship." Cavalier in Buckskin remains a superb little biography of one of America's most written-about icons, deserving of our continued attention.


New York-born Erastus F. Beadle was thirty-six years old when he moved to Nebraska Territory three years after the passage of the Kansas–Nebraska Act of 1854. Although he failed to make his fortune and returned to New York after one year, he succeeded in leaving us "a picture of reality of one small piece of the nineteenth-century American West," according to Ronald C. Naugle, professor of history at Nebraska Wesleyan University. Beadle's is "the diary of a man lured by the myth of the West as a place of adventure, a new start, a chance to get rich...The diary is one man's brief account of life in Nebraska Territory in 1857, and it provides snapshots of a human drama as it plays out in business, culture, and politics."


If Daniel Dancer's spectacular photographs fail to "help people to look with a renewed respect at this state," certainly nothing could succeed. The beautifully reproduced images in this volume cover Kansas's marvelously diverse seasons and span the state geographically, from "Bald eagles along the Kaw River," a "Sunset over White Cloud," a "Storm over Beaumont, Butler County," and black-eyed Susans in Jefferson County to a "Sunrise at Cheyenne Bottoms," a custom wheat cutter in Greeley County, a mule deer in Logan County, and the moon over Monument Rocks, Gove County. This revised volume also features new seasonal essays and eleven new photographs.


Adeline and Julia Graham were sisters who grew up in the western Michigan community of Berrien Springs during the 1870s and 1880s. Although both proved to be fine diarists, of most interest to readers of Kansas History, will be part two, "Julia Graham's Kansas Adventures," which covers the period from September 11, 1885, to August 3, 1886, when Graham and four other young women took up residence on a homestead claim in Greeley County. Julia Graham's adventure was not a unique one, as many single women took advantage of the Homestead Act's equal treatment provision, but it was unusual, and her motivation "is not clear...Most likely," write the editors, "Julia thought 'roughing it' in the West would be a lark, and despite many privations [not the least of which would no doubt be the great blizzard of 1886], her diary shows that she and her women companions had a delightful time."