

In the Guthrie, Oklahoma, land rush of 1889, as in most other federal land sales, those who profited most were often not the actual settlers but the entrepreneurs—like these lawyers—who serviced the settlers' needs.

C. P. Rich, Guthrie, Oklahoma Territory, April 22, 1889, Open Air Law Offices. Photograph, 1889. Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library, Norman.



the railroad's land grant in the Red River Valley of the north, and they developed bonanza grain farms on these holdings. Oliver Dalrymple managed a seven-thousand-acre wheat operation there in 1877. He used "eighty horses, twenty-six breaking plows, forty cross plows, twenty-one seeders, sixty harrows," and harvesting equipment in proportion. But over time the owners of the bonanza farms found it worthwhile to sell out to small farmers.

When settlers first crossed the Mississippi, men of capital had long been investing in raw western lands, expecting to earn large returns as the country developed. By the mid-nineteenth century, well-informed capitalists knew that investments in western mortgages and tax titles were also remunerative. Western lawyers, bankers, and real estate men eagerly served as western agents of such investors. As the tide of settlement flowed into the West after the Civil War, a less visible stream of capital accompanied it. Increasingly in the western county-seat towns and supply centers, loan agents, sometimes also lawyers or real estate men, offered funds to settlers who wished to preempt land, take advantage of the commutation clause of the Homestead Act, or buy supplies, equipment, or livestock. Mortgage agents recruited savings from eastern banks and insurance companies as well as from professionals and small businessmen who were eager to double or triple the 5 or 6 percent paid by eastern savings institutions. Successful western loan men incorporated their businesses, set up branch offices in New York or abroad, offered "guaranteed" mortgages for sale, and began to sell debentures against mortgage paper. Such companies helped finance the "Great Dakota Land Boom" of the 1880s and the flow of farmers into other western states and territories during the same period.

Entrapped in the collapse of the boom, many western settlers failed to meet their mortgage interest or capital payments and abandoned their land. Caught between penniless borrowers and importunate lenders, the mortgage companies foreclosed. But the corporations could not resell the land, and most of them failed also. There had been earlier "wring-outs" in new settlement areas, but none so devastating as that of the late nineteenth century. Populist orators castigated mortgage men, along with railroad companies and land monopolists, for being responsible for the misery of the western farmer during the early 1890s. When Congress passed the Federal Farm Loan Act of 1916, memories of those years of discontent inspired advocates.

On every western agricultural frontier, the commercial production of farmers stimulated the development of an urban superstructure. The villages, towns, and cities of the West provided skills, services, capital, machinery, markets—or gateways to markets—and a good deal of political leadership for rural America. In return, the food, feed, and fiber surpluses of the farmers and their needs for manufactured goods, equipment, and supplies invigorated western trade centers. Above the local level, an urban hierarchy of subregional, regional, and national entrepôts and manufacturing centers developed, sustained by the movement and processing of agricultural products and the needs of hinterlands for manufactured goods, supplies, and services.

Glance at a listing of American millionaires compiled in 1892. In Moline, Illinois, Charles H. Deere controlled the fortune amassed by his father in the plow business. Nearby in Quincy, Edward Wells prospered by packing midwestern hogs; in Chicago, three members of the Armour family became rich in the same business. Thomas Lynch was a millionaire distiller, and Cyrus H. McCormick made millions from the sale of patented mowers and reapers. In Minneapolis-St. Paul, one finds the Pillsburys, enriched by western wheat. Frederick Weyerhaeuser provided thousands of western farmers with milled lumber, and James J. Hill's railroads served the farmers of the northern plains and Pacific Northwest. In St. Louis, D. R. Frances attributed his wealth to dealing in grain options, and Adolphus Busch used western grains to brew "fine beer." In San Francisco, L. L. Baker prospered in the agricultural machinery business, and the millionaire Henry Pierce was a grain dealer. These men exemplify urban individuals or firms that accumulated vast assets during the agricultural settlement of the trans-Mississippi West. Other businessmen derived part of their substantial wealth from rural land speculation. William Jennings Bryan echoed the belief of millions of rural westerners when, at the convention of the Democratic party in 1896, he thundered, "The great cities rest upon our broad and fertile prairies. Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country."

Cultural Adaptation

Did cultural groups adapt similarly to the economic challenges of agriculture while they created a vast social mosaic in the West? Did the eagerness of some of these groups to develop commercial agriculture assist their adjustments to western conditions, or did cultural predispositions sometimes obscure economic opportunities? We have seen that two powerful American subcultures were involved—northeastern Yankee and upland

southern. Studying early-nineteenth-century regional cultures in Indiana in areas that would soon be sending populations westward, Richard L. Power contrasted hay-gathering, orchard-planting, dairy-oriented, energetic Yankee farmers with corn-growing and hog-raising southern upland or Hoosier agriculturists, who lacked the sense that leisure was sinful. The one ate white bread and chicken "fixens"; the other subsisted on corn bread and "common doins." One used Virginia rail fences; the other preferred posts and straight boards. Yankee and Hoosier farmers even laid out their farmsteads differently. To the cultural options that settlers from such backgrounds brought across the Mississippi, the foreign born added the preferences and practices that they had known. In facing problems, people first consider accustomed solutions—so it was in the trans-Mississippi West.

Cultural proclivity, however, was modified by western realities. Swedish settlers from Upper Dalarna might prefer to make barley their major small-grain crop in Isanti County, Minnesota, as at home in Sweden. But when the local market and natural environment suggested that wheat and oats were more profitable, the immigrants accepted the cue. Had they followed their cultural inclinations, Russian Germans in eastern Nebraska might have concentrated on the small grains of the Russian plains, but a major part of their acreage was soon in Indian corn. The agricultural patterns of ethnic groups did sometimes appear to differ from those of nearby American-born pioneers. These differences tended to disappear in the first generation of settlement. Still, some preferences in farm management continued into the second generation. And sometimes, practices that had been dysfunctional during settlement reappeared. German-Russian settlers in eastern Nebraska were once more growing their homeland crops, flax and rye, during the early 1890s, illustrating cultural rebound. Another adaptation pattern involved the transfer of crops or farming practices from the homeland without any perceptible break in continuity, such as when Mennonites continued to emphasize the wheat crop in the central grasslands.

The manuscript censuses of the late nineteenth century frequently show that ethnic groups differed from colonial-stock Americans in their choice of combinations of crops and livestock. But differences in age of farm operators, in the degree of farm development, in access to capital, in the soils that the groups farmed, in the availability of labor, in the distances to markets, and perhaps in other factors must be considered in such comparisons, and historians have not always done so. Nor did members of particular national ethnic groups invariably behave in the same way. That cultural background might serve as either cue or brake in the immigrant's adaptation to American practice, we cannot doubt. We are tempted to conclude that ethnic differences were less noticeable in making a living than were contrasts in household economy, food preference, work routine, language, religion, neighboring, and family values. Some members of ethnic groups were more strongly committed to passing their farms to the next generation and establishing family members in proximity than were those of Yankee or southern upland descent. Historians have particularly related such behavior to the German settler, but none of the numerous Ise children stayed on the lands painfully accumulated by Henry and Rosie, both impeccably German in origin.

Sometimes the immigrant farmers brought much more to their new country than

labor and the will to succeed. The Mennonites' contribution of hard winter wheat is the best known of such legacies. The alfalfa seed that Wendelin Grimm brought from Bavaria was crucial to the later development of American agriculture. Agoston Haraszthy's importations of European vine cuttings made Sonoma County, California, the center of the West Coast wine industry. Thus, immigrant settlers broadened the options open to American farmers, although sometimes their contributions were controversial. When hundreds of industrious Chinese truck gardeners purchased or leased small holdings in California during the 1850s, supplying countrymen, miners, and urban dwellers with vegetables, neighbors criticized their use of night soil in fertilization and urine in pest control as dangerous to the public health and offensive to the nostrils.

Family Ventures

Critics maintain that historians of agricultural settlement have accentuated production to the neglect of cultural values and have emphasized the role of the male head of the farm household while ignoring the farm wife. Such criticism is justified, although the earlier emphases are understandable—if settlers failed to make a living, all else failed as well. But the farm frontier was a family frontier, even though sex ratios were sometimes skewed by the presence of large numbers of bachelors and men improving claims before they brought out families. On the other hand, the censuses of the nineteenth century show that farm households headed by women were present in some numbers, and it is estimated that women represented 10 to 15 percent of the homesteaders in some states during the early twentieth century.

After losing her husband in a railroad accident, Elinore Pruitt moved with her small daughter to Denver, where Elinore worked as a domestic. Hoping to become a homesteader, she advertised her availability as a housekeeper in a region where government land was available. Thus, in 1909, she moved to the ranch of Clyde Stewart near Burnt River in southwestern Wyoming. Soon Stewart proposed marriage, and Elinore accepted.

Elinore Pruitt Stewart filed her homestead claim on land adjacent to her husband's holding, allowing them to build her log cabin as an extension of the Stewart home. Meanwhile, she milked cows, tended poultry and pigs, gardened, cooked, put up preserves, and made clothes for herself and her daughter. She had other children, and she wrote, in 1912, that she wanted "a great many things" that she lacked, but she was neither discontented nor forgetful of her many blessings:

I have my home among the blue mountains, my healthy, well-formed children, my clean, honest husband, my kind gentle milk cows, my garden which I make myself. I have loads and loads of flowers which I tend. There are lots of chickens, turkeys, and pigs which are my own special care. I have some slow old gentle horses and an old wagon. I can load up the kiddies and go where I please any time. I have the best, kindest neighbors.

With real pleasure, Elinore Stewart proved that she knew how to operate the hay mower.

Frontier wives and mothers did what most wives and mothers were doing elsewhere in America; they tried to provide "proper" homes and give their children a good

upbringing. When Anne E. Bingham, a seminary-trained former schoolteacher, journeyed west with her husband in 1869 to a Kansas farm, a woman's suffrage worker in Leavenworth asked for her views on women and the vote. She responded that "voting had better be left to the men, for a woman's place was in the home." Many farm wives of the time would probably have agreed. Still, sixteen of the seventeen states in which women already had the vote before passage of the Nineteenth Amendment were western states. If most of the leaders in winning woman's suffrage were urbanites, rural women had swelled their battalions.

Farms on the frontier were family enterprises. The wife cleaned, cooked, prepared meals, washed dishes and clothes, and mended. At threshing or hog-slaughtering time she fed the extra men. She preserved food—from wild plums to headcheese. During the early nineteenth century, small flocks of sheep were usual, and carding, spinning, and the knitting of socks, mittens, and other apparel were common female tasks. Some women owned looms. Home manufactures were waning by the 1850s, but at this time the treadle sewing machine became available, and many farm women found it indispensable. Although mechanization rapidly changed the character of external farm work after 1850, America's industrialization did less for the farm wife than for her husband. True, the cookstove replaced the fireplace, and the sewing machine was a boon, but the washing machine of the late nineteenth century was a crude device, and few frontier women had running water or an indoor toilet.

The farm woman's work did not stop when she crossed the threshold of her house. Almost certainly, she worked in the garden, she sometimes cared for the barnyard fowl, and she often milked and churned the cream into butter. The dribble of money or store credit from sales of eggs and butter sometimes made the difference between success and failure in the new settlements. Women helped with the binding and shocking of grain in prebinder days and often drove the team or "built the load" at haying time or grain harvest.

In matters of domestic economy there were probably differences depending not only on the material and cultural circumstances but also on the personal inclinations of the women. Some pioneering women found the landscape hostile and the outdoor tasks wearing; others enjoyed the companionship involved in such labor and thrilled to the sights, sounds, and smells of the new land. On large, prosperous farms, the farm wife might be supplied with hired help and never feel the need to venture beyond the household perimeters in her work. Within some cultural groups, outdoor work was an accustomed part of the woman's heritage. On the other hand, Anne Bingham wrote: "My work . . . would have been much harder if I had not had the very best kind of a good husband. Before he went to work morning and noon he saw to it that there was wood and water in the house. I never did any milking and never took care of the poultry, and seldom did the churning. Many women I knew did all these things besides their own housework."

To merely contrast the roles of husband and wife is to oversimplify the social contours of farm life. A demographic analysis of the frontier areas during the years 1800–1840 showed that children constituted at least half of the household in 72 percent of northern frontier households and 83 percent on the southern frontiers. Having "suffered reverses," the Indiana carpenter William Dorsey established a preemption

The farm frontier was a family frontier, where women and children performed essential labor. In addition to producing most of the foods and household goods consumed within the home, women might assist with the care of animals and the planting and harvesting of crops while children performed domestic chores. Their labor would help generate much-needed cash, since the added income brought in from the sale of eggs and dairy products could be critical to a small farm's success.



Unidentified photographer. Farm Women at Work. Photograph, date unknown. The Denver Public Library, Western History Department, Denver, Colorado.



Solomon Butcher (1856-1927). Nebraska Lassie (Custer County, Nebraska). Photograph, date unknown. Solomon D. Butcher Collection, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln.

claim on the Little Nemaha River in Nebraska in 1857. So lively was the cabin, wrote his diarist daughter Mollie, and so recurrent the demands for hospitality from visitors and the older daughters' beaux that Mother Dorsey often "took the babies and fled to her retreat in the woods . . . to gain her equilibrium." The frontier farm family is best understood when viewed in the context of family interaction and changing family goals as well as from the standpoint of gender polarities.

The full history of American farm labor is unwritten. We know that there were kin and neighborhood work rings, that farmers sometimes hired help at harvest and

threshing time, and that there were full-time laborers on large holdings. We also believe that the farmer and his family provided most of the labor on frontier farms. Western children joined the work force at an early age. Seven- or eight-year-old boys could herd livestock, drop corn into waiting hills, and pick potato bugs from infested vines. Increasingly thereafter they shared in farm tasks in the field and at the farmstead. In larger families, boys might hire out to neighbors, with the wages sometimes destined for family coffers. Within the house, the farm wife might move from the position of domestic worker to manager, over daughters who minded younger siblings, learned to cook and sew at an early age, and worked outdoors when needed. On the Little Nemaha it was Mollie, or her sixteen-year-old sister, who milked the cow, rather than their mother, and Mollie also considered herself the chief cook.

One of Rosie's sons wrote a sensitive account, *Sod and Stubble*, of the Ise family homestead and family life on the plains frontier. He depicts the dangers faced by the pioneers: family privations, tragedies, comedy, and victory; the first-born who died and the crippled child among the healthy ones. He writes of the church picnics, the celebration when the mortgage was paid off, the relationships of neighboring and community, the road routing that sparked local conflict, the cultural heterogeneity (leavened with one Democrat), the disdain for "little Dutchies," and the movers and the stayers. In time, the railroad came, and rural-urban differences sharpened. Meanwhile, the Ises developed their farm through times of good returns and periods of drought, grasshoppers, or low prices, slowly accumulating equipment and additional land. Rosie was the dominant force in the Ise family, but the history of the Ise farm is a family story.

Pioneers in the trans-Mississippi West found the first years to be the most difficult. There were exceptions; some came to the new land with ample resources, strapping sons, hired help, strong teams, implements and machines, and the funds with which to buy sufficient land and supplies to bridge the gap before tilled fields began to produce. But for most, the scarcities, hardships, and dangers of pioneering weighed heavily. Drought, grasshoppers, prairie fires, hailstorms, the wheat-attacking Hessian fly, and even jackrabbits on the high-desert homesteads of the twentieth century could turn a year of hope into one of disillusion, or famine. And there were other dangers: poisonous snakes, rabid animals, wandering Longhorns that could tumble through a dugout's sod roof, runaway teams, well-digging accidents, and the errant ax or pitchfork. Medical practice was rudimentary. "Out here," wrote Mrs. Stewart, "we have to dope ourselves." Malaria was common on the nineteenth-century frontier and tetanus always a threat. Other diseases, later rendered minor by vaccine or antibiotic, shattered frontier farm families.

We can make too much of the isolation faced by members of the farm family. The native born were children of an open-country, rural culture and were unused to living in each other's pockets. Remembering a more densely settled countryside, the foreign born sometimes found the absence of close neighbors or the wind of the high plains distressing, even psychologically unsettling. But most pioneer families soon had neighbors, sometimes more than they would have preferred, and among these neighbors almost invariably were relatives, former neighbors, or members of the same religious persuasion. Farm wives visited, quilted, and were active in church activities. Still, Anne Bingham wrote in retrospect of their farm near Junction City, Kansas: "In all the years

spent there we never could see a neighbor's light in the evening. I did wish so much we could, to relieve the aloneness."

In the last stage of their epic trek to Oregon in 1843, the Applegate families lost young Warren and Edward in the turbulent waters of the Columbia. In contrast to such tragedy, Herbert Quick's memorable character "Cow" Vandemark wrote: "The prairies took me, an ignorant, orphaned canal hand, and made me something much better. . . . The best prayer I can utter now is that it may do as well with my children and grandchildren." On the other hand, the year 1888 was one of drought in Kansas, and in the fall, the wagons of the "defeated legion" began to roll eastward past the Ise homestead, "grizzled, dejected, and surly men; sick, tired and hopeless women," along with children often unaware of the family tragedy of which they were a part. Given shelter overnight, some left lice, bedbugs, and pools of tobacco juice behind; others tried to steal chickens or pigs. The Ises, therefore, reluctantly agreed when the Hutson family asked for shelter for the sick woman traveling with them. The Hutsons proved, however, to be cultivated people. The sick traveler had lost her husband in an Indian raid in Decatur County, where Hutson had, in two years, lost all of his money. The family was returning to Iowa to begin again. Farmers who enjoyed success comparable to that of "Cow" Vandemark are well represented in the county histories and old settlers' accounts, but such publications seldom tell the stories of victims like Warren Applegate and the Hutsons. Was the settler's story a tale of ruthless and uncaring conquest over man and nature? Sometimes it was that, but more frequently it was a chronicle of hope, new homes, adaptation, family success, and sometimes, tragedy or failure.

Bibliographic Note

Those wishing to carry their reading or research beyond suggestions here should consult the articles, reviews, and indexes in *Agricultural History*, edited at the Agricultural History Center, University of California/Davis, and published by the University of California Press, Berkeley. During the 1960s and 1970s, the center also published a series of helpful regional bibliographies. Critiques of the recent literature dealing with frontier agriculture are provided by Gilbert C. Fite, "The American West of Farmers and Stockmen," in Michael P. Malone, ed., *Historians and the American West* (Lincoln, 1983), 209–33, and James W. Whitaker, "Agriculture and Livestock Production," in Roger L. Nichols, ed., *American Frontier and Western Issues: A Historiographical Review* (New York, 1986), 51–67. Unfortunately, space limitations require that this note focus on the monographic literature without specific mention of relevant articles in the periodical literature.

During the last generation, a number of scholars have written histories of American agriculture that treat the frontier experience from a variety of viewpoints: John T. Schlebecker, *Whereby We Thrive: A History of American Farming, 1607–1972* (Ames, 1975); John L. Shover, *First Majority, Last Minority: The Transforming of Rural Life in America* (DeKalb, Ill., 1976); Willard W. Cochrane (an agricultural economist), *The Development of American Agriculture: A Historical Analysis* (Minneapolis, 1979); and Walter Ebeling (an entomologist), *The Fruited Plain: The Story of American Agriculture* (Berkeley, 1979). Nor should one ignore William Parker's brilliant essay "Agriculture" in Lance E. Davis et al., *American Economic Growth: An Economist's History of the United States* (New York, 1972), 369–417. Several more narrowly focused surveys of agricultural development or settlement are useful: Fred A. Shannon, *The Farmer's Last Frontier: Agriculture, 1860–1897* (New York, 1945); Paul W. Gates, *The Farmer's Age: Agriculture, 1815–1860* (New York, 1960); and Gilbert C. Fite, *The Farmers' Frontier, 1865–1900* (New York, 1966). More broadly conceived and recently published is Rodman W.

Paul, *The Far West and the Great Plains in Transition, 1859–1900* (New York, 1988), which contains relevant chapters.

A number of regional or subregional studies deal with agricultural settlement in the trans-Mississippi West or special aspects of the subject, although the coverage as a whole is incomplete. Despite its age, conceptual weaknesses, and substantive thinness, Walter P. Webb's *The Great Plains* (Boston, 1931) cannot be ignored by anyone who wishes to comprehend the history of the plains country. Basic to understanding the development of agriculture on the prairies, though by no means comprehensive, is Allan G. Bogue, *From Prairie to Corn Belt: Farming on the Illinois and Iowa Prairies in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago, 1963). The unique developments in the Red River Valley of the North are covered in Stanley N. Murray, *The Valley Comes of Age: A History of Agriculture in the Valley of the Red River of the North, 1812–1920* (Fargo, 1967), and Herman M. Drache, *The Day of the Bonanza: A History of Bonanza Farming in the Red River Valley of the North* (Fargo, 1964). Robert Ostergren, *A Community Transplanted: The Trans-Atlantic Experience of a Swedish Immigrant Settlement in the Upper Middle West, 1835–1915* (Madison, 1988), is an excellent illustration of current approaches to the settlement experience of immigrant groups. Richard L. Power, *Planting Corn Belt Culture: The Impress of the Upland Southerner and Yankee in the Old Northwest* (Indianapolis, 1953), however, is still a classic introduction to American agricultural subcultures.

One of the most talented of western historians, James C. Malin, made the central grasslands his special interest; of his many contributions, *Winter Wheat in the Golden Belt of Kansas: A Study in Adaption to Subhumid Geographical Environment* (Lawrence, 1944) and *The Grassland of North America: Prolegomena to Its History, with Addenda and Postscript* (1947; reprint, Gloucester, Mass., 1967) are central to the concerns of this chapter. Richard G. Bremer develops some of Malin's methods still further in *Agricultural Change in an Urban Age: The Loup Country of Nebraska, 1910–1970* (Lincoln, 1976). Two fine collections from the Center for Great Plains Studies include various relevant papers: Brian W. Blouet and Frederick C. Luebke, eds., *The Great Plains: Environment and Culture* (Lincoln, 1979), and Frederick C. Luebke, ed., *Ethnicity on the Great Plains* (Lincoln, 1980). Mary W. M. Hargreaves, *Dry Farming in the Northern Great Plains, 1900–1925* (Cambridge, Mass., 1957), ably describes the development of that system of agriculture. Terry G. Jordan, *German Seed in Texan Soil: Immigrant Farmers in Nineteenth-Century Texas* (Austin, 1966), and Richard G. Lowe and Randolph B. Campbell, *Planters and Plain Folk: Agriculture in Antebellum Texas* (Dallas, 1987), provide a good introduction to the Texas end of the plains country spectrum.

Several monographs have been basic to our understanding of Mormon settlement: Leonard Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-Day Saints, 1830–1900* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958); Lowry Nelson, *The Mormon Village: A Pattern and Technique of Land Settlement* (Salt Lake City, 1952); and Nels Anderson, *Desert Saints: The Mormon Frontier in Utah*, 2d ed. (Chicago, 1966).

Turning to the Pacific Northwest, Donald W. Meinig, *The Columbia Plain: A Historical Geography, 1805–1910* (Seattle, 1968), is extremely useful, as is William A. Bowen. *The Willamette Valley: Migration and Settlement on the Oregon Frontier* (Seattle, 1978). Several recent monographs skillfully develop important themes: James R. Gibson, *Farming the Frontier: The Agricultural Opening of the Oregon Country, 1786–1846* (Seattle, 1985); John Fahey, *The Inland Empire: Unfolding Years, 1879–1929* (Seattle, 1986); and Barbara Allen, *Homesteading the High Desert* (Salt Lake City, 1987). Alexander C. McGregor, *Counting Sheep: From Open Range to Agribusiness on the Columbia Plateau* (Seattle, 1982), describes the transition from pastoralism to wheat raising in interior Washington.

Despite California's later position as one of the nation's major agricultural producers, the agricultural history of the state still has many gaps. Various articles in James H. Shideler, ed., *Agriculture in the Development of the Far West: A Symposium* (Berkeley, 1975), are very helpful. See also Rodman W. Paul, "The Beginnings of Agriculture in California: Innovation vs. Continuity," *California Historical Quarterly* 52 (Spring 1973): 16–27. Paul W. Gates, ed.,

California Ranchos and Farms, 1846–1862, Including the Letters of John Quincy Adams Warren . . . (Madison, 1967), provides the contemporary observations of an agricultural authority. Since irrigated agriculture is such a large part of the California story, Donald J. Pisani, *From the Family Farm to Agribusiness: The Irrigation Crusade in California and the West, 1850–1931* (Berkeley, 1984), is invaluable.

Donald W. Meinig, *Southwest: Three Peoples in Geographical Change, 1600–1970* (New York, 1971), is a fine, if brief, introduction to the settlement history of the Southwest. Henry C. Dethloff and Irvin M. May, Jr., eds., *Southwestern Agriculture: Pre-Columbian to Modern* (College Station, Tex., 1982), contains some useful articles. Water has been the key to the location of cropland agriculture in the Southwest, and Michael C. Meyer, *Water in the Hispanic Southwest: A Social and Legal History, 1550–1850* (Tucson, 1984), contains much of interest.

Much of the monographic literature cited thus far touches on several of the major themes of this chapter. Something should be said of more specialized treatments. Oscar Handlin et al., *Harvard Guide to American History* (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), 152–61, lists many of the best books of travel and description. Two surveys of regional booming activity are David M. Emmons, *Garden in the Grasslands: Boomer Literature of the Central Great Plains* (Lincoln, 1971), and Jan Blodgett, *Land of Bright Promise: Advertising the Texas Panhandle and South Plains, 1870–1917* (Austin, 1988). Paul W. Gates has dominated scholarly study of the disposal of federal lands. He summarized much of his work in *History of Public Land Law Development* (Washington, D.C., 1968). Two of his many articles are particularly relevant: “The Homestead Act: Free Land Policy in Operation, 1862–1935,” in Howard W. Ottoson, ed., *Land Use Policy and Problems in the United States* (Lincoln, 1963), 28–46, and “California’s Embattled Settlers,” *California Historical Society Quarterly* 41 (June 1962): 99–130. John Opie, *The Law of the Land: Two Hundred Years of American Farmland Policy* (Lincoln, 1987), sets the settlement period into chronological perspective.

Almost ignored until 1960, the role of women in western settlement has attracted many scholars during the last generation. Any sampling should include Sandra L. Myres, *Westering Women and the Frontier Experience, 1800–1915* (Albuquerque, 1982), Glenda Riley, *The Female Frontier: A Comparative View of Women on the Prairie and the Plains* (Lawrence, 1988), and Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880–1940* (New York, 1987). So far, the family in general has been of less interest to scholars than women, but note Elliott West, *Growing Up with the Country: Childhood on the Far-Western Frontier* (Albuquerque, 1989). James E. Davis analyzes the demographic structure of the early-nineteenth-century frontier population in *Frontier America, 1800–1840: A Comparative Demographic Analysis of the Frontier Process* (Glendale, Calif., 1977), but later frontiers still need attention. Also still seeking additional historians are the subjects of frontier agricultural credit and finance and frontier labor, although Allan G. Bogue, *Money at Interest: The Farm Mortgage on the Middle Border* (Ithaca, 1955), David Schob, *Hired Hands and Plowboys: Farm Labor in the Midwest, 1815–1860* (Urbana, 1975), and Thomas D. Isern, *Bull Threshers and Bindlestiffs: Harvesting and Threshing on the North American Plains* (Lawrence, 1990), have demonstrated the promise in these fields.



THE OXFORD HISTORY OF

The
American
West

Edited by
Clyde A. Milner II
Carol A. O'Connor
Martha A. Sandweiss

NEW YORK • OXFORD
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS • 1994

*Frontispiece: Maynard Dixon (1875–1946). Open Range. Oil on canvas, 1942.
Courtesy of the Museum of Western Art, Denver, Colorado.*

Oxford University Press

*Oxford · New York · Toronto · Delhi · Bombay · Calcutta ·
Madras · Karachi · Kuala Lumpur · Singapore · Hong Kong ·
Tokyo · Nairobi · Dar es Salaam · Cape Town · Melbourne ·
Auckland · Madrid*

*and associated companies in
Berlin · Ibadan*

Copyright © by Oxford University Press, Inc. 1994

Published by Oxford University Press, Inc., 200 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Oxford is a registered trademark of Oxford University Press

*All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or
transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise,
without prior written permission of Oxford University Press.*

Maps created by the University Cartographic Laboratory, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Maps copyright © by Oxford University Press, Inc. 1994

Research for maps on p. 330 and p. 331 performed by Kathleen Neils Conzen.

*The excerpt from the Blessingway (p.41) is reprinted from Blessingway by Leland C. Wyman with the
permission of the University of Arizona Press, copyright © 1970.*

Buffalo Poem #1 (p. 737) is reprinted with the permission of Geary Hobson.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

*The Oxford history of the American West / edited by Clyde A. Milner II, Carol A. O'Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss.
p. cm.*

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-19-505968-9

*I. West (U.S.)—History. I. Milner, Clyde A., 1948- . II. O'Connor, Carol A., 1946- . III. Sandweiss, Martha
A.F591.095 1994 93-38829
978—dc20 CIP*

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper