

## ARMY EXPLORATIONS IN THE AMERICAN WEST 1803-1863.

By William H. Goetzmann. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1959. \$6.50.

The trans-Mississippi West was systematically explored, mapped, and exposed to the American public during the years, between 1838 and 1863, that the U. S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers had an independent existence. It is primarily of the Engineers doing this job that Dr. Goetzmann has written. His book is a revision of the Yale doctorate dissertation that won the John Addison Porter Prize for 1957. Not surprisingly, it is more notable for careful scholarship than for writing style, though none of it is really dull and Chapter 5 "The Boundary Survey" and Chapter 8 "The Savants and the Surveys" were delightful.

Every specialist in any American study will be glad the book has been written; every one will read it for different reasons and will, perhaps, wish it had emphasized different things. Political historians will be interested in Dr. Goetzmann's concern to show the importance of government as opposed to individualistic activity in the opening of the West. This he does most successfully, as he also shows the influence of political motives on the work of the Corps. This reviewer, an historian of science, was intrigued by the way in which the scientific activity of the Engineers seems always to have taken second place to political purpose and personal ambition. Dr. Goetzmann's summary of American scientific endeavors and the results of the Engineers' explorations seems so cogent, that one wonders at his concluding high estimate of the scientific importance of those explorations.

As in many a good book, this one raises many more problems than it attempts to solve and should provide hints for much further research.

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THE LITERARY MIDWEST. By David James Harkness. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee. 1958. \$1.00.

THE GREAT LAKES STATES AND ALASKA AND HAWAII IN LITERATURE. By David James Harkness. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee. 1959. \$1.00.

These two pamphlets are part of a series published by the University of Tennessee. Other titles are Literary Profiles of the Southern States, The Southwest and West Coast in Literature, Literary New England, and Literary Mideast U. S. A. Each is little more than a laundry-list of names and titles, but the group should be useful as a bibliographical guide to the fiction of the various states.