

Ebbets Field Terrain

A TREASURY OF BROOKLYN. Edited by Mary Ellen and Mark Murphy and Ralph Foster Weld. New York: William Sloane Assoc. 435 pp. \$5.

By JOHN T. WINTERICH

THIS is an anthology of Brooklyn, made up of extracts, factual and fictional, all the way from Richard Denton, in 1670, to Thomas Wolfe, Irwin Shaw, and Edmund Wilson. It is not an anthology of Brooklyn authors—natives, that is, or even necessarily long-time residents, though there are some of both—but every writer included speaks from firsthand knowledge, whether it be Peter Sluyter visiting, in 1679, “the first village, Breukelen, which has a small and ugly little church standing in the middle of the road,” or Nunnally Johnson expressing the conviction that Nathalia Crane, nine-year-old poetic prodigy of 1922, was not a fake.

Here, of course, are Walt Whitman (very little; the compilers didn’t want to overwork him), Betty Smith, Ernest Poole, Christopher Morley, Laura Jean Libbey (by and about), Henry Ward Beecher (about only); here, too, are Samuel Woodworth, Carson McCullers, Julian Ralph, Charles Hanson Towne, Robert H. Moses, Ring Lardner, Theodore Dreiser, Lewis Mumford, Paxton Hibben, and Sinclair Lewis. Some of the citations are not particularly pertinent or apposite. The description of the street-car strike from “Sister Carrie,” for instance, could have been about any street-car strike anywhere. But the Dodgers are Brooklyn’s own, and it is good to see that the compilers are aware of the origin of the name.

A good many anthologies of this type suffer from over-documentation.

Evening on the Beach

By Marion Lineaweaver

YOUNG boy running
With the wind in his hair
And a little girl after
In the chartreuse air.

I stand with open arms,
But they run out wide,
Up to the yellow dunes,
Down to the tide,

And then back together.
“Children! Come home!”
But their eyes have caught the sunset
And their feet are on the foam.



—From the “A Treasury of Brooklyn” jacket.

This one has the opposite shortcoming. Or perhaps it is simply a matter of bad arrangement. The compilers seem to have an idea that people read anthologies just as they do any other book. I doubt it. I think they dip. For example, there are four pages of extracts “from Mayor Gaynor’s letters and speeches,” introduced exactly thus, and occupying pages 167 to 170. The extracts are typical and good. But suppose you have no idea who Mayor Gaynor was. Well, you get that information on pages 150 and 151, back in the introduction to the section headed “Politics.” If you haven’t read that you are on your own. It takes more than selection to make a good anthology—it takes packaging.

Second-Hand Market

TREASURES IN TRUCK AND TRASH, by Morgan Towne. Doubleday. \$2. This book is about old books, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, handbills, signs, trade cards, programs, valentines, catalogues, scrapbooks, paintings, prints, wallpaper, furniture, lamps, china, pottery, silver, pewter, tinware, glassware, fire tools, stoves, kitchenware, textiles, stencils, jewelry, clocks, watches, toys, dolls, buttons, postage stamps, letters, documents, diaries, and so on. With a roster like that, the treatment is inevitably highly superficial. The book lists a few hundred of the thousands of valuable books (there are millions of books, of course, of no value at all), with “indications of retail value.” It lists a few reference books, but does not say whether they are still in print or, if so, what they cost. A reasonably complete list of these manuals, with notes on availability and cost, and a sentence or two of description, would make a valuable reference work. This is, rather, an attempt to do too much in too little space. —J. T. W.

FICTION

(Continued from page 19)

more than love, and an establishment run for bachelors and still permeated by the spirit of a man long dead. How Ruth almost destroyed, and proud old Appuhamy intrigued to salvage, the honor of the house, and how the Elephant People at last revenged themselves upon the interlopers at the Big Bungalow, builds up into an exciting and dramatic tale.

Robert Standish, author of “Elephant Walk,” has himself engaged in tea planting in Ceylon, and spent many of his years as a journalist in the Far East. His “Three Bamboos” and “The Small General” will be remembered as outstandingly authentic pictures of life in the Orient. In this new novel he displays rare understanding of the Englishman in the tropics, and with nostalgic vividness, paints an existence more spacious than any we shall see again.

Fiction Notes

THE RED DRESS, by John Watson. Harper. \$2.75. From the day country-bred Pearl goes to town to buy shoes, lipstick, nylons, and a tight fitting red dress, evil plagues her family. Her denial of calico and bare feet, her desire for the town and for freedom spell doom. It is a mounting doom. Mr. Watson tells it with terror and with heartache for the good people it destroys.

For Pearl annihilates those she touches. Cruelly vindictive to her parents, stealing her sister’s husband, directly causing the murder of this same sister, she manages to feel supremacy for a moment. Guilt points to an innocent Negro. When that guilt is properly placed, Pearl herself is murdered. The boomerang strikes down the wicked.

Nothing is left. The old man and his wife are alone, bereft of all they loved, existing without purpose. It is for them we weep when the taut tale has been told, the tense drama played out, and the dreams of the innocent shattered. Arresting, exciting, and sincerely touching.

LORD JOHNNIE, by Leslie Turner White. Crown. \$3. With unflagging consistency, with a driving insistence on coincidence, and with infinite resolution, Mr. White in his historical novel maintains a level of untouched improbability. His hero is a superman. Born out of wedlock, living as an outlaw, slaying, roistering, robbing, forging, and duelling, he still manages to

enlist love and loyalty. Take his looks for granted, assume his amorous adroitness, rely on his leadership and craftiness on land or at sea, and you can be sure you have "Lord Johnnie."

From eighteenth-century London to New York, with marriage on the eve of his planned hanging, with abduction of his hoity-toity lady, with naval engagements and privateering, the scene shifts restlessly, plastered with events. But honor will out. Aristocratic paternity is established, the Union Jack flies aloft, and Johnnie becomes a true Lord of the Realm.

Camera! Lights! Action!

HICKORY SHIRT, by George Palmer Putnam. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. \$2.75. Here we have an incident, a tale told round flickering fires, passed on from generation to generation until the hundred-year span has simmered the thing down to the slimmest structure. Men and women pushed West in 1850. After '49 they all faced stiff competition with the doomed Donner party. No use. All else is pallid unless touched with freshness.

Mr. Putnam's group gets as far as Death Valley. Two men love a lass; one good, one evil, but neither willing to do in the other. Fair play for the lady, and may the best man win. He does. A Marine unit in himself, he repels avalanche, flood, ambush, and Indian raid. On the side he and his rival fight it out in what they consider a desultory fashion, aiming for eyes, eager to throttle the windpipe, happy to crush the thumb.

A heavy reliance on mortician's jokes and a tendency to italicize for overemphasis weaken the brawn of this blustering brand.

SMOKE UP THE VALLEY, by Monte Barrett. Bobbs-Merrill. \$3. Gun-play in the Texas of the 1870's. Law may

be shaky, justice hazy, and corruption commonplace, but it's anybody's right to grab the whip-hand. Men are surely mighty men out there; quick on the draw, ready to scalp, to kill for a throw of the dice or to turn cattle thief for the money it brings. Fighters are a dime a dozen, but good citizens and true are sadly scarce.

So scarce it's hard to recognize them. But that's where the fun comes in. The stalwart sheriff turns out to be a wolf on all counts, and most of the cozy German homesteaders eventually reveal themselves as sadistic sneaks. It takes young, tough, vengeful Grady Scott, orphaned by Indian raids, to track down the gang, to give the guilty what for, and to win the girl in the case.

Slow going and involved. Should settle for the double feature.

COME CLEAN MY LOVE, by Rosemary Taylor. Crowell. \$3. Rosemary Taylor is a prankster, a fun-lover, a gagster, the perpetrator of many a joke. She's thrown them all together and come up with a bag chockablock full of tricks. Certainly she gets "A" for effort; the strain for mirth is tremendous.

It happens in Arizona. An ex-husband discontinues his alimony, leaving his divorced wife and his son flat broke. The boy gets a job in a laundry rather than live on his rich fiancée. He competes successfully with the only other plant in town, launches

promotion campaigns, unleashes ideas, establishes new methods, makes money, and earns the right to wed. None of this is accomplished without involuted, so-called comical situations. Made to order for local high-school talent shows. Try it. For my part, the starch has gone limp and a mild mildew has set in.

OH GLITTERING PROMISE, by Anne Fisher. Bobbs-Merrill. \$3. It is California that lures the traveler from 1849 on. We have come to expect this tour to lead to an overflowing till. Miss Fisher disappoints us; hers is an unrelieved hard-luck tale. The only promise for anyone, most especially the reader, is in the title. There is no gold in those distant hills after all.

A Pennsylvania miner leaves his wife and sons to seek the world's goods. He has a happy, exotic, and lingering affair with a Chilean content to be his "California wife." Very obliging, very handy set-up. His wedded mate, greedy for gold, arrives on the scene, sets up shop, gives birth twice, loses one baby, lives to know her favorite, philandering son has been murdered by a jealous Mexican, and dies in a cave-in with her eager hands clutching a great big old nugget. Too late for her, but time enough for Father. The old flame still flickers.

All firmly tethered to the flat, the stale, and the unprofitable. Folksy forensics.

—CATHERINE MEREDITH BROWN.

The Day I Walked the Downland

By Roberta Teale Swartz

THE day I walked the downland
With no one by my side,
I pulled my coat the closer
For the cold that Whitsuntide;

I pinned my cloak the closer
As I passed beside the wood,
And there I thought of Christ
That hangs on Holy Rood.

As I climbed the thorny hillock,
As I mounted up the stile
I thought of the dead Christ,
And there I stood awhile

When far upon a hillside
The sunshine sped before
Illumining a garden
Upon the valley-floor.

The wild clouds overtook it
But full the light remained:
Upon a dazzling unicorn
It constantly downrained.

From that mysterious meadow
He turned and noticed me,

With all his wounds apparent—
But O, he was not free.

His collar set with beryl stones
Was buckled bright to see,
But he was chained by a golden chain
To a pomegranate tree.

Within a little picket fence
On thousands of fair flowers,
He lay and listened to the church
A-striking of the hours.

He listened to the village church
And turned and noticed me;
We heard the tedious hours toll
Against eternity.

I looked into his flashing eyes
And nothing though he said
He put the Rood from out my mind
For that he was not dead:

For that he lived much more than died
To set his people free,
And from that princely garden, Lord,
They will unfasten thee.

SCREEN



Book Mss. Welcomed

Every author delights in a best seller, but even a book with a limited audience can prove profitable when expertly promoted. We publish books of every classification; submit your ms. now, or write Dept. D for free literature.

VANTAGE PRESS

35 So. William St., New York 4

The Film Forum

ART AND NATURE

The Saturday Review's Weekly Guide
to Selected 16mm. Sound Films.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The three color films reviewed below recapture some aspects of life on the North American Continent as it must have been a century or so ago. Relics of Indian cultures—ceremonial masks, totems, and other representative and mystical figures—provide material for the first two films. In their highly different techniques the films give meaning to art forms which heretofore have been relegated to museums. In addition they provide insight into a way of life which has become almost total myth. The third film shows the animal world upon which these Indian cultures were intimately based, and which also has been nearly forgotten in this mechanical age.

THE LOON'S NECKLACE

Produced by Crawley Films. Available from Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., Wilmette, Ill. (11 min., color)

This film is based on an Indian legend telling how the loon got his white neck-band. The story revolves around an old blind medicine man, his magic shell necklace, and his spirit-father, the loon. But more unusual than the story is the extremely effective device by which this legend of British Columbia is presented. Wooden ceremonial face masks are worn by all the characters, and carved animals and painted backdrops provide authenticity and at the same time create the necessary illusion of unreality.

These brightly colored masks and figures might ordinarily appear static and dead to the unaided eye. But under the skill of the film's director and photographer (Radford Crawley and Grant Crabtree) they come to life in their own stylized way. External movements of the camera, as well as the bodily motions of the human beings who wear the masks, allow the inherent expressions and emotional values in these primitive art forms to show with unexpected forcefulness. Incidental personifications of the blustering north wind and the queenly smooth-faced moon are especially charming.

"The Loon's Necklace" was recently selected as Film of the Year

in Canada, and it has won other honors at film festivals in Edinburgh and Cleveland, indicating a deserved popularity with adult audiences and youngsters alike for some time to come.

TOTEMS

Produced by the National Film Board of Canada, and available from its New York office at 1270 Avenue of the Americas. (11 min., color)

Something of the history and meaning of the totem poles which were first discovered in British Columbia about a hundred years ago is told in this film, which was produced and directed by Laura Bolton, with the technical assistance of Dr. Marius Barbeau. Shown in their natural colorful landscape of snow-capped mountains, majestic fir trees, and clear, still lakes, the animal figures are explained casually and sometimes not too clearly.

An excellent musical background of drums and chants in Indian style adds to the effectiveness of the film, which compared to "The Loon's Necklace" is more a travelogue than a really creative film.

REALM OF THE WILD

Produced by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Available from the Motion Picture Division, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. (28 min., color)

As a documentary film, "Realm of the Wild" has relatively modest aims. It is little more than a tour through our nation's forests with a simple plea for conservation of wild life as its message. But it is one of the most handsome and exciting outdoor color films ever made. Audience after audience has felt its distinctive charm and appeal. Those who are quite unfamiliar with the documentary film have responded to it without inhibition or sophistication. "This is the first film I've ever seen that showed wild life in the raw," said the representative of one enthusiastic city audience, "and it's really wonderful." It is difficult to imagine an audience that would disagree. Excellent color photography.

—CECILE STARR.

For information about the purchase or rental of any films, please write to Film Department, The Saturday Review, 25 West 45th St., New York 19, N. Y.

STAGE

CRITICS' AWARD FOR BEST MUSICAL

RICHARD RODGERS & OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd
present in association with
LELAND HAYWARD & JOSHUA LOGAN

MARY EZIO
MARTIN·PINZA

In A New Musical Play

South Pacific

Music by RICHARD RODGERS

Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd

Book by

OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd & JOSHUA LOGAN

Adapted from JAMES A. MICHENER'S Pulitzer

Prize Winning "TALES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC"

Directed by JOSHUA LOGAN

Scenery & Lighting by Jo Mielziner

with MYRON MCCORMICK

MAJESTIC THEA., 44th St. W. of B'way

Air-Conditioned. Matinees Wed. & Sat.

HENRY FONDA
in
Mister Roberts
A play by THOMAS HEGGEN & JOSHUA LOGAN
with Robert KEITH
William HARRIGAN Murray HAMILTON
ALVIN Thea., W. 52 St. Eves. 8:30, Mats. Wed. & Sat.

NATIONAL COMPANY
Now—ERLANGER THEATRE, CHICAGO

Pulitzer Prize 1949

Critics' Award 1949

death of a Salesman

Morosco Theatre

West 45th St.

HOWARD LINDSAY & RUSSEL CROUSE present
RALPH BELLAMY in
"DETECTIVE STORY"
By SIDNEY KINGSLEY
with ANNE BURR
HUDSON Thea. 44th St. E. of B'way. Mats. Wed. & Sat.

SAINT SUBBER & LEMUEL AYERS present
ALFRED PATRICIA
DRAKE MORISON
in
"KISS ME, KATE"
Music & Lyrics by COLE PORTER
Book by SAM & BELLA SPEWACK
Production staged by JOHN C. WILSON
Century Theatre, 7th Ave. & 59th St. • Mats. Wed. & Sat.
NATIONAL COMPANY • ON TOUR