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The Unknown Travels and Dubious Pursuits of William Clark
Jo Ann Trogdon

“Imaginative historical detection and good writing will make this a widely read and much discussed book. Trogdon’s surprising discoveries point to Clark’s apparent involvement in a tangled web of conspiracy involving a foreign power. This thought-provoking book illustrates the potential rewards of curiosity and painstaking research in out-of-the-way places.” —William E. Foley, author of Wilderness Journey: The Life of William Clark

In 1798—more than five years before he led the epic western journey that would make him and Meriwether Lewis national heroes—William Clark set off by flatboat from his Louisville, Kentucky, home with a cargo of tobacco and furs to sell downriver in Spanish New Orleans. He also carried with him a leather-trimmed journal to record his travels and notes on his activities.

In this vivid history, Jo Ann Trogdon reveals William Clark’s highly questionable activities during the years before his famous journey west of the Mississippi. Delving into the details of Clark’s diary and ledger entries, Trogdon investigates evidence linking Clark to a series of plots—often called the Spanish Conspiracy—in which corrupt officials sought to line their pockets with Spanish money and to separate Kentucky from the United States. The Unknown Travels and Dubious Pursuits of William Clark gives readers a more complex portrait of the American icon than has been previously written.

Jo Ann Trogdon lives in Columbia, Missouri, the same city where the 1798–1801 journal of William Clark has been housed, virtually overlooked, in the State Historical Society of Missouri since 1928. She was led to the journal by her research in Spanish archives for her book St. Charles Borromeo: 200 Years of Faith. Her articles on history have appeared in publications including Arizona Highways and We Proceed On, a publication of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

Of related interest:
Wilderness Journey: The Life of William Clark
By William E. Foley
In the late sixties, Gail Pool and her husband set off for an adventure in New Guinea. He was a graduate student in anthropology; she was an aspiring writer. They prepared by reading, practicing with language tapes, consulting with the nearest thing to experts, and off they went. Their research could not prepare them for the reality of life in the jungle. As they warded off gargantuan insects, slogged through mud, and turned on each other in fatigue and frustration, they struggled to somehow connect with their enigmatic hosts, the Baining.

Sixteen months later they returned home. Despite months of trying, they had not been able to make sense of the Baining’s culture. Worse yet, their lives no longer seemed to make sense. Pool put her journals away. Her husband abandoned the study of anthropology.

Decades later, Pool returned to her journals and found in her jumbled notes the understanding that had eluded her. Finally, she and her husband returned to New Guinea for a shorter visit and a warm reunion with the tribe that challenged them on so many levels.

Gail Pool is a writer whose work has focused on criticism, the culture of magazines, and travel. Her writings have appeared in the New York Times, the Christian Science Monitor, Columbia Journalism Review, and the Women’s Review of Books. She also edited the anthology Other People’s Mail.
“Larson plots a personal journey through revelations; but the connotations of his parents’ story move beyond the personal to reveal the social and psychological challenges of an era in our culture.” —Beth Taylor, author of *The Plain Language of Love and Loss: A Quaker Memoir*

Ruth Larson saved nearly 700 letters she and her husband Bob exchanged during World War II. Opening the box while his mother lay dying, her son Bruce expected to find commonplace details of his parents’ early life together. He instead discovered a story of deception, obsession, and betrayal.

Reading through the letters, he is drawn into his parents’ courtship amid the hardships of separation and war. Beyond the tumultuous romance, Larson finds that he barely recognizes his father, whom he knew only as distant and impassive. He uncovers shocking truths about his mother, Ruth, whom family lore had pigeonholed as sweetly pious.

At the time of the letters, Bob is a young Coast Guard clerk fighting off depression with thoughts of his dream girl back home. Back in Minnesota, Ruth passes the days adrift in romantic fantasies and liaisons with local admirers. Bob’s suspicions about Ruth and his obsession with her from afar threaten the young man’s fragile hold on his sanity, but he will not give her up. Decades later, their son comes to feel a tenderness for both his parents and to understand how their losses, fears, and reluctance can transform and refashion family bonds.

R. Bruce Larson grew up in the suburbs of Chicago and in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. He holds a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Hawai‘i, a master’s degree in anthropology from the University of Iowa, and a master’s degree in theology from Bethel Seminary. He is also the author of *Living Stewardship: New Church Participants*. He lives in Marquette and Republic, Michigan.
Six weeks before Pearl Harbor, Keith Mason received a $150 uniform allowance, a pair of silver wings, and his first assignment as a flight instructor: Randolph Field, Texas. Two years later, he was Squadron Officer in the 460th Bomb Group, 15th Air Force in Spinazzola, Italy — flying the harrowing combat missions he dreamed of as a boy in rural Iowa.

In this memoir of one man’s war years, Mason provides insight on the inner workings of serving as an airman during World War II: stultifying boredom, stupefying incompetence, paralyzing fear, and stunning success. Details of how crews were selected for combat missions, of the necessity to occasionally break up crews, and of select missions in which Mason was a participant are important additions to the history and literature of this often neglected theater.

Keith Mason was born in Waukon, Iowa, in 1920, where he now lives with his family. Together with wife, Jean Anne Mason, for whom he named his two B-24 airplanes, he has five children and six grandchildren. During World War II, Keith Mason completed 48 missions before returning to the United States. He is a retired vocational auto mechanics instructor who organized his courses utilizing principles and techniques he learned as a flight instructor.
“Bonnie Stepenoff’s account of life along the middle Mississippi in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries examines the stream’s allure and its impact on those who traversed its waters and inhabited the cities and towns along its banks.” —William E. Foley, author of The First Chouteaus: River Barons of Early St. Louis

The Mississippi River occupies a sacred place in American culture and mythology. Often called The Father of Rivers, it winds through American life in equal measure as a symbol and as a topographic feature. To the people who know it best, the river is life and a livelihood. River boatmen working the Mississippi are never far from land. Even in the dark, they can smell plants and animals and hear people on the banks.

Bonnie Stepenoff takes readers on a cruise through history, showing how workers from St. Louis to Memphis changed the river and were in turn changed by it. Each chapter of this fast-moving narrative focuses on representative workers: captains and pilots, gamblers and musicians, cooks and craftsmen. Readers will find workers who are themselves part of the country’s mythology from Mark Twain and anti-slavery crusader William Wells Brown to musicians Fate Marable and Louis Armstrong.

Bonnie Stepenoff lives on the banks of the Mississippi River in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. In 2012, for her extensive writing and preservation efforts, she was awarded the Rozier Award for Lifetime Achievement by the Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation (Missouri Preservation). Stepenoff is Professor Emerita of history at Southeast Missouri State University. Three of her five books were published by the University of Missouri Press.

Of related interest:
From French Community to Missouri Town
Bonnie Stepenoff
ISBN 978-0-8262-1668-7 | $40.00s
“Unfailingly interesting. The Benton who emerges here—cultivated, emotional, a bit of a hick, an aesthetic experimenter—is a new Benton, a towering figure in the history of American painting. He’s Harry Truman and an old master muralist rolled into one, a movie star and a one-man show.” —Karal Ann Marling, Professor Emeritus of Art History and American Studies, University of Minnesota

Few American artists have incited more controversy than Thomas Hart Benton. Argumentative, brilliant, and enormously influential, Benton painted for nearly seventy years, inspiring acclaim and loathing among students, friends, fellow artists, and outraged critics.

Now, in a series of provocative essays, premier Benton scholar Henry Adams examines the many facets of the man as artist and the pitched battles of his long career, including the real reasons for Benton’s feud with the radical left and his tumultuous, 36-year love-hate relationship with his student Jackson Pollock. Adams ends with an account of his 25-year effort to expose fakes of Benton’s work.

Henry Adams is the author of more than 350 publications on American art, including Eakins Revealed, that Andrew Wyeth described as “without question the most extraordinary biography I have ever read on an artist.” Currently the Ruth Coulter Heede Professor of Art History at Case Western Reserve University, he is widely regarded as the foremost scholar of Thomas Hart Benton’s work. He was the curator of the centennial exhibition of Benton’s work at the Nelson-Atkins Museum in 1989. In partnership with film maker Ken Burns, he developed a documentary film on Benton which was broadcast nationally on PBS.
Recent and Notable

American History

Harry S. Truman and the Cold War Revisionists
Robert H. Ferrell

“In a brilliant and concise work, the dean of American presidential historians delivers a critical commentary on the Cold War revisionists who tended to shift the blame for many of the Soviet-American encounters following World War II from the Soviet Union to the United States, from Joseph Stalin to Harry Truman. This book will interest anyone in the period and the subject should be required reading in graduate seminars and an inspiration to their participants for new work and insights on Harry Truman and the Cold War.”—The Historian

Robert H. Ferrell is Professor Emeritus of History at Indiana University in Bloomington. He is the author of several books on Harry S. Truman and the diplomatic history of the United States, including Presidential Leadership: From Woodrow Wilson to Harry S. Truman; Harry S. Truman: A Life; and Five Days in October: The Lost Battalion of World War I.

Ferrell served in the U.S. Army Air Forces during the Second World War and was an intelligence analyst in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War. He received a B.S. in Education from Bowling Green State University in 1946 and a PhD from Yale University in 1951, where he worked under the direction of Samuel Flagg Bemis. During his career, he supervised thirty-five PhD students from 1961 to 1988.

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“One must greatly admire Stuart Paine, who on my Grandfather Byrd’s ’33–’34 expedition to the South Pole, navigated his dog team as far south as any man, except Amundsen and Scott. He writes of braving incredible hardships with the confidence, and even nonchalance, of a resourceful, extremely capable, and hardworking New Hampshire yankee. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this diary.” —Richard E. Byrd, III

“Documents the period in Antarctic exploration that bridged the ’heroic era’ and the modern age of mechanized travel. Paine’s tale is one of the most compelling stories in polar history, surpassing other accounts with its immediacy and adventure as it captures the majesty and mystery of the untouched Antarctic.” —The Antarctic Circle

**American Literature**

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Massacre in Mexico
Elena Poniatowska
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"Heartbreaking. A massive chronicle that builds to the night of the Tlatelolco massacre in an accumulation of skillfully crosscut eyewitness accounts."—Publishers Weekly

"Passionate and, while some may question the method—the splicing together of partisan memories recorded years after the event—this is a story that has not been effectively told before. Call it the grito of Tlateloco, a cry of protest and the subjective manifesto of Mexico's suppressed, potentially explosive, middle-class dissenters."—Kirkus

Massacre in Mexico remains a critical source for examining the collective consciousness of Mexico. During the 1968 Olympic games in Mexico City, 10,000 students gathered to peacefully protest their nation's one-party government and lack of political freedom. The police shot and bayonetted to death 325 unarmed Mexican youth. In this heartbreaking chronicle, Poniatowska has assembled a montage of testimony from eyewitness accounts that re-creates the chaotic optimism of the demonstration and the terrible shock of the massacre.

Elena Poniatowska is a French-born Mexican journalist and author, specializing in works on social and political issues focused on those considered to be disenfranchised, especially women and the poor. Considered to be Mexico's grande dame of letters, Poniatowska was recently awarded the Miguel de Cervantes Prize, which honors the recipient's lifetime body of work.
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Recent and Notable

Civil War / American History / Regional Studies

**The Collapse of Price’s Raid**
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Mark A. Lause

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Biography / Political Science / American History

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The Life of Grenville Clark
Nancy Peterson Hill

Grenville Clark was born to wealth and privilege and grew up on a first-name basis with both Presidents Roosevelt, and his close friends included Supreme Court justices. He was well known and respected in the inner circles of business, government, and education. Nancy Peterson Hill gives life to the unsung account of this great and largely anonymous American hero and reveals how the scope of Clark's life and career reflected his selfless passion for progress, equality, and peace.

American Literature / Frontier History / Journalism

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