

Book Reviews



Windows in an Old Adobe. By Bess Adams Garner. Foreword by J. Gregg Layne.

Printed by Progress-Bulletin, Pomona, California in collaboration with Saunders Press, Claremont, California. 1939. (10) 246 pp. Index, Map, Ports. Illus. 8°

A saga of the old Rancho San Jose has been written by Mrs. Bess Garner, president of the Historical Society of Pomona Valley. She calls her work *Windows in an Old Adobe*, but she has given us a picture of life and conditions on a Spanish California rancho in a more thorough manner than it has ever before been attempted, and has done for the Pomona Valley, that was once Ygnacio Palomares' and Ricardo Vejar's great San Jose Rancho, granted to them in 1837, and from which was carved the cities and towns of Pomona, Spadra, San Dimas, La Verne, Claremont, and Walnut, a work that is outstanding.

Mrs. Garner has for years lived the history of Pomona Valley. She has reproduced scenes of the early life in the valley in her little theatre at Padua Hills, and has spent hours and days talking to the early pioneers, both Spanish and American to get the material for her book that is a real contribution to the history of Southern California, and has given us facts that would soon have been lost for all time.

While the book treats more fully with the Palomares family, none of the old families that helped to settle this fertile valley are neglected. Through the pages walk the Alvarados, the Vejars, the Garcias, the Lopez, and other lesser families of old California. And into the picture comes a horde of Americans, P. C. Tonner, who filled a niche in Pomona life, both interesting and useful for many years. She tells of DeBrunner's grocery store, where the infamous Murchison Letter was concocted to upset a nation.

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Mrs. Garner has gone to great effort and given us a series of genealogies of the old California Spanish families of the valley, a contribution of value and one that should be made by some one for each of the Ranchos of old California.

The book while written in narrative style is real historical fact and much is heretofore unpublished fact uncovered after years of search by the author's untiring effort.

There are many excellent illustrations, views and portraits, and not the least important are the end paper maps, showing the location geographically of each of the homes on the Rancho San Jose, and the roads leading to and past them. This, at least to the reviewer, is a most interesting and valuable addition to the book, enabling the reader to place correctly in his mind these locations, that have been almost impossible to discover up to the present, and many of which would soon have been lost to memory.

The book will fill a long needed want in the history of our State, and should be on the shelves of every library of Californiana.

J. GREGG LAYNE

Heritage of the Valley. San Bernardino's First Century. By George William Beattie and Helen Pruitt Beattie. With a foreword by Henry R. Wagner. San Pasqual Press, Pasadena, California, 1939. xxv, 459 pp., illus., maps. \$5.00.

Forty years of research and reflection have gone into the writing of this book. Beginning with the early visits to the region of Fages and Garcés, the narrative moves leisurely and surely through the mission period, the era of the ranchos, the Mexican war, the transition from Mexican to American rule, the establishment of the Mormon colony, and the Civil War. Utilizing letters of padres, official reports and diaries of the early period, the Beatties have given an informative account of the establishment of the mission asistencia of San Bernardino and the attendant Indian problems. Attempts at starting an overland mail service between Sonora and San Gabriel via the valley are recounted as well as early irrigation and timber cutting. Following secularization of the missions came the petitions of Californians