



Books on the Frontier

Richard W. Clement

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From the end of the French and Indian War through the nineteenth century, the pioneers of the American book trade moved west, motivated, to varying degrees, by bibliophilia, enterprise, and a spirit of adventure. Through their own lively anecdotes and recollections, Richard Clement offers a history of book publishing and trade on the American frontier in Lexington, Louisville, and St Louis, where Joseph Charless opens various bookstores and print shops. In Texas, two brothers who set out to join the Army of Republic end up as pioneers of Houston's newspaper scene. In California, Anton Roman turns from mining gold to selling books, setting up a shop in San Francisco, while continuing to supply the foothill towns and mining camps with their literary needs.

In addition to the publishers and traders this is also a story of the readers: the men and women of the Great Plains who yearned for the escape of a novel nearly as eagerly as they demanded reliable guidebooks; the missionaries who used books to teach English and learn Native American languages. And finally, books took the stories of the frontier back East, where "The Adventures of Col. Daniel Boone" caught the popular imagination and helped to shape the archetype of the frontier hero.

Beautifully illustrated with seventy-five illustrations, Books on the Frontier includes examples of maps, portraits, almanacs, songbooks, guidebooks, dime novels, and more drawn from the Library of Congress collections.

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