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PAGE 12 THE CLARION-LEDGER—JACKSON (MISS.) DAILY NEWS, SUNDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 18, 1955 SECTION THREE

Jefferson Davis - - -

Reb Leader Gets Best Biog In Definitive Strode Work

JEFFERSON DAVIS

JEFFERSON DAVIS, by Hudson Strode (Harcourt, Brace, 460 pages, $6.75)

By TOM RARSELL

Hudson Strode has done a distinct service to the name of Jefferson Davis. He has written the most comprehensive biography to date on a controversial figure and in carefully researching his material, he has brought into print patriotic focus the image of a man who lived by his painfully honest conscience.

Jeff Davis has never been adequately appreciated by his own South or his native Mississippi. He was, as Strode dispassionately documents, a man among men.

Before the war years, Jeff Davis was thought to be the greatest brain in the Senate by many of his northern associates. Even as a dissenting and most vocal member of the opposition, his well-considered Constitutional objections to the extension of the northern influence in newly acquired territories in the Southwest were understood and appreciated. Because of his service in the Indian Wars and in the Mexican War, no one dared question the honor or patriotic fervor of his states rights at all costs.

While Davis believed in the Union, so also did he believe that northern agitators were shortsightedly dissolving it. He charged them with cynically condemning slavery in the South while they themselves had been slave-owners and slave runners.

Strode's book does not cover the war years but rather confines itself to the years before the great disaster. He traces Jeff Davis from the time of his youth in Woodville, Mississippi, until his resignation from the United States Senate to take over the Confederacy. In so doing, Strode has accomplished yeoman service for he has left open an obvious door to later document Davis during the tragic war years. One hopes this book will not be long in coming to print.

Every Mississippian can gain new insight into the remarkable character of Jeff Davis, a tower of strength and good judgment during America's early and formative years, and feel a swelling pride. Jeff Davis was made up of the broadward virtues one still sees in the regional personalities of our own Mississippians. No aristocrat, he nonetheless maintained the same high standards of personal behavior of men born to more.

But Jeff Davis didn't need to be revered in the tradition of nobility — it was latent within him and he comported himself as few men of good breeding could hope to equal.

All Americans interested in the War between the States ought to read this book, for its historical value; all Southerners should read it for a renewed understanding of the purpose of the Confederacy and all Mississippians must read it because it is about a Mississippian of our own past.

HUDSON STRODE, noted historian and Shakespearian scholar, is Professor of English at the University of Alabama.

Jews and Arabs - - -

Age-Old Problems Studied With Clarity And Insight

JEWS AND ARABS, by S. D. Goitein (Oxnoday Press, 237 pages with index, $4.0

By REV. RUSSELL M. McINTIRE
Pastor, Clinton Baptist Church

Having just returned from a trip to the Near East which included some twenty days in the area, this book on the contact between the Jews and the Arabs has been of unusual interest. Anyone traveling in the Near East senses immediately the tension that exists between the nations of Israel and Jordan. Many times in my visits there we would look at historical sites in old Jerusalem with soldiers pacing along the borderline. The members of our party discussed often the background for this tension—none of us knowing too much about it. On my return I found Dr. Goitein's book dealing with that very subject.

In this book the author goes back through the early days of history tracing the common rights of the two peoples, noting very carefully the different courses that each nation has taken. While the book is actually a history book, it is a very careful sociological study of the inter-relationships of these two neighboring races.

He deals quite carefully with their spiritual contacts in the Messianic movements, in the law and ritual, in the position of women in their society, in their folk literature and art, as well as their popular religion and customs. Quite helpful indeed is the chronological table of the histories of the two races which is in the back of the book, beginning some 1500 years B. C. and coming on down to the present day.

Dr. Goitein writes with clearness and keen insight although one senses in his writings a natural sense of pride in his own people which gives the book a decided Jewish coloring. This is quite excusable for the new nation of Israel has accomplished much toward bettering the lot of their people, and the difference in their society and economy is quite apparent to the visitor who comes into their country from the country of their neighbors.

This book will be of great interest to anyone who has traveled in the Near East for it deals with specific problems of that area. It will have a somewhat limited audience, however, for those who are concerned with these problems, it will be most enlightening and helpful.

Mississippi Scribblers - - -

Attorneys At Aberdeen Add To Its Literature

(Continuing the chapter on "A Is for Aberdeen" with mention of writers from Aberdeen, Mississippi.)

By TILLMAN MARTIN

Richard Brewsterig Haughton was born at Aberdeen on Nov. 26, 1864, son of the Honorable Lafayette Haughton, two terms chancellor of the 1st district of Mississippi. He authored a monograph, "The Influence of the Mississippi River Upon the Early Settlement of Its Valley," an important document in the Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society. XI (1910).

Haughton attended A & M and graduated in law at the University in 1886, taking first honors for his class. He practiced law at Aberdeen two years, then moved to St. Louis and continued in law until may, 1896, when he became a justice-of-the-peace. He was commander of Missouri Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans, and in May, 1901, at the Memphis Reunion, was made commander-in-chief of that organization.

George J. Leftwich was born in Blackburg, Va., Sept. 18, 1859, graduated from Cornell and the University of Virginia, and taught school at Cartilage, Mississippi. He went to Aberdeen in 1888 and formed a law partnership with S. Gillsylen, later becoming senior member of the firm, Leftwich and Tubb.

At various times he was state senator and president of the State Bar Association. Among Mr. Leftwich's writings are "Colonel George Strother Gaines and Other Pioneers in Mississippi Territory," Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society, Centenary ser., Vol I (1916), pages 442-68; "Cotton Gin Port and Gaines' Trace," in the same work, volume VII, "Some Main Traveled Roads, Including Cross-Sections of Natchez Trace," same work, volume I (1916), p. 403-415.

He also wrote "A Short History of Monroe County" and "Reconstruction of Monroe County." Mrs. Julian Evans writes that his "Monroe County in Carpet-bag Days" is a classic, revealing his ability both as writer and as historian. "His marvelous intellect never chose brighter" states Mrs. Evans, "than when he delved largely as a pastime and for the sheer love of the subject matter."

She further says, "He secured material at night after a hard day's work at the law office. He would carry home minute books of the board of supervisors and other source material . . . and pore over it for hours, digging up facts which are priceless and necessary in a true understanding of that dark period in Mississippi history. Do we have such men today? I wonder.

Judge Baxter McFarland was born in Ladgette county on May 15, 1839, later moving to Chickasaw County. He attended law school at the University and first practiced law at Houston. In 1870 he married Mary Ann Holliday of Aberdeen and soon afterwards joined the law firm of Dismukes, McFarland & Paine.

In 1882 he was appointed chancellor of the 1st district by Governor Lowery, filling the post with unusual distinction for 16 years. He died February 7, 1903. Dr. McFarland wrote, in his lifetime, many articles for law journals and about the Confederacy. "The 11th Mississippi at the Battle of Gettysburg" appeared in the Publications of the Mississippi Historical Society and was also reprinted in pamphlet form.

Bishop Robert Payne, of the Methodist Church, was born November 12, 1799, in Pearson County, N. C., and died in Aberdeen on October 26, 1882. For sixteen years he was president of La Grange College, Ala. He attended the general conference of 1844 when there was a split between the Northern and Southern branches of the Church, and participated in the debate.

On organization of the M. E. Church, South, he became its bishop. Bishop Payne published two volumes entitled The Life of Bishop McKendree, dealing interestingly with a critical period in Methodism.

James Phelan was born in Aberdeen on December 7, 1856. After leaving the Kentucky Military Institute, he studied at Leipsic for the Ph. D., then settled in Memphis for the practice of law. There he edited The Avalanche and represented his district in Congress. Dr. Phelan wrote Philip Massinger and His Plays (Leipsic, 1878) and Tennessee, the Making of A State (Boston, Houghton, 1887).

Reverend Gilderoy Porter, many years ago a Methodist preacher, elder at Aberdeen, wrote a collection of boys' stores titled Old Hours.

THE TWENTY-PIECE ORCHESTRA of the Calvary Baptist Church will be heard in its first formal concert in the Calvary Sanctuary at 3 pm. today. The orchestra is conducted by Richard Klug, Minister of Music at Calvary and has Oscar Beam as concertmaster. Many of Jackson's most talented musicians have given their time and talent to the orchestra. Works to be programmed will be from Bellini, Gluck, Haydn, Bach, Sibelius, Moszkowski and Rubenstein. (Photo by Ralph Atkinson)

PAGING ..... frank hains

Thanks from West Point, N. Y. for a mention of THE MacKENZIE RAID (Ballantine) which was noted by Doug Starr on the August 8th book page. It's an exciting western with a new slant, based on actual U. S. Cavalry records and concerning Texas border engagements in 1872.

The plight of slum children continues to rate high as a topic for novelists and VIOLENT STREETS, by Dale Kramer (Signet, 160 pages, 35c) is the latest entry in the delinquency derby. Not a reprint, is an original publication but hardly an original story. Central figure is a girl named inexplicably Candy Sweet, a sort of Helen of Troy figure who inspires a gang war by a flight of fancy in which she claims to have been abducted by rivals of her gang leader-boy friend Candy herself is a good enough girl who sees the light and eventually leads the boy friend to accept police protection and—does "spill the goods" on a dope ring for which he's been pushing.

The world will note that a new Dennis collection has become available; always a cause for rejoicing. This one is called DENNIS THE MENACE RIDES AGAIN, by Hank Ketcham (Henry Holt, 63 cartoons, $1.00) and needless to say, superior, as usual. This is the third volume of his adventures in hard covers. Dennis' cavorts weekly, of course, in the CL-DN Sunday comics as a highlight of the 16 page section.

Sordid sidelights of the Mickey Jelke case are summed up crudely in I LOVE YOU; I HATE YOU, by Emmanuel Treyllis (Andru Lee), 158 pages, $3.00). The story is as badly told as it deserves to be.

An insurer called "information" at the New York public Library: "Do you have U. S. Grant's Memoirs?"

A young voice answered: "Oh, we must have.

"But I'd like to make sure," the caller said.

"Well this is one of the biggest libraries in the world, "its earnest defender declared, "so we just must have it. Unless of course it's a recent book."

The merchant marine in the background for THE ETERNAL VOYAGERS, by Robert F. Hemenway (Signet, 250 pages, 35c), a story of the men who sail the S. S. Pan Nebraska, a tanker which sails the seven seas in the course of a novel which manages to be reasonably hawdy and rousing. The ring of authenticity is rightly come by for Mr. Hemenway has spent much of his own life on the high seas.

Some of the medical incidents fictionalized in "Not as a Stranger" will be found in their original form in FIFTY YEARS A SURGEON, by Robert T. Morris, M. D. (Signet, 350 pages, 50c). The book is twenty years old and was a best seller in its original edition. Although some of it may be a little clinical for peculiar tastes it reads well and interestingly.

Oxford has set October as the date for the publication of the first issue of a new magazine, Essential Books. It is to be an anthology of the best of the world's literature, selected by a board of editors headed by Dr. Frederick Hard, Oxford's president. Other members of the board are Dr. Howard Mumford Jones, Dr. Harry Levin, Dr. Mark Van Doren, Dr. Lionel Trilling, Dr. Jacques Barzun, Dr. Wallace Stegner, Dr. Bernard Smith, Dr. Alfred Kazin, Dr. Richard Chase, Dr. Richard Ellmann, Dr. Richard Hofstadter, Dr. Henry Steele Commager, Dr. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Dr. Arthur Mizener, Dr. Lionel Gelber, Dr. Robert Penn Warren, Dr. Allen Tate, Dr. Cleanth Brooks, Dr. Robert Heilman, Dr. Louis Rubin, Dr. Randall Stewart, Dr. Hennig Cohen, Dr. Donald Davidson, Dr. Frederick Gwynn, Dr. Thomas Daniel Young, Dr. Hoyt Trowbridge, Dr. Floyd Watkins, Dr. Thomas Parkinson, Dr. Robert Hunter Pitman, Dr. Ernest Earnest, Dr. Lewis Leary, Dr. Richard Beale Davis, Dr. Jay Hubbell, Dr. Clarence Gohdes, Dr. Hugh Holman, Dr. Walter Sutton, Dr. Lewis Simpson, Dr. Louis Wright, Dr. Merrill Moore, Dr. Lawrence Thompson, Dr. Ben Ray Redman, Dr. Harry Hayden Clark, Dr. Lewis Gannett, Dr. Clifton Fadiman, Dr. Mortimer Adler, Dr. Carl Carmer, Dr. Hamilton Basso, Dr. Stanley Kunitz, Dr. Malcolm Cowley, Dr. Edmund Wilson