

The Lost Trappers; a Collection of Interesting Scenes and Events in the Rocky Mountains (1892)

David Coyner



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David Coyner was born in Virginia in 1807 and was not only an able preacher, and lecturer but was also a successful author and historian. During the four years from 1842 to 1847, which he spent on the frontier between New Mexico and high up on the Missouri river, he gathered material for a book many editions of which have been published and sold. A great many of the facts contained in this historical collection he got from men who had been with Lewis and Clark across the Rocky Mountains in 1805-6-7.

This book on early western North American exploration is cited in numerous history books as a primary source of authority for this little documented period of history.

From inside the book: "During a residence of three years, 1846-6-7, in the

upper part of the State of Missouri, I was occasionally employed in redeeming a promise made to an editor of a newspaper in Virginia, the state from which I immigrated, to send him for his paper such materials of a frontier character, as I might be able to pick up, and as would form interesting communications for his columns. When I took up my residence in that State, I found myself among a

people much moved and stimulated by western enterprise ; a people not only familiar with frontier scenes and events, but deeply interested in things far beyond the limits of their own state. Many of them I observed were engaged in the Santa Fe

trade, and were making their regular annual trips across the plains to New Mexico.

"I frequently sought the company of such gentlemen, whom I found not only intelligent, but kind, and ready to communicate any thing I desired. Some of them,

indeed all that I met with, would entertain me for hours frequently, with interesting accounts of their difficulties in the various expeditions in which they had been engaged. I made it a rule to note down all the important oral information, that I was able to procure. Several gentlemen furnished me with a number of very interesting facts on paper, which were of great service to me in the work I now offer to the public. I soon found that the materials accumulated on my hands too fast, and in too great quantity to be published in a newspaper, at so great a distance. I also met with a number of men who had been to Oregon and California, and some

who had spent several years in the Rocky Mountains. From such 1I drew a great many interesting facts, which are interwoven in this work. The most interesting facts, however, that I was able to gather, I found in an old musty, mutilated journal,

kept by Captain Williams, and other papers furnished by Workman and Col. Cooper, of Howard county, Missouri, giving an account of the expedition, the history of which, makes the greater part of this volume. It is due to myself to state, that

these papers were so badly written, and so defective in many respects, that I aimed simply to get the facts, which I always clothed in my own words. Many of the most interesting facts that are interspersed through this work, I procured in conversation with gentlemin, who as I have said, had spent years in the Rocky Mountains, and had traveled through Oregon and California.

"Any publication, throwing any lighten that vast wilderness between the States and the Pacific, and

calculated to open its secrets, will be read with interest. Events are now transpiring, that throw around the regions of the far west, an interest, which they never possessed before. The Oregon question is settled, and our citizens are going there every summer season by thousands. California is likely to become ours, and who will venture to limit the number of persons emigrating there, if it should be attached to our domain? As to the statements that I have made about California, I would mention that they were furnished by men whose veracity I had no right to question. (This pre-1923 publication has been converted from its original format for the Kindle and may contain defects from the original publication or the

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