

NAVAHO TRADING DAYS- By Elizabeth Compton Hegemann.
University of New Mexico Press, Price \$7.50

Here is another book by another Navaho Trader. One can easily understand anyone having the somewhat unique opportunity of such a life, wanting to write of their experiences. We already have books by other traders such as THE NAVAJO INDIANS by Dane and Mary Coolidge; DESERT WIFE by Hilda Faunce; TRADER TO THE NAVAHO, by Mrs. John Wetherill; all written or dealing with the period between 1925 and 1940 roughly speaking.

Mrs. Hegemann's book is largely autobiographical giving a vivid picture of her life as a Trader's wife. (She was Mrs. Harry Rorick, during her years at a trading post). Her narrative begins when she was the wife of an employee of the National Park Service stationed at the Grand Canyon National Park. Her descriptions of this early part of her life and the background of the early days of the tourists at the Canyon, the development of Harvey House, and all the people connected with it, is an interesting section of this book. In 1929 she married Harry Rorick and the following year moved to the Trading Post at Shonto Sprints, in Northwestern Arizona, not far from the famous post of John & Louisa Wetherill at Kayenta. Mrs. Hegemann describes her life at Shonto for the next nine years. Much of this section of the book is interesting and well written and filled with many amusing anecdotes for she had a lively sense of humor. She was a woman of great energy and one admires her for tackling the job of driving a big truck loaded with pinon nuts and wool, all the way to Flagstaff over the desert roads of the 1930s. But I cannot find that this book adds anything new to the understanding of the Navaho life. She seems somehow remote from the people and one wonders why. Her obvious love for the country and the building of her collection

of Navaho jewelry are the most important factors of her life at Shonto. There is a lack of research that is regrettable, as for instance her description of a Squaw Dance. Many traders have stood aloof from the well trained ethnologist not realizing that a well trained scientist can absorb an amazing ammount of knowledge in a short space of time, in comparison with the long, extended experience of those living close to as a subject, by the untrained.

Of the 318 photographs by Mrs. Hegemann one again feels, with the series on the Navaho, remoteness from the subject. The big exception is the series on the Hopi. Here she has a much closer relationship ~~with the subject~~ to the people. She has a remarkable ~~series~~ ceremonial series, much the most interesting photographs in the book. Throughout the entire series, one wishes for the quality of Froman and Wittick, who photographed this country some thirty or forty years earlier. This book would have been better with a good many cuts both of text and pictures. The photographs suffer from inadequate reproduction. Fewer pictures well reproduced would have made a better book.

Perhaps the quality that lingers from Mrs. Hegemann's book is the feeling of the Country which she dearly loved. The preparation of NAVAHO TRADING DAYS obviously absorbed her last years and it is tragic that she did not live to see the finished volume.

Laura Gilpin.