NEW BOOKS

FROM SOONERS AND THE O.U. PRESS

Reviewer—Dick Smith

*A Shirttail to Hang To* by Beth Day, Henry Holt and Company.

They tell you in advertising that the best eye-stoppers are kids and dogs. Beth Day, *'45Let, will probably catch a lot of eyes with her history of Cal Farley and his Amarillo Boys' Ranch for bottom-of-the-barrel types, and if her readers can't stop reading between the whines it's because author Day not only has a genuine, sympathetic story, but also a reporting style that won't let loose. Her protagonist, Farley, had considerable success on the wrestling mats in the 20's, then wrestled even more successfully with his shyness to become a flourishing Panhandler businessman. The only thing he couldn't whip was a weakness for small fry—particularly the small fry most likely to fry in the state pen later in their fishy lives. Farley herded all the deserted, angry young mendicants he could out to a deserted cow town near Hereford, Texas, and there, backed by a lot of sympathetic Panhandlers, he sold out his business in Amarillo in order to devote himself to the most heartwarming success story in juvenile delinquency since Spencer Tracy aced Mickey Rooney in *Boys Town*. As a matter of fact, Hollywood has already done a picture at and on Farley's Boys Ranch. Although the Boys Ranch boys hadn't yet become another Farley if Miss Day's excellent reporting job catches his eye.

*Charles de Gaulle-The Crucial Years, 1943-44* by Arthur Layton Funk, University of Oklahoma Press.

It's a shame. The American voter was about the only person on earth who practised the wisdom of putting not very unusual men in office. Like a woman looking for a husband, the American voter was sharp-eyed for mediocrite men: they might not be much of a success, but by the same token of mediocrity they probably wouldn't be much of a failure.

All that went out the window as Germany turned into Hitler and Italy became Mussolini. When Tojo-Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt had already made everyone so cuddly by the fireside that his flamboyant dealings as a State-Man with State-Men Churchill and Stalin were approved and even encouraged by voters who not too long ago had proclaimed themselves immensely content with a Coolidge on the dais.

As happy with his role as a Shriner in town on a convention, Roosevelt launched into the international buddy business with the not unreasonable conviction that his fabled personality would charm Churchill and Stalin into seeing a postwar era in which the three of them could chum around like old cronies, ready to nip the bud of any flowering international villainies.

It seemed plausible enough at the time. Even realistic Churchill, reluctant to bite the hand that was feeding and arming England, said little and went along with this homey Americana. And Stalin, of course, was considerably more agreeable in those days than after the war.

The only person—or rather, the only nation—who pouted over Roosevelt's chum triumvirate of State-Men was France—or rather Charles de Gaulle.

A brilliant, but obscure tank officer, Charles De Gaulle had identified himself with France's past glories immediately after her incredibly inglorious collapse in 1940, and took it upon himself to demand her and his rights in the most un-chumlike way.

His presumption and Roosevelt's antagonism to the ambitions of this latter-day Joan of Arc are the subject of an outstanding book from the University Press—Arthur Layton Funk's *Charles De Gaulle, The Crucial Years (1943-44)*. Funk's book is a definitive, absorbing study of those swift-moving days when De Gaulle had both the conceit and the humility to become a nation.

By luck (and with considerable encouragement from the Press) author Funk finished his book just after De Gaulle returned to power in 1958. It is luck Funk deserves. A clear-thinking naval officer now stationed in Madras, India, Funk writes with authority and with an incredibly unobtrusive style. His lucid pictures of State-Men De Gaulle, Roosevelt, and Eisenhower are impressive analyses of motivation guided by a gentlemanly refusal to exploit hindsight at the expense of often pigheaded, but always dedicated men.

**RECOMMENDED:** State-Man study at its best. Here's hoping Funk is planning sequels.

*Journey Through the Rocky Mountains and the Humboldt Mountains to the Pacific Ocean* by Jacob H. Schiel (translated and edited by Thomas N. Bonner), University of Oklahoma Press.

**RECOMMENDED:** The 27th addition to the University Press' fascinating series, American Exploration and Travel, is a small (136 pages) but worthy volume by a German geologist who went along on the ill-fated Gannison Expedition in 1853 as the expedition's surgeon. Jacob Schiel—the German geologist—had the luck to be separated from the expedition when Captain Gannison and several of his men were wiped out by the Utes, but he was more unfortunate with mosquitoes, rattlesnakes, and Mormons; and his diary-like reflections on these companions—especially the latter—reach across a century with a freshness and individuality that make Herr Schiel as interesting as the country he was exploring.

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Daredevils of the Confederate Army by Oscar A. Kinchen, Christopher Publishing House.

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The curriculum was made broad and tough for a reason. Half-breeds in the oil business, landmen must be as ready to serve their companies in engineering, geological, and public relations discussions as in their most widely known function, acquiring drilling rights. Setting up a curriculum to please both these profession-conscious but broadly-trained men as well as the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business (the accrediting agency) was no simple matter.

The main bone of contention between educators and landmen when the former were approached by the latter early in 1955 was that of specialization vs. general education. The former was impossible unless a new chair could be endowed at O.U. It was also unnecessary in Dean Brown's eyes . . .

After a widely-attended extension division short course for landmen convinced landmen and educators alike that a curriculum must be agreed upon, Dean Brown presented the substance of the present curriculum to Continental landman Phil McGowan and Cal-Ray Petroleum president William Majors. McGowan was chairman of the national association's education committee, and Majors was chairman of the local organization's education committee. Both men liked what Brown proposed.

Liked is hardly the word. The support given the curriculum by these two men and their associates is nothing short of phenomenal. Three O.U. landman majors are attending classes drawing on a $2,750 scholarship fund which McGowan raised from 22 local chapters of the Association. And most impressive, six landmen have joined together in a committee to find summer training jobs for O.U. landman majors.

Toward the end of his report to the A.A.P.L. convention, Dean Brown responded to the landmen's 1958 resolution by presenting appreciation citations to McGowan and Majors for their efforts in establishing the nation's first curriculum in petroleum land management at O.U. It was an expression of what promises to be one of the most admirable of mutual admiration societies.