THE clash of white civilization with the southern plains Indians when the frontier was being steadily pushed southward was full of tragedy and violence. Probably the most heartbreaking phase of this struggle was the Indian practice, during the period 1835 to 1875, of kidnapping white women and children for ransom.

In *Border Captives*, Carl Coke Rister has presented a factual study of the captive traffic and the consequent bitter relations between the Indian tribes and white settlers. He recognizes that the Comanches, Kiowas and associated tribesmen considered horse stealing, the killing and scalping of settlers, and the capture of white women and children a mark of valor. At the same time, the savage way in which captives were frequently treated aroused horror among the white settlers and caused them to be antagonistic to all Indians.

As a matter of fact, the traffic in captives was aided more than a little by some of the frontier traders who acted as middle men in procuring ransom from relatives for the release of captive white women and children. Since practically all the money the Indians received in ransom profits was spent for guns and ammunition and food staples handled by the traders, the community of interest in the kidnapping “racket” is at once apparent.

For a time, Indians were reported as saying that the stealing of white women was more profitable than stealing horses. Mr. Rister cannot, of course, catalog all the cases of kidnapping by the Indians, but he gives details about enough typical cases to give the reader an understanding of what was happening. And although the book is intended to deal only with a single phase of history in the southern plains, he sketches in enough background to make his story rounded and satisfying.

Well illustrated with pictures and maps, and issued in attractive format, *Border Captives* is a valuable addition to the recorded history of the southwest.

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