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The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West: Biographical sketches of the participants by scholars of the subjects and with introductions by the editor

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Mountain Men were the principal figures of the fur trade era, one of the most interesting, dramatic, and truly significant phases of the history of the American trans-Mississippi West during the first half of the 19th Century. These men were of all types—some were fugitives from law and civilization, others were the best in rugged manhood; some were heroic, some brutal, most were adventurous, and many were picturesque.

The typical trapper was a young man—strong hardy and adventure loving. Having succumbed to the lure of the wilderness, his thin veneer of civilization soon rubbed off. In the wilds he had little need for money—barter supplied his simple wants. Possibly short on book-learning, he could read moccasin tracks, beaver sign, and trace of the travois.

Memorials to them cover the West. Mountain peaks, passes, rivers and lakes carry their names. Towns and counties have been christened in their honor. Their trails have become our highways—their campfire ashes, our cities.

Included in Volume 5 are the biographies of Cyrus Alexander; John Ball; James Bird, Jr.; Benjamin L. E. Bonneville; James Bordeaux; Lucien Fontenelle; John Gantt; Seth Kinman; James Kirker; Michel Laframboise; William LeBlanc; Aaron B. Lewis; Manuel Lisa; Joseph Livernois; Finnan MacDonald; Duncan McDougall; Donald McKenzie; Levin Mitchell; Bill New; Benjamin O'Fallon; Dick Owens; Antoine Plante; Ceran St. Brain; Louy Simmons; John Simpson Smith; William L. Sublette; Joseph R. Walker; and Nathaniel Jarvis Wyeth.

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