The Annals of Iowa

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SPECIAL ISSUE: HISTORIANS REMEMBER IOWA

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF HISTORY

In This Issue

FIVE HISTORIANS—H. Roger Grant, John D. Buenker, Rebecca Conard, George McJimsey, and Franklin D. Mitchell, all native Iowans except for one "Naturalized Iowan"—describe their experiences as Iowans and analyze how those experiences shaped their perspectives as historians.

KATHLEEN M. SCOTT introduces the Iowa Polio Stories Oral History Project, a new collection housed at the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, that captures the voices of the people who were most affected by polio: polio survivors as well as physicians, pediatricians, and nurses. Their words reveal how they felt, how they coped, how their communities responded, and how they survived the anguish of the "dreaded" disease.

PAMELA RINEY-KEHRBERG reviews three new books with complementary portraits of family farming in Iowa and the Midwest in the early twentieth century.

Front Cover

Youngsters participate in a scrap metal drive in Hampton during World War II. In this issue, five historians reflect on how such experiences shaped their perspectives as historians.

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William B. Friedricks,
guest editor

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Historians Remember Iowa: An Introduction

BY GUEST EDITOR WILLIAM B. FRIEDRICKS

I AM NOT A NATIVE IOWAN, so it might seem strange that I had a hand in this special issue, which considers the Iowa experience and its impact. Let me explain. I was born and raised in southern California and came to Iowa in 1988 when I joined the history department at Simpson College in Indianola. Serendipity, you might say, led me to Iowa history. Shortly after I started at Simpson, a college trustee suggested that I write a history of the *Des Moines Register*. I took up the recommendation and have been researching and writing on Iowa topics ever since. Those pursuits brought me into contact with *Annals of Iowa* editor Marvin Bergman, and in the fall of 2006, he invited me to serve as the guest editor for an upcoming issue of the *Annals.*

Part of the job entailed developing a topic for the special issue. At the time, I was reading a number of memoirs, including Doris Kearns Goodwin's *Wait Til Next Year*. In that book, Goodwin turned her critical skills as a historian on herself, recounting her childhood in New York in the 1940s and 1950s. Rather than taking a nostalgic trip into her past, Goodwin entwined her story with the many complexities of American life at mid-century.

Goodwin's memoir gave me an idea. Why not ask prominent historians with significant ties to Iowa to consider their own years in the state? After several discussions with Marv, we decided to do just that. We asked five historians—four are

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native Iowans, the fifth moved here as a child—to focus on themselves and analyze their experience in Iowa. We also wondered how their Iowa years might have shaped their perspective as historians. Finally, instead of using the standard process of having submitted articles assessed by anonymous reviewers, we had our five contributors comment on their peers' essays and then engage each other in their final drafts.

The assignment was difficult on several levels, largely because historians generally think and write about others, not themselves. Nonetheless, Roger Grant, John Buenker, Rebecca Conard, George McJimsey, and Frank Mitchell undertook the challenge. As you will see, they've written revealing, personal accounts of periods and places in Iowa, sometimes poignant, sometimes humorous, but always with the broader currents of American life and thought in mind. Their stories are at once similar and different; elements of a common Iowa culture emerge, but variations due to time, location, and gender are also evident. Taken together, these essays tell us much about what it means to be an Iowan. I found the essays stimulating and interesting. I hope you do as well. My thanks go to Marv for giving me this opportunity and to our five contributors who carried out the task with grace and aplomb.

An Albia Childhood

H. ROGER GRANT

AT TIMES I have thought about how my childhood in Iowa has affected my life. Such reflections usually occur when I return from out-of-state to visit family members and friends or to attend high school reunions or other functions. If I had been raised in Ohio or South Carolina, I might have had similar experiences, but not necessarily. A small-town midwestern upbringing, in my mind, offered a special set of challenges and opportunities.

I grew up in Albia, seat of Monroe County, located in the rolling landscape of southern Iowa. Shortly after the turn of the twentieth century, my paternal grandparents, Samuel "S. M." and Rose Heimann Grant, arrived in town. Grandfather Grant, who two decades earlier had emigrated from the highlands of Scotland and later settled in Kansas City, Kansas, and had married my Berlin-born grandmother, saw Albia as a place of possibilities. The family business became S. M. Grant & Company, a wholesale fruit and vegetable firm located in a two-story brick building on East Washington Avenue in the heart of what residents called the "Farm Block." After graduating from high school, my father, Harry, born in Olathe, Kansas, in 1900, joined the concern and helped to expand operations.

H. Roger Grant, Kathryn and Calhoun Lemon Professor of History at Clemson University, received his B.A. degree from Simpson College in 1966 and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Missouri in 1967 and 1970. In 2003 his alma mater awarded him the Doctor of Humane Letters. A prolific railroad historian, he has recently completed his latest book project, *Twilight Rails: Railroad Building in the Midwest, 1905–1930,* forthcoming from the University of Minnesota Press.

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My maternal grandfather, Henry "Hank" Dinsmore, came to Monroe County from Kirkville in neighboring Wapello County, where his father had been the beloved village physician. Initially, though, he lived in Hiteman, a bustling coal-mining camp in Guilford Township northwest of Albia. There he met, courted, and in 1901 married my grandmother, Katherine Beerkle, a native of Creston. Her father, a German-born butcher, held the lucrative fresh meat concession awarded by the Wapello Coal Company, which dominated the Hiteman economy. Securing that position was a welcomed turn of events since my great grandfather's livelihood in the railroad town of Creston had been nearly ruined by the economic fallouts of the bitter locomotive engineer's strike of 1888. In Hiteman Grandfather Dinsmore owned the much larger of the two drugstores and developed a thriving business.

Then in 1915 the family moved to Albia, building a handsome frame house on an acreage near the eastern outskirts. My grandparents wished to have better educational opportunities for their two daughters, Marcella, my mother, who was born in Hiteman in 1903, and Eleanor ("Dinny"), who arrived five years later. My grandparents also seemed troubled by the influx of eastern and southern Europeans to Hiteman. In my grandparents' minds, those newer immigrants challenged the dominance of the Welsh, Swedes, and native born in the community. Yet for years Grandfather Dinsmore continued to operate his store in Hiteman, usually commuting on the eight-mile Albia-to-Hiteman line of the Albia Interurban Railway. Later he opened a drugstore, located a few steps off the Albia public square on North Clinton Street, then known as Wall Street.

Before I was born in 1943, my hometown, with its more than 5,000 residents, had experienced both good and bad times. For decades Albia claimed to be the "Coal Capital" of Iowa. Miners and their families, who lived mostly in the nearby coal camps of Hiteman, Hocking, and Rizerville, provided much economic stimulation. After 1908 "these men who spend" and their family members could "take the cars" of the electric interurban to Albia to shop and partake of the services of this dynamic place. But then the Great Depression and drought conditions of the 1930s struck, virtually destroying the coal-mining

The structures on South Main Street on the east side of the public square in Albia housed a variety of stores on the street level and offices, fraternal halls and private apartments on the second floors. The smokestack in the background belongs to the Albia Light & Railway Company. When this postcard view was made in about 1950, the power company no longer operated an interurban railroad or generated electricity for local consumption, but rather provided steam heat for downtown commercial buildings and some nearby houses. All photos courtesy of the author.

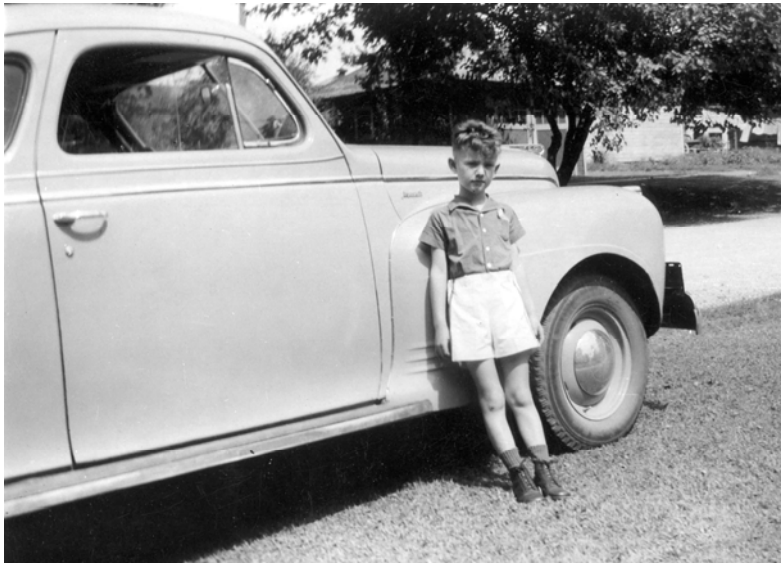
industry and badly damaging agriculture. The New Deal relief and recovery programs, including a Civilian Conservation Corps camp near Grandmother Dinsmore's home (Grandfather Dinsmore had died in 1931) helped, but Albia, Monroe County, and the surrounding areas continued to lag economically. Even with the wartime surge, many struggled. Fortunately, scores of farmers remained solvent by augmenting their income with full-time jobs, often at the John Deere and John Morrell plants in Ottumwa, 20 miles to the east.

As a child I sensed that there had been past glory days and days that were less so. Yet Albia was always busy on Saturdays, when farmers came to town to shop and gossip, making it at times difficult to negotiate the crowds around the courthouse square. When I got my license for my first bicycle, I remember receiving a book of rules. The only ordinance that I recall stated that no one was to ride a two-wheeler in the commercial center on Saturday afternoons and evenings. That made me reluctant to attempt such an illegal act, although I never knew anyone who had been warned, let alone fined.

Albia's signature building, the Monroe County courthouse on the public square, is captured in this postcard (ca. 1950). It had changed little since its construction in 1903–1904.

While there might be crowds "uptown" on Saturdays, I realized that Albia was hardly a boom town. There were few new buildings, either commercial or residential. As a child a pleasant Sunday ritual in good weather was to take "a buggy ride." That was what Grandmother Dinsmore, who lived on the second floor of our house at 304 South Clinton Street, called these periodic car rambles. We would look at the "new houses," several homes that stood near the rutted road that led to the private Albia Country Club. I recall, too, positive comments made about houses that were recently painted. A combination of wartime rationing and lack of money resulted in scores of dwellings badly needing a coat or two of paint.

While we lauded every improvement, my grandmother expressed considerable anguish when we drove over the often dusty "Hiteman Road" to what had become mostly a ghost town. My grandmother detested the Hiteman destination, especially when we passed the former drugstore and the overgrown



Roger Grant stands by the family car, a 1941 Plymouth, in the side yard of his boyhood home on South Clinton Street. It is his first day of kindergarten at nearby Grant School.

lot on "Dude Hill" where the family's house once stood. By the early 1950s the drugstore building had become a tavern, one of the few surviving commercial structures. The house, however, was gone, having been moved to a farm along Highway 60 (today's Highway 5) in the southern part of the county. I realized that conditions had changed dramatically for Hiteman. It was somewhat difficult for me to visualize a community of approximately 2,500 residents, although picture postcards, which my grandmother had saved, helped me to place what I had seen in the context of the early twentieth century.

Those Sunday jaunts always included, along with my Grandmother Dinsmore and me, my mother, a widow since my father's death from complications of an automobile wreck and heart disease in 1944. Occasionally my adopted brother Richard ("Dick"), who was almost exactly ten years older than I, joined us, but as a teenager he had a steady girlfriend and Sunday afternoons were usually spent with her. Then in 1952, soon after graduation from Albia High School, Dick and a buddy, unan-

nounced, joined the U.S. Marine Corps, and within a year Dick was severely wounded by "friendly fire" in Korea. Grandfather Grant, widowed since the late 1930s and who until his death in 1955 lived above the now closed family business, occasionally accompanied us.

The past was very much a part of my childhood. When Grandmother Dinsmore gathered with relatives and friends, conversations inevitably turned to what I considered to be ancient history. Life in Hiteman was a common topic. Nearly all of these people were elderly, and events in their earlier lives were important. Yet I liked hearing about trips that my grandmother made as a child on Mississippi River steamboats operated by distant relatives, the Weyerhaeusers, and her race in an automobile with an interurban car that led to a minor accident and the self-imposed end of her driving career. My friends and I loved the story, probably embellished, that Grandfather Grant told about witnessing the Jesse James Gang rob a bank in Kansas City.

There were more than stories about the past. My home surroundings possessed museum-like qualities. After my parents married in 1927, they became collectors of antiques. Mother especially liked pattern glass; my father preferred furniture, particularly pieces that he could refinish. I remember my mother happily recalling the purchase of all the household possessions of a Civil War veteran for $100, a handsome sum during the Great Depression.

Perhaps it's understandable that, growing up in this history-charged environment, I became interested in old things. While my large collection of matchbook covers didn't have much historical significance, my ever-growing holdings of old automobile license plates probably did. I scoured alleys, asked neighbors and "old timers," and attended household sales for these artifacts. Most were free, and I usually could afford the 10¢ or 25¢ that I occasionally had to pay at an auction. And nobody ever bid against me.

This fascination for the past, especially for collectibles, led to what I considered to be a brilliant idea: I would open a museum. The year was 1955, and I was 11. At that time my mother and I lived in a spacious second-floor apartment in a magnificent Victorian brick house at 204 Benton Avenue East, next to St. Mary's

Roman Catholic Church and across the street from the Carnegie-Evans Library and the Kendall Place, former home of Iowa governor Nathan Kendall. The owner, Jessie Powell Prizer, who was in her eighties, lived downstairs in the house that had been home to her and her late merchant husband and also her parents. In later years her brother, Dr. Burke Powell, had had his medical office on the second floor. The house featured a full third floor and tower section. Already the former ballroom area contained fascinating items, including stereopticon views of ghastly skin diseases and a skeleton that Mrs. Prizer remembered her physician father had assembled from the corpse of a vagrant. What a perfect place for a museum!

I decided that Albia's first museum would not be a solo undertaking. My longtime playmate, Helen Humeston, who was a year younger and lived two doors from my former home on South Clinton Street, was also interested in old things. Her father, a mortician and furniture store dealer, possessed a large gun collection, and both her mother and Grandmother Humeston were antique enthusiasts.

A museum interested Helen, and soon we cleaned out most of the corner tower and a section of the ballroom, selected items from a supportive (and probably surprised) Mrs. Prizer, asked my mother and the Humestons for contributions, and set up the exhibits, in no particular order. The signature piece was a huge 45-star American flag that we hung from the ceiling. Helen and I distributed flyers that announced the museum, noted the afternoon hours of operation, and listed the admission charge of 10¢. Visitors climbed the steep outside staircase; entered the second floor through the former medical reception room, then a bedroom used occasionally by my brother, an art student in Chicago; and walked through a hall to the attic stairwell.

During that summer there were visitors, 50 or more, and non-paying family members and friends. More significant was the additional interest that developed. Robert Larson, the Albia newspaper editor, sensed the value of a human interest story. Not long after a front-page feature appeared in the *Albia Union Republican*, the *Des Moines Tribune* sent a reporter to interview me. Soon he wrote a lengthy piece that described the museum and took pleasure in my ignorance of Tiffany & Company,

maker of one of the Civil War swords. Even though the museum had closed, KTVO, the Ottumwa television station, invited Helen and me to be guests on the *Kay Ray Show*, an event that impressed my classmates in the sixth grade at Grant School, perhaps because they received an early dismissal to watch the program in nearby homes.

Long before the attic museum venture, I developed a fascination for trains. Some of my earliest memories involve railroads. The most vivid were rides in my stroller that my mother pushed to the Burlington or "Q" depot so that I could watch a streamliner or any passing train. Before I entered kindergarten, I often walked the five or six blocks to the yards of the Minneapolis & St. Louis (M&StL) and Wabash railroads, where I poked around freight equipment, watched cars being interchanged, played on the turntable, and smelled the pungent (and pleasing) aroma of creosote. Why this interest? Perhaps I liked big things that moved. Trains and dinosaurs, I believe, hold an attraction for small children, but after a few years the allure of ancient creatures for me had faded.

My love of railroads did not flag, however; if anything, it grew. I haunted the depots for timetables and asked railroad employees if they had any memorabilia, old or new. I loved to walk, especially with friends, across the bridges that carried South Main and South Clinton streets over the Burlington's "cut-off," particularly when a steam locomotive passed underneath or the morning *California Zephyr* sped eastward. Later, as a teenager, I helped members of the Iowa Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society work on their equipment stored on the Southern Iowa Railway, a freight-only electric road that operated between Centerville and Moravia. And I took delight in the fall trips that catered to railroad fans. After my junior year in high school, I decided to run for a seat on the Iowa Commerce Commission at Iowa's Hawkeye Boys State, and I easily won. When fellow Boys Staters visited the Iowa capitol, my election victory allowed me to chat with commission staff members, and my intense interest in railroads seemed to surprise them.

Albia offered other pleasures. I enjoyed school, even though for most of the years that I attended Grant Elementary School my mother was the kindergarten teacher. Fortunately, I had

Constructed in 1912, the former Albia High School building once accommodated both the high school and Albia Junior College. This image dates from about 1950, about 10 years after the junior college closed. Grant entered this school in the fall of 1958 and graduated in the spring of 1962.

"Miss Mary" Terrell for kindergarten, although not long after school began in the fall of 1949, she died tragically. Her replacement, Mildred Doyle, seemed to give me special attention, perhaps because of my mother, but I deeply missed Miss Mary. No secrets at school could be kept from my mother, including missing recess because of "talking out of turn" in Velma Jones's first-grade class. Discipline was firm, and everyone seemed to value education. From grade school through high school there was no stigma if you behaved, studied hard, and achieved academic success.

Memorable teachers did much to shape my life. There was Viva Miller, my eighth-grade English teacher; Gladys Smith, the high school Latin teacher; Donald Vinson, the young and dynamic chemistry and physics instructor; and, most of all, Marie Cain, the jolly high school English, dramatics, and speech instructor. There were clunkers, but they were rare.

Other activities beckoned a boy in small-town Iowa. Outings with friends on their farms were a highlight of summer vacation, especially if they had a stock pond, and so was shooting rats with BB guns and .22 rifles at the city dump. We also

played basketball, usually in someone's driveway, swam in the old, cracked pool at the country club or later in the new municipal pool that adjoined the city park, and rode bikes *everywhere*, even into the distant countryside.

And I haunted the library. I especially enjoyed the few books on conducting science experiments, in part because I had received a Gilbert chemistry set as a Christmas gift. I liked history, too. Books on wars, especially the Civil War, appealed to me. Then there was that section that contained the Iowa history collection. Although I didn't spend much time with political studies or the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, I adored the heavily illustrated copies of *The Palimpsest*. A real pleasure came from discovering the series of illustrated articles on Iowa railroads that Frank P. Donovan Jr. began to contribute in the early 1950s. I read them and reread them, virtually memorizing portions of the issues on the M&StL and Chicago Great Western, two of my favorite railroads. I was not surprised when the librarian, Beulah Mabry, told me that an instructor from Drake University, who taught an evening state history course locally as part of that school's extension program, said that these Iowa holdings were the best he'd seen in a small-town library. I knew that this was true.

In my journeys around Albia I sensed that there was something of an economic division. Several of my playmates lived in houses with outside toilets, and their mothers, unlike mine, did not own Haviland china or crystal goblets. I knew that Aunt Grace, my father's younger sister, and her husband, John Griffin, a banker, had some means. Their house was beautiful, filled with antiques and the latest electric appliances, and they always drove a late-model Buick or Oldsmobile. Their son Jack, who was eight years older than I, owned a huge model train layout with many mechanical marvels that annually appeared about Thanksgiving time in their sparkling clean basement. I was highly envious of Jack's nifty possessions.

But unlike a place like Hiteman, which unmistakably had a better section, Albia was different. Except for those few new houses, there was no "good" part of town. Alfred Pabst, the lawyer, lived not far from the old box factory near the Burlington depot. J. E. King, the affable president of the "southside"

bank that competed with Uncle John's "northside" institution, resided near the Wabash tracks among some modest dwellings. And Dr. G. A. Jenkins, the quintessential country physician, owned a fine brick and stucco house that stood adjacent to Oak View Cemetery and next to several small homes and across the street from a weed-chocked vacant lot. Nice houses adjoined not-so-nice houses; there was no discernable pattern of residential segregation. If there was an exception, it would be "Colored Town," a collection of several houses northwest of the Burlington depot. But this small cluster of homes owned or rented by African Americans included the attractive, ranch-style house of the town's prominent black family, the Graysons. The kindly Mr. Grayson worked in the post office (and later became postmaster) and was an active member of First Methodist Church and several civic organizations.

Albia, however, was not utopia. There might be nearly first-run movies at the King Theater, but there was virtually no exposure to ballet, classical music, or quality plays. That would be possible only if one traveled 70 miles to Des Moines or more to some other city. Mildred Bates's dance reviews, Thursday night summer band concerts, and junior and senior class plays hardly constituted highbrow culture. Ratty carnivals and occasionally a one-ring circus came to town, but my mother warned me about the former, although she might take me to the latter.

Sports opportunities were also somewhat limited. Of course, there was basketball and football, at least for boys. My mother had been a star on the high school girls' basketball team in the early 1920s, but by the post–World War II years, females lacked the opportunity to play varsity sports. The high school had track and golf teams (I tried the latter because golf not only allowed me to skip last period study hall but also to observe operations on the Burlington and M&StL whose tracks adjoined the Albia Country Club), but there were no tennis or swimming teams and hence no opportunities for those personal athletic pursuits.

There was also the presence of "vice," which meant taverns and pool halls. Although my brother patronized Pat Rogers's billiards parlor, usually without family knowledge, I was too cautious, realizing that the smell of cigarette smoke and stale beer probably meant trouble. Yet with several pals, especially

Phil Morgan, I tried smoking, including corn silks. However, burnt fingers and coughing often resulted, for me effective behavior modification.

And some truly nasty people lived in Albia. One memorable person was Mr. Benjamin, whose home, an unpainted former neighborhood grocery store with attached living quarters, stood at the corner of South Clinton Street and Sixth Avenue across from Grant School. Every year this cranky, old man and his wizened wife, who seldom spoke, planted a big garden, likely out of economic necessity. The playground was a short kickball distance from the growing or about to be harvested vegetables, and the red ball seemed to have a magnetic attraction to Mr. Benjamin's awaiting hands. Notwithstanding complaints from teachers and the principal, he sometimes gleefully burned the ball (or even balls) in an old 55-gallon oil barrel as we watched. There were rumors that at Halloween the Benjamins placed pins and razor blades in candy and cookies. But when I joined friends for trick-or-treating, we avoided the creepy Benjamin place. Then there was Mrs. Winters, the feisty wife of Billy Winters, a county road employee who, like Mrs. Benjamin, never seemed to talk. An avid flower grower at her tidy home on South Clinton Street, Mrs. Winters unquestionably hated animals (and probably children, too). When pets wandered into her yard, especially dogs who during hot spells liked to drink from or cool off in her fish and lily pond, they stood a chance of disappearing forever. A neighbor once told my mother that Mrs. Winters killed dogs and cats with a shovel and either buried them along the back alley or during the heating season threw their carcasses into the coal furnace. That may not have been true, but I always wondered how this stalwart of First Methodist Church, and a person who gave excruciatingly long and tearful prayers in Sunday School, could be so cruel.

In Albia, as in probably every small town, it was difficult to keep secrets. The freshest gossip was learned at Fred Dunkin's Mobil Oil gas station, on benches outside the courthouse, and at the Bluebird Café or Brawdy's drugstore. After church, worshipers chatted, not always showing Christian charity. It was an environment where everyone knew almost everyone else and their business, whether good or bad.

For more than seven decades the edifice of Albia's First Methodist Church stood on the corner of South Clinton Street and Second Avenue West and served the largest Protestant congregation in Albia and Monroe County.

Another limitation, although I did not realize it at the time, was the relatively modest choices of churches. Several denominations dominated the religious life of Albia: Roman Catholic (likely the largest), Methodist, the largest Protestant church, Disciples of Christ (Christian), and Presbyterian. Smaller congregations also were represented, including the Church of the Nazarene, Episcopal, Open Bible, Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints, and Society of Friends. My father's family were Presbyterians, a direct legacy of the Church of Scotland. My mother had been baptized in the Congregational church in Hiteman, but when the family moved to Albia, the Dinsmores

gravitated to Methodism. I, too, had a Methodist experience: Sunday School, with three years of perfect attendance, Methodist Youth Fellowship meetings, and the occasional church-sponsored outing. I must have inherited my mother's tendency to be a religious seeker. In time she became a Catholic, in part because of Irish Catholic friends and a preference for things liturgical, but I moved in a much different direction, first joining the Unitarian Universalist Church and in more recent years embracing the tenets of the Church of Christ, Scientist (Christian Science). Albia never offered a Unitarian or Universalist option, and for only a brief time was there a Christian Science Society. As a young adult there was really no opportunity to be exposed to ultra-liberal or metaphysical faiths.

On reflection, spending my first 18 years in a small county-seat community in the Hawkeye State placed me on the right course for my future education and profession. Many of my classmates in the Class of 1962 who planned to attend college shied away from big and what most believed to be impersonal universities, although a few selected Iowa State University and the University of Iowa. If I had been female, I would have considered Stephens College, a private two-year women's school in Columbia, Missouri, where mother, Aunt Dinny, and cousin Nancy Griffin had attended. I thought about Grinnell College, partly because Aunt Grace was an alumna and Dennis Homerin, "Homer," who graduated a year ahead of me, was a student. I loved that the main line of the M&StL sliced directly through the campus. But a visit convinced me that Grinnell was surely too radical for me. At the time I was a dyed-in-the-wool Republican, who during the 1956 presidential campaign had worn shirts literally covered with "I Like Ike" and "I Like Ike Even Better" buttons. And during my junior year in high school I had spent a week in Washington, D.C., as a guest of John Kyl, the conservative Republican congressman from Iowa's Fourth District. I picked the small and non-threatening Simpson College in Indianola, and it proved to be a good fit. After all, the school had awarded me a scholarship, and before enrolling I had chatted with the affable Joe Walt, a professor of history, who enthusiastically sold the college and suggested the possibilities of history as a field of study.

Active in high school and collegiate debating, Grant, in a lighter moment (seated front right) is surrounded by the 1965–66 Simpson College debate team, coached by Professor Richard J. de Laubenfels.

The distinguished Simpsonian George Washington Carver once said, "At Simpson I discovered that I was a human being"; from my perspective, at Simpson I discovered that I could become a historian. Rather than pursuing a career in museum work, I decided that I wanted to teach at the college level. I continued my education at the University of Missouri with financial assistance from a National Defense Education Act Title IV fellowship and a Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellowship. Then in 1970, with Ph.D. in hand but with limited classroom experience, I began a 26-year stint at the University of Akron in Ohio, and in 1996 I relocated to Clemson University in South Carolina. Just as the past and trains had been a pleasurable part of my life in Albia, they remain important to me as a teacher and researcher. For years I have offered undergraduate and graduate students courses on the history of American transportation. Twenty of my 25 books have been on railroad subjects, including histories of three Iowa carriers, Chicago Great Western (1984), Chicago & North Western (1996), and Wabash (2004).

Although it might sound corny, I have always considered myself an Iowan. I quickly learned in my present home location that it is much better to say that you are from Iowa than from Ohio; the Hawkeye State has a positive or at least neutral image among native-born Southerners. And at some point I expect to be buried in the beautiful and memory-filled Oak View Cemetery in Albia.

Growing Up Iowan—Sort Of!

JOHN D. BUENKER

TOO YOUNG to be part of the Greatest Generation and too old to be a Baby Boomer, I was born in Dubuque, Iowa, on August 11, 1937, and lived there for the first 22 years of my life. That confluence of time and place left indelible marks on my psyche that nearly a half-century of living and working east of the Mississippi has altered but not erased. Although I have been a faculty member in the University of Wisconsin system for the past 37 years, I still root for the Hawkeyes. As my wife says, you can take the boy out of Iowa, but you can't take Iowa out of the boy.

I suppose that the circumstances of my birth and upbringing make me a member of the Silent Generation, so-called because there were relatively few of us and we were seemingly quiescent compared to those who preceded and followed us. Coming of age during one of the biggest and longest growth spurts in American history (and largely shielded from competition by racial and gender boundaries), we enjoyed unprecedented—and since unequalled—opportunities for social mobility. Thanks largely to the efforts and motivation of working-class parents with high school educations, my brother and I were able to earn Ph.D.s at two of the nation's most prestigious universities and live the lives of academics and professionals.

John Buenker is professor emeritus of history at the University of Wisconsin–Parkside. He has a B.A. from Loras College and a Ph.D. from Georgetown University. He is the author of *Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform, The Income Tax and the Progressive Era,* and *Wisconsin: The Progressive Era*; and he is the editor of the *Historical Dictionary of the Progressive Era, Multiculturalism in the United States,* and the *Encyclopedia of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era.*

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In fairness, though, I should point out that mine was the first generation to experience the pervasive tensions of the Cold War and to grow up under the threat of nuclear annihilation. In the midst of apparent peace and prosperity, we practiced "duck and cover" drills in our schoolrooms and watched some of our neighbors dig and provision underground atomic bomb shelters. We puzzled over the Korean War and worried that we might be drafted during the Suez and Berlin crises. We also watched as our elders attacked each other's loyalty and patriotism during the anticommunist hysteria that accompanied the early Cold War. One of my most vivid teenage memories is that of people glued to their primitive television sets watching the Army-McCarthy hearings during workday hours. Like many of my contemporary co-religionists, I initially believed that "Red-hunting" Senator Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin was saving the country from communism and that he was being attacked because he was a Catholic. I was gradually disabused of such beliefs by two high school teachers who were also Catholic priests and by reading a satire of McCarthyism published in *Mad Magazine.*

Although Dubuque is definitely in Iowa, it is not entirely of it. Even though its citizens are proud that it is the oldest city in the Hawkeye State, they are at least equally proud of its reputation as "the state of Dubuque," situated as it is on the west bank of the Mississippi, directly across the river from southwestern Wisconsin and northwestern Illinois. If it were possible to extend the borderline of those two adjacent states, the resultant line would effectively bisect the city. Accordingly, Dubuque styles itself "the key city" of the tri-state area. Dubuquers seeking to partake of the amenities of big city life are far more likely to travel to Chicago or Milwaukee than to Des Moines or the Twin Cities. Several locations, such as the Fourth Street Elevator and Eagle Point Park, boast of having the most panoramic view of the tri-state area.

For a relatively small city in an overwhelmingly agricultural state, Dubuque had more than its fair share of manufacturing establishments, chiefly the Dubuque Packing Company, the John Deere Implement Company, and a variety of woodworking firms. It also had more than the usual array of institutions of

Eagle Point Park offers panoramic views of the Mississippi River and the tri-state area. Photo from the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

higher learning, including Loras and Clarke colleges, the University of Dubuque, and Wartburg and St. Bernard seminaries. For the majority who did not pursue higher education, working at "the Pack," "Deere's," or other unionized shops was the zenith of blue-collar employment, providing wages that lifted thousands into a middle-class standard of living.

The Dubuque of my youth was one of the most Catholic cities in the country, if not the entire world. According to popular belief, the city was built upon seven hills—just like Rome—with a Catholic church, school, convent, or hospital crowning each one. The bulk of the population descended from northern and western European immigrants, chiefly German and Irish, at a time when the church was sponsoring settlement by old-stock newcomers in order to protect its dogmas and rituals from being Americanized. Although there was an influential non-Catholic elite, the middle and working classes were overwhelmingly Catholic. What we did not have were "Negroes," as African

Americans were then called in polite conversation. There was supposedly a single black family of several members living in the "flats" near the river, but I never saw them. We did have one "Negro" student, a boarder from Chicago, in my high school class at Loras Academy, and we encountered others in athletic contests. (Imagine my initial culture shock when I moved to Washington, DC, to attend graduate school.) *Fortune* magazine once quipped that a mixed marriage in Dubuque was one between an Irish Catholic and a German Catholic. That was certainly an exaggeration, but it rang true to me because I was the product of such a union between my maternal grandfather, Pete Ferring, and my grandmother, Katie McCann.

A city of just over 40,000 people in 1940, Dubuque boasted nine Catholic churches and grade schools, five Catholic high schools, two Catholic colleges, a major seminary, and the motherhouses of three orders of nuns. So far as I know, Dubuque is the only city in the country to have elected a Catholic nun mayor. The most influential person in the city was probably the archbishop. His pronouncements on matters of faith and morals, backed by the threat of excommunication for those who dissented, generally carried the day. Once a year in each Catholic church, parishioners had to take a public oath to support the Legion of Decency, which rated movies on a scale ranging from acceptable for school kids to "condemned." (By the time we became teenagers, my brother and I remained seated and silent during that part of the mass.) The opposition of the Catholic hierarchy to such movies as *Luther, The Moon Is Blue,* and *The Outlaw* convinced theater owners to refuse to exhibit them. Whether one regarded this Catholic hegemony as nurturing or stifling depended largely on the individual. I learned from my grade-school teachers that Dubuque had been safe from tornadoes because its first bishop, French immigrant Mathias Loras, had blessed the city and continued to watch over it. His memory is venerated in the form of his statue overlooking the city from Loras Boulevard, one of its steepest hills.

Perhaps the biggest anomaly about Dubuque in those days was its allegiance to the Democratic Party in an overwhelmingly Republican state. A large part of the reason for that deviation lay in the city's heavily Catholic character. Part of it was

This statue of Archbishop Mathias Loras, the first Catholic archbishop west of the Mississippi River, blesses Dubuque from the apex of the boulevard that bears his name. Photo from Purgold*, the Loras College yearbook.*

also due to the widespread conviction that Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal had ameliorated the harsher aspects of the Great Depression. Part of it, too, was attributable to the fact that Dubuque's workforce in the 1930s, '40s, and '50s was heavily unionized, also a legacy of the National Labor Relations (Wagner) Act and other pro-labor New Deal policies. My father was a shop steward for the Teamsters Union local at the Dubuque Star Brewing Company, and my mother was fired from her job for supporting a unionization drive at Woolworth's five-and-dime store.

By all odds, the most contentious issue between "the state of Dubuque" and mainstream Iowa had to do with the enforcement of the state's strict liquor laws. Although Dubuque's aversion to prohibition was shared by large numbers of people in other river towns and in the state's larger inland cities, its clashes with Iowa and federal enforcement authorities were particularly belligerent. The numerous islands in the middle of the Mississippi provided cover for bootleggers and rumrunners. Conventional wisdom had it that the key to being elected sheriff

The Fourth Street (Fenelon Place) Elevator, one of several that provide access from the riverfront to the bluffs. Photo from SHSI, IC.

of Dubuque County was open refusal to cooperate with the state liquor control authorities when they staged tavern raids. Liquor and gambling were also readily available just across the bridge in East Dubuque, Illinois, although the Dubuque police periodically stopped cars with Iowa license plates as soon as they exited the bridge.

I was born in St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital on a brutally hot and humid day in the pre–air conditioning era. Contrary to current practice, my mother and I spent my first week in the hospital before I was taken home to our Third Street flat. We lived halfway up one of the steepest streets in the city, which, unlike Fourth Street, had no elevator. My uncle Gil, my mother, and I narrowly escaped serious injury when the brakes on his car failed and we went several blocks in free fall. My widowed maternal grandfather, devastated by the loss of his Chevy dealership during the Great Depression, lived with us until he remarried. Most mornings, he would take me for a walk that usually

ended up at one of the numerous taverns on the south side. While Grandpa schmoozed with his friends over a beer or two, I sat on a barstool and drank orange soda from a bottle. I was easily the best-known little kid in the neighborhood, a condition that always amazed my mother when local merchants called me by my first name. Perhaps my most vivid impression from those early days occurred on an unusually balmy December 7, 1941, when my parents and I learned about the attack on Pearl Harbor from a radio bulletin while standing in line to see a movie. I don't remember whether we stayed for the show.

My parents were the grandchildren of immigrants from Germany and Ireland who settled on farms and small towns near Dubuque in the mid- to late nineteenth century. My mother was born in the crossroads hamlet of Bankston, where her family operated a general store for more than 50 years. Early in the twentieth century her father and mother had moved to the larger town of Dyersville, where my grandfather owned and operated a prosperous automobile and farm implement dealership. My father was born in 1909 in nearby New Vienna, a town so monolithically German Catholic that it did not even have a public school, and where his father owned both a farm and a tavern/general store. (Fittingly enough, my parents are buried next to her parents in Dyersville's St. Francis Xavier Cemetery, less than a mile from *The Field of Dreams* movie location.) My mother graduated from St. Francis Xavier High School and was groomed for higher education until her mother died and her father lost his business during the Great Depression. My father had to leave school after the eighth grade, despite having won a countywide competitive scholarship to Dubuque Senior High School, because the parish priest, a German immigrant, refused to allow him to attend a "non-Catholic" school. My parents met at a series of small-town dances, most likely attracted by the similarity of their frustrated ambitions, a condition that later steeled their determination to provide as much education as possible for their sons.

They settled in Dubuque. My dad went to work for the Dubuque Star Brewing Company and remained there, except for a three-year hiatus during World War II, until his retirement. My mom kept house, except for the few years when she worked in

restaurants, bakeries, or dime stores in order to facilitate our education and buying their own home. They finally achieved the latter goal the same year that I graduated from Loras College and went off to graduate school at Georgetown. My mom also was very active in the Democratic Party, as well as in numerous parent organizations affiliated with the schools attended by her sons. Like many parents with frustrated ambitions, she lived much of her life vicariously through her children.

My "Summer of '42" was not as dramatic as the one portrayed in the movie of the same name, but it was an important watershed in my young life for several reasons. For one thing, my brother Bob was born on May 6, meaning that my days as the sole apple of my parents' eye came to a screeching halt. Like most only brothers, Bob and I had a volatile relationship that ran the gamut from love and loyalty to jealousy and hostility. Like the Smothers Brothers, we argued a lot over whom mother liked best. I often resented his tagging along when my friends and I played baseball or basketball, but I was always secretly proud when he was allowed to join in. The low point of our relationship probably came when I broke his arm during a one-on-one basketball game. The high point came when he attacked a bunch of older boys who were trying to steal my bike, chasing them up the street with a board from which a nail protruded. (Or maybe it was our last city league basketball game just before I left for graduate school when we combined for more than 50 points.)

Bob traced my footsteps through St. Patrick's Grade School, Loras Academy, and Loras College, making comparisons all but impossible to resist. I was always near the top of my class in grade point average; Bob was always first in his. I "played at" a variety of sports; he concentrated mostly on tennis, becoming the number one man on both his high school and college teams. I got a graduate fellowship from Georgetown; he got one from Princeton. Over the past half-century—during which time I have lived in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Illinois, and Wisconsin, and he has resided in New Jersey, Nebraska, Germany, and North Carolina—we have been the one constant in each other's lives and the most enduring link to our Dubuque roots.

The 1955 Loras Academy baseball team ranked first in the state, with a record of 23–0 before losing the state championship game in extra innings. John Buenker is on the lower left. Photo from The Log.

Almost as significant as Bob's appearance in our household was our move to a duplex on Kaufmann Avenue, in the northwestern hinterlands of the city, where we lived in the closest thing to a real neighborhood that we ever experienced. At the risk of being deceived by what Mario Puzo has called "retrospective falsification," I remember that neighborhood of about a dozen working-class families as a place where adults generally took responsibility for each other's children and where older kids watched out for younger ones. In an age before television and computers, we spent most of our playtime outside, making our own recreation and entertainment. Mostly, we chose up sides for one of several competitive games, such as kickball, dodgeball, hide and seek, kick the can, capture the flag, king of the hill, and red rover. Some nights we tried to see who could capture the most lightning bugs in a jar. My favorite game was "statues," in which one person swung another around several

times before letting go, and the "throwee" froze in whatever position he or she landed. The two then agreed on a name for the "statue," which people from the other side tried to identify. In wintertime, we had snow sculpture contests, built snow forts, and had massive snowball battles. Then there were the "rubber gun wars," in which the two sides fired thick rubber bands at one another from wooden guns that the older boys had constructed. If you were hit, you were out of the battle, which continued until one side gave up or was annihilated. Shooting anyone above the waist resulted in automatic disqualification.

Sometimes we just climbed and explored the hills behind our houses or the quarry several blocks away. On hot summer days, the highlight was the arrival of the ice delivery truck. Until the end of World War II, many of the people in the neighborhood still had iceboxes instead of electric refrigerators. When the ice truck was due, people would put cards in their windows designating how much ice they needed, usually anywhere from 25 to 100 pounds. The iceman, whose name was "Red" Clapper, was a good friend of my parents and so he would let us climb on board the truck and ride around as he made his tour of the neighborhood. We were allowed to pick up all the loose pieces and ingest them—a real treat on a hot summer's day! Sometimes Red would chip off some ice, if there wasn't enough lying loose. I am sure that, in this age of seatbelts and airbags, it was dangerous to ride on the back of the truck, but we loved doing it and our parents trusted Red to watch out for us. To us, he was one of nature's noblemen. Come to think of it, many necessities, such as milk, bread, and groceries, were delivered to us. There was even a Fuller Brush man who went door-to-door selling household cleaning products.

Indoor entertainment revolved around the big radio that stood on the floor in the living room. We used to rush home from school to listen to such kids' programs as *The Lone Ranger, Superman,* and *Jack Armstrong, the All American Boy*. These were generally 15-minute shows akin to movie serials that ended each day with the hero or his girlfriend in some kind of horrible danger and the announcer breathlessly urging us to "tune in tomorrow" to find out how he or she managed to survive. On a rational level, we knew that the characters were reading the

dialogue from scripts in a studio somewhere, accompanied by sound effects, but in our vivid imaginations they were whatever we chose to make them. The announcers also urged us to save the boxtops from the sponsoring product and send in for decoders, signet rings, and cardboard walkie talkies. During the daytime, our mothers listened to soap operas as they did their household chores. In the evening, the whole family usually gathered around the radio to listen to comedy shows such as *Fibber McGee and Molly* or *Jack Benny*, mysteries such as *Suspense* or *Inner Sanctum*, science fiction such as *Dimension X* or *The Twilight Zone*, or dramatic programs such as the *Lux Radio Theatre* or *Grand Central Station*. We didn't get our first television set until my junior year in high school (1954)—a small black-and-white set whose reception was enhanced by "rabbit ears" with pieces of tinfoil attached. In the beginning we could (under perfect weather conditions) pull in NBC from the Quad Cities or CBS from Madison, but they only transmitted from 7 a.m. to midnight. (Because of its distance from places with television stations, Dubuque was one of the first cities in Iowa to get cable television, thereby upping the number of channels to a dozen or so.) A rabid sports fan, I couldn't wait until the weekend for a telecast of a single "game of the week" of baseball, basketball, or football. These were generally overshadowed by such sports as wrestling, bowling, and roller derby. In those early days, people would watch almost anything—including test patterns and the playing of the national anthem at the conclusion of the broadcast day. The first house on the block to get a TV suddenly became the neighborhood gathering spot.

When we ventured outside the neighborhood without adults, we almost always went in small groups, with the older children charged—under threat of severe penalty—with the welfare of the younger ones. A frequent destination was Torreys, a "mom and pop" grocery store several blocks away that had a cornucopia of candy and ice cream. Another was Sacred Heart School, a distance of close to a mile from home. (I know this because my own children later made me measure it on the odometer in order to disprove my claims of walking several miles—uphill—both ways.) On Friday nights and Sunday afternoons, we frequently hiked to the Capitol Theater on the

corner of Kaufmann and Central Avenues. The "Cap" was a typical neighborhood movie theater of the times. Unlike the movie "palaces" downtown, it showed second run or "B" films made especially for such venues, and changed the bill frequently. "Going to the show" was usually a four- or five-hour experience that included two feature films, a couple of cartoons, a newsreel, a short subject, a serial, and previews of coming attractions. The cost of this extravaganza was 14 cents for children under 12 and 25 cents for those over that age.[1] Since I was tall for my age, my mother gave me a copy of my birth certificate to prove my age. Even then we sometimes conspired to help some of our number to sneak in through the exit door, a transgression that we were expected to include in our list of sins at our next confession.

At the end of the "Summer of '42," I began kindergarten at Sacred Heart School, where I came under the tutelage of the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (You could say that I entered school at age five and did not leave until I retired from the University of Wisconsin–Parkside faculty 60 years later.) I wish that I could say that school and I were an instant love match, but things were much more rocky than that. For one thing, my kindergarten teacher, Sister Mary Hermilinda, seemed ancient to me, especially when she boasted that she had taught the parents—and even grandparents—of some of my classmates. She scared me half out of my wits, with an occasional rap on the knuckles with a ruler or pointer. For the first nine years of my academic career, I was taught exclusively by nuns. When we entered high school, however, boys and girls went to separate schools. Then I was taught almost exclusively by priests or laymen.

The grade-school curriculum of course consisted of a great deal of religious instruction, supplemented by daily mass and communion. (I almost blew my first Holy Communion by trying to sneak a glass of water from the kitchen sink while my mother and my aunt put the finishing touches on my all-white outfit. Fortunately, my Aunt Marian knocked the offending glass out of my hand before I could imbibe.) The good sisters

1. This is relatively cheap even when adjusted for inflation; 14 cents in the late 1940s is equivalent to about $1.20–$1.60 today.—Ed.

were particularly bent upon constant drilling in "reading, writing, and 'rithmetic." We spent seemingly endless hours drilling addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division tables, diagramming sentences, identifying parts of speech, working problems on the blackboard, reading out loud, conducting spelling bees, and the like. We hated almost every minute of it, but I later realized that those boring drills provided me with a solid grasp of the fundamentals and building blocks of acquiring knowledge. In addition, the nuns included generous helpings of art and music in our curriculum, which awakened an abiding appreciation for the aesthetic side of human existence. (This even though I almost always flunked art because of my ineptitude at drawing, painting, and sculpting; I boasted that I had invented soap powder in my abortive attempts to carve the *Santa Maria* out of a bar of the stuff.)

The year 1942 was also the first full year of American participation in World War II, popularly referred to as "The Good War" because our country was clearly responding to the "unprovoked and dastardly attack" at Pearl Harbor and because we and our allies were so obviously engaged in a life-and-death struggle against a genuine "axis of evil" in Nazi Germany, Imperial Japan, and Fascist Italy. (Ironically, our strongest military ally was the Soviet Union, which had been miraculously transformed into a Western-style democracy for the duration of the war, only to become the new "evil empire" during the ensuing Cold War.)

Unlike recent conflicts, World War II involved the total mobilization of American society on the home front, one that even enlisted the contributions of elementary school children. There were price, wage, and rent controls and rationing of nearly all of the necessities of life. (Ration books became more important than cash, and campaigns against black marketeering and hoarding took on the aura of patriotic crusades.) Inspired by the government's "Rosie the Riveter" campaign, millions of women entered the workforce in defense-related industries (only to be told, once the war was over, to stay home and contribute to the Baby Boom). My dad went to work at "the Pack," preparing meat for shipment to the armed forces. He also served as the neighborhood air raid warden, making sure that no light shone

anywhere during mock air raids. (Even at our tender ages, my friends and I thought it unlikely that a residential area in Dubuque was a realistic target for Nazi bombers.) Since gasoline and rubber tires were prohibitively rationed, most families put their cars up on blocks for the duration. I helped my parents till their Victory Garden in order to have fresh fruits and vegetables, and my mother canned or preserved them for later usage. Many homes displayed "blue star" emblems in the windows to show that a family member was in the armed services. ("Gold star" emblems signified that someone in the household had already made the "supreme sacrifice for his country.")

Like millions of other youngsters, I did what I could to contribute to the war effort. Every Monday, we would bring a dime to school and purchase a stamp that we carefully pasted in our savings bond books. When we had accumulated $18.75, we exchanged the book for a bond that would mature at $25.00 in ten years. My dad also had money withheld from his paycheck to buy war bonds. Several times per month, we pulled our little red wagons around the neighborhood to collect newspapers, scrap metal, and rubber that were recycled into war materials. Inspired by the ubiquitous propaganda messages that we received in school, comic books, movies, and radio programs, we were constantly on the lookout for hoarders, black marketeers, saboteurs and, above all, Nazi spies. I was convinced that my parents' landlord, who spoke with a heavy German accent (as did several of my older relatives), was a spy because he made my parents pay him a little extra under the table along with their rent-controlled monthly payments. Although just about everyone violated the price controls and rationing quotas in small ways, the degree of compliance with these rules "in pursuit of victory" and for the "protection of our freedoms" was extraordinary. Whether or not my parents and their contemporaries were really the "greatest generation" is certainly debatable, but the extent to which they strove together to combat economic depression and war was truly remarkable and inspirational.

Nearly every evening, families gathered around their radios to listen to the latest war news as delivered by Edward R. Murrow, William Shirer, or my particular favorite, Gabriel Heatter, who always began his broadcast by proclaiming either, "Ah,

Loras Academy, halfway up the hill on the way to Loras College. Photo from The Log.

there is good news tonight" or "Ah, there is bad news tonight." Even more awe-inspiring were the "fireside chats" given by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had an uncanny knack for talking directly to each listener in language that brought world-shaking developments down to a personal level. My favorite memories of World War II are the spontaneous parades down Main Street on VE and VJ days. Total strangers hugged and kissed one another, and people sang and danced in the streets in a state of near euphoria.

I spent most of my last eight years in Dubuque (1951–1959) on Loras Boulevard, because Loras Academy was on a plateau halfway up the steep incline, while Loras College gazed down from its apex. The academy was an all-male Catholic boarding school with compulsory Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)

The commanding officers of the Loras Academy Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) battalion pose in 1959, with John Buenker, the second-in-command, on the front row left. Photo from The Log.

and seemed to be a universe unto itself. There was a clear division between "boarders" and "day hops," but that bifurcation grew less obvious over time due to the mixing that took place in classes, intramural sports, extracurricular activities, and interscholastic athletics. The curriculum was almost entirely liberal arts and college prep, at least in the "A track" where I spent all four years.

Most of my classmates—both boarders and "day hops"—moved, literally and figuratively, up the boulevard to complete their college educations, so that we formed a tightly knit cohort during the decade of our emergence. We worked on the school newspaper and yearbook; played together on intramural, city league, and varsity athletic teams; and were the chief movers and shakers in most student organizations. The highlight of the year was the Military Ball, at which we received our ROTC commissions, and the Homecoming Dance, for which we "bor-

rowed" students from the three Catholic girls' schools. My biggest thrill was being a member of the varsity baseball team that won 23 straight games. My biggest disappointment was losing the state championship final in extra innings.

Growing up in Dubuque in the 1940s and 50s instilled in me a passionate love of history that enriched my life and laid the groundwork for my career as a historian. As the oldest city in Iowa, Dubuque was awash with historical artifacts going back into the early nineteenth century. I remember being tremendously impressed with the events of the state's centennial celebration in 1946, especially with the elaborate pageant held in the football stadium at Senior High School when I was nine years old. Trips to nearby Galena, Illinois, a living historical museum that included the home of U. S. Grant, reinforced my interest, as did a visit to Spillville, Iowa, where we toured the home where Czech composer Antonin Dvořák stayed during his sojourn in the United States. I recall my mother frequently remarking that I always picked nonfiction books over fiction on our frequent visits to the Carnegie Stout Public Library. Perhaps even more inspiring was listening to the stories told by my great-grandmother, a German immigrant, mother of 11, and a pioneer on the Iowa frontier. She died just months short of her 100th birthday, a living link to the immigrant experience on which I have focused much of my research and teaching. I was 12 years old at the time of her death and have always wished that I had asked her better questions and that I had recorded her recollections.

My abiding interest in history was nurtured and cultivated by several of my teachers, especially Sister Mary Robertelle in the sixth grade at St. Patrick School, Tom Hurm and Cliff Lorenz at Loras Academy (the latter held frequent "history downs," which I usually won), and Tom Auge and Bob Brady at the college level. In fact, it was Professor Brady who constructed my bridge from Dubuque to Washington, D.C.—and to my professional life—by helping me secure a teaching assistantship at Georgetown University.

Reading the other four autobiographical essays in this collection makes me realize, even more than before, how atypical my experience of "Growing Up Iowan" really was. When I first

enrolled in the history department at Georgetown University in 1959, the professor who was to become my mentor immediately assumed that—being from Iowa—I must be fresh off the farm and a conservative Republican. That was hardly a promising background for someone who wanted to work under the tutelage of a scholar who grew up in New Jersey, received his Ph.D. at Harvard under Oscar Handlin, was writing a biography of Senator Robert F. Wagner Sr., was founder of the "urban liberalism" school of American political history, and whose book, *Massachusetts People and Politics, 1919–1933*, had just been reviewed in the *New York Times* by Senator John F. Kennedy. That impression was also shared by most of my fellow graduate students, who were predominantly Irish and Italian Catholics and Jews who had been brought up in the "Boswash" megalopolis. It didn't take me long, however, to convince J. Joseph Huthmacher and my colleagues that, in spite of their stereotypes about Iowans, my urban, ethnic, working-class, Democratic origins made me a kindred spirit. By the time I published *Urban Liberalism and Progressive Reform*, my mentor was quoted as saying that he wished that he had written it. During my professional career of forty-plus years, the focus of my research and teaching has been on immigration, ethnic, urban, state, and local history and political culture.

While I was busy earning my spurs as a historian of urban liberalism, Herschel Loveless, Harold Hughes, John Culver, and Richard Clark and their supporters were significantly altering both the image and the substance of Iowa's social and political landscape. By the mid-1960s, my brand of Iowan no longer seemed quite so atypical.

Public History and the Odyssey of a Born-Again Native

REBECCA CONARD

LIKE MANY OTHER NATIVE IOWANS, I grew up on a farm—in my case, a quarter-section of undulating terrain in northwest Iowa that supported a modest dairy operation. Even though we were a tenant farm family, my dad belonged to a soil conservation district and practiced the kind of diversified farming that went out of fashion in the 1960s but is now slowly being reclaimed by sustainable agriculturists. On the far side of the farm, a fallen cottonwood provided a convenient sitting spot. The cows often were pastured near there in spring and summer, and I never tired of walking the path to fetch the herd for milking because it meant that I could steal a few minutes to hop up on the trunk, soak in the warmth of the day, and watch whatever crossed the horizon.

It is axiomatic that we are all shaped to some degree by environment in the literal sense of "place" as well as the figurative sense of "the times and circumstances," and self-evident truths are, by definition, hard to parse. As I began to think about the ways that growing up in Iowa has shaped my work as a historian, it became clearer that the figurative sense—the happenstance of being born on the leading edge of the baby boom gen-

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eration—has been, on balance, a more powerful influence than place. The only childhood stories I can remember are my father's recounting of World War II experiences during the North African and Italian campaigns, and I have aged in lock step with the modern civil rights, feminist, and environmental movements. The truth is that, during my formative years, I developed no particular attachment to any place, except perhaps that dead cottonwood and my maternal grandmother's house in Ida Grove: the coo of a mourning dove will recall the feel of cool summer breezes at her kitchen window, and the scent of lilacs will rock my thoughts to the glider that sat under an immense lilac bush in the side yard. Those cherished memories notwithstanding, it was only as an adult that I began to explore Iowa in the course of "doing" public history. The repeated experience of connecting history with specific places and people, and learning to observe the landscape in historical, even geological, time, much like the process that Wes Jackson describes in *Becoming Native to This Place,* triggered a naturalizing effect of sorts. I am, if you will, a born-again native.

For better or worse, those of us who came of age in the 1960s carry the hard stamp of that decade. The televised 1960 Democratic National Convention was my rite of passage into political awareness—a classmate and I stayed up all night to watch Kennedy win the nomination—but even before then it was hard not to be aware of civil rights as a growing national crisis after the 1957 standoff at Little Rock's Central High. The fact that schools were battlegrounds in the fight for racial equality brought the issue to *our* level, but from the vantage point of my all-white, small-town high school, Lake View–Auburn, the discord was a distant and intermittent rumble. That changed in the summer of 1963, when I was tapped to be a student delegate to the Second Methodist Conference on Human Relations, which met in August, August 26–30 to be precise. Little in my rural Iowa upbringing had prepared me for that experience.

When I boarded the train for Chicago, I knew only that my destination was the Conrad Hilton Hotel and that the conference would address race relations; thus I was marginally prepared to join what turned out to be a biracial gathering of several hundred people. After the opening session, student delegates were

escorted to a specially arranged meeting conducted by Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee recruiters. I was hardly a seasoned conference goer, but at that moment I knew this was no ordinary conference. During the next four days, the conference gradually turned into a civil rights rally even though the program included a fair number of obligatory discussions concerning the pending merger of Methodist denominations. There were animated discussions of racial issues in local communities, integrating local congregations, Martin Luther King Jr.'s letter from Birmingham City Jail (written just four months earlier), and the civil rights bill then before Congress. Speakers of national and international stature addressed "The Role of the Courts in Expanding Freedom," "Black Muslims—Challenge to the Church," and "The World Implications of Human Rights"—issues that were largely beyond my ken at the time. James Meredith, Dick Gregory, and members of the Southern Christian Leadership Council took command of the auditorium for an afternoon. On Wednesday, August 28, the assembly joined hands and sang "We Shall Overcome" in solidarity with something called the Washington March, to which the conference sent six delegates. Only after the conference did I learn the magnitude and significance of *that* event.

It was an extraordinary experience, but then it was an extraordinary time. My personal encounter with the overwhelming power of the civil rights movement was, in the grand scheme of things, marginal but not inconsequential. Years later, reading Sara Evans's *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (1979), I realized that I had observed firsthand a key strategy of the church-based movement: black and white clergy using the organized network of churches to spread the roots of citizen solidarity and, particularly, to reach into the hinterlands of the upper Midwest to recruit students for voter registration drives and other nonviolent action. That experience, and a similar horizon-expanding study tour of Washington, DC, and New York City during my senior year, occurred on a parallel plane with the normal activities of my teen years, which included youthful passions for music and vocal performance, but they are the indelible memories of my youth that travel in my day-to-day consciousness.

Concerning the university years that eventually brought me to study history, I never actually made a decision about whether to go to college; I just knew that I would, even though neither of my parents had. In retrospect, I realize that I ended up on the college prep track largely because of Cold War–inspired changes in public education. The faults of that regime notwithstanding, I benefited from Iowa's public education system, the finest in the nation in the 1960s. Even at Lake View–Auburn High, consolidated but still small, I fell into the orbit of dedicated, talented, and creative teachers, especially three outstanding women who also were raising families and involved in community affairs.[1] I came of age at a time when girls on the college track still were expected to choose teaching or nursing; thus career counseling was not a priority. So, even though teaching then had no career appeal for me, I unconsciously adopted these three teachers as role models. Years later, as I was reordering personal priorities and making career choices, I appreciated them even more. They had been "doing it all" long before Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique* and reinvigorated the feminist movement.

In adopting the term "born-again native" for this essay, I intentionally background the many years I have spent living elsewhere, including more than two decades in California. It is of some interest, however, to note that Frank Mitchell, another essayist in this issue, left the Midwest to pursue an academic career at the University of Southern California at roughly the same time I was drawn to southern California to pursue a college education. On some level, both of our experiences reflect the allure of the West that still figures prominently in western Iowa culture vis-à-vis John Buenker's experience growing up in the "state of Dubuque" and absorbing its stronger cultural affin-

1. Evonne Deur, whose approach to teaching drama included strategies such as taking a group of thespians to the newly opened (and now, sadly, gone) Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis to see Hume Cronyn in Moliere's *The Miser;* Arline Hunter, French and music, who drew on her experience as a performer to create a music program that rivaled the athletic program; and author Annabelle Irwin, composition and literature, who taught my generation how to write (and write and write) before she went on to teach writing at Iowa State University. Consolidation is an ongoing process among rural school districts; Lake View Auburn expanded to Wall Lake View Auburn, and in 2007 became East Sac County School District.

ity with Chicago and points east. The M & M divide of Iowa's topography, which sends some river waters to the Mississippi and some to the Missouri, permeates Iowa culture, too.

In any case, in 1976, having completed a graduate degree in folklore studies at UCLA, I thought I needed an interlude to contemplate the next big step. Admission to two doctoral programs lay on the table, neither option beckoning, so I retreated to a familiar place: home, Iowa. At the suggestion of one of those high school teachers I considered a mentor of sorts, I called Peter Harstad, then director of the State Historical Society of Iowa (SHSI), and asked if he had any special projects that might keep me busy for a summer. He did. My project was to conduct exploratory interviews with a small number of Century Farm owners in order to lay the groundwork for a larger oral history project. With a bit of fieldwork and oral history experience in my graduate studies, I was comfortable undertaking the assignment and quickly discovered that the people I interviewed considered me an insider because I had grown up on a farm.

The summer, however, turned out not to be the quiet interlude I was seeking. In one sense, it was a grand summer because I began learning Iowa's twentieth-century agricultural history inside out, from which vantage point I began to think about the forces that shape human uses of land over time and, more particularly, began to understand the outside forces at work during my father's time as a farmer, and his father's before him. Born in Germany, my paternal grandfather immigrated to the U.S. in the 1890s with his parents, who settled in the German enclave of Schleswig. In 1919, at the tail end of war-driven prosperity, he and my grandmother purchased a farm near Ida Grove, only to lose it during the Great Depression. In another sense, it was a summer of deepest sadness: my youngest brother sustained fatal injuries in a freak vehicular accident. The experience of connecting to the past through people who shared many details of their family history intertwined with the experience of waiting helplessly while a young life ended in a hospital operating room. I still have no words to adequately express that summer's *force majeure* except to note that because I felt powerless to protect my brother from death, I surrendered a piece of my heart to the earth of his gravesite. It was the be-

The author (left) interviews Rachel Hodgin for the Earthwatch-SHSI Oral History Project. Photo from State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

ginning of reconnecting with Iowa soil and my own family. In between interviewing Century Farm families, I spent many hours with my maternal grandmother recording her life story and family history, one that weaves back through the major strands of westward migration to four brothers sent to the colonies as soldiers in the British army during the revolutionary war who decided to take their chances in America after the fighting was over.

Sometimes the most amazing thing about life is the way mundane details carry us along. I returned to California at the end of the summer to accept a teaching position at American River Community College in Sacramento, which turned out to be the real interlude. During the next two years, a new routine filled my days as I made plans to return to Iowa in 1978 to continue the oral history project, this time with a field crew.[2] The planning process entailed articulating the purpose for such an undertaking and the possible research value that might come

2. Oral history interviews of the Earthwatch-SHSI Oral History Project [OH 4], July–August 1978, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

from it. Initially, the intent had been to gather information about rural traditions among families whose roots in Iowa extended back at least two or three generations. But the pilot study revealed good potential for eliciting discussions about changes in land use across generations and the future of family farming. In due time, I found myself increasingly drawn to the study of history because it offered Context with a capital C—not theories to guide analysis or intellectual constructs to discern patterns and shades of meaning, but a synthetic approach to understanding change over time, the forces great and small that affect human action, and the relevance of the past in contemporary society. The summer of 1976 had left me wondering about the meaning of life, and above all else I was seeking assurance that life had meaning. To make a long story short, the summer of 1978 confirmed my decision to jump disciplines, and in September I plunged into doctoral work in public history at U.C. Santa Barbara.

The decades since have been a public history odyssey. Professionally, one calls this a career, but it has always seemed more like a journey to me. During the past two decades especially, the journey has taken me to many out-of-the-way places in my native state and instilled a sense of place over time that comes only by getting to know the territory.

In the late 1980s, Ralph Christian, architectural historian in Iowa's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), talked me into taking on the daunting task of surveying Iowa's railroad architecture, a task accomplished only with the aid of a dedicated research assistant and a railroad buff whose detailed knowledge of extant railroad structures was unparalleled. The process of studying hundreds of remaining structures, together with documentary and field evidence of long-gone structures along the more than 10,000 miles of track that once crisscrossed Iowa, gave me an on-the-ground understanding of railroads as complex corporate organizations. Historians often cite railroads as the beginning of the modern corporate system of business, but we do not often stop to think about what that meant in physical, functional terms: what it took to move trains, passengers, and freight from one location to another; the infrastructure that supported long transportation routes; how railroads man-

aged a labor force that was in constant motion and strung out in lines across vast distances. Roger Grant's work on railroads in Iowa helped me reconceptualize railroad architecture in functional rather than stylistic terms.[3] That, in turn, opened me to thinking about how historians contextualize the particulars of local history.[4]

Scholars have, for instance, profiled the major rail lines, insofar as corporate records allow, and examined the ways railroads enabled the rapid extraction of natural resources to industrialize cities and whole regions, shifted the north-south axis of river commerce to the horizontal axis of rail transport, and decentralized the meatpacking industry. Juxtaposed with such big-picture views, local history often seems insignificant. But if one shifts the vantage point to draw connections from specifics to meaningful patterns or universals, as evaluating the significance of historic places requires one to do, the past becomes more complex and new questions arise. For example, how did local merchants and manufacturers use Iowa's intricate rail network to expand markets to levels sustainable with local labor pools? Or, how did that intricate network contribute to shaping and reshaping the social and cultural contours of Iowa over time? Understandably, historic preservationists and local communities across Iowa have focused on saving depots and adapting them to new uses. In exchange, we have lost roundhouses where mechanics serviced train engines; freight warehouses where dock workers transferred cargo; shops where carpenters, blacksmiths, and other skilled workers built and maintained the infrastructure; and all the other functionally specific structures —water tanks, coal chutes, sand bins, and firehouses—needed

3. Grant's publications in railroad history constitute a lengthy list, but much of his work focuses on railroads in small towns and rural areas. Especially useful for the Iowa railroad architecture study was *The Country Railroad Station in America* (Sioux Falls, SD, 1988), which he coauthored with Charles W. Bohi.

4. Rebecca Conard, "Once I Built a Railroad: Viewing Railroad History from the Depot Platform," *Public Historian* 14 (1992), was an early attempt to examine what happens in the research process when one *begins* by asking questions that arise in the course of observing historic structures in situ. The most straightforward and basic question—"Why is this structure located in this place?"—can spur one to investigate sources that might not otherwise be obvious.

to operate railroad systems in the days of steam locomotion. Less than three decades after my 1963 train trip to Chicago, still a normal way to travel long-distance at the time, most of the rails that made that trip possible were gone. The depots, few of them even located adjacent to an active line, stand as icons of the industrial age on the prairie, their meaning more felt than understood.

A couple of years later, I worked with historian Lowell Soike, also with the Iowa SHPO, on a statewide survey of historic places associated with the conservation movement. Not only did the project align with my interests in environmental and modern U.S. history, but the fieldwork put me in touch with the Iowa landscape in ways that I had not experienced since childhood, whether it was boating to an island in the Mississippi River to document early fish-rearing ponds, following a ridgeline to document a 1930s watershed protection project in southwest Iowa, or stretching out in Hayden Prairie Preserve on a hot summer afternoon to be enveloped by a cool mixture of grass, breeze, and earth.

The research also took me into the history of progressivism in Iowa, still a rich field for scholars. Perhaps the most visible legacy of progressivism and the conservation movement in Iowa is the state park system. The voices of those who articulated the need for creating Iowa's system of parks and preserves were botanists, geologists, ornithologists, natural scientists, and nonprofessional naturalists who were documenting the decline or degradation of Iowa's timberlands, native prairies, songbirds, fish and game populations, sovereign lakes, rivers, and water quality. The resource concerns of early twentieth-century natural scientists such as Thomas Macbride, Louis Pammel, Ada Hayden, and others resonated so clearly with contemporary environmental concerns that I was drawn to study the relationship between the park movement and environmentalism in Iowa in some depth, work that resulted in *Places of Quiet Beauty: Parks, Preserves, and Environmentalism* (1996). When the title became the slogan for the 75th anniversary of state parks, I took it as the sincerest form of flattery: a cap emblazoned "Places of Quiet Beauty: State Parks 1997" hangs in my study.

In a twist of fate, Iowa history brought me to a deeper understanding of my chosen profession, public history, not only through professional practice and association with other Iowans working in the field, but also by studying one of the true pioneers of public history. Benjamin Shambaugh, the State Historical Society of Iowa's first director, devoted much of his career to developing an intellectual rationale for the practice of history in the wider world. An academician himself, inasmuch as he also served as the founding director of the political science department at the University of Iowa, he nonetheless envisioned a dynamic role for history in service to the commonwealth. Shambaugh articulated his vision most clearly in a set of policy studies that he called the Applied History Series, but his legacy also includes one of the most complete state studies of homefront activity during World War I, the founding of one of the earliest popular history magazines, still published under the title *Iowa Heritage Illustrated*, and the pathbreaking Commonwealth Conferences of the 1920s. Mary Bennett, curator of special collections at the State Historical Society of Iowa's Iowa City library, convinced me to turn an unpublished biography of Shambaugh into a more nuanced study that situates him in the context of progressivism and disciplinary professionalization during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Writing *Benjamin Shambaugh and the Intellectual Foundations of Public History* (2002) caused me to rethink everything I thought I knew about the history of the profession and to look more closely at the influence of scientific thought and progressive reform movements on the *practice* of history. That, in turn, changed my approach to teaching public history, which is what I do most of the time, and cultivated a new research interest in the historiography of historical practice.

Several public history projects have allowed me to explore the territory that is most familiar to me—northwest Iowa—and, in the process, I have acquired a deep appreciation for local history. Surveys of historic structures in Lake City and Sac City, two of several communities I have come to know better, revealed not only the patterns of community development over time but also the ways rural areas have been idiosyncratically connected to widespread trends and national events—and

sometimes oddly disconnected from broader influences. Lake City's growth, for instance, rested in large part on its status as a division point for the Chicago & North Western Railroad. Sac City, however, rejected an 1859 proposal to subsidize local railroad construction, but its county seat status enabled the town to survive, even prosper to a degree. Nonetheless, when the Chicago & North Western extended rail service to Sac City in 1879, the pace of growth accelerated, helping to sustain a period of economic prosperity that lasted through World War I, a period that often is called Iowa's Golden Age. In both towns the housing stock steadily increased and new businesses persisted until the 1920s, suggesting that the forces of growth were robust enough to mitigate, or at least soften, ripple effects of the 1873 and 1893 economic depressions. Community studies of this nature do not adequately document patterns of agricultural development and economics in the surrounding rural areas, but they nonetheless correlate with the findings of economic and political historians who have sought to explain why the Populist Party was relatively weak in Iowa.

Sometimes the fine texture of history leads, even forces, one to ask different questions about the past. Lake City is known to most Iowans as the "lake" city without a lake, but in the surrounding area it has a long-standing identity as a regional medical center, a curious circumstance because the town ceded its status as a county seat to Rockwell City early on, in 1876, and its population has remained static since the 1920s. In a different vein, what motivated citizens of Sac City to erect not one, but two, monuments commemorating the "War of the Rebellion"?[5] Unraveling the past in search of plausible explanations for the anomalies as well as patterns of material culture is often the path to situating local history in new contexts or finding thematic connections. Lake City's function as a regional medical center may stem from its designation as a railroad division

5. "War of the Rebellion" is the name for the Civil War found on many northern monuments. In the South, counterpart names are the "War for Southern Independence," popular during the war, and the "War of Northern Aggression," which came into use during Reconstruction as the Lost Cause movement took hold. In the 1890s, "War Between the States" became the unofficial neutral term as North and South began to reconcile.

point, which, among other things, meant locating a physician in town to attend to the medical needs of railroad workers, a semi-transient workforce. Whatever the genesis, no fewer than 16 physicians were practicing in Lake City by the early 1900s. The specific actors and precise motives of Sac Citians who were inspired to erect two Civil War monuments may not have been recorded. Nonetheless, the facts that they appear in a place so remote from the theaters of war and that one of them sits adjacent to a Grand Army of the Republic meeting hall attest to how deeply sectional politics were ingrained in rural Iowa culture. They also suggest the degree to which northerners were complicit in silencing the underlying issue of slavery that caused four years of fierce, bloody warfare.

Perhaps the most persistent question of local history is what distinguishes one town from another. National media have stereotyped Iowa as the most homogenous state. Never mind reality; to outsiders, the state is flat and one place looks pretty much like another. But no two places *are* alike, and the question of community identity has taken on considerable import in an era when far too many Iowa towns are trying to stimulate economic growth and stem population loss. In the search for winning strategies, heritage tourism has been widely embraced for its potential to bolster local coffers, although it takes more than a marketable past to transform a place into a destination. However, if community development, that is, injecting dollars into the local economy, is the underlying motive for historic preservation planning, as it often is, the goal of identifying historic sites and structures that embody a community's distinctive past becomes more critical, and often political. Despite at least four decades of scholarship that approach community studies through history, anthropology, sociology, and economics, a perceived relationship between shared community identity and community vitality remains more believed than understood. Perhaps this is the fascination as well as the frustration of local history. In any case, my experiences working with Iowa communities on preservation-based studies in the role of a professional historian who is also a hybrid insider-outsider has led me to respect the interpersonal dynamics of collaborative inquiry and the agency of local history keepers. When one is accepted

as an insider, dismissing local politics as bothersome or treating local history as quaint is not an option.

As historian Lucy Salmon pointed out nearly a century ago, there is always "History in a Back Yard."[6] My odyssey with public history has brought me to see the identity of my own hometown, Lake View (not to be confused with nearby Lake City), from a new perspective. I grew up taking for granted our two lakes, Black Hawk and Arrowhead, and all the park and protected areas adjacent to them, but parks do not simply emerge from the landscape. The progressivism that gave Iowa its state park system also gave rise to an era of local-state collaboration in the cultural context of "pluralism" that George McJimsey discusses in his essay.[7]

When the newly created Iowa Board of Conservation (now Department of Natural Resources) assumed responsibility for managing the state's natural lakes, they were in various states of degradation after decades of neglect and encroachment from farming and livestock grazing. In Iowa as elsewhere land acquisition to make lake management possible was a contentious process. Even so, the Board of Conservation found willing collaborators among the local Izaak Walton League chapter, which served as the unofficial caretaker for Black Hawk Lake (called Wall Lake until 1934), and a private landowner who, in 1920, dedicated a strip of land along the lakeshore for public use. That prompted the city to create a park commission and purchase enough residential lots to create a lakeside park, subsequently landscaped with assistance from Iowa State College Extension Service. In the late 1920s the city took another big step and donated to the state 150 acres of eroded land containing an abandoned gravel pit. Women of the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution stepped forward to assist the Board of Conservation by planting a stand of trees around the water-filled gravel pit, christened Lake Arrowhead,

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6. Lucy Salmon, "History in a Back Yard" (1912), reprinted in *History and the Texture of Modern Life: Selected Essays*, ed. Nicholas Adams and Bonnie G. Smith (Philadelphia, 2001).

7. See also George McJimsey, *Harry Hopkins: Ally of the Poor and Defender of Democracy* (Cambridge, MA, 1987); and idem, *The Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt* (Lawrence, KS, 2000).

all of which gradually became habitat for wildlife in a designated game refuge.

Throughout the 1920s, local organizations, individuals, and the town council worked in loose coalition with one another and with the state to approach land acquisition and park development from different angles. Thus, when federal funds for resource conservation and park development became available through New Deal programs in the 1930s, the groundwork had been laid for another collaborative effort to fully develop a state park. With federal relief aid to pay for labor and technical assistance, the state and the city erected a number of stone park structures. As a result, in less than two decades, approximately one-half of the lakeshore frontage was transformed into public open space with designated outdoor recreation areas that invited picnicking, hiking, swimming, fishing, boating, and hunting.

The dedication of Black Hawk Lake State Park on Labor Day 1934, along with a cast stone statue of its eponymous Sauk warrior, marked the emergence of a new public image that drew on the town's enhanced association with two lakes and public open space. At the time, no one foresaw the huge demand for outdoor recreation that would emerge after World War II. But, with ample recreation resources available for use, Lake View's economic base gradually began to shift in the 1950s from agriculture to a broader base of agriculture and outdoor recreation. As a result, the community was better positioned to weather the 1980s downturn in the farm economy. Today, few residents take the lakes and parks for granted. Reshaping the town's physical relationship with its natural environment also reshaped local attitudes about the related values of outdoor recreation and resource conservation. Hence, in the 1990s the community supported and once again collaborated with state and federal agencies to clean up Black Hawk Lake and restore the now historic stone park structures. Although working relationships have often been strained and collaboration sometimes forced, there is an elegant simplicity about the stone park structures, now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In their own quiet way, naturalized into the landscape, they represent a remarkably complex chapter of interwoven local, state, and national history.

The author's home near Lake View, Iowa, as it appeared in the early 1950s, from a family photo album, courtesy of the author.

My family left the farm in December 1963 and moved to town. Shortly thereafter I went off to college and another long chapter of life in California. But during the late 1980s and early 1990s, as I was relearning native territory, I drove past the farm occasionally, watching the smaller outbuildings disappear one by one, then the big barn, and, finally, the house itself, leaving only an aged cottonwood tree, which, ironically, my mother was certain would fall in some storm and smash the house—an uninsulated four-square in which the icy bloom of rime-etched windowpanes defined the winter season. Watching the farmstead disappear over a period of years was akin to watching my personal past slowly be erased. But by the time everything had disappeared except the cottonwood standing sentry over the ghost of my childhood, a different landscape of Iowa had taken shape in my mind's eye—a layered landscape, far more varied and vastly more interesting than the familiar local landmarks

by which we all navigate home turf and the iconic landmarks with which travelers associate Iowa. While I wish that more old farmsteads were still standing along the graveled grid of rural Iowa, I enjoy watching the emergence of fields of wind turbines harvesting the prairie wind. While I wish that every small town still had a vibrant main street, I admire every community that harnesses local energy and talent to preserve historic places. And while I wish that Iowans had a stronger commitment to land stewardship, I am deeply grateful for the farsighted individuals who worked to preserve bits and pieces of what Iowa was like when it was the land of the Sauk, Meskwaki, and Sioux, and before them the Oneota, Woodland-Hopewell, and Paleo-Indian cultures.

Naturalized Iowan

GEORGE MCJIMSEY

IN HIS BICENTENNIAL HISTORY OF IOWA, Joseph Frazier Wall draws attention to the state's "middleness." He notes that geographically Iowa lies between the nation's two great rivers and on the major routes of mid-continent transportation. Of the 50 states, Iowa ranks 25th in land area and, at the time he wrote, ranked 25th in population and 26th in personal income. In politics, its Republicans were "moderately liberal," its Democrats "moderately conservative."[1] This was the Iowa in which I grew up, the one that contributed to my work as a historian.

I am what you might call a "naturalized" Iowan. Although I never took classes to become a citizen of Iowa or pledged allegiance to the state, I embraced Iowa with the zeal of many an immigrant. Maybe this was because, like many an immigrant, I moved to Iowa when I was old enough from the start to appreciate it. It seems now that when I first arrived I sensed that my young life had taken a turn for the better. This sense, I grew up to believe, proved to be true.

I was born in Dallas, Texas, and spent most of my first eight years in Houston. But I never thought of myself as a Texan, de-

1. Joseph Frazier Wall, *Iowa: A Bicentennial History* (New York, 1978), xvii–xviii.

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The author's family home at 605 Kellogg Avenue in Ames. In 1961 it was demolished to make way for an automobile repair shop. All photos courtesy of the author.

spite almost heroic efforts by my Texas relatives to keep me in the fold. My bookshelves contain some of their efforts—*Roadside Flowers of Texas, Great Rivers of Texas, The Raven, A Life of Sam Houston, Great Cities of Texas*—all Christmas or birthday gifts. I think I once received a gift subscription—some of my relatives being tenacious Texas liberals—to *The Texas Observer*.

But neither this nor the hours spent singing "Deep in the Heart of Texas" during family drives ever really made me a Texan. My mother probably had a lot to do with it. She had gone to Texas from Ames, Iowa, to teach home economics but had never adapted culturally. She once told me that when the spectators at a football game began to sing "The Eyes of Texas," she turned to the person next to her and asked why everyone was singing "I've Been Working on the Railroad." Another time she told one of my father's brothers that she might like to retire in the "northwest." He replied that he had often thought of moving up to Amarillo. She thought that was a good one.

Thus, my regional identity began to form when, at age eight, we moved from Houston to Ames. During World War II, my father had worked at the Houston shipyard. In 1944 the government concluded that the war's shipping needs could be

The authors' grandparents' living room, a place of comfort and culture.

constructed elsewhere, and we decided to move to Iowa. Ames had been my mother's hometown and we lived in a separate apartment in her parents' house. I vividly recall arriving from the train station and immediately feeling at home.

"Ames is a great place to raise kids" was repeated so often that it could have become the town's slogan. The slogan rang true in part because the community valued education. My parents supported the educational impulse. Family discussions identified people according to their educational achievements. My mother, who had a master of fine arts degree from Columbia and who taught costume design and clothing selection in the home economics division of Iowa State, once told me that her family was "education crazy" and had been attending colleges, from New England to Iowa, almost ever since there had been colleges to attend. Her parents were college graduates. My father, who had never gone to college, was also an education enthusiast. So everyone assumed I would go to college. Also, our home displayed the artifacts of college learning. My mother's parents were avid magazine subscribers; I specifically recall *The*

Saturday Evening Post, Life, Look, Collier's, and *Reader's Digest*. When my brother and I reached a suitable age, we were given a gift subscription to *Boys' Life*. Nor were my parents reluctant to give me a book as a Christmas present. During wartime, I read R. Sidney Bowen's War Adventure Series, in which RAF pilot Dave Dawson defeated the Axis powers in Europe and the Pacific. We did not travel much, mostly trips to Des Moines, but whenever we went to a "big city"—Chicago or Washington, D.C.—my mother made sure we visited art galleries, where she explained the style and history of the paintings.

Ames also provided excellent schooling. Since Ames was the home of Iowa State College, its schools assumed that most students would attend college and prepared them for it. I took up with friends who were good students, had academic interests, and went on to scholarly and professional careers. Because Iowa State was a "technical school," Ames High's curriculum was especially strong in science and mathematics. History was taught by the basketball coach, with whom I got along fine because I played basketball but from whom I did not learn much history. I had some excellent English teachers, especially our teacher of world literature. She not only introduced me to important "Western" writers but also prepared me for college by giving essay examinations that required answers documented with "specific examples."

My father, a native Texan, inspired an interest in politics that directed me toward political history. The family story was that his father had decided that he should go into politics, had named him Joseph Bailey McJimsey after a popular East Texas politician, and taken him to political events. I recall sitting near the radio with him listening to the 1944 political conventions and later the election night returns, starting a family tradition that continued after he and my mother divorced and he had moved away.

I am sure I was attracted to biography because people figured prominently in family conversation. This was commonly not gossip but expressions of interest, as my mother liked to put it, in how to "figure out" others. We were less interested in what others did than who they were. Thus I grew up with a

kind of objective tolerance of other people and an interest in discovering what made them tick.

Although it never occurred to me at the time, I now realize that my religious upbringing was intellectually liberating. From the beginning we were theological "liberals." When we lived in Houston, we attended the Unitarian church, which must have been a kind of missionary outpost on that fundamentalist plain. When we moved to Ames, we joined the Congregational church, where theological rigor and conformity seemed less important than showing up for Sunday School, Pilgrim Fellowship, and the Christmas pageant. My mother once assured me that the creation story was "an allegory." Thus, I came to believe that I did not have to take seriously any part of the Bible that seemed to contradict common sense or anything I was taught in school.

I cannot overestimate the influence of my twin brother, Robert. At some time in grade school we became fast friends and fed each other's intellectual and academic interests. We made up games, discussed poetry and literature, and, most important, made up stories. We drew cartoon strips and wrote short stories that we shared with each other. In grade school Bob became a popular storyteller, making up tales of space travelers (this in the late 1940s).

These evidences of higher learning were diluted with hours spent reading comic books, listening to radio sportscasts, going to movies, palling around with friends, and attending canasta parties. Sports took up a lot of time. My brother and I started on the high school basketball team, which won many more games than it lost, and we spent hours honing our skills on the hoop attached to our garage.

Mix all these experiences together and you end up with a pretty well-rounded (a key catchphrase of the day) example of what the critic Dwight Macdonald labeled "midcult," a kind of limbo between the "high culture" of "serious" artists and intellectuals and "masscult," industrially manufactured drivel that culturally anesthetized the masses. Macdonald defined midcult as a corruption of "high culture." Its products' only claims to excellence were that they were better than masscult. They were acquired by those who aspired to better things but settled for

glossy formats and "liberalistic moralizing." One of its icons was *Horizon* magazine, to which we were inaugural subscribers.[2]

All of this informed my idea of what it meant to be an Iowan. We were educated, tolerant, friendly, sporting, and intellectually curious but not snobbish. Of course, I had plenty of experiences to the contrary, but I thought of these as exceptions, cultural missteps or blunders that could be safely overlooked. We Iowans all floated on a sea of bland midcult happiness.

Sometime during our high school years Bob and I decided that we wanted to be teachers, a natural outcome of our family's enthusiasm for education and our mother's professorship at Iowa State. After this, my principal consideration was what kind of teacher I wanted to be. A position teaching high school and coaching basketball was my first goal. But each step up the education ladder heightened my ambition.

Bob and I had won scholarships to Grinnell College, where we enrolled in the fall of 1954. About 300 of the college's 900 students came from Iowa; most of the others came from the Midwest. Grinnell encouraged social toleration. The college had been founded by New England missionaries and developed by abolitionist promoter-politician Josiah B. Grinnell. In the late nineteenth century it had become a center of Social Gospel Christianity. In a spirit of discouraging social distinctions, it disallowed fraternities and sororities, although the "halls" in its dormitory system did what they could to take their place.

I arrived on campus having no idea what to major in. When I was making up my first semester class schedule, one of my two roommates recommended that I take "Wall" for modern European history. "Wall" turned out to be Joseph Frazier Wall. Joe Wall was not as well known as he later became, both in Iowa and nationally. But he had become one of the most prominent faculty members on the Grinnell College campus. During my four years at Grinnell, the number of history majors rivaled if not surpassed those in other majors. That was largely because of Joe Wall's teaching. Joe's style was to give lectures that emphasized narrative and personality. It was because of his class that I decided to major in history.

2. Dwight Macdonald, *Against the American Grain* (New York, 1962), part 1.

Another popular history teacher was Alan Jones. His approach was more analytical than narrative, and I did not so easily connect with it, although I later learned that it was more in keeping with the emerging use of social scientific "model building" in historical scholarship. His teaching prepared me to recognize that approach when I encountered it in graduate school. He directed my honors thesis, which I wrote on Jesse Macy, who helped to establish the discipline of political science while teaching at Grinnell from the 1870s to the 1910s. By the time I came to write the thesis, I had written a good number of term papers, but none longer than 25–30 pages.

Just as my high school world literature course had provided a fortunate preparation for college, so an English history course provided fortunate preparation for graduate school. Our supplementary text in the course was *Problems in English History*. Its chapters consisted of documents on a particular event, such as William the Conqueror's claim to the English throne, followed by questions that showed how to evaluate the documents critically. Each Friday the class would take up a topic, usually going from student to student answering the questions. Occasionally we would write a paper on the topic. From that experience I began to learn how to write history from manuscript sources.

At Grinnell I acquired lots of practice writing and an appreciation for fine teaching. I also studied very hard. As I progressed through those years, I gave up wanting to be a high school basketball coach and decided I wanted to become a college professor. That meant I would have to go to graduate school. Since I was sure we could not afford it (I once thought Congress had passed a law that said my mother could never make more than the national average income), I figured I would have to get financial aid. So I studied hard to get good grades. I never thought of myself as a "grind," but I guess I was. In the spring semester of my senior year, after a 9 a.m. ceremony at which I and some of my classmates, including my brother Bob, were recognized for making Phi Beta Kappa (the upper 10 percent of our class), we went to the student union for a little celebration. Years later I confessed to one of my classmates that I had been shocked to see students drinking coffee, dancing, and playing cards instead of studying. "You know, George," she said, "I was

probably one of those drinking coffee, dancing, and playing cards. It was students like me who got you into Phi Beta Kappa." Studying hard earned me good grades and good recommendations from my professors. Those, combined, I am sure, with Grinnell's reputation, got me a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship to the school of my choice. Joe Wall had gone to Columbia University, so I chose Columbia.

I now see that I should have learned more from Grinnell than I did. Its midwestern character and egalitarian traditions reinforced midcult assumptions that it was actually preaching against. In the fall of 1957 the college held a week-long symposium, "American Culture at Mid-Century." Distinguished scholars from around the nation gave presentations. Two of them, David Riesman and William H. Whyte, had become iconographic critics of mass culture. Riesman had written *The Lonely Crowd*, which argued that modern mass society had created the "other-directed man," who sacrificed personal growth in order to please others. Whyte's book *The Organization Man* examined how corporate values squeezed the individuality out of white-collar employees. We all understood their message and sneered at the poor souls they described. But I never got the idea that their analyses applied to me. An opportunity missed.

Columbia was a fortunate move. It gave me a chance to learn lessons that Grinnell had tried to teach me, but that I had resisted. Thus, it gave me the chance to develop as a scholar without permanently damaging myself in the eyes of the graduate students who later would become my friends and colleagues. Unlike my "small society" Iowa life, graduate work at Columbia was an experience in anonymity. I was one of more than 300 M.A. candidates, most of whom lived off campus and with whom I seldom socialized. I lived in a graduate dormitory, sharing a room with a very nice fellow who was preparing for the Foreign Service by taking courses in the Russian Institute. My thesis project gave me a chance to use manuscript sources at the New York Public Library and the Library of Congress and newspapers at Columbia's Butler Library. When I prepared the thesis, I had only classroom contact with my thesis adviser, followed by a few hours in his office while he copyedited my draft. The finished product, a study of the New York governorship of

Samuel J. Tilden, was an attempt at scholarship but far from the real thing.

Two other Columbia professors taught me the craft of scholarship. During my first semester I wrote a term paper for Professor William E. Leuchtenburg. Years later, I would introduce a graduate research seminar by reading his comments on the paper. They began with the words "excellent research," their last laudatory comment. The gist of what followed was that, in a writing style that was "generally syntactical," I had missed all the subject's important points: that is, the paper had no ideas. Grade: C+. The moral of the story, I would observe to my class, was that historians are made and not born. The more immediate lesson was that I had confused historical scholarship with the midcult values of bland narration and liberalistic moralizing.

Another Columbia professor, David Donald, showed me how to rise above my midcult values. His class in the Civil War and Reconstruction was the best class I ever took as a graduate student. The class met for three hours on Saturday morning. Each class period treated a particular topic. Everyone read James Ford Rhodes's classic account of the subject and another book from a list assigned for the topic. During the first hour, Donald would review the historiography of the subject. During the break that followed, students handed him a card containing their name and the title of the book they had read on the topic. During the second hour Donald would call upon these students to report briefly on their reading to construct the "current" interpretation of the topic. He would also ask questions that evoked a coherent discussion from a class of 50 students. During the third hour, he would venture onto the "frontiers" of the topic, posing new questions and hypothesizing about new ideas and themes that might emerge. David Donald's class taught me to think like a historian.

These were specific professional benefits of my year at Columbia, but I now realize that I benefited at a deeper level. My Iowa values and academic successes had gotten me to New York with too many easy assumptions about "truth" and "reality." Having grown up with tolerant, accepting people, I assumed that was how I should look at history. So my history tended to be superficial and critical only to the extent of my

tossing in a moralistic bromide here or there to show the people of the past how they might have done things just a little better. That was what Professor Leuchtenburg's criticism revealed, what Professor Donald showed me how to explore.

Of course, in 1958–59 I was about to join the rest of the country as we entered a major cultural transformation. Midcult satisfactions were giving way to anti-establishment suspicions. The "New Left" was germinating. And I was about to plant myself in one of its seedbeds.

I had enjoyed a year in New York, but the experience had convinced me that at heart I belonged in the Midwest. Most of all I missed the sense of open space: fields, lawns, sky. My Woodrow Wilson Fellowship ran out after one year, and Columbia did not provide much aid. When I was a senior at Grinnell I had applied to the University of Wisconsin, which had offered me a fellowship. So, encouraged by that and a meeting on job-seeking advice at which the speaker began by saying "I wish we could offer you a system like they have at Wisconsin," I applied there and was accepted without financial aid. (After college, my brother had obtained a scholarship from the Grinnell Rotary Club and had gone to the University of London to study English history. When I wrote to tell him that I was going to Wisconsin, he wrote back that he was going to Wisconsin, too. You may insert your own observation about twins here.)[3]

Wisconsin was just right for me. Madison was a beautiful city; the university's faculty and research facilities were top notch. Probably most important for me was the grad student camaraderie. In one sense, we rallied ourselves against the medieval torture scheme of the department's Ph.D. program. (I wrote qualifying examinations on the constitutional history of England and modern Germany, one day of the comprehensive exam for Ph.D. candidates in political science, and three days of comprehensive exams in U.S. history.) But we also encouraged each other to become scholars: to read, read, read and to look at

3. Bob received his Ph.D. in English history, taught briefly at Oberlin College and Ohio Wesleyan College, and then took a job at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. He has remained there, raising his family, and is now retired. We are still great friends but with different regional orientations. During a cross-country skiing excursion many years ago, he zipped along as I managed to fall down while standing still.

Harriet McJimsey strolls her twin sons (Robert, left, and George, right).

all the documents. Once, a colleague caught me using an index to a volume of the *Congressional Record*. "Start on page one, you lazy bastard," he ordered.

Wisconsin was one center of New Left culture. William A. Williams was in his heyday, publishing anti-imperialist scholarship and training a generation of Cold War revisionist scholars. The spirit of Charles Beard lived on in Merle Curti's sociological explanations of American intellectual history and Merrill Jensen's analyses of the political-economic controversies of colonial and revolutionary America. My major professor, Richard Current, said that when he arrived in Madison he felt safe to display a picture of Beard. Grad student ideologies spanned the leftwing gamut from Marxist to Socialist to Social Democrat. (I heard tales of a Maoist but never saw him.) Those ideologies

informed *Studies on the Left*, which became a major voice of New Left scholarship.

I read *Studies on the Left*, made friends with its contributors, and accepted with my midwestern, Iowa tolerance many of their revisionist ideas. But I never really became a believer. My midcult roots continued to tug at me; fundamentally I preferred consensus to conflict. I am sure that my leftist colleagues knew this, but they accepted me all the same. And we did have a lot of common enemies: racism, poverty, anti-intellectualism, and, perhaps highest on the list, the Ph.D. program. It would take some time for me to realize that midcult values could serve the purposes of reform.

I wound my way through the Wisconsin system and, while writing my dissertation, took a job at Portland State College in Oregon. Portland was a pretty, pleasant city; the department was welcoming and friendly, the students were wholesome and middle class. But it wasn't the Midwest; it wasn't Iowa. When my mother called to say that Iowa State University had an opening for an assistant professor of history, I applied and got the job. I would be at Iowa State for the next 37 years.

The most fortunate result of my return to Iowa was my marriage to Sandra Bryant. She had lived all her life in Iowa, principally in Indianola. She embodied all the positive Iowa traits I have previously described and added the invaluable one of civic virtue. Sandra believed, and still does, in good government, honestly and openly conducted for the benefit of the citizenry. She was president of the local chapter of the League of Women Voters (LWV) and a member of the league's state board. She served on various city planning task forces and as a member and chair of the Ames Planning and Zoning Commission and as a member of the county zoning authority. Conversations with her and in the company of her LWV friends, many of whom also served in local and state government, were seminars in good public policy and civic responsibility. I was proud to dedicate to her my first major publication, a biography of a man who exemplified her commitment to civic virtue: Harry Hopkins.

By the time I arrived at Iowa State I knew I wanted to write a biography of Harry Hopkins. I had read Robert E. Sherwood's book and thought of writing a more up-to-date and more read-

able version. Still, I thought it might be a formidable project, so I waited until I had tenure before starting on it. Hopkins had grown up in the Midwest, principally in Iowa, and had graduated from Grinnell College. When he was a public figure in Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration, he frequently spoke about his humble origins and during an ill-starred presidential bid touted his Iowa roots. I was interested to see how much he remained an Iowan. Of course I found that he did and he didn't. He gladly left behind small-town society and cultivated a taste for life's finer comforts, whether or not he could afford them. He rejected his fundamentalist religious upbringing, although he kept to high ethical standards infused with a good measure of Protestant guilt. Still, it seemed to me that he developed and retained an essentially midwestern tolerance and friendliness that proved essential to his success as a government administrator. He had an almost uncanny ability to win people's trust and confidence and, where necessary, to encourage them to succeed. He was able to do this in part because he was willing to take responsibility for making difficult decisions and because he did not ask for special favors for himself or his family. In this respect he embodied Iowa civic virtue and Grinnell's Social Gospel Christianity. Others perceived this selflessness and responded to it. Thus, Hopkins was able to focus on tasks at hand and to shut out peripheral or self-interested distractions.

My interpretation of Hopkins contrasted with the prevailing view. Previous scholars, relying on Robert E. Sherwood, had emphasized the harder edges of his personality, portraying him as combative, goading, and sarcastic. They often related this to Hopkins's impatience with systems of authority and diplomatic niceties. What they failed to see was that you did not have to rip up organizational charts; you could leave them in place but build informal relationships to work around them. In this way Hopkins nicely complemented Franklin Roosevelt, who loved to tinker with organizations. But Roosevelt often wanted to strike political balances whose combinations could produce confusion, gridlock, and public name-calling instead of decisive action. Hopkins found how to get around that by bringing people together.

My interpretation of Hopkins might seem inevitably to link up with my interpretation of Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency, the subject of my next book. I saw Roosevelt operating in a cultural context that emphasized social "balance," a fluid, open-ended social system in which "leadership" passed from one person to another depending on circumstances, in which leaders "facilitated" group decisions instead of determined them, and in which problem solving meant constantly dealing with the problems created by previous solutions. I called this cultural context "pluralism," the politics of which sought consensus through democratic means that opened political decision making to the largest possible number of persons and groups. It was a politics that emphasized tolerance, friendliness, self-restraint, and civic virtue—the qualities I had grown up with in midcult Iowa and the qualities I had highlighted in Harry Hopkins.

I will get to the truth of this shortly, after I point out that it is far too facile an interpretation. Both books reached similar conclusions but by very different intellectual courses. The Hopkins book was based on sources that my undergraduate education and graduate training had taught me to evaluate. It derived from dozens of letters written to Hopkins, describing his encouragement, good nature, courage, resourcefulness, honesty, and lack of pretense. Usually, but not always, these letters came from persons who had nothing to gain from flattering Hopkins. Very often they were reminiscences, shared with Hopkins by persons who had known him at an earlier time and had written to congratulate him on his public prominence. But even those who might have been currying his favor described traits similar to those ascribed to him by those who were not. Other key sources were notes and transcriptions of Hopkins's conversations and speeches, all of which evoked similar themes.

The Roosevelt book derived from an entirely different approach. It was based on reading in the social and scientific theory of the 1920s and '30s, illuminated for me in discussions with my Iowa State colleagues in the history of technology and science. Of course, history never perfectly matches theory, but Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency and Harry Hopkins's role in it matched the theory remarkably well. Roosevelt and Hopkins

employed pluralist values in pursuit of civic good, both at home and abroad.

Any historian who provides a cultural context for political actions and events is essentially treating those actions and events as chapters in a larger story. Pluralism began before Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency and continued after it. And that is where I came in: to the Iowa of the mid-1940s and 1950s, the culture of the midcult Midwest.

Sometime in the latter 1950s that culture began to fray and fracture. Iowans still honor midcult values. Their hospitality and friendliness are legendary, attested to each summer by thousands of RAGBRAI riders. Its educational values are intact. But economic stresses are challenging educational quality, and the state's politics have become essentially oppositional: the large, less populated areas solidly conservative Republican; the more heavily populated ones moderate-to-liberal Democratic. Worries to the point of hysteria about "illegal" (that is, Hispanic) immigrants challenge tolerance and inclusiveness.

It is not the historian's job to prescribe for the present, only to show how the past compares and contrasts with it. I did not write about Harry Hopkins and Franklin D. Roosevelt in order to recapture an idealized past: anyone who wanted to do that would not have written about the Great Depression and World War II. It just turned out that the life I led growing up in Iowa connected me to the culture of that time. Thinking about it now, I am glad it did.

An Out-Migrant's Tale

FRANKLIN D. MITCHELL

THE HISTORIAN John D. Hicks, taking note of the midwesterners who had moved to Kansas during the 1880s only to return to Iowa and other Corn Belt states after drought and insects had produced crop failures and indebtedness, dismissed the out-migrants from his classic history of Populism with a few sentences: "Aside from the fact that they may have carried the seeds of agricultural discontent back with them, the later fortunes of those who left . . . are of no interest here. The history of the West was not made by those who moved out but by those who stayed on."[1]

I became an out-migrant in 1958 after spending the first 26 years of my life in Iowa. What concerns me here are the Iowa experiences and understandings that I carried into my 44-year career as a college and university professor of history. My own early times—the Great Depression of the 1930s, the World War II years in the 1940s, and the beginning of transforming changes in agriculture and rural Iowa during the postwar decades—all left a large imprint upon my life. My membership in a farming family and the expectation that farm boys would either farm or enter a farm-related career directed my path, first as a vocational agriculture student at Chariton High School and later as a major

1. John D. Hicks, *The Populist Revolt: A History of the Farmers' Alliance and the People's Party* (Minneapolis, 1931), 34–35.

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in agriculture education at Iowa State College. Two agriculture teachers, J. Joe Wright at Chariton High and Professor Clarence E. Bundy at Iowa State, masters of their craft, inspired me by their example to become an agriculture educator. Both men excelled in applying the vocational approach of "learning by doing." Professor Bundy also taught his students to "chase the fox to the woods," his phrase for asking students to supply an explanation for an undeveloped answer to a question.[2] I followed that example in my teaching by interjecting the word "because" when a student stopped short of explaining an answer. It followed, naturally, that I would engage rural living and farming, as would most agriculture education majors at Iowa State, as an instructor of vocational agriculture. For two years, from 1956 to 1958, I taught vo-ag at Lost Nation (Iowa) Community School.

To my dismay, I discovered that the vocational agriculture program mandated by the Iowa Department of Vocational Education retained the original mission under the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 to prepare farm boys for a career in farming. Although that program still suited the needs of rural youth going into farming, many vo-ag students of the post–World War II period were headed not for the farm but to the cities for an occupation or profession related to or completely different from agriculture. My solution to the problem of an unchanging vo-ag curriculum and a changing economy was to leave vo-ag teaching forever.

When I closed the door on vocational agriculture in 1958, I did not realize that I was opening another one to a lifelong pursuit of a liberal education keyed to the discipline of history. That commitment came not as the result of one conscious decision but through the influence of several experiences extending back into my youth. I first developed an interest in history by listening to the conversations of my father and his brother about Civil War lore and the history of their own times. Both men were farmers who took Avery Craven's Civil War history course at Simpson during the college's winter sessions for farm youth of the early twentieth century, and they attended the local rallies of Iowa Farmer's Union leader Milo Reno. As it turned

2. Professor Bundy taught hundreds of vocational agriculture instructors and other agriculture educators at Iowa State College during his career there from the 1940s through the 1960s.

out, the indirect influence of historian Craven proved to be stronger upon me than Reno's love of agriculture, but that did not become apparent for several more years. My undergraduate study of history, limited to two courses offered in the University of Maryland's overseas program for army personnel at Verdun, France, during my service there in 1953 and 1954, was more valuable as credits toward my Bachelor of Science degree and subsequent admission to a graduate history program than to a deepening affection for history.

My memorable experience in the humanities at Iowa State came in the English composition and literature course taught by Professor Fred W. Lorch. By both appearance and intellect, Lorch personified the cultured college professor summed up in the much-used phrase, "a gentleman and a scholar." On one occasion Professor Lorch read a student's essay for the teaching example it afforded of uninspired, unedited writing and, without disclosing the name of the essayist, what could be done to turn the piece into effective prose. A polished essay in the course text titled *Of Time and Truth,* edited by Lorch and his colleagues, recounted the economic and academic plight of a struggling student who worked at a café at night and attended class in the day, only to fall asleep when called upon for his one chance to read his term paper, thereby failing the course.[3] Fortunately, the outcome for the essayist in Professor Lorch's class—I was the author of the piece he read for the mutual benefit of all, and working my way through college, too—was favorably different for a lasting lesson from the humanities.

With the foundation laid in history courses required for the master of arts degree at the University of Missouri, I headed for a career as a high school American history teacher. I taught U.S. history at Knoxville (Illinois) High School during the 1959–60 school year until a chance meeting with two former history professors at Missouri changed my career objective. "When are you coming back for the Ph.D.?"was the question that returned me to Missouri for graduate studies, culminating in the doctoral degree and a collegiate and university teaching career.

3. George Milburn, "A Student in Economics," in *Of Time and Truth: Ideas and Values for College Students,* ed. Fred W. Lorch, W. Paul Jones, and Keith Huntress (New York, 1946), 167–80.

When I interviewed for a collegiate history teaching position at Washburn University of Topeka as my doctoral studies at the University of Missouri neared completion in 1964, Washburn President Harold Sponberg noted my lack of an undergraduate major in history. Mindful of the jibes I had received from fellow history graduate students familiar with my agriculture studies background, I acknowledged that this anomaly was no advantage. President Sponberg quickly put me at ease by stating that, to the contrary, he believed my understanding of both agriculture and rural life would enhance my teaching of the nation's predominately agrarian past, and he appointed me to the history faculty.

Indeed, one of the first applications of my Iowa agricultural background came in a class discussion with my Washburn students of Walter Webb's classic history, *The Great Plains*. Webb had been reared on a farm in west Texas and thus knew well the arid, treeless, wind-swept region that he described and interpreted in his famous book. The hostile Indian country, lack of wood, and few navigable streams required new approaches and new technologies for Great Plains settlement, recounted in academic language by Webb. He quoted with approval, however, the colloquial phrase of one of his students who identified the plains as the region where "the wind drew the water and the cows cut the wood."[4] Over the years many of my students could explain that the windmill harnessed the power of the wind to pump the deep-level water to the surface, but no one could explain how a constantly operating, unattended windmill, located miles away from a ranch house, kept the tank full for the cattle without overflowing. That arrangement was accomplished by having a return pipe located below the top of the tank leading back to the well, thus completing the circular movement of water from the well to the tank and back to the well again. A little knowledge of agricultural engineering and common sense solved this mystery.

And cutting of the wood by cows? This statement stumped my students, too, and finds its explanation in the nature of range cattle manure, consisting of digested grass and water that

4. Walter Prescott Webb, "The Historical Seminar: Its Outer Shell and Its Inner Spirit," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 42 (1955), 21.

Windmills were once a prominent feature on most Iowa farms. All photos from State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

dries in the sun to make a chip of organic material that burns readily as wood for cooking and heating. There is no great intellectual payoff to this example, of course, but pull together the natural history of the plains and the lessons of how the environment and the human responses to it determined culture, as Webb did in *The Great Plains,* and one has a methodology that is applicable to Iowa and every other place on earth. Webb's genius, as that word was once defined, was in "seeing what everyone else has seen but thinking what no one else has thought."

At best, my experiences growing up in Iowa allowed me to speak authoritatively on a number of small things without any grand design, as I did when I explained to my history students how the Public Works Administration (PWA) operated in my home county during the Great Depression. My father and other residents of Lucas County who qualified for relief assistance in the form of PWA employment wielded axes to clear the trees in the future basin for Red Haw Lake near Chariton and pushed wheelbarrows full of dirt for the construction of the lake dam. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) provided a job for my brother Jerry in several area conservation and public works proj-

WPA workers construct a dam on the Shell Rock River near Plymouth in Cerro Gordo County during the Great Depression.

ects, with $25 of his monthly pay of $30 going directly to our parents. My mother used a portion of the CCC check to buy a new winter coat for my sister Margaret, thus meeting a personal need and, by placing money in circulation, providing indirect relief to a struggling town merchant. These examples shared with my students made these New Deal agencies less abstract and illustrated how they worked at the grassroots level. Other slices of Depression-era life were cited, too, many of them similar to the experiences shared by Mildred Armstrong Kalish in her recent best-selling book, *Little Heathens: Hard Times and High Spirits on an Iowa Farm during the Great Depression.*

My scholarly interest in political history—heightened by the charismatic leadership Franklin D. Roosevelt gave to the New Deal and the modernizing of Republican politics in response to liberalizing policies of the Democratic Party—outstripped my interest in agriculture and rural life and led me in 1965 to invite former Kansas Governor Alf Landon to recount for my students at Washburn University his experiences as the Republican candidate for president in the election of 1936. I worried some when

the old progressive sprinkled his account with salty language and continued his remarks well into the time of the next class, but no one stood on formalities that day, least of all Mr. Landon.

My mentor at the University of Missouri, Richard S. Kirkendall, had earlier provided my grounding in political history. Kirkendall had equally strong interests in agricultural and political history, but he had been appointed to the history faculty at Missouri to lead research and publication based on the newly opened papers of Harry S. Truman at the presidential library in Independence. Kirkendall's seminars focused on modern political history, and he and his students created a body of Truman scholarship known as the "Missouri School." He consented to direct my dissertation on Missouri Democratic politics during the years of Republican ascendancy in the 1920s, published under the title *Embattled Democracy: Missouri Democratic Politics, 1919–1932* (1968), as background to then county supervisor Harry S. Truman's rise to power. While Kirkendall continued to write agricultural and political biography and history, later holding prestigious appointments at Iowa State University and the University of Washington, my focus into the 1990s remained on Truman and his presidency despite the profession's reorientation from political history and the so-called presidential synthesis—U.S. history told in the framework of each presidential administration—to social history and many other genres as well.

My early articles on Truman explored his entry into state politics when he was largely unknown outside of his home county; other articles and papers that came later dealt with his role as commander-in-chief, the women's rights movement during his presidency, and a historiographical treatment of Truman scholarship that charted his reputation from its nadir during the Korean War to its affirmation of him a half-century later as one of the nation's greatest presidents.[5] I also developed these themes, along with some new ones, especially conservative newspaper opposition to Truman, in my book, *Harry S. Truman and the News*

5. "Who is Judge Truman? The Truman-for-Governor Movement of 1931," *Mid-continent American Studies Journal* 7 (Fall 1966), 3–15; "An Act of Presidential Indiscretion: Harry S. Truman and the Marine Corps Incident of 1950," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 11 (1981), 565–75; "Harry S. Truman and the Verdict of History," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 85 (1986), 261–69.

Harry Truman stopped in Iowa City (pictured here) and several other Iowa towns during his "whistle stop" campaign in 1948.

Media: Contentious Relations, Belated Respect (1997). A referee for the publisher advised me to omit a story attributed to Truman by an anonymous news reporter that brought back into circulation the Missourian's occasional mild use of profanity. According to the story, reporters who accompanied Truman on one of his early morning walks asked the former president if he thought it would rain. "Boys," Truman replied, in words that could have come from Alf Landon, "I think it is going to rain like hell." The embellishment of this story, midwestern niceties aside and with the storyteller's exaggerated humor, stated that 14 inches of rain had fallen that day. I published that account in my history.

My firsthand knowledge of the past as I had lived it as a young boy in Iowa during World War II prompted my role as principal investigator, project historian, and associate producer of a documentary film on the American home front during the war. My collaborators, Steven Schechter and Mark Jonathan

Youngsters participate in a scrap metal drive in Hampton during World War II.

Harris, both skilled filmmakers trained in the famed cinema school of the University of Southern California, had been too young in the 1940s to bring their personal experiences and understandings to the film. I had lived the war years between the ages of 9 and 13 on an Iowa farm, and my avid interest in newspaper reports, radio broadcasts, newsreels, and letters received from three older brothers in the service broadened and deepened my knowledge of the war in both small and large ways. The map of the world hanging on the wall of the one-room country school I attended received postings from every pupil of locations cited in the *Des Moines Tribune* and the *Des Moines Register* of battles and conference sites as the war progressed. That ongoing lesson in world geography made visible to us the global nature of the war and familiarized us with faraway places such as Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Casablanca, Stalingrad, Normandy, and Japanese cities. My classmates and I could also look to the skies to see the flights of bombers and fighter planes going from midwestern factories to the overseas theaters of war, making evident to us that a new air age had dawned. Such

personal recollections, along with contemporary film footage and filmed interviews with both civilians and service personnel, told other stories for the documentary, *The Home Front: America During World War II*, televised to a national audience during the 1980s by the Public Broadcasting System. Video copies expanded the film's viewership in schools, colleges, and libraries, extending its life indefinitely, and a companion book of oral histories of the film's interview subjects reached an audience in print format.[6]

Years before, in 1968, I had uprooted myself from Kansas to follow the advice given by the brilliant biologist and environmentalist, Rachel Carson. In her book, *The Edge of the Sea,* Carson wrote that sometime in one's life, one ought to live by the edge of the sea in order to observe the origins of life from their ancient beginnings. That I did by moving to Santa Monica and Venice, California, to reside in those seaside communities for more than 40 years during my tenure on the history faculty of the University of Southern California. When I informed my father, a lifelong resident of Lucas County, Iowa, that I was moving from the Midwest to California, he quipped, "Well, son, you might like California, but I like the good old U.S.A." His neighbors regarded California in the same light, telling me that they liked to visit that state but would not want to live there.

In all the subsequent years, I never quite shook the Iowa dust from my feet, so to speak, as I visited family and friends in Lucas County annually. During one of many visits to my lifelong friend Burdette Smith, a career farmer, he related his observation about the environment that received scientific elaboration by biologist Carson in her celebrated book, *Silent Spring.* Burdette recalled how during his youth he had walked barefoot in freshly turned furrows as his father plowed the fields for corn planting, observing the many earthworms that wiggled for cover to escape the sharp-eyed and hawing red-winged blackbirds that also followed the plow. The use of pesticides and other chemicals to control harmful insects and weeds on farms

6. Mark Jonathan Harris, Franklin D. Mitchell, and Steven Schechter, *The Homefront: America During World War II* (New York, 1984). The University of Southern California holds the copyright and distribution rights for the home-front film.

throughout the Corn Belt, however, killed the beneficial earthworms and other life forms as well. The cycle of death continued when the worms, eaten by the birds, laced the birds' eggshells with poison that caused breakage before the embryo hatched. Smith and other farmers thus learned, firsthand, about the silent spring that Carson wrote about so powerfully. I shared these observations of both farm folk and the biologist with my urban students far removed from the endangered rural environment, adding my own recall of the sounds and sights of once teeming wildlife in the country. Probably every farm boy and girl who ever heard the song of quail and meadowlarks whistled a response to "bob white, bob white" and the multinote music of the lark, and I demonstrated their calls without embarrassment in my classroom. After years of silence, the species are coming back to Iowa, and the whole world is learning the lessons of environmental protection.

Another related lesson from my Iowa past occurred a half-century ago at one of my evening classes for adult farmers at Lost Nation. The topic for one session, "What's New in Weed Control?" featured Iowa State College plant pathologist E. P. Sylvester. Sylvester stood on the cutting edge of the post–World War II use of herbicides such as 2,4-D. However well he and the farmers in my class understood that they were at the beginning of the chemical and plant technology revolutions that would transform agriculture, I certainly did not foresee that herbicides and plant genetics would replace mechanical cultivation for weed control, sending to museums and scrap heaps the moldboard plows, discs, and harrows that once turned fields into a smooth, loosely textured seedbed for corn and soybeans, kept relatively clean of weeds by cultivators and spike-toothed rotary hoes. In turn, such revolutionary changes made my own knowledge of field crop production obsolete.

Indeed, farming's future belonged to seed and plant science and to the technology of power. These combined technologies made possible no-till and low-till farming performed by huge tractors and matching equipment such as chisel plows, 12- to 48-row planters with air-forced, precision seed placement, trailing tanks of anhydrous ammonia, and mobile 60-foot-wide sprayers that applied pre- and post-emergence weed killers,

pesticides, and liquid fertilizer. Powerful self-propelled harvesters with interchangeable heads for picking and shelling eight rows of corn at a time and harvesting soybeans and small grains in a 25-foot swatch were added to the farmer's machinery lineup, too. None of these revolutionizing seed and power technologies existed 50 years earlier when I made my own revolutionary change from vocational agriculture instructor to historian, and the changes distanced me further from the Iowa of small farms and rural neighborhoods I had known during my youth.

Iowa's agricultural and rural history from the late 1950s onward, made through the lived experiences of permanent residents of the land, lay well beyond my province in much the same way that John Hicks explained the history of the Great Plains. Still, I and other out-migrants who wished to retrace the contours of change in our native state could do so by writing about the "made" history of Iowa. I thus ended the long-marginalization of my Iowa rural and agricultural past and its development over time with my decision in 2002 to write a comprehensive local history of my home county.

Local history has always had a friendly reception in Lucas County, dating formally from 1901 when citizens of the county established the state's first county historical society. Biographical sketches of many residents of Lucas County were published in the subscribed state histories that appeared in 1881 and 1896, and the county itself was the subject of a history published by local lawyer T. S. Stuart in 1913. Nearly 200 family histories fill the shelves of the Lucas County Genealogical Society, and the society itself has edited and compiled family and local history in two well-received books that were published in 1978 and 2000.[7] Microfilm copies of the Chariton newspapers dating from 1870 (shortly after the town received its charter as a municipality) to the present, housed in the genealogy room of the Chariton Public Library, along with the sources just cited, are the principal print sources I consulted during a break from classes at USC.

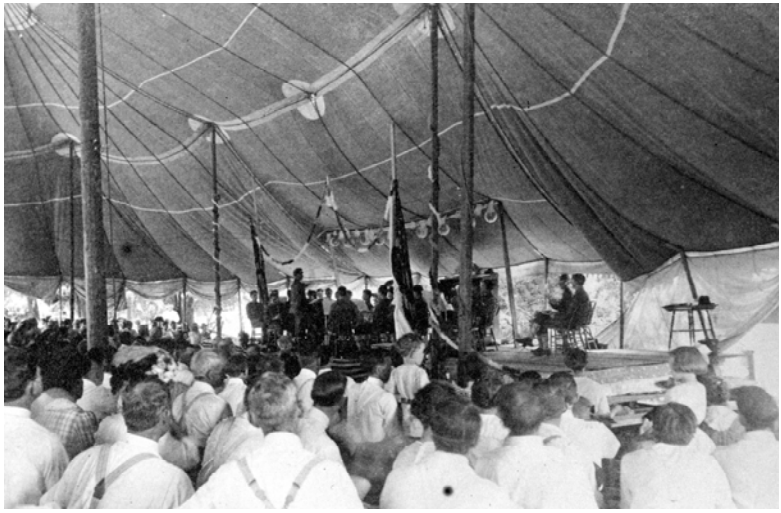
When I returned to Los Angeles in 2004 for my last two years of teaching at the university, I took along extensive re-

7. *The History of Lucas County Iowa* (Marceline, MO, 1978); *Lucas County Heritage 2000* (Chariton, 2001).

search notes and ideas for a local history set in Lucas County from the earliest times of the Woodland culture to the present. Long wanting to make my students more than passive receivers of small pieces of my Iowa past, I could make them active participants in researching and writing about aspects of my home county with the method of the agriculture educators who first introduced me to "learning by doing." The outcome, I hoped, would make it possible to pull together hitherto fragmented chapters of the Lucas County story as previously recounted, as I have lived it, and as I have observed it from afar and up close, with visits of both short and long duration.

To make the task of my students manageable for their own venture in writing social and cultural history, I chose for them two topics: prohibition and the chautauqua movement. Prohibition's outlawing of the making, selling, and distribution of alcoholic beverages and the efforts by law enforcement officials and the courts to make prohibition effective gained a reputation as a "big city" problem both in Iowa and the nation, but my students and I learned about rural and small-town non-compliance with prohibition from documents collected in my own research and the local histories of Rose Marie Briggs on the coal-mining communities of Olmitz and Tipperary.[8] Newspaper accounts of the 1922 federal, state, and local police raid on the stills of Tipperary, termed then and later the largest and best-coordinated effort for prohibition enforcement in rural Iowa, resulted in numerous arrests, destruction of the stills and moonshine, and punishment for the lawbreakers. My students gained a knowledge of the ethnicity of the offenders, otherwise known as coal miners from Italy, France, Croatia, Poland, and other eastern and southern European countries, and their Old World cultural view of wine and beer as a socializing food to be enjoyed rather than an intoxicating beverage to be abused. One lawbreaker, known locally as "Chicago Mike," who made moonshine in Tipperary and sold it in Chicago, became as familiar to my students as Al Capone. They learned, too, that the standard $300 fine for making liquor increased to $1,000 dollars in the late

8. Rose Marie Briggs, *Memories of Olmitz* (Deep River, 1993); and idem, *Tipperary: Gone But Not Forgotten* (Newton, 1990). See also the chapter titled "The Northeast Township Coal Mines" in my forthcoming history of Lucas County.



A large crowd gathers for a chautauqua in West Branch in the early years of the twentieth century.

1920s (equivalent to more than $11,000 today), and that the state legislature added a jail term or prison sentence as a part of the punishment in the closing years of prohibition. The dynamiting of the garage of local prosecuting attorney J. D. Threlkeld of Chariton on an early Sunday morning in 1927 drove home the point that violence and lawlessness associated with defiance of prohibition could reach into a quiet country town.

The morally uplifting lessons of the chautauqua movement offered different insights on ethnicity, race, gender, and class. When I first wrote *chautauqua* on the blackboard (the name taken from the New York lakeside community that inaugurated semireligious and educational sessions for summer visitors), a student completely unfamiliar with the prominent cultural movement of the early twentieth century asked, "How do you pronounce it?" The excitement and interest of the students grew as they researched the chautauqua story from documents that I supplied from my Chariton research and that they found on the internet. Did I know, one student eagerly asked after her visit to the internet, that in 1902 Chariton was one of eight Iowa cities on the circuit managed by Redpath Enterprises, the agency that

contracted with performers and the host towns for 5- to 8-day "chautaquas" each August? They could hardly believe that in a county with a population of 16,166 in 1900, 17,685 people attended a chautauqua in the county seat in 1904 to hear lectures and presentations by prominent Americans. At different chautauquas over the years the crowd pleasers included William Jennings Bryan, Booker T. Washington, Helen Keller, General O. O. Howard of the Freedman's Bureau and the black college in Washington, D.C., the Swedish Bell Ringers of Chicago, and Iowa State's corn seed specialist Professor Perry Holden. One of the speakers advocated woman suffrage in a lecture titled "The Old Man and the New Woman"; other speakers, just by the example of their presence, foreshadowed a more democratic and tolerant society.[9] The chautauqua, along with the automobile, electric lights, and the movies, introduced modernity to residents of Chariton and Lucas County.

Now, in my retirement from USC and living in Chariton, I write the concluding chapter of the Lucas County history while still sharing stories of my Iowa heritage with students enrolled in a history course I teach at Simpson College. Their questions have identified topics needing further research and clarification. I have learned, too, from old friends and new acquaintances who have lived all or part of their lives in my home county. A non-native, non-resident historian could write an engaging and illuminating history of Lucas County, but only someone like myself, with family links to the county's pioneering generation and their descendants of the past 150-plus years, could write about a people and place with insights and understandings common to many but in other ways unique to a native. My local history, tentatively titled *A People and Place in Time: A History of Lucas County, Iowa,* is a part of my past in ways I realize and do not realize, just as my life experiences as a native Iowan and longtime out-migrant have found conscious and unconscious expression in my career as a historian. This much is clear: For nearly half a century I lived away from Iowa, but during all those years, Iowa never left me.

9. See chapter titled "Modernization of Town and Country, 1896–1919" in my forthcoming history of Lucas County.

And clear, too, are the accounts and assessments of their Iowa heritage provided by each of the other contributors to this issue: the conservative, small-town character of World War II–era Albia described and analyzed by H. Roger Grant; the dominant Catholic culture of Dubuque during the 1940s and 1950s imprinted on the life of John Buenker; the deep, rich meaning of time and place Rebecca Conard gained through her research and publication on the state's once busy railroad depots and quiet parks; and the enduring lessons of education and educators of Ames, Grinnell College, and Columbia University for George McJimsey and the history and biography he has written from an Iowa-conferred "midcult" perspective. History, both as lived experiences and the written record, informs us as fellow Iowans wherever we have lived or whatever we have done, making us all shared inheritors of a proud and storied past.

The Iowa Polio Stories Oral History Project

KATHLEEN M. SCOTT

BY THE MID-1960s Jonas Salk's killed vaccine and Albert Sabin's live oral vaccine had largely eliminated the threat of polio in the United States.[1] Prior to that time it was feared as a crippling and often deadly disease. As memories of the terror of polio fade, it is important to record the history of the experience. In the 1990s scholars began to focus their attention on polio as a subject of serious historical and cultural inquiry. In her 1992 analysis, *Dirt and Disease: Polio Before FDR*, Naomi Rogers employed the concepts of dirt and disease, poverty and infection, to focus on the epidemiology of polio and the curious fact that middle- and upper-class Americans appeared to suffer higher rates of affliction than immigrants. "By 1900," Rogers noted, "while most poor immigrant children had become infected and immune at an early age, children from clean, middle-class homes were at greater risk of the paralytic form of the disease." Jane S. Smith argued in her 1995 study, *Patenting the Sun*, that the polio vaccine raised popular expectations and possibly false hopes for a high-tech breakthrough for acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). And in his 2005 Pulitzer Prize–winning analysis, *Polio: An American Story*, David Oshinsky examined the reality of polio as a fairly uncommon disease. He also investigated America's obsession with polio and how it was portrayed in the media and popular culture.[2] Despite the emergence

1. "Polio Conquest in Sight," *The Science News-Letter* 81 (4/14/1962), 229.

2. Jane S. Smith, *Patenting the Sun: Polio and the Salk Vaccine* (New York, 1990); Naomi Rogers, *Dirt and Disease: Polio Before FDR* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1992),

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of this national literature on polio, little has been published about polio in Iowa specifically, even though polio afflicted Iowans in unusually high proportions.

Beginning in 1910, polio epidemics recurred in Iowa every few years, peaking with 3,564 cases reported in Iowa in 1952. In 1994 *Palimpsest* editor Ginalie Swaim organized a photographic essay titled "An Iowa Polio Portfolio, 1939 to 1959."[3] The essay noted the importance of providing a human dimension to the epidemics. The *Des Moines Register and Tribune* photographs from 1939 to 1959 that are featured in Swaim's essay convey the complex duality of fear and hope in the expressions of a generation of Iowans with little or no medical explanation or cure for their condition. What remained absent from the historical record were the subjects' experiences in their own words. How did polio affect their lives, families, employment, physical health, and emotional spirit?

In 2006 the Iowa Center for the Book selected a popular account of the development of the polio vaccine, Jeffrey Kluger's *Splendid Solution* as its All Iowa Reads selection for 2007.[4] In response to the intense conversation the book sparked, the All Iowa Reads Committee sought the participation of public libraries and volunteers across the state to encourage Iowans to share their stories about polio through its Web site and in a more proactive oral history project. The purpose of this brief essay is to call attention to that project as a valuable resource for Iowans, particularly for Iowa historians. The passing of two of the participants in the oral history project—Betty Stanfield and Jeri Fegan—since their interviews were recorded underscores the importance and urgency of chronicling their stories.

THE IOWA POLIO STORIES Oral History Project, funded by the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust and the State Library of

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quotation from p. 2; idem, "Race and the Politics of Polio: Warm Springs, Tuskegee, and the March of Dimes," *American Journal of Public Health* 97 (May 2007), 784–95; Tony Gould, *A Summer Plague: Polio and Its Survivors* (New Haven, CT, 1995); David Oshinsky, *Polio: An American Story* (New York, 2005).

3. "An Iowa Polio Portfolio, 1939 to 1959," *Palimpsest* 75 (1994), 4–13.

4. Jeffrey Kluger, *Splendid Solution: Jonas Salk and the Conquest of Polio* (New York, 2004).

Beth Brown (1921–1971) is surrounded by her family, including husband Evan and interviewee Ann Brown LeMaster (pictured left of her mother), November 1956. Beth contracted polio in the fall of 1954. She was treated at Methodist and Lutheran Hospitals in Des Moines and later went to Omaha's Creighton Memorial-St. Joseph's Hospital for rehabilitation. For the rest of her life, Beth lived at home with the care of her own mother, her children, and hired help, in a paralyzed state from the neck down. Beth's parents sold their stately home in Andover, Massachusetts, and moved to Iowa when they learned of their daughter's desperate condition. Beth died in 1971, shortly after her youngest child graduated from high school. Despite the presence of three maternal figures—a mother, grandmother, and caregiver—Beth's daughter, Ann, experienced complex feelings of abandonment. She once saw her mother cry in quiet conversation with a clergyman, but never heard her mother complain. Photograph courtesy of Ann Brown LeMaster (who now resides in Dallas County).

Iowa, has been a collaborative effort between the State Library of Iowa and the State Historical Society of Iowa to document and preserve the history of polio in Iowa. The collection includes oral history interviews with physicians, pediatricians, registered nurses, and licensed practical nurses who worked with polio patients. Most important, the collection includes the voices of the people who were most affected by polio. Through their own words, they reveal how they felt, how they coped,

how their communities responded, and how they survived the anguish of the "dreaded" disease. The taped interviews, transcripts, and associated materials are accessible in Special Collections at the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City. In addition, 59 Iowans electronically submitted written narratives of their memories of how polio affected their lives, families, and communities to the Iowa Polio Stories Web site.[5] The written narratives are a treasure trove of primary source material.

The Iowa Polio Stories Oral History Collection consists of 51 recorded audio interviews from Iowans scattered across 26 counties.[6] The subjects, both men and women, ranged in age from 55 to 96 years old. The interviews are recorded primarily on cassette tapes; four are in digital format. Most interviews last approximately 45 to 60 minutes. Several interviews were recorded via telephone in order to ensure broad geographic scope across the state. Summaries are available online at the Iowa Center for the Book's Web site, as is an extensive bibliography of articles related to polio from twentieth-century periodicals, medical journals, and annual and biennial reports from the Iowa State Department of Health. Statistical accounts from the Iowa Department of Health and the medical profession are critical, but they do not necessarily capture the whole story.[7]

To facilitate accessibility and to aid researchers, all but one of the oral history recordings have been transcribed. The transcripts are filed along with the individual's biographical data form and oral history release form. Many interviewees' files also contain photographs, personal letters, news clippings, scrapbooks, medical letters, and documents generously shared from the personal collections of the interviewees.

This collection sought to capture the voices of three primary groups affected by polio: 1) the medical community; 2) family and friends of those afflicted; and 3) polio survivors. By capturing their voices, this project has made it possible to begin to document and preserve perhaps the most critical, yet overlooked element in the historical record: the personal experience.

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5. www.iowacenterforthebook.org/ips-home.

6. Forty-nine participants submitted oral history release forms.

7. www.iowacenterforthebook.org/air/previous-years/ohs/ohcol/; www.iowacenterforthebook.org/air/previous-years/air07/Polio-in-Iowa.

With only two interviews in the collection from African Americans—one physician and one polio survivor —the collection is not entirely comprehensive in scope. More must be done to capture the voices of diverse racial and ethnic immigrant Iowans and to document the efforts made by African American health professionals to overturn the idea of polio as a white disease.[8] Through personal donations, however, the project did acquire photographs of African American women working as physical therapists at Broadlawn Medical Center and Blank Memorial Children's Hospital in Des Moines. Through the oral histories, we also know that a team of African American women worked in the basement of the Sister Kenny Institute in Minneapolis preparing hot packs during the early fifties. "Packers," as they were commonly called, worked in extremely uncomfortable conditions; they tolerated nauseating heat and the unpleasant smell of the wet wool used for therapy to treat polio victims.

The topic of polio fits into a number of important conceptual frameworks for scholars, historians, and educators. Like race, class, gender, and sexuality, disability studies is burgeoning as an analytic category of scholarship. University of Iowa historian Douglas Baynton has observed, "The polio epidemics that swept the country in the twentieth century had profound effects not only on the thousands of individuals and families but on the very culture of the area. One of the most significant, perhaps, was the advent of the disability rights movement, which drew much of its early leadership from the ranks of polio survivors." Baynton and others have reminded us that American society has come a long way from the rampant and institutionalized discrimination of the turn of the century. Like the Civil Rights Act, the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has been interpreted as a critical landmark of civil rights legislation prohibiting discrimination.[9] Yet the voices in this collection

8. Rogers, "Race and the Politics of Polio," 784.

9. Douglas C. Baynton, e-mail message to author, 9/9/2008 (quotation); idem, "Disability in History," *Perspectives* 44, no. 8 (2006), 5–7; idem, "Defectives in the Land: Disability and American Immigration Policy, 1882–1924," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 24 (2005), 31–44; idem, "Disability History: No Longer Hidden," *Reviews in American History* 32 (2004), 282–92; Paul K. Longmore and Laura Umansky, eds., *The New Disability History: American Perspectives* (New York, 2001).

Joann Hall celebrates her sixteenth birthday at Blank Hospital, Des Moines, 1950. Joann was 16 years old and looking forward to homecoming celebrations at Menlo High School when she started experiencing a terrible headache and stiff neck. She was admitted to Blank Hospital, where, as she recalled, "They gave me a spinal tap . . . and diagnosed me with bulbar and paralytic polio. It just progressed from there that night. I was hurting so bad I could not walk. . . . With the lights in the nurses' station and the nurses communicating with each other and laughing and such, well, I just felt like I was the most abandoned person in the world." Her parents, who lived an hour away, visited her in Des Moines every day for three months. Photograph courtesy of Joann Hall, who now resides in Greenfield.

reveal that we still have a long way to go in this regard. Many interviewees reflected on the extent to which the law, despite good intentions, is not being enforced with enough tenacity or vigilance. Issues of mobility and accessibility remain a constant and recurring theme.

Disability, as a social and cultural construct, is an important lens to broader themes of accessibility, citizenship, and power for scholars of American history and culture. Yet the concept rarely surfaced as a metaphor in the rhetoric of polio survivors.

Most of the Iowa polio survivors interviewed for this collection interpreted their "disability" as a source of inspiration, courage, and determination; and most offered commentary on the ways polio enhanced their compassion and empathy for others.

Many Americans born after the terror of the polio epidemics subsided remain oblivious to and unaware of the intensity of fear that swept the country or the overwhelming sense of desperation felt by families affected by polio. A serious problem currently exists for polio survivors who find that they need to educate their own physicians about the long-term effects of polio on their muscles, nerves, joints, and bones. This burden is exacerbated by a medical profession that has yet to officially acknowledge Post-Polio Syndrome in the nomenclature of medical diseases. According to Baynton, "The epidemics themselves have been well documented and their histories often told. What the Iowa Polio Stories Oral History Project will make possible are the histories of the subsequent lives of the polio survivors and how they were transformed by the disease."[10]

The Iowa Polio Stories project is a valuable primary resource for all of these reasons. But it is also important to note that the project reflects a neat coincidence with its origins in the Iowa Center for the Book's All Iowa Reads program. A number of interviewees recalled how important reading was to their survival and recovery. Some mentioned in their oral histories the significance of libraries in their local communities. Others clearly remembered the way reading operated as a form of escapism. Patricia Moreland explained how reading gave her comfort and a sense of adventure when she was hospitalized as a seven-year-old at Blank Memorial Children's Hospital. "I loved to read. I would read three or four books a week in addition to my schoolwork. Part of the appeal of reading was that I could go into a whole other world—a world where I could run and jump and do things. I think that was partly why I loved to read so much. I still love to read." Reading enhanced imaginations and allowed survivors to break free of doctors, nurses, braces, and crutches —free of polio.

10. Baynton, e-mail.

Family Farming in the Midwest in the Early Twentieth Century: A Review Essay

PAMELA RINEY-KEHRBERG

A Good Day's Work: An Iowa Farm in the Great Depression, by Dwight Hoover. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2007. viii, 211 pp. Illustrations, index. $26.00 cloth.

Little Heathens: Hard Times and High Spirits on an Iowa Farm during the Depression, by Mildred Armstrong Kalish. New York: Bantam, 2007. 292 pp. Illustrations. $22.00 cloth.

Days on the Family Farm: From the Golden Age through the Great Depression, by Carrie A. Meyer. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. x, 264 pp. Illustrations, appendixes, notes, index. $17.95 paper.

IN THESE BOOKS, we have three midwestern tales. In many ways, the worlds they describe are quite similar; in other ways, these stories illustrate the uniqueness of individual family histories that are often subsumed under the larger category of midwestern family farming. Each of these books tells the story of family farming, but each family was very different.

Dwight Hoover's book, *A Good Day's Work*, is the classic family farming tale. Hoover was born in 1926 on his family's farm in Mahaska County, Iowa. His father's operation was part of a larger family concern, including the farms of three uncles and his paternal grandfather. Unlike the authors of many similar books, Hoover is careful to point out the web of connections that made his family's farm a going concern. Not only did the

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immediate family—Hoover, his parents, and his siblings—contribute to running the farm, but the uncles, aunts, cousins, and grandparents did as well. Hoover writes, "One of today's common misconceptions is that the family farm, at least as it existed in the early years of the twentieth century, was worked by a farmer with the aid of his wife and perhaps his small children. That farm work required the efforts of several *adults* [emphasis in original] does not seem to be widely recognized" (7). Farms survived because so many individuals cooperated.

As Hoover comments, his family's farm was as much a part of the nineteenth century as the twentieth. The farm employed family labor and provided a large proportion of the family's necessary food. An enormous garden bordered the front of the house. The family also raised, killed, and cured its own meat. Horses provided the power on the farm. A tractor would not make its appearance on the farm until the late 1930s. The family participated in a threshing ring, and Hoover's mother cooked the prodigious meals necessary for a successful threshing party. Hoover explains how, and when, the family moved to modernize its operation.

One of the great strengths of *A Good Day's Work* is Hoover's attention to detail. Season by season, he explains how he and other members of his family accomplished agricultural tasks. For anyone wanting to know the how and why of planting, harvesting, and picking, this is the book. He also describes the problems involved with raising various types of animals, and he does not avoid the unpleasant. Lambs, for example, will eat themselves to death. The reader will also learn the tricks involved in preparing animals successfully for competition at the state fair. *A Good Day's Work* provides a wealth of information that would otherwise be lost when the author's generation, which largely left agriculture through education and World War II, is gone.

Mildred Armstrong Kalish's *Little Heathens* is a very different story. Kalish spent most of her youth in and around her grandparents' home in Garrison, Iowa. Like Hoover's, her story is one of extended family. Unlike Hoover's, however, it was anything but the typical family. For reasons only vaguely known to Kalish, her grandfather evicted her father from the family, probably due to "bankruptcy, bootlegging, and jail time" (11). Kalish's

mother had to fall back on her parents for help. During the school year, Kalish, her mother, and siblings lived in town with her rigid, very religious grandparents. During the summer, the fatherless family moved to a farm owned by her grandparents, across the road from an aunt and an uncle. Kalish, like Hoover, lived within a broad grouping of extended family. Everyone shared the work and the fun.

And there was fun. In spite of Kalish's assertion that her childhood "came to a virtual halt when I was around five years old," when the family moved to Garrison, her engaging book is filled with tales of a life happily lived (11). As with Hoover, the great strength of the book is in its details. Kalish provides careful descriptions of such topics as cooking, washing, and milking, but she also devotes a great deal of space to the fun that could be had in the process. Readers also learn how rural Iowans celebrated traditional holidays; Kalish even includes menus and recipes. She also shows how families cared for their disabled members and coped in times of sickness and death. Like Hoover, Kalish does not avoid the unpleasant; she describes adult reactions to disabling injuries to family pets, providing blessedly prompt euthanasia. Other topics rarely broached in memoirs, such as contraception, abortion, and menstruation, also receive their due. Kalish provides a full view of the emotional weight and importance that everyday activities carried.

Particularly interesting is Kalish's discussion of growing up and getting out. As a teenager, she decided that farm life was not her future, and she began taking the necessary steps to make a life outside of agriculture. Like many of her generation, her ultimate avenue outward came in the form of World War II. Kalish served in the Coast Guard as a radio operator, and she used her benefits from the G.I. Bill to obtain a higher education.

Hoover's book is a methodical discussion of Iowa farming during the Great Depression; Kalish's is a romp. Both demand rereading to fully appreciate all of the painstaking detail that went into their writing. The best way to read these two books is as a pair, first reading Hoover to obtain the carefully written agricultural background, followed by Kalish, to grasp more of the emotional context within which family life was lived during the depression years.

Carrie A. Meyer's *Days on the Family Farm* is also the story of an extended family, that of May and Elmo Davis, who farmed in northern Illinois. The Davises married in 1901 and made their home within a short distance of their parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins in Guilford Township, Winnebago County, Illinois. Unlike the average farm couple, however, they did not have children. The Davises' wedding picture, taken January 1, 1901, clearly shows the arthritis that would shortly cripple May and confine her to a chair for the rest of her life. Meyer, a grandniece of the Davises, brought together May's brief diary, the couple's financial records, and family lore to write this farm's story.

In many ways, Meyer's book rounds out this set with a detailed discussion of the economics of family farming in the first years of the twentieth century. Because of May's disability and a lack of child laborers, the Davises relied heavily on hired men and women and extended kin. Theirs was a small operation, and they felt no need to expand it, having no children to inherit the land. This conservative approach to farming meant that while others suffered from overexpansion in the 1920s and 1930s, May and Elmo did not. Even as they aged and their income failed to match their expenses, their savings and investments made continued operation possible.

In addition to the economic story, there is also the family story. Like those presented by Kalish and Hoover, cooperation across the generations and among extended kin made the continuation of the agricultural community possible. Elmo Davis shared his labor with the extended family, and they with him. May made use of hired labor, but also welcomed nieces and other female relatives into the home to help with the work. May and Elmo lent money to extended kin. When an aging and ailing Elmo could not do his chores, "of course, many helped make sure the farmwork got done" (203). It is the "of course" that defines the love, respect, and cooperation with which Meyer describes this family's relations.

Individually, these three books are well worth reading. The books entertain and inform and would be interesting to nearly anyone concerned with the history of the Midwest, rural and agricultural life, or the Great Depression. Together, however,

they are even more impressive and useful. Each one tells a different part of the rural and agricultural history of the Midwest, and the primary issues upon which each author chooses to focus neatly complement the others. In these three books, we have the "cows and plows" discussion of the intricacies of early twentieth-century agriculture, in addition to the emotional and financial context of the same. And each, in its own way, is an intensely personal tale, highlighting the importance of family within the phrase family farming.

Book Reviews and Notices

The Underground Railroad in Western Illinois, by Owen W. Muelder. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2008. vii, 191 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. $45.00 cloth.

Reviewer Galin Berrier is adjunct instructor in history at Des Moines Area Community College. He is the author of the chapter, "The Underground Railroad in Iowa," in *Outside In: African-American History in Iowa, 1838–2000* (2001).

Owen W. Muelder acknowledges in the preface to his study of the Underground Railroad in western Illinois that "the primary difficulty facing anyone who examines the history of the Underground Railroad is one of reliable verification" (1). Most of the freedom seekers were not themselves literate, and the free black and white abolitionists who helped them seldom risked keeping written records. Muelder has tried to evaluate the sources available to him—newspaper articles, county histories, and historical monographs, among others—critically. He acknowledges that academic historians often regard county histories, for instance, as unreliable, but without them, those of us attempting to study the Underground Railroad would have few sources of any kind.

One of the monographs Muelder employs frequently is his father Herman R. Muelder's *Fighters for Freedom: A History of Anti-Slavery Activities of Men and Women Associated with Knox College* (1959, 2005). As befits the major role Galesburg played in the Underground Railroad in western Illinois, the most prominent actors in both books are George Washington Gale, Jonathan Blanchard, Samuel G. Wright, and other Presbyterian and Congregationalist clergy and laypeople associated with the founding of Galesburg and Knox College.

Owen Muelder's approach is to quote these actors directly, believing that the language "is moving and often . . . truly eloquent," giving us "a sense of the time and place as well as the sensibilities of the writers in ways that are lost through paraphrasing" (2). This has the merit of allowing readers to evaluate these sources themselves for possible sentimentality or exaggeration.

In his first chapter, Muelder defines "western Illinois " as the Military Tract set aside as land grants to veterans of the War of 1812, a rough triangle of counties bounded by the Rock River on the north, the Illinois River on the south and east, and the Mississippi River on

the west. Subsequent chapters describe routes and stations in Adams, Hancock, McDonough, Fulton, Peoria, Knox, Stark, and Bureau counties, approximating travels freedom seekers might have undertaken along the so-called "Quincy Line" through Galesburg and Princeton to Chicago. In western Illinois, as in Iowa, freedom seekers hid not just in basements or root cellars but in places as varied as "the rafter beams of a covered bridge, a remote cave, a tree hollow inside a forest grove, or tall prairie grass or corn fields" (15), as well as garrets, attics, and, in at least one case, a church belfry. A final chapter describes the use after 1850 of steam railroads, chiefly the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, to transport freedom seekers concealed in freight cars.

The folklore of the Underground Railroad suggests that agents did not know each other well, if at all. Muelder argues persuasively that, at least in western Illinois, that is not true. Many of them came together in Farmington on October 1, 1838, to organize the Illinois Anti-Slavery Society. "There can be no doubt about the fact that these freedom fighters knew each other very well. . . . Their friendship, loyalty, and common commitment extended a network across the Mississippi River to southeastern Iowa, where their comrade, Asa Turner, was doing the same kind of work" (81–82). Other Iowa Underground Railroad operatives known to the western Illinois Congregationalists were their coreligionists Rev. William Salter in Burlington and Rev. John Todd in Tabor, as well as the Anti-Slavery Friends in the Quaker settlement of Salem.

Iowa readers might wish that Muelder had broadened his definition of "western Illinois" somewhat to include the so-called "Rock River Course," a route likely followed by freedom seekers crossing from Clinton County in Iowa and heading for Beloit, Janesville, or Milton in southern Wisconsin. Also, several counties, including Mercer and Henry, although located within the Military Tract and with several "stations" indicated on Muelder's very helpful map of the Underground Railroad in west central Illinois (33), have no chapters of their own in the text. Iowa readers might turn instead to Glenette Tilley Turner, *The Underground Railroad in Illinois* (2001), for the story of Iowa abolitionists conveying two freedom seekers named George and Sam from Missouri to Samuel McClure's house northeast of Sunbeam in Mercer County (55).

Owen Muelder deserves our thanks for compiling from many sources his narrative of the Underground Railroad in western Illinois. Iowans and others can now visualize more fully the later experiences of freedom seekers who crossed Iowa in the late 1840s and 1850s in their valiant bid for freedom from bondage.

John Brown to Bob Dole: Movers and Shakers in Kansas History, edited by Virgil W. Dean. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006. xii, 408 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. $29.95 cloth.

Reviewer John E. Miller is professor emeritus of history at South Dakota State University. He has written biographies of Governor Philip F. La Follette and author Laura Ingalls Wilder. His latest book is a dual study of Wilder and her daughter, Rose Wilder Lane, to be published in fall 2008.

If people make history, and they do, biography properly plays a central role in any adequate account of the past. We have progressed beyond the simple proposition propounded by Thomas Carlyle that history consists of "the biography of great men." Few of us would disagree, however, with the contention of William E. Connelley, one-time president and longtime secretary of the Kansas State Historical Society, that "great men [and women] leave the impress of their genius upon the institutions they have helped to found" and that "to rightly understand the institutions of our State, it is necessary that we should have some knowledge of the [women and] men who builded it." This statement is approvingly quoted in the introduction to this fine collection by editor Virgil W. Dean, who also edits *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* and serves as director of publications at the Kansas State Historical Society.

Dean has assembled an all-star lineup to write the 26 biographies contained in the book. They are divided into five time spans, beginning with early European settlement of the territory (no American Indians are included). The authors include Nicole Etcheson, Jim Hoy, Burdett Loomis, Thomas D. Isern, Sally F. Griffith, Peter Fearon, Leo P. Ribuffo, and Craig Miner, along with the editor himself. Boiling down the thousands of possible subjects who could have been included to only 26 (27, to be precise, since one chapter is about a husband-wife team) was an unenviable task, making comprehensiveness impossible. Readers will no doubt think of people they would like to have seen in the book, but they will have to admit that the ones chosen for inclusion make up a broad range of interesting and significant characters who reflect a sense of the diversity of Kansas culture and the sweep of the state's history.

Many of the subjects could fit into several categories. Political figures include John Brown, James H. Lane, Alfred M. Landon, Gerald B. Winrod, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Vern Miller, and Robert J. Dole. After a single gubernatorial term, Walter A. Huxman made his biggest mark as a federal judge. Among the entrepreneurs and businessmen are William H. Russell, Joseph G. McCoy, Theodore C. Henry, Frederick H. Harvey, Bernhard Warkentin, and R. H. Garvey. Women involved

in a variety of endeavors include Clarina I. H. Nichols, Mary Ann Bickerdyke, Mary Elizabeth Lease, Kate Richards O'Hare, Marcet Haldeman-Julius, and Esther Brown. Authors include Charles M. Sheldon (who was also a minister), newspaper publisher William Allen White, book publisher Emanuel Haldeman-Julius, artist of many talents Gordon Parks, and ecologist Wes Jackson. Samuel J. Crumbine was a crusader for public health, and John Steuart Curry made his reputation as a regionalist artist.

The 10- to 12-page chapters are models of concision. While including basic biographical information about their subjects, including date and place of birth, education, and so forth, their real forte lies in the interpretive focus they all strive to achieve. Some essays, such as Marjorie Swann and William M. Tsutsui's on Curry, are strongly opinionated or one-sided, but most are balanced and judicious. That does not mean that they are dull or boring. Roger Grant's chapter on Fred Harvey's string of restaurants and hotels demonstrates why their creator was indeed "a remarkable entrepreneur." Bruce Kahler's piece on "Mother" Bickerdyke recreates the atmosphere in which thousands of men after the Civil War revered the contribution made by the angelic wartime nurse. M. H. Hoeflich relates the unique partnership that enabled the Haldeman-Julius husband-wife team to crank out 2,000 titles that sold more than 500 million copies during the mid-twentieth century.

I hesitate to single out any of the chapters, because they are uniformly well written. Those about some of the more obscure figures perhaps stand out most in my mind, because their stories are less familiar. The editor, the authors, and the publisher are to be commended for this fine collection, whose main contribution will be to whet readers' appetites for reading more deeply in Kansas biography.

Marching with the First Nebraska: A Civil War Diary, by August Scherneckau; edited by James E. Potter and Edith Robbins; translated by Edith Robbins. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007. xxxi, 335 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. $34.95 cloth.

Reviewer Paul Fessler is professor of history at Dordt College. His research and writing have focused on the Civil War, immigration and ethnicity (especially German Americans), and public education.

This diary by August Scherneckau, a young German immigrant from Grand Island, Nebraska, provides evocative descriptions of the trans-Mississippi theater of the Civil War. Enlisting in the First Nebraska Volunteers in September 1862, Scherneckau spent much of the early part of his service in light duty in southeastern Missouri, particularly

in the St. Louis area. Wounded in a friendly fire incident, Scherneckau recuperated at home before being recalled near the end of the Civil War to deal with Indian uprisings in Nebraska.

Extensive explanatory footnotes helpfully place Scherneckau's insights within the cultural and political context of the Civil War in the Midwest. This volume is also a valuable contribution to the study of immigrant perspectives on the Civil War. Although Scherneckau subscribed to the German-language newspaper the *St. Louis Westliche Post* and occasionally attended events at the local Turner Hall, he spent much of his time in the army around English-speaking midwesterners. His time in the military began Americanizing him. "Germans have sometimes annoyed me," he wrote, "when they so distorted our language with bits of English, but now I am almost doing the same thing" (169). Viewing himself as more educated and sophisticated than most of his comrades, Scherneckau repeatedly complained about the moral laxity (especially drunkenness) of officers and enlisted men behind the lines. This diary provides a useful and highly readable account of such overlooked Union activity in the trans-Mississippi Civil War through the eyes of a German immigrant.

True Tales of the Prairies and Plains, by David Dary. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007. xii, 248 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. $24.95 cloth.

Reviewer J. Thomas Murphy is associate professor of history at Bemidji State University. His dissertation (University of Illinois, 1993) was "Pistols Legacy: Sutlers, Post Traders, and the American Army, 1820–1895."

"One of my men was once bitten on the hand by a big rattler," David Dary quotes Kit Carson as saying. "I cut it open, flashed powder on it three times, and that afternoon he killed and scalped two Injuns" (155). This yarn appears in a chapter about "Legless Critters" and is the kind of Old West story that has fascinated readers since the days of dime novels. Dary has won numerous awards, including one for lifetime achievement from the Western Writers of America, and he has three other "True Tales" collections among the 15 books he has written about frontier life. Here, he presents 39 accounts about life on the Great Plains, particularly in Kansas and along the Santa Fe Trail.

Relying on newspapers and a variety of firsthand and secondary materials, Dary offers a slumgullion of the usual topics: cowboys and cow towns, buffalo and buffalo hunters, lawmen and outlaws, the famous and less so. The stories are straightforward, lacking embellishment and without analysis. Dary, quoting his principal characters whenever possible, simply tells his stories. Most, such as Theodore

Roosevelt's time in the badlands of Dakota Territory and "Portugee" John Phillips's ride in minus 30-degree temperatures from Fort Kearny to Fort Laramie in December 1866, are well known to fanciers of western lore. Others are not. Dary recounts the James Philly family's overland trail experience with their cat Jip as well as a history of singing cowboys. All in all, this is an entertaining collection readers will enjoy.

American Indian Nonfiction: An Anthology of Writings, 1760s–1930s, edited by Bernd C. Peyer. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007. ix, 401 pp. $26.95 paper.

Reviewer Lee Schweninger is professor of English at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. His most recent book is *Listening to the Land: Native American Literary Responses to the Landscape* (2008).

In this anthology Bernd Peyer gathers four dozen pieces of nonfiction, spanning almost two centuries, by 36 different American Indian writers (including six women), many of whom will be familiar to students of American Indian literature. One of the strengths of the collection, though, is that there are many more authors whose names are not so well known but whose contribution to American Indian literature is also valuable. Another of the collection's strengths is that a concise bibliography of primary and secondary sources and a brief biography follow the prose selection(s) of each author, making the anthology ideal for scholars and for American Indian literature survey courses.

In an introduction, Peyer contextualizes the writings by providing a geographical-chronological overview of American Indian history, suggesting how the selected writers participated in and responded to that history. He is willing to make a few generalizations, arguing, for example, that although educated in English-speaking missions or schools, most of the authors remained in contact with and committed to their communities, most spoke their native languages, and most were familiar with and wrote about tribal matters. Herein lies what is perhaps most valuable about the collection: The cumulative effect of the essays suggests an American Indian literary tradition in English with a very long and complex history of intercultural awareness and insight wherein these writers address important issues concerning religion, culture, and politics, as well as other Indian and non-Indian relations.

In that the anthology includes writings only through the 1930s, it begs for a second volume.

The Oneida Indians in the Age of Allotment, 1860–1920, edited by Laurence M. Hauptman and L. Gordon McLester III. The Civilization of the American Indian Series 253. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006. xx, 333 pp. Illustrations, map, charts, notes, appendixes, bibliography, index. $34.95 cloth.

Reviewer Emily Greenwald is an associate historian with Historical Research Associates, Inc., Missoula, Montana. She is the author of *Reconfiguring the Reservation: The Nez Perces, Jicarilla Apaches, and the Dawes Act* (2002).

The Oneida Indians in the Age of Allotment is the third installment in a four-book history of the Oneida Nation. It surveys Oneida experiences between 1860 and 1920, covering such topics as the Civil War, Indian boarding schools, land loss under the allotment policy, and legal struggles. The editors, Laurence M. Hauptman and L. Gordon McLester III, have compiled oral histories and essays, which they place in context and link together through introductions to each of the book's five topical/chronological parts. The selections offer a range of perspectives from personal to scholarly, and the book as a whole is a fine model of what a Native community and academics can produce through collaboration.

The book highlights the lives of complicated political and social leaders among the Oneida. One of the most interesting and well-developed essays, written by Hauptman, examines the career of Dennison Wheelock, a Carlisle graduate who became a bandmaster, composer, and tribal attorney. This and Hauptman's other contributions to the volume—an essay on competency commissions and an essay co-written with McLester—are the book's strongest entries.

The book's other essays vary in quality. James Oberly's essay on Oneida allotment appears to have been written for Wisconsin educators to assist them with teaching the topic. It would have been helpful to have a more penetrating analysis of allotment here, especially given the book's title and the importance of allotment in Native American history. Carol Cornelius's short narrative about the return of a railroad right-of-way to the tribe stands out as a good example of how history and historical records matter in present-day Indian issues.

The oral history excerpts and firsthand accounts add color and make the past more personal. Some were recorded by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s; others were collected more recently. The editors' introductions help connect this personal testimony to the historical narrative in the essays, but some of the entries would benefit from further explanation or analysis.

The book addresses a period of great significance in Native American history, when federal policy aimed to break apart tribes and as-

similate Indians into the American mainstream as farmers and laborers. Iowa's tribes had largely been pushed from the state by the late nineteenth century, and, like the Oneida, they experienced the pressures of the assimilation policy in places other than their traditional homelands.

Apart from its stronger essays, the book does not quite achieve the depth of analysis or originality that would appeal to academics. General readers will likely find some of the personal accounts and essays compelling. Despite some shortcomings, the book succeeds in providing insight into this important era in Oneida (and Native American) experience. It would be nice to see more collaborative projects of this nature.

Calling This Place Home: *Women on the Wisconsin Frontier*, *1850–1925*, by Joan M. Jensen. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2006. viii, 518 pp. Illustrations, map, notes, note on sources, index. $34.95 cloth.

Reviewer Paula M. Nelson is professor of history and chairperson of the Department of Social Sciences at the University of Wisconsin–Platteville. She is the author of *After the West Was Won: Homesteaders and Town-Builders in Western South Dakota, 1900–1917* (1986); and *The Prairie Winnows Out Its Own: The West River Country of South Dakota in the Years of Depression and Dust* (1996).

One goal of some historians of women over the nearly 40 years of the sub-discipline's existence has been to provide one overarching interpretation of the female experience in the United States. As scholars have undertaken this endeavor, however, they have encountered a difficult truth: there is no single narrative line that can encompass the variety in women's lives. Females shared the biological role of childbearing, but other life circumstances varied dramatically. Oppression models, for example, that emphasized universal legal, political, economic, and cultural subordination of women could not explain both the circumstances of enslaved women in the South and the plantation mistresses who ruled over them, or the lives of wealthy Gilded Age society matrons compared to those women who labored in the sweatshops of the time, or who bore child after child in the dank tenements of American cities. Women's lives were and are shaped by time, place, culture, gender, race, class, ethnicity, religion, education, luck, and many other factors.

Joan M. Jensen has found a better way to tell the multiple stories of women in the past. In *Calling This Place Home*, she focuses on a region, her own home place, economically marginal north central Wisconsin, and provides a richly detailed, comprehensive examination of

the family, community, economic, and institutional history of women. The stories of her own family members help provide the everyday details that make the story personal and real. The stories of her research trips through the area illustrate the processes of a historian at work and show the importance of leaving one's desk to see firsthand the places subjects inhabited. That Jensen did not really know her own family's places until relatively recently lends a special poignancy and immediacy to the story. This is not an autobiography, however, but a solid, scholarly work that uses family experiences, as well as the experiences of those Jensen "met" in her research along the way, as entrées into the complex stories of different groups as their world changed over time.

Jensen divides the book into three sections: Building Economies, Protecting Families and Communities, and Making a New Home. The first section, Building Economies, includes migration stories, the lumber economy and the transition to agriculture, especially dairying, and the places that Native women filled within these changing circumstances. The segment titled Protecting Families and Communities includes a wide range of topics, including health, and "caring," which includes manners and mores, elder care, poor houses and other elements of community values and institutions. Other chapters include the stories of schools at all levels, churches and spiritual practices, customs, and politics. The final section, Making a New Home, details the migration away from the region that so many women undertook as they searched for a different life in urban areas. Each segment has to untangle and interpret the stories of several different cultures. The category of Native women, for example, includes women from three tribes with three different cultures and three different interactions with the federal and state governments, all of whom were facing marginalization as settlers came to the region and developed their own economies and institutions. Among the settlers, Polish Catholic immigrants lived differently than Germans or Danes or native-born Americans. Nuns provided different kinds of institutions and fought different kinds of battles with their hierarchy than did Methodist women. The differences as well as the similarities are carefully detailed, told as often as possible through the experiences of specific women.

One of the best features of the book is the depth of context provided for each story. When her female relatives migrated into Minnesota's Twin Cities to find work during the first two decades of the twentieth century, for example, their story introduces a discussion of the difficulties of living on female wages, as documented by the Minimum Wage Commission, the passage of new laws to protect women

workers in Minnesota, and the circumstances of the labor movement of the time. Jensen maintains this commitment to full context throughout the book with every subject that she introduces. The notes for each chapter testify to the extensive research each segment and sub-segment required. The result is impressive and the information encyclopedic. *Calling This Place Home* will serve not only as a good history well told, but as a reference work of much value to students of women's history, midwestern or Wisconsin history, and the story of rural life and culture.

In the introduction, Jensen sets her work within the New Western revisionist school of interpretation, with its multicultural view and its utopian demand for justice or "it should have beens" about past events and behaviors. Certainly, many of her stories are those of struggle, poverty, loss, and constant change. Jensen's sorrow and frustration at the circumstances and at injustices many of the women of north central Wisconsin suffered comes through. Yet those women also laughed and danced; raised families; preserved their cultures; built their churches, schools, and hospitals; served their communities; and created lives that mattered within the context of their own times. It is all here, the complete story, the tragedy and the joy.

Investing in Iowa: The Life and Times of F. M. Hubbell, by William B. Friedricks. Des Moines: The Iowan Books, 2007. ix, 224 pp. Illustrations, appendix, notes, index. $18.95 paper.

Reviewer Eric J. Morser teaches history at the University of Florida. His research and writing have focused on the interrelated histories of business, labor, gender, and politics in nineteenth-century La Crosse, Wisconsin.

In this concise and well-researched biography, William B. Friedricks surveys the life of Frederick M. Hubbell, an early booster who helped transform Des Moines into a thriving western city and who eventually became one of the wealthiest men in Iowa. Like so many tales of settlement, Hubbell's western story began in the East. In 1855 a teenaged Hubbell and his father left their Connecticut home and trekked west in search of fame and fortune. Soon after they arrived in Des Moines, the younger Hubbell embarked on a commercial journey that would keep him in town for the better part of the next 75 years. He quickly found a job working as an office boy in a Des Moines land office, where he mingled with speculators and became familiar with the business of property. From that point on, Hubbell focused his energies and acquired his wealth. He made waves buying and selling local real estate but quickly moved into other ventures. By the 1860s he had invested in urban transportation and services and founded Iowa's first

life insurance company. He also recognized the commercial potential of railroads and built new lines that linked Des Moines with emerging regional and national markets. Together, Hubbell's efforts made him a rich man and one of Iowa's Gilded Age captains.

Hubbell was not just concerned with his own prosperity and power. As he became an established financial player in Des Moines, he took steps to ensure that his influence would live on in his descendants and in the thriving city around him. His children and grandchildren enjoyed the privileges of wealth. They attended the finest schools and toured the world. Many returned home to comfortable positions in the family business. He also ensured their place after his death when he set up an innovative trust to nurture their inheritance. Such generosity did not end with kin. As Hubbell grew older, he also invested time and money in local charities, embraced prohibition and other political causes, and paved the way for construction of a new civic center and other urban improvements. Hubbell may not have been as ostentatiously altruistic as Andrew Carnegie. Friedricks, however, deftly demonstrates how Hubbell's charitable efforts shaped Des Moines and its people.

Friedricks never explicitly engages the question of frontier mythology in his book. Yet he does a commendable job of undermining pervasive American folklore that describes western settlers as independent, pioneering men who fled the stifling confines of eastern society and planted civilization on the nation's savage border largely on their own terms. Hubbell was clearly a hard-working and highly motivated entrepreneur. But, as Friedricks reveals, Hubbell took ready advantage of business connections to succeed in his efforts. Beginning with Phineas M. Casady, who tendered the callow Connecticut boy a job in his Des Moines law office, Hubbell forged critical personal bonds with a series of benevolent patrons who provided him with work, capital, and contacts. Friedricks further reminds us that Hubbell, like most successful capitalists, was often the beneficiary of fortuitous events and good timing. Most important, as Hubbell began to amass a small fortune, the arrival of the first Iowa railroads offered him a golden opportunity to augment his wealth. Such examples show that although hardheaded determination and an uncompromising work ethic were necessary, they were not always sufficient to guarantee financial success on Iowa's urban frontier.

Friedricks's exploration of Hubbell's life and economic legacy is largely admiring. At times, his celebratory narrative skims over some of the more troubling, but potentially more illuminating, aspects of Hubbell's prosperity. Time and again, for example, the author demon-

strates that Hubbell preyed upon the commercial misfortune of others. As an ambitious young lawyer, he made his name purchasing warrants and tax liens. He later took advantage of tough commercial times either to seize control of struggling railroad corporations or to drive them out of business to enhance his private wealth and power. Friedricks further reveals that Hubbell did not always play well with local politicians, particularly when he warred with the Des Moines City Council over municipal waterworks. There is nothing wrong with lauding Hubbell and other innovative American business leaders for their economic contributions. Nevertheless, greater focus on the financial consequences of Hubbell's empire building could shed intriguing light on the darker side of Gilded Age capitalism and render him a more complex and compelling character in this story.

Investing in Iowa is ultimately an insightful study of the life of a groundbreaking person who left a lasting mark on his world. The book may not offer much that will surprise scholars of western settlement, urbanization, or business. For readers interested in how an intrepid entrepreneur built a commercial fiefdom in a particular Iowa place, however, it offers an enlightening read.

Upstream Metropolis: An Urban Biography of Omaha and Council Bluffs, by Lawrence H. Larsen, Barbara J. Cottrell, Harl A. Dalstrom, and Kay Calame Dalstrom. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007. xiii, 507 pp. Illustrations, index. $19.95 paper.

Reviewer Jon C. Teaford is professor emeritus of history at Purdue University. He is the author of *The Rise of the States: Evolution of American State Government* (2002) and *Cities of the Heartland: The Rise and Fall of the Industrial Midwest* (1993).

Although neither Iowa nor Nebraska is generally perceived as an urban state, a major metropolitan area straddles their common border. *Upstream Metropolis* offers a thorough and enlightening history of this sprawling urban mass, tracing the evolution of Omaha and Council Bluffs, with lesser coverage of adjacent suburban communities. Given the significance of the Omaha–Council Bluffs metropolis, this new volume should prove a valuable resource to anyone interested in the urban Midwest. Iowans especially should applaud the coverage afforded Council Bluffs. There have been a number of histories of Omaha, but the smaller Iowa city has suffered relative neglect. *Upstream Metropolis* is, then, not a biography of a single city but an attempt to encompass the development of a metropolitan area spanning two states and including two historic hubs.

Because of Omaha's later preeminence, many readers may not realize that Council Bluffs is actually the older of the two cities and the parent of its western neighbor. *Upstream Metropolis* makes this clear when describing the Iowa city's early history as a Mormon way station originally named Kanesville. When the federal government opened the Nebraska Territory to white settlement in 1854, Council Bluffs residents exploited their advantage, ferrying across the Missouri River to claim lots in the new settlement. Gradually both cities developed as significant frontier outposts, with Omaha winning designation as the territorial capital. In addition, it profited as a supply center for fortune seekers headed to the newly opened Colorado gold fields.

Perhaps the most significant factor in the development of the two cities was the Union Pacific Railroad. The eastern half of the nation's transcontinental railroad, the Union Pacific headed west from Council Bluffs and established both cities as major rail centers. Railroads would play an especially significant role in the Council Bluffs economy, providing a disproportionate share of local jobs. In the late nineteenth century, Omaha developed a more diverse economy, becoming a major stockyards and meatpacking hub.

The railroads and packinghouses attracted thousands of European immigrants in search of jobs. Thus Omaha became a rich ethnic mosaic, with residents from every part of Europe as well as a contingent of African Americans. South Omaha, originally a separate city, evolved as a classic immigrant, working-class town. In contrast, Council Bluffs was not only less varied economically both also less diverse ethnically. Whereas Omaha became a characteristically diverse and dirty American metropolis with all the problems and possibilities of America's emerging cities, Council Bluffs assumed the narrower role of midwestern railroad town.

Certainly neither city conformed to the bland, wholesome midwestern stereotype. *Upstream Metropolis* chronicles the prostitution, gambling, and drinking endemic to the wide-open cities straddling the Missouri River. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Omaha and Council Bluffs had a seamy reputation for sin, and local authorities were not committed to cleansing the area of moral blight. Moreover, ethnic tensions produced periodic outbreaks of violence, the most notable example being Omaha's Court House Riot of 1919, in which a mob murdered a black man accused of assaulting a white woman.

Although rural Nebraska experienced a marked loss of population and suffered the insecurities of fluctuating market prices and uncertain weather, Omaha continued to grow throughout the twentieth cen-

tury, adapting admirably to economic change. As headquarters for the Strategic Air Command, the Omaha area benefited from Cold War spending. The stockyards and packinghouses provided fewer jobs, but the old blue-collar town transitioned relatively painlessly to a white-collar hub. Insurance companies, telecommunications, and data processing offered new employment opportunities and perpetuated prosperity in the Nebraska metropolis.

With its narrower reliance on the railroads, Council Bluffs fared less well. Its population stagnated, and urban renewal projects reaped failure rather than revival. Eventually, however, gambling seemed to prove a panacea for the Iowa city. In an excellent chapter, "Reviving Council Bluffs," *Upstream Metropolis* discusses the late twentieth-century effort to establish Council Bluffs as a gambling destination, an initiative that brought much-needed jobs and money to the beleaguered community.

Historians have generally ignored the plight of smaller cities, focusing instead on attempts at regenerating the nation's metropolitan giants. The authors' account of Council Bluffs' doldrums and the community's various responses is, then, especially illuminating. Economic change has blighted not only Detroit and Pittsburgh but also has plagued the smaller cities of Iowa. *Upstream Metropolis* admirably describes how one of these communities coped.

In many ways, *Upstream Metropolis* is a masterful synthesis, but it is not totally evenhanded in its account of the metropolitan area. It presents relatively little about Sarpy County, Nebraska, and its burgeoning growth in the second half of the twentieth century. Sarpy County is actually more than half again as populous as Council Bluffs' Pottawattamie County, ranking second only to Omaha's Douglas County in the metropolitan area. Nearly one-fifth of the area's people reside there, and its significance to the metropolis bodes to grow even greater in coming years. Generally, *Upstream Metropolis* reads not as a history of a metropolitan area but as a twin-city history, switching back and forth between Omaha and Council Bluffs. Given this bipolar vision, the suburbanization of Sarpy County remains a relative blind spot.

On the whole, however, the authors of *Upstream Metropolis* should be commended for their contribution to the history of the Midwest. They offer a readable narrative of the development of a major metropolitan area that merits the attention of every student of the region.

White Racism on the Western Urban Frontier: Dynamics of Race and Class in Dubuque, Iowa (1800–2000), by Mohammad A. Chaichian. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2006. viii, 254 pp. Tables, notes, index, bibliography. $24.95 paper.

Reviewer Kristin Anderson-Bricker is an associate professor of history at Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa. Her research and writing have focused on civil rights organizations of the 1950s and 1960s, currently focused specifically on CORE chapters in three cities—New Orleans, Detroit, and Washington, DC.

In *White Racism on the Western Urban Frontier*, Mohammad Chaichian approaches race relations not as a moral dilemma that can be resolved by tackling racist attitudes; rather, he defines racism as "a socially created ideology" responsive to the changing political economy and "constantly modified and revised in response to political and economic developments, group and ethnic interaction dynamics and class conflicts (220)." Therefore, defeating racism requires dealing with the inter- and intra-class conflict inherent in a capitalist system. Essentially, the author argues that racist attitudes and actions characterized the culture of Dubuque from its origins, but during periods of economic distress racism becomes more blatant and aggressive. He identifies three eras—the late 1850s to early 1860s, the 1920s and the late 1980s through the early 1990s—when economic problems worsened for the working class and unemployed, and as a result they found a scapegoat in African Americans. During the 1920s, when the Protestant middle class and farmers faced a fearful transition to a corporate capitalist economy, they targeted Catholics and immigrants generally and German American Dubuquers specifically.

Chaichian presents a logical theory to explain racism in communities without a large population of non-white citizens. He wanted to understand why racial unrest occurred in Dubuque in the late 1980s and early 1990s despite its relatively low African American population rather than in Iowa cities with a larger black population such as Des Moines, Davenport, or Waterloo (57). He sees Dubuque as "*any town* U.S.A." and therefore a case study to assist other communities with similar historical experiences. Dubuque's well-intentioned, yet failed efforts to deal with its race relations provide lessons on how to deal more effectively with racism. Communities like Dubuque in Iowa, the Midwest, and the nation must deal with the economic problems that pit members of the working class and underclass against one another. Such cities need to see solutions as national rather than local, and citizens need to understand that "specific historical circumstances" explain what ethnic group becomes the targeted scapegoat (201).

Although *White Racism on the Western Urban Frontier* provides a compelling explanation for racism and interesting insights to assist contemporary discourse on race relations, its primary thesis remains a theory rather than a conclusive historical argument. A professor of sociology at Mount Mercy College, Chaichian employs history and historical sources, but the monograph does not follow the methodology employed for community studies in the historical discipline. The author provides evidence, yet several key conclusions are based on a limited number of sources. The people in the study are categorized in large groups such as liberals, business community, movers and shakers, union leaders, working class, religious institutions, and local politicians. Therefore, the characteristics, backgrounds, and value sets of these people as individuals and as a group are missing. Although Chaichian uses a broad range of sources, he relies most heavily on secondary literature and published primary sources in the form of reports and newspapers. Such reports and newspapers are valuable primary resources, but they reflect comments crafted for public consumption. How might private diaries, personal letters, organizational papers, the minutes of city council meetings, or telephone logs enhance his argument? The author references interviews in the text, but he does not provide a complete list of the interviewees and the unpublished sources he used. More troubling, he sometimes applies conclusions from the historical discourse without providing Dubuque-specific evidence. In order to argue that the Ku Klux Klan attracted area farmers because of their fear of capitalism in transition, evidence from local sources needs to verify that conclusion. Although it is logical to assume that real estate agencies discriminated against African Americans because historians have documented such actions across America, evidence of that action in Dubuque must be supplied. Finally, several sections of the text would be enhanced by applying context from other historical work to Dubuque and determining whether local sources confirm that interpretation. For example, one explanation for the racist spike of the late 1850s/early 1860s might derive from the nineteenth-century working-class ideology of "free labor" and the free soil political ideology used in the sectionalist debates surrounding the Civil War.

These criticisms arise from this reader's expectation to discover a community study rooted in the historical discipline, but are not meant to imply that *White Racism on the Western Urban Frontier* should not be consulted. On the contrary, the book is a thoughtful commentary on contemporary race relations that provides food for thought for the many communities engaged in a discourse over race.

Consuming Nature: Environmentalism in the Fox River Valley, 1850–1950, by Gregory Summers. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006. xii, 256 pp. Illustration, notes, bibliography, index. $29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Terence Kehoe is a senior research associate with Morgan, Angel & Associates in Washington, DC. He is the author of *Cleaning up the Great Lakes: From Cooperation to Confrontation* (1997).

Following the path of Samuel P. Hays, American environmental historians have rooted the emergence of the post–World War II environmental movement in America's shift from a society oriented around production to one centered on consumption. According to this thesis, an increasing number of citizens came to value nature for the amenities it offered to people with expanded amounts of leisure time and disposable income. Americans—and people in other developed, affluent countries—now encountered nature primarily through outdoor recreation, travel, and forms of leisure. As a result, they gave equal or even higher priority to preserving the natural environment than to exploiting natural resources for various types of production. In *Consuming Nature*, Gregory Summers explores in fascinating detail how that transformation played out in the Fox River Valley of Wisconsin, a region that was both rural and also quite industrialized. In doing so, Summers helps us understand America's transition from a producer to a consumer society. He also sheds light on important aspects of modern environmentalism, particularly the way, for most Americans, the connection between the large-scale manipulation of nature and the consumption of various goods and services became largely hidden.

By just about every measurement, the material quality of life experienced by inhabitants of the Fox River Valley changed dramatically during the century covered by this book. The basic components of everyday life, such as working, cooking, heating and illuminating one's home, and traveling, became both easier and more dependent on the reshaping of the natural environment by business and government. Summers illustrates this industrial progress and transformation of everyday life by looking in detail at the spread of electricity, the construction of the state highway system, and the rise of the modern dairy industry.

That material progress affected the ways people interacted with nature. For example, residents of the valley eventually were able to travel long distances throughout Wisconsin in enclosed comfort when and where they chose without much reference to the weather, except for the most severe snowstorms. Without the need to work in and some might even say "battle" nature to obtain the necessities of life, citizens were now more likely to encounter the natural environment as

a place for leisure and relaxation. The Wisconsin state government and business interests encouraged this trend by creating, maintaining, and promoting state parks and other recreation areas to which people could travel and experience nature. This was, however, a particular kind of nature: one that had been reshaped and made accessible (and more comfortable) as a result of the same transformation that had reshaped everyday life in all parts of Wisconsin.

These linked worlds of production and consumption first came into overt conflict right after World War II, when aroused citizens in the Fox River Valley pushed for more rigorous enforcement of water pollution laws along the Fox River, site of one of the most intense concentrations of pulp and paper mills in the world. Ironically, those paper mills, first drawn to the valley by its natural resources, had played a large role in creating the material prosperity that lay behind the heightened concern for protecting the environment. At first, the economic importance of the paper industry allowed it to avoid stringent regulation of its discharges. That was only the initial clash, however, in a series of battles over Fox River water quality that would become more intense in later decades.

Consuming Nature addresses a topic of relevance for students of Iowa history as well as other parts of the United States. The particular timing of the developments described here will, of course, vary by state, depending on such factors as industrial development and traditions of active government. *Consuming Nature* is well written, and the analysis is based on a close review of local newspapers, state government documents, and other primary sources. The implication of modern environmentalism's failure to adequately recognize the ways modern life is inextricably linked to productive use of the environment is not well developed, but other scholars interested in this issue can build on Summers's fine monograph.

Kansas in the Great Depression: Work Relief, the Dole, and Rehabilitation, by Peter Fearon. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007. xv, 316 pp. Map, tables, notes, bibliography, index. $44.95 cloth.

Reviewer J. Christopher Schnell is professor of history at Southeast Missouri State University. He has written extensively about the Great Depression and the New Deal, including "Franklin D. Roosevelt, the New Deal, and the Missouri Clergy," in *Gateway Heritage* (1997–98).

When the Great Depression struck in 1929, midwestern farm states such as Iowa and Kansas presented very similar pictures to federal officials attempting to relieve the widespread misery. Such rural states

relied on the agricultural productivity that bolstered the economies of the small towns that dotted the countryside. Neither state contained a dominating metropolis.

Peter Fearon has closed another gap in depression and New Deal history. This highly readable work successfully analyzes how Kansas suffered from, coped with, and eventually recovered from the Great Depression. *Kansas in the Great Depression* begins with President Herbert Hoover's admirable but insufficient response based on private charity and trickle-down economics. Hoover's failure, as much political as economic, gave way to the massive federal bureaucracy created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Fearon's work, based on research at the local level, is a case study of how macroeconomic decisions worked out in places such as Beloit and Smith Center, Kansas, where people disliked the dole but saw the need for the federal work relief promised by Iowan and New Deal architect Harry L. Hopkins. The state enjoyed one major advantage over many others: both presidential administrations understood that, despite its devastating droughts, massive dust storms, failing farms, and widespread unemployment, Kansas ran an extremely efficient relief operation even though Kansans generally feared a loss of independence and pride that came with accepting handouts.

The "politics of relief" was a problem in Kansas as it was in practically every other state. Although President Roosevelt ordered Hopkins to "keep politics out of relief," it was an impossible task. Generally, Hopkins succeeded in working with Kansas Republicans such as Governor Alfred Landon and John Stutz, the administrator of the Kansas Emergency Relief Administration. When Democrats complained, Hopkins appointed Kansas Democrat Evan Griffith as Works Progress Administrator but retained Stutz to handle relief. However, as Hopkins himself became more politicized, accusing Governor Landon of balancing the budget by "taking it out of the hides of the people," the Kansas Republican leadership fought back and forced him to back down.

The story of how Kansas coped with the Great Depression should interest Iowa readers. In particular, state and local historians may join New Deal scholars in applying Fearon's county-by-county methodology to Iowa, Nebraska, Colorado, Missouri, and Oklahoma. This is a study of how two huge bureaucracies—one national and one local—worked out a successful strategy to cope with the greatest economic crisis of the twentieth century.

Like other midwestern states, Kansas suffered from several devastating droughts, complicated by massive dust storms produced by the

plowing up of valuable prairie farm land during the 1920s. Surprisingly, however, the number of Kansas farms actually increased from 1930 to 1935 as people desperately fled the cities in search of subsistence in the countryside. Although there were demonstrations—even riots—by farmers in Crawford and Wyandotte counties as well as in cities such as Topeka and Wichita, Kansas resisted the militant strategies advocated by groups such as Milo Reno's Farmers' Holiday Association.

Although Kansas had experienced previous radical movements in the 1890s under populists such as "Sockless" Jerry Simpson, Annie Diggs, and Mary Ellen Lease, this time there was no revolt. One reason was that President Roosevelt satisfied the public demand for aid, relief, crop subsidies, insurance, and employment. The 1933 Farm Bill, creating the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and the Emergency Farm Mortgage Act, combined with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and the Works Progress Administration, kept the opposition to a controllable minimum.

Kansas in the Great Depression is a penetrating analysis of the Wheat State's greatest crisis since the Civil War. Its focus on local issues fills a significant gap in New Deal literature. The work ethic, not the dole, was a primary Kansas philosophy supported by most of its citizens. Prior to the New Deal, the federal government had never spent a dime for unemployed persons. But Roosevelt found an answer. Peter Fearon's unbiased account of how federal and state officials responded to local needs in a time of crisis represents a methodology that should be applied to other midwestern states. His approach clearly indicates how social, political, and economic factors inherent in the Great Depression affected not only the people but all levels of government.

Iowa City Municipal Airport: Opening the West to Aviation, 1918–2007, by Jan Olive Nash. Iowa City: Iowa City Municipal Airport Commission and U.S. Federal Aviation, 2007. 44 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography.

Reviewer Janet R. Daly Bednarek is professor of history at the University of Dayton. She is the author of *Dreams of Flight: A History of General Aviation* (2003) and *America's Airports: A History of Municipal Airports in the United States, 1918–1947* (2001).

Today, the airports most people are familiar with are the giant facilities associated with the nation's largest cities. In fact, a sizable majority of the nation's commercial air traffic goes through only about 25 to 30 major hub airports. In the early days of aviation, however, smaller airports in smaller cities, especially in the Midwest, played critical

roles in the evolving national air transportation system. That was particularly true in the 1920s and 1930s, when carrying the mail was more lucrative than carrying passengers and the limits of aviation technology required frequent stops along the emerging air routes. During those decades, small city airports witnessed their heyday.

As told by Jan Olive Nash in a short, well-illustrated work, the early history of the Iowa City Municipal Airport was typical of its time. As the U.S. Post Office worked to create a series of airmail routes that would crisscross the nation, it turned to local interests to provide the needed landing facilities. Caught up in the aviation enthusiasm of the time, Iowa City boosters jumped at the chance to place their city on the developing national air map. The airport was originally established through private sector action, but when citizens passed an aviation bond issue in 1929, Iowa City became the first city in Iowa to own its airport.

Like most works on aviation and airports, this history of the Iowa City Municipal Airport focuses most of its attention on the period before 1945, including a very short section on World War II. The decades after the war, when changing technologies as well as shifts in government policy gradually diminished the role of the Iowa City airport, receive less attention. Only a few pages are devoted to the end of commercial airline traffic in 1972 and the transformation of the facility into a general aviation airport.

This history, created in response to the imminent demolition of a historic building, includes a section on that structure, the Boeing Hangar. However, the deliberately modern 1950s-era terminal, built to serve commercial airline passengers, still exists, a reminder of the role played by the airport in the national air transportation system until 1972. This work highlights the vital role played by smaller cities in the development of the nation's air transportation system. It should inspire a more extensive examination of the subject, especially the long competition between several smaller Iowa cities for airline service.

Amish Education in the United States and Canada, by Mark Dewalt. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield, 2006. viii, 218 pp. Illustrations, tables, appendixes, references. $60.00 cloth, $32.95 paper.

Reviewer Frank Yoder is an academic advisor and adjunct professor of history at the University of Iowa. He is the author of *Opening a Window to the World: A History of Iowa Mennonite School* (1995).

In this very readable and interesting account, Mark Dewalt offers historical background on Amish education in North America and a com-

prehensive review of Amish education today. Dewalt's expertise in education shows in his careful description of Amish classrooms, teaching styles, study materials, daily routines, and parental involvement. The book is filled with detailed statistics and narrative accounts that offer readers a comprehensive understanding of Amish education today.

Dewalt's argument is not always explicit, but his analysis highlights the stark contrast between the philosophies that underpin Amish education and those in education in the rest of society. Most people believe that education improves their lives, advances knowledge, increases productivity, enhances their standard of living, and makes them more competitive in the workplace and on the world stage. As a society, we emphasize excellence and individual achievement and celebrate the accomplishments of students who do well. Bumper stickers declaring that the driver of an automobile is the proud parent of an honors student proliferate, local newspapers list students who make the honor roll, and schools whose students score exceptionally well on various achievement tests are lauded.

The Amish reject much of what the rest of us value about education. The most obvious difference is that they educate their children only through the eighth grade. They emphasize the community instead of the individual, cooperation instead of competition, and rather than celebrating knowledge and success, the Amish seek humility and a quiet spirit. Dewalt shows how Amish educators integrate every student into the group and teach students that everyone has value, no matter how they score on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills or how skilled they are in sports or in the classroom. For the Amish, a utilitarian elementary level education serves the wider Amish community by providing basic instruction in language acquisition, reading, mathematics, writing, and a smattering of science. Education in Amish society is not designed to reform or reshape society. Rather, it complements and reinforces the values and beliefs that are taught in church and community life.

Dewalt not only analyzes Amish education but also provides firsthand accounts of Amish schools in action. We learn exactly how the Amish operate a school, what takes place in the classroom, how the community is involved, and what students study. Dewalt observed Amish schools in many different states and Canada, and he offers detailed and personal descriptions of what he saw and heard. He has organized parts of his text as a reference book, with sections devoted to various aspects of the Amish educational system. In a chapter on curriculum and textbooks, for example, we learn how Amish teachers

approach specific subjects, how the community and church are involved in selecting texts, and what students read and study.

Fittingly, the book is appropriate for Amish people who are careful about what they read. Instead of photos of Amish schools, students, and parents, the only illustrations are line drawings of Amish school buildings. In keeping with the Amish desire to avoid personal attention, Dewalt does not identify the Amish individuals who provided information and access to the Amish schoolhouses. The book reflects who the Amish are and what they believe.

Dewalt has done extensive research, and the data he presents is impressive. He is obviously a sympathetic observer of the Amish and their schools, and his accounts and descriptions are generally quite positive. But he does not romanticize the Amish and he does not overlook the challenges they face. His work leaves us with the lingering question that dogs much research on the Amish: Are the Amish relevant to wider society or are they simply a curious group of iconoclasts living on the fringes?

James Van Allen: The First Eight Billion Miles, by Abigail Foerstner. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2007. xx, 322 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $37.50 cloth.

> Reviewer Roger D. Launius is senior curator at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC. His books include *Frontiers of Space Exploration* (1998, 2004), *NASA: A History of the U.S. Civil Space Program* (1994), and (with Howard E. McCurdy) *Robots in Space: Technology, Evolution, and Interplanetary Travel* (2008).

In 2007 each of the three principals involved in launching the first U.S. satellite into orbit—Wernher von Braun, William H. Pickering, and James A. Van Allen—had biographies published about their lives. That was entirely appropriate at the time of the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the space age. All three deserve well-researched and well-written biographies that seek not so much to glorify but to analyze and understand this trio and their efforts in creating spaceflight. Of these new biographies, all are creditable, but unfortunately only one is definitive. Unfortunately, it is the Wernher von Braun biography, not the biography of Van Allen under review here.

Abigail Foerstner's *James Van Allen: The First Eight Billion Miles* is satisfactory in many respects—and it is certainly engagingly written. It will serve as a useful basic text on the life of a vital actor in the first half-century of the space age, but it is unsuccessful in offering the insightful, critical analysis that Van Allen deserves. Of course, Van Allen

was a pathbreaking astrophysicist best known for his work in magnetospheric physics, the scientist who built the instruments on *Explorer 1*, launched on January 31, 1958, and analyzed data about the radiation belts encircling earth. Van Allen became a celebrity because of the success of that mission, and he pursued other important space science projects thereafter. The radiation belts he discovered now bear his name, and the discipline of magnetospherics became important in part because of his initial work. In one way or another Van Allen was involved in the first four Explorer probes, the Pioneers to the outer planets, several Mariner space probes, and the orbiting geophysical observatory. Thereafter, he continued to provide significant scientific analyses throughout his long career, retiring in 1985 but still working until his death in 2006 just shy of his 92nd birthday.

Author Abigail Foerstner had unparalleled access to Van Allen, his papers, his family, and many friends and colleagues, but the result is somewhat less than the sum of its parts. She does well in describing the amiable Van Allen and his career at the University of Iowa, the Applied Physics Laboratory, and in space science. But Foerstner never succeeds in bringing a broader understanding to her subject. Van Allen was at the center of a scientific debate about the origins of the solar system, the nature of the relationship between the earth and the sun, and larger space policy issues relating to the purpose of space exploration that have vexed the space community since the 1950s. Those issues were vital to Van Allen's life and to understanding him and his significance, but too often they are given short shrift, inadequate explanation, or erroneous explication. As only one example, Foerstner offers an inadequate and misleading account of the proposals and political limitations that led to the creation of NASA in 1958, reciting a simplistic assessment that concludes that "the administration and [Lyndon B.] Johnson never expected to really give up military control of the space program and pushed the controllable NACA [National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics] model" (165). It is difficult to see what the author intended by this statement. The NACA model was anything but military, and had proven "uncontrollable" from its creation by Congress in 1915. Regardless, the statement is both too inaccurate and incomplete to be acceptable.

Errors of fact are also far too present in this volume to trust it implicitly. For instance, Foerstner recounts a meeting between American officials and Nazi rocketeers under Wernher von Braun "a few weeks prior to the fall of the Reich and offered asylum to the rocket specialists" (82). That presumably started the process of von Braun and his rocket team's surrender to the United States at the end of the war. The

only problem with this story is that it never happened. I am sympathetic to authors who occasionally print incorrect information here or there. It happens to everyone, but I worry about accounts such as this for which there is no evidence. Foerstner uses references, not notes but short snippets from the text with a source following it. There is no page reference for these snippets, so readers must search the references section for the text in question. Too often I failed to find the source, as was the case for this story.

Overall, *James Van Allen: The First Eight Billion Miles* is an acceptable biography that will be of interest to many but certainly will not be as useful to specialists in the field as had been anticipated. I had harbored hopes that this would be the seminal work that all would have to refer to in considering this scion of space science, but there is still much more about James Van Allen that eludes us. Perhaps a future biographer will explore more fully his scientific discoveries, his role in space policy, and the contributions he made to solar-terrestrial magnetospherics.

Critical Regionalism: Connecting Politics and Culture in the American Landscape, by Douglas Reichert Powell. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007. xviii, 260 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendix, references, index. $59.95 cloth, $24.95 paper.

Reviewer James R. Shortridge is professor of geography at the University of Kansas. His books include *Cities on the Plains: The Evolution of Urban Kansas* (2004) and *The Middle West: Its Meaning in American Culture* (1989).

Regionalism is a word most people use without reflection. It evokes conventional wisdom about a place or the rube-like antithesis of cosmopolitanism. Powell argues for deeper understanding. Whereas other conceptualizations of place (such as home, city, and state) refer to specific sites, he notes that regions always are relational terms. To say that the American West is a frontier culture, for example, is to compare it to the nation as a whole. This means that regions are dynamic entities, products of competing definitions. As such, they can be windows into the complex relationships between people and places, a perspective sorely needed in this dehumanizing time of globalization.

In recent decades, students have learned to leaven their generalizations about American culture with considerations of race, gender, and social class. Powell wants to add region to this list as a way to understand tensions such as local-global, periphery-core, interior-exterior, and domestic-foreign. It is an important argument. Thoroughly grounded views from Iowa farmers or West Virginia miners,

for example, can provide needed counterpoints to the equally narrow (rootless, upper-class) perspective of the cosmopolite. Similarly, participating in local debates over alternative futures for Iowa (or West Virginia or New York City) can provide a relatively responsible path toward social change.

Powell arranges his work into five chapters plus a long introduction and an epilogue. The introduction and first chapter develop the core concept and consider possible approaches to its study. Then come demonstrations of how place-centered social construction (or critical regionalism) might be studied, using as an example the author's hometown of Johnson City, Tennessee. Chapter two is a regional reading of the local built environment, chapter three of films, and chapter four of literature. The final chapter and the epilogue are more personal. They consider the role an activist university could play in the process and include his own attempts at Duke University and his reflections as a professor's child at East Tennessee State University.

I judge this book a partial success. Powell has thought deeply about his subject. He engages the spirit of social theory without falling into its jargon, and intelligently develops the nuances of a complex idea. Comparisons of his view of region with more limiting versions found in county museums and on topographic maps are especially effective. So is his deep reading of a local story about the hanging of a circus elephant.

The author's demonstrations of how southern Appalachia has been imagined are less praiseworthy. Partly this is because he ignores a growing body of relevant literature about material culture and sense of place from anthropologists, folklorists, and geographers. Such work would have strengthened chapter two and suggested other approaches as well. The chapter on literature works reasonably well, stressing how seemingly national texts such as the *U.S.A.* trilogy of John Dos Passos might be read *through* Appalachia. He contrasts this with two more local works: James Still's *River of Earth* and Jo Carson's *Stories I Ain't Told Nobody Yet*. I see a loss of focus in the other chapters. Powell's previous tight arguments give way to movie analysis for its own sake in chapter three, where the emphasis is on *Apocalypse Now*, *Deliverance*, *Fargo*, and *Pulp Fiction*. The material there also overlaps with the chapter on literature. Powell's university discussion is mostly polemic.

Critical Regionalism is an academician's book, but its core ideas are important to Iowans and anybody else who lives away from centers of national power. Powell has considered his theory well and makes a good case for regional empowerment. Unfortunately, he provides only partial blueprints for how to proceed.

New on the Shelves

"New on the Shelves" is a list of recent additions to the collections of the State Historical Society of Iowa. It includes manuscripts, audio-visual materials, and published materials recently acquired or newly processed that we think might be of interest to the readers of the *Annals of Iowa.* The "DM" or "IC" at the end of each entry denotes whether the item is held in Des Moines or Iowa City.

Manuscripts

Ankeny, Henry Giese. Papers, 1861–1864. ½ ft. Civil War letters of this Adams County resident written to his wife while serving with Company H of the 4th Iowa Volunteer Infantry. Subjects include troop movements, military engagements (Pea Ridge, Helena, Vicksburg, Lookout Mountain, Atlanta), casualties, camp life, and appropriation of civilian property. DM.

Bassett, Thomas C. Papers, 1898. 18 documents and 7 photographs. Materials related to Bassett's training assignments with Company M of the 52nd Iowa Infantry during the Spanish-American War. DM.

Benner, Mabel (Falls). Papers, 1899–1964. ¼ ft. Journal and scrapbook maintained by this Belle Plaine resident, featuring diary entries from her high school years (1899–1901) and local history clippings and ephemera. DM.

Beymer and Company (Des Moines). Records, 1909–1946. 1½ ft. Sales and accounting records, advertising materials, and photographs of this lighting and heating appliance distributor, which, during its four decades of existence marketed such innovative products as fireproof gas and electric lighting systems and oil-burning heaters for the home. DM.

Brann, Denny. Papers, 1933–1940. ½ feet. Various professional and business materials of this Des Moines pharmacist, past president of the National Association of Retail Druggists, and cofounder of the American College of Apothecaries. In addition to his affiliations with these professional organizations, Brann also served as a director for The Squibb Plan, Inc., a cooperative created by pharmaceutical company E. R. Squibb & Sons (New York). The Brann papers include correspondence, documentation related to the formation of the American College of Apothecaries, ephemera, and several photographs. DM.

Business Women's Association Foundation (Des Moines). Records, 2005–2008. ½ ft. Addition to the organization's collection, including minutes, reports, and correspondence. DM.

Central Iowa Mineral Society. Records, 1946 to current. 3½ feet. Records of this regional organization for mineral collectors and enthusiasts, including minutes, newsletters, correspondence, and scrapbooks containing ephemera, clippings, and photographs. DM.

Civic Music Association of Des Moines. Records, 1925 to current. 2 ft. Scrapbooks, event programs, compiled histories, and other materials documenting this organization's efforts to coordinate and present fine arts performances, educational opportunities, and civic musical resources for the Des Moines community. DM.

Des Moines Area Writers' Network. Records, 1989–2001. 2 ft. Documentation of this affiliation of multi-genre published and unpublished writers, including member records, newsletters, anthologies, and a 1998 history of the group. DM.

Des Moines Rapids Canal (Keokuk). Records, 1878. 5 documents. Appropriation forms itemizing expenses incurred during U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project for "Improving Des Moines [River] Rapids of the Mississippi River," an outcome achieved by installing a canal that operated from 1877 to 1913. DM.

Gwynne, John W. Papers, ca. 1920–1972. 9½ ft. Documentation of this Waterloo municipal court judge (1920–1926), Black Hawk County Attorney (1929–1934), Republican congressman (1935–1949), and Federal Trade Commission member (1953–1959) and chairman (1955–1959). Includes speeches, authored articles and literature, correspondence, reference materials and publications related to legislation and trade commission cases with which Gwynne was associated, scrapbooks, ephemera, news clippings, photographs, and sound recordings. DM.

Audio-Visual

Civil War portraits. 2 black-and-white photographs and 1 crayon portrait, ca. 1862. Portraits of James Ewing (Co. E, 3rd Iowa Infantry), Captain Wilbur Dimmitt (Co. F, 24th Iowa Infantry), and Ishmael White (Co. H, 2nd Iowa Infantry). DM.

Hamburg, Iowa. 10 black-and-white photographs, 1943. Views showing flooding in the community. DM.

Iowa Bench and Bar: Video oral histories. *A Man for All Courts: Interview of Honorable Robert G. Allbee.* 1 DVD, August 2005. Color, 2 hrs. 13 mins.; *The History of the Dickinson Law Firm as Recounted by L. Call Dickinson, Jr.* 1 DVD, April 2006. Color, 55 mins.; *Interview of Honorable George G. Fagg*. 1 DVD, August 2006 and September 2007. DM.

Jackson, Frank D. 1 black-and-white photograph. 1893. Autographed portrait of this Iowa governor from the time of his successful political campaign. DM.

Martin, Thomas E. 41 black-and-white photo negatives, 1955–1959. Publicity photos of this U.S. senator from Iowa taken at a variety of events including civil rights and armed services hearings, and the signing of a U.S.-Israel beef agreement. DM.

Robertson, Andrew Eugene. 7 black-and-white photographs, 1925 and ca. 1925. Images related to Robertson's work as an inspector with the dairy and food division of Iowa's State Department of Agriculture. DM.

United Mine Workers of America. 1 black-and-white panoramic photograph, 1911. Attendees of the UMWA meeting at Des Moines. DM.

Published Materials

Abraham Lincoln: Savior of His Country, by Mabel Mason Carleton. Boston: John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Co., 1923. 16 pp. IC.

Affirmative Action Report to the Governor: A Statistical Analysis of the Utilization of Minorities and Females in Iowa State Government Employment for Fiscal Year 1977 by Garrett (Gary) W. Martin. [Des Moines: Iowa Civil Rights Commission, 1978?]. 391 pp. IC.

After the West Was Won: Homesteaders and Town-Builders in Western South Dakota, 1900–1917, by Paula M. Nelson. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1986. xvi, 220 pp. IC.

All for the Union: The Civil War Diary and Letters of Elisha Hunt Rhodes, edited by Robert Hunt Rhodes. New York: Orion Books, [1991]. 255 pp. DM.

America, 1908: The Dawn of Flight, the Race to the Pole, the Invention of the Model T, and the Making of a Modern Nation, by Jim Rasenberger. New York: Scribner, 2007. vii, 307 pp. DM, IC.

American Angels: Useful Spirits in the Material World, by Peter Gardella. CultureAmerica Series. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007. x, 285 pp. IC.

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