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## In This Issue

MARILYN L. OLSON, a clinical pharmacist at the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics, describes the administration and distribution of poor relief in Cedar County between 1857 and 1890. She shows how Cedar County officials sought to balance their legal obligation to provide adequate care for the poor with their obligation to local taxpayers for budgetary restraint. By covering support for the poor outside the poorhouse as well as at the poorhouse itself, she reveals the broad networks of social support available in a nineteenth-century rural county.

JANE SIMONSEN, assistant professor of history and women's and gender studies at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois, relates the architecture of the Hospital for the Insane in Mount Pleasant — and the evolution of that architecture over the course of the nineteenth century — to Iowans' understanding of the nature of mental illness and to their ideas about home, family, gender roles, domestic virtues, and institutional authority.

## Front Cover

By the turn of the twentieth century, the Iowa Hospital for the Insane at Mount Pleasant had become a sprawling expanse, including an amusement hall, an industrial building, and separate infirmaries for men and women. The hybrid sort of construction combined the original building's monumental style with smaller, more homelike yet just as specialized spaces. For more on how changes in the hospital's architectural style reflected ideas about mental illness and domesticity, see Jane Simonsen's article in this issue. Image from State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

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# The Annals of Iowa

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# “Halt, Blind, Lame, Sick, and Lazy”: Care of the Poor in Cedar County, Iowa, 1857–1890

MARILYN L. OLSON

AMERICA, according to the nineteenth-century ideal, was the land of opportunity. There was a job for every man and, if he worked hard, prosperity followed. With thrift and frugality, he and his wife saved money for their later years and, if no longer able to live independently, they moved in with their children to live out their lives. Failure to achieve economic security was a personal shortcoming and a sign of moral laxity.<sup>1</sup> This ideal of

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I thank the State Historical Society of Iowa for a SHSI Research Grant; John Fry for inviting me to the Newberry Library Seminar in Rural History; Shelton Stromquist and Douglas Baynton for their very helpful feedback on an earlier version; and Marvin Bergman for his astute editorial comments and suggestions. I wish to acknowledge the assistance of the staff at the Cedar County Auditor's Office and the Tipton Public Library. Angela Keysor, my fellow traveler in the history of poor relief, has generously shared her work and helped me to think more clearly about my own. I express my deepest appreciation to Susan Lawrence for her patience and guidance through every draft—and there were many.

1. Historians have placed the roots of these ideas in early capitalism. According to Michael B. Katz, *The Undeserving Poor: From the War on Poverty to the War on Welfare* (New York, 1989), 7, the “culture of capitalism” measured a person by his ability to produce wealth; and the failure to prosper, or at least contribute to the overall economy, resulted in “moral condemnation.” According to Paul G. Faler, *Mechanics and Manufacturers in the Early Industrial Revolution, Lynn, Massachusetts, 1780–1860* (Albany, NY, 1981), chap. 6, the Second Great Awakening, the growth of manufacturing, and the Victorian moral code merged to bolster capitalism by emphasizing “self-discipline, industry, sobriety, self-denial, and respect for authority” while condemning “idleness and leisure, lewd and lascivious behavior, self-indulgence and prolonged celebrations.”

THE ANNALS OF IOWA 69 (Spring 2010). © The State Historical Society of Iowa, 2010.

self-reliance, home, and family failed to acknowledge that many Americans in the nineteenth century lived on the thin line between getting by and needing assistance.

In Cedar County, Iowa, the economic hardships experienced by Edwin and Sarah Lane exemplify the fragile boundary between independence and dependence in the rural Midwest. In the 1840s the Lanes moved into the Pedee settlement, planted roots in the community by buying land, and settled in to farm and raise their son, Evan.<sup>2</sup> Like millions of others, the Lane family carved out their small portion of the American dream, but the ideal crumbled in the face of life's problems. In the 1870s Edwin developed catarrhal consumption (tuberculosis). When he and Sarah needed assistance, the county government granted them a small monthly allowance. After Mr. Lane died, Mrs. Lane, an elderly widow and a longtime member of the community whose poverty came through no fault of her own, seemed to qualify for the status of "deserving." Yet the county discontinued the relief. Although she could no longer get by on her own, Mrs. Lane did not move in with Evan and his family, who lived nearby. On March 28, 1885, Sarah Lane, age 69, in "good health" and with "no home," entered the Cedar County poorhouse and lived there until her death five years later.<sup>3</sup> For many people, like the Lanes, unforeseen troubles, such as of loss of employment, death of a spouse, illness, disability, or a myriad of other reasons left them as victims of the myth of abundance. In need of assistance and with family either unable or unwilling to help, poor individuals turned to local government for relief.

The details of Sarah and Edwin's economic difficulties illustrate the value of case studies for understanding the ways county

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2. In accordance with a data use agreement with the Cedar County Board of Supervisors, the names of individuals that appear in the Poor House Register, except for the steward, are pseudonyms. All others are real names. I am grateful to the board of supervisors for access to the Poor House Register for the purpose of historical research.

3. The data on the Lane family was compiled from Proceedings of the Cedar County Board of Supervisors, Cedar County Courthouse, Tipton, Iowa, 1875–1883 (hereafter cited as Proceedings); Poor House Register, Cedar County Courthouse, Tipton, Iowa, p. 12 (the register covers the years 1873 to 1916); *Seventh Census of the United States in 1850* (Washington, DC, 1853); and *Tenth Census of the United States in 1880* (Washington, DC, 1883).

governments provided care and relief for the needy in their midst. Much of the historiography takes the top-down view by focusing on policy, poor laws, and reformers, thus telling us how poor relief was supposed to work but very little of how it really worked.<sup>4</sup> The administration and distribution of poor relief is a local story documented in local records of how local relief officials met their obligations to neighbors and strangers while managing the expenses of relief. This case study of Cedar County, Iowa, benefits from rich local records: the Cedar County Poor House Register, the Proceedings of the Cedar County Board of Supervisors, the *Tipton Advertiser* (the newspaper in the county seat), deed records, probate and guardianship records, and the manuscript federal census. Other studies have used similar sources, but the population of this rural county is of a manageable enough size to allow individuals to be tracked through the records, and so to uncover how individuals moved between self-sufficiency and dependency, on and off outdoor relief, and in and out of the poorhouse.<sup>5</sup>

While the voices of the poor remained virtually silent, the voices of reformers rang loud and clear in blaming the idle, thriftless, alcoholic poor for their poverty. Throughout the nineteenth century, as reformers repeatedly attacked the govern-

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4. David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic* (Boston, 1971); James Leiby, *A History of Social Welfare and Social Work in the United States* (New York, 1978); Mimi Abramovitz, *Regulating the Lives of Women: Social Welfare Policy from Colonial Times to the Present* (Boston, 1988). For a more nuanced analysis, see Michael B. Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America* (Boston, 1986). For poor laws in midwestern states, see John L. Gillin, *History of Poor Relief Legislation in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1914); Sophonista Breckinridge, *The Illinois Poor Law and Its Administration* (Chicago, 1939); Alice Shaffer, Mary Wysor Keefer, and Sophonista Breckinridge, *The Indiana Poor Law: Its Development and Administration, with Special Reference to the Provisions of State Care for the Sick Poor* (Chicago, 1936); Aileen Elizabeth Kennedy, *The Ohio Poor Law and Its Administration* (Chicago, 1934); Isabel Campbell Bruce and Edith Eickhoff, *The Michigan Poor Law: Its Development and Administration with Special Reference to State Provision for Medical Care of the Indigent* (Chicago, 1936).

5. In 1870 Cedar County was a rural county with 54 businesses and 2,299 farms. *Ninth Census of the United States in 1870*, 3 vols. (Washington, DC, 1872), 3:515, 351. The first white settlers moved into the county in the 1830s, and the population grew steadily until it peaked in 1870 at 19,731. *Iowa Historical and Comparative Census, 1836–1880* (Des Moines, 1883), 449; *Eleventh Census of the United States in 1890*, 25 vols. (Washington, DC, 1895), 1:130.

ment assistance given to individuals and families in their homes, or outdoor relief, as a disincentive to work, the provision of relief in government-run poorhouses, or indoor relief, remained the mainstay of poor relief. Even though reformers wrote disparaging reports on the conditions within poorhouses, there was no widespread support to close them.<sup>6</sup> Reformers maintained their belief that the system of relief centered on the poorhouse and directed their criticisms at the overseers who, in their view, failed to effectively and efficiently administer the relief through the enforcement of labor requirements and the proper categorization of the poor.<sup>7</sup> At national conferences, reformers presented the problems of poverty as sweeping generalizations that reveal very little about the individual experience of need. The experiences of individuals pieced together from the Cedar County records and documents challenge the notion that poor individuals could be neatly labeled and treated according to set rules. The rigid categories of “deserving” and “undeserving” and the pejorative labels of “vicious” and “social defect” used by reformers break down in the complexities of need and the individual circumstances of poverty.

Pragmatism rather than ideals governed local relief. Local studies peel away the layers of rhetoric and theoretical discussions of morals and discipline to examine relief at the point of administration and distribution. Such studies have revealed that local relief practices often did not match the intention of state poor laws or the rehabilitation ideals of reformers. Local officials neglected to enforce labor requirements on poorhouse residents who were either unwilling or unable to comply. Rehabilitation took time and money, and local officials had little incentive to expend either on reforming the poor.<sup>8</sup>

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6. Rothman, *Discovery of the Asylum*, 204–5. By 1890, 85 of Iowa’s 99 counties had a poorhouse. *Census Bulletin: Paupers in Almshouses in 1890* (Washington, DC, 1891), 10 (microfiche).

7. Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse*, 28–32; Rothman, *Discovery of the Asylum*, 192–93.

8. See, for example, Glenn C. Altschuler and Jan M. Saltzgaber, “Clearinghouse for Paupers: The Poorfarm of Seneca County, New York, 1830–1860,” *Journal of Social History* 17 (1984), 573–600; idem, “The Limits of Responsibility: Social Welfare and Local Government in Seneca County, New York, 1860–1875,” *Journal of Social History* 21 (1988), 515–37; Priscilla Ferguson Clement, *Welfare and the Poor in*



This study furthers this theme. Cedar County officials sought to balance their legal obligation to provide adequate care to the poor and their obligation to local taxpayers for budgetary restraint, thereby concentrating their efforts on limiting expenses rather than achieving reform. Because this study covers both the poorhouse and support for the poor outside the poorhouse and includes data about the care of the disabled and insane in the home, as detailed in local census schedules, moreover, it reveals networks of social support available in a nineteenth-century rural county.

### Care in the Home

The image of the poorhouse, the insane asylum, and the institutions for the “defectives” of American society as a dumping place for the dangerous, the unproductive, and the unwanted has obscured the vital role of the family.<sup>9</sup> Institutions generated records, and scholars have used them to put the institution at the center of their studies. With a move toward a more bottom-up view, historians have examined institutional records from a new perspective in order to locate the role of the family.<sup>10</sup> As institutions opened, families did not rush to commit their mentally and physically disabled family members. Rather, they continued to care for them at home and turned to institutional care only as a last resort. Institutions were not dumping places that hid problematic populations behind the walls of government-

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*the Nineteenth Century City: Philadelphia, 1800–1854* (Rutherford, NJ, 1985); Simon E. Newman, *Embodied History: The Lives of the Poor in Early Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 2003); David Wagner, *The Poorhouse: America’s Forgotten Institution* (Lanham, MD, 2005); Monique Bourque, “The Creation of the Almshouse: Institutions as Solutions to the Problems of Poverty,” *Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society* 102 (2000), 56–81; Eric H. Monkkonen, *The Dangerous Class: Crime and Poverty in Columbus, Ohio, 1860–1885* (Cambridge, MA, 1975), chap. 5.

9. In this essay, I use the nineteenth-century terms *feeble-minded*, *idiot*, and *imbecile*. Although these words today are offensive, in the context of the time they were the accepted terminology. See James W. Trent Jr., *Inventing the Feeble Mind: A History of Mental Retardation in the United States* (Berkeley, CA, 1994), 5.

10. Akihito Suzuki, *Madness at Home: The Psychiatrist, The Patient, and the Family in England, 1820–1860* (Berkeley, CA, 2006); David Wright, *Mental Disability in Victorian England: The Earlswood Asylum, 1847–1901* (Oxford, 2001); Nancy Tomes, *A Generous Confidence: Thomas Story Kirkbride and the Art of Asylum-Keeping, 1840–1883* (Cambridge, 1984), chap. 3.

supported buildings and away from “normal” citizens; nor did they replace family care.

In Cedar County, the institutional records from the poor-house reveal only one portion of the provision of care in this rural county. Data from the *Report on the Defective, Dependent, and Delinquent Classes of the United States* (volume 21 of the 1880 federal census) and the Cedar County probate records uncover the role of family care.<sup>11</sup> At first glance, the published report of the special census seems a rather typical collection of tables, but the introductory remarks to the volume by Frederick Wines, the special agent in charge of the special census, make it clear that these were not merely statistics. One of the aims of this census was “to obtain approximately as complete an enumeration of defectives outside of institutions as of the inmates of such institutions.”<sup>12</sup> In addition to the general population schedule, the local enumerator documented the information about individuals in these classes on seven supplemental schedules: four for the defectives classes of insane, idiots, blind, and deaf-mutes; two for the dependent classes of paupers and homeless children; and one for the delinquent class of prisoners. Beyond an accurate accounting of each class, Wines hoped that his report made available the data needed to affect public policy. “For the information of legislatures it is important that the whole extent of the evil to be contended against shall be known, and that it shall be

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11. The aggregate numbers in the published volume are larger than the numbers tabulated from the available schedules from the county. Of the 17 townships, only six have all seven schedules. The paupers, prisoners, and homeless children schedules are missing for nine townships. Two townships are missing all seven schedules. Either the missing data is on the schedules omitted from the microfilm, or the information came from local physicians. The census office sent a blank form to physicians requesting information, and those forms were used in addition to the schedules to compile the numbers. Microfilm copies of the schedules for Cedar County are located at the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City. *Report on the Defective, Dependent, and Delinquent Classes of the United States as Returned at the Tenth Census (June 1, 1880)* (Washington, DC, 1888), issued as volume 21 of the Tenth Census. For the policy issues and social science motives behind the special census, see the chapter “The Morphology of Evil,” in Michael B. Katz, *Poverty and Policy in American History* (New York, 1983), 134–56. For a discussion of the emergence of social statistics during the Gilded Age, see Margo J. Anderson, *The American Census: A Social History* (New Haven, CT, 1988), chap. 4.

12. *Report on the Defective, Dependent and Delinquent Classes*, ix.

TABLE 1  
 "DEFECTIVES" AND DEPENDENTS IN THE 1880 FEDERAL CENSUS

Poorhouse <sup>a</sup>	Family Care <sup>b</sup>	State Institutions <sup>c</sup>
12 paupers	10 paupers	
3 insane	27 insane	11 insane
3 idiots	36 idiots	3 idiots
2 deaf and dumb	18 deaf and dumb	2 deaf
2 blind	24 blind	3 blind
2 old age		
2 crippled		

SOURCES: *Defective, Dependent and Delinquent Census, Cedar County, Iowa*; *Defective, Dependent and Delinquent Census, Pottawattamie County, Iowa*.

<sup>a</sup>Twelve individuals resided at the poorhouse in the 1880 federal census. All 12 were paupers; the form of disability appears in this column as documented on the pauper schedule of the special census. Some individuals are in more than one category.

<sup>b</sup>The numbers for the paupers and the deaf and dumb were compiled from the township supplemental schedules. Aggregate numbers for the insane, idiots, and blind were in the published special census.

<sup>c</sup>The number of deaf individuals was compiled from the township schedule for the deaf school in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

accessible in a single report, in order that they may make adequate provision for its care or alleviation."<sup>13</sup> The report's value for this local study is that the supplemental schedules of the special census gathered the "defectives" and "dependents" into one source (rather than having to search through hundreds of census pages). With the 1880 federal census listing only 12 residents at the poorhouse and 19 individuals at state institutions in comparison to 115 individuals receiving care within the family (see table 1), the poorhouse was certainly not a dumping place for the county's "defectives." The primary site of care was still the home.

Family care in the home could span decades and cross generations. Daniel Seitzinger, for example, crafted his will with the intention that his 78 acres of farmland, which included the homestead, would provide lifelong income for those of his children he realized could never provide for themselves.<sup>14</sup> Mary Jane and

13. *Ibid.*, x.

14. Daniel and Mary Seitzinger had nine children living in Cedar County: Rebecca, Hester, Edward, Jacob, Lavina, David, Ream, Mary Jane, and Ellen, ages 56, 52, 49, 48, 46, 45, 41, 37, and 30, respectively, in 1870. The ages are a best es-

Ellen, who never married, received 38 acres of land; Lavina, David, and Ream, who were classified as feeble-minded, received 40 acres. Their father provided a house and an income, but he made no provisions for their day-to-day care. The family identified Lavina, David, and Ream as mentally disabled throughout their lives; the mental abilities of Mary Jane and Ellen were less clear. In 1871, after both parents had died, Hester, their older sister who had been living with a family in another township, moved home. She either had a verbal agreement with her parents to accept the responsibility or, after the death of their parents, the four older, independent siblings (Rebecca, Hester, Edward, and Jacob) decided that Mary Jane and Ellen were not capable of independent living and someone needed to look after all of the five younger siblings. Until her death in the early 1890s, Hester provided day-to-day care for her siblings in their family home.<sup>15</sup>

After Hester's death, care moved out of the family sphere, and the income from the land no longer provided sufficient funds to cover expenses. By 1894, Lavina, David, and Ream had died, and Mary Jane and Ellen then divided all 78 acres of land for their support.<sup>16</sup> After Edward's death in 1897, family discord and the ensuing legal battles over the rightful ownership of a portion of Mary Jane's land resulted in Mary Jane and Ellen being deemed of "unsound mind" and unable to transact their own business. In 1898 the court appointed Jacob as guardian over Mary Jane and Ellen in order to preserve their land and income. Jacob negotiated arrangements for the care of his sisters

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imate compiled from the 1850 federal census, *Eighth Census of the United States in 1860* (Washington, DC, 1864); *Ninth Census of the United States*; Probate File 959, Probate and Guardianship Records, Cedar County Courthouse, Tipton, Iowa (hereafter cited as Probate File); and a Seitzinger family tree at [trees.ancestry.com/owt/person.aspx?pid42480231&st=1](https://www.ancestry.com/owt/person.aspx?pid42480231&st=1) (last accessed 9/25/2008). Rebecca, Edward, and Jacob were married; Hester, Mary Jane, and Ellen were not. The family identified Lavina, David, and Ream as either idiotic or insane in the 1850, 1860, and 1870 censuses. In the special census in 1880, David and Ream appeared on the individual schedule for idiots. Although no death or grave record exists, Lavina, by her absence in the 1880 census, presumably had died.

15. Compiled from Probate File 700; Probate File 2697; Deed Record, Book X, p. 559, Cedar County Courthouse, Tipton; and *Ninth Census of the United States*.

16. When Lavina, David, and Ream died, the land went to Jacob. He deeded the land to Mary Jane. Deed Record, Book 30, p. 148.

with William and Mary Tevus, a couple who lived in the Seitzinger neighborhood.<sup>17</sup> When Mary Jane died in 1904 at age 70, Jacob, as guardian, had paid \$638.62 out of his own funds for her day-to-day care, legal expenses during the land dispute, maintenance on the farm, taxes, funeral expenses, and doctor's bills. Rather than lament the expenditure of this rather large sum of money, he stated in his final report to the court that "his ward has been a great care and worriment to him and that he has never received any compensation for his services, neither has he charged anything; he feeling under obligation to see that she was cared for during her life."<sup>18</sup>

In legal documents relating to a dispute over the payment of an attorney's fee, Jacob portrayed himself as the bulwark between Mary Jane and the poorhouse. W. G. W. Geiger, the attorney who represented Mary Jane at the hearing to establish the soundness of her mind, made a claim against her for \$75 in legal fees. Since Mary Jane's income did not cover her own expenses, she had no money to pay the bill. Throughout the many reports filed with the court, Jacob carefully drew a line between his sister's finances and his own. He repeatedly argued to the court that he, as guardian, was not personally responsible for the claim; that Mary Jane held the responsibility but had no money to pay it; and that the only way to pay the claim would make Mary Jane a charge on the county. He willingly paid out of his own pocket for her day-to-day care and the maintenance of the farm so that he could "keep said ward from the poor farm." But if the court ordered him to pay the claim out of her income, he would have "to take his ward to the Poor Farm to be supported by the county or live on air until money enough could be accumulated to pay such judgment." In the end, after four years of back-and-forth legal paperwork, Jacob paid the claim, and Mary Jane never set foot in the poorhouse.<sup>19</sup>

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17. William and Mary Tevus boarded and worked on an adjacent farm. *Tenth Census of the United States*. The records give no indication of a separate rental agreement for the homestead. Most likely, the Tevuses moved onto the Seitzinger place and Mary Jane and Ellen continued to live in their own home.

18. Jacob died in 1908 at the age of 85, and his daughter Lena succeeded him as guardian. After Ellen's death in 1911 at the age of 62, Lena continued to rent the land for two years in order to pay off Ellen's debts. Probate File 2697.

19. Probate File 2697.

Although Jacob used the image of his elderly and vulnerable sister living at county expense in the poorhouse in an attempt to sway the judge's opinion, sending Mary Jane to the poorhouse was an idle threat. The Seitzinger family had the financial means to care for the dependent members of their family, but many others did not. For poor individuals whose families struggled just to get by, the specter of the poorhouse loomed as a real possibility in the event of a downturn in the family's fortunes.

### The Poor Law

Nineteenth-century Americans maintained the belief that those closest to individuals in need knew best how to care for them. In the seventeenth century, emigrants from Britain brought this belief about family and community obligation to America. By designating family and local government as primary caregivers, colonial American poor laws turned social obligation into legal responsibility.<sup>20</sup> Family and community took care of their own while sending strangers or outsiders back to their place of origin.<sup>21</sup> In the nineteenth century, as the country expanded westward, poor laws in the new territories retained the basic ideal of family and community responsibility for those in need.<sup>22</sup>

Although the family as caretaker was the ideal in caring for the poor, the family, at times, failed to meet the need. Parents outlived their children or the children moved away. Sickness and disability sometimes were overwhelming. When family was either unwilling or unable to assist, the responsibility fell primarily to county government.<sup>23</sup> Iowa poor law structured

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20. Josiah Henry Benton, *Warning Out in New England* (Boston, 1911), 4–8; Billy G. Smith, ed., *Down and Out in Early America* (University Park, PA, 2004).

21. For a brief discussion on the “invidious social category” of “stranger,” see Katz, *The Undeserving Poor*, 6–7.

22. For a discussion of the westward migration of poor relief legislation to early Ohio and the territories of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa, see Gillin, *History of Poor Relief Legislation in Iowa*, 3–70.

23. Private charities provided some outdoor relief to the needy, but community and religious organizations lacked the funds to provide adequate care for all the poor. Only government had the resources to handle the vast problems of poverty. In Cedar County, the board of supervisors never discussed private charity

the process of relief to resemble the family-community ideal. In each of Cedar County's 17 townships, the voters elected three township trustees who, as part of their duties, were responsible for "the oversight and care of all poor persons in their township." When a poor person applied to a trustee for assistance or medical care, the trustee established that the person had legal residence in the county and was truly in a state of need. If the person qualified, the trustee "may afford such relief as the necessities of the person require, and shall report the case forthwith to the board of supervisors." In 1868 the law quantified "the necessities" as "either in the form of food, rent, clothing, fuel and lights, medical attendance, or in money; and shall not exceed two dollars per week for each person . . . exclusive of medical attendance." The trustees had to certify the accuracy of the providers' claims and bills for "the necessities" before submitting them to the board for payment.<sup>24</sup>

The board of supervisors, the main administrative, decision-making body of county government, governed poor relief through its fiscal oversight of care provided by the trustees. The township trustees provided temporary relief until reporting the case to the county board. The board then decided whether to "continue or deny relief as they find cause." In counties without a poorhouse, the board could either pay a monthly allowance "to poor persons . . . who are of mature years and sound mind," or "enter into contract with the lowest bidder" to board the poor with one of their neighbors. In order to establish a poorhouse, the board needed the approval of a majority of the voters.<sup>25</sup>

Iowa poor law established settlement or residency requirements to set the boundaries for county government's social and economic responsibilities. In order to qualify for poor relief in the county, an adult must have resided in the state for one year. If local officials could foresee a person without settlement becoming a charge on the county, the law permitted the county to prevent the person from obtaining settlement "by warning

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as an optional source of assistance for the poor. See also Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse*, 36–57; and Bourque, "The Creation of the Almshouse," 74.

24. Gillin, *History of Poor Relief Legislation*, 71–192; 1868 *Laws of Iowa*, chap. 95, sec. 1(1); 1873 *Code of Iowa*, Title XI, chap. 1, sec. 1364, 1365, 1366.

25. 1873 *Code of Iowa*, Title XI, chap. 1, sec. 1365, 1367, 1369, 1372.

them to depart . . . and thereafter they shall not acquire a settlement except by the requisite residence for one year uninterrupted by another warning." When a person had settlement in the state, the county in which he or she resided was responsible for "expenses incurred in the relief and care of a poor person." If the person crossed the border into another county and received relief, the law required the county of legal residence to reimburse the other county for those expenses. The law also enumerated penalties against anyone who brought a poor person into the state "with the intent of making him a charge of any of the townships or counties therein." The maximum fine was \$500.<sup>26</sup>

Settlement alone was not enough to provide eligibility for relief; one had to be dependent and without family. The law designated family as the caretakers of the poor, but did so by taking into account the degree of relation and ability to work. Primary responsibility fell to "the father, mother, and children . . . who shall, jointly or severally, relieve or maintain such poor person." If the nearest relatives were unable, "the same liability shall extend to the grandparents, if of ability without personal labor, and to the male grandchildren who are of ability by personal labor or otherwise." If the trustees judged the family as able but unwilling to provide relief, the county officials could compel them to comply by ordering entire or partial monetary support "by taking the poor person to a relative's house."<sup>27</sup>

The law stated the proper procedures for relief by channeling the initial requests for relief and the everyday tasks of relief through the trustees, but in their administration and distribution of relief Cedar County officials occasionally departed from the law.<sup>28</sup> The board acted upon petitions from citizens asking for relief of a neighbor and, on occasion, petitions directly from

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26. *Ibid.*, sec. 1352(1), 1355, 1358; 1873 *Code of Iowa*, Title XXIV, chap. 11, sec. 4045. A wife followed the settlement of her husband, if he had settlement. If, at the time of marriage, she had settlement and he did not, she retained her settlement. If he abandoned her, she attained settlement as if she were single. Children followed the settlement of their father or, if they had none, they had the settlement of their mother. 1873 *Code of Iowa*, Title XI, chap. 1, sec. 1352(2)(3)(4).

27. 1873 *Code of Iowa*, Title XI, chap. 1, sec. 1330, 1331, 1337.

28. See also Bourque, "The Creation of the Almshouse," 69–74; and Alschuler and Saltzgaber, "Clearinghouse for Paupers," 574.



the poor person. This ended in 1874 when the board, instead of acting on a "petition of the citizens of Springdale Tp. asking aid for Mordicai M. Reeder and Family," referred the case to the trustees, as the law required. Occasionally, a provider of relief submitted a claim without certification by the trustees, and the board would "refuse to consider the bill . . . until put in proper form." In 1883, in an effort to end such paperwork problems, the board printed and distributed to all the trustees instructions that outlined the proper procedures. The board also clarified the ambiguous phrase "report the case forthwith" by mandating that relief cases be reported at "the next succeeding session of the Board of Supervisors," thus moving the case more quickly from the judgment of the trustees to the scrutiny of the board.<sup>29</sup>

Although the law clearly laid out the responsibility of families, the role of the family in the enforcement of the law was not always clear. With the Boyle family, for example, the board enforced the letter of the law. Even though Mary Boyle, an elderly widow, had children living in the county, the board paid \$12 per month to board her with a neighbor. After an investigation into the family situation by the trustees, the board called a hearing and ordered her two sons to either care for their mother in their homes or pay the county for the expenses of her board. They took her home.<sup>30</sup> Sarah Lane, in the opening example in this article, was also an elderly widow with a son living nearby, but she went to the poorhouse. As with many other individual cases, without the documentation to explain the decisions of the relief officials, the role of family responsibility and financial obligation remains hazy.

The care of the insane entered into the poorhouse debate through the need for institutionalization rather than economic need. Before the opening of the state-run insane asylum at Mount Pleasant in 1861, the site of care for the insane remained within the county in either the home or, in the case of an individual who was a danger to the community, the jail.<sup>31</sup> In 1857

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29. Proceedings, 4/6/1874, 4/3/1877, 4/5/1883; 1880 *Code of Iowa*, Title XI, chap. 1, sec. 1365.

30. Proceedings, 1/10/1867, 10/14/1867, 1/8/1868.

31. The State of Iowa established other institutions as well. The asylum for the blind opened in 1853 and one for the deaf and dumb in 1855. After the Civil

the township trustees reported Hannah Wymer, a widow with six children ranging in age from 14 to 27 years, as "hopelessly insane" and requested that the court "so provide that the said Hannah Wymer may be provided for, restrained and taken care of." The judge assigned the care of Mrs. Wymer to her daughter Susanna and her son-in-law for \$5 per week. She remained in the care of her family until her death in 1885 at the age of 82.<sup>32</sup> Pernina Brooks, on the other hand, "a married woman whose husband has abandoned her & gone to parts unknown," had no family to take her in. Neighbors reported that she "wandered from house to house" and was "disposed to injure both person and property." The court ordered the sheriff "to secure said Pernina Brooks into your custody and detain her in the jail of the county." In 1861 the county moved Mrs. Brooks from the local jail to the new state insane hospital.<sup>33</sup> With the opening of the state hospital, the board readily sent insane individuals to the state institution. In 1878, after years of overcrowding, the state returned some of the chronically insane to the county, thereby leaving local officials to grapple with the difficulties of local institutionalization.

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War, the state took over the soldiers' orphans' homes that had been started by private enterprises. In 1876 the state legislature consolidated the three homes into the Soldiers' Orphans' Home in Davenport and expanded admission qualifications to include indigent children. The state then converted the abandoned orphans' home in Glenwood into the Asylum for Feeble-Minded Children. In 1886 the state opened the Iowa Soldiers' Home in Marshalltown to care for indigent and disabled soldiers, sailors, and marines. Gillin, *History of Poor Relief Legislation*, 195–284. See also Benjamin Talbot, "Iowa Institution for the Deaf and Dumb," *Annals of Iowa*, 1st ser., 5 (1867), 955–59; George Gallarno, "How Iowa Cared for Orphans of her Soldiers of the Civil War," *Annals of Iowa* 15 (1926), 163–93; and Gregory Calvert, "A Short History of the Mental Health Institute at Mount Pleasant, 1855–1899," *Annals of Iowa* 41 (1972), 1022–39.

32. Probate File 267; Records of County Judge, Book B, 2/12/1858, Cedar County Courthouse, Tipton. Wymer's family memorialized her as "a kind and affectionate wife, a fond mother and friend to all." Gravestone in Section 17 Cemetery, Gower Township, Cedar County.

33. Probate File 297. For Brooks's care, the sheriff received 25 cents per day for board, 10 cents per day for attendance, and 5 cents per article of clothing washed. Records of County Judge, 1/1/1859.

## The Poor Farm

In the summer of 1865, as the people of Cedar County put four years of war behind them, the board of supervisors looked to the future and expected an increase in "pauperism . . . in consequence of said war."<sup>34</sup> During the war, the board had administered a system of monetary assistance to the families of the soldiers. On June 7, 1865, it put an endpoint on the support of the soldiers' families by resolving "that no orders be issued to families after the return of the soldier who is the head of the family."<sup>35</sup> Yet many families no longer had a breadwinner, or he came home crippled from his wounds and unable to work. The return of the soldiers also increased the availability of labor in the county and cast an uncertain future on the employment of temporary day laborers and hired hands. The board may have foreseen an increase in pauperism from its own experiences administering relief to families. In seeking a solution to the anticipated long-term problems of poor relief, the board decided that "it is therefore expedient that there should be some action taken by this board to secure lands whereas to erect a poor house."<sup>36</sup>

Before the establishment of the poor farm in 1871, the only site for the care of the poor was the home, either their own or that of a family member or neighbor. For those who needed temporary help, the county paid a neighbor, merchant, or physician to provide "necessities" to the person in his or her home: "Doctor M. Mayer be allowed the sum of \$20 for professional services in attendance upon William Rogers"; "James Kelsey be allowed \$24.45 for provisions, food and other articles furnished to James Gould and family"; and "[Mr.] Carl be allowed the sum of \$3 per cord of wood furnished Mrs. Hagan."<sup>37</sup> If a poor person had no home, had needs beyond the capabilities of his or her family, or had no family, the township trustees made arrangements to board him or her with a neighbor. In 1859, for ex-

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34. Proceedings, 6/6/1865.

35. Proceedings, 6/7/1865. For the experience of one Iowa town providing relief for soldiers, see Russell L. Johnson, "'A Debt Justly Due': The Relief of Civil War Soldiers and Their Families in Dubuque," *Annals of Iowa* 55 (1996), 207–38.

36. Proceedings, 6/6/1865.

37. Records of County Judge, 10/26/1857, 1/6/1859, 12/29/1859.

ample, the county paid John Reese \$1.50 per week “for boarding and taking care of” Mr. and Mrs. Blow, “two aged and infirm persons . . . having no property and no friends legally bound to take care of them.”<sup>38</sup> In all of these transactions, a trustee or provider handled the county funds. The poor did not touch government money.<sup>39</sup>

The anticipated rise in the need for poor relief after the war did occur. With the increasing demands on the public treasury, the board tried to find the balance between providing adequate care and maintaining a low tax burden.<sup>40</sup> In the establishment of the poor farm, the members of the board of supervisors had their eyes on the bottom line.<sup>41</sup> Rather than having 51 township trustees providing relief, they wanted one location in the county to take care of the necessities of the poor. The process of winning the voters of the county over to the idea started in the fall election of 1865. When voters were asked if they were “For” or “Against the purchase of a poor farm,” the measure passed 1,086 to 539. In 1866, however, when the board asked for “an appropriation of Six thousand dollars for the purchase of a poor farm,” voters, who liked the idea of a poor farm but not the expenditure of tax money to buy it, rejected the request 1,141 to 1,105. In 1867 voters defeated a similar proposition 1,237 to 912. The board then let the matter rest for a few years.<sup>42</sup>

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38. *Ibid.*, 6/18/1859.

39. In 1893 sociologist Charles Henderson stated in his principles of administration for outdoor relief: “Aid should be given in articles of primary necessity, as food, fuel and clothing. Never is it safe to give money.” Charles Richmond Henderson, *An Introduction to the Study of the Dependent, Defective and Delinquent Classes* (Boston, 1893), 45.

40. According to Clement, *Welfare and the Poor*, 38, the relative importance of the three main concerns of relief officials in Philadelphia — benevolence, controlling the actions of the poor, and economy — varied depending on the economic, social, and political outlook at the time. According to Katz, *Shadow of the Poorhouse*, 3, compassionate care always remained the lowest priority.

41. Elizabeth Gaspar Brown, “Poor Relief in a Wisconsin County, 1846–1866: Administration and Recipients,” *American Journal of Legal History* 20 (1976), 80–91; Alschuler and Saltzgaber, “Clearinghouse for Paupers,” 576; Alschuler and Saltzgaber, “The Limits of Responsibility,” 515; Bourque, “The Creation of the Almshouse,” 62–64.

42. Proceedings, October Term, 1865; 9/4/1866; October Term, 1866; October Term, 1867.

In 1870 the board invested more effort in taking its case of economy to the voters. On the first day of meetings in the January term, George Wooley, a new member and former township trustee, put forth a resolution that "whereas Cedar County is now paying for the support of near 40 paupers," the question of the poor farm be on the fall ballot. In an action that pushed its agenda out into the community, the board, at its September meeting, resolved to print 200 circulars "stating the cost of keeping our paupers under the present system." The *Tipton Advertiser* entered into the fray for the first time with an editorial supporting the poor farm so that "paupers may . . . be cared for consistently and economically by the public." This time, when asked for \$6,000 to purchase a poor farm, the voters approved the measure 2,408 to 430.<sup>43</sup>

Throughout the six years of wooing the voters, the public language surrounding the poor farm emphasized home and economy rather than labor in exchange for relief or moral reform. In 1866 a board committee appointed to purchase a poor farm stated that the purpose of the farm was to supply "the wants of the paupers of said County with a comfortable home."<sup>44</sup> In 1867 Thomas Shearer offered a resolution to purchase a farm "for the purpose of establishing a permanent home for the poor of our County."<sup>45</sup> The language illustrates the supervisors' belief that the government had a duty to care for the poor, but that duty had to be weighed against the duty to the taxpayers to spend their money with care. If the board hoped that the poorhouse would provide economy by deterring individuals from applying for relief, they did not state it for the record. In articulating his support, the editor of the *Tipton Advertiser* incorporated the pragmatic with the altruistic, stating that "a collection of all the objects of charity under one roof, and a dignified, systematic and humane method of providing for their necessities, could not fail to be beneficial to them and economical for the county."<sup>46</sup> The supervisors' benevolent tone contrasted sharply

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43. Proceedings, 1/5/1870, 9/6/1870; *Tipton Advertiser*, 9/22/1870; Proceedings, October Term, 1870.

44. Proceedings, 6/7/1866.

45. *Ibid.*, 6/6/1867.

46. *Tipton Advertiser*, 9/22/1870.



*The Cedar County poorhouse. From A Topical History of Cedar County Iowa, ed. C. Ray Aurner (Chicago, 1910), vol. 1, opposite p. 64.*

with the harsh rhetoric of reformers. The township trustees knew each of the 40 poor individuals that the county assisted at that time, and the supervisors, in handling the poor relief claims, at the very least knew the identities of each person. It was much easier for officials and reformers in urban areas to denigrate the abstract masses of poor than for the officials in a rural area to take a harsh tone with members of their community.

In 1871 the opening of the poor farm created so little interest that neither the meeting minutes nor the newspaper commented on the event. The first indication of its opening was a small item in the *Tipton Advertiser* relating the story of a man “who . . . now in the Poor House, allowed his angry passions to rise . . . and assaulted the Superintendent with a pitchfork — sharp end first.”<sup>47</sup> The poor farm was a working farm that raised chickens, pigs, and cattle; grew corn and put up hay; and cultivated a large garden and an orchard of fruit trees. A township trustee managed the farm until the end of 1872, when the county advertised for “a man and wife” — a man to manage the farm operation and a woman to run the household.<sup>48</sup> In 1873 George F. Burroughs, the first poor farm steward and former county jailor,

47. *Tipton Advertiser*, 8/10/1871.

48. *Ibid.*, 10/10/1872. The county paid the steward a salary of \$500 per year (compared with \$2,000 to the treasurer, \$1,600 to the auditor, and \$1,000 to the superintendent of schools). Proceedings, 1/5/1877.

initiated the registration of poorhouse residents into the Poor House Register by entering the names of the residents that "I found there when I came."<sup>49</sup> From that initial list of residents, only Daniel Burns had an admission date from 1871. The fate of the other 39 paupers supported by the county before the commencement of the poor farm remains unknown.

In early 1883 the nature of care at the poor farm shifted dramatically with the opening of the Cedar County Insane Asylum. In April 1878 the board of trustees of the Iowa Hospital for the Insane at Mount Pleasant decided to alleviate the overcrowding at the hospital by returning the "incurable insane" to the counties.<sup>50</sup> The number of insane in the state was increasing faster than the state could provide care. According to the hospital superintendent, the overcrowding "is not only positively injurious to many, but prevents or retards cure in others," thereby altering the purpose "from a curative hospital to a receptacle mainly for the incurable insane." The hospital's board of trustees set the date of November first for the removal of "a portion of the incurable insane now under care . . . some of whom may require a portion of the time such restraint as is implied in locked doors and guarded windows." To avoid overcrowding in the future and to provide the proper care to those with the best chance for improvement, the board requested that only individuals with disorders of less than one year's duration be sent to the state institution.<sup>51</sup>

With the care of the incurable insane thrust upon it, the county board of supervisors had to find "a receptacle" in which to house them. No good alternatives existed within the county. The county had sent these individuals to the state institution because their care went beyond the capabilities of family and government. Now they were back. To solve the immediate problem of housing the five individuals from the state insane asylum,

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49. Poor House Register, p. 3.

50. At the time of the letter, "630 persons are confined in the space only designed and intended for less than one-half this number." Mark Ranney, superintendent, to Commissioners of Insanity of Cedar County, Iowa, 4/24/1878, copied by clerk into Proceedings, 6/5/1878.

51. For patients not meeting this stipulation, the county had to make a formal application "stating the class to which the patient belongs" and wait for a reply as to whether or not the person could be admitted. Proceedings, 6/5/1878.

TABLE 2  
ADMISSIONS BY YEAR

Year	Poor	Insane
1873	11	0
1874	11	1
1875	16	0
1876	11	0
1877	20	4
1878	22	0
1879	24	0
1880	8	0
1881	23	1
1882	23	0
1883	22	12
1884	21	7
1885	25	4
1886	14	2
1887	9	3
1888	14	2
1889	17	0
1890	9	1
Total	300	37

SOURCE: Compiled from Poor House Register, pp. 3-16, 97-98.

the board contracted with the sisters at Mercy Hospital in Davenport to provide care at a cost of \$16 per person per month.<sup>52</sup> In 1881 the board took action toward a long-term, more economical solution by deciding to erect "a suitable building" on the poor farm "for the purpose of keeping the incurable insane of the county."<sup>53</sup> In early 1883 the new brick asylum on the poor farm opened, receiving 12 insane persons the first year and 7 the next year (see table 2). Although these individuals required monitoring more than care, they surely increased the workload, with additional laundry and more mouths to feed. The board did not hire another superintendent to manage the asylum. The poor farm steward and his family added the responsibility for the incurable insane at the poor farm to their duties with the poorhouse and the farm.

52. Proceedings, 10/15/1878. In April 1882 the Mount Pleasant hospital released five more insane individuals back to the county. The board sent four of them to Mercy Hospital in Davenport and released one woman to the custody of her mother. Probate File 1644.

53. Proceedings, 6/10/1881.



TABLE 3  
AVERAGE OCCUPANCY OF POOR FARM AND COST PER PERSON

	1877	1878	1879	1880	1889	1890
Average Occu- pancy per Week	15	18	18	14	36	39
Cost per Person per Week	\$1.82	\$2.18	\$1.39	\$1.02	\$1.15	\$0.76

SOURCE: Proceedings, 1/11/1878, 1/9/1879, 1/9/1880, 1/8/1881, 1/8/1890, and 1/6/1891.

With both the poorhouse and the insane asylum founded on the goal of providing relief with lowered costs, the available year-end poor farm reports show that the institution achieved its goal. Receipts from the sale of hogs and cattle offset some, but not all, of the expenses. The farm turned a profit in just one year, but it did not have to operate in the black to accomplish its aims. Any net cost less than the \$16 per month that Mercy Hospital charged clearly defined success in housing the insane. The benchmark for the poor is somewhat less clear. The board could not eliminate all forms of outdoor relief, but boarding, the most costly form of relief, virtually disappeared from the claims reports. The board had paid about \$3 per week to board a single person, which was significantly more than the cost per person per week at the poor farm (see table 3).<sup>54</sup> Although the poor farm lost money, it proved to be a more economical form of relief than outdoor relief for the homeless.

### Medical Care

Medical care was expensive and different from other forms of relief.<sup>55</sup> Physicians provided a professional service and charged a

54. Proceedings, 6/7/1866, 1/10/1867.

55. In a study of Philadelphia in the first half of the nineteenth century, Clement argues that relief officials, who paid about 1/6¢ per house call, readily supplied medical care as outdoor relief because it was inexpensive. Physicians accepted such low payments in exchange for gaining clinical experience. Clement, *Welfare and the Poor*, 78. Relief officials of urban poorhouses controlled medical costs of indoor relief by allowing the almshouse hospital (and the poor individuals in them) to be used for training medical students. *Ibid.*, 93–94, 105–7. See also Katherine A. Harvey, "Practicing Medicine at the Baltimore Almshouse, 1828–1850," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 100 (2005), 298–314.

TABLE 4  
MEDICAL EXPENSES CLAIMED AND ALLOWED

Year	Expenses Claimed	Expenses Allowed	Percent Allowed
1866	\$389.20	\$237.90	61.1%
1870	\$737.95	\$377.10	51.1%
1875	\$519.75	\$158.00	30.4%
1880	\$865.65	\$427.92	49.4%
1885	\$589.75	\$450.75	76.4%

SOURCE: Compiled from the claims reports in Proceedings for the years 1866, 1870, 1875, 1880, and 1885.

professional fee. Along with the charge for the actual service rendered, such as stitching a wound or amputating a limb, the fee also included and placed a value on the physician's knowledge and time. Physicians' claims differed from those for clothing or groceries. With a bill for 75¢ for a shirt, the board could see the price of shirts in the store and see the man wearing the shirt. The board could not "see" knowledge and time, and so medical bills could be a contentious issue for administrators and doctors (see table 4).

Iowa poor law addressed this tension between county fiscal concerns and physicians' professional fees but did not help in resolving it. In 1868 Iowa statutes limited the support of the poor "in the form of food, rent, clothing, fuel and lights, medical attendance, or in money" to \$2 per week for each person, "exclusive of medical attendance." The Code of 1873 added that "no more shall be charged or paid [for medical services] therefor than is usually charged for like services in the neighborhood." In 1880 the legislature rewrote the clause and deleted that phrase. In 1888 the legislature again addressed the problem by allowing the board, when examining all claims, "including claims for medical attendance," and finding the amount "to be unreasonable [or] exorbitant," to "reject or diminish the claim as in their judgment would be right and just." By specifically addressing medical care in these laws, the legislators acknowledged that medical care differed from other forms of relief and that it was expensive, but they did not directly address the problem by putting a price cap on physicians' fees, as they did with the \$2 per week limit

on other forms of outdoor relief. Instead, they empowered the board of supervisors to handle decisions about medical expenses within the county.<sup>56</sup>

In Cedar County, the board and the physicians did not always agree on the value of the intangibles of knowledge and time. For the majority of the claims submitted by physicians, the board paid the full amount. The size of the bill did not affect whether it was paid in full. For example, in 1878 the board paid the full amount of Dr. Minthorns's bill for \$89.25 but none of Dr. Yule's bill for \$9.<sup>57</sup> Physicians sometimes aggressively pursued payment of their unpaid bills. When, in June 1886, the board rejected payment on two of his bills totaling \$35.50, Dr. Melbourne resubmitted the bills three times until, in June 1887, the board paid \$22.50 on the total bill.<sup>58</sup> Drs. James Donnelly and David Donnelly provided the most extreme example of a contested bill: the board granted only \$25 on their claim for \$329.<sup>59</sup> The percentages of total amounts allowed shown in table 4 thus reflect the disagreement over the value of specific claims, but not a generalized devaluing of all claims by physicians.

In 1875 the board took the first step to control the costs of medical attendance by contracting physicians' services for the care of the poor. The board placed a notice in the *Tipton Advertiser* "To Physicians" requesting "sealed proposals . . . for the necessary medical attendance at the Poor Farm." They awarded the contract to Dr. S. Ensign for \$75 "to furnish medical attendance, medicines, perform surgical operations, and render such other medical attentions as may be required."<sup>60</sup> Between 1875 and 1884, the duties expanded to include the poor living within a six-mile radius of the courthouse, and the contracted fee varied from a low of \$75 to a high in 1881 of \$200 (see table 5). In 1885 the board sought to expand the contractual agreements to cover all the poor in the county. After reviewing the bids, the

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56. 1868 *Laws of Iowa*, chap. 95, sec 1; *Code of 1873*, Title XI, chap. 1, sec. 1361; 1880 *Laws of Iowa*, chap. 133, sec. 1; 1888 *Laws of Iowa*, chap. 101, sec. 1.

57. Proceedings, claims reports in January Term, 1878; and April Term, 1878.

58. Proceedings, claims report in June Term, 1886; September Term, 1886; November Term, 1886; and June Term, 1887.

59. Proceedings, claims reports in September and November Terms, 1888.

60. *Tipton Advertiser*, 3/25/1875; Proceedings, 4/6/1875.

TABLE 5  
 PHYSICIANS' CONTRACTS FOR THE POOR FARM

Year (from April to April)	Physician	Contracted Fee (per year)
1875–1877	Dr. S. Ensign	\$75
1878	Dr. S. Ensign	\$115
September 1879–September 1880	Dr. P. R. Pine	\$150
January–April 1881	Dr. G. W. Wilson	\$150
April 1881–March 1882	Dr. G. S. Focht	\$200
1882	Dr. Shoemaker	\$175
1883	Dr. O. E. Deeds	\$124
1884	Dr. O. E. Deeds	\$144

SOURCE: Proceedings, 4/6/1875, 4/6/1876, 4/2/1877, 4/3/1878, 9/4/1879, 1/8/1881, 4/8/1881, 4/6/1882, 4/5/1883, and 4/10/1884. (There was no contracted physician from April to September 1879 and from September 1880 to January 1881.)

board awarded contracts for “medical attendance, including Medicine and Surgery” in 8 of the 17 townships (see table 6).

By contracting the services of the physicians, the medical costs of those townships went from unknown (and possibly very large) claims to known, set expenses. A bill from a physician in 1889 located in a probate file provides examples of medical fees in Cedar County. Dr. G. W. Wilson of Tipton charged \$1 for an office consultation, \$3.50 to \$5 for a house call in the country, and \$4.50 to \$6 for a night visit. Beginning on November 5, 1889, until the patient’s death on December 23, 1889, the doctor visited the patient every day, and many days he called twice. With daily charges ranging from \$3.50 to \$10, the final bill totaled \$341.<sup>61</sup> The fee for one service mattered less than the accumulation of charges over the length of an illness. With a contract, the board locked the medical expenses to a flat fee and eliminated the expenses incurred in resolving disputed claims.

The reasoning behind the bids of the physicians is less clear. The dollar amounts of the four contracts in 1885 bore no relation to the population covered (see table 6). Dr. Deeds was responsible for the largest population, plus his contract required him to visit the poor farm once a week, and yet his contracted fee was not the highest. Drs. Greig and Joerger were responsible for only somewhat smaller populations than the others, but they submitted

61. Probate File 1555.

TABLE 6  
POPULATION IN RELATION TO PHYSICIANS' BIDS IN 1885

Name of Physician	Townships	Population of Contracted Area	Bid Amount
Dr. Deeds	Red Oak and Center*	3,532	\$120
Dr. Darner	Springdale and Iowa	2,564	\$150
Dr. Greig	Dayton and Fairfield	1,882	\$40
Dr. Joerger	Springfield and Massillon	2,163	\$25

\*Included the Poor Farm.

SOURCES: Proceedings, 4/7/1885; and population data from *Census of Iowa for the Year 1885* (Des Moines, 1885), 13–14.

much lower bids. The expenses of one patient with a lengthy illness could far exceed a doctor's yearly contract. Drs. Pine, Wilson, and Greig were recent graduates when they won their bids and may have needed the income while they established their private practices.<sup>62</sup> For the physician with a winning bid, the contract guaranteed income and removed the uncertainties of payment, but it also limited potential earnings.

The benefits for the poor in contracting medical services are even more unclear. Access to medical care was not guaranteed. The poor individual could not seek medical care without first going to the township trustees, who decided whether or not the poor individual received medical care from the contracted physician. What the records fail to reveal is whether contracting made medical care more accessible because the county paid a flat amount no matter how many poor individuals received care, or less accessible because physicians and the county wanted their expenses to fit their bids.

Contracting continued in the ensuing years, expanding to include 11 townships for a total of \$445.<sup>63</sup> Physicians continued to bid for the contracts, and the county awarded them, which strongly suggests that both groups found financial benefits in this system of providing care. This did not necessarily leave the

62. Pine graduated from Bellevue in New York in 1877, Wilson from the University of Iowa in 1877, and Greig from Bellevue in 1881. Charles H. Lothrop, *The Medical and Surgical Directory of the State of Iowa for 1886 and 1887* (Clinton, 1886), 125–26.

63. Proceedings, 4/9/1890. See also *ibid.*, 4/7/1886, 4/6/1887, 4/7/1887, 4/6/1888, and 4/2/1889.

poor without benefits. No matter how the board chose to fit medical care into the bureaucratic structure, government remained the avenue of access for the poor.

### Outdoor Relief

Throughout the nineteenth century outdoor relief withstood repeated attacks by reformers calling for its abolishment. The rhetoric of the reformers focused on the vices of alcohol and idleness and trumpeted the dangers of outdoor relief in creating a disincentive to work among the able-bodied while overlooking the dependent poor who truly needed government assistance. In large American cities in the 1870s, a coalition of reformers and wealthy professionals demanded the repeal of the poor tax and the transfer of outdoor relief from government to private charities. A few large cities found a balance between public and private funding of relief, but during severe economic downturns, such as the depression in the mid-1870s and the Panic of 1893, assistance from private sources fell short of the overwhelming need. Government stepped in, and outdoor relief continued.<sup>64</sup>

The people of Cedar County may have shared some of these urban attitudes about the poor and poor relief, but the decision by county officials to end outdoor relief had more to do with implementing a more fiscally efficient system of relief than with abstract ideals and images surrounding dependency. The board had persuaded the county's voters to fund the poor farm on the premise that indoor relief would be a more economical means of providing relief. Several months after the poor farm opened, the board of supervisors announced the end of outdoor relief and notified the township trustees that all "county charges must be sent to the county Poor Farm by the 1st of December as no allowance will be made by the board after that date."<sup>65</sup> After spending \$6,000 to establish the poor farm, the board proclaimed the end of outdoor relief as the next step in consolidating relief expenditures.

Actually ending outdoor relief turned out to be easier said than done, however. At the same meeting in which it voted to

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64. Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse*, 36–57.

65. Proceedings, 11/13/1871.

end outdoor relief, the board made its first exception “in favor of the pauper taken care of by widow Fell.” The board chose not to send a 75-year-old widow and her two adult disabled sons to the poorhouse. Nor did they deny assistance of \$1.50 per week to a woman caring for her sick and blind sister or \$1.50 per week to a 64-year-old blind man and his wife.<sup>66</sup> The board granted an allowance to several elderly couples. For example, William and Hildah Miller received monthly allowances off and on from 1875 to 1884. On April 8, 1884, some time after Mrs. Miller had died, Mr. Miller entered the poorhouse at age 76 for the reason of “old age.” The board had not discontinued his allowance, which suggests that he could no longer care for himself, and so entered voluntarily. He lived at the poor farm until his death in 1889.<sup>67</sup> In each case, the board granted allowances to a caretaker so that the disabled or elderly family members could remain at home.

The public also expressed opinions on who should receive relief. In the early 1870s, before the board ceased hearing petitions, citizens bypassed the township trustees and appealed directly to the board on behalf of their poor neighbors. In January 1872 the board granted a “petition of citizens of Springfield Tp.” to give \$5 per month for four months to Mrs. Schoeff and her four young sons and Mrs. Myers and her six children. At the end of the four months, neither woman requested additional assistance. Other allowances went to “a petition for aid” for an epileptic boy and his mother and a “petition of Citizens of Massillon township asking for aid” to assist a 78-year-old veteran of the War of 1812 and his wife. Citizen petitions did not always bring assistance. The “petition from Citizens of Iowa township asking for aid for Nancy McVey pauper” was not granted. Public opinion only carried influence if it fit into the economics of relief.<sup>68</sup>

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66. *Ibid.*, 11/13/1871, 6/3/1874, 2/18/1875. Relief officials in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, also failed in their attempt to end outdoor relief. In 1826 they abolished outdoor relief except in cases needing only temporary relief. Expenses lessened but did not disappear as overseers “reclassified” individuals as recipients of temporary relief. Bourque, “The Creation of the Almshouse,” 73–74.

67. Compiled from Proceedings, 1875–1884; Poor House Register, p. 11; and *Tenth Census of the United States*.

68. Proceedings, 1/2/1872, 6/3/1872, 10/20/1873, 11/25/1873.

With the opening of the poor farm, the board eliminated the expense of boarding the poor, but could not abolish outdoor relief. Trustees provided small amounts of relief, evidenced by the claims for groceries, goods, clothing, shoes, and wood that reappeared in the meeting minutes, and the board paid them. Although public opinion influenced the board to continue monthly allowances even after the poorhouse opened, the amounts granted were less than the expense of care in the poorhouse (see table 3). For example, the \$1.25 per week granted to Mr. and Mrs. Miller in 1879 was less than half the \$1.39 per person per week it would have cost the county to place them in the poorhouse. With the poorhouse as the alternative, poor individuals accepted these small amounts of relief in order to stay in their homes.

Although the individuals receiving outdoor relief came from the traditional "deserving" groups, the board did not use the language of "deserving" and "undeserving," nor did they make decisions based solely on an individual's inclusion in a certain category, such as widowed, elderly, or disabled. In addition to economic need, the decisive factors for individuals to receive outdoor relief were an existing roof over their heads and the capability to care for themselves. For those who met those measures, the county dispensed an amount of outdoor relief that enabled them to get by. Individuals from these same "deserving" groups also entered the poorhouse. Although a lack of housing was a criterion for admission, a variety of other reasons brought the needy to the poorhouse.

### **The Poor and the Poorhouse**

In 1877 the editor of the *Tipton Advertiser* reflected on the new poor farm: "The attractions in the way of charges at this domicile are many and various. They range in years from two to eighty — sane and insane, halt, blind, lame, sick, and lazy." His comments echoed common nineteenth-century sentiments. In 1871, the year the poorhouse opened in Cedar County, the national periodical *Harper's Weekly* published the poem, "Over the Hill to the Poor-House," in which an elderly woman whose son sent her to the poorhouse asked, "What is the use of heapin' on me a pauper's shame? / Am I lazy or crazy? Am I blind or lame?"



In his report to the National Conference of Charities in 1879, C. S. Watkins of Davenport, Iowa, referred to almshouses as “mere legalized cesspools or reservoirs for the reception, and, it may be added, the cultivation, of the most repulsive features of our social defects.” Such contemporary descriptions represented the poorhouse as a dumping place and the residents as unproductive to society or unwanted by family.<sup>69</sup>

Were the poorhouse residents in Cedar County the broken-down and degraded paupers portrayed in these trenchant remarks? The information from the Poor House Register provides a demographic picture of the residents over time. For each person admitted to the poorhouse, it contains columns for name, age, date of admission, place of birth, township or city from which removed, condition when admitted, date of discharge, length of stay, condition when discharged, and additional remarks.<sup>70</sup> Although some stewards were more scrupulous record keepers than others, the information is fairly complete. When combined with data from other sources, details from the Poor House Register provide ways to test the veracity of popular and historical perceptions about poorhouse residents.

The reasons for admission reflect the complexity of economic circumstances (see table 7). The conditions of “in need,” “no home,” and “destitute” imply simply a lack of money. Although the elderly and orphans also lacked money, they represented the more traditional “deserving” groups at the two ends of the life cycle. Physical circumstances brought some to the poorhouse in need: the crippled, the blind, the deaf-mutes, and

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69. *Tipton Advertiser*, 11/29/1877; Will Carleton, “Over the Hill to the Poor-House,” *Harper’s Weekly*, 6/17/1871, 1; C. S. Watkins, “Poorhouses and Jails in the North-Western States,” *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Conference of Charities* (Boston, 1879), 97–98.

70. The Poor House Register did not have a column to record an individual’s race. For the American Indian family, the steward wrote “Indian” in the place of birth column for all five family members, even though, according to the 1880 census, the husband was “Indian,” his wife was “white,” and the children were “I/W.” On their second admission after the husband died, the steward made no reference to race. Poor House Register, pp. 9, 13; *Tenth Census of the United States*. For the African American admissions, the steward indicated “colored” for 9 of the 12 admissions; he made no reference to race for one child and the two adult black men admitted. Poor House Register, pp. 5, 8, 11; *Tenth Census of the United States*.

TABLE 7  
REASON FOR ADMISSION AS DOCUMENTED BY POOR FARM STEWARD

64 in need	3 deadbeats	1 feeble
35 no home	3 epileptic fits	1 felon
24 destitute	3 frozen feet	1 fever
20 crippled	3 lost one arm	1 heart disease
15 sick	3 palsy	1 hurt by fall
11 old age	3 poor health	1 infirm
10 orphans	2 blind	1 invalid
9 tramps	2 broken arm	1 lame back
7 pregnant	2 deaf & dumb	1 lame knee
7 rheumatism	2 debilitated	1 lazy
6 children of disabled parent	2 liver complaint	1 mumps
6 no home & destitute	1 broken leg	1 paralytic
6 seeking employment	1 deaf, dumb, & blind	1 partly blind
4 feeble-minded	1 disabled by wound	1 quinsy
4 sore leg	1 dropsy	1 railroad accident
3 ague	1 encumbered by flesh	1 smallpox
3 chills & fever	1 erysipelas	1 tolerable health
3 consumption		

SOURCE: Compiled from Poor House Register, pp. 3–16.

the feeble-minded. Local officials admitted the “undeserving” tramps, transients, deadbeats, and lazy but did not identify them as a particular problem.<sup>71</sup> Lack of work discipline and alcohol, the two great vices that, according to social reformers and policy-makers, sent the poor to the poorhouse due to their own moral weakness, rarely appeared in the local records.

Those admitted to the poorhouse were needy, but many were also sick (see table 7). Although county officials did not articulate the connection between ill health and poverty, the poor farm was a necessary site for medical care. If nothing else, it provided food and shelter during the course of illness and injury as family would for those temporarily incapacitated in the community. The documentation of an illness in the Poor House Register as a reason for admission did not necessarily reflect the diagnosis of a physician, but rather the steward’s as-

71. The board addressed vagrancy only once in accordance with an act of the General Assembly “to restrain vagrancy and common beggary.” The law allowed the county to keep vagrants in the jail and order hard labor. The board designated the entire county as an area in which vagrants could serve time and could be ordered to labor at any job done by an ordinary man. Proceedings, 6/7/1876.

assessment or the person's perception of the ailment. Physicians had no official involvement in admitting the sick poor to the poorhouse.<sup>72</sup> A township trustee or county board member granted permission for admission, and they or the steward decided whether it was necessary to call a physician.

In establishing the poorhouse, the board emphasized fiscal efficiency rather than the ideal of requiring labor in exchange for relief. In the 1820s advocates promoted the connection between labor and the provision of relief as an advantage of the poorhouse over outdoor relief. Residents of the poorhouse would produce income to offset at least part of their expenses.<sup>73</sup> In the ensuing decades, the growing fear of the able-bodied living off government money trapped reformers in a circular argument. Labor at the poorhouse taught work discipline to the able-bodied but lazy poor while producing goods that the superintendent sold to offset the expenses of the poorhouse. At the same time, the threat of having to labor at the poorhouse was supposed to prevent the able-bodied poor from applying for relief. Without able-bodied laborers at the poorhouse, production waned. The income from the labor of the residents failed to offset their expenses, and the government taxed the citizenry for support.<sup>74</sup> In the latter part of the nineteenth century a paper presented at the National Conference of Charities

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72. According to Joan E. Marshall, "Shaping Poor Relief for the Sick-Poor in Indiana's Pioneering Era, Tippecanoe County, Indiana, 1826-1846," *Social Service Review* 74 (2000), 560-87, in rural Tippecanoe County, Indiana, the county physician was the gatekeeper for the poorhouse. The county owned a poor farm but leased the land and the care of the residents to the man who offered the highest bid to rent the land with the lowest per diem charge to provide care for the poor. It was to his advantage to keep residents as long as possible. The county physician evaluated the admission and discharge of residents so that they stayed no longer than necessary, thus controlling costs at the poorhouse.

73. Bourque, "The Creation of the Almshouse," 63; Clement, *Welfare and the Poor*, 89-92; Altschuler and Saltzgaber, "Clearinghouse for Paupers," 578.

74. For an example of the difficulties in inducing residents to labor, see Clement, *Welfare and the Poor*, chap. 4. In Seneca County, New York, in the 1830s and 1840s, the residents provided very little labor on the poor farm. The land did not produce enough to offset the expenses of the hired help. County officials complained that the county would be better off selling the land, except for the 25-acre vegetable garden, and buying what they needed. Altschuler and Saltzgaber, "Clearinghouse for Paupers," 579-80.

TABLE 8  
RESIDENTS OF THE POORHOUSE IN THE 1880 FEDERAL CENSUS

Age	Gender	Reason for Admission
67	F	in need
45	F	rheumatism
N/A	F	sore leg
50	M	feeble
57	M	rheumatism
60	M	crippled
52	M	deaf & dumb
56	M	blind, deaf, & dumb
47	M	idiot
52	M	idiot
37	M	insane
53	M	insane

SOURCES: *Tenth Census of the United States*; Poor House Register, pp. 3–7.

suggested that reformers acknowledged the chasm between the ideal and the reality of labor at the poorhouse. While remaining firmly in the belief that “idleness is the cause of a large part of pauperism” and that “regular employment . . . discourages lazy loafers,” local officials and poor farm stewards found it difficult to force residents into long hours of unpaid labor in order to support the poorhouse. “Labor in poorhouses has little pecuniary value. . . . It is easier and perhaps cheaper to hire the work all done than to secure it from unwilling and inefficient help.” Instead, residents, including the insane and the feeble-minded, should be given tasks to keep them occupied, “which keeps them busy and therefore out of mischief,” and to promote feelings of satisfaction and self-respect.<sup>75</sup> Labor was still a means of moral reform, but no longer was it expected to produce income for the poorhouse.

No records exist to document whether or how the steward apportioned the labor at the Cedar County poor farm.<sup>76</sup> None of the residents in 1880 seemed able to work (see table 8). Yet on the

75. A. O. Wright, “Employment in Poorhouses,” *Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Conference of Charities* (Boston, 1889), 197–203.

76. Iowa poor law allowed the steward to require “reasonable and moderate labor as may be suited to [the residents’] ages and bodily strength.” 1851 *Code of Iowa*, Title XII, chap. 48, sec. 836.

TABLE 9  
HIRED HELP

Year	Amount Spent on Hired Help
1872	\$207.85
1873	\$120.69
1874	\$232.00
1875	\$282.20
1876	\$271.50
1877	\$470.08
1878	\$ 26.00
1879	\$ 75.00
1880	\$ 0.00
1881	\$ 33.00
1882	\$ 54.00
1883	\$169.00
1884	\$ 0.00

SOURCE: Compiled from claims reports in Proceedings for the years 1872–1884.

the supplemental schedule for paupers in the Dependent, Defective and Delinquent Census that year, the poor farm steward identified three individuals as “able-bodied”: two insane men, ages 37 and 53, and a feeble-minded man, age 52.<sup>77</sup> Considering the mental disabilities of the three men, it is unclear how the steward interpreted the meaning of “able-bodied.” Were the men able to work for long hours at a time, thereby meeting the reformers’ definition of “able-bodied,” or were they simply the only residents who could perform any tasks around the farm? Residents of the poorhouse with physical and mental disabilities and those of early and advanced ages probably performed clearly defined tasks that required little supervision, such as gathering eggs, picking beans in the garden, and sweeping the floor. The approach to labor most likely was task-oriented rather than requiring residents to labor all day in the house or the field.

Hired help for the poor farm became a point of negotiation in the steward’s contract. Almost from the beginning, the poor farm required hired help (see table 9). At the end of 1877, with the cost of hired help almost equaling the steward’s annual sal-

77. Dependent, Defective and Delinquent Classes Census, Cedar County (microfilm).

ary of \$500, the board advertised "for bids for the Superintendent of the Poor Farm" to replace G. F. Burroughs as steward. Walter Jeffers beat out nine other men with a bid to run the poor farm for an annual salary of \$525 and to furnish "all the needed girl help, (except in case of an epidemic)." Jeffers provided that help at no cost to himself by having his sister and mother-in-law live with him at the poor farm. In 1882 the board changed the contract so that the county provided "one hired hand on the farm" and Jeffers continued to furnish "all help in the house and asylum." W. F. Moorhead took over the steward position in 1883 and contracted to supply "all help to run the Poor Farm and Asylum for three hundred dollars additional per annum to the salary already allowed him as overseer." Moorhead had five sons between the ages of 8 and 23 to provide the needed help. In negotiating the contract for labor for the following year in the fall at the end of the growing season, the board did not expect able-bodied poorhouse residents to provide labor. The contracts were advantageous for both sides. The board controlled the expense by contracting hired labor at a set amount. Jeffers and Moorhead used their families to fulfill their end of the agreement and not have to pay out of pocket for extra help.<sup>78</sup>

The foreign-born were often thought to be potential burdens on hard-working Americans. Some claimed that countries dumped their paupers on American shores. At the National Conference of Charities in 1876, Dr. M. B. Anderson stated that "both foreign municipalities and foreign nations have provided, at the public expense, for the transportation of considerable number of their pauper class to the United States. It is beyond all question paupers and criminals, in considerable numbers, have been sent to the United States by their relatives."<sup>79</sup> Between 1875 and 1885, the foreign-born made up 36.5 percent of individuals in the Cedar County poorhouse, which was much higher than their representation in the general population of the county (13.7 percent).<sup>80</sup> Germany and Ireland were the most com-

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78. Proceedings, 10/16/1877, 11/29/1877, 11/16/1882, 11/28/1883.

79. Quoted in Henderson, *Introduction to the Study of the Dependent, Defective and Delinquent Classes*, 31. See also Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse*, 9–10.

80. Based on a comparison of the nativity data for residents of Cedar County in the 1880 federal census with nativity information documented in the Poor

TABLE 10  
COUNTRY OF BIRTH  
FOR POORHOUSE ADMISSIONS VS. COUNTY POPULATION

Country of Birth	Cedar County 1880 Census		Poorhouse Admissions, 1875–1885	
	N	%	N	%
German Empire	1,429	53.7	31	34.1
Ireland	472	17.7	44	48.4
England and Wales	196	7.4	7	7.7
British America	198	7.4	2	2.2

SOURCES: *Tenth Census of the United States*; Poor House Register, pp. 4–12.

mon countries of origin in the population of the county at large and among the residents of the poorhouse, with the Irish making up almost half of the foreign-born admissions (see table 10). The populations used to calculate these percentages are problematic in that they include individuals from the entire life cycle. Children, for the most part, entered the poorhouse based on the need of their parents. With only one child out of 67 being foreign-born, children skew the numbers. By removing them from the tabulations, the proportion of foreign-born adult admissions increases from 36.5 percent to 50 percent of the poorhouse admissions. Even with that high percentage, no comment or complaint about the number of foreign-born individuals entering the poorhouse appeared in the official record. It is impossible to discern whether local taxpayers looked to the poor farm to confirm prejudices or simply accepted it as reflecting the struggles of new arrivals.

Data from the Cedar County poor farm also support common views about nineteenth-century gender relations: that men, being more independent and transient, were more likely

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House Register for admissions between 1875 and 1885. The 1880 federal census was the first census to enumerate nativity data at the county level. With only eight individuals entering the poorhouse in 1880, I included the admissions for five years on each side of 1880 in order to create a larger group for comparison. By the mid-1850s in Seneca County, New York, the foreign-born represented three-quarters of the men entering the poorhouse. Altschuler and Saltzgaber, "Clearinghouse for Paupers," 584. See also Monkkonen, *The Dangerous Class*, 113–14.

TABLE 11  
REASONS FOR ADMISSION BY GENDER

Reason for Admission	Men		Women	
	N	%	N	%
Needy or Destitute	30	17.0	32	50.0
Old Age	9	5.1	2	3.1
Tramps	9	5.1	0	0
Looking for Work	5	2.8	1	1.6
Deadbeats and Lazy	4	2.3	0	0
Disabled	32	18.2	3	4.7
Insane	26	14.8	11	17.2
Sick	61	34.7	15	23.4
Total	176	100.0	64	100.0

SOURCE: Compiled from Poor House Register, pp. 3-16 and 97-98.

to end up alone (see table 11).<sup>81</sup> Of the 105 men admitted to the poorhouse between 1875 and 1885, only 26 appeared in the 1880 federal census. Many of the men who stayed in the Cedar County poorhouse most likely were single men with no family ties who worked as day laborers or hired hands, stayed in the county for a short time, and then moved on to seek better opportunities.<sup>82</sup> Even though farm and day laborers usually boarded with a family, they had no family of their own to provide care when needed. Instead, they turned to county officials for assistance when they ran short of money or needed care during an illness

81. Altschuler and Saltzgeber, "Clearinghouse for Paupers," 581; Brown, "Poor Relief in a Wisconsin County," 96; Katz, *Poverty and Policy in American History*, 76. For discussions of population mobility in other poor relief studies, see Monkkonen, *The Dangerous Class*, 119-21; and Altschuler and Saltzgeber, "The Limits of Responsibility," 528-32.

82. A study of a township in Mahaska County, Iowa (about 70 miles west of Cedar County) found that between the 1870 and 1880 federal censuses, half of the households turned over and 70 percent of the males aged 12 to 25 no longer lived in the township. Thomas R. Baker, "Farmer Migration and the Depopulation of Rural Eastern Iowa, 1880-1885" (M.A. essay, University of Iowa, 1986), 19-21. See also Allan G. Bogue, *From Prairie to Corn Belt: Farming on the Illinois and Iowa Prairies in the Nineteenth Century* (1963; reprint, Ames, 1994), chap. 1; Seddie Cogswell Jr., *Tenure, Nativity and Age as Factors in Iowa Agriculture, 1850-1880* (Ames, 1975). The mobility of the population raises questions about how closely Cedar County officials followed the residency requirement. The records do not answer such questions.



or after a work accident.<sup>83</sup> The poorhouse provided a refuge for men in old age who had never married and could no longer pay for their board, as well as for widowers who lacked family assistance. For example, in three consecutive censuses, Edward Haines, a farm laborer, boarded with a different member of the Long family: Samuel Long Sr. in 1860, Elizabeth (Long) Tomlinson in 1870, and William Long in 1880. Even with his long-term connection to a single family name, Mr. Haines, age 78, entered the poorhouse in 1885 "homeless & a cripple." Two years later he "died [at the poorhouse] after 8 months of sickness" and was "buried in sand hill semitery."<sup>84</sup>

Women, in contrast, were most needy after the loss of a breadwinner.<sup>85</sup> Of the women under the age of 50 whose documented reason for admission implied a lack of money, such as "in need," "no home," or "destitute," over three-fourths entered with one other family member, usually her children. The poorhouse served as a temporary refuge until a new source of support could be established. Women over the age of 50 went into the poorhouse in much smaller numbers than men (see table 12). In her 1892 study of almshouse women in San Francisco, Mary Roberts Smith argued that the sense of family obligation differed. "The world recognizes the inevitable dependence of women by considering it a most disgraceful thing for relatives or children to allow an old woman to go to the almshouse." Men, on the other hand, "have had their chance to lay up money, and if they have not done so they must take the consequences. This one-sided filial obligation keeps large numbers of women out of the almshouse who are wholly dependent."<sup>86</sup> Although men went to the poorhouse with palsy and rheumatism, no woman over the age of 45 entered the Cedar County poor-

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83. Men in their twenties and thirties accounted for half of the men admitted with an illness, suggesting that they perhaps needed the justification that they were too ill to work.

84. Poor House Register, p. 12.

85. The number of "Females to 1,000 Males" in Cedar County was 876 in 1860, 916 in 1870, and 932 in 1880. *Iowa Historical and Comparative Census*, 218.

86. Mary Roberts Smith, "Almshouse Women: A Study of Two Hundred and Twenty-Eight Women in the City and County Almshouse in San Francisco," *Publication of the American Statistical Association* 4 (September 1895), 244.

TABLE 12  
ADMISSIONS BY GENDER AND AGE

Age Range (in years)	Men		Women	
	N	%	N	%
16-19	5	3.9	4	7.9
20-29	17	13.2	13	25.5
30-39	20	15.5	16	31.4
40-49	20	15.5	8	15.7
50-59	35	27.1	4	7.9
60-69	14	10.8	2	3.9
70-79	15	11.6	2	3.9
80-89	2	1.6	2	3.9
90-92	1	0.8	0	0
Total	129	100.0	51	100.1

SOURCE: Compiled from Poor House Register, pp. 3-16.

house because of a medical condition, and no feeble-minded woman entered the poorhouse. With a few exceptions, women in the older age groups and those with mental impairments were vulnerable and did not enter the poorhouse. They remained at home in the care of their families.

Individuals in the first decade of life had the largest number of admissions; 83 out of 340, or one-fourth of all admissions, were children under the age of 16. Most of the children entered the poorhouse with at least one parent, but exited with differing outcomes. Lettie, Beth, Sarah, James, Homer, and Ella, ages 10, 9, 8, 6, 5, and 2, respectively, entered with their mother and stayed at the poorhouse for about one year until the county spent \$61.75 to send the seven of them to Kansas, presumably to family. Henry, Emma, and Ellie, ages unknown, came with their mother because they were "in need"; one month later they had "runaway." For one family, poverty became so pressing that the parents could not afford to keep their children. William, Belinda, and Margaret (ages 10, 8, and 7) and their parents had been on and off outdoor relief for four years when their father "came [to the poorhouse] to get homes for his children." The board of supervisors placed a notice in the *Tipton Advertiser* "to advertise for homes for them." All three children found homes with different families. Margaret rebelled against the decision made on her behalf by adults and, after 11 months, was "sent

back" to the poorhouse. Ten days later "her Father came for her."<sup>87</sup>

The county had the responsibility for orphans who had no family in close proximity to take them in. Six children entered the poorhouse without family.<sup>88</sup> The county found homes for three of the children with local families, and the board spent \$40 to send two boys, ages 11 and 15, to New York.<sup>89</sup> With only six orphans entering in 17 years, the poorhouse provided shelter for the six children who needed a temporary home, but it was not the sole administrative mechanism for handling the care of orphans.

Although the board had established a "permanent home for the poor of our County," the majority of those admitted to the poorhouse used it more as a stopover than as a home. Of the 311 admissions with known discharge dates, 30 percent stayed 30 days or less, 49 percent stayed three months or less, and 76 percent were in the poorhouse for less than one year (see table 13).<sup>90</sup> For the 33 individuals who stayed longer than five years, the poorhouse became a home. Eighteen of the 33 were residents of the insane asylum; the other 15 simply needed a place to live. Elizabeth Stone, for example, had lived with her son and his family until her son died in 1874. Two years later, at age 63, she

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87. Poor House Register, pp. 4, 7, 8, 9; Proceedings, 1/7/1874, 9/5/1882. See also Altschuler and Saltzgaber, "Clearinghouse for Paupers," 576-77.

88. Table 7 lists ten admissions as orphans. Two of the orphans entered the poorhouse on more than one occasion.

89. The county sent a 17-year-old young man to New York at the same time. Poor House Register, p. 8. In 1876 the Iowa Soldiers' Orphans' Home in Davenport expanded its admission guidelines to accept the children of indigent parents. The county was financially responsible for the expenses of children sent to the Soldiers' Orphans' Home. Gillin, *History of Poor Relief Legislation in Iowa*, 202. The board did send children from the county to the orphans' home, but it sent only one orphan from the poorhouse to the orphans' home. In 1878 the county tried twice to place Harry Cooper, age 8, with a local family; both times he re-entered the poorhouse in less than a month. After almost two more years of living in the poorhouse, he was "sent to orphan home by county." Poor House Register, p. 6. Further discussion of indigent children and orphans would require access to admission records at the orphans' home.

90. Proceedings, 6/6/1867; Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse*, 90. A 27-year-old insane man who entered the insane asylum when it opened in 1883 and a 32-year-old man with heart disease who was admitted in 1888 still resided at the poor farm when the Poor House Register ends in 1916.

TABLE 13  
LENGTH OF STAY

Length of Stay	Number of Admissions	Percent of Total
1-7 days	31	10.0
8-30 days	62	20.0
1-2 months	37	11.9
2-3 months	23	7.4
3-6 months	60	19.3
6-12 months	24	7.7
1-2 years	24	7.7
2-3 years	10	3.2
3-5 years	7	2.2
5-10 years	8	2.6
10-15 years	8	2.6
15-20 years	7	2.2
20-30 years	8	2.6
> 30 years	2	0.6
Total	311	100.0

SOURCE: Compiled from Poor House Register, pp. 3-16.

entered the poorhouse "in need" and lived there for more than 20 years until her death. Unlike the other long-term residents who, before their admittance to the poorhouse, had their names recorded in insanity hearings in the probate records, guardianship records, or the board's meeting minutes for receiving monthly allowances, Mrs. Stone's name appeared nowhere in the local public record other than the census. In the 1870 census she reported owning some real estate, which may have supported her for two years and kept her off relief. Her daughter-in-law may have helped out, but an in-law did not have the same legal or family obligation as a blood relative. Mrs. Stone seemingly just ran out of money and family. When she died in 1896, the county buried her in the cemetery at the poor farm.<sup>91</sup>

The case of Daniel Burns further illustrates the complex circumstances of those who spent many years at the poor farm. In 1859 Daniel, a minor at "sixteen or seventeen years of age," was "of imbecile or weak mind" and had "no connections in the County except a Brother who pays no attention to him." People

91. *Ninth Census of the United States*; Poor House Register, pp. 5, 6, 18.

hired him to work and then “owing to his imbecile mind” did not pay him. Without a guardian, Daniel would “be in a suffering state if attention is not paid him.” L. D. Cleghorn, “a citizen & householder of said County of Cedar,” stepped forward and petitioned the court to appoint a guardian to look after Daniel and his few assets. In his 1861 report to the court, the guardian, Robert Gower, reported that Daniel had “lived with Geo. E. Baker for the last year, and as I understand he works enough to pay his board, and I think he is improving, physically and mentally.” Despite this optimistic assessment, the county decided that he should enter the poor farm when it opened in 1871, and he lived there for more than 31 years until his death in 1902.<sup>92</sup> Most of the individuals who passed through the door of the poorhouse needed only a temporary shelter during an illness or economic crisis, but for Elizabeth Stone, Daniel Burns, and others who needed a permanent residence, the county provided a home.

IN CEDAR COUNTY, the care provided within families reflects the American ideal of self-reliance, home, and family. Families gathered together under one roof to provide a home and source of support for grandparents, grandchildren, parents, married sons and daughters and their families, widowed daughters and their children, nieces, nephews, and siblings. Local records reveal that most families extended the ideal to include family members with disabilities and did not turn to government for assistance or institutional care. The care of the disabled remained within the family sphere as a part of everyday life.

For those who asked for government assistance, most experienced a brief respite from self-reliance rather than a move into dependence. Whether it was a few groceries, a cord of wood, or a stay in the poorhouse, relief officials provided as-

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92. Probate File 345. At one time L. D. Cleghorn ran the hotel in Cedar Bluff. He was also one of the lay preachers for church services held in the schoolhouse. *History of Cedar County, Iowa* (Chicago, 1878), 533–34. In the 1860 federal census, he listed his occupation as farmer. Robert Gower moved into the county in 1841. He was a surveyor and ran the ferry on the Cedar River. He “was a public spirited, highly esteemed man, prominent in many county and local actions, and a member of the Second Constitutional Convention.” *History of Cedar County*, 533.

sistance until an individual or family regained health or established a new source of financial support. In this rural county, the individuals who entered the poorhouse were not the broken-down, degraded paupers portrayed by reformers in their pamphlets, speeches, and conferences, but rather individuals in need. Some were "strangers" who would move on; others were long-time residents with connections in the community. The poorhouse served the community of Cedar County as a place of refuge and as a home. When individuals or families could no longer get by on their own, they turned to local government for assistance, and government met their needs.

# “This Large Household”: Architecture and Civic Identity at the Iowa Hospital for the Insane at Mount Pleasant

JANE SIMONSEN

IN 1861 Richard J. Patterson, superintendent of the Iowa Hospital for the Insane, praised the as yet incomplete state asylum as a concrete symbol of the state's civic health and maturity. Just 15 years after Iowa became a state, Patterson wrote to Governor Samuel Kirkwood to assure him that the state was ready to measure itself by the extent of its civic philanthropy. Designed to serve the needs of a small fraction of the citizenry, the asylum, with its grand architecture, nonetheless functioned as a gauge of Iowa's ability to provide a haven for the mentally ill and to ease the burden of care on families, as well as an indication of the state's technological modernity. "The plan of the building was conceived on a scale of philanthropy worthy of a Great State," the asylum's first biennial report announced. "It was intended to embrace all the improvements, conveniences, and appointments requisite to promote restoration to soundness of mind in those persons bereft of reason, whose recovery may be hoped for; and to secure the comfort and happiness of those wretched beings . . . whose mental alienation is irremediable and hopeless. When this vast structure is completed, such a Hospital for the Insane Iowa will have." By its mere existence, the hospital symbolized the progress of a state that had learned

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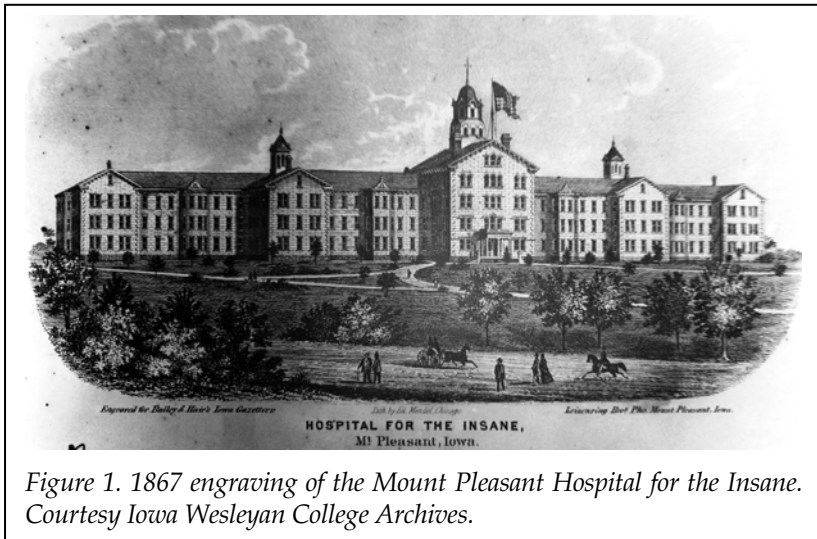


Figure 1. 1867 engraving of the Mount Pleasant Hospital for the Insane. Courtesy Iowa Wesleyan College Archives.

to “erect and dedicate an institution to the amelioration of suffering humanity”; it represented the artful combination of the technological and the beautiful; and it served the needs of patients for whom privacy, order, and an agreeable environment were central to their care.<sup>1</sup>

Although the colossal structure made a firm statement about Iowa’s coming of age, the very need for such a building reflected uncertainty about what role various social and architectural spaces — cities, rural areas, public institutions, and especially private homes — played in shaping citizens. When the asylum opened to patients in 1861, it was the young state’s grandest architectural undertaking, the “first permanent building erected in the state,” according to one visitor’s account.<sup>2</sup> It was an enormous structure, with an ornamented façade, a sprawling east wing (the west wing would be completed in 1865), and a central rotunda with cupola rising nearly 140 feet above the Iowa landscape (fig. 1). Patterson and asylum superintendents of the succeeding decades thought of the asylum’s architecture as both public and domestic: dedicated to the welfare of citizens yet

1. *First Biennial Report of the Trustees, Superintendent, and Treasurer of the Iowa Hospital for the Insane at Mount Pleasant* (Des Moines, 1862), 7, 15–23.

2. *Burlington Hawk Eye*, 3/9/1861.



providing patients with the privacy, self-control, and moral instruction that were often associated with the home in the nineteenth century.

In spite of the specialized architecture and economic constraints of such an enormous, publicly funded building, superintendents regularly referred to the hospital as a “large household” and to those who worked and lived there as part of an extensive but “well-regulated family” that, like other families of the era, was meant to recognize the needs for individual integrity and for order within the household. Indeed, the well-regulated household was often invoked by nineteenth-century reformers, politicians, and domestic scientists as the incubator for social order and citizenship. Yet superintendents, policymakers, physicians, and patients at the Mount Pleasant asylum also recognized that the household was not an unproblematic place and was itself often the source of mental illness. The architecture of the Mount Pleasant asylum reveals ways that nineteenth-century Iowans understood the appeals and the limits of domestic architecture and of domesticity itself as they sought to improve upon it through technological, scientific, and moral means. The asylum’s design incorporated the civic ideals of domestic life: morality, self-control, hard work, and orderliness based on proper categorization and lines of authority. At the same time, the emphasis on scale, utility, and scientific precision and professionalism tacitly acknowledged and even helped to construct the impression of the home’s failure to provide an environment in which such ideals could be cultivated. Even as architectural changes to the asylum in the late nineteenth century seemed to valorize domestic architecture, “homelike” design became a gloss on a modernizing institution.<sup>3</sup>

LIKE MANY ASYLUMS built in the United States in the middle of the nineteenth century, the Mount Pleasant facility was deeply influenced by beliefs about the importance of hospital design in the treatment of mental illness. Practitioners of the “moral cure” that dominated psychiatric care in the United States and western Europe between 1830 and 1870 posited that

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3. *Third Biennial Report* (1866), 14; *Eighth Biennial Report* (1876), 18.

disorders of the brain were created by disorderly environments — from the stress and strain of urban living to the isolation of an Iowa farmhouse. Thus, the goal of asylum design was to create an environment that would calm and isolate the patient from such daily cares by implementing order, regimenting daily activities, and providing aesthetically beautiful and intellectually stimulating surroundings.<sup>4</sup>

The asylum's particular architecture helped to legitimate the professional status of psychiatric physicians, often called alienists, who claimed authority over this type of hospital. In 1844 they consolidated their professional identity in the Association of Medical Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane (AMSAAI). Because alienists considered the architecture of the asylum crucial to moral treatment, discussion of spatial design was prominent in the *American Journal of Insanity*, the voice of the AMSAAI. Not long after its founding, the AMSAAI organized a Committee on Construction, whose first major policy statement was a manifesto on the principles of asylum construction. Thomas S. Kirkbride, one of the AMSAAI's original members and the superintendent of the Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane, authored the "Propositions on the Organization of Hospitals for the Insane," which were adopted by the AMSAAI in 1853, two years after the Iowa General Assembly authorized the sale of state lands to pay for the asylum at Mount Pleasant and two years before the state legislature voted to fund construction of the institution.<sup>5</sup>

Kirkbride's principles put into practice the theories of believers in moral management about the importance of hospital design for treatment. Among the propositions were the stipula-

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4. On the "moral cure" and asylum design, see especially Ruth B. Caplan and Gerald Caplan, *Psychiatry and the Community in Nineteenth-Century America: The Recurring Concern with the Environment in the Prevention and Treatment of Mental Illness* (New York, 1969); David J. Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic* (New York, 1971); Gerald N. Grob, *The Mad Among Us: A History of the Care of America's Mentally Ill* (New York, 1994); and Nancy Tomes, *The Art of Asylum-Keeping: Thomas Story Kirkbride and the Origins of American Psychiatry* (Philadelphia, 1994).

5. Thomas S. Kirkbride, *On the Construction, Organization, and General Arrangements of Hospitals for the Insane* (Philadelphia, 1854), 6; Wesley Shank, ed., *Studies of Historic Iowa Architecture, Part II* (Ames, 1975), 1-2.

tions that the building be easily identifiable as a civic landmark situated near a town; that every hospital be equipped with the latest in ventilation, heating, and water supply technology; that every hospital have eight wards for each gender for a total of 16 classes; that every room have a window; that the building include a central tower for administrative offices and residences; and that patients be housed in radiating wings suffused with light and air. All asylums should be surrounded, moreover, with "pleasure grounds" so that patients might exercise and be healed by strolls in a well-maintained and controlled "healthful, pleasant, and fertile" environment. The façade would create a sense of awe in patients, visitors, and would-be philanthropists even as the exterior ornamentation served another purpose: "to mask, as far as possible, by arrangements of a pleasant and attractive character," all signs of restraint that would make the building resemble a prison. While the exterior would nod to well-established principles of good taste, the inside needed to reflect alienists' concern with order; therefore, the interior spaces were designed with attention to utility, repetition of elements, accessibility, and the classification of patients that separated male from female, curable from incurable, and unruly from cooperative (fig. 2).<sup>6</sup>

The designers and backers of the Mount Pleasant asylum hewed closely to these principles, and their efforts reveal collaboration between state leaders and national authorities in hospital design. In 1855, following passage of the Act to Establish an Insane Asylum, asylum commissioners Edward Johnson and Dr. Charles S. Clark visited asylums in the East and consulted with Kirkbride as well as Luther V. Bell, a founding member of the AMSAII and superintendent of New Hampshire's McLean Asylum, one of the oldest in the nation. As a result of these visits, the board urged the state to fund a hospital that closely followed the comprehensive Kirkbride plan. Perhaps because legislators were interested in the ways such an asylum would brand Iowa as a progressive state, they seemed to be willing to listen to the AMSAII board, which urged them to reject a less ambitious plan to build a \$50,000 hospital that

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6. Kirkbride, *On the Construction of Hospitals for the Insane*, 6–14.

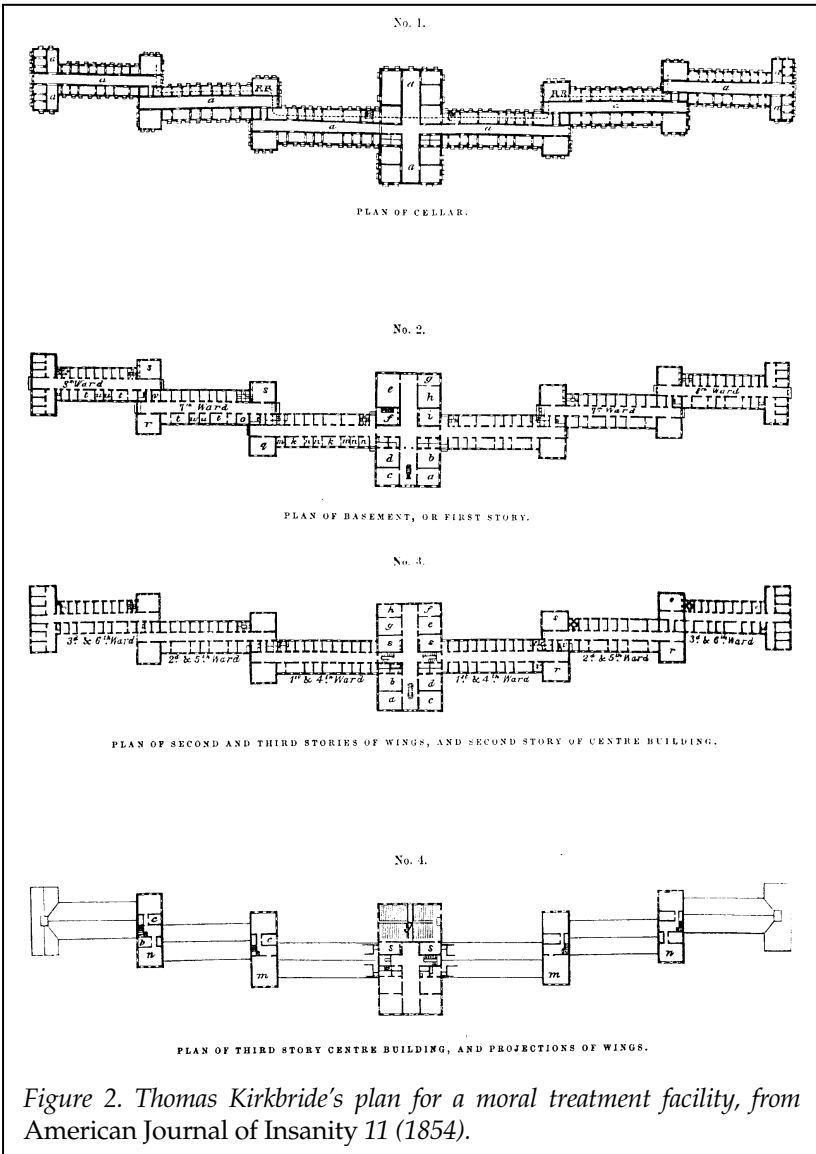


Figure 2. Thomas Kirkbride's plan for a moral treatment facility, from *American Journal of Insanity* 11 (1854).

would fall far short of fulfilling alienists' architectural ideals. Bell offered an initial design, but the official architect of the Iowa hospital was Jonathan Preston of Boston, who designed the Northampton Lunatic Hospital in Massachusetts at about the same time. Mount Pleasant steward Henry Winslow worked



Figure 3. View of the Mount Pleasant asylum from the north (front view), ca. 1910–1920. From State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

with the architect and board in adhering as closely as possible to the plan, even as, according to Patterson, he combined “architectural expression with greater practical utility.”<sup>7</sup>

The Iowa facility was monumental. It was built just outside the city of Mount Pleasant, on a rolling landscape yet close to the supplies and labor power that the town offered, as Kirkbride had recommended. The revised, more ambitious plan called for 50,000 square feet in two three-story wings and a central building surrounded by pleasure grounds, in keeping with the AMSAI principles. Patterson, installed as superintendent in 1861, reported upon the asylum’s opening that “instead of the long, lofty, meaningless pile of masonry, which we often see in similar structures, they have produced a building of rare dignity and beauty of proportion, agreeably diversified by bold projection and varied elevation.” The style was “Elizabethan” with some features of Italianate detailing, including roof cornices, pediments, and cupolas. The windows of the central building had a slight Palladian curve, but most windows were topped with simple rectangular lintels. The ornamentation emphasized size and repeated elements rather than variety, and its variations were those of degrees of elevation and diversity in the façade due to bay windows and recesses (figs. 3, 4). Bell recommended this style, also described as “Tudor Gothic,” because it was nei-

7. *History of Henry County, Iowa* (Chicago, 1879), 434; Shank, *Studies*, 3-5; *First Biennial Report* (1862), 15.

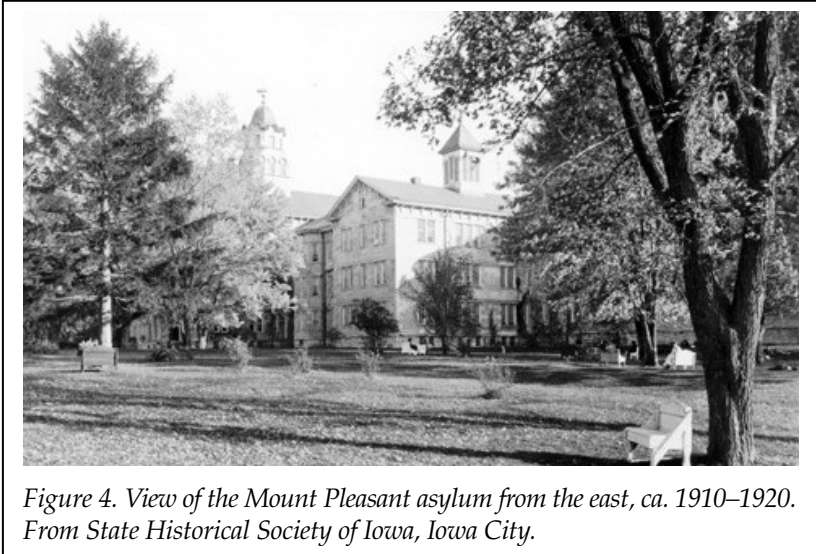


Figure 4. View of the Mount Pleasant asylum from the east, ca. 1910–1920. From State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

ther too decorative nor too plain and imposing. His ideas were both aesthetic and practical, as he was (as were all superintendents) intent on keeping expenses down, especially in developing states. Thus Bell's encouragement that "the amount of stone needed to produce the proper effect in this style is not great."<sup>8</sup>

Inside, the building proclaimed the importance of central control and orderliness on a grand scale. The building was designed around a soaring rotunda and cupola with a double stairway inside (fig. 5). The rotunda housed the offices and rooms of all resident officers, including the superintendent, steward, and matron. Behind the rotunda stretched the facilities such as the kitchen, laundry, and chapel. The basement contained an eighth-mile "railroad" to carry food to dumb waiters as well as the equipment for steam heating the entire building. The building was also equipped for gas lighting and had tech-

8. *First Biennial Report* (1862), 16; Shank, *Studies*, 13; Luther V. Bell, "To the Trustees of Butler Hospital for the Insane," *American Journal of Insanity* 2 (1845–46), 31. Patterson was formerly at the Indiana State Asylum, and his choice to head another public institution is interesting given that he wrote to Kirkbride in 1852 that "these state institutions are horrible establishments, and no sensitive man — none but one who has the skin of a RHINOCERUS has any business in one of them." Apparently Patterson had developed a thick skin in the intervening decade. Tomes, *The Art of Asylum-Keeping*, 276.



Figure 5. Rotunda with staircase, 1897. From State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

nologies for ventilating all the rooms with windows, flues, and steam-driven fans. Only one wing was completed in 1861 when the asylum opened, but it was intended that the three-story wings, when completed, would contain 220 single rooms, 18 dormitories, 18 parlors, 18 dining rooms, 24 bathrooms, 24 water closets, 24 washrooms, and 78 closets. The building's wings were designed to accommodate the crucial environmental principle of categorization: separating men from women and the more difficult or incurable cases from the milder cases — the more compliant cases being placed in the more comfortable “bourgeois” wards closer to the central rotunda.<sup>9</sup>

Early viewers of the asylum were certainly impressed by its scale and saw the building as Patterson and others hoped: upon the opening of the asylum on March 6, 1861, the *Burlington Hawk*

9. *First Biennial Report* (1862), 17. The Northampton hospital, also designed by Preston, closely resembles the Mount Pleasant asylum; its plans are reproduced in Carla Yanni, *The Architecture of Madness: Insane Asylums in the United States* (Minneapolis, 2007), 66.



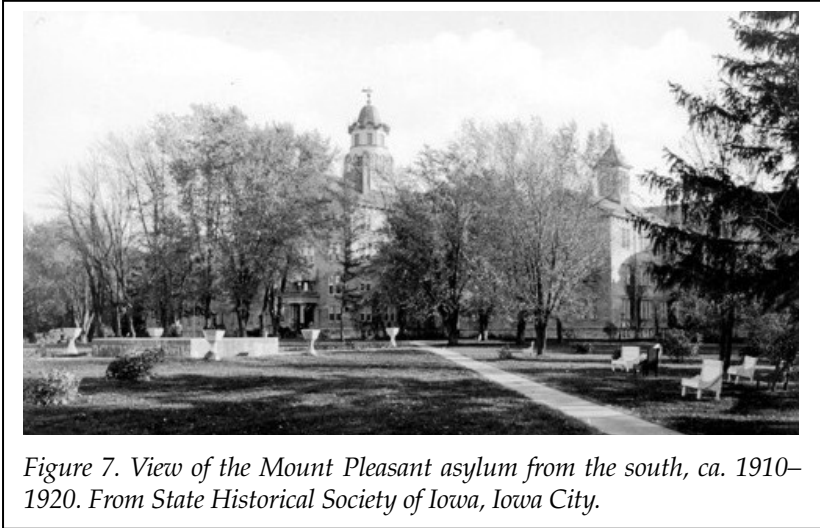
*Figure 6. Postcard, Mount Pleasant Asylum. Courtesy Iowa Wesleyan College Archives.*

*Eye* reported that “Mount Pleasant turned out en masse” and that “the Institution is an honor to the State, and will stand an imperishable monument to the skill, business capacity, faithfulness, and probity of Mr. Winslow.” The author went on to invite readers to visit, as they would “find it a very pleasant place to spend an hour or two, and, notwithstanding its grated windows, and unfortunate inmates, having a cheerful, orderly and happy look.” Viewers noted that in terms of technological innovation, no household could compare to the hospital. Visitors to the asylum were privy to the mechanisms that ran the large household; one visitor wrote, for example, that “the kitchen and cooking department in the cellar, is really a sight, and the eyes of lady visitors generally open pretty wide when conducted through this part.”<sup>10</sup>

The asylum’s specialized design included the surrounding grounds as well, also regarded as key to moral and thus mental health: “If there is a spot on earth which ought to be improved and beautified by art, at the public expense, surely it is the one that surrounds the hospital for the Insane,” Patterson exhorted the legislature in 1861. The surrounding landscape, designed by landscape architect H. W. Cleveland and completed in 1871, was intended to allow patients to stroll the grounds as on a country

10. *Burlington Hawk Eye*, 3/9/1861; *Birmingham Enterprise*, 4/1/1871.





*Figure 7. View of the Mount Pleasant asylum from the south, ca. 1910–1920. From State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.*

estate. Moreover, the windows afforded pleasing views of the surrounding landscape, which administrators hoped would provide patients, family members, and even residents of Mount Pleasant with “pleasant scenery, affording views as varied and attractive as any to be found in this part of the state.” The model of the country home set in private pleasure grounds — the original blueprint of private asylums such as Kirkbride’s Pennsylvania hospital — became, under the doctrine of moral treatment, infused with a kind of moral restraint<sup>11</sup> (figs. 6, 7).

THE IOWA GENERAL ASSEMBLY’S 1855 decision to fund a state hospital for the insane built according to Kirkbride’s principles both responded to and helped to create the public perception that the state and its appointees were ready to care for the mentally ill and to protect the public weal. Part of the process of state-building involves creating new social welfare policies — and the institutions that would function as the visible manifestation of such policies. The asylum represented Iowa’s attempt to establish new forms of state authority as well as superintendents’ claims to professional authority. The kind of authority that asylums represented in the nineteenth century has been

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11. *First Biennial Report* (1862), 10; *Sixth Biennial Report* (1872), 35–36.

contested among historians who debate whether mid-century asylum design was a humanitarian response to social needs, a form of repressive custodialism reflecting superintendents' quest for social power, or states' attempts to suppress society's "unruly" members.<sup>12</sup>

Yet a dichotomy between control and care cannot fully account for the layers of meaning that asylums took on for different populations; instead, asylum architecture was a product of what Carla Yanni calls the very "tensions between home and institution, benevolence and surveillance, medical progress and social control, nature and culture" that shaped American society in general during the last half of the nineteenth century. The principles of asylum organization — and deviation from those principles — endorsed particular kinds of spaces as fundamental to moral and psychic health and exemplified ideal relationships among citizens, communities, and the state. The Mount Pleasant asylum's architecture, then, was the product of negotiations among representatives of larger cultural ideals. State officials, superintendents, hospital workers, and even patients regarded the Mount Pleasant asylum in ways that reveal the

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12. According to John Sutton, "The Political Economy of Madness: The Expansion of the Asylum in Progressive America," *American Sociological Review* 65 (1991), 665–78, asylums and other public institutions tended to grow faster in newer states with an interest in establishing new systems of political and social order. For theories of benevolent intentions, see Albert Deutsch, *The Mentally Ill in America: A History of Their Care and Treatment from Colonial Times*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1949); and Grob, *The Mad Among Us*. For social control theories, see Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (New York, 1961); Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum*; Andrew Scull, ed. *Madhouses, Mad-doctors, and Madmen: The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era* (Philadelphia, 1981); and idem, *The Insanity of Place/The Place of Insanity: Essays on the History of Psychiatry* (New York, 2006). Studies stressing complexity include Tomes, *The Art of Asylum-Keeping*; Ellen Dwyer, *Homes for the Mad: Life Inside Two Nineteenth-Century Asylums* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1987); Constance M. McGovern, *Masters of Madness: Social Origins of the American Psychiatric Profession* (Hanover, NH, 1986); idem, "The Myths of Social Control and Custodial Oppression: Patterns of Psychiatric Medicine in Late Nineteenth-Century Institutions," *Journal of Social History* 20 (1985), 3–23; Peter McCandless, *Moonlight, Magnolias, and Madness: Insanity in South Carolina from the Colonial Period to the Progressive Era* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996); and Danielle Terbenche, "'Curative' and 'Custodial': Benefits of Patient Treatment at the Asylum for the Insane, Kingston, 1878–1906," *Canadian Historical Review* 86 (2005), 29–52.

tensions between belief in the power of domestic spaces to cultivate individual virtues and the power of public architecture to rejuvenate citizens through more healthy work and gender roles than those offered by the home.<sup>13</sup>

In Iowa's case, early descriptions of the asylum in the biennial reports to the legislature accentuate features of the asylum that would help preserve civic order by removing disruptive elements from society. For example, Governor Grimes, appealing to the Fifth General Assembly in 1855, stressed the importance of the asylum in separating out destructive individuals. He seemed to invoke fear as well as reason, stressing that "there are now more than one hundred pauper insane persons in the State." While half were in jail, "the other moiety are remaining at large, a terror to their friends and neighbors, and by exposure to exciting causes, rendered their disease hopelessly incurable." Grimes cleverly suggested that current, less authoritative institutions such as city jails and families were inadequate to house this population even as he argued for the need to contain these persons through the restraining power of a state institution. While asylum design was a key to treatment, it also visually reinforced the authority of the state. The vastness of the asylum, combined with the emphasis on the entry and rotunda, denote "stability" in their very form.<sup>14</sup>

The asylum's design also stressed the professional authority of the steward, the matron, physicians and nurses, and especially the state-appointed superintendent. The physical location of their offices in the rotunda denoted in architecture the need for a superintendent who could survey the activities of all of his patients. He needed to be inside the building, for the superintendent was not just a doctor, but the head of a household of dependents. Superintendent Mark Ranney, who directed the asylum between 1865 and his death in 1882 (with the exception of two years spent at Wisconsin's state hospital in Madison), stressed the need for both professional authority and careful design when he wrote in 1876 that "if insanity were only a bodily disease . . . the hospitals specially devoted to its treatment would

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13. Yanni, *Architecture of Madness*, 1.

14. *History of Henry County*, 434; Yanni, *Architecture of Madness*, 52.

be unnecessary. . . . But insanity differs from most other diseases. Not only is the brain involved and disordered in its action, but through it the mind also, rendering the individual generally incapable of management by the ordinary methods applicable to the management of the sick." In fact, Ranney described the efforts of medical personnel as almost heroic in avoiding "serious accident or epidemic" and "collision and violence" among patients. Such results could only be achieved, he stressed, by adhering carefully to the "rules that governed the household" — the AMSAII-endorsed design principles — which valued separation, order, and surveillance.<sup>15</sup>

Part of the superintendents' authority rested in their ability to categorize patients according to principles of their own devising. Those principles were developed from popularly held beliefs, such as those about gender differences, but made those distinctions explicit through careful design. The merely nervous, for example, or those suffering from excitements due to novel reading or economic woes were separated from the more threatening patients; and the violent and the criminally insane, Superintendent Ranney argued, were best consigned to other spaces entirely. The Mount Pleasant asylum's careful separation of genders and cases both inside and outside the structure created a more orderly way of defining social and gender relations than existed in homes. In making those categories structural, the hospital's design made private dysfunction visible and suggested that living environments were both cause and cure of mental illness. The state, the structure pronounced, could provide the environment and care that would remedy — or at least remove — such cases.<sup>16</sup>

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15. *History of Henry County*, 437–38; *Sixth Biennial Report* (1872), 15. For biographical information on Ranney, see "Obituary," *American Journal of Insanity* 38 (April 1882), 465.

16. Ranney would have preferred that cases involving irremediable mental illness not be housed in the asylum at all. He felt that those who were "vicious, dangerous, and violent," "have delusions and hallucinations," or were "addicted to masturbation" did not even fit the accepted definition of insanity. He protested that the hospital was not built for security (one patient escaped even as Ranney was writing the ninth biennial report) but for moral cures, and such patients were generally incurable. If necessary, Ranney argued, such cases should be relegated to a separate building. *History of Henry County*, 439.

The separation of classes and genders extended outside the asylum walls. Throughout the 1870s, Ranney continued to ask for funds to improve the grounds not only for the aesthetic pleasures of a varied landscape and the healthful benefits of agricultural work, but because the classification of patients needed to be maintained even outside the walls. Grounds were divided by walls or shrubs to maintain separation between patients, giving them freedom to enjoy nature within secure enclosures (fig. 4). The separation of the sexes and attention to perceived gendered differences in interactions with nature prompted the creation of groves in the garden as secluded nooks for female patients.<sup>17</sup>

The categories of mental illness that the hospital's design mapped out may have helped Iowans define the problems faced by their family members, encouraging families to identify as unacceptable behaviors that may once have been tolerated or treated within the confines of the home. Physicians' records at various public and private asylums indicate that families played a significant role in diagnosing patients' illnesses as they were admitted. Among Mount Pleasant's patients, masturbation, sexual aggressiveness, general ill health, business failings, and puerperal condition (ailments related to female reproduction) were all listed as causes of mental illness. These causes suggest what families saw as incorrect behavior. At the same time, asylum architecture, organized as it was according to various classes and conditions, helped direct understandings of what kinds of behaviors were most and least problematic. For example, the building's architecture was less fanciful than Gothic or elaborately ornamented Elizabethan styles, for the superintendents believed that one of the causes of insanity was literary life, the reading of Gothic novels, the "free indulgence in vapid amusements, [and] the reading of trashy romances."<sup>18</sup>

In particular, the asylum's architecture responded to and helped designate gendered behaviors as morally right or wrong.

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17. See *Sixth Biennial Report* (1872) and *Seventh Biennial Report* (1874) on the design of the surrounding landscape.

18. Tomes, *The Art of Asylum-Keeping*, 114; Lindsay Prior, "The Architecture of the Hospital: A Study of Spatial Organization and Medical Knowledge," *British Journal of Sociology* 39 (1988), 90; *History of Henry County*, 442; *First Biennial Report* (1864), 23.

When families identified problems such as sexual excesses, depression caused by business failings, overexcitement due to reading, or “female maladies” as mental illness, they were pinpointing problems of home life. When home failed to provide for men a respite from the marketplace, or when the lack of organization and privacy in the home contributed to women’s exhaustion, mental illness could ensue. By organizing the asylum to reflect categories from the slightly depressed or hysterical to the dangerously violent, superintendents helped to legitimate such concerns. Moreover, they helped justify mental illnesses as gender dependent, as, for alienists, maladies often stemmed from the separate work and social environments of men and women that were intrinsic to family organization.

The asylum’s design thus simultaneously identified patients as victims of the gender order and attempted to recuperate them to proper middle-class gender roles through regulated spaces and activities. One of the early concerns of hospital superintendents was that the failure to complete the west wing (the women’s wing) threatened careful classification and separation of patients. By 1871, Ranney was lobbying for a separate building for women. In addition, those patients who were able to work engaged in separate activities, with the men assigned to construction activities such as improving the grounds and women assigned to interior activities such as laundry and sewing linens for the asylum itself.<sup>19</sup>

But Ranney’s concerns about categorization inside and outside the asylum illustrate the degree to which his professional authority could be jeopardized by the state’s power to allocate funds and to dictate the asylum’s role in serving mentally ill citizens. Part of the difficulty of maintaining moral treatment was purely structural: as the asylum aged, the trustees sought funds to build new sewers, rehabilitate a ventilation system, shore up sinking foundations, repair leaky “water closets,” bolster shrinking floorboards with brick arches and iron girders, and replace plaster walls between patients’ quarters that were so thin that the more violent inhabitants could break through

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19. Benjamin Reiss, “Letters from Asylumia: The *Opal* and the Cultural Work of the Lunatic Asylum, 1851–1860,” *American Literary History* 16 (2004), 11; *Sixth Biennial Report* (1872), 17.

them. The difficulties of fixing these deficiencies were exacerbated by the high cost of labor and materials and the scarcity of funding during the Civil War era when many of the problems first surfaced.<sup>20</sup>

At least as pressing as structural flaws was the overcrowding that endangered design from the start. For a building whose successful use was predicated on precise calculations of the space needed for each patient, rooms devoted to particular mental and physical functions, and separation of spaces, overcrowding was a design disaster. Before the women's wing opened, patients were crowded into one wing, making it impossible to adhere to rules governing classification. Ten years after the asylum opened, parlors, reading rooms, and even corridors had been appropriated as living quarters, a move that threatened "social, orderly, and appropriate arrangements." Ranney and others were angered by the number of chronic cases consigned to them by the state, as that practice changed the atmosphere of the hospital from that of a retreat to one that resembled the prisons and poorhouses they strove not to replicate. State policies created a nightmare for superintendents bent on classification: criminal, foreign, chronic, and poverty-stricken insane created more categories of insanity whose differences needed to be echoed in architecture. The state's power to designate who could reside at the hospital threatened the authority that superintendents sought to validate through design, while state-created categories whittled away at the medicalization of mental illness that superintendents fought for.<sup>21</sup>

One of the ways that leaders of the Mount Pleasant asylum sought to build professional authority, then, was by setting the physical and moral architecture of the asylum over against that of the private home. While the asylum was meant to be "home-like" in its care, capitalizing on the still powerful ideals of domesticity, it nonetheless identified the home as a cause of mental illness, and the asylum's monumental architecture suggested its distance from the home. The very architecture of many asylums was paradoxical, as "domestic" interiors coexisted with

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20. For listings of structural problems, see *Third Biennial Report* (1866) and *Sixth Biennial Report* (1872).

21. *Sixth Biennial Report* (1872), 14.

monumental, public exteriors. Indeed, for those who worked and stayed at the Mount Pleasant asylum, home and asylum were not so distinct from one another. The asylum could function as a home, and home as a repressive institution; the home could also provide respite from the asylum as a busy, disordered, and exhausting place.<sup>22</sup>

From the start, the Mount Pleasant asylum's design cast doubt on the nostalgic ideal of the independent settler's rural home by identifying it as the culprit. Superintendent Patterson wrote in 1863 that "it will seem strange that among the rural population of Iowa, . . . while quietly engaged in the peaceful pursuits of agriculture, any considerable number of people . . . , especially the wives and daughters of farmers, become insane."<sup>23</sup> Patterson was both responding to citizens' diagnoses of their own family members and stressing that the private family home, far from a refuge, was a restrictive environment, particularly for women who were least able to leave it. He stressed that women on the farm were removed from social and physical entertainments and confined to homes that were less than technologically modern — they suffered from poor ventilation and heating and desolate surroundings.

In some ways, then, alienists such as Patterson participated, along with nineteenth-century household theorists from Catherine Beecher to Charlotte Perkins Gilman, in the larger critique of households as repressive and unenlightened. Long before Betty Friedan identified "the problem that has no name" in 1963, material feminists of the mid-nineteenth century argued that the poor design of homes was partially responsible for women's social repression. By redesigning the home itself for efficiency (in the case of Beecher) or more radically (in the case of Gilman) to eliminate those features of the home that trapped women in unending rounds of household labor, these feminists argued that social, political, and economic power for women began at home. By the later decades of the nineteenth century, some feminists were criticizing domesticity itself as fundamentally repressive — that political power could come only through

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22. Yanni, *Architecture of Madness*, 55.

23. *Second Biennial Report* (1864), 24.



economic and social power gained outside the home, through professional work and wage labor. Rather than a bastion of morality and font of civic identity, the home, many social reformers argued, was more often a repressive, premodern, fundamentally limiting institution in need of radical change. These female reformers continued to see the home as a place that could become modern, though, through better technology, efficiency, and a broader understanding of the roles of women.<sup>24</sup>

Rather than advocating change in the home itself or through broader roles for women, however, Patterson lauded the asylum as a social, moral, and architectural alternative to the home, where, in Iowa, “the wives and daughters of farmers” were particularly susceptible to mental illness due to poor home construction and limited social opportunities. This echoes a larger late nineteenth-century phenomenon: even as the nineteenth-century “cult of domesticity” was being celebrated as the foundation of an orderly society, state governments and philanthropic institutions were also encouraging the movement of some of the order-making mechanisms of the home — including health care — to institutions. Industrial schools, settlement houses, reformatories, hospitals, and asylums adopted many of the ideals of domesticity but took on the function of teaching those ideals in state-sponsored and professional settings.<sup>25</sup>

Patterson’s and Ranney’s reports highlight the state’s ability to do what the family could not. In his 1876 report, Ranney appealed to the board of trustees for increased funding by explaining that mental illness implied a need for care that could not be met by families, and that attempts to care for such individuals at home could actually worsen the situation: “the insane person’s own will and power of self-control being perverted or destroyed, the will of others must be substituted instead, and that often for months and years. It was long since found by experi-

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24. On material feminism, see Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities* (Cambridge, MA, 1981).

25. *Second Biennial Report* (1864), 24–25. On the institutionalization of domesticity, see Laura Wexler, “Tender Violence: Domestic Photographs, Domestic Fictions, and Educational Reforms,” in Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2000).

ence that generally the will or judgment of others than those of the patient's own household and kin could be beneficially substituted." Ranney justified the asylum as a "modern" hospital — and legitimated the expenses associated with it — by arguing that the need for the asylum arose directly from families' inexperienced care for the mentally ill.<sup>26</sup>

Most prominently, the asylum's imposing design and scale signaled its difference from home life by highlighting organization and control. For example, the building's scale and central placement of administrative offices in the rotunda differed from the single-family home. Separate rooms for various activities such as sleeping, eating, socializing, and working made visible the "moral regimen" of treatment plans and showed families how patients would be encouraged to regulate themselves under the supervision of a host of hospital personnel — a feat difficult for the typical wife and mother to achieve (fig. 8). More so than any private home, the hospital was able to dedicate many rooms to specific physical functions: rooms to eat, wash, receive treatment, sleep, pray, be entertained. This emphasized the asylum's ability to control patients' various activities based on the rooms designed to accommodate them. The remedy for a disordered home life lay in creating a stable, regulated environment and scheduled activities that healed through "the change of scenery and associations; change of habits of life."<sup>27</sup>

BUT FOR WOMEN who worked and lived at the asylum, the lines between home and work may have been more permeable than Patterson and his successors implied. Former Civil War nurse Rhoda Amanda Shelton, who kept a diary during her tenure as asylum bookkeeper in 1866, regarded the asylum as both home and workplace. She describes late nights spent working with Ranney or his wife, Catherine, the matron; visits from the board of trustees to inspect her accounting work; "reading aloud to the ladies"; and her work with a women's sewing class. Her own office space likely legitimated her work, and Ranney signified his esteem by giving her keys to the wom-

26. Tomes, *The Art of Asylum-Keeping*, 114, 127; *History of Henry County*, 438–39.

27. *First Biennial Report* (1864), 30; Prior, "The Architecture of the Hospital," 105.

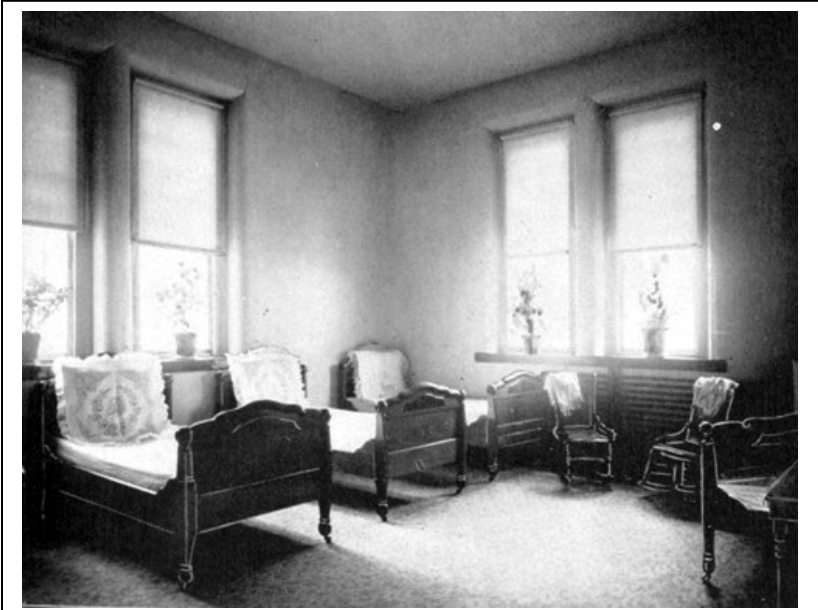


Figure 8. Dormitory in the west wing, ca. 1890s. From State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

en's ward. "I have keys to the Ladies side of the house," she announced in her diary — access to space, in this case, was a way of signifying professional responsibility. "My visits to the wards are always a source of great pleasure to me," she wrote, and the patients' appreciation of her was "gratifying for I feel my life is not quite useless." Interestingly, Shelton identifies her interactions with patients as satisfying, while she describes her book-keeping as a source of some anxiety.<sup>28</sup>

But her status as worker blends into her personal life, for the asylum was also her home. She documents social relationships with supervisors, ward attendants, and even patients. Although the wards where the "excitable" patients were kept distressed her, she visited patients in their parlors, reading and sewing with them, and attended evening dances with patients. She also regarded the grounds as an extension of home space, frequently

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28. Sharon E. Wood, "'My Life Is Not Quite Useless': The 1866 Diary of an Asylum Bookkeeper," *Palimpsest* 70 (1989), 11–12.

gathering flowers for the wards or playing croquet. Her work seems to have given her both professional and personal purpose, while her interactions with patients also seem to have affected her deeply. She “went to the window and looked up into the ‘starry deep’ and thought of the concentrated agony in this house,” she wrote one evening — following her ruminations with the note that “I am learning to play croquet — play chess with Miss Bell quite frequently.” Her diary moves almost seamlessly from the patients’ social and living spaces to her own, from the disorder and distress of the wards to the peacefulness of her own quarters and social interactions. The walls of the asylum serve to hold in the “concentrated agony” of the mentally ill who were unable to function in society even as they provided a homelike refuge in which Shelton could cultivate her professional identity and her personal relationships.<sup>29</sup>

Coworkers were her confidantes, but patients were also members of her social circle. They attended dances together and even spoke intimately together, indicating that Shelton was touched as well affirmed by hearing the stories of patients, who ranged from mothers who had suffered breakdowns to a former attorney general of the state. Shelton often entered the wards to socialize with patients, but she also documents at least one case in which a patient visited her: “This morning as I sat in my Office writing Mr. Clark — the patient who brings me flowers so often — came in with a bouquet and a paper basket that would hold a quart, full of blackberries.” For Shelton, the asylum’s scale and diversity may have provided a freedom to move around social spaces that were more difficult for women to cross in public, as “home” and “work” both took place in the asylum’s microcosm of society.<sup>30</sup>

Perhaps because the asylum may have provided an empowering space for women like Shelton who worked there, women physicians tended to share the ideas of alienists that the causes of mental illness for women were primarily environmental. Like Patterson, Jennie McCowen, a graduate of the University of

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29. *Ibid.*, 9–10. Wood points out that Shelton was also recovering from her own distress: she had lost her brother in the Civil War and faced the horrors of battle herself while serving as a nurse during the war. *Ibid.*, 3.

30. *Ibid.*, 10.

Iowa's College of Medicine who became the women's physician at the Mount Pleasant asylum in 1875, claimed that the causes of illness for many women were their homebound lives, their "monotony of work and thought," and their lack of access to the spaces and freedoms that men enjoyed. On the other hand, McCowen's predecessor in the position, Margaret Abigail (Abbie) Cleaves, who was hired as the asylum's first female physician in 1873 (only the second woman in the nation to be hired in such a capacity), acknowledged the pressures of environment in mental illness even as she averred that "true neurasthenes [the condition from which she herself suffered] are born initially, not made" and their illnesses were exacerbated by the pressures of life. She attributed her own illness to a nerve disorder, but in her autobiography Cleaves lauded the benefits of "an environment, inviting content and happiness" and lamented that many of her own stresses in life came from attempts to be a caregiver, "with no one to look after me."<sup>31</sup>

Cleaves's autobiography testifies to the cultural ideal of home even as it acknowledges the paradoxical relationship between home and work in her own life. Her *Autobiography of a Neurasthene* (1910) looks back fondly on her childhood in Iowa, describing the health and sunshine of Iowa as a "pioneer land" and nostalgically pining for a return to that "simple life." But she also identifies her brother's and father's deaths as sources of

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31. Nancy M. Theriot, "Women's Voices in Nineteenth-Century Medical Discourse: A Step Toward Deconstructing Science," *Signs* 19 (1993), 12, 15; Margaret Abigail Cleaves, *The Autobiography of a Neurasthene* (Boston, 1910), 18, 20, 46. For biographical information on Cleaves, see, in addition to her *Autobiography*, Constance M. McGovern, "Doctors or Ladies?: Women Physicians in Psychiatric Institutions, 1872-1900," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 55 (1981), 88-107; Sharon E. Wood, *The Freedom of the Streets: Work, Citizenship, and Sexuality in a Gilded Age City* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2005), 61-62; and *Des Moines Register*, 7/16/1880. Cleaves's hiring was part of a trend on the part of psychiatry to combat the growing influence of obstetrics, a feminized field that was also seeking to legitimate professional authority through medicalization and the use of hospital treatments and surgeries. The majority of women at asylums had always been diagnosed with "female problems" thought to stem from childbirth, menstruation, and "hysteria." These common diagnoses meant that psychiatrists might lose authority over patients to the fields of gynecology and obstetrics, and one response by state asylums was to hire female physicians as part of their staffs to supervise treatment of "female" problems and to preserve psychiatry's interest in the mental health of women. See Theriot, "Women's Voices."

early psychic distress, along with what she saw as her mother's role and her own: "but after all what is woman's life, — whether wife mother or that of a doctor — but watching and waiting." Her autobiography does not specifically mention her time at the Mount Pleasant asylum, but she traces her own neurasthenic condition to the pressures of her work life and her inability to find rest even at home. She notes that at about the time she opened her private practice (in Davenport), "My environment had reached a degree of supersaturation with the pains and problems of life." While Shelton seemed to find comfort and direction in her work at the hospital, Cleaves, who was clearly passionate about her work, nonetheless lamented her inability to make her home a space free of work-related concerns. Cleaves clung to an ideal of home as a refuge from work, even as she acknowledged the centrality of her work to her very identity.<sup>32</sup>

For female patients, the asylum's distinct architecture may have represented medical and institutional answers to social and familial problems they faced at home. Women patients may have consented to surgical therapies as a method of birth control in an era when reliable birth control methods were illegal and unavailable. Likewise, asylums provided temporary relief for women suffering from emotional breakdowns in an era in which wife- and motherhood was idealized. The asylum's work and leisure spaces "enabled women with minor illnesses to recuperate in a way that was impossible when surrounded with the stresses of everyday life at home." Shelton mentions several women at the asylum who were plagued by anxieties about their children or homes — one always feared that her children were starving. In an era when home was where women were supposed to find fulfillment, the loss of home or children could be a cause of mental illness. A suicidal woman who attempted to escape the asylum in 1866 revealed to Shelton that "her home was burnt down & all she had with it which caused her insanity. . . . She has one of the saddest faces I ever saw."<sup>33</sup>

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32. Cleaves, *Autobiography*, 33, 40, 56.

33. Theriot, "Women's Voices," 22; Terbenche, "'Curative' and 'Custodial,'" 46-47; Wood, "My Life is Not Quite Useless," 11.

Asylums like the one at Mount Pleasant may also have provided necessary spaces for long-term female patients who, in the migratory social landscape of nineteenth-century Iowa, may have had no family to care for them. The necessary “custodial” spaces of the asylum, then, may have been a response to changing patterns of mobility as well as to the very social shift they helped to produce: the movement of long-term caregiving responsibilities from home to institutions. Shelton notes at least one young girl at the asylum, being treated for “fits,” whose “Mother is poor and cannot support her.” Women like Cleaves and McCowen made their career choices in the midst of these transitions, for as unmarried women, both found themselves thrown upon their own resources for economic survival and chose to follow the movement of caregiving from home to hospital by becoming professionals.<sup>34</sup>

Shelton’s diary, Cleaves’s autobiography, and the concerns of women patients suggest a critique of home life as unable to provide healthy and empowering environments for women: both Shelton and Cleaves sought affirmation in their workspaces, and female patients sought relief at the asylum. But all also laud those traits traditionally associated with domesticity — rest, morality, healthfulness, and personal fulfillment — and lament the loss of those ideals in the homes from which they came. The asylum thus reflects, both in its architecture and in the ways individuals experienced that architecture, the conflicted relationship between domesticity and the institutional powers that sought to assume control over some aspects of private life in the mid- to late nineteenth century.

IN THE LATER DECADES of the nineteenth century, tensions between institutional authority and domestic ideology shaped debates over new design at the growing Mount Pleasant asylum. State and hospital authorities weighed the merits of a new form of asylum architecture on the rise in the 1870s and ’80s generally called the cottage plan or system. The movement, underway in 1884 when the Iowa legislature appropriated more construction

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34. Terbenche, “‘Curative’ and ‘Custodial,’” 49; Wood, “‘My Life is Not Quite Useless,’” 10.

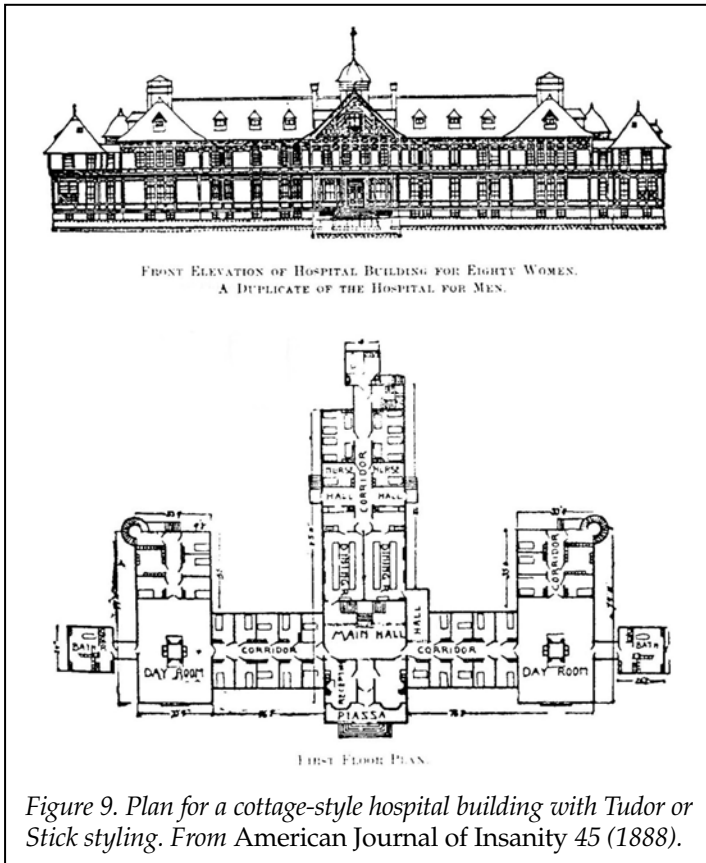
funds and began to debate the design of the asylum addition, allowed some patients to live and work apart from the main building in “cottages” that were more like the architecture of private homes than of public institutions. The combination of smaller buildings would be cheaper and suggested a community that lived, worked, and ate together in separate structures. In 1887 the AMSAII revised the Kirkbride propositions for the first time, rejecting some of the older principles in favor of this more modern but still “attractive and impressive” style.<sup>35</sup> At the Mount Pleasant asylum, the selective adaptation of the cottage plan shows the continuing power of the domestic ideal, but suggests that the architectural ideal of the middle-class home could be embraced even as the asylum persisted in and even heightened its tendency toward the institutional goals that consolidated state authority.

This new style of architecture kept the old design principles such as classification, variation of activities, regulation, and pleasantness of surroundings, but the detached style and smaller buildings echoed the architecture of private homes and thus emphasized personal liberty and the integrity of individuals. The cottage style was influenced by nineteenth-century architectural trends that valorized the suburban family home. Doctors still worried that mental illnesses were bred at home, but they — and the culture at large — continued to idealize the rural cottage as an antidote to the trials of urban living, for the home was the place where “individuality takes its most natural and strongest development.” Architects such as Andrew Jackson Downing regarded the rural cottage as an essentially American architecture, one that represented “the best character and pursuits, and the dearest affections and enjoyments of social life.” In its revised propositions of 1888, the AMSAII presented a cottage design in which all of the buildings were in the Tudor or Stick style popular in larger resort homes of the era. The buildings offered a variety of symmetrical and asymmetrical designs, although the Stick style served to break up the surfaces of even the more rigidly symmetrical buildings (fig. 9). Where regularity was the rule in the Kirkbride plan, physicians now asserted

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35. “Report of the Special Committee on Revision of the ‘Propositions’ of the Association,” *American Journal of Insanity* 45 (1888), 56.





that the variety of the cottage system was the way to address the monotonous life “which is too often the type of the rural household, and which in so many instances begets mental disease among farmers and their wives.”<sup>36</sup>

The adoption of the cottage plan at various state and public institutions in the decades after the Civil War was influenced by a number of factors. One was the attitude of physicians toward the growing population of “incurable” cases, which included the chronically ill, elderly suffering from dementia, and some-

36. A. J. Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850; reprint, New York, 1969), xix, xx; Leland M. Roth, *A Concise History of American Architecture* (New York, 1979), 155; “The Colony System in Michigan,” *American Journal of Insanity* 43 (1887), 577.

times, the criminally insane. Under the doctrine of the moral cure, these cases needed to be permanently separated from those that were curable. Erecting separate buildings for such patients could, some physicians believed, make it possible to provide them with the care they needed while preserving the climate of cure for the curable so central to Kirkbride's linear plan.<sup>37</sup>

Moreover, by the last decades of the nineteenth century, the mounting opinion that insanity was hereditary among certain "classes" of citizens, particularly the poor and immigrant groups, influenced both physicians and the public to rethink the image of the asylum. Popular opinion emphasized the "palatial" architecture reminiscent of the European monarchy, which Mount Pleasant Superintendent H. A. Gilman saw as partly responsible for the classes of insane that overpopulated his asylum: "European countries becoming overwhelmed by the cries and demands of the defective, criminal, and mendicant classes, whose misfortunes and crimes are largely due to the grinding hand of a monarchical system of government, or the corrupt social system, born and nurtured in royalty, have sought a sewer for the elimination of these masses of corruption and decay." Sensational publications such as Elizabeth Packard's *Modern Persecution; or, Insane Asylums Unveiled* (1873), Francis Delilez's *The True Cause of Insanity Explained; or, The Terrible Experiences of an Insane, Related by Himself* (1888), and Nellie Bly's stunt reporting on her masquerade as a neurasthenic at Blackwell's Island in 1887 fueled perceptions of asylum architecture as less a country home than a Gothic palace that wrongly restrained the healthy, a dangerous world opposed to the home in which innocent men and women were taken away from their proper social roles and misdiagnosed as threats. Sensationalism suggested that the design of seclusion and central authority as well as the "Elizabethan" detailing of the structures themselves had been redesigned in the public mind.<sup>38</sup>

Superintendent Ranney recognized that public distrust of the asylum had its basis in the architecture that encouraged

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37. Yanni, *Architecture of Madness*, 83.

38. *Fourteenth Biennial Report* (1888), 22; Jean Marie Lutes, "Into the Madhouse with Nellie Bly: Girl Stunt Reporting in Late Nineteenth-Century America," *American Quarterly* 54 (2002), 217-53.

isolation and seclusion of patients and staff. In 1880 he wrote, "Within a few years there has been a good deal of clack and clamor in some quarters about the expense of maintaining the insane and the great cost of the palatial structures reared for this care." Several years earlier he had lamented that "the wards are all so nearly alike both in appearance of their constructive arrangements and furnishings . . . with its inevitable corridor and rows of rooms on either side; the patient going from one to another finds little else than to live, perhaps a rather dreary monotony of sameness that gives no relief"; there was "little of that variety of form, furnishing, occupation, diversion [or] inducements to self-control." He granted that some asylums were too ornamental, referring to them as "grand piles of brick and stone," and went on to suggest that taste need not be sacrificed if large buildings were no longer the norm: the "simple break of outlines and inexpensive groupings, may be as pleasant as the most ornate and ambitious architecture."<sup>39</sup>

For mental health professionals such as Superintendents Ranney and Gilman, design was becoming less important as mental illness itself was pathologized. Physicians' efforts to remedy mental illness increasingly focused on the architecture of the brain rather than the architecture of the asylum; they attributed mental effects more often to lesions on the brain and to inherited illness. Psychiatrists sought to define themselves more narrowly as medical specialists rather than as possessing broader knowledge and skills — architectural, supervisory, and medical. Moral causes were relegated to the background as nutritional deficiencies, nerve disorders, and cerebral anomalies became the focus of attention and helped physicians legitimate their authority through new medical technologies rather than through the technologies of the asylum itself. Accordingly, Superintendent Gilman's biennial reports used photography to include images not only of the buildings' interiors but also photographic images of the diseased brain.

The emphasis on separate buildings and domestic styling also reflects trends evident in other public institutions at the time. College campuses, for example, like cottage-style asylums,

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39. *Eleventh Biennial Report* (1882), 40–41; *Ninth Biennial Report* (1878), 33.

began to use detached dormitories and strove to inculcate civic principles in their populations. Institutions meant to reform “deviant” classes also emphasized domestic living as a way to teach inhabitants the virtues of citizenship: model homes for immigrants and boarding schools for African Americans and American Indians also incorporated cottage-style dormitories and buildings in the belief that domestic work and arrangements fostered ideals of cleanliness, discipline, cooperation, and self-policing essential to citizenship. Such institutions suggested the loving environment of home even as they aimed to indoctrinate unruly or un-American “others” into civic life in more rigid and systematic ways than the family home ever could.<sup>40</sup>

The joint committee of the Iowa General Assembly that visited Mount Pleasant in 1884 to assess its needs pressed for “the erection of detached cottages, on the score of safety, economy, and sanitary reasons.” This “outside” group supported the new plan, regarding the older tradition of building colossal structures as passé. Unlike early descriptions of the hospital that praised its technology, advanced sanitary systems, and sophisticated system of care, the committee now suggested that patients would do better in more homelike conditions and that the scale of the central building was actually a detriment to cleanliness and care.<sup>41</sup>

In a move that displays ambivalence about the cottage plan’s more diffuse forms of control as well as struggles between state authorities and asylum leaders, the trustees ignored the committee’s move toward modernity and instead requested funds to build extensions onto the existing wings of the hospital to house more than 300 patients. The additions were large — 120 feet long and four stories high — and exceeded the allotted expense. Chicago architects Willett and Pashley — who had previously designed an asylum at Kankakee, Illinois, that combined the cottage system with a linear hospital — worked under Gilman to complete, by 1887, the east and west wings that turned the institution into a sprawling expanse (fig. 10). In this case,

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40. See Yanni, *Architecture of Madness*, 79–104.

41. *Report of the Joint Committee of the Twenty-first General Assembly of the State of Iowa, Appointed to Visit the Hospital for the Insane Located at Mount Pleasant* (Des Moines, 1886); Wesley Shank, *The Iowa Catalog: Historic American Buildings Survey* (Iowa City, 1979), 19.



Figure 10. Mount Pleasant Hospital for the Insane, ca. 1900. From State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

Gilman and the trustees seem to have won the struggle to preserve the authority of the superintendent to supervise patients, which many asylum physicians believed would be too difficult to maintain in the cottage system.<sup>42</sup>

Nonetheless, Gilman did make some concessions to the cottage system, especially when it came to community outreach. In 1890 an amusement hall was built at the back of the center building. It was meant not only for the entertainment of the patients but also for the local community to benefit from the concerts, lectures, dances, and “magic lantern” shows held here. In 1894 an industrial building for men was built, and in 1896 appropriations were made for infirmaries for aging men and women who had “helped change the state from a wilderness to a garden” by building homes and schools and fighting the Civil War (fig. 11). The Mount Pleasant asylum became a hybrid sort of construction, combining the original building’s monumental expanse with smaller, more homelike yet just as specialized

42. Shank, *Iowa Catalog*, 19; Yanni, *Architecture of Madness*, 90–95.

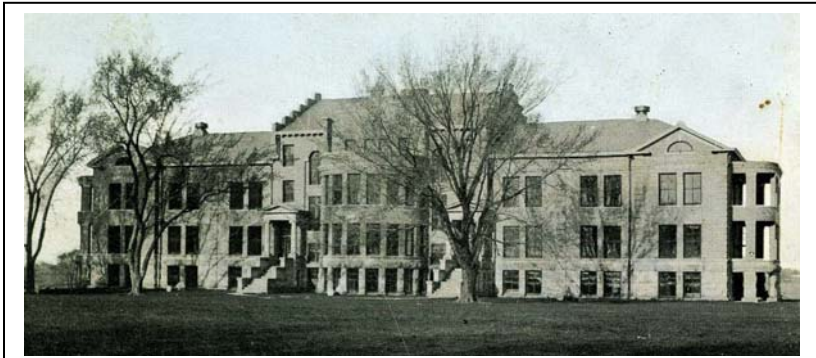


Figure 11. Ladies' Infirmary, Mount Pleasant Hospital for the Insane, ca. 1900. Postcard courtesy Iowa Wesleyan College Archives.

spaces for long-term, aged patients not expected to recover. The mixed architecture present on the Mount Pleasant asylum grounds by the turn of the century echoes changes in the ways patients were being categorized: the older building suggests an understanding of mental illness that emphasized environment and used design to classify and control patients; the newer, segregated buildings show how “homelike” design could become a patina on more systematic and statistical ways of evaluating and categorizing patients.<sup>43</sup>

In 1898 the legislature established a new State Board of Control of Institutions, which signaled the consolidation of state control and the loss of Gilman's independence as a designer. The move served to separate the roles of architect and physician that the superintendent had once simultaneously embodied. The board of trustees was abolished and replaced by the Board of Control, which oversaw a variety of state institutions, including prisons, reform schools, and homes for the blind and deaf. The new board made decisions about plans, materials, architects, and labor and was also responsible for collecting statistics about the populations served by the institutions.<sup>44</sup>

The mixed design of the institution at the turn of the century reflects other ways that the Mount Pleasant facility may

43. Yanni, *Architecture of Madness*, 89.

44. Shank, *Iowa Catalog*, 22–24; *Nineteenth Biennial Report* (1898), 8; *Seventeenth Biennial Report* (1894), 9–13.

have been struggling with transitions to more modern, statistical ways of viewing citizens. In 1899 the American Statistical Association praised the new Iowa State Board of Control for its "exhaustive" statistical tables of all inhabitants of state institutions. The "model document" organized patients according to race, nativity, "hereditary tendencies," and more precise categories of employment, among others. One exception, however, was the Mount Pleasant asylum, which still categorized 90 percent of its female patients as "domestics," not recording the occupation of the head of her family, which statisticians believed would provide a more accurate understanding of the "social environment" from which she came. While the leaders of the Mount Pleasant asylum were moving towards less architectural and more categorical ways of approaching mental illness, there may have been a lingering sensibility that home as a defining social force still had valence.<sup>45</sup>

The conflicts over and selective use of the separate structures at Mount Pleasant show concurrent ways of thinking about the relationship between homes and institutions. The original asylum appeared to be homelike in the values it inculcated in its patients, but its monumental and systematic architecture distinguished it from the homes that were believed to have instigated the problem in the first place; it used design to define deviance and control patients' bodies through specialized rooms and organization. The cottage system symbolized a reversal of that view: While the structures appeared homelike, systems of order prevailed within, treatment was increasingly medicalized, and authority operated at a farther remove, shifting from the superintendent to the State Board of Control. As the cottage system came to prevail in the early twentieth century, more domestic forms of architecture were accompanied by more diffuse and systematic forms of control represented by statistics and professional medical authority. Structures that physically separated genders and coded spaces in terms of treatment, work, and leisure activities increasingly were replaced by bureaucratic structures that codified patients by form of illness, class, race, and gender.<sup>46</sup>

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45. C. E. A. Winslow, "Review: Statistics of Institutions," *Publications of the American Statistical Association* 7 (September 1900), 35–37.

46. Yanni, *Architecture of Madness*, 103; Erica Lilleleht, "Progress and Power," 178.

THE STORY of the Mount Pleasant asylum is in many ways a familiar one to historians of mental health: ambitiously constructed at mid-century, by the turn of the century the structure was deteriorating, overcrowded, and undergoing a shift from the central, localized authority of the superintendent to the bureaucratic control of the state. The sprawling asylum continued to operate until 1936, when a fire destroyed most of the original building. But the history of the asylum is more than a story of the literal rise and fall of a particular type of architecture; instead, the asylum's design responded to struggles within the society of nineteenth-century Iowa itself to understand the meaning of home, work, gender roles, domestic virtues, and institutional authority even as it created new situations, relationships, and interactions that affected the public, asylum workers, and patients alike. The metaphor of home and family so often invoked by administrators was not just an allusion to a simple ideal; the conflicted meaning of "home" as an incubator for social life and as a physically and socially flawed space invests this comparison with historical value. The history of the Mount Pleasant asylum reveals ways that public architecture exists in close relationship with understandings of the benefits and limits of domestic space. Even as superintendents attempted to reassure officials, families, and patients that the building's design would provide homes for the needy, the intention was to impress citizens with its difference from domestic architecture and the relationships that, to their minds, often caused disorder. And while the building's spaces reinforced nineteenth-century domestic values, such as separation of spheres, central authority, and moral self-control, the design of the asylum and the experiences of workers and patients implied a critique of home life that ultimately was part of larger movements toward institution-building and professionalization in the late nineteenth century.<sup>47</sup>

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47. Today, the Mental Health Institute and the Mount Pleasant prison facility occupy the site of the original Mount Pleasant asylum.



# African American Migration to the Midwest: A Review Essay

ALLISON GORSUCH

*Emancipation's Diaspora: Race and Reconstruction in the Upper Midwest*, by Leslie Schwalm. The John Hope Franklin Series in African American History and Culture. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. xii, 387 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, graphs, notes, bibliography, index. \$65.00 cloth, \$24.95 paper.

*A Little More Freedom: African Americans Enter the Urban Midwest, 1860–1930*, by Jack Blocker. Urban Life and Urban Landscape Series. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2009. xvii, 330 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, graphs, appendixes, notes, index. \$49.95 cloth.

LESLIE SCHWALM'S *Emancipation's Diaspora: Race and Reconstruction in the Upper Midwest* and Jack Blocker's *A Little More Freedom: African Americans Enter the Urban Midwest, 1860–1930* are two very different books that expand our historical understanding of black migration and presence in the Midwest after the Civil War. Both works tell the story of southern blacks moving northward to settle in a region loosely defined as "the Midwest." Schwalm's book traces the development and movement of ideas and ideologies as well as people; Blocker's traces the physical movement and economic development of populations. Each work also covers different geographical spaces; Schwalm includes Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota while Blocker profiles Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. This essay will provide a review of

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each work independently before asking questions raised by these two works: What is the Midwest, and why does that definition matter when studying African American migration? How can historians further the concept of “place” in terms of African American migration?

LESLIE SCHWALM'S *Emancipation's Diaspora* provides a new look at the Midwest, particularly the state of Iowa, through the legacy of slavery. Schwalm emphasizes that African Americans who lived in the postbellum upper Midwest often had been enslaved themselves. The legacy of slavery influenced the ideas that African Americans living in the postwar Midwest had about this “land of freedom” as they lived, worked, and fought for civil rights (15).

Iowa provides the main stage for this book, and many of its arguments are rooted in Iowa places. Schwalm shows that almost half of Iowa counties received their first black residents between 1860 and 1870; by 1870, only 16 percent of Iowa counties had no black residents. She profiles two small towns with African American residents, Muscatine and Keokuk. The latter became home to many growing African American institutions in the antebellum period. Later, it was the site of escalating racial tensions brought on by the economic crisis of 1857. Keokuk was also a base of black Union enlistment during the war.

Most of Schwalm's sources originated in Iowa, with additional materials from Minnesota, Illinois, Missouri, and Wisconsin. She includes materials from many cities across Iowa, in the form of newspapers, institutional records, family papers, and governmental records. Other sources include slave narratives from other states, the National Archives for war records, and much published primary material. This diversity of sources — from men and women, and local and national archives — creates an especially rich base of evidence that tells the story of Iowa, but also of the region and the country as a whole.

Schwalm's work revolves around the experiences of free and enslaved African Americans in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. These states — though legally devoid of slavery under the Northwest Ordinance and each state's constitution — participated in the wrenching horror of the slave trade, harbored

slaves on “sojourn,” continued slavery through indentured servitude, and absorbed the “social landscape” of southern slavery (3). Black laws prevented free African Americans from settling in Iowa. Minnesota and Wisconsin also considered bills to restrict black migration, although the bills never passed. Seen through such laws, attitudes of racial hierarchy meant that as black southerners made their way north — or as northern black residents made their way through life — white midwesterners felt threatened by the social mobility of African Americans signified through their physical mobility from South to North. White midwesterners tried in different ways to restrict blacks’ physical mobility through laws, discrimination, and violence. Part of the Midwest’s contract with the Union, it seemed, was that African Americans would remain a southern problem. When the Civil War began, that contract was suddenly broken.

After the outbreak of the Civil War, African Americans began moving to the Midwest in greater numbers. Black men and women used the war as a chance to move north; more than 6,000 African Americans escaped slavery while the Civil War raged. At first, official Union policy did not support escaping slaves, and troops often returned slaves to their masters. After the passage of the Confiscation Act and the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, that practice diminished. The war also provided an opportunity for freedom for slaves in the Union slave states of Missouri and Kentucky; although the proclamation did not apply to those border states, they were the source of over a third of the sampled wartime migrants to the upper Midwest.

Enslaved people who seized the opportunity of wartime disruption to leave their masters took a number of different paths. More than 70,000 black men signed up to serve in the Union army. The war also provided an opportunity for women — who previously had fewer opportunities to escape slavery — to free themselves by moving behind Union army lines. Some women moved north in informal arrangements with Union soldiers to assist those midwestern soldiers’ families at home — a dubious escape from slavery, but part of the diversity of wartime migration experience that Schwalm uncovers. Another wartime migration movement began in 1862, when former slaves found

themselves in relocation camps as part of an organized relocation movement. Traveling in boxcars, large numbers of formerly enslaved people — mainly women and children — were moved to border places such as Cairo, Illinois, and St. Louis, Missouri, and then on to other towns in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. Such government-organized relocations were not only uncomfortable but unsafe due to threats of slave kidnapers and violence. By showing the on-the-ground experiences of black migrants during the Civil War, Schwalm changes the face of the wartime Midwest: not only were African Americans migrating northward, but they also found racism and violence alive and well there as in the South.

As these newly free African Americans made their way north during the war, white midwesterners came to a new realization: “that the consequences of emancipation extended well beyond the slaveholding South” (81). White midwesterners saw relief for freedmen as stealing from white families who had also been hit hard by the war, especially those living in areas with white-Indian conflict. Restrictive black laws were a way to control the perceived threat of black immigration; in Iowa, white residents celebrated an anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation before beginning legal proceedings against a freed slave who had emigrated in violation of an 1851 law. Because the refugees from the South were often women working for white women, conflict was not simply racialized but also gendered, as white men felt their authority threatened. The war had disrupted the way things were.

This sense of disruption continued in many aspects of midwestern life. Free black men who had previously migrated north later enlisted in the military, much to the discomfort of white midwesterners. Even though black soldiers were a military necessity — helping “turn the tide of war” for a Union victory — white midwesterners resisted black enlistment because, as Schwalm puts it, “recent arrivals in the upper Midwest . . . linked their geographic migration to their social migration — from slaves to contraband property, from contrabands to soldiers, from soldiers to citizens” (108). But at no point were black soldiers guaranteed acceptance and citizenship because of their service. In fact, northern whites eventually agreed with the policy

of enlisting black men because it would prevent those black men from settling immediately in the North and lessened the need for a draft. Despite these circumstances, many African Americans viewed soldiering as an important step to full citizenship, although some protested their unfair working conditions.

Keokuk, Iowa, became the rendezvous point for black enlistment in the Mississippi River valley because of Missouri's restrictive laws on arming African Americans. That concentration of enlistment allows Schwalm to argue, using pension records, that the great majority of men enlisting were former slaves, not people who had been free before the war. The records of the 60th Regiment — Iowa's "Colored Infantry" regiment — show the potential for great change during wartime: black men changed their surnames upon enlistment, worked hard to defy the public perception of black men as lazy or oversexed, and returned to the South to fight for the Union. Those soldiers' working conditions were brutal, the work was strenuous and uncelebrated, and disease was rampant. The call to serve extended as well to some African American women who accompanied their husbands to war as unofficial nurses and cooks.

After the Civil War, the legacy of slavery continued to influence life for both white and black midwesterners. Economic opportunity brought many black migrants to places like Keokuk, but they soon found that jobs for black people were low paying and menial, with industrial and professional employment inaccessible. Women worked as domestic laborers, often as servants. Men were mostly day laborers. The meager wages they earned went to keeping their families; any extra earnings went to the new AME and Baptist churches in Muscatine and Keokuk. Such institutions as fraternal organizations, churches, and political groups were spaces for public discourse, especially about gender and sexuality. For example, gender roles were often discussed in churches, where ideas grew increasingly conservative. Women had a voice in church proceedings, but were often overruled by men. In reality, it took black men and women together to build a church, but the dynamics of race and gender took their toll on religious equality. When black men were the subject of racialized and stereotyping attacks by whites, as they

often were in the postwar period, they responded by reinforcing their gendered roles. That gendering of the black community was an effect of the midwestern legacy of slavery.

As a result, it was black men who built the fraternal organizations that “became principal sites for the articulation of evolving racial ideologies, race organizing, and masculine identity” (157). Schwalm’s discussion of these fraternal organizations stresses the ways gender and race influenced the organization of various lodges across the Midwest, especially Prince Hall Masonry. Many white Masons resisted the inclusion of black lodges, although black Masons “engaged in an extensive but focused campaign against white Masonic racism” (164). By 1881, Iowa had 11 Prince Hall lodges with 250 members and it was time for a Grand Lodge open to blacks. This campaign for institutional freedom from the Missouri-controlled parent organization replete with white supremacy marked an important step for African American culture, although it came at the expense of women by promoting patriarchal black male authority.

The questions of earlier chapters — how slavery and Reconstruction were received by midwestern whites as southern problems were brought north — come into clearer focus as Schwalm turns her attention to African Americans’ fight for citizenship in the postbellum period. As Schwalm notes, many historians ignore the northern battles for education, suffrage, and citizenship — especially those fought by women. As black men struggled for the right to vote, they also wanted to serve on juries and receive equal public accommodation, while black women fought for equal access to public education and civil rights. Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa did enfranchise men before the Fifteenth Amendment. Yet, as voting became possible, jury service remained forbidden. Black men’s allegiance to the Republican Party went unrewarded, as the political power of Lincoln’s party was in decline, and what remained was not used for black rights. Racism, although subtle, was present in the Midwest just as in the South, and the North’s legal framework “protected white supremacy” just as the South’s legal system was being dismantled under Reconstruction (181).

Black women increased their demands in a different way — in the courtroom. Cases demanding access to public schools

and public transit were often brought by black women. Beginning in 1850, Iowa limited black children's access to schools, so black parents organized their own schools. Women brought legal and social challenges in courtrooms and classrooms across the Midwest, especially in Iowa. In 1876 two successful court cases brought school desegregation to Iowa. Public transportation cases provided another site of successful challenge for black women. That success had a darker side, though, as the schools that had been successfully founded and run by black parents were now under white control, and black women lost their jobs as teachers.

In 1883 the federal Civil Rights Act was withdrawn and state legislation was still not strong enough to protect the rights of African Americans, leaving black midwesterners frustrated with their "circumscribed political power" (207). Two years later, black midwesterners forged a new way of challenging limited civil rights. Black women began to work with black men, white women, and their own support organizations to achieve change in different arenas. Interracial suffrage movements grew in Iowa, national African American groups formed branches in the Midwest, and women's clubs sprouted up across the country. Despite such efforts, racism and sexism still kept civil rights out of reach.

The legacy of slavery and the Civil War was felt as much in the Midwest as anywhere else. A "culture of reunion" rid the war of any recollection of divisive arguments over substantive issues, and the white media portrayed slavery as a fond memory. The brutal history of midwestern slavery was forgotten, and white midwesterners could pat themselves on the back for their roles in the war and the Underground Railroad. African Americans in Iowa spoke out against such representations through speeches, Emancipation Day celebrations, and other avenues. By the turn of the twentieth century, black women were taking a more outspoken role. Black veterans groups and women's auxiliaries became increasingly important.

Schwalm shows, through detailed research, that slavery was a continued subject of African American conversation and memory. From pension claims, in which women documented their own actions in achieving freedom and always mentioned their

slave pasts, to death notices and obituaries that noted membership in fraternal groups as well as talking about slavery, to slave narratives published by black midwesterners, such documents challenged the dominant contemporary narrative of slavery as something that was only part of a nostalgic southern past. They also challenge current assumptions about the extent to which northern African Americans felt connected with their southern history. Schwalm finds that these memories of slavery have “no corresponding memory of the wide-ranging Reconstruction-era activism for citizenship and civil rights” (262). Even though they were in the upper Midwest, a land that had long been free, African Americans still saw slavery as the most salient issue for their past, present, and future.

*Emancipation's Diaspora* is an important book for all scholars of midwestern history, as it brings to light the Civil War-era African American experience in the North and Midwest. Schwalm's consistent emphasis on gender and race dynamics makes this an especially well-rounded story. The regional focus of African American migration from the border regions and the Mississippi slave south to Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin gives crucial evidence of why the subject of slavery and emancipation is, and should be, important for historians of the Midwest. White midwesterners may have seen themselves as northerners, separated from the South and its brutal legacy of slavery and oppression, but geography — and Schwalm's exemplary research — prove otherwise.

JACK S. BLOCKER'S *A Little More Freedom* tells the story of the more than 750,000 African American migrants to Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois between 1860 and the beginning of the Great Depression. In the first and second parts of his book, Blocker profiles small towns in the Midwest. He primarily uses quantitative methods, but also includes material from memoirs and oral history sources. He aims to show how black migration occurred, examining whether African Americans moved directly to large urban areas or chose to move in “step migration” from town to town until they reached a final destination. In the third part, Blocker looks at the southern conditions that might have contributed to midwestern migration.



The first wave of northward migration occurred during the Civil War period. That movement included mostly poor black families, assisted by white people. Before 1890, migrants were more likely to participate in step migration, meaning that people would move to small towns for short periods of time before settling in a larger city. African Americans chose where to migrate based not on where existing African American communities were located, but where the population was growing quickly and had a rural character that meshed well with the migrants' previous experience. Laws restricting African American settlement in the Midwest also influenced migrants' choices.

Even in this hostile climate, African Americans worked hard to simultaneously build community institutions and achieve political and economic parity in their "adopted communities." In Washington Court House, Ohio, a number of African American families were able to build wealth, even though they were limited to a small number of unskilled occupations. Two small cities called Springfield — one in Illinois, one in Ohio — also became targets for African American migration. Springfield, Ohio, was an industrial city that attracted African Americans mostly from Kentucky, mostly men whom factories employed for the intense labor of metalworking. Housing was less racially segregated than in other towns; work for women was more varied. It also had lower than average homeownership rates and higher rates of black men living with non-kin, which Blocker suggests might be because of the lack of job advancement for African Americans — evidence of white labor groups' growing fear of job competition from blacks, which would manifest itself in the form of racial violence after 1900.

Springfield, Illinois, had a more varied economy than the Ohio metalworking town, attracting families from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. However, that capital city, home of the "Great Emancipator" Abraham Lincoln, was not nearly as popular with black migrants as Springfield, Ohio. Homeownership rates were higher than in many other towns, though still affected by the restricted availability of jobs. Using homeownership data from the Springfields and Washington Court House, Blocker suggests that the economic penalties usually inflicted on black families by work discrimination may have been mitigated in

less urban towns, compared to large cities, perhaps because of the economic power and homeownership rates of African American women. Still, larger cities such as the Springfields were more economically profitable for black families over the long run than smaller towns like Washington Court House. African American migrants employed many strategies for success; living in a big or small town, moving or staying, could all be avenues to homeownership and financial stability.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, race relations were deteriorating across the country, no less in the Midwest. Political activism on the part of black families added to the tension felt by the northern white majority. Metropolitan black families developed their political activism through their migration via smaller towns, where they learned the power of their vote. In Ohio African American votes were in demand before the turn of the century by both parties. Yet, by 1900, politicians had abandoned African American interests, even though small-town African Americans did achieve some political success through their activism.

Conflict also extended beyond the ballot box. As African Americans tried to build new lives in their midwestern homes, white residents saw their new neighbors as "transgressors of . . . community mores" (91). Local police were far harsher on black residents than on whites in Washington Court House, Xenia, and other midwestern towns. Even in states with school desegregation laws, local enforcement was difficult. Labor battles in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois also put African Americans in a tight spot; even though some interracial labor movements had taken off in the 1880s, by the end of that decade the white labor movement had closed its doors to alliances with black workers.

In such circumstances, African Americans continued to work for their political rights, but any political disruption by black midwesterners could lead to violence. The same towns in which African Americans established schools and churches, purchased houses, and raised families in the postwar period became increasingly violent over the 1880s and 1890s. Illinois, Ohio, and Indiana all experienced antiblack violence, often in the same pattern as border states. Conflicts over politics, strikes, and private revenge all prompted terrorist mobs in the Mid-

west, with little protection available to black residents from the police or other state forces.

All of this violence was intensely local. Close examination of stories of midwestern violence in the towns profiled earlier in the book brings the narrative of antiblack violence closer to home and integrates it into the story of migration. In places such as Washington Court House — previously very attractive to black migrants — racial violence, along with job discrimination, caused black migration to stop in the 1890s. Although there were similarities, antiblack violence in the Midwest differed from that in the South in three ways: it was spread out over the year rather than peaking in the summer, “spectacle lynching” was absent, and antiblack violence remained steady in the North over the turn of the century as it declined in the South.

The largest explosions of antiblack violence occurred in Springfield, Illinois, during two “full-scale race riots” (123). There, white mobs targeted saloons owned by African Americans, indicating that white men may have felt threatened by African Americans’ social and class movement. Violent outbursts such as these in the lower Midwest have largely been ignored, even though lynching rates in the lower Midwest during the first decade of the twentieth century equaled those in Georgia and Virginia. Blocker points to the North’s relatively egalitarian laws, noting that in the South increasing legal restrictions on black freedoms meant that southern whites maintained control without having to resort to violence.

African American public voices in the North denounced the racial violence, except in the few cases of black self-defense. For example, the riots in Springfield, Illinois, in 1908 included instances of newspapers positively reporting black Springfield residents fighting back against white violence. Local oral history as well as newspaper reports from the time emphasize African American agency — and that agency extended to many African Americans leaving a town they felt was no longer safe. Black Springfield residents were not just passive victims.

After this period of violence, midwestern migration changed. African American migrants in the 1920s encountered new challenges, which they faced with established resources from those migrants who had settled in the Midwest over the previous 50

years. The newer migrants often came from southern cities. Migration from Kentucky flowed to the urban North, while that from Alabama and Mississippi tended to the West, with African Americans moving for agricultural independence, not urban settlement, although there was some in-state urbanization as well. Tennessee migrants split between the rural Southwest and the urban North.

By the turn of the century, most migrating people, regardless of race, were moving to cities, although African Americans often chose to live in places with less racial violence. Indianapolis, for example, was a peaceful town, with African American institutions, although it lacked a booming economy. By 1890, Chicago had a large African American population, with more migrants coming for booming job opportunities despite its violent history. The potential for violence and economic opportunity had to be balanced when choosing a town.

In the 1910s the migration "trickle" suddenly became a deluge. World War I brought the First Great Migration of southern blacks to the North. Blocker emphasizes that this migration was a continuation of previous migration practices and was simply one of many options available to southern black people. African American migration patterns after 1910 showed less preference for established African American communities and essentially followed economic opportunities, paralleling white migration patterns. Cities that had positive hiring practices for African Americans, such as Cleveland, Ohio, became especially popular. There was also a growing sense of safety in numbers, and increasing numbers of migrants had previously lived in an urban place in the South, so felt they could bypass the small-town stop.

Blocker emphasizes, however, that no single contributing factor explains any of these patterns. Some migrants chose to live in small towns, perhaps for the availability of homeownership. A combination of antiblack violence, black institutions, and economic opportunity provided the variables for this decision. The process of migration also contributed to a growing racial consciousness, as the racism of the small-town Midwest and the vibrant black communities of northern cities created a push and pull effect on not only physical movement but on cul-

tural consciousness as well. In this way, Blocker says, the Midwest influenced its new African American residents as much as the new migrants changed the Midwest.

A number of impressive addendums add immensely to the value of Blocker's book. Three appendixes provide a wealth of information, including statistics, a bibliography of primary and secondary works, and commentary on migrant oral history. The tables and charts available throughout the work provide excellent visual and numerical support for his arguments. These appendixes provide a way to compare the different cities and time periods of the book, which spans three states and, at points, up to 70 years of time.

BETWEEN THESE TWO BOOKS, six states of the midwestern portion of the United States are profiled. Schwalm covers Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota while Blocker covers Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Perhaps one of the main impressions from these two works is that the term "the Midwest" needs more definition. Schwalm deems her region "the Upper Midwest" and Blocker his region "the urban Midwest"; both need further clarification, because from the evidence posed in these two books, the African American experience in Des Moines and Indianapolis may have differed, even though both may have been "urban" areas in the "Midwest."

Both Blocker and Schwalm wrestle with the idea of social and physical places. Blocker notes that racial violence by whites may have been caused, as in the South, by whites perceiving that African Americans were ignoring the subordinate place given to them by white society through striving for full citizenship. Schwalm writes repeatedly about the perceived double threat of African American migration: not only were black people settling in previously white-only geographic areas; they were also working to improve their economic and social situations. Both authors come to a similar conclusion based on their regional study, but upon comparison one then wonders what was regional about that conclusion at all. Is this a midwestern story, or are there differences between the Midwest and other parts of the Union North, or even among the states of the Midwest? Was "place" specific to place?

Both of these works are relevant for scholars of African American history and midwestern history. Schwalm's book is especially useful for historians interested in Iowa, as well as those studying black Civil War soldiers. Each book uses very different methods, providing scholars with complementary material: Blocker combines probing statistical analysis of region-wide movements with in-depth profiles of specific towns at different points in time; Schwalm focuses on cultural sources to build a broad picture of black experiences and changes. By appreciating both works side by side, one can see a more holistic picture of the state of black affairs in the Midwest. For example, Schwalm has an entire chapter on black cultural, fraternal, and religious institutions in Iowa — of which Blocker's families in Ohio were also members, but he mentions only in passing. As part of a growing field of African American history in the Midwest, these two books offer important contributions and perspectives.

## Book Reviews and Notices

*Prairies and Plains: The Reference Literature of a Region*, edited by Robert Balay. Chicago: KWS Publishers, 2009. xxiv, 422 pp. Indexes. \$125 cloth.

Reviewer Molly P. Rozum is associate professor of history at Doane College in Crete, Nebraska. Her dissertation (University of North Carolina, 2001) was "Grasslands Grown: A Twentieth-Century Sense of Place on North America's Northern Prairies and Plains."

A scraggly cottonwood tree, framed in sky, fringed in green, invites scholars and collections librarians to peruse this reference book on the grasslands. Robert Balay, a Kansas native and head of reference at Yale University, assembled these bibliographies, indexes, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and Web sites for ten states and three provinces — 1,270 records in all — as a way to "pay homage" to the region and to bring attention to the place for those who, as he does, recall it "with affection," but also for the edification of others who "scoff," considering the grasslands "featureless" (xvii). Organized into general works, humanities, social sciences, history (the largest section), science and technology, health and medicine, agriculture, and military science, each entry is amply annotated and evaluated for research effectiveness. Eighteen boxes list directories for resources such as museums, arts and humanities councils, agriculture and manufacturing statistics, historical societies, and geological survey data.

All regional libraries, including those in Iowa, which is *not* included in the prairies-plains as defined by Balay, would do well to place this book on the shelf. The literature cited often includes Iowa, depending on the choices of individual editors and authors, and resource boxes will help identify comparable Iowa institutions. It is peculiar that Balay, who wants the volume to be a lever for a "regional consciousness" beyond the too circumscribed studies of individual states and provinces, decided to exclude Iowa, a state with a historic prairie relationship (xx). Nonetheless, the same attentive interest that allowed a cottonwood tree to invite readers in the feature-full complexity of North America's grasslands infuses this uniquely conceived reference book.

*Across the Plains: Sara Royce's Western Narrative*, edited by Jennifer Dawes Adkison. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009. vii, 128 pp. Photo, map, notes, index. \$19.95 paper.

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."

On the morning of April 30, 1849, Sarah Royce and her husband, Josiah, tucked their two-year-old daughter into a wagon and set off from Tipton, Iowa, for the gold fields of California. They started late in the season, so every setback, whether from illness or a difficult river crossing, increased the likelihood of dying in a snow-drifted mountain pass. In the Nevada desert, dead cattle and abandoned wagons lined the trail, and Sarah imagined her small company as "the last, feeble, struggling band at the rear of a routed army" (61). Trudging on, they owed their survival to a relief party coming from California and soldiers marching westward. Happy to be in the "Promised Land," the Royces lived in a series of mining camps where Josiah operated grocery stores and Sarah occasionally taught school. In 1873 they moved to Oakland, where, 11 years later, Sarah began a narrative of her experiences.

Sarah's story is often cited in studies of the overland trail, but initially, her son, Josiah Jr., wanted the memoir as confirmation that his history of California linked the state to a national destiny. Sarah obliged with a self-satisfying portrayal of hardiness and pluck tempered by domesticity and guided by religious faith. Jennifer Dawes Adkison, a literary scholar, transcribed the original manuscript, including text excised from earlier printings, and supplied informative notes and a timeline of Sarah's life. This, along with an insightful introduction, clarifies the intent of Sarah's narrative and shows how constructed memories inform our history.

*One Hundred Summers: A Kiowa Calendar Record*, by Candace S. Greene. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. xvii, 263 pp. Illustrations, glossary, notes, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewer Greg Olson is Curator of Exhibits and Special Projects at the Missouri State Archives in Jefferson City. He is the author of *The Ioway in Missouri* (2008).

There was a time when those who wrote about the history of American Indians believed that Indian people themselves had left us little important information about the past. Many European American historians operated under the assumption that the historical information that native people had carefully recorded in decorative arts, oral tradi-



tion, and material culture offered, at best, an unreliable glimpse into history. Candace S. Greene's *One Hundred Summers*, an illustrated catalog for a 2009 exhibit of the same name, is a stunning example of the falseness of that assumption.

*One Hundred Summers* brings together nearly 200 color pencil drawings by the Kiowa historian and artist Haungooah, or Silver Horn (ca. 1860–1940), that make up a pictorial calendar. Also known as “winter marks,” calendars like Silver Horn’s were a tradition among the Plains Indian tribes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Winter marks tended to be drawn during the season that cold weather and snow confined native artists to their winter camps and were sometimes drawn on hides, cloth, or, as in the case of Silver Horn’s calendar, on ledger paper.

Silver Horn’s calendar chronicled Kiowa history from 1829 to 1929, a century during which the tribe was forced to move to a reservation and pressured to assimilate to European American culture. Renderings of memorable events that took place in the summer and in the winter mark each year of the calendar. As a calendar keeper, Silver Horn chose to mark years by depicting events that would have been familiar to all Kiowa people, such as a battle or the death of a well-known tribal member. His drawings were not intended to record those events comprehensively. Instead, they were meant to serve as pictorial shorthand for the Kiowa’s shared oral traditions.

In her essays and in the notes that accompany the drawings, Greene is careful to highlight three important points about Silver Horn and his calendar. First, she recognizes Silver Horn’s significant talent as an artist and the unique power of his images to convey information. Second, Greene appreciates the importance of Silver Horn’s calendar as a historical document. On more than one occasion she notes that the artist portrays certain events from a perspective that differs significantly from accounts written by European Americans. Finally, Greene wants us to understand that Silver Horn’s calendar depicts the resilience of the Kiowa people. His summer drawings almost always mark the annual tradition of the Kado, or Medicine Lodge ceremony; entries added in the 1910s and 1920s depict automobiles and airplanes, Kiowa delegations traveling to Washington, and the departure and return of the young Kiowa men who served in the U.S. military during World War I. *One Hundred Summers* reminds us that indigenous cultures have not vanished, but have changed and evolved over the past two centuries. It also reminds us that, for those who care enough to look and listen, American Indians have a lot to tell us about their own past.

*The War in Words: Reading the Dakota Conflict through the Captivity Literature*, by Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. xxxiv, 363 pp. Map, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$60.00 cloth.

Reviewer Holly Boomer is assistant professor of humanities at Black Hills State University. Her dissertation (University of Nebraska, 2000) was "Writing Red: Vine Deloria, Jr. and Contemporary American Indian Fiction."

What is most interesting about Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola's book *The War in Words* is the analysis of events, identity, and perspectives and, maybe most important, the contrast in memory between Natives and non-Natives. This book, focusing on the 1862 Dakota Conflict, creates a dialogue of analysis about captivity and confinement narratives that were predominantly claimed by Euro-Americans to narrate their treatment at the hands of Indians. Little known is that this particular genre was used by Indians as well to narrate their treatment at the hands of non-Natives. The two main sections of the book allow for perspectives from non-Natives and Natives in an attempt to give voice to those missing from historical discourse and to show "individual ideologies and identities within the two groupings" (5).

Derounian-Stodola contends that the contentious perspectives about the 1862 Dakota Conflict have generated numerous narratives that "found their way into print." She uses her book as a forum for individual voices, Native and non-Native, remembering that conflict. She makes the distinction that "memory is often owned; history, interpreted" (20). She also asserts that "the past is created through narrative rather than being translated into narrative" (21) and calls her approach a "path of dialogue" in analyzing these narratives. Her intent, "using different forms of testimony" (2), is to give "equal say and equal space concerning the same war" (13) and to give critical attention to the differences in "the experience and recollection of captivity during the Dakota War" (5). This critical attention to the differences in perspective and memory shows how the outcome and implications of the conflict have reverberated beyond Minnesota, where it took place. Because of the mix of individuals living in Minnesota at the time of the conflict, the objective of spotlighting voices giving different versions of the same conflict allows readers to analyze the threads of testimony and narrative to better understand the historical context of the conflict.

Derounian-Stodola uses ideas from *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, by Shoshana Felman and Doru Laub, M.D., to provide a new lens through which to see how history and biography are not only built from memory but also radically changed by it. Felman and Laub contend that the works they scruti-

nized were “consequent to the historic trauma of the Second World War . . . the watershed of our times . . . not as an event encapsulated in the past . . . but as a history which is essentially *not over* . . . whose traumatic consequences are still actively *evolving*” (Felman and Laub, xiv–xv). This idea is pivotal for understanding the context of the Dakota War, one of many watershed events for Natives, as a historic trauma that is still evolving for Dakota peoples. Derounian-Stodola acknowledges Dakota historian Waziyatawin Angela Wilson’s assertion that the war “remains the major point of demarcation in Dakota history,” and that a combination of factors, including being “severed from the land . . . confined to reservations in new lands . . . suffering disconnection,” forever changed the Dakota’s relationship with the rest of the world (5). The indigenous people living in Minnesota in 1862 were severed from the world as they knew it. Survival and memory make up the bones of captivity narratives that, according to Derounian-Stodola, are “any story with captors . . . and captives” (3).

Thus, survival and bearing witness are credible and validated processes for Euro-Americans but for indigenous Americans there is still a lack of acknowledgment, a discounting of testimony and witness and a disempowerment of voice. There are many pivotal points in history for the large number of American Indians in this country, and the historic trauma for these indigenous groups is not over; the consequences that are still evolving are really the core of understanding indigenous narratives. Derounian-Stodola allows the dialogue and narratives to “speak.” By doing so she has shown the highest respect. Her efforts at leveling the historical playing field by not only giving voice to those Natives who were previously voiceless in history but also by attempting to illustrate how wartime memories are wounds that are interpreted differently by each group because of personal, cultural, and historical context, should not go unnoticed.

*Amorette’s Watch: A Civil War Widow and Her Granddaughter*, by Virginia Foote. Berkeley, CA: Regent Press, 2009. Illustrations. \$20.00 paper.

Reviewer Jane Simonsen is assistant professor of history and women and gender studies at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois. She is the author of *Making Home Work: Domesticity and Native American Assimilation in the American West, 1860–1919* (2006).

*Amorette’s Watch* begins with the story of how Virginia Foote lost a watch that once belonged to her grandmother, Amorette; it was her only tangible inheritance of the ancestor she never knew. The loss spurs an attempt to follow her grandmother along a somewhat faint

paper trail of legal documents, county histories, and family records. The book is part history, part personal memoir, and part research narrative; it hints at creative ways to engage evidence, but left me wishing that the author had made more use of the possibilities of exploring the self through history.

Amorette Foote, born in 1839, led a life that is remarkable for its intersections with nineteenth-century migrations, Reconstruction efforts, and women's mission movements. She traveled from New York to Iowa in 1857 and married in 1859. Her husband, Seth, moved farther west to seek gold, fought in the Civil War, and died at home after a battle injury. In 1882 Amorette traveled with her son, Dellizon (the author's father, born in 1862) to Dakota Territory to homestead; beginning in 1888, she worked as a matron at the Chicago Training School for female missionaries. In 1892 she left for Alabama to oversee a dormitory at Talladega College, a school for African Americans. By 1900 she was in Los Angeles superintending a Women's Home Missionary Society's Deaconess Home. She died in 1909 in Omaha, where she lived with Dell.

There are some intriguing episodes in this journey. Amorette's decade-long attempt to claim a widow's pension reveals the effect of war deaths on women's economic lives. Her struggle with her father-in-law, who controlled Seth's estate and charged Amorette for expenses even as she cared for her dying husband, shows how deeply assumptions about women's marital service permeated family life. Equally evocative is an incident in which Amorette plays a central role in expelling a Talladega student over a civil rights protest. At a college dedicated to the "uplift" of African Americans in the racially supercharged Reconstruction South, as Foote recognizes, there was a fine line between maintaining authority and "only partially suppressed racial prejudice" among those pledged to "conquer" such feelings (232).

Part of Foote's aim is to "reach across a whole generation" to "take [her grandmother's] hand" (21). Yet Amorette's life is elusive. She left no diary. Seth's Civil War letters were lost. The only writings by Amorette that Foote can identify are annual reports she made at the Los Angeles Deaconess Home beginning in 1901. Thus, Foote tells Amorette's story partly through others'. One of the most engaging sections, in fact, deals with Seth's movements at the battles of Chickamauga and Missionary Ridge, where he was injured. Foote also uses incidents from her own life — her wartime marriage, the pressures she felt as a young mother to "schedule" her baby, her multiple divorces, her involvement in a college civil rights protest — to draw parallels between lives separated by nearly a century. But just as Amorette, who was in-

volved in so many historically significant movements, left little for her granddaughter to go on, Foote opens the door on her own life too briefly and seems hesitant to reflect on the larger significance of her grandmother's life and her own.

Foote sounds some key notes in women's history through these brief interludes — changing social attitudes towards motherhood, marriage, and civil rights protest — but I yearned for her to sustain these chords longer through reflection and contextualization to make them resonate more within women's history. Other writers have examined their lives through the lens of history (Doris Kearns Goodwin's *Wait Till Next Year: A Memoir*) or have used speculation engagingly to fill in the blanks in the historical record (Melton McLaurin's *Celia, A Slave*); these might have been effective strategies. The considerable scholarship on women's nineteenth-century lives, mission work, and economic struggles — including struggles for property rights — does not appear in the notes. Thus Foote sometimes only guesses at answers to easily researched questions: Why would a single woman travel west in 1859? What circumstances may have led to Seth's financial failures in 1850s Iowa, and why would Amorette marry him anyway?

The openings that Foote leaves provide opportunities for researchers. Amorette's work in Chicago might be framed by the pre-history of women's mission work and the post-history of women's settlement houses in that city. Her economic struggles could lead students to ask questions about Iowa women's property and dower rights. It also could provide a model for students to understand how broad social movements and events may have affected their ancestors.

Foote's book might hold the most interest for lay researchers uncovering family histories or investigating individuals who left few marks on the historical record. Her overt descriptions of her research process can feel awkward, but they expose the methods and frustrations of research into the lives of ordinary people. Some passages convey, in a way that more conventional histories do not, the thrill of archival discovery. Foote writes of finding her grandfather's original signature: "I saw the letters his hand had formed. . . . The sight assured me, in a new and tangible way, of his existence" (44).

Amorette's existence is never quite so tangible, and perhaps this is one of the lessons of doing history on subordinate groups — fewer left such indelible signatures. While she follows some trails admirably, Foote could have made more use of the lamps lit by other writers of history and memoir that might have helped to bring more of Amorette's journey out of the shadows.

*Iowa's Railroads: An Album*, by H. Roger Grant and Don L. Hofsommer. Railroads Past & Present Series. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009. xii, 308 pp. Maps, illustrations. \$59.95 cloth, \$29.95 paper.

Reviewer William Friedrichs is professor of history and director of the Iowa History Center at Simpson College. He is also the editor of a new book series with the University of Iowa Press titled *Iowa and the Midwest Experience*.

Marketed as a companion volume to Don Hofsommer's earlier history of Iowa railroads, *Steel Trails of Hawkeyeland* (2005), *Iowa's Railroads: An Album* is an expansive, pictorial version of the same story told through nearly 500 black-and-white photographs, maps, and illustrations.

Following a brief introduction, the album chronicles Iowa's railroads from their beginnings in the 1850s to the current era of mega-mergers and retrenchment. Divided into seven topical chapters organized chronologically, each section opens with several pages of text, outlining the story and setting the table for the main course: railroad photographs that illustrate the authors' deep knowledge and abiding love of the subject. Grant and Hofsommer, both native Iowans and respected railroad historians, have mined a wide variety of public and private photo collections, and the result is a visual feast of Iowa's railroad experience. The pages are filled with images of locomotives, freight cars and passenger cars, depots and stations, tunnels and bridges, and round-houses and shop facilities over the period and throughout the state.

Although illustrations of equipment and buildings undoubtedly have the starring role, the authors do discuss the railroads' broad impact on Iowa history. In possibly the most interesting section, Grant and Hofsommer explore the human side of the story by reminding us of the thousands of jobs the labor-intensive railroads provided Iowans. With well-chosen photos and succinct text, the authors offer a glimpse into the work of engineers and firemen, conductors and car stewards, porters and waiters, station agents and machinists.

The oversized volume will appeal to railroad enthusiasts and model railroaders, who should avoid the mistake of skimming the book's photo captions. Grant and Hofsommer often accompany photos with important details. In general, the captions reveal just how integral railroads were to Iowa's social and cultural fabric as well as its business and economic life. More specifically, they sometimes furnish intriguing information, such as the fact that Richard Sears, later of Sears & Roebuck fame, once worked as a telegraph operator for the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railway in Lake Mills, Iowa. Those who want a more thorough account of railroads in Iowa should start with Hofsommer's *Steel Trails of Hawkeyeland*.

*Harker's One-Room Schoolhouses: Visions of an Iowa Icon*, by Michael P. Harker, with essay by Paul Theobald. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2008. 85 pp. Photographs. \$24.95 paper.

Reviewer Kathy Penningroth is co-principal of A&P Historical Resources. She has conducted extensive research on the early twentieth-century Iowa State Superintendent of Public Instruction Agnes Samuelson and is the author of her entry in *The Biographical Dictionary of Iowa*.

Michael Harker's skillfully rendered black-and-white photographs capture the simple dignity of 66 nineteenth-century one-room and small schoolhouses — some restored, some deteriorated — that survive on the early twenty-first-century Iowa landscape. Education historian Paul Theobald describes the evolution of one-room schoolhouses, using the 1869–70 diary of the son of a Linn County farmer and school board director to illustrate the interaction between the farm economy and the educational process. Both Harker and Theobald emphasize the importance of the one-room school as a symbol of the value Iowa settlers placed on education, and, in turn, as a physical structure central to their community gatherings. A Bur Oak Book, *Harker's One-Room Schoolhouses* is a beautiful representation of mid-western culture.

Following the theme of his *Harker's Barns: Visions of an American Icon* (2003), Harker set out to photograph the historic architecture of education built during the vibrant period of Iowa's settlement and growth. From the historian's perspective, however, the date of construction of each schoolhouse would have been a welcome addition to the note of its location, providing the opportunity to trace the advance of settlement from east to west and to assess the success of Iowa's developing agricultural economy. As the American populace pressed further westward, it maintained its dedication to education, constructing one-room schoolhouses on the Great Plains well into the twentieth century, joining Harker's striking photographs to a broader historiography. John Martin Campbell's *The Prairie Schoolhouse* (1996) documents the scattered remnants of these efforts in stark black-and-white photographs. With a detailed narrative accompanied by abundant photographs, Wayne Fuller describes the history of one-room schoolhouse education, including architecture, financing, curricula, and teaching, in *One-Room Schools of the Middle West* (1994). *Schoolwomen of the Prairies and Plains* by Mary Hurlbut Cordier (1992) provides accounts of life in nineteenth- and twentieth-century schoolhouses through the diaries, letters, and journals of five teachers, among them Sarah Gillespie Huftalen, a native Iowan who began her long career in education in a one-room school in northeastern Iowa in 1885.

*America's Main Street Hotels: Transiency and Community in the Early Auto Age*, by John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2009. xiii, 217 pp. Illustrations, figures, tables, notes, index. \$29.95 paper.

Reviewer Patricia Mooney-Melvin is associate professor of history at Loyola University Chicago. Her teaching, research, and writing have focused on urban and public history, historic preservation, and tourism.

Small-town hotels represented anchors of small to mid-size communities from the late 1890s through the 1950s. Centrally located downtown, these institutions showcased community progress and provided tangible and intangible benefits for community members and the traveling public. As they entered the second half of the twentieth century, these hotels faced innumerable challenges that have placed their very existence in question. John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle explore their history and role in countless communities across the United States. In so doing, they deepen our knowledge of both an institution of American life and the communities in which these hotels operated.

Their suggestive study focuses on six elements of the hotel experience. First, they concentrate on these institutions' physical transition from railroad hotels to those that increasingly acknowledged the advent of the automobile. Second, they examine the business aspects of the hotel enterprise. Hotel management is the focus of the third part of their study. In the fourth component, Jakle and Sculle explore the dynamics of hotel life. In the fifth section, they discuss the role of food and drink in hotel operation. Finally, the authors analyze the challenges inherent in changing times. They conclude with an exploration of the ways specific hotels have undergone a process of re-envisioning as they face a very different economic, travel, and community landscape from the era in which they grew and blossomed and served as economic engines and community centers.

By concentrating on smaller hotels rather than resort hotels or the fashionable hotels of large cities, Jakle and Sculle provide a window into the ordinary — the places where more of the people on the go were likely to stay. They detail the inner workings of the hotel as well as how its managers learned to accommodate a new type of traveler, the motorist. Hotels built before 1910 owed their existence to the railroad era. Although amenities existed in railroad hotels, the advent of automobile travel encouraged a reinvention of the downtown hotel.

Reinvention included a wide range of activities in addition to a different customer base. Taller, more distinctive buildings, inviting public areas, enhanced amenities and staffing, and the addition of automobile-friendly features characterized the hotels built especially



after World War I. During the 1950s, however, the expansion of roads to accommodate defense needs, housing opportunities, and increased pleasure travel rearranged the transportation geography in a way that increasingly limited the use of downtown hotels for motor travel by the 1960s. New motels joined other commercial ventures and new housing developments on the urban periphery, and the travel dynamic shifted away from the central city.

As community-based institutions, downtown hotels provided a range of services, from hosting service clubs and offering fine dining to providing rooms for local residents to mark special occasions. Hotels provided arenas for social interaction and local identification. By providing services and venues for activities, these hotels helped define what it was to be modern as well as to belong in small-town America.

Jakle and Sculle explore all parts of the United States, but the midwestern section of the nation figures prominently in their analysis. From Sinclair Lewis's fictional town of Gopher Prairie in *Main Street* to the Iowa hotels in Marshalltown, Rock Rapids, and Fort Madison to the hotels located in small towns along U.S. 40 and the Lincoln Highway, the midwestern world of traveling gets significant coverage.

Regardless of their location, small-town hotels faced seemingly insurmountable challenges as the nation's automobile landscape shifted the economic locus of most small towns to the fringes of the community. Downtown districts languished, and the bustling hotels that helped define these communities fell on hard times. Reinvention, however, can occur at any time. Jakle and Sculle end their study with a look at the ways some of these institutions have adapted to changing conditions.

Rather than offering an exhaustive study, Jakle and Sculle have sketched the outlines of an unfinished story and have whetted the imagination. Anyone interested in his or her community will find similarities and differences in the fate of their own hotels. New research will flesh out this story and deepen our knowledge of life in our communities.

*Communities of Frank Lloyd Wright: Taliesin and Beyond*, by Myron A. Marty. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2009. x, 306 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 cloth.

Reviewer Rob Sovinski is professor and chair of the landscape architecture program at Purdue University. He is the author of *Brick in the Landscape: A Practical Guide to Specification and Design Materials and Their Applications in Landscape Design* (1999).

Myron Marty's book on Frank Lloyd Wright manages to occupy a unique niche among the considerable library of books that deal with

America's greatest architect — and that's not an easy thing to do. In the universe of Frank Lloyd Wright authorship, there aren't many niches left. An astonishing (and growing) number of books — biographies, essays, novels, and an autobiography (which for the most part belongs in the fictional category, too) as well as coffee table books, coloring books, pop-up books, and photo journals — endeavor to address some facet of Wright's life and architecture. Most books justifiably focus on his architectural output: there are encyclopedic overviews and books that focus on individual buildings, books about his bootleg homes, his neighborhoods, commissions that never came to fruition, his ever-evolving styles of architecture, his furniture designs, his leaded glass windows, and his landscapes, as well as portfolios of his elegant architectural renderings and books. Recently, a growing number of texts delve into the foibles, the women, and the tragedies that marked his personal life.

Given such a daunting array of choices, the Wright-inclined reader needs to know where this book fits into the substantial spectrum of the Wright library. It is not targeted at beginners. The author presumes that the reader already possesses the basic broad brush outline of Wright's story and proceeds to fill in the canvas with a much finer stroke. Those hungry to attain a deeper understanding of this charismatic figure will find Marty's careful attention to detail both satisfying and illuminating. Those with only a passing interest in learning what all the fuss is about would do better with a broader overview.

Marty is explicit about his primary objective: "My purpose in this book is to tell a fresh story about Frank Lloyd Wright by focusing on his intentions in creating communities of apprentices and coworkers — most notably the Taliesin Fellowship, but also those that preceded it — and revealing how his intentions were realized, or, in some instances, not realized" (5). The author restates his mission later: "to identify Wright's closest and most dependable associates, to discover the circumstances in which they worked, and to consider whether they functioned as effective contributors to his communities" (51). This is a book about the people (often told *by* those people) who worked with or for, supported, befriended, and sometimes abandoned Wright over his lengthy career. Marty accomplishes his mission admirably in this well-researched book.

Readers need to understand that this book represents a solid, well-crafted piece of *scholarship*. Marty is a seasoned academic and understands what that word entails. Four fundamental requirements define good scholarship. The first is *research*. This book grows out of an intensive period of reviewing archives, records, and correspondence in or-

der to piece together the second requirement: *discovery*. Too few of the books mentioned earlier offer readers much in the way of discovery. *Communities* provides new insights and perspectives that are fundamental to its primary objective. Scholarship also demands *dissemination* for the review, critique, and benefit of the larger community of similarly focused scholars. Last, a scholarly product demands clear and accurate *documentation* so the work can be evaluated and, more important, carried forward by future researchers.

If the author accomplished his stated objectives and no more, this would be a welcome addition to the ever growing Wright repository. But *Communities* manages to achieve another vitally important, but unstated, objective. Scholars who choose to probe into the genius that was Frank Lloyd Wright invariably arrive at the same frustrating conundrum. *What made him tick?* How did he justify his reckless and often self-destructive attitude regarding societal ethics and morals, his reluctance to grant credit (and payment) to his colleagues and employees, his propensity to revise even the basic truths of his life? We may never know the answers to these questions because it is unlikely that Wright knew the answers or even grappled with these questions to any degree. Marty's book, through its detailed exploration of the communities that Wright carefully orchestrated to achieve his purposes, inches us ever closer to an understanding of the mind of this most contradictory genius.

*I Go to America: Swedish American Women and the Life of Mina Anderson*, by Joy K. Lintelman. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2009. vii, 294 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendix, notes, index. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Paula M. Nelson is professor of history 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).

On November 7, 1913, Hilda Burgeson, an 18-year-old immigrant from Frillesas, Halland, Sweden, crossed the Canadian border into Minnesota. Accompanied by her two younger sisters, she was headed to Hector, in Renville County, where a large population of Swedes, including some of her family members, had settled south of the town. Hilda was my grandmother. Although she does not appear in Joy Lintelman's book, it is her story, as well as the story of the quarter-million Swedish immigrant women who came to America between 1880 and 1920 in search of something better than they had. The author has taken

the memoir of Mina Anderson, an immigrant from Dalsland, Sweden, and skillfully incorporated it with the letters, memoirs, autobiographies, interviews, and other writings Swedish immigrant women produced to create this thorough, detailed, informative, and uplifting account of the Swedish female immigrant experience throughout the United States.

Most historians begin their work with a research question. For Joy Lintelman, that question arises from the novels of Vilhelm Moberg, whose Swedish immigrant stories about Kristina and Karl Oskar Nilsson have become celebrated classics of the genre. Moberg's *Kristina* did not want to immigrate, longs for her home in Sweden, and never makes a complete adjustment to life in Minnesota. Karl Oskar is the force in the books, the one who acts to make things happen. Lintelman's research indicated that Swedish immigrant women were actors in their own right, women who chose to immigrate, who made their own circumstances as much as human beings can, and who adjusted as well as men did to the new country. Because fiction can establish tropes that linger in the public consciousness in spite of their misrepresentations, Lintelman's goal was to tell the story of real people in all of their complexity, and to challenge the fictional structures of man as forward looking, woman as backward looking, that immigrant novels have often supplied.

The first chapters reveal the wealth of Lintelman's careful research. Using Mina Anderson's memoir to provide structure, Lintelman tells the story of life in Sweden for young women whose families were of the poorer classes. Such women were independent of their families by age 16 and often worked as domestic servants in the homes of those who were better off. Lintelman explains the economic circumstances of rural Swedes, the types of homes they had, the family arrangements, the work patterns, and the legal structures that shaped young women's lives. The details are clearly explained and the photos of Swedish rural homes, people, and work highlight the circumstances under which they labored.

Mina Anderson, like so many other Swedish women, believed that immigration to the United States would improve her circumstances in life. She wanted better wages, improved working conditions, and more respect. She found those things in northern Wisconsin, where she first moved to live with an uncle, and improved her situation further when she migrated to St. Paul, Minnesota, in search of even better wages. Lintelman argues that Swedish immigrant women made rational economic decisions in their choice of work and living conditions. She uses the story of Evelina Mansson, my grandmother's cousin, to illustrate the stories of those who did not work in domestic service and who, in

Evelina's case, returned to Sweden to find economic and personal fulfillment. Swedish immigrant women were not passive but active in pursuit of better lives.

Mina Anderson married a tailor, and together they bought land in Mille Lacs County and raised their family. The final chapters of the book are devoted to the story of family, farm, and community building. Again, Lintelman skillfully weaves Mina's story with those of other Swedish women who chose marriage and the farm.

*I Go to America* is a valuable contribution to the history of immigration, American women's history, and the history of the upper Midwest, especially Minnesota. The writing is accessible to general readers, while the research will satisfy the most particular scholars. Anyone with an interest in the American immigrant story or in women's history will enjoy this book.

*Lights on a Ground of Darkness: An Evocation of a Place and Time*, by Ted Kooser. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009. xii, 60 pp. Illustrations. \$10.95 paper.

Reviewer Terrence J. Lindell is professor of history at Wartburg College. His research interests include immigration and ethnicity, Populism, and the World War II home front.

In this slim volume, Ted Kooser, 2005 Pulitzer Prize winner in poetry and U.S. poet laureate from 2004 to 2006, takes readers back to the summer of 1949 in Guttenberg, Iowa, where his mother and her two children — including ten-year-old Ted — are spending time with her parents. From that point Kooser's narrative flows backward and forward in time, telling the stories of his mother's family, the Mosers and Morarends, who settled in Clayton County in the 1850s.

These are Kooser's childhood memories of scenes observed and stories heard as the youth watched and listened to his elders as they went about their daily tasks, entertained family in the evening, and reminisced about times gone by. Interspersed with such recollections are more recent events as an older Kooser revisits places of the past and carries the stories of his relatives to the end of their lives. The work was prompted by the approaching death of his mother; she lived long enough to read the manuscript but died in 1998 shortly before the work's initial publication in the *Great River Review*.

Beautifully written, this work will evoke for many readers memories of their own childhood, when the world moved more slowly and when conversations over a card game held the attention of old and young alike.

*More than a Farmer's Wife: Voices of American Farm Women, 1910–1960*, by Amy Mattson Lauters. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009. 191 pp. Illustration, tables, notes, appendix, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewer Jenny Barker Devine is assistant professor of history at Illinois College and the author of "Quite a Ripple but No Revolution: The Changing Roles of Women in the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, 1921–1951" (*Annals of Iowa*, 2005).

In *More than a Farmer's Wife*, Amy Mattson Lauters closely examines the content of several mainstream and farm periodicals for female audiences between 1910 and 1960, and compares the images and ideal notions portrayed in those magazines with the lived experiences of American farm women. Lauters found that throughout the first half of the twentieth century, farm journalists, both male and female, acknowledged the difficulties of rural life, but generally portrayed farm women as independent, hardworking partners on family farms who desired educational opportunities and political outlets.

For this clearly written, concise study, Lauters exhaustively surveyed several magazines, including *Country Gentleman*, *The Farmer's Wife*, *Farm Journal*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Saturday Evening Post*. Articles intended for female audiences focused on three themes: rural versus urban women, citizenship and political participation, and women in the business of farming. Whereas mainstream magazines recognized farm women's work on family farms, the periodicals directed specifically at a rural audience placed a greater emphasis on farm women's unique position in society as laborers, partners with their husbands, and civic actors. Farm journalists asserted that because "city life drained the soul," and urban women shared few concerns with their husbands, farm women could easily claim superiority over their urban sisters (102). This became increasingly evident in the years following the Second World War, when mainstream periodicals replaced their coverage of women's political involvement with material related to housekeeping and childrearing. On the other hand, farm women's magazines also increased the number of stories with domestic themes but maintained assertions that women played important roles in shaping public policy.

Mindful that periodicals typically contain idealized images, Lauters interviewed and corresponded with farm women across the country to compare lived experiences with popular portrayals. She located informants through her social networks, by visiting retirement communities, and by publishing a request in *Country Woman*, a popular magazine distributed by Reiman Publications in Greenfield, Wisconsin. More than 200 women responded to the advertisement in *Country*

*Woman*, providing a wealth of written and oral records of women's lives. The final chapters that deal with the lived experiences of farm women are dynamic and compelling, as they demonstrate the diverse perspectives of a supposedly collective group of "farm women." The women typically agreed on the value of work, independence, thrift, and family, and the importance of their roles within the family. Not surprisingly, Lauters also found significant variations in lived experiences, from women who despised farm life to those who found it as idyllic as portrayed in the magazines. Most women stated that they did not measure up to the images in magazines they read, but that periodicals allowed women to create an imagined community based on such images that placed value on their difficult, constant, and undervalued work.

Lauters provides a perceptive analysis of the periodicals, oral histories, and letters written by farm women, but the study would have benefited from a greater engagement with other historical works on gender and agriculture. Numerous scholars, including Mary Neth and Katherine Jellison, have also examined farm women's lives during this period and concluded that over time, farm journalists gradually wrote women out of farm magazines because they assumed that rural women increasingly had identical interests with their urban and suburban counterparts. A more thorough examination of the secondary sources, especially works by scholars such as Nancy Grey Osterud, Melissa Walker, and Deborah Fink, would have provided a richer contextual backdrop for the sections that consider how the media helped rural communities find cohesiveness and in the final chapters that examine oral histories and letters.

Lauters rightly asserts that the lived experiences reveal deep economic and social class divisions, often based on land ownership, inheritance, and family dynamics. She concludes, "There was solidarity evident in the struggle with the land, but it was equally evident that the constructions of farming, and farm women, offered in the national farming magazines applied only to those who could afford to farm" (160). This is a significant finding in keeping with existing research. Furthermore, the examples of women with a strong distaste for farm life offer startling contrasts to popular images, as well as new evidence for a little-studied aspect of rural women's lives. This adds to our overall understanding and illuminates the diversity of their experiences, but the limited attention to the oral histories and letters, as well as the lack of secondary material, leaves readers with an incomplete picture of broader changes in agriculture and rural life and the importance of gender relations within that context.

*Sweet Tyranny: Migrant Labor, Industrial Agriculture, and Imperial Politics*, by Kathleen Mapes. The Working Class in American History Series. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009. xi, 336 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$80.00 cloth, \$30.00 paper.

Reviewer Jim Norris is professor of history at North Dakota State University. He is the author of *North for the Harvest: Mexican Workers, Growers, and the Sugar Beet Industry* (2009).

*Sweet Tyranny* represents the best work that is being done in history today. Using the development of the sugar beet industry in Michigan starting in the 1890s as a focal point, Kathleen Mapes offers a broad analysis of the growth of the sugar industry in the United States and how international events influenced that commodity's production through the Great Depression. Thus, this is a multifaceted book spanning numerous history subfields, including business, agricultural and rural, political, local, international, immigration, and labor history. Mapes has arranged the work topically, although the story unfolds chronologically with considerable overlap. In essence, this is a study of the industrial revolution in the United States: how it shaped the rural population of Michigan and their response to the new order of industrial farming; how America's empire in the Caribbean and Pacific influenced the growth of the sugar industry; and the evolution of the migrant work force that did most of the work to feed Americans' incessantly expanding demand for sweetness.

Mapes begins her study with the ironic convergence of the growing importance of sugar beet production in the United States at the same time the nation was obtaining colonies — Puerto Rico and the Philippines — and a protectorate (Cuba) that produced sugar, too. The sugar beet interests were able to mold to a degree how those foreign territories fit into the economic structure of the United States. Mapes next turns her attention to the nature of the sugar beet industry and its relationship to farmers. Based on contractual ties, farmers and the industry clashed over exactly how those ties would bind. She finds that early on the farmers and their organizations had considerable influence on the growth of the sugar beet industry.

Sugar beets required a considerable labor force, however, one that the local communities were unable or unwilling to provide. The answer was the same throughout the Midwest: migrant workers, especially German Russians. Mapes explains the difficulties of their toil and the complexities of their migratory patterns. World War I and its immediate aftermath represented a watershed, according to Mapes, for both the nation and the sugar beet industry. As the companies and, to a lesser degree, the farmers made enormous profits during that period,



a conflict arose between big business and “progressive and radical farmers” (121). The vision of the latter group lost and was replaced by a more conservative one. In addition, World War I provided the opportunity for German Russians to escape the sugar beet fields as the industry turned to a new migrant work force from Mexico.

Mapes then shifts her attention to the history of Mexican migrant workers and the sugar beet industry during the 1920s, relating along the way the changing shape of immigration law in the United States, the forms of Mexican migration, and how Mexicans established their enclaves throughout the region. Finally, Mapes examines the era of the Great Depression. She finds that the sugar beet industry significantly influenced the move away from having an empire. At the same time, the New Deal created a permanent bond between the federal government and the sugar industry, one that the sugar interests would exploit throughout the remainder of the century. On the other hand, federal legislation that helped the sugar beet industry enormously also provided some oversight of abuses within the labor system, especially child labor, and provided a minimum wage structure for migrant sugar beet workers. More than anything, Mapes concludes, the sugar beet industry emerged from the 1930s as “a powerful and potent force” (246).

Mapes offers a very nuanced yet powerful examination of the triumph of industrialism over agricultural America, as well as corporate America’s ability to shape domestic and international politics. The text is very well researched and written. Indeed, this is one of the most lucid histories I have read in recent years. If the book has a problem, it is only in the title. “Tyranny” is a bit of a stretch. Indeed, the author makes clear that farmers had important influence on the industry from time to time, and migrant workers, whether German Russians or Mexicans, were never at the complete mercy of the companies. The latter point notwithstanding, this is an important and compelling history. Considering Iowa’s very similar experiment with sugar beets during the same time period, there is much to compare between the experiences of the two states, and Mapes’s book will provide an important context for Iowa’s sugar beet past.

*North for the Harvest: Mexican Workers, Growers, and the Sugar Beet Industry*, by Jim Norris. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2009. ix, 223 pp. Illustrations, map, notes, bibliography, index. \$22.95 paper.

Reviewer Kathleen Mapes is assistant professor of history at SUNY College at Geneseo. She is the author of *Sweet Tyranny: Migrant Labor, Industrial Agriculture, and Imperial Politics* (2009).

Jim Norris's new book, *North for the Harvest*, challenges the common perception of the Midwest as a homogeneous place of family farmers, hired laborers, and close-knit communities. By focusing on the rise and transformation of the sugar beet industry in the Red River Valley in North Dakota and Minnesota over the course of the twentieth century, and by including industrialists, farmers, and migrant workers in his narrative, Norris provides a much needed corrective to mythic understandings of rural America and midwestern history. In part economic history, in part social history, and in part political history, Norris's book places the history of the midwestern sugar beet industry in a much broader national and at times even international context.

The main arguments wedding the various chapters revolve around relations between and among the main protagonists in the Red River Valley sugar beet industry: American Crystal, local farmers, and Mexican workers. Unlike most rural histories, which focus on farmers, or labor histories, which hone in on the experiences of urban industrial workers, Norris transcends traditional sub-disciplinary boundaries and as a result is able to tell a complex and nuanced story. He begins his book with a useful albeit somewhat brief overview of the development of the sugar beet industry in the Red River Valley, including the search for an agricultural labor force in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the succeeding chapters, he provides a chronological and thematic overview of changing labor and industrial relations, highlighting the major shifts with respect to which groups toiled in the fields: grower-factory relations, local community responses, and governmental intervention.

Norris highlights the period between 1929 and World War II as a particularly significant one. In the early years of the Great Depression, whites largely replaced Mexican workers, who often found themselves the victims of repatriation, high unemployment, and unfair discrimination. By the late 1930s, however, Mexicans once again became the bulk of the labor force. While the depression certainly undermined production, profits, and wages, it also helped to usher in a new era with the passage of the Jones-Costigan Act of 1934 and its successor, the Sugar Act of 1937. Those acts mandated minimum wages, prohibited child labor, and made the farmers' own government bonuses dependent upon compliance with the labor standards, thereby ensuring that the federal government became an important player in what had been a three-way relationship.

Turning to World War II, Norris argues that the war offered an opportunity to sugar beet workers who found their own power increased due to labor shortages and competition from other agricultural and in-

dustrial interests. That opportunity, however, was often cut short by the growing use of *bracero* laborers, who were imported into the Red River Valley to meet what many believed to be a severe labor shortage, as well as illegal immigration into the United States, which agribusiness encouraged and immigration officials ignored. Nonetheless, Norris found that as farmers saw increased profits during the war, they tended to become less prejudiced toward the Mexican labor force and somewhat more interested in meeting the workers' needs. That paternalism increased in the postwar period, especially among farmers who were lured by the promise of high profits as well as threatened by the possibility of government sanctions under the Sugar Act. Norris argues that the paternalism benefited Mexican workers, who gained greater access to credit, improved housing, and enhanced welfare as growing numbers of Mexicans began to settle in the Red River Valley.

Although labor relations seemed to have improved in the postwar period, they did not remain stable. In fact, Norris argues that after Mexicans started to settle in the valley, local residents grew increasingly concerned about perceived crime waves, which they blamed on resident Mexicans. Those same local residents were also concerned about the problem of juvenile delinquency among Anglo teenagers. As a solution to both "problems," local farmers began to hire local teenagers to tend the fields. While many teenagers answered the call, they also often proved to be unreliable, unskilled, and difficult to control.

As the industry continued to struggle with the question of labor, industrialists and farmers found themselves increasingly divided. Farmers wanted American Crystal to expand and modernize operations so that all could take advantage of the market opportunities created by the embargo of Cuban sugar. American Crystal proved unresponsive to the growers' demands. Moreover, American Crystal officials often sided with government officials when it came to the question of migrant labor, pushing growers to further address working and living conditions. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, those tensions reached a boiling point. Radically remaking the industry, growers banded together, formed a cooperative, and bought American Crystal. Equally important, the growers abandoned American Crystal's labor agency in Texas and decided to recruit workers individually on their own. Combined with the growing use of new technologies and herbicides, as well as the continued use of local teenagers, growers successfully sought ways to reduce their dependence on Mexican workers. While the Mexican workers who continued to toil in the fields often gained increased access to much needed social services, especially with respect to education and health, as well as inclusion in minimum wage

and workers' compensation laws, they found themselves increasingly vulnerable to individual growers.

Anyone interested in midwestern, rural, labor, Mexican American, and business history should read Norris's well-written, compelling account of the Red River Valley's sugar beet industry.

*Hero Street, USA: The Story of Little Mexico's Fallen Soldiers*, by Marc Wilson. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009. xvi, 192 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$19.95 cloth.

Reviewer Robert F. Jefferson is associate professor of history at Xavier University in Ohio. He is the author of *Fighting for Hope: African American Troops of the 93rd Infantry Division in World War II and Postwar America* (2008).

In *Hero Street, USA*, journalist Marc Wilson offers an admirable recounting of the struggles of men from a poor neighborhood in Silvis, Illinois, who made the ultimate sacrifice in America's wars in the twentieth century. Second Street was the location where devotion to family and country was born and nurtured for many Mexican immigrants who served in the nation's armed forces. As Wilson contends, "The story of Hero Street is largely untold, and U.S. history is incomplete without this story."

Based on a plethora of primary material, *Hero Street, USA* dramatically captures the travails of Mexican Americans who migrated to the upper Midwest from 1910 to 2008 and shows how the processes of war, revolution, and social change transformed their lives over the course of the twentieth century. Wilson uses the wartime service of the fallen soldiers as chapters to frame the story of the Mexican American community in Silvis, Illinois. The opening chapters document the struggles of the Sandoval and Pompa families as they fled the violence and economic deprivation brought about by the Mexican Revolution and crossed the Mexican border into the United States. Eager to begin a new life and attracted by the employment opportunities provided by the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad, Mexican nationals made their way through a handful of states before landing in Silvis in 1917. Wilson carefully describes the concerns and aspirations of newcomers to Silvis as they negotiated the worlds of Mexico and Silvis. Often subject to American racism and labor-capital strife, many newcomers pinned their hopes of gaining citizenship and future prosperity on the battlefield actions of their offspring during periods of war. Those aspirations often carried fatal consequences.

Throughout World War II, mournful memories of letters written by GIs such as Willie Sandoval and Claro Solis to loved ones back home,

along with regretful letters from the War Department to dozens of homes along Second Street, provided pointed reminders of the terrible costs that war exacted on both the dead and the living. In chapters relating to the Korean War, the selfless actions taken by Joe Gomez and other GIs dramatically point out the degree to which Silvis's residents used military service to enlarge their claims to American life.

Silvis's immigrant community sought to recover, resuscitate, and keep their wartime memories of the recently fallen alive in the minds of city residents. In 1954 Silvis's Mexican American ex-GIs established their own local post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, later spearheaded the push to create a veterans memorial park, and during the late 1960s worked to have Second Street repaved and renamed Hero Street. But the commemorative efforts staged by the townspeople of Silvis were enveloped in bittersweet irony as some of the children of the fallen heroes began to express ambivalent feelings about the unique traditions, customs, and practices that their grandparents had brought across the Mexican-American border nearly a hundred years earlier. Indeed, the tears that Claro Solis's great-nephew shed during a trip to Texas bring *Hero Street, USA* to a close.

Wilson's book parallels a spate of literature that has begun to re-examine the complex issues of immigration and how international events contributed to the making of Mexican American identity during the twentieth century. *Hero Street, USA* recovers the ways Mexican Americans altered their religious practices and family networks to shape their neighborhoods and communities in their new American surroundings. But it also raises intriguing questions about the social foundations of Mexican American communities in the Midwest. For example, how did latent racism, xenophobia, and localism in towns like Silvis, Illinois, shape the experiences of Mexican nationals and their ideas about national identity? Also, if Mexican Americans experienced very little racism in the segregated American armed forces, as Wilson claims, what might the appearance of returning Mexican American veterans and the reaction of Silvis's white community to their presence tell us about the cultural adaptations and cross-fertilization that was taking place in other Mississippi River towns? Finally, *Hero Street, USA* is reticent on how the experiences of Mexican nationals in Silvis between 1930 and 1960 were akin to those faced by immigrants who lived in other areas of the Midwest during that period. Even if it does not provide adequate answers to these questions, *Hero Street, USA* is an important addition to studies of immigrant life in the Midwest.

*Growing American Rubber: Strategic Plants and the Politics of National Security*, by Mark R. Finlay. Studies in Modern Science, Technology, and the Environment. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009. xiii, 317 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, index. \$49.95 cloth.

Reviewer Joanne Abel Goldman is associate professor of history at the University of Northern Iowa. She is the author of "Mobilizing Science in the Heartland: Iowa State College, the State University of Iowa, and National Science during WWII" in the *Annals of Iowa* (2000).

In *Growing American Rubber*, Mark Finlay examines the century-long effort to supplement the imported rubber supply with either a domestically produced source, natural or synthetic, or a foreign supply that could meet the needs of the growing U.S. economy. Finlay argues that the intensity of that effort grew and faded in direct correlation to the urgency of national security concerns. During World War II, the situation grew dire, and Iowans became particularly vocal as they lobbied for the development of grain-based synthetic rubber.

Finlay documents the history of early rubber production. In the 1920s, the United States imported the bulk of its rubber supply from British and Dutch plantations in the South Pacific. To stabilize profits, England regulated exports, and subsequently prices rose. Nonetheless, demand continued to increase, and the importance of a domestic supply became urgent. Thomas Edison rallied to the cause. Edison's group made valiant efforts to identify and grow domestic rubber plants, but despite inexhaustible energy, abundant resources, and unwavering commitment to success, he died before developing a reliable and adequate crop able to meet the growing demand.

World War II exacerbated an already critical situation inasmuch as the military engagements required rubber for tanks, airplanes, and medical supplies. With transoceanic trade compromised and the plantations of the South Pacific vulnerable to Japanese earth-scorching, the demand for domestic production reached a crescendo. In 1942 the federal government launched the Emergency Rubber Program, a national research initiative to solve the shortfall. Finlay likens the program to the Manhattan Project "in terms of scale, urgency and interdisciplinary scope" (141).

Government and private-sector scientists experimented with rubber-producing plants in California (including one in a Japanese internment camp), Arizona, Texas, and Minnesota. The United States controlled plantations in Mexico and Haiti as well. In addition, people began in earnest to synthetically develop rubber from grain-based alcohol and petroleum. The synthetic initiatives became politically charged as midwestern farmers faced off with petroleum producers.

Iowa Senator Guy Gillette chaired a Senate committee to study the problem and quickly became a proponent of grain-based alcohol production. The committee concluded that the government must support a new agency devoted to synthetic rubber production made exclusively from plants. Despite its efforts, the president vetoed the bill. The Gillette Committee then threw the debate into the public limelight, harnessing spirited public support throughout the Midwest. Roosevelt responded by supporting research and production on both grain- and petroleum-based synthetic rubber. By the end of 1942, the debates calmed and production of synthetic rubber reduced the urgent rubber shortage.

The whole rubber supply drama reaches a climax in chapter 6; there Finlay's organization proves to be weak. By that point it is unclear why the mammoth effort to grow or synthetically produce rubber never satisfied the demand. Not until chapter 7 does Finlay tell us that ineffectiveness, inefficiency, and scandal together with weather and disease events plagued much of the effort. In chapter 8 Finlay concludes the story by noting that with the end of World War II, the quest for rubber self-sufficiency waned, following the pattern that had persisted during most of the first half of the century.

*Growing American Rubber* is a good history of the rubber industry, private and public efforts to control the industry, and its vulnerability to world politics. This is important because we all need to understand that increased globalization and increased outsourcing intensify our vulnerability. Therefore, this book should be of interest to historians of science and technology, economics, and the twentieth century as well as to makers of public policy.

*Staley: The Fight for a New American Labor Movement*, by Steven K. Ashby and C. J. Hawking. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009. xi, 358 pp. Illustrations, notes, glossary, index. \$75.00 cloth, \$25.00 paper.

Reviewer Colin Gordon is professor of history at the University of Iowa. He is the author of *Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City* (2008); *Dead on Arrival: The Politics of Health Care in Twentieth-Century America* (2003); and *New Deals: Business, Labor, and Politics in America, 1920–1935* (1994).

Each era of American economic history has its emblematic labor struggle: Homestead in the 1890s, steel at the close of World War I, the Flint Sit-Down in 1936–37, General Motors in 1946, the Memphis Sanitation Strike in 1968. Each of these, in its recounting, is held out as both a snapshot of that era's labor relations and the blueprint for a new la-

bor movement. In more recent years (Lordstown in 1972, Hormel in 1986, Pittston in 1989) these struggles have ended badly, and the lessons drawn have been both more bitter and more romantic. *Staley: The Fight for a New American Labor Movement* tells the tragic story of the lockout at A. E. Staley's corn-processing plant in Decatur, Illinois, in the mid-1990s, a struggle that overlapped with local strikes at Caterpillar and Bridgestone-Firestone. The authors were deeply immersed in the fight as part of a local and national support network for the Staley workers.

*Staley* is a masterful and cautionary account that brilliantly captures the obstacles and dilemmas faced by organized labor at the close of the twentieth century. The confrontation begins in the shadow of globalization, when the Staley plant is acquired by the British sugar giant Tate & Lyle. The local union, Allied Industrial Workers 837, had been on the defensive through the 1970s and 1980s as concessionary bargaining (in the wake of the Chrysler bailout and the PATCO strike) became the rule. For Staley workers, those concessions (and the subsequent lockout) involved not just compensation but plant safety, an issue chillingly underscored by the book's prologue. The local's response drew on a wide array of strategies, including "work-to-rule" control of the shop floor; an ambitious (if unevenly successful) corporate campaign targeting Tate and Lyle's brands (Domino Sugar), its corporate customers (Pepsi), and its institutional stockholders (State Farm); and an expansive solidarity effort involving other local unions, churches, and national fundraising and outreach by the local's "road warriors." All of this found only ambivalent support from national labor unions. The AFL-CIO's timid support of Decatur workers was the final nail in Lane Kirkland's coffin in 1995, but the new leadership was not much better.

Like the P-9 Hormel strike a decade earlier (see Peter Rachleff's fine *Hard-Pressed in the Heartland*), the Staley standoff ended in defeat and recrimination. Abetted by the weariness of Staley workers and leadership change in the local (now under the mantle of the United Paperworkers), the two sides agreed to a contract that cemented all of the company's original concessions: 12-hour shifts, mandatory overtime, unlimited subcontracting, weakened safety standards, and stark cuts to health coverage for current workers and retirees.

As much as there is to admire in Ashby and Hawking's sobering and sympathetic account, I cannot share its optimism that Decatur could and should have been "a rallying cry for a resurgent labor movement" (290). The defeat rested not on the weakness or treachery of local turncoats and national union leaders but on the political cli-



mate in which they operated. With a tenuous share of the private labor force (barely 7 percent), stark obstacles to new or secondary organizing, little check on union-busting strategies, and a near evaporation of federal responsibility for workplace health and safety (at its current staffing and inspection levels, it would take OSHA 133 years to inspect each workplace under its jurisdiction just once), the labor movement faces not an uphill battle but a cliff.

*Stories from the Heart: Missouri's African American Heritage*, compiled by Gladys Caines Coggsell. Missouri Heritage Readers Series. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009. xvi, 141 pp. Illustrations, index. \$15.95 paper.

Reviewer Kristen Anderson is assistant professor of history at Webster University, St. Louis. Her dissertation (University of Iowa, 2009) is "German Americans, African Americans, and the Construction of Racial Identity in St. Louis, 1850–1870."

A master storyteller with the Missouri Folk Arts Program, Gladys Caines Coggsell presents here the tales she has collected over the past two decades through her fieldwork among the African American population of Missouri. Like any good storyteller, she recognizes the value not only of the stories people tell, but of the words they use to tell them. Those interviewed thus tell their stories in their own words, while she provides background information and transitions to knit the pieces together. These stories span Missouri history geographically and chronologically, including tales from all regions of the state, both rural and urban, and from throughout the twentieth century. The topics of the stories range from tales told to children — such as "Why Dogs Chase Cats" — to accounts of growing up as sharecroppers in the Missouri Bootheel or undergoing school desegregation in St. Louis.

The Missouri Heritage Readers series is designed to provide high-quality historical scholarship that is accessible to nonacademic readers. The book succeeds admirably at this goal and is a very accessible introduction to the history of African Americans in Missouri, particularly on the issues of childhood, education, community, and work. Although the discussion of these issues may not be new to scholars of African American history in Missouri, these stories are new, and scholars and general readers alike will benefit from them. This book will also find a readership among scholars of the African American experience in the Midwest as well as those interested in storytelling and the oral tradition in history.

*Old Farm: A History*, by Jerry Apps with photographs by Steve Apps. Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2008. xi, 222 pp. Illustrations, appendix, notes, index. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Barbara J. Dilly is associate professor of anthropology at Creighton University. Her research and writing have focused on farming communities in northeast Iowa.

An old Wisconsin farm is the setting for a family's adventures of living on the land. It is the primer from which a father (now a grandfather) teaches his children (and grandchildren) the linear history of the land and the timeless heritage of nature. Landowner and author Jerry Apps feels that the only way to authentically convey to the next generation an appreciation for the land is to own it and live on it.

Apps's cultural ecology of an old farm reveals intimate and interconnected relationships among plants and wildlife, seasons and climate, people and place. From this personalized account of life on the land, we gain a deeper understanding of what makes someone not just love a place and nature, but seek to understand it so that it can be cared for sustainably. His deep connection to the land comes from thinking, feeling, and acting from "deep within" (2). The cultivation and nurturing of that sensibility throughout a lifetime were shaped by reading Aldo Leopold and John Muir. He learned reverence and a spirituality of nature from reading Thoreau and Emerson and knowing Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson. Rachel Carson and Wisconsin naturalist Sigurd Olson taught Apps the need for a common sense that comes from interaction with living things and the sense of urgency to set intentional goals to respect and protect the environment. Apps learned from his grandfather, father, and neighbors that survival on a farm with poor soil meant learning to value something other than material success.

Apps's holistic interdisciplinary methodology is largely anthropological. He engages in participant observation, story collecting, and gathering local archival data. He drew from published taxonomies of native and imported plants, animals, and insects that lived on his farm to compile an ethnobotany of the farm. In his ethnographic account, Apps describes his family's struggles with the limits of the land and the methods by which they constructed buildings, cut, cured, and burned firewood, raised gardens, hunted deer, cooked their local foods, and shared meanings. From the insights of an insider who experiences every inch and minute of a complex ecosystem, tempered by the outsider perspective of a scientist who sees the local cultural flaws and recognizes the limits of the local resources, Apps found a way to sustain an intact ecosystem for the next generation.

Jerry Apps's story is richly illustrated by his son Steve's exquisite photographs. The images reveal timeless truths about place, habitat, and process. The few people found in the images remind those who would live on the land to assume a more collaborative, behind-the-scenes relationship with nature. The greatest contribution of this work is the recognition that there is much more of value in nature and on the land than extractive resources. Nature is a steady force of experience and meaning that can teach us all to reflect on connections within a bigger picture if we will watch and listen.

## 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

Bily, John. Oral history interview, February 17, 1970. 4 reel-to-reel audiocassettes. Jack Nelson's interview of Spillville, Iowa, native John Bily in which he provides recollections of composer Antonin Dvorak during his 1893 visit to Iowa, and of the community in general. DM.

Civilian Defense Committee on Soldier Morale (Iowa Falls). Newsletters, Summer 1943–October 1945. ¼ ft. Local news from the Iowa Falls community distributed to World War II service personnel from that locale. DM.

Kendall Griffith Russell Artiaga, architects (Des Moines). Records, 1983–1989. 1 ft. and approximately 600 blueprints. Planning materials and architectural drawings for John Ruan's proposed World Trade Center for Des Moines. For various reasons, the planned 30-story agribusiness headquarters did not come to fruition. DM.

Kohns, Donald P. (Lt.). Reminiscences, 1956–1957. 2nd Lt. Kohns (Cherokee) recalls incidents from his service in Korea with Company A of the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Division. His unit's assignments included defense of a diesel oil pipeline and patrol duty along the Demilitarized Zone. DM.

Mormons in Iowa. Letter, August 21, 1857. Letter written by an unidentified resident of Indiantown, Iowa, a Mormon settlement established in 1846 in Cass County and reported to be the first white settlement in that county. DM.

Nauroth, Frank. Records, 1895–1902. 2 vols. Itemized accounts of Nauroth's blacksmith shop at Earling, Iowa. DM.

Owen, Phebe Slate. Diary, January 16, 1902–April 7, 1904. Diary kept in the last few years of life by Phebe Owen of Fertile. DM.

Parkison, Thomas. Papers, 1898–1899. 1 vol. + 47 black-and-white photographs. Journal kept by Parkison (Knoxville, Iowa) during his training and assignments with the 51st Iowa Infantry during the Spanish-American War, and subsequent Philippine-American War. Journal is accompanied by snapshots taken while in the Philippines. DM.

Weaver, James Baird and Clara Vinson. Papers, 1858–1972. 3½ ft. 16 pieces of 1858 correspondence between James and Clara Vinson Weaver prior to their

marriage; 2 Civil War letters written by General James Baird Weaver, 1861, 1863; Clara Weaver's letters to family, 1892–1910; and Weaver and Vinson family photographs, genealogical materials, and scrapbooks, ca. 1930–1972. DM.

Woman's Relief Corps, Kinsman Corps #24 (Des Moines). Scrapbook, 1943–1944. Clippings, ephemera, and various mementos and documents compiled by Blanche Dillon during her year as president of the local corps, which existed to commemorate the service of Iowans in the Civil War. DM.

Wykoff, Roy A., Jr. Papers, 1954–1962. ½ ft. Letters, clippings, miscellaneous documents, and ephemera that recall activities of this Davenport resident while a foreign correspondent from 1932 through World War II. DM.

## Published Materials

*The Able McLaughlins*, by Margaret Wilson. 1923. Reprint. New York: Avon Book Division, The Hearst Corporation, [196-?]. 192 pp. *Fiction by Iowa author*. IC (1923 ed. in DM).

*African Americans in the United States Army in World War II*, by Bryan D. Booker. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008. viii, 358 pp. DM.

*The AIC Guide to Digital Photography and Conservation Documentation*, by Franziska Frey et al. Washington, DC: American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 2008. 111 pp. DM, IC.

*American Countercultures: An Encyclopedia of Nonconformists, Alternative Lifestyles, and Radical Ideas in U.S. History*, edited by Gina Misiroglu. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2009. 3 vols. IC.

*American Musical Traditions*, edited by Jeff Todd Titon and Bob Carlin. New York: Schirmer Reference, 2002. 5 vols. DM.

*Angels at the Station*, by Scott D. Trostel. Fletcher, OH: Cam-Tech Pub., 2008. ix, 262 pp. *Stories of homefront volunteer efforts in the Midwest during World War II*. IC.

*Behind the Hedge: A Novel*, by Waneta Dawn. Longwood, FL: Xulon Press, 2007. 247 pp. *Fiction set on an Iowa farm*. IC.

*Being Moore: My Life in Professional Wrestling*, by Ben Puttmann. Baltimore: Publish America, 2008. 207 pp. *Autobiography of professional wrestler known as Christian Moore*. IC.

*Borlaug: The Mild-Mannered Maverick Who Fed a Billion People*, by Noel Vietmeyer. Lorton, VA: Bracing Books, 2008. *The first 30 years of the life of Norman Borlaug*. DM.

*A Brief History of the American West Since 1945*, by Gerald D. Nash. Fort Worth: Harcourt College Publishers, 2001. x, 182 pp. IC.

*The Brown Decades: A Study of the Arts in America, 1865–1895*, by Lewis Mumford. 2nd ed. New York: Dover, 1971. ix, 128 pp. IC.

*Buying Time for Heritage: How to Save an Endangered Historic Property*, by J. Myrick Howard. Raleigh: Preservation North Carolina; distributed by University of North Carolina Press, 2007. viii, 187 pp. DM, IC.

*Cedar Creek Friends and its People: The Story of Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting of Friends from 1841–2006 and the Surrounding Community*, compiled by Jean Hal-lowell Leeper. [Mount Pleasant], 2007. xxviii, 271 pp. DM.

*Cemetery Walk: A Journey into the Art, History and Society of the Cemetery and Beyond*, by Minda Powers-Douglas. Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2005. xxv, 416 pp. IC.

*China Journal 1889–1900: An American Missionary Family during the Boxer Rebel-lion: With the Letters and Diaries of Eva Jane Price and Her Family*. New York: Scribner, 1989. xxiii, 289 pp. DM, IC.

*Chrysler: The Life and Times of an Automotive Genius*, by Vincent Curcio. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. xiv, 699 pp. DM, IC.

*Citizen of the Earth*, by Kathleen Lawless Cox. Bettendorf: Razor Edge Press, 2006. 161 pp. Poetry. IC.

*Civil Disobedience: An Encyclopedic History of Dissidence in the United States*, by Mary Ellen Snodgrass. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2008. 2 vols. IC.

“Civil Rights in Iowa: The Statute and its Enforcement,” by Robert Edward Goostree. Ph.D. thesis, University of Iowa, 1950. 154 pp. DM, IC.

*Coal Resource Program Report*. [Iowa City?]: Iowa Geological Survey, 1979. 13 pp. DM.

*Coming Over: Migration and Communication Between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century*, by David Cressy. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987. xiii, 324 pp. IC.

*Confederate Goliath: The Battle of Fort Fisher*, by Rod Gragg. New York: Harper Perennial, 1992. xvii, 343 pp. DM.

*The Cowan Site: A Great Oasis Community in Northwest Iowa*, edited by Stephen C. Lensink and Joseph A. Tiffany. Iowa City: Office of the State Archaeologist, University of Iowa, 2005. xviii, 254 pp. DM.

*Creating Your Library Brand: Communicating Your Relevance and Value to Your Patrons*, by Elisabeth Doucett. Chicago: American Library Association, 2008. xiii, 124 pp. IC.

*Cultural Districts: The Arts as a Strategy for Revitalizing our Cities*, by Hilary Anne Frost-Kumpf. [New York]: Americans for the Arts, 1998. 36 pp. DM.

*Decorative Art, 70s*, edited by Charlotte and Peter Fiell. Köln and London: Taschen, 2006. 575 pp. IC.

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