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In This Issue

JONATHAN D. NEU examines the institutional history of Memorial University—a college, normal school, and preparatory academy in Mason City, Iowa, founded in the early 1900s. He argues that the short-lived school linked a Grand Army of the Republic-endorsed memory of the Civil War with Progressive Era educational reform.

EMILY PRIFOGLE demonstrates how prosecutorial discretion functioned in the small town of Storm Lake, Iowa, in the 1920s. Through the memoirs of county attorney Charles Pendleton, she shows how rural social networks and local norms concerning race, religion, gender, sexuality, and temperance informed prosecutorial acts of discretion in the early twentieth century.

Front Cover

Image of the first building completed at Memorial University in Mason City, Iowa, which was meant to be a harbinger of the grand university that the Grand Army of the Republic planned to build in the community. For more on the rise, decline, and influence of Memorial University, see Jonathan D. Neu's article in this issue. Photo courtesy of Jonathan D. Neu.

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Editor's Perspective

SINCE THE SPRING issue of the *Annals of Iowa* appeared in February, our world has experienced dramatic changes brought about by the rise of COVID-19. Amid these global transitions, we celebrated the retirement of the journal's longtime editor Marvin Bergman, and I humbly picked up his red pen.

Although a different name will now appear as the editor on the masthead, the work of the journal continues. *The Annals* will remain a scholarly journal dedicated to the history of Iowa and the Midwest, and we will still serve both professional historians and committed lay readers. In the past, the journal has brought new voices into Iowa history, with many articles focusing on the history of women, working-class people, and African Americans. It has also been committed to the evergreen interest in Iowa's agricultural and political history. Building on this deft balance of introducing new voices and shedding new light on familiar topics, the journal will still be a home for innovative research on our state.

In my transition to this role, I am particularly grateful for the support I received from my new colleagues at the State Historical Society of Iowa. At Duke University, Grant Wacker's sharp eye taught me how to be a kind but exacting editor and work with John R. Levison at Southern Methodist University helped me hone that craft. Support from mentors like Ted A. Campbell, Kate Carté, Crista De Luzio, and Priscilla Pope-Levison trained me to think and write like a historian. Kyle Carpenter, Sara Egge, Rebecca Brenner Graham, Chun-Jen Hou, Marie Olson Purcell, April Simpson, Kelsey Spinnato, Grace Vargas, and Brady Winslow humored my persistent interest in Iowa history, asked substantive questions, made the journey to this point lighter, and filled it with laughter. Of course, my greatest thanks go to my predecessor Marvin Bergman. He not only built a great legacy here at the *Annals* but also helped to make a smooth and enjoyable transition. Since then, he has graciously remained only a quick email away.

As a seventh-generation Iowan, I am delighted to come home after nearly a decade living and studying in the American South. I am excited to pursue this work and continue to serve our dedicated readers. It is with tremendous gratitude and humility that I take up the editorship.

—Andrew Klumpp, editor

“Produce Patriots As Well As Scholars”: GAR Educational Reform and the Establishment of Mason City’s Memorial University

JONATHAN D. NEU

THE NEWSPAPERS of Mason City declared Wednesday, June 26, 1901, as a “Day of Jubilee.” Businesses closed, citizens festooned public buildings with flags and bunting, and thousands of visitors from across the region descended on the small northern Iowa town. Crowds gathered to witness the cornerstone laying of the first of many planned academic buildings for the new Memorial University—a bold educational venture where the nation’s rising generation would learn the principles of good citizenship for the new American century and internalize the noble values exhibited by the men and women of the Civil War era North. Befitting the occasion, hundreds of grizzled members of the powerful but aging Grand Army of the Republic (GAR)—the largest organization of Union veterans—paraded down Mason City’s streets alongside Spanish-American War veterans and other patriotic and fraternal societies in front of at least 10,000 spectators.¹

The research and writing of this article were supported by a State Historical Society of Iowa Research Grant for Authors.

1. For event details, see “The Day of Jubilee Is Here,” *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 6/26/1901; and “Beginning of a New College,” *Davenport Times*, 6/27/1901.

THE ANNALS OF IOWA 79 (Summer 2020). © State Historical Society of Iowa, 2020.

The festivities then shifted to a knoll southeast of town, recently dubbed Patriot's Hill, which would serve as the site of the envisioned campus. Under a large, overflowing tent, orators gave voice to the special meaning of the day. Most prominent was Eliakim "Ell" Torrance of Minneapolis, a leading officer in the GAR. Rejecting the spirit of sectional reconciliation that had overtaken many Northern and Southern white Americans, Torrance declared that it seemed "but yesterday since we looked helplessly upon an enslaved face, with its auction block and overseers' lash; but yesterday since we heard the Constitution, purchased at so great a cost by the patriots of the Revolution, denounced as a lie; and the flag of Washington spurned and trampled upon by traitorous feet." Calling his audience a "great army of freedom," Torrance insisted, "this is certainly an hour and this the place for a new baptism of patriotism."² Next, Iowa State College president and GAR veteran William M. Beardshear spoke to how Memorial University would stand as a living, practical monument to the Union soldier. "More fitting than . . . shafts of granite," he proclaimed, "is the monument whose foundation we place today. . . . Here the spirit of the Grand Army of the Republic like that of John Brown's body will go marching on long after that lamentable day when the last old soldier . . . shall lie 'under the sod and the dew,' with his country's flag like the stars forever above him."³

This article examines the institutional history of Memorial University—a college, normal school, and preparatory academy in Mason City, Iowa. It argues that despite its short-lived existence Memorial University represented an audacious experiment linking a GAR-endorsed memory of the Civil War with Progressive Era educational reform in a period of burgeoning national power.⁴ Further, the university's establishment points to a new

2. Ell Torrance address delivered at cornerstone-laying ceremony of Memorial University, 6/26/1901, box 34, Ell Torrance Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, MN (hereafter MHS).

3. Quoted in "Memorial University Opens," *Grand Army Advocate* (Des Moines, IA), September 1902, box 13, Ell Torrance Papers, MHS.

4. My research, while heavily indebted to David W. Blight's conceptualization of Civil War memory, nonetheless contributes to the ongoing revision of his

interpretation of turn-of-the-century GAR veterans that goes beyond typical views that suggest that they were primarily invested in securing military service pensions, electing Republicans, erecting stoic monuments in town squares, and waxing nostalgically about their bygone days in the Union Army.⁵ Instead, this article highlights just one example of how aging GAR veterans and, vitally, their auxiliary allies utilized their memory of the Civil War to direct robust social activism during the Progressive Era. In this case, they invested their emotional, organizational, and financial

influential reconciliationist paradigm. It identifies a GAR memory of the Civil War and asserts Union veterans' own remembrances of their war experience are an overlooked but vital aspect of the nation's messy reunification process. See David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA, 2001). For scholars who have challenged aspects of Blight's thesis and advanced the notion of a Unionist memory of the war, see William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865–1914* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2004); John R. Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation* (Lawrence, KS, 2005); Barbara A. Gannon, *The Won Cause: Black and White Comradeship in the Grand Army of the Republic* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2011); Caroline E. Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2013); and M. Keith Harris, *Across the Bloody Chasm: The Culture of Commemoration among Civil War Veterans* (Baton Rouge, LA, 2014).

5. Interpretations of the GAR like these are best exemplified by the works of scholars such as historian Mary Dearing, political scientist Theda Skocpol, and historian Stuart McConnell. The first major scholarly treatment of the GAR, Dearing's *Veterans in Politics: The Story of the GAR* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1954), emphasized that members "became efficient cogs in the Republican machine" and evolved into a successful political lobbying group best evidenced by their ability to direct one-fifth of the federal government's revenue toward service pensions. In 1992, Skocpol similarly emphasized the GAR's lobbying significance in her top-down, policy-heavy *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, MA), which declared Union veterans' pensions as "America's first national system of public old-age and disability benefits." McConnell's *Glorious Contentment: The Grand Army of the Republic, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1992), the preeminent social history of the GAR, notes the numerical and political decline of the organization by the late 1890s and simply declared that the GAR after 1900 became "an organization for the promotion of patriotism and the commemoration of Memorial Day." My work shows that with more than 250,000 members in 1900, the GAR was still a powerful and assertive fraternal order whose members readily engaged in civic and reform activism as the nation entered the heart of the Progressive Era. For quotations, see Dearing, vii, 117; Skocpol, viii; and McConnell, xiii.

support in a civic education project that aimed to cultivate new generations of loyal citizens at a time when shifting national and international responsibilities called for an assertive brand of American patriotism.⁶

After victoriously emerging from the Spanish-American War, the United States was beset with challenges associated with its newfound status as a bone fide world power, an influx of immigrants harboring no connection to the Civil War, as well as expanding urbanization and industrialization. Many Americans viewed the education of the nation's youth—both native and foreign-born—as a way to bring order out of the chaos. According to one scholar of the Progressive Era, activists sought to “transform pupils into dutiful, hardworking, loyal citizens” prepared to become “full, individual participants in a democratic society.”⁷ This civic spirit also pervaded the progressives' views of the nation's quickly multiplying institutions of higher learning. As historian Frederick Rudolph argued, progressives wanted university education to encompass the idea that “informed intelligence when applied to the problems of modern society could make democracy work more effectively.”⁸ One new study of turn-of-the-century higher education similarly demonstrated that contemporaries viewed university attendance as the best means to mitigate the problems associated with modern life by nurturing “civic

6. In her study of how gendered behavioral codes shaped turn-of-the-century American imperialism, Kristen L. Hoganson discussed “a nation wary of the imperial endeavors that were reshaping the globe; a nation in which leadership was passing from the venerated Civil War generation to those who had grown up in the shadow of the Civil War.” The establishment of Memorial University exemplifies this transition in leadership. GAR veterans relied on their women's and hereditary auxiliaries to create an institution in which the lessons of the Union's victory could be learned and applied by a rising generation charged with navigating America's standing in an imperial age. For quotation, see Kristen L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, CT, 1998), 1.

7. Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America* (New York, 2003), 110, 111.

8. Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History* (Athens, GA, 1962), 363.

responsibility” among students.⁹ Principles of duty, loyalty, democracy, and civic responsibility formed the basis of educational reform during the era and also called to mind Union veterans’ Civil War service. The establishment of Memorial University thus subsumed Progressive Era educational reform and the GAR’s memory-driven activism at the turn of the century, such that the institution stood squarely at the confluence of both movements.

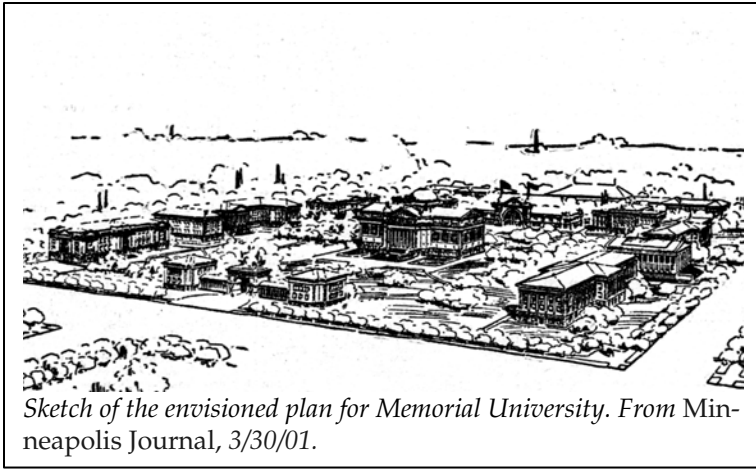
Historians have previously studied Grand Army involvement in education, emphasizing how benign old veterans taught young boys and girls how to salute the flag or sing patriotic songs. Over 50 years ago, Robert H. Wiebe identified GAR veterans as key actors in the pursuit of Progressive Era social order, asserting that their presence in public schools was part of a “hectic campaign to instill patriotism through worship of the Constitution, the flag, and America’s heroes.”¹⁰ Another historian of U.S. patriotism argued that Grand Army veterans and, importantly, their wives entered the public schools and served “as authentic actors in the living theater of Civil War history,” aiding in the instruction of good citizenship for native-born and immigrant children alike.¹¹ Similarly, scholars of the GAR and Civil War memory have underscored the renewed battle between postwar northerners and southerners over school textbooks and the lessons of the war they inculcated. Historian Stuart McConnell, for instance, detailed Grand Army textbook advocacy, illustrating how members promoted only those versions grounded in “the theme of Union” and attacked any that hedged on the crime of southern secession.¹² M. Keith Harris likewise asserted that veterans on both sides of the sectional divide understood the importance of

9. Steven J. Diner, *Universities and Their Cities: Urban Higher Education in America* (Baltimore, 2017), 18–20, 35.

10. Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877–1920* (New York, 1967), 57.

11. Cecilia Elizabeth O’Leary, *To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism* (Princeton, NJ, 1999), 190. O’Leary also illustrated the GAR’s paternalistic belief in welcoming immigrants and instructing them in “true” Americanism. She argued that to many GAR veterans the “acceptance of immigration restriction amounted to an implicit criticism of America’s powers of conversion.” O’Leary, *To Die For*, 62.

12. McConnell, *Glorious Contentment*, 224–32.



school textbooks “to illuminate both the ‘right’ and the ‘wrong’ versions of Civil War history.”¹³ Historians, however, have not studied Union veterans’ endorsement of and activities within the nation’s fast-growing network of turn-of-the-century institutions of higher education.

The establishment of Memorial University is an example of this overlooked form of GAR activism, which was more potent, practical, and progressive than the more traditional commemorative exercises usually associated with aged Union veterans. The project was crucially supported by the GAR’s auxiliary allies in the Woman’s Relief Corps (WRC) and Sons of Veterans (SV), who provided a great deal of the organizational and fundraising labor on behalf of a generation quickly entering their twilight years. Together, all three groups shared a vision to graduate scholars from Memorial University who had mastered the Union veteran’s remembrance of the Civil War. These graduates could then apply those lessons toward progressive efforts to broaden accessibility to university education, promote service in the public sphere, and deploy civic virtue in the battle against the nation’s societal ills. All the while, the school’s founders sought to stem the tide of North-South reconciliationism by grounding the curriculum in support of GAR-approved values of citizenship,

13. Harris, *Across the Bloody Chasm*, 8.

service, loyalty, and Americanism, all with a strikingly Unionist bent. As the *Mason City Globe-Gazette* reported at the time of the cornerstone-laying ceremony, Memorial University would stand with “a purpose greater than has yet been realized. It is a purpose which grasps the opportunity to immortalize the spirit of patriotism, elevate civic virtue, clothe sentiment with utility, and make all the future beneficiary, not only of the achievement of martial deeds but of the greater triumphs of peace.”¹⁴

**“Build a College and You Hold a Fortress”:
The Origins of a National University**

From the republic's earliest days, Americans debated the value of planting an elite institution of higher education in the nation's capital, established and supported by the federal government. Luminaries across the political spectrum articulated the merits of a so-called “national university” and its potential to instill in its students a devotion to the state and to civic service. Notably, George Washington bequeathed \$25,000 (the equivalent of over \$375,000 in 2020) toward the endowment of such an institution to train young citizens “in acquiring knowledge in the principles of politics and good government” and to help “spread systematic ideas through all the parts of this rising empire, thereby to do away [with] local attachments and State prejudices.”¹⁵ Other early advocates for a national university included Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and John Quincy Adams. Nevertheless, antebellum critics consistently thwarted the efforts. They doubted a national university's constitutionality and feared the consolidation of U.S. higher education under federal control.¹⁶

14. “The Day of Jubilee Is Here,” *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 6/26/1901.

15. Quoted in Jared Sparks, *The Writings of George Washington*, vol. 11 (Boston, 1838), 3.

16. For criticisms of the national university vision before the Civil War, see George Thomas, “The National University and Constitutional Limits,” chap. 2, in *The Founders and the Idea of a National University: Constituting the American Mind* (New York, 2015).

The idea again gained traction after the Civil War, when advocates argued that a national university's unifying influence might have averted the sectional crisis in which so many Americans, specifically college-aged men, had died. The string of post-war Republican veteran-presidents—Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, and James A. Garfield—supported the university concept, corresponding with their party's intention to consolidate the reunited country and strengthen the federal government.¹⁷ In 1877, for instance, Hayes delivered a message to Congress arguing that it would be “to the great and lasting benefit of the entire country, that this [educational] system should be crowned with a university in all respects in keeping with the national capital and thereby realize the cherished hope of Washington.”¹⁸ Further, postwar proponents of a national university tied its establishment to the era's powerful nationalistic impulses, deeming an education from the proposed institution to be a foundation for its graduates' loyal and passionate public service. One advocate asserted that the university's prospective scholars “would in time return to their thousands of homes more ardent patriots, the better qualified to serve their country, the more resolute in purpose to protect it from perils of every nature.”¹⁹

Union veterans subscribed to this rhetoric too, linking a national university education with civic-minded patriotism. Like their former army commanders who they had helped to send to the White House, GAR members imagined the establishment of the institution as the educational culmination of their efforts to preserve and restore a unified nation. The *National Tribune*, the fraternity's official organ, steadfastly supported the venture for many years, seeing in its creation the fount for a powerful state and an informed and loyal citizenry. Indicating a national

17. On post-Civil War state formation and its obstacles, see Richard Franklin Bensel, “State Structure and Reconstruction: The Political Legacy of the Civil War,” chap. 6, in *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859–1877* (New York, 1990).

18. *Letters and Messages of Rutherford B. Hayes, President of the United States, Together with Letter of Acceptance and Inaugural Address* (Washington, D.C., 1881), 98.

19. John W. Hoyt, *Memorial in Regard to a National University* (Washington, D.C., 1892), 23.

university's ability to "place the United States at the very head, in comparison with similar institutions in other lands," the education it offered would combine "the highest learning with the purest patriotism."²⁰ At their 1898 state encampment, Massachusetts GAR officials—acting on local post resolutions in support of a national university—urged comrades to assist the various patriotic societies in pressing Congress to authorize the institution.²¹ Citing the project as one that "appeals directly to our patriotism," the veterans advised that a national university "would be a most fitting thing for a great nation, ambitious to lead the world in civilization."²² Reminiscent of antebellum opposition to the university scheme, stiff resistance to the plan reappeared after the war. Critics (including many wary white southerners) still distrusted the centralization of U.S. higher education and several influential university presidents proved hostile to competition from a federally sponsored institution.²³ The national university never amounted to the vision George Washington proposed a century earlier.

Grand Army veterans and their auxiliary allies, however, remained strongly supportive of an elite national institution of higher education—one that might groom civic-minded patriots from every region of the country and prepare them for service on behalf of a reunited nation. The vision of such service evoked memories of the Union soldier, torn away from the educational and professional pursuits he might have enjoyed as a young man, had the requirements of war not intervened. Proponents of a GAR-endorsed national university believed that knowledge

20. *National Tribune* (Washington, D.C.), 10/7/1897.

21. Besides the GAR, the national university venture attracted support from a host of hereditary and patriotic societies. The GAR's women's auxiliary, the Woman's Relief Corps (WRC), was another vocal advocate for a national university. See Wallace Evan Davies, *Patriotism on Parade: The Story of Veterans' and Hereditary Organizations in America, 1783–1900* (Cambridge, MA, 1955), 245.

22. *Journal of the Thirty-Second Annual Encampment, Department of Massachusetts, Grand Army of the Republic* [. . .] (Boston, 1898), 56.

23. See Charles W. Eliot, *A National University. Report Made by Charles W. Eliot, President of Harvard University, to the National Educational Association* [. . .] (Cambridge, MA, 1874), 23.

and education provided safeguards against the ignorant and debasing social currents that had once corrupted white southerners, namely, secessionism and slavery, and subsequently, led to the death, debility, and stunted opportunities for millions of northern men (not to mention suffering and sacrifice on the part of northern women). Establishing a world-class institution would help prevent a similar recurrence for future generations. As one editorialist argued, "education form[s] a bulwark about a people amply sufficient for their protection from both domestic and foreign dangers."²⁴

As the nation's colleges and universities became more influential after the Civil War, Americans—including Union veterans—increasingly looked to them as powerful disseminators of cherished values.²⁵ Although the ratio of students to the total number of young adults remained small (about two percent in 1900), the number of colleges and universities grew rapidly. When the war commenced, fewer than 400 institutions existed. Forty years later, the number ballooned to nearly one thousand.²⁶ As a result, more and more communities across the country came to shape and be shaped by their institutions of higher education.

Increasingly, Union veterans and their families became part of this movement, exhibiting a growing interest in transmitting their preferred values to a GAR-backed college. Here, young scholars would learn more intently about the tragedy of the 1860s, the rightness of the Union Cause, the abhorrence of the Lost Cause, and how to prevent a similar catastrophe. By emphasizing disciplines such as history, politics, civics, and ethics, instructors would teach their students the importance of service, liberty, and love of country, all of which would be guided by the memory of the Union soldiers' sacrifice. Graduates would then leave the institution,

24. "G.A.R. Memorial College," *National Tribune*, 5/5/1892.

25. As W. Bruce Leslie confirms, post-Civil War colleges were useful progenitors of middle-class, Protestant values. "Americans," according to Leslie, "increasingly turned to colleges to perpetuate their cultural values and social position in the next generation." See W. Bruce Leslie, *Gentlemen and Scholars: College and Community in the "Age of the University," 1865–1917* (University Park, PA, 1991), 1.

26. For statistics, see Thomas D. Snyder, ed., *120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait* (Washington, D.C., 1993), 63, 75, 76.

steeled to the dangers of anarchy, tyranny, and bigotry, and prepared to exercise their citizenship on behalf of order, community, and justice.²⁷ As one advocate of the proposal simply stated in the *National Tribune*, “build a college and you hold a fortress.”²⁸

It was in the heart of the country, where so many veterans and their families migrated after the war, that supporters envisioned a national testament to patriotic education and Unionist principles rising high above the prairies. In 1889, several local members of the WRC came together with designs to found a college in the community of Oberlin, Kansas. “The object,” declared the all-woman board of trustees, “is to build a National Educational institution, in which every department of higher learning shall be free to the children and the children’s children of those who saved our nation; to perpetuate their memory in honor and to inculcate the principles for which they offered their lives.”²⁹ State GAR officials agreed. At the annual convention of the GAR’s Kansas Department in 1890, the comrades gave the National GAR Memorial College’s trustees their approval. Commending the “certain ladies actuated by the principles of Friendship, Charity and Loyalty,” Kansas GAR officers endorsed the college and urged “favorable consideration of all persons interested in the education of the children of the soldiers and sailors of the late war.”³⁰ Unfortunately for the WRC’s vision, however, little more came of the project. Endorsements from other state- and national-level GAR officials never materialized and the Kansas WRC fell victim to disorganization and infighting. By 1894, with not a single cornerstone laid and no students matriculated, the GAR Memorial College endeavor had died.

27. Equating the danger of mid-nineteenth-century Confederate secession with the threat of turn-of-the-twentieth century anarchism was common among Union veterans. See Harris, *Across the Bloody Chasm*, 58–59.

28. “G.A.R. Memorial College,” *National Tribune*, 5/5/1892.

29. Subscription request letter for the National G.A.R. Memorial College, 1891, box 2, Henry A. Castle Papers, MHS.

30. *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Encampment, Grand Army of the Republic* [. . .] (Topeka, KS, 1890), 94.

“Scholars for the Sake of Being Citizens”: Forging a National Memorial University

A few years later in Iowa the GAR's other significant auxiliary, the Sons of Veterans (SV), rekindled the national university idea. Leading the effort was Alexander Louis “Al” Sortor, Jr. Born in Iowa City in 1867, Sortor (whose father had served in the 20th Ohio Independent Battery) reportedly “never wearied of stories of heroism; of the camp-fire; of death in the trenches; of fierce fights where thousands fell” and became an enthusiastic member of the SV.³¹ As a young man, Sortor settled in Mason City and as early as 1896, envisioned “a college here . . . that will be a memorial to the union [sic] soldiers of the Civil war [sic] . . . devoted to the education of their children.”³² At the annual SV convention the following year in Indianapolis, Sortor suggested forming a committee of five to consider establishing a national university as a lasting tribute to the Civil War generation.³³ The Sons favored the idea and assigned Sortor to the committee, but their work was briefly postponed when he and other SV members enlisted to fight the Spanish in 1898. Sortor redoubled his efforts upon his return to civilian life, drumming up interest and pledges of financial support for the institution among GAR veterans and other patriotic societies. As initiative on a federally sponsored national university stalled, veterans and their allies assumed the burden of creating a national memorial university that would graft the sacrifices of the war generation to the goals of an institution centered around patriotic education and public service.

Although Sortor envisioned a memorial university in his hometown, the decision to determine its location did not go uncontested. Besides Mason City, civic leaders in Utica, New York;

31. Quoted in Charles Sumner Nichols, “A Patriotic Ideal,” *The National Magazine: An Illustrated American Monthly* 14 (Apr.–Sep. 1901), 445.

32. Quoted in “Al Sortor, Originator of Memorial University, Dies,” *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 2/7/1944.

33. For more on the SV's early planning for the institution, see *Journal of Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Encampment of the Sons of Veterans, U. S. A* [. . .] (Reading, PA, 1897), 210.

Plainfield, New Jersey; Lake Minnetonka, Minnesota; and Washington, D.C., all vied to host the institution. Boosters in the nation's capital most clearly articulated a vision for the prospective institution, which mirrored what national university advocates had long hoped to establish. For instance, the Washington representatives touted easy access to the Smithsonian Institution, the Congressional Library, and other "educational privileges"—not to mention the ability for students to learn about "the practical administration of the federal government" up close. In their pitch, the Washington Board of Commissioners enticed the SV by noting the "easy access of many of the great battlefields of the War of the Rebellion." Meanwhile, the Washington Board of Trade was particularly prescient in promoting the capital as "neutral ground" that would not fall victim to regional infighting. "Should you secure a purely local habitation," the Board warned, "the college would soon become more or less closely identified with the many inhabitants of that locality and eventually with the State itself."³⁴

To be sure, a small town in northern Iowa seemed to be an odd spot for what the SV envisioned as "the Harvard of the West."³⁵ Halfway between Des Moines and Minneapolis, and three hundred miles west of Chicago, Mason City was a comparatively outlying community with a turn-of-the-century population of roughly seven thousand. Still, the town's many promoters lauded its "intelligent, hospitable, and progressive" citizens, convenient rail access, modern amenities, and good "moral tone," which was attributed to the community's "absence of saloons" (deemed a particular benefit for a town angling to host college students).³⁶ Other backers extolled Mason City's location amidst "the loyal soldiery of the north" and professed that it would satisfy the need for "a university of the first class in the Mississippi

34. Localism ultimately hindered Memorial University's ability to assume a national scope and, arguably, hastened its failure, which proved their warning to be farsighted. For the Washington, D.C. boosters' inducements, see *Journal of Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Encampment of the Sons of Veterans* [. . .] (Boston, 1900), 120–25.

35. Quoted in "Memorial University," *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 8/19/1942.

36. Nichols, "A Patriotic Ideal," 446–47.

valley."³⁷ But whatever the town's benefits or shortcomings, it led its competitors in one important respect—financial pledges. Mason Cityans promised forty acres for the campus, as well as a gift of \$75,000 for the construction of the embryonic university's first academic building. Money ultimately pushed Mason City to the forefront of the Memorial University sweepstakes, with electors at the SV's 1900 national encampment in Syracuse, New York, selecting the town by an overwhelming vote of 143 to 10.³⁸

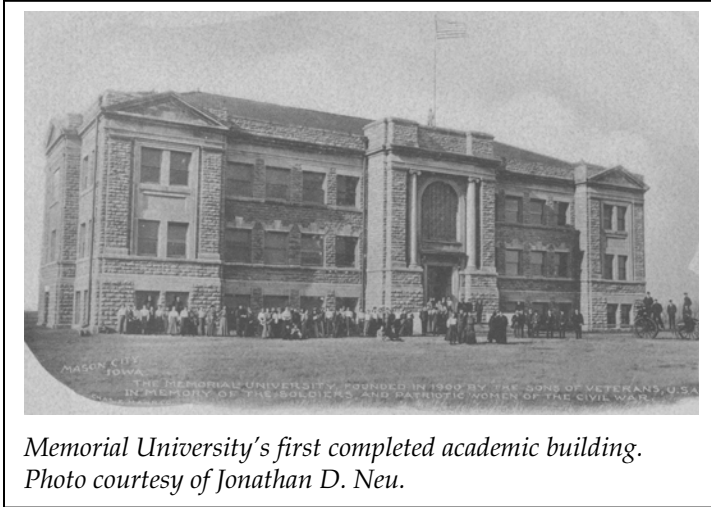
Progress on Memorial University proceeded quickly, aided by the support of enthusiastic Grand Army veterans and members of the organization's auxiliaries. Mason City's own Charles H. Huntley Post No. 42 contributed twenty dollars from its modest treasury while the veterans from nearby Clear Lake's Tom Howard Post No. 101 chipped in another ten. Some wealthier Mason City members later contributed personal funds to sponsor a competitive scholarship.³⁹ The women of Iowa's WRC pulled in especially impressive fundraising numbers. Department president Georgia B. Worker declared December 3, 1901, "Memorial University Day," and urged members across the state "to prepare on that day an entertainment of a patriotic nature, the proceeds to go as Iowa's contribution to help carry out this work . . . to commemorate the lives and deeds of the loyal men and women of the Civil War."⁴⁰ The individual corps responded generously. By early the following year, state WRC officials reported that members had contributed over \$800 dollars to the project with corps in Cedar Rapids (\$100), Mason City (\$50), Iowa City (\$35), and Muscatine (\$35)

37. "The Day of Jubilee Is Here," *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 6/26/1901; "Memorial to the Grand Army," *Minneapolis Journal*, 3/30/1901.

38. For the SV's debate about and decision on the location of the institution, see *Journal of Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Encampment of the Sons of Veterans* [. . .] (Boston, 1900), 113–28.

39. Minute book entry, 11/23/1901, box 63, Grand Army of the Republic Post Records, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, IA (hereafter SHSI); "Bulletin of Memorial University, Mason City, Iowa," 6:1 (Sep. 1907), 19; Minute book entry, 12/15/1900, box 108, Grand Army of the Republic Post Records, SHSI.

40. WRC Department of Iowa circular, 10/1/1901, box 1, Grand Army of the Republic, Woman's Relief Corps Records, General Orders and Circular Letters from State Headquarters, SHSI.



leading the way.⁴¹ Meanwhile, Sortor, his SV allies, and the institution's other civic backers drew up incorporation papers, secured the awarded land in the southeast quadrant of town, sold lots to raise funds (garnering some \$200,000), and authorized construction on the campus's first structure.⁴²

With the physical construction of Memorial University started, the founders next turned to developing the school's curriculum and determining its standing alongside the nation's growing network of colleges and universities. The undertaking mirrored a wider trend in American higher education during the Progressive Era. At this time, many colleges were expanding (and, frequently, rebranding themselves as universities) by supplementing their usual offerings with new programs, divisions, and departments aimed at widening their service to society and value to Americans broadly.⁴³ Sortor and his allies envisioned a

41. WRC Department of Iowa circular, 4/15/1902, box 1, Grand Army of the Republic, Woman's Relief Corps Records, General Orders and Circular Letters from State Headquarters, SHSI.

42. "Memorial University," *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 8/19/1942.

43. John R. Thelin dubs the late nineteenth century as the age of the "Comprehensive American University," in which many historic U.S. colleges extended their reach to incorporate a wider variety of curricula and departments,

similarly comprehensive offering to help Memorial University scholars make their mark in society, contemplating a College of Liberal Arts, a School of Music, a School of Art, a School of Oratory, a Business School, a Dental College, and a preparatory Medical School (though the latter two proposals evidently never came to fruition).⁴⁴ Additionally, they conceived a preparatory academy providing secondary education for students as young as thirteen, a service commonly offered by many colleges of the time.⁴⁵

Still, the founders sought unique reasons for prospective students and their guardians to choose Memorial University over the host of institutions cropping up across the country. To do this, they needed to address many commentators' acute concerns that college education was not molding the type of graduates needed for the modern era. Supposed threats to the republic, such as socialists and anarchists, throngs of immigrants, urban and industrial unrest, and resistance to law and order, required a new generation of trained leaders instilled with values of public-spiritedness, service, and devotion to country. In 1892, before students at the University of Michigan, President Grover Cleveland argued that "there is a great need of educated men in our public life, but it is the need of educated men with patriotism. The college graduate

ultimately comprising a "decentralized alliance of 'schools.'" Roger L. Geiger similarly notes that Progressive Era institutions of higher education "embrace[d] service to society as a fundamental mission, and this view accounts for the great expansion in their scope of activities." See John R. Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore, 2011), 103–07; and Roger L. Geiger, *The History of American Higher Education: Learning and Culture from the Founding to World War II* (Princeton, 2015), 363.

44. For the founders' departmental and curricular planning, see "Memorial University," *National Tribune*, 7/10/1902; and Letter of Ell Torrance to Theodore Roosevelt, 7/25/1902, box 36, Ell Torrance Papers, MHS. Incidentally, Memorial University's overambitious commitment to offer programs in a range of diverse fields may have spread its resources and effectiveness too thin.

45. Having a preparatory academy not only provided Memorial University with an additional source of income, but also had the potential to serve as a feeder school. In other words, academy students would be more likely to advance to the institution's college-level courses upon graduation, maintaining their connection with Memorial University. W. Bruce Leslie noted that many colleges of the era only survived by offering secondary education. See Leslie, *Gentlemen and Scholars*, 8, 91–92, 214.

may be, and frequently is, more unpatriotic and less useful in public affairs than the man who, with limited education, has spent the years when opinions are formed in improving contact with the world instead of being within college walls and confined to the study of books."⁴⁶ New York Republican (and later senator) Chauncey M. DePew more simply put it that U.S. educators must "teach, first and last, Americanism."⁴⁷

For a university honoring the men and women who had saved the republic, these concerns were particularly germane and offered a chance to advance the principles and characteristics of the Civil War generation as a pedagogical solution. Dedicated as it was "to the memory of the soldiers of the Republic and the loyal women of war times," Iowa's WRC officers acclaimed that the university was "calculated to assist in transmitting to posterity the heritage of a free government and . . . the blessings of American citizenship."⁴⁸ Administrators further promised that Memorial University would become "America's greatest university . . . founded upon broad lines as would befit its national character, and make it in all respects worthy of the men and women it seeks to honor."⁴⁹ To President Theodore Roosevelt, Al Sortor similarly wrote that the aim of the institution was "to raise the standard of citizenship and produce patriots as well as scholars."⁵⁰

To fulfill this lofty mission and set the school apart from others, university founders prided themselves on three distinct offerings for anticipated enrollees. First was an emphasis on teaching American history and the Union soldier's place within it.

46. Quoted in George F. Parker, ed., *The Writings and Speeches of Grover Cleveland* (New York, 1892), 354.

47. See DePew's 1888 "Oration on the Political Mission of the United States," in John Denison Champlin, ed., *Orations, Addresses and Speeches of Chauncey M. DePew*, vol. 1 (New York, 1910), 33.

48. WRC Department of Iowa circular, 12/31/1900, box 1, Grand Army of the Republic, Woman's Relief Corps Records, General Orders and Circular Letters from State Headquarters, SHSI.

49. Promotional booklet, "Memorial University, Sons of Veterans, U.S.A.," ca. 1901, box 113.D.3.5B, Department of Minnesota Records, MHS.

50. Alexander L. Sortor, Jr. to Theodore Roosevelt, 7/28/1902, box 36, Ell Torrance Papers, MHS.

Memorial University planners frequently berated other colleges for subjecting students to interminable lessons on ancient civilizations while ignoring the United States' own proud heritage.⁵¹ To counter this blunder, they promised that "especial attention will be paid to American history and civics, and patriotism will be to this institution what creed is to the denominational schools."⁵² The plan was one closely linked to the pedagogical musings of the era's educational reformers. Pioneering progressive school activist and GAR veteran Francis W. Parker, for instance, urged that students be taught, "the history of American life, and the genius of American liberty" while being "led to feel the heart-beats of liberty in all ages; to feel in his soul the pricelessness of his inheritance; that he is bought with a price—the suffering and blood of untold millions."⁵³

In keeping with this philosophy, Sortor wrote Ell Torrance (now the GAR's commander-in-chief) in March 1902 that it was the desire of the board of regents to have Grand Army veterans direct the organization of its American history curriculum, so it would "be organized in such a manner as to be satisfactory to the men we seek to honor."⁵⁴ Torrance selected regional GAR luminaries for the task, including University of Minnesota lecturer James O. Pierce; Iowa newspaper editor and politician Levi B.

51. In 1907, for instance, then-president William J. Patton stated before a meeting of Wisconsin GAR and SV members that Memorial University believed "it worth more to the young American to teach him our own history and achievements, to give him lessons drawn from the lives of great Americans, and to inspire him with American ideals, than to give the most of our attention, as too many colleges do, to the history, institutions and ideals of the nations of antiquity." See Lucius Fairchild Post meeting minutes, 11/4/1907, box 15, Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Wisconsin Records, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Madison, WI.

52. "G.A.R. Memorial University," *Des Moines Register*, 3/20/1901.

53. Francis W. Parker, *Talks on Pedagogics: An Outline of the Theory of Concentration* (New York, 1894), 341, 342.

54. Memorial University's board of regents acted in response to an earlier GAR pledge at the 1900 national encampment that officers would assign an Advisory Committee with "power to consult with, advise and assist the Sons of Veterans" in the establishment of the university. *Journal of the Thirty-Fourth Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* [. . .] (Philadelphia, 1900), 254.

Raymond; and Minnesota governor Samuel R. Van Sant. In July 1902, the committee met at GAR national headquarters in Minneapolis to plan Memorial University's American history curriculum.⁵⁵ Together, the men recommended that the department of history be elevated to college-status within the university, led by its own dean (a position soon filled by Pierce) and constituting a rigorous four-year course of study.⁵⁶ Further, the committee laid out a straightforward teaching philosophy:

We recommend that American History be made the principal object of study in this College; that the era of the Civil War receive especial attention as the most conspicuous event in our history; that the histories of other times, peoples and places be carefully examined in their relations to our own history; that Constitutional History be studied as presenting the highest and most commanding aspects of all History; and that the full courses of study in this College be made compulsory upon all students.⁵⁷

Drawing on their veteran status and a pedagogically reformist bent, the American history curriculum committee promised a unique and compelling educational strategy.

The four-year course of historical instruction sketched out by the committee was noteworthy for its insistence on keeping the restored Union's primacy foremost in students' minds. Freshmen would sit for lectures during their first academic year "to ascertain the leading and fundamental features of our history," covering the colonial, pre-revolutionary, and revolutionary eras in the first term; the post-revolutionary age and the early republic in the

55. On the meeting, see "College of Hist.," *Minneapolis Journal*, 7/22/1902.

56. The board of regents elected James O. Pierce as the dean of the College of American History in July 1902. After war service as a general's staffer, Pierce was a prominent state-level GAR officer and enjoyed a long postwar career as a lawyer and judge. He earned accolades at the University of Minnesota's college of law where he took up lecturing on constitutional history and jurisprudence late in life. Pierce assumed his duties as dean, noting that he had "made history a life study." See "Judge Pierce of Minneapolis Elected Dean of History College," *Minneapolis Journal*, 7/29/1902. For his first lecture before Memorial University's student body, see his 9/24/1902 address entitled "America's Place in History," in Pierce, *Studies in Constitutional History* (Minneapolis, 1906), 311–25.

57. Report of the American History Curriculum Committee to Alexander L. Sortor, Jr., 8/1/1902, box 36, Ell Torrance Papers, MHS.

second term; and the slavery question and Civil War during the final term (with each term concluding with biographical lectures on "Eminent Americans"). With a nod to the professionalization of historical teaching, Memorial University students would begin seminar work in the sophomore year as "an essential adjunct" to professorial lectures.⁵⁸ In courses such as "Making of State Constitutions," "Making of the Federal Constitution," and "History of Federation," second-year students would learn of the unique structure of the U.S. republic.⁵⁹ In the junior year, students would receive some instruction in world history—but with the U.S.-centric aim of tracking the "progress in the world's history of the political principles which distinguish the American system of government." Finally, senior-year students would study international diplomacy through "a *conspectus* . . . of the history of the leading nations of the world during the closing years of the Nineteenth Century, exhibiting constitutional government according to the American type as the dominant influence."⁶⁰ American historical exceptionalism, with the history of GAR veterans' Civil War sacrifice made paramount, gave Memorial University's course of study unusual status among other institutions of higher education and provided a bulwark against Lost Cause ascendancy in the postwar memory battles.⁶¹

58. *Ibid.* On the professionalization of historical teaching and the introduction of university seminars, see Georg G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge* (Middletown, CT, 1997), 27–28.

59. American History Curriculum Committee's College of American History, Manual of Study, 8/1/1902, box 36, Ell Torrance Papers, MHS. The committee's emphasis on constitutional history bears the marks of James O. Pierce's involvement in the curriculum planning. Pierce lectured on constitutional history at the University of Minnesota at this time. *The Minneapolis Journal* alluded to Pierce's involvement, stating that the department, under his supervision, would follow "a course of study which he has prepared." See "Will Not Leave Minneapolis," *Minneapolis Journal*, 9/12/1902.

60. Report of the American History Curriculum Committee to Alexander L. Sortor, Jr., 8/1/1902, box 36, Ell Torrance Papers, MHS (emphasis in original).

61. On Union veterans' education-related efforts to defeat "national amnesia" about their sacrifices on behalf of the Union, see Harris, *Across the Bloody Chasm*, 38–40. There are difficulties in tracing how closely Memorial University's course of historical study followed the curriculum committee's July 1902 recommendations.

Conjoined with Memorial University's emphasis on American history was an unprecedented curricular focus on what administrators dubbed "Applied Patriotism" or "Civic Virtue."⁶² Though hazily defined, the founders intended the study of applied patriotism "to assist in raising the standard of citizenship by bringing about a greater appreciation of the blessings of a free government and a fuller realization of the responsibilities of citizenship"—a clear attempt to address contemporary criticisms of college students and the education they typically received.⁶³ Although elevated to department-level status, applied patriotism was not taught in specific courses; rather, it was something university founders intended to "be woven into the warp and woof" of the students' character during their entire academic experience at Memorial University.⁶⁴ In other words, administrators expected applied patriotism to spread organically through all courses of study and be supplemented by student participation in special lectures and other events on "patriotic, historical and national

No course catalogs have been found delineating the university's U.S. history offerings in the early years of the school's operation. It is reasonable to suspect, however, that the committee's recommendations hewed fairly closely judging by later course catalogs. The 1907 "Bulletin of Memorial University," for instance, maintains a rigorous four-year program in U.S. history that provides survey courses for freshmen and emphasizes the Civil War and constitutional history for more advanced students. An entire semester in the junior year dealt with "The Rise and Fall of the Slave Power" and used as its chief text the anti-slavery politician Henry Wilson's three-volume *History of the Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America*. For 1907 U.S. History course of study, see "Bulletin of Memorial University, Mason City, Iowa," 6:1 (Sep. 1907), 10–11. For Wilson's *History*, see John L. Myers, "The Writing of *History of the Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America*," *Civil War History* 31:2 (June 1985), 144–62.

62. Memorial University's development of "applied patriotism" is similar to the rise of "applied sciences" more broadly in Progressive Era education and the pragmatic pedagogy of reformers like John Dewey. Applied patriotism, like applied sciences, was designed to be more practical and utilitarian in improving or fixing social problems. On applied science in Progressive Era U.S. institutions of higher education, see Laurence R. Veysey, "Research," chap. 3, in *The Emergence of the American University* (Chicago, 1965).

63. "Memorial to the Grand Army," *Minneapolis Journal*, 3/30/1901.

64. "Bulletin of Memorial University, Mason City, Iowa," 6:2 (Dec. 1907), 6.

topics."⁶⁵ Applied patriotism, according to one excerpt from official college literature, was designed for "the development of **Americanism**—the students are to be scholars for the sake of being citizens. . . . Under such a course [the student] is expected to develop a citizenship impossible under the ordinary routine of book study, and to go forth from the school with a full consciousness of individual responsibility and with a willingness to bear it."⁶⁶ Further, university founders believed that in the absence of a national crisis whereby young people could express their patriotism through military sacrifice, young people had little direction about how best to devote themselves to the state. Because there had not been "a legitimate opportunity for expression" of young people's commitment to the nation (perhaps expressed best through military service in a conflict akin to the Civil War), one newspaper explained that applied patriotism would help them realize that "good citizenship means a healthy interest in governmental and city affairs, and actual work in caring for a country that has been left to them as an inheritance."⁶⁷

Giving final, physical expression to the infusion of patriotic sentiment at Memorial University, the founders hitched military drill to male students' obligations. Unlike the school's applied patriotism branch, drill on a college campus was not particularly unusual between the Spanish-American War and World War I. Since the passage of the Morrill Act in 1862, all land-grant colleges benefiting from federal government support were required by law to include "military training" in their curriculum.⁶⁸ The

65. "Pledge Support to Sons of Veterans," *Freeport Journal-Standard* (Freeport, IL), 10/31/1907.

66. "Bulletin of Memorial University, Mason City, Iowa," 7:2 (Dec. 1908), 8 (emphasis in the original).

67. "Large Work of Veterans' Sons," *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, 6/28/1907. The newspaper further asserted the progressive orientation of Memorial University's applied patriotism emphasis, stating that "the object of this branch [applied patriotism] is to teach young Americans to foster the spirit of patriotism which animated the forefathers, and to use it for the betterment of the state; to apply the deeds inspired by patriotic impulse, to the betterment of civic affairs and for the purification of state and national government."

68. Text of Morrill Act, quoted in William M. McKinney, *Federal Statutes Annotated: Second Edition* [. . .], vol. 3 (Northport, NY, 1917), 100.

stipulation was popular with many Americans (particularly Union veterans). Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Congress and state legislatures continued to back supplementary acts in support of military training in institutions of higher education.⁶⁹ In Iowa, for example, GAR officials reported favorably in 1896 on the General Assembly's vote to loan state-owned arms to educational institutions that offered military instruction, encompassing some "600 stand of arms in use in the academies, normal schools and colleges of the State."⁷⁰ Four years later, GAR commander-in-chief Albert D. Shaw acknowledged that school military drill "develop[ed] both mind and body in a desirable way" and cultivated "national strength of the most desirable sort in times of peace."⁷¹

Given the school's dedication to former soldiers and its oversight by GAR veterans, Memorial University unsurprisingly made military training a key part of the curriculum and used imagery of the past to inspire the next generation of America's defenders. In a pointed display of the institution's adherence to the memory of Union victory, administrators decided that instead of making cadet uniforms "grey as at other schools," they "will be of union blue."⁷² All male preparatory and college students were required to take part in drill and tactics twice a week, unless an enrollee could prove honorable discharge from military service prior to admission. The founders also reserved drill grounds and a rifle pit for their students, secured officers from the Iowa National Guard to lead training, and even planned a naval reserve station at nearby Clear Lake (an idea that was later scrapped). All told, the school's curricular triad—American history, applied

69. For instance, Congress authorized the War Department to post army officers to teach military drill on college campuses, equip colleges with small arms and other training equipment, and extend military training beyond the land-grant institutions. For more, see Michael S. Neiberg, *Making Citizen-Soldiers: ROTC and the Ideology of American Military Service* (Cambridge, MA, 2000), 21–22.

70. See *Journal of the Thirtieth National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* [. . .] (Indianapolis, 1896), 163.

71. *Journal of the Thirty-Fourth National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* [. . .] (Philadelphia, 1900), 63.

72. "Memorial University," *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 9/11/1902.

patriotism, and military instruction—shaped Memorial University students into an image reminiscent of the Union soldier of the past, girded to defend the nation of the present. With this training, the university vowed that “every graduate shall become a missionary to the country in altruistic patriotism,” sending out scholars to do battle to uphold the GAR’s cherished principles.⁷³

“We Are Not Going to Send Our Children to Iowa”: The Rise and Fall of Memorial University

With Memorial University’s curriculum solidifying and construction of its first academic building nearing completion, its founders determined to open the institution for the start of the 1902–03 academic year—a remarkable feat given the brief amount of time that had passed since Sortor secured the school for Mason City. “The patriotic citizens of this city . . . never does [sic] things by halves,” boasted the *Globe-Gazette*, and “fulfilled their obligations by insisting on . . . open[ing] the school at once.”⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the school’s speedy inauguration belied the fact that it was not initially a university at all. Rather, the institution “for the present . . . will be run as a Military academy and until the larger design has been successfully reached. The academic course will be a three year course and will fit students for the collegiate course when it is established.”⁷⁵ Still, administrators lured a talented array of men and women to lead classes in the academy’s preparatory division, the commercial school, and the school of art. They also took out advertisements in regional newspapers to attract students, and sent canvassers to nearby homes to convince parents to send their children to Memorial University. As one student later recalled, a teacher visited her family’s farm and assured her parents that the children would “get more attention there than we would at the [public] high school.”⁷⁶ Reflecting their desire

73. “Bulletin of Memorial University, Mason City, Iowa,” 6:2 (Dec. 1907), 7.

74. “Memorial University,” *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 9/9/1902. Courtesy of Lee P. Loomis Archive, Mason City Public Library, Mason City (hereafter MCPL).

75. “Memorial University,” *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 9/11/1902.

76. “Woman Recalls When Building Was Young,” *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 11/4/1978.

both to maintain the institution's national scope and to ensure Union veterans' involvement, the board of regents also empowered the commanders of each GAR state department and the presidents of the WRC state departments to select a son or daughter of a veteran "of good moral character" to receive a scholarship to attend.⁷⁷

Memorial University formally opened its doors to roughly sixty students on September 10, 1902, with a reception in the newly completed and state-of-the-art liberal arts building (the first of at least a dozen planned for the campus).⁷⁸ Three stories tall with thirty-seven rooms and an assembly hall "capable of seating 500 students," the structure was of "Greek architectural design . . . and equipped with the most modern school furniture and the latest devices for heating and ventilating."⁷⁹ Opening ceremonies were far more subdued than the previous year's cornerstone-laying events. A visit by President Theodore Roosevelt during his scheduled tour of the region was never formalized, quashing the hope "that every building on the college campus shall be dedicated by some president of the United States to make every building national and historical."⁸⁰ Nevertheless, assembled students, faculty, and guests heartily sang "America," listened to a prayer of invocation, and heard dean of faculty Walter A.

77. "A Free Scholarship," *Arizona Daily Star* (Tucson, AZ), 8/8/1902. For more scholarship announcements in other GAR state and territorial departments, see "Free Education," *Albuquerque Citizen* (Albuquerque, NM), 8/8/1902; "Scholarship Free in New Memorial University," *Argus-Leader* (Sioux Falls, SD), 8/14/1902; "Free Scholarship for Veteran's Child," *Washington Times* (Washington, DC), 8/22/1902; "Grand Army News," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* (Brooklyn, NY), 9/14/1902; "G.A.R. Appointee," *Argus-Leader*, 9/22/1902.

78. Exact enrollment numbers and how many students enrolled in which departments are difficult to pinpoint. School records for Memorial University's earliest years of operation have not been discovered and newspaper reports are frequently vague and often contradictory. I have chosen to place the opening year's enrollment estimate at sixty based on a report given by the Committee on Memorial University at the GAR's national encampment held in Washington, D.C., in October 1902. See *Journal of Thirty-Sixth National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* [. . .] (Minneapolis, 1903), 283.

79. "Will Open Wednesday," *Evening Times-Republican* (Marshalltown, IA), 9/9/1902.

80. "Memorial University," *Mason City Daily Globe-Gazette*, 9/9/1902.

Doran give an address welcoming the “band before him,” which he confidently predicted was “but a beginning of the thousands who should crowd the halls of the University.”⁸¹ Al Sortor attended, as well, but according to the *Grand Army Advocate*, “sat as a silent listener during the exercises [and] tears came to his eyes as he thought of what the event passing before him meant, of the struggles, hopes, fears, triumphs and sacrifices which stood behind this day, when training began in the halls of the University.”⁸²

Despite the haste with which Memorial University was constructed and opened, its first academic year passed largely successfully. The school was proudly coeducational (young men boarded in nearby Lincoln Hall, young women in Barton Hall—nods to the war generation’s male and female paragons).⁸³ Mirroring trends in other contemporary universities, the students assertively organized a wide range of extracurricular activities.⁸⁴ Enrollees had the opportunity to join the newly established Lincoln-Fritchie Literary Society or the board of the student-run *Varsity Review*. Besides the requirement to take part in military drill, young men also joined the school’s football, basketball, and

81. Quoted in “The Light That Failed,” *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 6/1/1953.

82. “Memorial University Opens,” *Grand Army Advocate*, Sep. 1902, box 13, Ell Torrance Papers, MHS.

83. Consistent with many Progressive Era educational reformers, Memorial University’s founders harbored no qualms about coeducation. Reformer John Dewey proclaimed that coeducation in high schools and colleges was “an intellectual and moral necessity in a democracy.” Because GAR, WRC, and SV members readily acknowledged the service and sacrifices of men *and* women on behalf of Union and democracy during the Civil War, it stands to reason that they also understood the importance of coeducation to groom good citizens for the twentieth century at Memorial University. For Dewey quotation, see Steven C. Rockefeller, *John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism* (New York, 1991), 256.

84. Roger L. Geiger identified a “collegiate revolution” in educational institutions during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, during which students broke free of some administrative discipline and began organizing their own activities. Fraternities, YMCA chapters, glee clubs, student journals, and athletic teams proliferated thanks to student-led efforts during this time. Memorial University’s attendees proved no exception. See Geiger, *The History of American Higher Education*, 365–80. See also, Leslie, “‘The Side Shows Have Swallowed Up the Circus,’” chap. 9, in *Gentlemen and Scholars*.

baseball teams, taking part in a nationwide turn toward collegiate athletics.⁸⁵ By the end of the second term, total enrollments more than doubled to some 150 students.⁸⁶ Capping the school's auspicious first year, in August 1903 the trustees announced the addition of the "energetic, forceful and eloquent" Frederick D. Tucker, head of the Minnesota State Agricultural School, as Memorial University's first president.⁸⁷ With growing enrollment, improving reputation, and a top-rate president, Memorial University appeared poised to realize the vision of its founders and carry on the values of the Civil War generation.

A particular point of pride in this regard was the school's first graduation ceremony in June 1903 and the identity of its lone graduate that year. James Leggett was an African-American student, born in Alabama in 1869 to parents who were formerly enslaved. Leggett transferred to Memorial University after studying for three years at Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois. He and his wife, Menarvia, boarded at Mason City's Wilson Hotel while he completed one year of study in the College of Liberal Arts. Granted his diploma from trustee W. A. Morris, who "expressed the pleasure" of "being able to give the diploma to one so worthy," Leggett was then feted afterward by "the ladies of the W.R.C." who "presented the young man with handsome bouquets of American beauty roses." Leggett continued his education at the State Normal and Industrial College for Colored Students in Tallahassee, Florida (now Florida A&M University).⁸⁸

85. Recently elected dean of the college of liberal arts, J. F. Sellick spurred on Memorial University's athletic development. Sellick, who came to Mason City from the Michigan Normal College, was—as the *Des Moines Register* reported—a "believer in athletics" who would help Memorial University "be heard from in the athletic world." See "First Term Successful," *Des Moines Register*, 12/21/1902.

86. Number as reported in "Aid for Memorial University Asked," *Des Moines Register*, 1/29/1903.

87. "Memorial University Has New President," *Des Moines Register*, 8/13/1903.

88. For quotation and proceedings of the ceremony, see "A Colored Man," *Minneapolis Journal*, 6/23/1903. For more on Leggett, see also, "At Memorial University," *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 9/18/1902; "First Graduate a Colored Man," *Indianapolis Journal*, 6/18/1903; and "May 26, 1903," *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 5/26/1933. Unfortunately, Leggett's later career remains obscure in the historical record.

Newspapers commented upon the appropriateness that the first graduate of Memorial University was black since “the men in whose memory” the university was dedicated “fought thru to many bloody years for the liberation of the slave.”⁸⁹

Notwithstanding measurable achievements made in its first years in operation, Memorial University consistently faced numerous obstacles. Enrollment lagged behind the number needed to keep the institution financially afloat, forcing the school’s leadership to take to the road in search of students and donations. This was not wholly unusual, as college presidents of the era frequently took on the role of fundraisers for their institutions.⁹⁰ Like their counterparts in prestigious schools, Memorial University’s administrators sought lavish donations from wealthy backers. However, these requests were rarely fruitful. For instance, an appeal to Pittsburgh industrialist Henry Clay Frick for financial backing ostensibly failed despite much goading from Iowa congressmen.⁹¹ School advocates blamed the failure on the very fact that the university was devoted solely to the memory of Grand Army veterans, which “stayed the hand [and] closed the pocket-book” of philanthropists who contributed funds to educational institutions “only to see their names inscribed over its doors.”⁹²

89. “A Colored Man,” *Minneapolis Journal*, 6/23/1903.

90. John R. Thelin explains that at a time when many colleges had meager administrative structure, college presidents frequently served as chief fundraisers for their institutions. George Keller notes that many college presidents of the era—for example, Charles W. Eliot of Harvard, Daniel Coit Gilman of Johns Hopkins, and James Angell of Michigan—were so proficient at fundraising, they could be termed “academic entrepreneurs.” See Thelin, *American Higher Education*, 99; and Keller, *Academic Strategy: The Management Revolution in American Higher Education* (Baltimore, 1983), 7.

91. “Aid for Memorial University Asked,” *Des Moines Register*, 1/29/1903.

92. *Journal of the Twenty-Eighth National Convention of the Woman’s Relief Corps* [. . .] (Boston, 1910), 332. George Keller notes that “the history of American higher education institutions has been an unceasing struggle between locating and catering to potential or actual donors who, like modern Medicis, could support the colleges’ unusual cultural and intellectual labors, and protecting the colleges’ central pursuits and freedoms from these frequently powerful and often passionately opinionated patrons.” This appears particularly true for Memorial University. On one hand, administrators desperately sought large donations. On the other, the nature of the university’s founding dictated that only the

Memorial University leaned heavily on the members of sympathetic local- and state-level GAR, WRC, and SV groups. For example, President Tucker sought backers at the June 1905 Michigan GAR state encampment in Traverse City. Calling on veterans there to give "your support, your influence and your aid in this great work," Tucker informed those gathered "that we are building a monument to the patriotic men and women of the civil war [sic], [so] that the children of the land may have a correct knowledge and an honest historical view of the institutions of the country."⁹³ Although many of these members were enthusiastic, they lacked the deep pockets of the typical university donor. In 1905, the WRC Iowa department raised an admirable, but insufficient, \$850 for Memorial University (outraising twenty other WRC state departments that also contributed).⁹⁴ In another effort "to revive some of the latent interest" in Memorial University, Tucker visited the patriotic societies of Decatur, Illinois, hoping to drum up more financial support beyond the meager ten-dollar annual contribution of the city's WRC group.⁹⁵

In the summer of 1906, regent Walter J. Patton addressed GAR and SV state encampments in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, and Maine. Patton (who had vital links to the SV as a prominent officer) proved an abler cheerleader and fundraiser than President Tucker. Netting several substantial financial pledges during his eastern tour, Patton succeeded, according to fellow administrator James E. E. Markley, in securing "a net gain over the costs to the institution whil [sic] his time has been spent mostly in correcting the wrong impression, which some how [sic] arose in the minds of the order in the east."⁹⁶ His

deeds of Union veterans (and not of philanthropic industrialists) could be memorialized. See Keller, *Academic Strategy*, 8.

93. *Journal of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Encampment, Department of Michigan, Grand Army of the Republic* [. . .] (Lansing, MI, 1905), 83. Courtesy of Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

94. "Memorial University," *National Tribune*, 6/28/1906.

95. "Dr. Tucker Is in Decatur," *Decatur Herald*, 10/20/1905.

96. James E. E. Markley to Alexander L. Sortor, Jr., 7/15/1906, box 36, Ell Torrance Papers, MHS.

success also resulted in his elevation to the presidency of Memorial University in September 1906.

Unfortunately, Memorial University continued to operate primarily as a preparatory academy for local youths during its first several academic years, deviating from its stated mission to serve as an elite national university. In July 1906, Sortor (who remained on the board of regents) received a scathing report from WRC inspectors who censured Memorial University for “the debt of the institution; its lack of standing; its failure to graduate students; that it is not a University . . . and that in many ways it is sailing under false colors.”⁹⁷ Although school officials advertised that the student body was comprised of individuals hailing from twelve different states, the vast majority were native Iowans plucked from a public school education in or around Mason City.⁹⁸

Newly elevated school president Walter J. Patton subsequently oversaw a reorganization of Memorial University that sought to deliver on the educational promises made by the founders several years earlier. During the 1906–07 academic year, the school introduced a normal department to help fulfill the country’s growing need for trained schoolteachers. The department fell under the leadership of Perry O. Cole, who came to Memorial University from his position as superintendent of schools in Cerro Gordo County. Administrators praised the “able and experienced” Cole who had “thorough acquaintance with the public school system [that] enables him to adapt our courses to the needs of that system.”⁹⁹ Students in the normal department had two options—to take either the two-year course of study that earned them a county certificate or a three-year course that terminated with a five-year state certificate. In either case, normal students took their courses with regular faculty, ensuring that their education fit with the heavy emphasis on American history and civics.

97. Letter of Alexander L. Sortor, Jr. to Col. William T. Church, 7/14/1906, box 36, Ell Torrance Papers, MHS.

98. *The Memorial University Bulletin, Containing Annual Announcement, Mason City, Iowa, 1906–1907* (Mason City, 1906), 4. Courtesy of MCPL.

99. “Bulletin of Memorial University, Mason City, Iowa,” 6:1 (Sep. 1907), 15. For more on Cole’s hiring, see “Supt. Cole Is Named,” *Des Moines Register*, 8/3/1906.

In a report submitted in 1907 by a WRC committee, the women noted with satisfaction that of the forty students taking normal courses, "thirty-six stood at the head of the long line of Teachers who the County Superintendent examined for honors."¹⁰⁰

By the 1907–08 academic year, Memorial University at last began advertising its conspectus of college courses for prospective enrollees. The institution offered four-year programs for both a bachelor of arts and a bachelor of science degree with candidates also "required to write a thesis on some subject related to the courses pursued."¹⁰¹ In either case, students took on a rigorous series of courses in the sciences, mathematics, philosophy, psychology, English, foreign languages, and ethics. Further, in keeping with the school's foundational objective, students were also expected to complete a robust array of American history classes through the entirety of their collegiate experience. "The courses here offered are of a different nature," asserted school officials. "It is one thing to learn that an event happened; it is another thing to know who brought it about, why he did it, what sort of a man he was and how he grew. . . . We assert with confidence that no other college of similar grade offers a course in American history at all comparable to that offered in Memorial University."¹⁰²

Despite the energy that President Patton brought to his post, however, Memorial University still failed to be recognized as an elite national university. The school struggled to shed its image as a preparatory academy for native Iowans. Indeed, Memorial University became an educational option for a certain type of student—"largely boys and girls from the more remote agricultural districts, sons and daughters of poor soldiers who would not otherwise be sent to school."¹⁰³ Total enrollments stagnated, usually fluctuating from year to year between one hundred and one

100. Quoted in "Bulletin of Memorial University, Mason City, Iowa," 6:1 (Sep. 1907), 24.

101. "Bulletin of Memorial University, Mason City, Iowa," 6:4 (June 1908), 10. Courtesy of MCPL.

102. "Bulletin of Memorial University, Mason City, Iowa," 6:1 (Sep. 1907), 10.

103. *Ibid.*, 25.

hundred fifty students (mostly enrolled in the preparatory academy). During the 1908–09 academic year, for instance, the educational report from the Department of the Interior tallied 57 male and 63 female students—in line with estimates from preceding years.¹⁰⁴ Spring newspaper reports consistently announced only a handful of graduates each year, confirming the complaints from disgruntled WRC inspectors. Of these few graduates, most were from the area. For example, of the eight graduates in 1908, all hailed from small Iowa towns.¹⁰⁵ Another problem was that many of Memorial University's college-aged students seemingly transferred out of Mason City to further their education at more prestigious institutions. Common was the experience of "two young ladies who had left the school [and] were admitted to the Senior year in the State University of Iowa, on merit."¹⁰⁶

Moreover, the patriotic societies that had once sustained Memorial University further cooled in their support. The WRC national apparatus failed to coalesce around a unified plan of action for the struggling institution. When President Patton visited the WRC's 1910 national encampment seeking funds to endow the school's chair of applied patriotism, many members (particularly those from regions benefiting least from the school) responded adversely. For instance, Isabel Worrell Ball, an officer in the Potomac Department, complained that the WRC was losing sight of its true mission. "The Woman's Relief Corps must go straight ahead in its work of caring for the veterans," Ball rebuked. "As long as there is a survivor of the Civil War left, all the energies of my life shall be devoted to his welfare and comfort, and when he is laid to rest I may then turn my attention to Chairs of Applied Patriotism, but not before."¹⁰⁷ The Sons of Veterans also failed to

104. United States Department of the Interior, *Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year Ended June 30, 1909*, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C., 1910), 1114. Of this number, 32 students were enrolled in the normal school and 50 students were taking business courses. The rest, presumably, were in the preparatory department.

105. "Memorial University Commencement," *Des Moines Register*, 5/29/1908.

106. "Bulletin of Memorial University, Mason City, Iowa," 6:1 (Sep. 1907), 24.

107. *Journal of the Twenty-Eighth National Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps*, [. . .] (Boston, 1910), 373.

present a united front in support of Memorial University. In 1907, one Ohio SV officer tried to raise funds by means of a new but short-lived periodical, *The Republic Magazine*, which promised to “be devoted to the highest interests of American Schools, American Homes, American Youth, American Men and Women, with patriotism as the foundation principle.”¹⁰⁸ Meanwhile, despite President Patton’s gestures of goodwill to Sons of Veterans camps in the East, interest there in propping up the institution waned. For example, in 1910, the state SV commander in Vermont reported a mere eleven dollars in camp donations for the university.¹⁰⁹

Ultimately, many factors—financial straits, stagnating enrollments, disinterest in collegiate offerings, and a loss of support from the patriotic societies—doomed Memorial University. At the SV’s 1911 encampment in Rochester, New York, the Sons determined the fate of their relationship with the institution once and for all. Supporters motioned to levy an annual per capita tax of twenty cents to keep the school afloat. During the ensuing debate, however, the inability of the Mason City school to attract a national following thwarted its continued operation. Many SV opponents likely shared one officer’s opinion:

It is true that a vast majority of the members of the Sons of Veterans live east of the Mississippi. Of the total membership, I should say . . . that in Ohio, New York and Pennsylvania more than 50 per cent of the total membership will be found. It goes without saying that we are not going to send our children to Iowa to attend the Memorial University. In other words, more than one-half of the members of the Sons of Veterans will not avail themselves of the opportunities offered in the Mason City institution. Then why should we continue to support it, why should we expend any more money for purposes that are of no real benefit to the order as a whole?¹¹⁰

108. Informational circular of H. V. Speelman to Davis Camp #1, 10/12/1907, correspondence box, SV Davis Camp #1, Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall, Pittsburgh, PA.

109. *Proceedings, Twenty-Eighth Annual Encampment, Sons of Veterans* [. . .] (1910), 35–36.

110. “Will Not Aid a University,” *Democrat and Chronicle* (Rochester, NY), 8/25/1911.

Delegates representing nineteen state divisions of the SV soundly defeated the ensuing vote on the per capita tax proposal, 102 to 37, along largely regional lines. Strongest support for the institution came from those midwestern states most directly linked to its benefits—Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Michigan.¹¹¹ With the proposal's defeat, delegates decided to withdraw their affiliation with the university and ceased further appropriations. With its parent order's abandonment, President Patton and the administration formally closed Memorial University's doors during the 1911–12 academic year.¹¹²

“A Sore Need of This Very Kind of School”: Memorial University in History and Memory

Just five years after the shuttering of Memorial University, America's foremost progressive educational reformer, John Dewey, wrote in his influential *Democracy and Education* that for a people to “conduct education so that humanity may improve,” society “must depend upon the efforts of enlightened men in their private capacity.”¹¹³ Despite Memorial University's unfulfilled legacy, the failed endeavor nonetheless revealed the powerful influences that turn-of-the-century Grand Army veterans and their auxiliaries maintained in shaping higher education through efforts that foreshadowed Dewey's call.

Veterans who had fought for democracy and freedom, their wives who supported the effort on the Civil War home front, and their progeny who vowed to carry on their parents' legacy viewed themselves as the enlightened ones. They believed in the righteousness of the Union Cause and its ability to lay the groundwork for higher education in a new, assertive American century.

111. For vote totals, see *ibid.*

112. Within six months of its demise, the building and grounds were sold and converted for use by the Mason City school district. Memorial University's sole academic building later hosted the town's junior college and was later unceremoniously razed in 1979. “Memorial University Sold,” *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern* (Oshkosh, WI), 2/19/1912; “Plan to Enlarge Building,” *Iowa State Bystander* (Des Moines, IA), 12/12/1912.

113. John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York, 1916), 111.

This reformist educational model firmly grounded pupils in an Americanism that continued to embody the broad principles for which the Union soldier had fought—loyalty, service, citizenship, and freedom. In turn, scholars would go out into society as graduates sacrificing for and perfecting a powerful, though discordant, United States.

Admirable as this was, the school faced irrepressible headwinds. With every passing year, fewer and fewer Americans shared a direct memory of the Civil War, and the United States faced modern challenges that made “bloody shirt” cries seem outmoded and inconvenient. When Memorial University opened in 1902, the Grand Army still mustered just over 260,000 members. A decade later, that number had dwindled to just 190,000.¹¹⁴ The Sons of Veterans, meanwhile, no longer garnered the same devotion as the twentieth century unfolded.¹¹⁵ The sons and grandsons of Union veterans had their own wars to fight and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and American Legion soon supplanted the GAR as the nation’s foremost veterans’ organizations. The Woman’s Relief Corps still boasted a sizeable membership, fielding some 164,000 members when Memorial University closed. Nevertheless, in an effort to fend off attrition, the WRC began to admit female relatives of veterans of other American wars, further diluting the direct connection to the Civil War. They also began to turn their organizational interests toward new aims—women’s suffrage to name just one—that got in the way of quixotic projects like Memorial University.¹¹⁶ In many ways, America or, at least, white America was moving on to the exigencies of the twentieth century, and with it, buried the

114. For membership statistics, see *Journal of the Thirty-Sixth National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic* [. . .] (Minneapolis, 1903), 111; *Journal of the Forty-Sixth National Encampment, Grand Army of the Republic* [. . .] (n.p., 1912), 111.

115. On membership declines and ennui within the SV’s ranks, see Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, 281–82.

116. *Ibid.*, 282–83.

troublesome sectional disagreements of the post-Civil War years in favor of national reconciliation.¹¹⁷

With the shuttering of Memorial University came the end of one of the most daring educational experiments in GAR memorialization—the establishment of an institution of learning that guaranteed a space (in a nation otherwise given over to sectional reconciliationism) for young scholars to honor and learn from the sacrifices of the Union soldier and the principles of the Unionist cause. Here, under the watchful supervision of veterans, their wives, and their children, educators and administrators instructed students with a unique curricular triad designed to inculcate a GAR-endorsed memory of the war and prepare graduates to lead lives of service with it in mind. Through the educational development of scholars' character, courage, and (perhaps most importantly) loyalty to the nation, Memorial University's young men and women could construct a bulwark against those "imbibing ideas of contempt for law and government"—a defense not unlike that which Union soldiers provided against an earlier generation of disruptive secessionists.¹¹⁸

Through its reform-minded curricula, Memorial University promised a progressive education that both looked backward on Union veterans' past sacrifices and also promoted mastery in modern patriotism, citizenship, and service to the nation. In 1912, the WRC members gave their final word about the then-defunct institution. "[There was] a sore need of this very kind of school," that taught the "nameless miseries that followed the men and that remained with the women [of the Civil War generation] . . . and a college that [would] instill into the minds of our youth—whether they are native born or children coming to us from foreign shores—this patriotic love and devotion."¹¹⁹

117. See, for instance, Nina Silber, *The Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South, 1865–1900* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1993); Blight, *Race and Reunion*; and Janney, "A New Generation, 1913–1939," chap. 9, in *Remembering the Civil War*.

118. "Bulletin of Memorial University, Mason City, Iowa," 7:4 (June 1909), 14. Courtesy of MCPL.

119. *Journal of the Twenty-Ninth Annual Convention of the Woman's Relief Corps* [. . .] (Mitchell, SD, 1912), 58.

Winks, Whispers, and Prosecutorial Discretion in Rural Iowa, 1925–1928

EMILY PRIFOGLÉ

IT WAS SUMMER 1920, and Charles Pendleton had just returned to Iowa from Washington, D.C., where for three years he worked for the government during World War I and took law school classes at night at Georgetown University. Pendleton had become a member of the Iowa bar not many days before when he ran into Sheriff Merritt Hoffman in rural Buena Vista County.¹

“Hey, where you gonta start up be’na lawyer?” asked Sheriff Hoffman.

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1. Charles Pendleton, “Lawyer Sign or Justice is the Best Lawyer, copy #2” MS146, box 1, Charles Edmund Pendleton Papers, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City (hereafter SHSI), 1–2; Georgetown University, *Ye Domesday Booke* (Yearbook) (Washington, D.C., 1920).

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"At Fort Dodge," replied Pendleton.

"Them Fort Dodge attorneys," by that he meant urban lawyers, "are too smart for a new beginner. They'll eat you up without any salt while you starve to death." Hoffman continued, "Sure Mike, everybody in Storm Lake remembers your seven years as a post office carrier and clerk, and they want you to stay in this county and forget those Washington, D.C. big city airs."²

With apparent prompting from a local sheriff, Pendleton began his career in rural Buena Vista County instead of one of Iowa's small cities. Throughout his long career, he retained a primary identity as a small-town lawyer, boasting of the expansive and varied skill set required of small-town lawyers. They were "expected to practice in all courts, government agencies and Washington bureaus and to be informed on all subjects and procedures." By claiming these broad abilities, he also asserted his equality with urban lawyers: "death came and went at my location the same as he did in New York City or any metropolitan center, so do not scorn the small-town attorney, for he deals with life and death, good luck and misfortune, love and hate, taxes and tithes, just like his brothers in big cities."³

THROUGH CHARLES PENDLETON'S memoirs, this article explores the use of prosecutorial discretion at the ground level in one rural Iowa county in the 1920s. Individuals in rural communities like those where Pendleton was a prosecutor experienced "the law" through distinctly isolated geographies and social networks that lacked anonymity. This lack of anonymity was what scholars of rural America refer to as onymousness—"namedness and knownness"—and it altered patterns of dispute and dispute resolution. Yet as this article makes clear, onymity did not mean homogeneity. Ethnic, racial, and religious diversity created divisions within a community where social distance between individuals was small. Both onymity and diversity shaped who should have access to which types of sanctions and remedies. As the examples in this article demonstrate, some legal transgressions

2. Pendleton, "Lawyer Sign," 1.

3. Pendleton, "Lawyer Sign," 172, 209.

did not align with transgressions of social norms. In those cases, illustrated most clearly in bootlegging, Pendleton's exercise of discretion (his power to decide independently who to charge with which crimes) adhered closely to the letter of the law. In other cases, legal transgressions did align with social transgressions, but legal processes were not always triggered in response.⁴

The aim of this article, then, is to sort out some of the ways that rural social networks informed prosecutorial acts of discretion in the early twentieth century. To do that, it examines the memoirs of Charles Pendleton, who wrote about his legal practice from his home in Storm Lake, Iowa. Beginning in the 1940s and continuing until the 1970s, he drew on account books, diaries, and letters to recollect his exploits as a lawyer, small-town mayor, and county prosecutor from 1920 through World War II. Pendleton aligned himself with others in his profession who also wrote memoirs, and asserted both his own importance and the importance of his profession to his small rural town.⁵

Legal life writing can play an important role in legal scholarship because neglected voices in the profession, such as rural legal practitioners, can be brought to the fore through autobiography. Self-published and unpublished memoirs, like those of Charles Pendleton, provide one entry point to the understudied rural

4. Colin R. Johnson, *Just Queer Folks: Gender and Sexuality in Rural America* (Philadelphia, 2013), 21, 110–11, 119; Michael Grossberg, "Institutionalizing Masculinity: The Law as a Masculine Profession," in *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America*, eds. Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen (Chicago, 1990), 143–45; Robert Wuthnow, "Rural Depopulation," in *The Routledge History of Rural America*, ed. Pamela Riney-Kehrberg (New York, 2016).

5. Pendleton's son donated six volumes of his father's memoirs to SHSI. Pendleton also self-published one book in 1978 entitled, *At the Home Front in War and Life: How a Patriotic Iowa Lawyer Helped Win World War II* (Hicksville, NY, 1978). In this article, I make use of two of the memoirs that describe Pendleton's legal practice in the 1920s, and a third that informed my understanding of his practice of writing his memoirs after World War II: Charles Pendleton, "Many War and Living Fronts or Confessions of a Lawyer," MS 146, box 3, Charles Edmund Pendleton Papers, SHSI; Pendleton, "Lawyer Sign;" and Charles Pendleton, "People's Pendleton or Crime Cases, copy #2," MS146, box 2, Charles Edmund Pendleton Papers, SHSI. Also, one of Pendleton's peers in Storm Lake wrote his own memoir during the same years that Pendleton wrote his memoir. See E.A. Thompson, *You Cannot Stand Alone* (Mora, MN 1958).

lawyer. Certainly, Pendleton's status as a white man influenced his belief that his life story was worthy of recording in immense detail; nevertheless, his memoirs provide a "broader version of 'law' and 'society'" by illuminating the entanglement of personal life, community life, and legal life in rural communities.⁶

Pendleton's memoirs are an especially exciting source because they not only offer a particularly candid, if subjective, perspective of a prosecutor but also reflect the onymity that shaped Pendleton's legal practice. The newspapers, legal opinions, census data, and other community members' writings that inform the narratives that follow corroborate portions of Pendleton's memoirs; however, I am relatively unconcerned about the factual truth of the memoirs. This type of source instead offers a subjective truth, but it is precisely Pendleton's subjective perspective that provides insights into the practice of prosecutorial discretion in rural communities. He never tried to conceal the real names of the individuals he described in his stories—they are named, and their namedness mattered to him.⁷

The detailed stories in Pendleton's memoirs enable the examination of rural prosecutorial practice in a period before many legal thinkers had considered the discretionary nature of prosecutors. Prosecutorial discretion generally refers to determinations about whether, when, and how to pursue criminal charges against an individual. These decisions might reflect a sense of fairness or mercy, some utilitarian purpose, or limited enforcement resources. This is an extraordinary power held by prosecutors, and the subject of much recent concern because such

6. For more about the use of memoirs in legal scholarship, see Linda Mulcahy and David Sugarman, "Introduction: Legal Life Writing and Marginalized Subjects and Sources," *Journal of Law and Society* 42, no. 1 (March 2015), 1; David Sugarman, "From Legal Biography to Legal Life Writing: Broadening Conceptions of Legal History and Socio-legal Scholarship," *Journal of Law and Society* 42, no. 1 (March 2015), 7–33, 21, 27, 30, 32.

7. As other historians and legal scholars have noted, "there is no way of knowing" if authors accurately reproduce the conversations they include in their memoirs and autobiographies. See Hendrik Hartog, "Abigail Bailey's Cover-ture: Law in a Married Woman's Consciousness," in *Law in Everyday Life*, eds. Austin Sarat and Thomas R. Kearns (Ann Arbor, MI, 1993), 68; Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide to Interpreting Life Narratives* (Minneapolis, 2000), 10–12.

“discretion is a potential source of societal injustice.” In general, this authority is considered to be limited to criminal proceedings, and today “many, if not most, people do not imagine that they may be subject to prosecutorial power.”⁸

And yet, at least in Storm Lake, Iowa, in the 1920s, the discretion and authority of the county attorney extended into the lives of “many, if not most, people.” Because this discretion in practice was distinct from the twenty-first-century prosecutorial discretion familiar to legal scholars, this article uses the term “county attorney” rather than “prosecutor” and “discretion” rather than “prosecutorial discretion” to reflect the distinct role of the rural prosecutor in the early twentieth century. These words better reflect both Pendleton’s self-image as, and his efforts to be, the “People’s Pendleton.”⁹

Recent research on public prosecutors has called for an emphasis on the importance of place and descriptive analysis of prosecutorial work. To date, historical scholarship on prosecutorial discretion has focused primarily on urban communities. Perhaps this is because some legal scholars have observed a tendency for rural residents to avoid legal remedies for intra-community

8. Peter L. Markowitz, “Prosecutorial Discretion at its Zenith: The Power to Protect Liberty,” *Boston University Law Review* 97 (March 2017), 489–549, 490, 496; David Sklansky, “The Changing Political Landscape for Elected Prosecutors,” *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law* 14 (2017), 647–74, 669; David Sklansky, “The Problems with Prosecutors,” *Annual Review of Criminology* (2018), 2.4, 2.6; Dwight L. Greene, “Abusive Prosecutors: Gender, Race & Class Discretion and the Prosecution of Drug-Addicted Mothers,” *Buffalo Law Review* 39 (Fall 1991), 737–802, 741; David Sklansky, “The Nature and Function of Prosecutorial Power,” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 106, no. 3 (2017), 474. See generally, Bruce A. Green and Samuel J. Levine, “Disciplinary Reregulation of Prosecutors as a Remedy for Abuses for Prosecutorial Discretion: A Descriptive and Normative Analysis,” *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law* 14 (Fall 2016), 143–82, 146; Gabrielle M. Thomas, “The Fate of Black Youth in the Criminal Justice System: The Racially Discriminatory Implications of Prosecutorial Discretion and Juvenile Waiver,” *Rutgers Race & the Law Review* 17 (2016), 267–88; Lissa Griffin and Ellen Yaroshfsky, “Ministers of Justice and Mass Incarceration,” *Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics* 30 (Spring 2017), 301–35. For a defense of prosecutorial discretion, see William T. Pizzi, “Understanding Prosecutorial Discretion in the United States: The Limits of Comparative Criminal Procedure as an Instrument of Reform,” *Ohio State Law Journal* 54 (1993), 1325–73.

9. Sklansky, “The Problems with Prosecutors,” 2.4.

disputes; however, scholars of rural communities note that a sense of cohesion and shared “common knowledge” among residents has never prevented intra-community disagreement.¹⁰

Contrary to legal scholar Robert Ellickson’s findings that in rural communities “large segments of social life are located and shaped beyond the reach of the law,” Pendleton’s memoirs reveal that such a conclusion cannot be universally true. Law permeated rural social life and intra-community conflict in Storm Lake. Pendleton’s memoirs highlight the fault lines of these rural conflicts and illuminate which groups of community members benefited from selective use of legal action and non-legal resolutions. Pendleton’s exercise of discretion reflected the specifics of his rural community, and yet it also mirrored larger themes of all prosecutorial work.¹¹

Pendleton was a product of the still fairly recent shift to formal education in (urban) law schools, which embodied a different set of masculine ideals that distinguished well-educated lawyers from the rowdy convivial rural bar.¹² As one of the few local lawyers with formal legal training, Pendleton ran for county attorney after practicing law for just four years. Between earning admission to the bar in 1920 and his 1924 campaign, he had already

10. Ronald F. Wright and Kay L. Levine, “Place Matters in Prosecution Research,” *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law* 14 (2017), 675, 678–81, 683–89; Sklansky, “Prosecutorial Power,” 473, 475, 478; Carolyn Ramsey, “The Discretionary Power of ‘Public’ Prosecutors in Historical Perspective,” *American Criminal Law Review* 39, no. 4 (2002), 1309; Allen Steinberg, “From Private Prosecution to Plea Bargaining: Criminal Prosecution, the District Attorney, and American Legal History,” *Crime and Delinquency* 30, no. 4 (1984), 568–92.

11. David Engle, “The Oven Bird’s Song: Insiders, Outsiders, and Personal Injuries in an American Community,” *Law & Society Review* 18:4 (1984), 551–82; Carol Greenhouse, Barbara Yngvesson, and David Engle, *Law and Community in Three American Towns* (Ithaca, NY, 1994); Dorothy Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land* (Ames, 1996), 161; Robert C. Ellickson, *Order without Law: How Neighbors Settle Disputes* (Cambridge, MA, 1991), vii, 4.

12. Grossberg, “Institutionalizing Masculinity,” 143–45. This article focuses primarily on Pendleton’s use of discretion. However, much of that exercise of discretion was an expression of shifting masculine norms in the legal profession in the early twentieth century, which can only be briefly mentioned here. For more analysis of rural masculinity and legal practice in Pendleton’s world, see chapter one in Emily Prifogle, “Cows, Cars, and Criminals: The Legal Landscape of the Rural Midwest, 1920–1975,” (Ph.D. Diss., Princeton University, 2019).

served as mayor for two years in Sioux Rapids, Iowa, in northern Buena Vista County. After his successful campaign as a Republican, on January 1, 1925, Pendleton moved to the county seat of Storm Lake to begin his duties as the county attorney for Buena Vista County and gave himself the moniker of the "People's Pendleton." The entire town of Storm Lake, where his office now sat in the courthouse on the square, measured less than a mile between the railroad to the north and lake to the south, and spread out just a smidge over a mile from east to west. The county seat was home to 3,900 community members and was the largest town in the county.¹³

As a rural county attorney, Pendleton's office and position differed from his urban counterparts in a few obvious ways. Small rural criminal dockets reflected smaller rural populations. That often meant that rural county attorneys only served in the role part-time, simultaneously maintaining a private practice or combining criminal prosecution with civil responsibilities (advising the county on issues of contracts, zoning, education, mental health commitments, and so forth). Fewer resources meant minimal, if any, support staff or attorneys to share the load. Further, smaller communities increased the likelihood that a county attorney personally knew the defendants, police officers, judges, counsel, and victims involved in any given case. Perhaps less obvious are some of the implications of those structural differences, which are discussed in the anecdotes that follow. In short, in some ways Pendleton's discretionary power was more expansive than might be expected of a prosecutor, extending beyond the criminal law. At the same time, he addressed legal matters in a relatively informal environment among people who knew each other, and his discretionary power was bounded by community norms around temperance, race, gender, and sexuality.¹⁴

13. Pendleton, "Lawyer Sign," 403, 434; Pendleton, "People's Pendleton;" State of Iowa, *Census of Iowa for the Year 1925* (Des Moines, 1925), 523; Sanborn Map Company, *Storm Lake, Iowa* [map], 1924, Sheets 1–17 (New York, 1924).

14. For more on the distinctiveness of rural prosecutors, see Frederick B. Bryant, "The Rural Prosecutor," in *Public Prosecutors* (New York, 1955), 2; Joan E. Jacoby, *The American Prosecutor: A Search for Identity* (Lexington, KY, 1980), 47–79.

Pendleton's experience as county attorney demonstrated the scope and limitations of the law to do the work of reconstituting and reinforcing rural norms more broadly. He observed, at least in hindsight, that the small communities surrounding the county seat often preferred to handle "the local problems" without the involvement of the county attorney. While Pendleton was the county's sole legal representative, he was not its only arbiter of conflict. Other leaders in the community, such as mayors, doctors, and even psychics, provided legal advice and social services.¹⁵

Scholars of rural American communities have found that individual community members often expressed their understanding of social norms by identifying the transgressive behavior of "outsiders" to the community. For example, who brought which legal claims could mark "the social boundaries between [insiders and outsiders]." Social boundaries in a rural community required active safeguarding and maintenance, which included stigmatizing certain types of legal actions brought by certain types of people. Doing so was a way for residents of a community to "exclude from their moral universe what they could not exclude from the physical boundaries of their community." Pendleton's exercise of discretion similarly maintained those social boundaries.¹⁶

Two powerful forces shaped experiences of insider and outsider status in rural Buena Vista County: onymity and otherness. Anonymity, and its absence (onymity), was a significant influence over perceptions of insider and outsider statuses, and consequently, of Pendleton's discretion. Otherness created along lines of ethnicity, race, and class was also an important influence on community legal norms. Pendleton's memoirs reveal his own liminal status between insider and outsider—someone who had grown up in the county and participated in the community's civic life, but also as someone who had left for better opportunities elsewhere before returning. His memoirs reveal many biases that

15. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 106, 164–65, 320.

16. Engel, "Oven Bird's Song," 580–81; Barbara Yngvesson, *Virtuous Citizens, Disruptive Subjects: Order and Complaint in a New England Court* (New York, 1993).

purposefully and knowingly influenced his understanding of the community he served and the criminals he prosecuted.

The structure of the close reading that follows reflects the episodic nature of the memoir. Just as Pendleton hopped from one story to the next, the article works through five categories of anecdotes found in the memoirs: race, religion, temperance, gender, and sexuality. Just as Pendleton hoped to use those anecdotes to make an argument for the value of his rural legal practice, I use the anecdotes to argue that in rural communities strong onymous social networks powerfully influenced early twentieth-century prosecutorial practices.¹⁷

Race: Insiders & Outsiders in Rural Iowa

One troubling example of the intersection of onymity and otherness is Pendleton's account of the "torrid afternoon [that] a group of Mexicans from toothless great grandfather to . . . the same kind of baby flooded . . . my law offices in the courthouse." He complained of their smell, despite observing that their landlord "made them sleep in an old hog pen." The family approached Pendleton to collect their wages from Jim Little, a tenant farmer, whose land they were working. A young boy translated between the grandfather and Pendleton, telling Pendleton that Little hired them to weed his cornfields, but they now wanted to leave for the beet fields and better housing. As it turned out, Little farmed land

17. Pendleton may be put in conversation with other rural midwestern lawyers across the twentieth century, yet understandable skepticism about whether his memoirs can reveal anything representative or generalizable about rural prosecutors remains. One person cannot stand in for all midwestern rural lawyers or even those in Storm Lake. However, like other rural scholars, I have found across many rural cases that studies of individual rural communities provide generalizable insights into rural law and history. For more about how I consider multiple case studies together, see Prifogle, "Cows, Cars, and Criminals." For examples of how other scholars have found, and proven, that careful close readings of oral histories, memoirs, and novels can provide insights about rural history and the social history of legal practice, see Johnson, *Just Queer Folks*, 11–12, 111–17; Hendrik Hartog, "The Significance of a Singular Career: Reflections on Daniel Webster's Legal Papers," *Wisconsin Law Review* (1984), 1105, 1109–10, 1118; and Mary L. Gray, Colin R. Johnson, and Brian J. Gilley, eds., *Queering the Countryside: New Frontiers in Rural Queer Studies* (New York, 2016).

owned by Judge James DeLand, who happened to be in chambers at the courthouse when the laborers approached Pendleton.¹⁸

Pendleton, seemingly thinking the wages were due, “volunteered to take the matter up with [Judge DeLand] feeling he’d order the wages paid.” But DeLand insisted otherwise. The contract was indivisible, and the family would not be “entitled to any pay” until they hoed all of the weeds. Pendleton explained to the young boy, “This is the ranchero. He is a great and good Judge and he has ruled that he and his tenant will pay every peso of your agreement to hoe out all the weeds, otherwise they will not pay.” After translating Pendleton’s words “in Mexican,” the young boy flatly stated his grandfather’s response: “My grandfather say, ‘We poor Mexicans will not hoe another weed on mean American’s ranch; they can steal our wages from us but they cannot make us sleep with [sic] their worn out hog house.’” In his memoir, Pendleton simply remarked, “Like a flock of jabbering blackbirds the Mexicans left the center of American justice,” and then he moved on to recount a new, unrelated story.¹⁹

The short account is remarkable. Pendleton did not express surprise at the presence of Mexican migrant laborers in the community or on Little’s farm in particular, but instead his account was ambiguous as to his perception of the situation. At first, he told the reader that he thought that the family should receive wages. Pendleton explicitly understood his professional career as dedicated to the underdog, but his understanding of that type of advocacy was complicated by his understanding of race and nationality. Here, he mediated as a favor, but whether the favor was to the migrant workers or DeLand and Little is unclear.

Pendleton did not ask to see a contract, conduct legal research, or take the claim to court because the migrants’ complaint was “right” or “just,” even though he did when other sympathetic (white) victims in the community approached him for help. Instead, he ostensibly accepted the judge’s straightforward application of the entireties doctrine to the labor contract—derived from the legal principles of master-servant relationships

18. Pendleton, “People’s Pendleton,” 287–88.

19. Pendleton, “People’s Pendleton,” 288–89.

stretching back to early nineteenth-century America. The employer was under no obligation to pay even partial wages until the employee completed the agreed upon term of service. Pendleton told the young boy that the judge had “ruled” on their case, but there was no indication of a legal hearing or ruling—the landowner (the judge making the decision) simply asserted he would not pay. Pendleton remarked that the migrant family left the “center of American justice,” and only implied, if not ignored, the fact that they left having not actually accessed the justice system at all.²⁰

Moreover, Pendleton’s proactive efforts to solve this dispute fell outside the scope of his official duties as county attorney. It is possible that the migrant workers approached him in his capacity as a lawyer in private practice, but one gets the sense that the workers went to the courthouse as a site of justice or dispute resolution, not to find the legal offices of an individual lawyer for hire. Pendleton, as county attorney, was someone who could help with a dispute, regardless of whether it involved a criminal act, and apparently even temporary community members like the migrant workers knew to go to him as county attorney to resolve a contract dispute.

Different types of legal actions carry different moral weight in a given community, and recourse to those different legal actions is shaped by community norms. Here, however, it is difficult to find the difference between the outsiders’ illegitimate claim for wages due and the legitimate claims of debt collection that Pendleton routinely carried out for prominent white men in his community. In this case, more important than the type of claim being brought was how onymity and otherness intersected to give the final say

20. Pendleton, *At the Home Front in War and Life*, 263; Pendleton, “Lawyer Sign,” 34–35; Christopher Tomlins, *Law, Labor, and Ideology in the Early American Republic* (Cambridge, 1993), 270, 273–79; “In Iowa,” *Storm Lake Pilot Tribune*, 6/3/1926. See also “Poultry Show at Rembrandt,” *Storm Lake Pilot Tribune* 10/7/1926; “Light Vote Cast at Rembrandt,” *Storm Lake Pilot Tribune*, 6/10/1926; “Rembrandt,” *Storm Lake Register*, 6/10/1926; “Harvesting Beets Near Rembrandt,” *Storm Lake Register*, 10/7/1926; “Rembrandt,” *Storm Lake Register* 12/6/1928; “Market Beets at Rembrandt,” *Storm Lake Pilot Tribune*, 12/6/1928; “Big Acreage of Sugar Beets,” *Storm Lake Pilot Tribune*, 6/17/1926. See also Marc Simon Rodriguez, *The Tejano Diaspora: Mexican Americanism of Ethnic Politics in Texas and Wisconsin* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2011).

in the matter to the prominent judge and not the nameless Mexican or Mexican-American outsiders.²¹

The migrant laborers were just one illustration of how even while there was little racial diversity in many small rural towns, the “ideas about race” expressed by rural residents and communities were nevertheless informative of their “view of themselves and their place,” insiders and outsiders, and how legal discretion unfolded. Even in acts of kindness to people of color, Pendleton worried that his actions would “giv[e] the Klan an issue” with which to harass him—and unseat him as county attorney. Rural Iowa towns like Storm Lake were not monolithically white, despite census reports indicating that was the case. Race, ethnicity, and religion all informed insider-outsider dynamics and shaped how Pendleton and his community routinely saw and experienced the law.²²

Religion: Disputes among Insiders

Pendleton was forced to practice law and navigate community politics at a time when the Ku Klux Klan was on the rise in Iowa.

21. Engel observed that who brought which claims marked “the social boundaries between [insiders and outsiders].” Engel, “Oven Bird’s Song,” 577, 580–81. He found in his study that in a rural midwestern community in the late 1970s individuals were less inclined to bring personal injury suits against other community members because doing so violated norms about taking personal responsibility for one’s actions. In that same community, however, keeping one’s word was also valued and corresponded to higher numbers of lawsuits enforcing contracts.

22. Another example of how Pendleton worried about whether an act of kindness to a person of color might raise the ire of the local Klan is found in his story about giving a hitchhiker a ride. Hidden under her sun hat, Pendleton did not realize the woman to whom he was about to give a ride was a black woman. He made a joke of it, and noted for his reader that he dropped her, “that cotton picking baggage,” at the edge of town to avoid anyone seeing his act of kindness to a person of color. Pendleton, “People’s Pendleton,” 190. Thomas J. Morain, “To Whom Much Is Given: The Social Identity of an Iowa Small Town in the Early Twentieth Century,” in *Iowa History Reader*, ed. Marvin Bergman (Iowa City, 1996), 294; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920: Volume III Population* (Washington, D.C., 1922), 321; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population* (Washington, D.C., 1932), 756.

Compared to divisions between insiders and outsiders, the Klan created a divide along political, ethnic, and religious lines within the community and between insiders. Thinking back on his time as county attorney, Pendleton wrote in his memoir, “the Klan became the issue.” The Klan tended to be strongest outside of the South in places with very small African American populations, like Buena Vista County. While Pendleton observed that nationally the Klan “was burning niggers at the stakes, whipping trifling white husbands, [and] scaring [sic] foreign born jousting Jews,” his detailed accounts of his challenges to the Klan focused almost exclusively on two different issues: temperance and anti-Catholic bigotry. Not only were Catholics specifically targeted as feminized or imperfectly masculine traitors to the nation, the Klan tied their anti-Catholicism to violations of Prohibition. Pendleton himself was raised in the Catholic Church—another marker of his sometimes-liminal status between community insider and outsider—but joined a Methodist church once he started practicing law.²³

The Klan offered rural men several benefits: the chance to join a fraternal organization, the opportunity to have anonymity behind a mask in a community in which there was virtually no anonymity, and an articulation of—and opportunity to perform—rural manhood. In her study of a rural Klansman from Buena Vista County, historian Dorothy Schwieder observed that at least one local Klan group “accomplished little.” Still, the letters of a rural Klansman expressed particular satisfaction in having his identity hidden behind a mask and remarked upon the power of anonymity several times. Klansmen like the ones Schwieder found in Buena Vista County focused on law and order yet encouraged

23. Pendleton, “Lawyer Sign,” 347–48, 353–56, 360, 367; Dorothy Schwieder, “A Farmer and the Ku Klux Klan in Northwest Iowa,” *Annals of Iowa* 61 (2002), 286–320, 287, 298–300; Linda Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK: The Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s* (New York, 2017), 41–42, 46–47, 96. For more on the Klan in the early twentieth-century Midwest, see Kathleen Blee, *Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s* (Berkeley, CA, 1991); Shawn Lay, ed., *The Invisible Empire in the West: Toward a New Historical Appraisal of the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s* (Urbana, IL, 1992); Leonard J. Moore, *Citizen Klansmen: The Ku Klux Klan in Indiana, 1921–1928* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1991).

actions outside of the law, including raids and burning crosses. Vigilantism expressed the Klan's manliness and pride.²⁴

Despite the anonymity of the mask, the Klan controlled much of local politics, and many community members publicly sympathized with their goals. The role of the Klan in informing county sheriffs of bootlegger operations was not insignificant. Thus, Pendleton's responsibilities as county attorney brought him into frequent contact with the Klan. The local Klan rightly understood Pendleton as an adversary because he opposed vigilantism. In a 1925 letter from a local Klansman to his girlfriend, the Klansman observed, "We have a Klan sheriff but our prosecuting attorney is a fish eater and he will do anything he can to fish the Klan." In addition to accusing Pendleton of being a Catholic (a fish eater), the Klan also launched a "propaganda campaign" against Pendleton alleging inappropriate sexual exploits including adultery. Pendleton felt the sting of these assaults on his masculine performance of civic duty, which came from men he thought were uneducated and crass. He emphasized how his handling of cases involving the Klan reflected "the new rural man" of the early twentieth century—in other words, educated, law bound, and respectable.²⁵

There are two particularly apt examples from the memoirs that demonstrate how Klan activity and politics influenced Pendleton's discretion. One can be found in "the riots between the Catholics and the Klan over Carney Hall." Tom Carney, a Catholic and owner of a dance hall, rented his space to Lou Wilkie not knowing that it was for a weeklong series of Klan lectures. On Monday night, the first lecture tipped off the Catholics. On Tuesday, the Catholics were quelled only when the police disbanded their gathering outside of the hall. On the advice of lawyers, Carney canceled the lease and locked the doors to prevent a Wednesday night lecture. Then the Klan secured a temporary injunction

24. Schwieder, "A Farmer and the Ku Klux Klan," 228, 314, 319; "Guy Mack Wins for Mayor of Majority of 178," *Storm Lake Pilot-Tribune*, 4/2/1925; Gordon, *The Second Coming of the KKK*, 3, 95, 97–98, 107.

25. Schwieder, "A Farmer and the Ku Klux Klan," 228, 307; Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 43, 299. See Gabriel Rosenberg, *The 4-H Harvest: Sexuality and the State in Rural America* (Philadelphia, 2015), 58.

preventing Carney from breaking the contract. "The mud splattered in Carney Hall" on Thursday night.²⁶

Pendleton did not learn of this wild dispute until Friday when one of the lawyers involved instructed Pendleton, as county attorney, to deal with the fallout that night. He was tasked with figuring out what to do as the Catholics planned to defend Carney Hall with guns, and the Klan summoned its members to the battle. Pendleton directly brokered a deal. The agreement kept both the Catholics and the Klan away from the dance hall, predicated on Pendleton "personally tak[ing] possession of the building" and threatening to prosecute anyone who showed up for starting a riot. Pendleton's insistence on upholding the Klan's right to free speech upset Catholic residents of Storm Lake. "You uphold their lies," one man charged. "No, indeed," Pendleton replied, but "the way to squelch their propaganda is not by violence." In the end, after an unexciting evening stake-out at the dance hall, Pendleton concluded that "reason had the ninth inning."²⁷

Another example of how Klan politics influenced Pendleton's prosecutorial work is when a school teacher burned down her schoolhouse. The larger community viewed the crime and investigation through the lens of the Klan-Catholic conflict. The Klan at first believed that a Catholic must have been behind the arson as an act of anti-public school activism. However, the school teacher—a Klan member—had burned down her own schoolhouse to escape her contract. The Klan soon rallied behind her and paid for her attorneys. Although Pendleton prosecuted the school teacher, public sentiment was against him. In a letter written by a local Klansman, the writer expressed certainty among

26. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 39–40. The anonymous Klan letter writer from nearby Marathon noted with surprise that "a Catholic in Storm Lake let us have his hall" to host meetings. It is possible that he was referring to this incident, as the timing seems to have coincided with early 1925. If it was the same incident, it is noteworthy that the Storm Lake hall was sought out because anti-Klan community members threatened violence if the Klan continued to hold meetings in a movie theater in Rembrandt. Schwieder, "A Farmer and the Ku Klux Klan," 303–04.

27. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 40–42.

his fellow Klansmen that the “Catholics in the community had initiated the investigation.” Faced with her confession, her Klansmen supporters helped the teacher explore the possibility of using an insanity-based defense to avoid punishment. In the end she pled guilty in exchange for a suspended sentence.²⁸

Often, a conflict that arose in town fell along clear lines between Klan members or Klan supporters and Catholics or anti-prohibitionists. Sometimes these divides were explicit—as they were with the Carney Hall dispute, and sometimes they were implicit and only made known through gossip networks—as they were with the case of school arson. Pendleton aimed to solve many of these problems by strictly adhering to legal procedure or appealing to the power of legal action. Perhaps because the community divisions created by the Klan were so dramatic and contentious, Pendleton looked to the justice system as a neutral arbiter that could remove the appearance of his own personal animosity for the Klan from his actions as county attorney. And yet, Pendleton used his discretion to not press any charges in the Carney Hall conflict against either side and chose to leave the legal action in the realm of a contract dispute. Nevertheless, he still acted as a mediator to ease one flare-up in a longstanding and ongoing conflict between Klan members and Catholics.

Temperance: Bootleggers & Prohibition

Many community leaders during the four years of Pendleton’s tenure as county attorney were Klan members and supporters of Prohibition. While it was Pendleton’s responsibility to enforce Prohibition laws, Klansmen in the area—like they did elsewhere in the nation—took it upon themselves to spy on bootleggers and conduct liquor raids. In contrast to this vigilantism, Pendleton believed in controlled enforcement of Prohibition, targeting only those profiting from illegal alcohol sales because “half the male population were experimenting in making home brew beer, bathtub gin, and wild grape wine.” Still, similar to a vigilante

28. “Washington Township School Fires Solved,” *Storm Lake Register*, 4/1/1926; Pendleton, “People’s Pendleton,” 123–27; Schwieder, “A Farmer and the Ku Klux Klan,” 315.

raid, enforcing Prohibition took Pendleton on stake-outs and police raids of stills and bootleggers' operations.²⁹

Once, a local resident rushed into Pendleton's office on a Saturday. "I want my farm raided!" announced Henry Tutt, a man Pendleton described as a "retired farmer, brutal landlord, active Methodist and holier than thou prohibitionist." Tutt continued, "I found a ten gallon demijohn full of moonshine hid in a clump of slew grass on my farm." Pendleton suggested that the raid on Tutt's tenant, Charley Brock, wait until Monday. To that, Tutt exasperated, "It will all be sold Saturday night. What do we pay you for?"³⁰

Pendleton gathered his constable, P.M. Godwin, and a warrant. The two men drove the thirty miles from Storm Lake, just past the small town of Marathon, to the Tutt farm. But it was during the day, and no one was home, so they simply took a look around to find the liquor and then headed to Sioux Rapids for dinner. Once it was dark, the men drove back and parked in a hidden spot about a half mile away. Pendleton recalled, "We proceeded through the corn field to a point where we could keep our sights on the white mule. We squatted tailor fashion on the rich black loam with the green corn stalk making a cathedral of our hiding place. We took turns getting a little shut eye until some excitement would break." Once excitement did break, the two men crawled to a better position, each "wiggling like a snake in the dewy grass." Then, suddenly, "some psychic alarm system caused the booze peddler to loop for his Lizzie." Godwin and Pendleton sprang up and sprinted with excitement. Pendleton was unarmed, but Godwin always carried a couple of guns. As

29. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 25. The state laws of Iowa enabled individual citizens to "maintain an action in equity to perpetually enjoin and abate" the liquor nuisance. When such actions were brought by private individuals, the county attorney was required to make "a personal investigation of the place of business sought to be enjoined." In practice, it seems that few Buena Vista County residents brought actual claims in court, but instead simply informed Pendleton to initiate proceedings on behalf of the state. Code of Iowa § 919, 966-67, 974 (1919); see also Code of Iowa § 1946-2129 (1924). Although ostensibly not required by statute, Pendleton frequently accompanied his officers of the peace during investigations.

30. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 277.

the bootlegger and customer took off in the Ford, the constable yelled, "Halt in the name of the law," but the call went unheeded. Godwin opened fire.³¹

Although the culprits escaped, Pendleton found a complete still and several jugs of whiskey. After officials loaded up the raid's spoils, Charley Brock eventually returned to the farm where he was arrested. Ultimately, Pendleton charged both Charley Brock and his brother Ferris Brock with liquor violations. Ferris pled guilty in an attempt to save his brother. Pendleton observed that "Judge DeLand sentenced him to a three hundred dollar fine and ninety days in jail, which resulted in a six months free ticket of room and board in [jail], for Ferris had no idea of paying any money." While Ferris's plea did not deter Pendleton from prosecuting his brother, it was a successful defense strategy at the trial, where the jury found Charley not guilty.³²

Most stake-outs and raids took a similar form to Pendleton's Tutt farm raid. Pendleton carefully followed the letter of the law, even if it cost him an arrest. He was not a vigilante like the Klansmen who conducted similar raids. After finding a still on a stake-out, rather than conduct an illegal search, he first went back to town for a warrant when necessary, even if it was the middle of the night, before returning to complete the raid.³³

Pendleton made sure these raids were reported in the local press. He wanted the community to know about his late-night raids. *The Storm Lake Register*, for example, published photos of one of Pendleton's victories on the front page. In another front-page article, the paper credited Pendleton for participating in a raid that involved federal enforcement agents and netted fifteen gallons of alcohol. The article also provided a quotation specifically asserting that Pendleton would be filing charges in court. While his appeal to formal legal processes during bootlegger raids did not differ in intention from his adherence to those processes in other conflicts involving the Klan, Pendleton's appeal to the press was a distinct expression of his discretionary power.

31. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 277-79.

32. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 280-81.

33. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 72-73, 76-78.

First, he advertised success as part of an ongoing reelection campaign. Second, he modeled rational law enforcement to contrast the Klan's vigilantism, which he hoped to deter. And third, Pendleton was also being transparent about his law enforcement efforts, marking out for the community how Prohibition would be enforced.³⁴

The liquor raids are good examples of how Pendleton as prosecutor functioned as a bridge for the community "between law and politics, rules and discretion, courts and police, advocacy and objectivity." While this intermediation is a role with which all prosecutors are tasked both then and now, in this case *place* mattered for the specifics of how that intermediation unfolded. Pendleton created a bridge between the rule of law in the courtroom and the open country where he and police officers investigated and fought Prohibition crimes. To the liquor still, he brought with him the rule of law by requiring proper procedure like warrants; to the courtroom, he brought with him the experience of having crawled through the mud on a raid. The space of the field invested Pendleton with masculine legitimacy regarding his Prohibition enforcement activities. Thus, he combined two co-existing, perhaps competing, visions of rural masculinity: one in which rural men performed hard physical, often dirty, labor, and one in which rural manhood was increasingly embodied in educated, responsible, and civically engaged community leaders.³⁵

34. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 79; "Take XG Still Monday Near Rembrandt," *Storm Lake Register*, 5/7/1925; "Liquor Dive Cleaned Out At Linn Grove," *Storm Lake Register*, 8/12/1926; "County Officers Raid Lee Township 'Still,'" *Storm Lake Register*, 8/12/1926; "2 Arrested With 15 Gal. of Alcohol," *Storm Lake Register*, 10/18/1928; "Sioux Rapids is Peeved Over Raid," *Storm Lake Pilot Tribune*, 7/30/1925. For more about prosecutors and Prohibition, see Thurman W. Arnold, "Law Enforcement—An Attempt at Social Dissection," *Yale Law Journal* 42:1 (1932), 1–24, 8–9, 18. Arnold suggested it was the role of the courts, if not the prosecutor, to dramatize "the moral notions of the community." That is precisely what Pendleton did when he sought what Thurman called "the limelight of public observation" with respect to his decisions and actions.

35. Sklansky, "Prosecutorial Power," 503–04, 520. On Pendleton's masculine performance and the legal profession, see Prifogle, "Cows, Cars, and Criminals." On rural masculinity more broadly, see Rosenberg, *4-H Harvest*, 58, 64; R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the

But raids were not the only type of Prohibition enforcement, and Pendleton received fees from all types of successful prosecutions of liquor violations. Often prosecutions were the result not of raids but of minor Prohibition infractions: liquor nuisances and drinking and driving. In addition to Pendleton's fees, these prosecutions pulled in fines for the local schools, and the town council specifically charged Pendleton to pursue such fines "that would enrich the school funds instead of prison terms that would cost the taxpayers money." Thus, policing infractions that warranted only fines created multiple community benefits: the appearance of Prohibition enforcement, the ability to continue illicit liquor consumption for those who desired to do so, and revenue for the local school system.³⁶

State-based special conviction fees like these were common for legal prohibitions of gambling and liquor precisely because of their unpopularity in some, or maybe most, of a state's communities. They were intended to incentivize public prosecutors like Pendleton to enforce laws that were in tension with local community norms, and in practice forced Pendleton to navigate that tension within his own community. Pendleton's community was divided over the value of Prohibition, and to secure votes, Pendleton as county attorney needed to navigate that divide so that the Klan and prohibitionists thought he was enforcing the law and also so that the drinkers in the community could largely continue imbibing encumbered only by the occasional fine, which acted as a use-tax. It was not just that he was enforcing a law at

Concept," *Gender and Society* 19, no. 6 (2005), 829–59, 849; Hugh Campbell, Michael Mayerfeld Bell and Margaret Finney, "Masculinity and Rural Life: An Introduction," in *Country Boys: Masculinity and Rural Life*, eds. Hugh Campbell, Michael Mayerfeld Bell and Margaret Finney (University Park, IL, 2006), 5–6; Linda Lobao, "Gendered Places and Place-Based Gender Identities: Reflections and Refractions," in *Country Boys*, eds. Campbell, Bell, and Finney, 268. For more about how rural legal practice reflected norms of rural masculinity, see Michael Grossberg, "Institutionalizing Masculinity;" Prifogle, "Cows, Cars, and Criminals."

36. See, for example, 1924 Iowa Code §§ 1963, 1993, 2015, 2087; Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 90, 100, 112, 120, 308–09.

odds with the community's norms; he was enforcing a law, the validity of which was disputed within the community.³⁷

Pendleton's annual salary for serving as county attorney was \$1,400, which was a significant improvement over his private practice. Pendleton explicitly disclaimed any interest in the fees as prosecutorial motivation, but also proudly counted at least \$1,000 in fees he collected from prosecuting bootleggers. While this conviction-based fee system, for both the schools and Pendleton, served as a profit motive driving discretion in favor of formal legal charges, other factors were also at play. Legal scholar Nicholas Parrillo has suggested that laws created externally—like state Prohibition laws—would not have been experienced by defendants as intra-community conflict because prosecutors like Pendleton received conviction-based fees for enforcement, giving the prosecution effort the character of independent outside intervention. However, in a town as small as Storm Lake, especially at the height of the Klan's power, it would be hard for any defendant to understand criminal prosecution for a liquor violation as anything but a neighbor-to-neighbor dispute—a dispute among insiders. Thus, the profit motive mattered, but so too did community norms. Indeed, the local Klan's power reveals that the community's lay members continued to hold great sway over the criminal justice system when it came to prosecution of Prohibition violations, and that the need for school funding similarly drove community support for specific forms of enforcement.³⁸

The Klan may have criticized Pendleton for not being enthusiastic enough about enforcing Prohibition, but Pendleton knew it was not in the community's interest to charge all bootleggers. In one instance, a community leader made this explicit for Pendleton. When Pendleton sought to convict a doctor of a liquor sale offense, a banker called upon Pendleton "to remember that we

37. Nicholas Parrillo, *Against the Profit Motive: The Salary Revolution in American Government, 1780–1940* (New Haven, CT, 2013), 269–72. Court costs that were paid to the attorney were assessed by the court and recoverable contingent on successful prosecution. See Code of Iowa § 1951, 1963, 2023 (1924).

38. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 1, 90, 114; Parrillo, *Against the Profit Motive*, 256, 272–73.

all lived in the same community and would continue to do so," and urged Pendleton not to seek a jail sentence.

Choices like this one, to look the other way, reflected broader community interests. Fines for Prohibition violations brought funding for county schools and lessened the impact of Prohibition enforcement on bootleggers and their customers. Pleas, mere threats of prosecution, and fines were compromises between divergent community interests, and a reflection of the lack of anonymity in the community. It was not that everyone in Storm Lake knew everyone else. It was that the community's size created social networks that overlapped to such an extent that no one was ever too many steps removed from knowing someone else. A hardship imposed on one individual could have far reaching ripple effects in the community, whether that be the loss of the town doctor's services or money for school coffers. In short, the lack of anonymity mattered for discretion, even when the connections between county attorney, victim, and defendant were not immediate.³⁹

Gender: The Prosecutor's Social Welfare Work

Pendleton often mobilized other community institutions distinct from the legal system to resolve conflict. In his position as county attorney, he said he also "performed all the social welfare work in the county." While "a wave of enlightened sociology had convinced the Board of Supervisors that they should employ a specifically trained social worker," he objected to any deference she tried to command from him, and continued to approach many problems he confronted as county attorney from the perspective of performing social services rather than criminal justice.⁴⁰ The social worker posed a double threat to Pendleton. She infringed upon his power to resolve disputes outside of the criminal justice system, and in the process, challenged the masculine nature of formal community dispute resolution.

In one story involving a case of arson, Pendleton specifically addressed his social work efforts and the threats to his own

39. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 258.

40. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 127, 151-55.

power that he perceived to be coming from the woman social worker. Pendleton arrived at the aftermath of a house fire to find the apparent culprit, the elderly Mrs. Trabu, with evidence of arson in her purse: rope, pocket knife, kindling wood, and even the smell of kerosene. When Pendleton questioned the eighty-two-year-old, she defended herself by claiming she was only trying to exterminate bed bugs. The tenants, she said, had refused to pay rent until the bed bugs were gone. Pendleton was not convinced she had not tried to kill the tenants with the fire.

Another man in the room suggested that the social worker be called. This infuriated Pendleton—he was performing the county’s social work and did not need a “paid sociologist” to help. He digressed into a mild tirade about the young female social worker’s incompetence and lack of knowledge about community resources like the poor farm and home for wayward girls. The young social worker had been openly dissatisfied with, and opposed to, Pendleton’s proposed conflict resolutions in the past, and he did not want her to interfere with his handling of the elderly arsonist. In other words, she posed a threat to his discretion to resolve disputes as he saw fit and to the masculinity associated with his being a community leader.⁴¹

It turned out that no one in the community especially approved of Pendleton charging the old woman with arson and placing her—even for a short while—in the county’s very dilapidated jail house. Newspapers from her hometown of Omaha, Nebraska, printed photos of the grandma behind bars. A few weeks later, Pendleton worked out a guilty plea in exchange for parole to one of her sons-in-law. Pendleton thought his agreement to the plea deal was supremely “humane,” a quality evidenced by the fact that one of the arsonist’s daughters soon afterward kissed Pendleton “on the lips” in appreciation.⁴²

As county attorney, Pendleton performed this work—almost always gendered—in other ways as well, such as assisting frequently in the process of making sanity determinations and commitments to the local asylum. One man raved that he needed to

41. Pendleton, “People’s Pendleton,” 151–53.

42. Pendleton, “People’s Pendleton,” 154–55.

be handcuffed to halt the “irresistible impulse” to kill someone. The “insanity committee,” composed of the clerk of court, a doctor, and the county attorney, gathered in the clerk’s office in the dead of a snowy night to determine that the man should be committed to the nearby “Insane Hospital at Cherokee” until he could be sent permanently to one in Illinois. Pendleton worked to have another man, who was a client of Pendleton’s income tax services and who had celebrated New Year’s Eve with too much alcohol, “brought before the sanity committee” and admitted to the hospital to avoid being charged with possession of alcohol. In still another case, a distraught doctor called Pendleton to his office, where he confessed to all manner of crimes because he wanted to be convicted and sentenced to death by crucifixion. His prompt admission to the mental hospital was later reversed so that the doctor could resume his practice.⁴³

While some community disruptions could be dealt with through commitments to the “insane hospital,” others were handled by different institutions. Pendleton, as county attorney, also managed the legal paperwork for the poor farm. He thought nothing of the decision of the poor farm’s custodian to send one woman to the state epileptic home. The same man forced her mother to get a hysterectomy and placed the woman’s daughter in a school for juvenile delinquents. The woman protested to Pendleton, claiming the custodian was trying to “get even” for her rebuking his passes. She was indignant when Pendleton would not believe her claims of harassment. Another woman “drew a free ticket to the Feeble Minded School at Woodward,” after Pendleton failed to secure a conviction for her rape. She testified at the trial that, although she was several months pregnant, she had only had sex once in her life and that it was with the accused just a week prior to the hearing. The justice of the peace dismissed the case for lack of evidence, and she then appeared before the juvenile court. In another instance of a young mother, Pendleton arranged it so that the father—who the girl neither

43. Pendleton, “People’s Pendleton,” 117, 176, 274–76. For state law regulating the “County Commissioners of Insanity,” see Code of Iowa §§ 2054 *et. seq.* (1919); Code of Iowa §§ 3544 *et. seq.* (1924).

wanted to prosecute nor marry—paid for her confinement at the “Florence Crittenden Home for Unwed Mothers.” Pendleton boorishly observed that “unpredictable females, and the poor” were issues constantly before him as county attorney.⁴⁴

Taken together, part of Pendleton’s job as county attorney extended far beyond being a “prosecutor” of criminal convictions to other realms of community problem solving, like making appropriate use of the county’s institutions including the poor farm, the “insane hospital,” and homes for the “feeble minded” and “unwed mothers.” These institutions served as alternatives to the courtroom for men who experienced psychological or emotional disturbances due to stress or alcohol. Women and children, on the other hand, encountered such institutions with much less power and control. Under Pendleton’s oversight, men, with few exceptions, came and went at the “poor farm” and “insane hospital” as it suited their personal interests, like avoiding arrest when caught drinking alcohol. Women, on the other hand, were committed by men, often against their vehemently expressed wishes.

Robert Ellickson’s work on the absence of law in rural communities has claimed that “members of a close-knit group develop and maintain norms whose content serves to maximize the aggregate welfare that members obtain in their workaday affairs with one another.” Pendleton certainly engaged in welfare maximization when resolving conflict both inside and outside the courtroom, but whose welfare? Ellickson’s argument does not sufficiently account for the power of law to shape community norms, nor can Ellickson’s work sufficiently account for intra-community diversity and hierarchies visible through Pendleton’s memoirs. Pendleton’s discretion was broad in scope. Situated in a small town where community norms significantly influenced

44. Pendleton, “People’s Pendleton,” 312–13, 315, 191–92. For the law regulating “Guardianship and Custody of Feeble Minded,” see Code of Iowa §§ 1952 *et. seq.* (1919); Code of Iowa §§ 3411 *et. seq.* (1924): “The county attorney shall, if requested, appear on behalf of any petitioner for the appointment of a guardian or commitment of an alleged feeble-minded person.” For the laws governing county poor farms, see Code of Iowa §§ 3272 *et seq.* (1919); Code of Iowa §§ 5297 *et. seq.* (1924).

the execution of the law and were capable of sanctioning transgressors without formal legal recourse, Pendleton had a wide range of options available to him as a county attorney. He had the discretion to not prosecute, craft a favorable plea deal, or ask for a fine rather than a jail sentence. However, his discretion and active participation rarely ended there. He often sought out alternative community institutions to provide sanctions and support for community members who had transgressed social norms or become public burdens even in the absence of a crime.⁴⁵

In this way, he was similar to other local officials in small communities. Pendleton not only sorted "local troubles" from "serious crime," but also he had the power to transform everyday acts into legally recognized acts. His decisions to transform or not transform those everyday acts were bounded by his relationship to individual community members, by his understanding of local hierarchies of ethnicity and gender, and by the law. Pendleton's prosecutorial power and discretion depended on his "mastery of local ways and local knowledge" and "his capacity to translate this skill into a definition of events" in a way that satisfied the individuals involved and recognized the legitimacy of certain claims. Pendleton's decisions about when to use legal measures, institutional supports, or discrete gossip largely turned on the "socially marginalized status" of an individual *within* a set of established community insiders. Through Pendleton it is possible to see that the moral weight of legal action or inaction was not just determined by insider status, but also by hierarchies among community insiders. In many ways this is not distinct to rural prosecutors. Indeed, the similarities between rural and urban prosecutorial discretion only further work to dispel Ellickson's argument. However, rural norms around race, religion, and gender informed Pendleton's decisions in a community where the social distance between individual residents was small

45. Ellickson, *Order without Law*, 167. Contrary to Ellickson's assertions, Yngvesson's earlier work demonstrated how courts in small towns worked informally to resolve disputes in ways that enmesh individual disputants in a legal order, even when formal legal sanctions were not invoked. Yngvesson, *Virtuous Citizens, Disruptive Subjects*, 10–11.

and non-legal options of sanction and dispute resolution were many, if only available to certain community groups.⁴⁶

Sexuality: Odd Balls

"Most of the town's odd balls," wrote Pendleton, "were tolerated with a wink in the left eye." Gender studies scholar Colin Johnson has described this common type of response to queer, eccentric, and curious individuals in rural communities as "benevolent toleration." For the people of Storm Lake and other small towns in the 1920s, the term queer did not necessarily mean homosexual, although gay men and lesbians would have fallen under the category. The category, however, referred more broadly to non-conforming people and thus created space for homosexuality in rural communities. Some might expect little room for these "social outliers" in rural communities because of conservative norms or lack of anonymity. However, Johnson has argued that "the same kinds of social entanglements that made it difficult to be a queer in rural and small-town America during the first half of the twentieth century often also made it difficult to brutally sanction or fully police queers in rural and small town America during this period." It was precisely because of the lack of anonymity that rural communities "were able to account for certain individuals' gender and sexual difference," even protecting individual "insiders" from outside criticism.⁴⁷

Understanding this dynamic of benevolent toleration of social outliers in rural communities helps us to interpret one criminal charge that Pendleton discussed at great length in his memoir and to better assess how onymity affected discretion in Storm Lake. This final example demonstrates forcefully the centrality of

46. Yngvesson, *Virtuous Citizens, Disruptive Subjects*, 7, 10–11, 47; Engel, "Oven Bird's Song," 569. Further, case studies of rural communities, like this one of Pendleton's social and legal world, suggest that today's calls by William Stuntz and others to return to a past of community policing and criminal justice are based on nostalgic tropes that fail to recognize the division and power hierarchies that influence the execution of criminal law even in small communities. See William J. Stuntz, *The Collapse of American Criminal Justice* (Cambridge, MA, 2011).

47. Pendleton, "Lawyer Sign," 326; Johnson, *Just Queer Folks*, 21, 108, 110–11, 119, 124.

winks, whispers, and discretion to dispute resolution in this rural community. One day early in his tenure as county attorney, the chief of police Jack Carey came into Pendleton's office accusing a young white police officer, Elmer Giddle, of being a "c.s.er"—cocksucker, a word Pendleton refused to spell out in his memoir. Pendleton was "discreetly reticent" in his response to the allegation of "felatio [sic] sodomy." Pendleton's initial response was both to believe the allegation and also encourage Carey to require Giddle to resign, thereby causing Giddle to leave town. But Carey pressed Pendleton to take action. Giddle was a Klansman, and Carey was Catholic.⁴⁸

A few days later, Carey returned to Pendleton's office with Hank Walsh. Walsh told Pendleton that "'Nig' Johnson told me that Elmer was a c.s.er."⁴⁹ He continued on at Pendleton's prompting, "Everyone in town knows that's what he is. Why, the yound [sic] boys follow him around like he was a slut dog." Walsh reported that everyone at the pool hall whispered "c.s.er about him." Carey felt he had proven his case, but Pendleton knew the hearsay—the legal term for gossip and a powerful form of non-legal sanction within the community—would not secure a conviction because Carey was "charging a crime against nature that most citizens will not believe."⁵⁰

Pendleton resigned himself to interviewing Doyle "Nig" Johnson:

48. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 48. The only other word that Pendleton abbreviated for discreetness in his memoir as often as the word cocksucker is the word pregnant (as p.g.). See for example, Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 315.

49. "Nig" Johnson's given name was Doyle Johnson. At the time, the census recorded that he was a white teenager living 90 miles away from Storm Lake in Sheldon, Iowa, shining shoes. The Storm Lake community knew Doyle by "Nig." Pendleton wrote his nickname in quotation marks, and seemed uncomfortable speaking out loud the nickname rather than his given name. Still, it is difficult to know what to make of this nickname, and if it was used as a racial slur in some way. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 49–50; 1920 U.S. Census, Nokomis, Buena Vista, Iowa; 1925 Iowa Census, Storm Lake Ward 3, Buena Vista, Iowa; South Dakota Department of Health, Pierre, South Dakota, Birth Index, 1856–1917.

50. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 49–50, 52.

"Somebody has to stop him ruining young boys, so I'll spill the beans. Yes, Elber [sic] Giddle is a c.s.er," disclosed Johnson.

"Did he ever commit the act with you?" [Pendleton] demanded.

"Yes, many times."

"Well, why did you permit him?"

"He always had fishing tackle, guns, kodaks, flashlights, and such that he let us play with. Guess we didn't know no better; but that was over three years ago, and you can't do anything to him about it," related "Nig."

Johnson then swore out a statement for Pendleton. Walsh hoped to use the affidavit to send Giddle to jail, but Pendleton knew that the three-year statute of limitations had expired, and so too, apparently, did Johnson. But in his memoir, Pendleton confided to his reader, "Had I the slightest desire to expose Elmer Giddle, I could have summonsed him in for an investigation and quizzing." Clearly, Pendleton continued to think the best course of action was to work discretely to get Giddle removed from the local police force. Rumors started to fly around town shortly after Pendleton's interview of Johnson, and Giddle was suspended from his position as a police officer. For Pendleton, it was all going according to plan.⁵¹

Giddle confronted a tough choice. According to Pendleton, Giddle stated, "If I skip town as Carey hopes I will, everyone will believe the worst; but if I stay and fight the charge, no one will believe such a heinous accusation. I'm standing pat." Even though loud whispers about Giddle circulated around the small town, new rumors circulated about the ulterior motives of Carey—he only wanted to take down Giddle as a Klansman and political opponent for Carey's position as chief of police. Just two weeks after his suspension, Giddle was back in uniform on the beat. Pendleton stated flatly, "It was the Klan. They . . . were the callers of Giddle's dance movements."⁵²

In fact, the Klan had provided Giddle with enough money to hire some of the county's best attorneys, and apparently the Klan

51. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 53–54.

52. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 54–55.

pressured the Sheldon, Iowa, police into forcing Johnson to recant his statement to Pendleton and swear out a second affidavit. Pendleton felt this sting as a personal offense against him. He was "being subjected to a hate Pendleton campaign." The "other county officials shunned me," he protested. It was this personal attack on Pendleton that spurred him to "prove to the satisfaction of everyone that Elmer Giddle is a pervert."⁵³

With the help of Carey's investigative work, Pendleton found out that a few years before he became county attorney, a man named Paul Zieke, "a regular Y.M.C.A. cutie," led camping trips with the same kids who hung around Giddle. Zieke convinced those boys to make statements against Giddle. At the grand jury hearing, with the "written confessions of sex transgressions" in hand, Pendleton questioned one of the young men who had given a statement to Zieke years before. Upon Pendleton's cross-examination, the young man "hung his head in shame." Then Pendleton called Zieke, who "took charge and gave the jury a masterpiece of a lecture on sex deviation, proving to the entire satisfaction of the grand jury that Elmer Giddle was a corrupter of the male youth of Storm Lake."⁵⁴

The grand jury first sought an indictment against Giddle, and even wanted Johnson to be indicted on perjury charges. But Pendleton reminded the jury and courtroom that the statute of limitations had expired on all known offenses, and everyone in the courtroom seemed acquiesced by Zieke's offer to inform the mayor-elect of what transpired in the secret grand jury proceedings. Yet when the time came to do so, the mayor-elect told both Zieke and Pendleton not to worry because he guaranteed "to keep the boys away from Elmer when he's my Chief of Police."⁵⁵

53. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 56.

54. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 59, 63, 67-71.

55. Pendleton, with no reference to these events, later recounted Prohibition raids he participated in with Giddle as chief of police. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 72, 222. The mayor-elect was an attorney named Guy Mack. Pendleton succeeded Mack as county attorney. Pendleton's memoirs do not cast Mack in a favorable light, calling him "Headachey." Passing references to Mack indicate that he certainly enforced Prohibition and had a "K.K.K. following." The Klan hired him to provide the legal defense for the school teacher who burned down her school house. At the same time, it seems that while mayor,

While this particular series of events recounted by Pendleton may seem “decidedly singular,” “exceptional,” unverifiable, or something to be “written off,” they bring together threads found in other anecdotes—the importance of the Klan and religious divisions, the power of Giddle’s status as both a man and insider of good standing in the community, and the power of winks and whispers both outside of, and within, the formal legal system. The account provides a rare look into how rural communities protected insiders from legal punishment and sought to solve some social transgressions without resorting to the law. We are limited to the perspective Pendleton provided. Newspaper accounts and census data do not help verify the events. However, the community response as told by Pendleton still reveals a great deal about the intersection of sexuality and discretion in this rural community.⁵⁶

First, throughout the entire ordeal most people involved wanted to avoid bringing Giddle to court, and even when Pendleton found the grand jury ready to indict, he told them the statute of limitations prevented the indictment. Neither did anyone ever mention punishing the teens who confessed to engaging in sex acts with Giddle. Indeed, only one young man—Johnson—was admonished. The social transgression was best sanctioned outside of the courtroom. Community gossip was already at work as one form of non-legal sanction. Giddle’s sexuality came to the attention of the county attorney because Johnson had told Walsh that Giddle was a “cocksucker.” Pendleton observed twice that the community was “whispering” about Giddle’s sexuality. Yet despite, or perhaps because of, this gossip, male teens continued to follow him around.

Scholars have noted the importance of gossip—winks and whispers—as social sanction for community transgressions. However, in order for “truthful negative gossip” to work, the social distance between the subject of gossip and those spreading gossip must be close. The presence of gossip indicates that the

Mack also defended bootleggers as part of his legal practice. Pendleton, “People’s Pendleton,” 25, 126, 147, 202, 221.

56. Johnson, *Just Queer Folks*, 113–17.

community considered Giddle to be an “insider”—someone who was known and recognized when he walked down the street or entered the pool hall. It is hard to know why Johnson told Walsh about Giddle. Gossip seemed to take place in the pool hall, which Giddle reportedly avoided, but also in the wider community. And, Giddle’s own remarks indicated that he knew how gossip would function once a charge was brought against him—if he left town, the gossip about his queerness would solidify his outsider-ness; if he stayed and faced the charges, the community would likely continue to include him as an insider despite the whispers.⁵⁷

It is also worth noting Giddle’s age. When Giddle became chief of police, just as the mayor-elect predicted, the paper observed his young age, 23. He was the youngest chief of police that the residents of Storm Lake had ever seen. While he was older than the boys who claimed to have engaged in fellatio with him, the age gap was not drastic. The acts were said to have taken place at least three years earlier, when Giddle would have been around twenty years old—the same age Pendleton was when he graduated high school. It is difficult to determine from the vantage point Pendleton provides whether Giddle’s act was transgressive primarily because of its same-sex nature, a potential age difference, or both. Johnson did preface his confession by stating that Giddle was “ruining” young boys, which might indicate that the age difference mattered. We cannot know from the perspective that Pendleton provides what the relationship between the teens and Giddle meant to either side—whether the relationship was exploitative or consensual.⁵⁸

Further, Giddle’s sexuality seemed to be fairly well known among the young men in the community, several of whom continued to befriend him. But Giddle’s homosocial behavior probably did not look out of place on its face to the wider community, and in many respects, it conformed to the community’s expectations for young men. He presumably participated in the local Y.M.C.A. by leading camping trips with younger boys, and

57. Ellickson, *Order without Law*, 57–61; Engel, “Oven Bird’s Song,” 567–69.

58. “Giddle Youngest Chief of Police,” *Storm Lake Register*, 7/9/1925; “Elmer Giddle is Slated for Chief of Police,” *Storm Lake Pilot Tribune*, 4/2/1925.

camping was a common expression of rural masculinity rooted in hard work and knowledge of the land. As a police officer, he had "protégés." Most prominent men in his community belonged to fraternal organizations and spent time with other men in similar contexts. Giddle was no different.⁵⁹

The only reason why the county attorney became involved initially, and brought it to a grand jury eventually, was because the Klan supported Giddle, and Carey wanted to get a Klansman fired with ostensibly old gossip. On the one hand, the Klan derided and harassed men who failed to be good husbands. Newspaper coverage of Mrs. Elmer Giddle's social engagements suggests that Giddle did marry soon after he became chief of police. On the other hand, that does not explain why the Klan supported Giddle in the first place. Presumably, he was a dues-paying member, and as a police officer, a valuable member. Perhaps his position as a policeman enforcing Prohibition predisposed him to align with the Klan. Perhaps Giddle sought protection in the Klan. Perhaps his participation in the Klan and law enforcement worked to reinforce the community's perception of him as masculine and thus heterosexual and lessen the perception of the alleged transgressions. We cannot know.⁶⁰

The Klan's support may have enabled him to weather attacks on his sexuality and masculinity and become chief of police in the aftermath of the scandal. Giddle's public reputation, as

59. *The Breeze: Storm Lake High School Yearbook* (Storm Lake, 1921), 54; Campbell, Bell, and Finney, "Masculinity and Rural Life," 18–19; Jo Little, "Embodiment and Rural Masculinity," in *Country Boys*, eds. Campbell, Bell, and Finney, 190–91. Pendleton himself took his family, and later just his sons, on camping trips each summer. These trips in some way marked his own masculinity, demonstrating his ability to survive in the wilderness with bears and harsh weather. See, for example, Charles Pendleton, "Wild Horse-Radish and Crocuses," MS146, box 3, Charles Edmund Pendleton Papers, SHSI, 218, 290–94, 332. Similarly, Pendleton marked his willingness to get his hands dirty not just in liquor raids but in his own backyard. He maintained his own garden, although he noted that it was beneath a man of his position. Pendleton, "People's Pendleton," 64–66.

60. "Giddle Youngest Chief of Police," *Storm Lake Register*, 7/9/1925; "Elmer Giddle is Slated for Chief of Police," *Storm Lake Pilot Tribune*, 4/2/1925; *The Breeze: Storm Lake High School Yearbook* (Storm Lake, 1921), 54; "Untitled," *Storm Lake Register*, 7/7/1927; "Society," *Storm Lake Pilot Tribune*, 6/28/1928.

recorded in the local paper, appeared untarnished. This should not come as a surprise given work by those like gender studies scholar Katherine Schweighofer who has found that “rural space permits many more variations of queer lifestyles than one might presume.” Pendleton’s aversion to exposing Giddle and his devotion to the rules of hearsay and the statute of limitations constrained legal proceedings to a private grand jury hearing and kept Giddle from a public trial. This legal process was part of the intended punishment for Giddle. The statute of limitations had expired. Publicly charging Giddle with allegations of sodomy was the rural prosecutor’s equivalent to gossip. Such formal and informal allegations could have ruined Giddle’s reputation and may have been intended as a means to run him out of town—to transform him into an outsider. His insider status and Klan affiliation, however, offered protection against gossip—formal and informal. Although he was able to remain in Storm Lake and even quickly secured a promotion, the investigation and prosecution likely cost Giddle in significant ways and perhaps limited his ability to continue pursuing homosocial or homosexual relationships.⁶¹

Pendleton, in contrast, was accused of abusing his power as county attorney to hurl distasteful allegations at a Klan member in the service of an Irish Catholic. During these events, Pendleton presented himself in his memoir as bound by the law and caution as he always did with Klan conflicts. While he certainly distanced himself from, and looked distastefully upon, the behavior of Giddle and the other young men, he did not seem to be threatened by their behavior. The threat to Pendleton’s character came, instead, from the Klan’s allegations (gossip) that he had been the one who was indiscrete and unlawful. Pendleton included the events in his memoirs for the purpose of showing his stand against the Klan as much as, if not more than, any negative view he had of Giddle’s same-sex relationships.

61. Katherine Schweighofer, “Rethinking the Closet: Queer Life in Rural Geographies,” in *Queering the Countryside*, eds. Gray, Johnson and Gilley, 238; Malcolm Feeley, *The Process is the Punishment: Handling Cases in a Lower Criminal Court*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1992).

ULTIMATELY, PENDLETON found his time as county attorney far less glamorous than he hoped. His aspirations to use it as a stepping stone to a prosperous law practice or higher political office were dashed when he was roundly defeated in his second reelection contest in 1928. At the same time, Pendleton took pride in his performance as the "People's Pendleton." His opposition to the Klan and (sometimes misguided) kindness given to those in need fueled his pride. He returned to private practice where he worked in Storm Lake as a small-town general practitioner and continued to be a civic leader until his death in the 1970s.⁶²

Conclusion

Just as often as the formal legal system was invoked, so too were winks and whispers. Indeed, the two worked in tandem. The spaces of the law were multiple: the farm, field, still, boarding house, home, school, grandstand, theater, courtroom, law office, and main street storefronts where gossip, onymity, and the law intersected. The law was not only exercised through the physical county courthouse and jail, but also was exercised with legal tools that were utilized as threats (in homes where Pendleton threatened criminal action against delinquent fathers), as limits (in cornfields where the law bounded Pendleton's actions against bootleggers), as gossip (in the grand jury proceedings of Elmer Giddle), as politics (in public speeches and newspaper articles), as revenue (for both Pendleton and local schools), and as entertainment (in theaters, schools, and courtrooms where community members watched trials and hearings for enjoyment).

There is nothing distinctly rural about a prosecutor determining which transgressions deserve legal sanction and which ones do not. That is the job description. In fact, today, advocates of "community prosecution" argue that prosecutors should not be mere case processors but "problem solvers" and "social

62. Pendleton, "Wild Horse-Radish and Crocuses;" Pendleton, "Many War and Living Fronts;" Charles Pendleton, "Poison Draught or Attorney at Mystery," MS 146, box 4, Charles Edmund Pendleton Papers, SHSI; and Pendleton, *At the Home Front in War and Life*.

workers."⁶³ Yet Pendleton's efforts to solve problems and act as a social worker were no less embedded with biases. Communities, as David Sklansky succinctly put it, "are complicated places" that, even in their smallest iterations, are not unified in perspective. The rare glimpse into a county attorney's use of discretion that Pendleton's memoirs provide us demonstrates that, if nothing else.

Sklansky has suggested that the "key to understanding prosecutors" might lie in seeing them as mediating figures. That is certainly necessary to understand the rural prosecutor in the early twentieth century. Then, like now, the intermediation role performed by prosecutors was central to the status, importance, and authority of county attorneys like Charles Pendleton. Pendleton's mediation practices were not all that different from the conflict resolution efforts of other community leaders like preachers, mayors, or psychics—each of which solved community problems outside of the realm of formal law. Of course, Pendleton had a tool that those other community leaders did not—near limitless and unilateral power and discretion to turn to legal resolutions.⁶⁴

In rural Iowa, in the 1920s, onymity shaped prosecutorial decisions in distinct ways particularly with respect to Klan influence. Moreover, Pendleton's memoirs dispel any lingering notion that rural communities governed themselves without law and used only other, non-legal systems of conflict resolution. Pendleton's memoirs directly contradict and complicate that claim. Pendleton's actions reveal law enmeshed into everyday acts, spaces, and relationships in the community. Enforcing Prohibition is perhaps the clearest example.

However, Pendleton also used the law as a tool to resolve conflict *outside* of the formal legal system. The memoirs provide glimpses suggesting that community members routinely turned

63. Sklansky, "The Problems with Prosecutors," 2.14; See Stuntz, *The Collapse of American Criminal Justice*; Josh Gupta-Kagan, "Rethinking Family-Court Prosecutors: Elected and Agency Prosecutors and Prosecutorial Discretion in Juvenile Delinquency and Child Protection Cases," *University of Chicago Law Review* 85 (May 2018), 743–824; Worrall, "Prosecution in America," 18.

64. Sklansky, "The Problems with Prosecutors," 2.5, 2.11; Sklansky, "Prosecutorial Power," 477.

to the county attorney to resolve conflict and other problems. Pendleton described his rural communities as experiencing constant internal conflict. Often, when Pendleton thought the legal system was an inappropriate vehicle with which to solve a problem, he turned to an ad hoc system of social supports, gossip, and institutions while remaining attentive to local status hierarchies. Even when he selected more informal solutions, he chose those solutions in the shadow of legal resolution, which loomed as an ever-present option in the background.⁶⁵

Pendleton, as a rural county attorney in the early twentieth century, did more than exercise discretion within the scope of criminal prosecution, he mediated disputes and performed social work—all in ways that reinforced gendered and racial biases, navigated religious divides, and projected a professionalism and masculinity associated with legal training and rural civic engagement. Discretion was not just about who among the legally guilty deserved legal punishment, but also about who among the social transgressors deserved social sanction, community assistance, or a blind eye.

65. Greenhouse, et. al., *Law and Community in Three American Towns*; Sally Falk Moore, "Law and Social Change: The Semi-Autonomous Social Field as an Appropriate Subject of Study," *Law and Society Review* 7, no. 4 (Summer 1973), 719–46.

Book Reviews and Notices

The Interior Borderlands: Regional Identity in the Midwest and Great Plains, edited by Jon K. Lauck. Sioux Falls: The Center for Western Studies, 2019. iii, 327 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$15.00 paperback.

Reviewer Amanda Rees is professor of geography at Columbus State University in Georgia. She established the Columbus Community Geography Center and received the 2018 Helen Ruth Aspaas SAGE Award for outstanding Stand Alone Geographic Educators.

Embracing ethnicity, fiction, film, food, gender, geography, geology, history, memoir, and religion, this edited collection draws comparisons and distinctions between two US regions: the Midwest and the Great Plains. It is made up of twenty short chapters, many no more than 9–10 pages and several of which have no organizing theses or conclusions. This book should perhaps best be understood as a series of think pieces. This review focuses on a few of its less successful submissions while highlighting several more novel approaches.

One impactful theme left unaddressed in the book is the tension between the “region as place” and the “region as process” perspectives. This reviewer recommends beginning the book with its last chapter, authored by Michael J. Mullin, so that readers can more easily place this tension into a broader historical and cultural context, and recognize the tension that is riven between the chapters.

At first glance, the application of economic geography by James S. Aber et al. to contrast the settlement of the two regions suggests a novel approach to contemporary regional studies. This quantitative approach, however, had its heyday in the mid-twentieth century and has well understood limits. Applying location theory to late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century human settlement patterns without a nuanced cultural and historical context does not add much to the broader discussion of region as a theoretical location.

Gleaves Whitney’s reflection on the “there” in “There is no There” embraces the conservative approach to “region as place.” This chapter rails against cultural theory, assuming that region is an acultural container in which things happen, rather than understanding region as a cultural construction that changes over time, space, and the viewer’s subjectivities. Indeed, this essay might best be characterized as defensive, essentialist, and occasionally boosterish. Inspired by the work of

geographer Pete Shortridge, Christopher Laigen makes some headway in response to Whitney's work, drawing our attention to the lack of reflection on how regional residents understand their region. Laigen, and subsequently Mullin, focus on residents' perceptions of regions that challenge the fixed boundaries that are sometimes drawn by "region as place" writers.

There are four chapters that explore new approaches and more contemporary evidence to reflect upon region and boundary. Rachel Handel's comparison of late twentieth-century Plains and midwestern women's memoirs highlights some remarkable themes and contrasts including the use of landscape, region as emotion, and reinvention both to stay and to leave. Handel shares approaches that both connect and are at odds across this regional boundary. Debbie A. Hanson's comparison of post-1970s regional cookbooks in bordering states of the northern Plains/Midwest offers a liminal boundary over which these cultural productions reach. Jay M. Price's use of religion to explore the Midwest's southeastern border helps reposition the discussion of dynamic boundaries and liminal spaces away from the Plains and opens up some new and interesting questions about how boundaries function. Finally, Anna Thompson Hajdik's well-written reflection on cinematic representations of "fly over country" provides a timely reflection on the Great Recession and the election of Donald J. Trump. These four texts work to balance out the sometimes all-too-familiar terrain of Great Plains-Midwest regional analysis that often privileges the past.

Lakota America: A New History of Indigenous Power, by Pekka Hämäläinen. The Lamar Series in Western History. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2019. ix, 529 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, glossary, index. \$35.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Stephen Hausmann is an assistant professor of history at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota. His book manuscript is an environmental history of the Black Hills and examines the implications of settler colonialism for Native people in cities in the twentieth century.

Lakota America is Pekka Hämäläinen's spiritual sequel to his award-winning 2009 book, *The Comanche Empire*. Both projects cover the rise and fall of powerful nomadic Indigenous societies on the Great Plains of North America, arguing that horse-and-bison social and economic systems held the keys to Lakota and Comanche power. *Lakota America's* subtitle—*a History of Indigenous Power*—is the principle difference between this and Hämäläinen's earlier work. Unlike his previous

historical subjects, Lakota power took a different shape and lasted longer. “The key to the Lakotas’ success,” Hämäläinen argues, “is that they did something slightly different and unexpected with their potential” (3–4). That something was a system of flexible kinship, which allowed new people to join Lakota political and social networks even within the inherently unstable world of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Imperial North America. Flexibility and adaptability were the critical elements to Lakota power and success during these chaotic centuries. Despite an enduring image in American imaginations as consummate horse warriors, the Lakotas’ deft and nimble diplomatic acumen, along with their willingness to adapt their society to meet changing circumstances, was the true heart of their political power.

Hämäläinen tracks the rise of the Lakota as a crucial player in the clash of French, British, and Spanish empires at the heart of North America, as all three vied for the greatest fur yields in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For Lakotas, the imperial fur economy gradually took them west from their Yankton, Yanktonai, and Dakota relatives in the woodlands of the Great Lakes and onto the tallgrass prairie of the Missouri watershed. The Lakotas transitioned to full time nomadism over the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries using the region’s riparian ecosystems and massive herds of bison, along with a steady supply of guns. Lakotas were seemingly everywhere during this period, from Montreal to the Missouri, thriving as empires rose and fell and epidemics nearly destroyed their more sedentary neighbors. It would not be until later in the nineteenth century, with bison herds dwindling mostly at the hands of white hunters, and facing an American enemy uninterested in kinship, that Lakota power finally waned.

Lakota America has much to say to historians of the Great Plains and Midwest broadly, as well as to historians of Iowa specifically. Lakota territorial control never extended as far as south as the Des Moines or Iowa Rivers, and Lakota power on the Missouri was centered farther north. However, Lakota influence on Native societies in what would become Iowa was nonetheless considerable. Regional semi-sedentary farming tribes such as the Arikara, Pawnee, and Otoe grew increasingly enmeshed in the Lakota sphere of influence during the eighteenth century, both as important trading partners and as victims of regular raiding.

Moreover, Hämäläinen takes an innovative methodological approach through his use of Lakota winter counts—pictographic annual reports written on animal hide representing important and memorable events from a given year. This is not a new primary source, but Hämäläinen reads winter counts carefully and in conjunction with one another. He also notes when his sources point to the significance of less well-

known events. For instance, the 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty conference garners far less discussion than a separate, all-Indigenous, peace conference between Lakotas and Crows that same year (220–21). Hämäläinen also pays special attention to events that appear in several winter counts, such as the shocking murder of Lakota leader Mato Oyuhi at American hands in 1854. Using Native sources to guide the historical narrative, *Lakota America* holds true to its goal of “decidedly [telling] a history of the Lakotas, written from sources that seek to convey their perspective” (8).

Lakota America is an important addition to the fields of North American imperial, Indigenous, and even environmental histories. Yet, like in *Comanche Empire*, Hämäläinen’s use of an imperial lens to compare settler colonial and Indigenous polities as near equivalents is problematic. As scholars such as Nick Estes have pointed out, Euro-American settler colonial states, with their emphasis on controlling land and racialization, are fundamentally different from Native societies, even at their most violent, expansionist, and exclusionary. Claiming the Western Sioux built a “Lakota Empire” as Hämäläinen does throughout *Lakota America* conceals more differences than it reveals similarities. Indeed, Hämäläinen comes close to admitting as much himself. “The Lakota empire was at its core, an empire of equals,” Hämäläinen argues, yet “unlike most empires, they did not rely on force or codified hierarchization . . . Lakotas’ was an expansive, all-embracing understanding of belonging that recognized no color line” (243–44). If Lakotas were able to embrace even former enemies as kin and as equals, one wonders if “empire” is the proper term for them at all. Using an imperial lens to describe Native survival and resistance in the face of Euro-America settler colonialism is inadequate, but in many other ways *Lakota America* is a fine piece of historical writing, of use to virtually any scholar of the American past.

The Federalist Frontier: Settler Politics in the Old Northwest, 1783–1840, by Kristopher Maulden. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2019. xvii, 261 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$40.00, hard-cover.

Nicole Etcheson is the Alexander M. Bracken Professor of History at Ball State University in Indiana. She is the author of *The Emerging Midwest: Up-land Southerners and the Political Culture of the Old Northwest* (1996) and most recently *A Generation at War: The Civil War Era in a Northern Community* (2011).

In 1986, the late Andrew R. L. Cayton’s classic *The Frontier Republic: Ideology and Politics in the Ohio Country, 1780–1825* (1986) traced the tension

between Jeffersonian Republicans' emphasis on democracy and Federalists' promotion of order and economic development in the Ohio country. Cayton saw the two parties as achieving a synthesis of views with Republicans adopting many Federalist policies. While Cayton confined that study to his native Ohio, Kristopher Maulden expands the focus to look at Indiana and Illinois as well. Maulden claims a contribution to studies of the Federalist Party, little examined outside of New England, and the growing literature on the trans-Appalachian frontier.

Cayton and his historiographical predecessors such as John D. Barnhart in *Valley of Democracy: The Frontier versus the Plantation in the Ohio Valley, 1775–1818* (1953) emphasized settlers' desire for political power in a contest with Federalist elites such as the Northwest Territory's Governor Arthur St. Clair. Maulden highlights the Federalist-built institutions that made frontier settlement possible: the military which wrested the frontier from its native inhabitants; the land office that provided secure titles to settlers; and expanded government that spent money on internal improvements and education. Maulden says that settlers "preferred the libertarian rhetoric of Jeffersonian and Jacksonian democracy," (7) but they relied on the governmental structures Federalists created. The frontiersmen saw themselves as "rugged individualists" (7) even as they relied on and expected help from an activist government.

The Federalist Frontier's narrative will be familiar to historians of the region and the era. The offer by the Ohio Company, a land speculation venture by Revolutionary War veterans, to buy land in the region spurred Congress to pass the Northwest Ordinance providing a government for the new territory. The Confederation and early national periods, however, coincided with war in the Ohio Valley as Indian tribes contested the intrusion of whites into the region. Under the presidency of Thomas Jefferson, officials such as William Henry Harrison, governor of Indiana Territory, used trade and treaties to acquire land from the Indians until resistance from the Shawnee leaders Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa caused Harrison to resort to military force. Maulden does not spend much time on the War of 1812, but has two chapters on the post-war period arguing that, despite the alleged death of the Federalists after the Hartford Convention, Federalists still influenced the region through their support for education and business.

In Maulden's account, unlike other histories of the Old Northwest, there is less of the conflict between settlers and the territorial governments led by St. Clair in what became Ohio and William Henry Harrison in Indiana. Instead, Maulden concentrates on the legacy of Federalism in the region even after Jefferson's election. Maulden contends that

Federalists remained influential in the region and that western Jeffersonians “repurposed Federalist institutions” (90). Although old Federalists lost political office, their program laid the foundation for the later Whig Party and its adherence to the American System of a national bank, protective tariffs, and government money for internal improvements. An epilogue looks at Abraham Lincoln as the heir of the Federalist frontier.

Maulden might do more to acknowledge the limitations of the activist government he sees in the Old Northwest. He frequently quotes the expansive language of public documents promising free public education. Although he acknowledges that “progress varied” (166), actual funding for educational systems in the states of the lower Midwest fell very much short of the rhetoric. In describing an arc that reaches from the Federalism of Arthur St. Clair to the Whiggery of Abraham Lincoln, Maulden misses the role of class. Lincoln may have embraced Federalist policies, but the democratic ethos of the Jeffersonians made possible the poorly educated, poorly dressed, homespun Lincoln’s rise to political power.

In effect, Maulden makes an observation about the early American frontier that many commentators have made about the modern West: small government Westerners rely more heavily on government subsidies than do Easterners. Both in the early republic and today, political rhetoric and political reality are often at odds.

Boone, Black Hawk, and Crockett in 1833: Unsettling the Mythic West, edited by Michael A. Lofaro. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2019. cv, 478 pp. Illustrations, notes, appendices, index. \$60.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Patrick J. Jung is a professor of history and anthropology at the Milwaukee School of Engineering in Wisconsin. He is the author of *The Black Hawk War of 1832* (2007), and “Lonely Sentinel: A Military History of Fort Madison, 1808–1813” (*Annals of Iowa*, 2016).

A trifecta of biographies appeared in 1833: one each on Daniel Boone, the Sauk war leader Black Hawk, and David Crockett. Common to these books, according to Michael A. Lofaro, was a shift in Americans’ perception of the frontier and the persons—both Native American and white—who resided there. Central to this shift was the election of Andrew Jackson to the presidency in 1828 and the mythos of a new age that celebrated the self-made man who rose to prominence despite humble origins. Lofaro writes that these works, in presenting men cut

from the same cloth as Jackson, fulfilled "the needs of cultural and democratic nationalism" (xl).

The original first editions, all published the same year in Cincinnati, are reprinted in this volume. Lofaro prefaces these works with a particularly valuable introductory essay on the evolution of the frontier hero in American literature. By 1833, the eastern aristocracy that had dominated the United States for its first half century had given way to the common man. A new democratic spirit defined the age, which, according to Lofaro, reflected "a consequent desire for democratic heroes" (xxv) whose lives reflected those of ordinary Americans.

Boone's biography illustrated this shift, particularly his time as a captive among the Shawnees for six months. Prior to his captivity, Boone had lived the life of a "white Indian" during his long sojourn in Kentucky. While earlier biographies cast Boone's experience among the Shawnees as an instance of racial and cultural betrayal, Timothy Flint's 1833 biography had completed the process through which Boone's captivity became a badge of honor. Boone's skill as a hunter and backwoodsman rivalled that of Native people and earned him the respect of both Indians and whites.

Black Hawk's autobiography illustrated a similar shift in sentiment. While mediated through a white newspaper editor, J.B. Patterson, and an interpreter, Antoine LeClair, the final product was the first authentic autobiography of a Native American. Rather than the familiar tropes of "uncivilized beast" or "noble savage" that had typified earlier depictions of Native people, Black Hawk instead represented himself as a defeated but still proud Indian leader. He considered himself equal to his white enemies even as he stood vanquished after the 1832 war that bore his name.

Crockett, like Boone, was the quintessential frontier hunter whose rustic lifestyle and folksy manner presented no insurmountable obstacles as he ascended to the halls of the United States Congress to represent the residents of western Tennessee.

Lofaro's introductory essay stands as this book's most significant scholarly contribution; nevertheless, the three biographical works that follow are valuable as well. Of particular note are the extensive explanatory notes that provide contextual information about the persons and events described in the texts. Lofaro also furnishes definitions of words and terms whose meanings have become archaic, and even opaque, since 1833. Indeed, his annotations make these reprintings particularly valuable to contemporary scholars who seek to gain insights into the lives of Boone, Black Hawk, and Crockett.

Of these biographical works, students of midwestern history (and especially the history of Iowa) will undoubtedly find Black Hawk's autobiography to be the most relevant. Researchers have tended to gravitate toward Donald Jackson's well-edited 1955 version of Black Hawk's autobiography. Lofaro's annotations benefit from six decades of scholarly research into the life of Black Hawk and the Black Hawk War since the publication of the 1955 edition, and, significantly, include Jackson's earlier annotations. Black Hawk died in 1838, five years after his autobiography appeared in print. Later editions, particularly Patterson's 1882 reprint, included details about Black Hawk's last years in Iowa. Lofaro includes these texts in addition to the 1833 narrative of Black Hawk's life.

Presenting these books in a single volume fulfills Lofaro's intent to "immerse the present-day reader in the world of the American reader of 1833" (xvi). In doing so, Lofaro illustrates the changing notions of race, class, and masculinity that characterized Jacksonian America. He has grounded these works firmly and judiciously in the rich body of secondary literature concerning both the history and literature of the era. His careful annotations result in new editions of these biographies that will be much appreciated by historical researchers.

Brigham Young and the Expansion of the Mormon Faith, by Thomas G. Alexander. Oklahoma Western Biographies Series. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019. xxiv, 392 pp. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. \$29.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Richard D. Ouellette teaches history at Napa Valley College. He holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of Texas at Austin.

Since its inaugural volume in 1988, the Oklahoma Western Biographies Series has produced concise biographies that illuminate critical facets of U.S. western history. For its 31st volume, series editor Richard Etulain persuaded Thomas G. Alexander, Redd Professor Emeritus of Western American History at BYU, to produce an important new biography of Brigham Young. Alexander is eminently qualified for the task, having produced highly regarded scholarship on western, Utah, and Mormon history alike.

Brigham Young and the Expansion of the Mormon Faith begins chronologically. Chapters 1–4 cover the period from Young's birth in 1801 to the eve of the Utah War in 1857. We follow Young as a Reformed Methodist craftsman in New York State; as a Mormon convert, missionary, and apostle in Ohio, Missouri, and England; as Joseph Smith's confidant in plural marriage, temple rites, and theocratic politics in Illinois;

as the leader of the Mormon exodus to the Great Salt Lake following Smith's murder; and as a defender of the vulnerable Mormon theocracy in the Great Basin. The narrative's brisk pace slows dramatically at the book's centerpiece, chapters 5–7, wherein Alexander digs deeply into the Utah War and the Mountain Meadows Massacre. In chapters 8–9, he shifts to a topical approach by examining Young's theology and polygamous family life. The chronological focus returns in chapters 10–12 for the final two decades of Young's life, covering the Civil War, the transcontinental railroad, Mormon mercantilism, the Black Hawk War, and the revitalization of church quorums and temple work before his 1877 death. The book concludes with an analytical summary of Young's life.

Alexander's tone is critical, sympathetic, and fair. While not as critical as Will Bagley's *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows* (2002), Alexander does not rush through controversies in the manner of Leonard J. Arrington's *Brigham Young: American Moses* (1985). Alexander addresses controversies head-on, and among other noteworthy conclusions he finds that, contrary to anti-Mormon caricatures and Young's own bluster, Young was no despot. He derived his powers from persuasion and consent, and Mormons could—and did—disregard his counsel. While Young was no pacifist either, Alexander finds that he was a generally pacific individual who had developed a deep fear of armies and mobs. Alexander attributes the violent rhetoric Young employed during the Mormon Reformation and Utah War to Young's fear of seeing the Mormons brutalized—again—by outsiders and their dissident collaborators. Young's fearsome rhetoric during this period fostered a climate of paranoia, zealotry, and aggression that made the Mountain Meadows Massacre possible. Ultimately, though, Alexander finds that Young did not order the massacre but tried to let the emigrants through. As for Young's larger significance, Alexander echoes Howard Lamar's thesis that Young was the greatest colonizer in western history, and he suggests that Young may have saved the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from the failure that befell most Second Great Awakening movements.

Alexander makes no claims to definitiveness. Oklahoma Western Biographies are works of synthesis written primarily for the public. The series wears its scholarship lightly, and like other series volumes, Alexander's contains a bibliography of published sources but does not provide scholarly citations to archival sources. In addition, the text does not devote equal coverage to the various phases of Young's life. Alexander leans heavily on his (uncited) primary research, most of which concerns the Utah period of Young's life; the forty-six years prior to Young's move to Utah—including the Mormon sojourn in Iowa, which

is of particular relevance to *The Annals of Iowa*—receive comparatively less attention. Readers who seek a more comprehensive biography with archival citations should consult John G. Turner’s *Brigham Young: Pioneer Prophet* (2012).

Despite its admitted limitations, Alexander’s is a synthesis of periodically stunning depth and insight. The author’s deep familiarity with his subject matter is plainly evident. The book’s secondary title—*the Expansion of the Mormon Faith*—may suggest the author focuses narrowly on religious matters, but such is not the case. Young made little distinction between “religious” and “secular” matters, and Alexander follows his lead, ranging widely from “secular” topics like environmental land use to straightforward “religious” matters such as missions and temples. Packed with surprisingly immersive dives on scattered topics, Alexander’s synthesis thereby differs from an older reliable synthesis, Newell G. Bringham’s *Brigham Young and the Expanding American Frontier* (1986), a slimmer work of greater balance but less depth.

A seasoned scholar’s reflections on a critical figure in western history, *Brigham Young and the Expansion of the Mormon Faith* is a synthesis worth reading.

The Mormon Handcart Migration: “Tounge nor pen can never tell the sorrow,” by Candy Moulton. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019. xv, 272 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, appendix, index. \$29.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Chad M. Orton is a Historic Sites Curator with the Church History Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He is an expert on the nineteenth-century migration of Latter-day Saints and their arrival in Utah.

A unique and compelling story of overland migration took place between 1856–60, when nearly 3,000 members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) “gathered to Zion” (Utah) by handcart. While numerous articles and books have looked at various aspects of this experience, Candy Moulton’s *Mormon Handcart Migration* is the first one-volume history in nearly 60 years.

The “gathering” largely took place under the direction of church leaders, and these handcart pioneers were a small percentage of the nearly 70,000 Latter-day Saints who traveled emigrant trails between 1846 and 1868. Many who “gathered” were only able to make the journey because of loans from the church-established Perpetual Emigrating Fund (PEF). In 1855, the PEF was nearly broke and Brigham Young,

looking for a way that would still allow individuals dependent upon the fund to emigrate, turned to handcarts, because they cost a fraction of what it took to travel by wagon. While others had used similar means to travel across the country, the experience of Latter-day Saints stands out because of its organization and scope.

This book looks at each of the ten handcart companies. The first seven began their journey in Iowa City and traveled about 1,300 miles. The last three started in eastern Nebraska, which meant these companies not only had 300 fewer miles to push and pull their handcarts, but they also avoided the infamously deep sands of Iowa that presented a challenge for both wagon and handcart emigrants alike.

Moulton presents the challenges leaders faced in implementing this new method of travel, including recounting the concerns, confusion and conflicting opinions of those responsible for its implementation. She also examines how enthusiasm on the part of some of those charged with implementing the program and ignorance on the part of those traveling by handcart allowed zealotry to overcome reason during the first year. Since most handcart pioneers came from Europe, Moulton's look at migrants' experiences during their ocean voyages as well as their overland journeys by rail and steamboat prior to beginning the handcart leg of their travels is a particularly interesting aspect of the volume.

She discusses the first three companies of 1856 together in one chapter, interweaving the writings of company members. Much of the focus upon the handcarts has long been on the fourth and fifth companies, the Willie and Martin companies, which were trapped by early winter storms in present-day Wyoming and experienced a great loss of life. A major portion of Moulton's work is likewise devoted to these companies—and the Hunt and Hodgetts wagon companies that followed them and were also caught in the storms—and the subsequent rescue that involved hundreds and lasted more than two months. Moulton devotes chapters to the two 1857 companies, who were aided in their journey by U.S. troops bound for Utah during the so-called "Utah War," a chapter to the company that traveled in 1859, and a chapter to the two 1860 companies, the last handcart companies.

Handcart companies occasionally faced similar challenges, one being that there were times when they had inadequate food, yet by looking at the handcart experience in its entirety, Moulton shows that the experiences of the companies varied. For instance, the makeup of the companies traveling after 1856 differed from the first companies as emigrants learned lessons and addressed problems. As a result, death rates for later companies were comparable to wagon companies.

Moulton approaches the subject in a fast-paced and engaging style that she honed through years of newspaper reporting. Her interest in the handcarts grew in part out of her husband having handcart pioneer ancestors and from her own long-standing interest in overland emigration. The book is at its best when she draws upon her strengths, including her own expertise regarding the trail and trail narratives, and allows individuals to speak for themselves and tell their own stories. In allowing these voices to be heard, Moulton presents themes long associated with the handcart story—faith, devotion, sacrifice, heartache, tragedy and triumph. These themes are at the heart of why thousands of Latter-day Saints each year push and pull handcarts in multi-day reenactments known as the “trek.”

German Americans on the Middle Border: From Antislavery to Reconciliation, 1830–1877, by Zachary Stuart Garrison. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2020. xiii, 232 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$30.00 paperback.

Reviewer Petra DeWitt is an assistant professor of history at the Missouri University of Science and Technology. She is the author of *Degrees of Allegiance: Harassment and Loyalty in Missouri's German-American Community during World War I* (2012).

German Americans on the Middle Border takes a geographic approach to evaluate the place of German immigrants during the American Civil War and Reconstruction. Zachary Stuart Garrison focuses primarily on German immigrants who settled on what he calls the Middle Border, the area along the Ohio River, from its confluence with the Mississippi River northward to the Mississippi's confluence with the Missouri River. This natural line in the midwestern landscape divided freedom from slavery and represented the intersection of northern, southern, and western political ideologies.

Taking this spatial view allows Garrison to update the traditional historiography of German immigrants' inherent opposition to slavery due to their beliefs in civil liberties and their European experiences. The author sees a more complex picture and convincingly argues that not all German Americans held abolitionist views. Instead, the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 and its threat to the survival of the United States inspired German immigrants to overcome their own ideological differences and briefly unite in opposition to slavery as an institution that not only limited individual freedoms but also restricted the advancement of society as a whole. When the Civil War broke out,

they joined the Union in order to save the nation and as Radical Republicans supported war aims such as emancipation and political rights for freedmen. During Reconstruction, Germans living on the Middle Border realized that their American-born neighbors, even those living in free states, viewed Germans as foreigners attempting to change the American way of life. Pragmatic Germans thus broke away from Radical Republicans by focusing more on reuniting the country instead of assuring racial equality. Consequently, ideological and social divisions within the ethnic group resurfaced.

Garrison begins this intellectual history by tracing the arrival of the Dreissigers in the 1830s and the Forty-Eighters in the 1850s, and evaluating their political ideologies within the context of the increasingly contentious debates over slavery in the United States. The author expertly analyzes two important transitions within the German community: the change from opposition to slavery as unnatural in a free society to the ideology of free soil, free labor, and gradual emancipation, and the slow move by German voters from the Democratic to the Republican Party. As Garrison points out, even during the 1860 election Germans were not yet united behind Lincoln or abolition. Secession, however, convinced them that slavery had to be abolished immediately in order to protect the nation. Defining this stance as a war aim turned them into political radicals along the Middle Border and brought them to the attention of pro-slavery advocates, in particular bushwhackers in Missouri, who viewed German Union soldiers as foreign invaders. Garrison is at his best when he discusses the role of Germans in assuring that Missouri stayed in the Union and the repercussions they experienced at the hands of conservative Unionists and Confederates. The narrative ends with an analysis of how disagreements over the punishment of the South and the number of civil rights freedmen should receive contributed to Liberal Republicans, concerned with reuniting the country and protecting individualism, and Democrats, focused on economic development, breaking away from the briefly united and radical political block.

This concise study based on excellent research in the appropriate primary and secondary sources is a delightful read. It offers the personal thoughts of a sizeable number of German immigrants including such notables as Gustav Körner, Friedrich Hecker, Henry Boernstein, and George Thilenius. This reinterpretation of the role of German immigrants in the American Civil War has been long overdue and will appeal to general readers as well as scholars interested in the history of the American Midwest.

Yet, one is also left wondering whether the geographic focus on the Middle Border overlooks the large populations of German Americans

who made Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin their home. Did Germans in Iowa not as eagerly participate in the discourse over slavery as their neighbors in Missouri? Did they not as willingly fight for the Union because they did not live in close proximity to the South? Did Germans in Iowa experience ethnic unity as Radical Republicans during the Civil War? Did they too revert to various interest groups at the end of Reconstruction? Historians should conduct such an important comparative study and find answers to these questions because discovery of differences in ideology would not only underline Garrison's argument but also substantiate the argument that German Americans were more divided than united as an ethnic group despite American perceptions to the opposite.

Living by Inches: The Smells, Sounds, Tastes, and Feeling of Captivity in Civil War Prisons, by Evan Kutzler. Civil War America Series. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2019. xii, 195 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 paperback.

Reviewer Patrick G. Bass is professor of history at Morningside College in Iowa. He specializes in European involvement with the U.S. Civil War.

Author Evan Kutzler has performed exhaustive research to put together his contribution to the relatively new field of the history of senses in his *Living by Inches: The Smells, Sounds, Tastes, and Feeling of Captivity in Civil War Prisons*. The book is, in fact, organized by these senses, as the author systematically pursues and then recounts prisoner perceptions of sight, smell, touch, hearing, and taste, in that order, during their captivity. Indeed, he pursues even greater specificity, as each chapter emphasizes but one or two aspects of the sense involved. For example, both sight and smell are explored by the limits of those senses (sight at night, and as anosmia takes over); then Kutzler explains touch through the ubiquity of lice, and the prisoners' battle against the pests, and hearing through both noise and silence (even noting the impacts of the absence of some sounds, such as church bells). The chapter on taste focuses on food as a key prisoner preoccupation and the search for wholesome food as key to survival—efforts, usually in vain, to avoid the scourges of prisons, diarrhea and dysentery.

This work is another addition to the recent renaissance in studies of Civil War prisons and prisoners of war. Unlike other works in this field, however, Kutzler's aim is to organize and record the subjective responses of both Union and Confederate prisoners of war to their sensory environment. His aim focuses on the subjective past as noted by individuals,

rather than on objective recreations of that past. For Kutzler, sources written long after the Civil War by former prisoners are just as valuable in exploring the perceptions of participants as are sources written during the war, even contemporary with the experiences described. Thus, in the end, the work is more concerned with sensory ideation than with actual conditions. So, readers looking for systematic generalized accounts of prison conditions may be disappointed by his post-structuralist approach. Yet, he asserts that the ideations that are his focus gave prisoners a way to live in prison successfully—and the question he poses is not how so many prisoners died, but how so many prisoners lived through their ordeals.

The work's epilogue explores memory study—his own included, particularly concerning the influences of his extended research stay at Andersonville—and how prisoners continued to process their own individual experiences for years after 1865. This epilogue is valuable to the reader, as it clarifies the author's more elusive goals in the earlier chapters. Thus, his prior use of pre-war works on etiquette, gender norms, and cleanliness, and their shaping of prisoner norms and expectations—and consequently, emotional impacts of prison adjustments—comes into clearer relief, as the epilogue recounts the prior norms of his own case and the extensive life-changing effects of his research.

Some of the book's more memorable elements record how prisoners sought to assert their own independence (indeed, individuality) and their defiance of the enemy by maintaining private sanitation standards (as best as possible, anyway) and by singing songs to annoy the guards. Varied (and sometimes amusing) prisoner competitions are also important aspects of the perceptions of the inmates, according to Kutzler. Parts of the work, however, are not for the faint of heart, involving the problems of living with revolting vermin and latrines. This reviewer notes that if Kutzler had infused his work throughout with the memory analysis of the epilogue, readers could more easily follow his approach, avoiding the confusion elicited by his challenging intra-chapter organizational scheme. And, almost always, the reader is left wanting more information. Additionally, this reviewer wishes that the chapters had been focused less on one or two aspects of the sense subject, and instead had included more about other facets of the sense in question. This would have made for a longer work, but perhaps an ultimately more rewarding book.

The bulk of Kutzler's research focuses on eastern prisons and their prisoners. There is little here for those particularly fascinated by midwestern or Iowa history. As part of a broader series on Civil War America put out by UNC Press, this work undoubtedly plays an irreplaceable role.

Empathetic readers will find reading this work rough sledding, however; disgust may overwhelm them. Unfortunately, given Kutzler's depth of research, outside of Civil War scholars or members of the guild pursuing history of the senses, there may not be a strong general market for *Living by Inches: The Smells, Sounds, Tastes, and Feeling of Captivity in Civil War Prisons*.

Such Anxious Hours: Wisconsin Women's Voices from the Civil War, edited by Jo Ann Daly Carr. Wisconsin Studies in Autobiography. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2019. xiv, 347 pp. Map, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Ginette Aley is visiting assistant professor of history at Kansas State University and associate editor of *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains*. She co-edited *Union Heartland: The Midwestern Home Front during the Civil War*, published by Southern Illinois University Press in 2013.

"I have no husband now," a despondent young wife, Belle Arnold Sleeper of rural Berlin, Wisconsin, wrote to her brother in April 1865. She continued: "I thought I was prepared for this news but the blow has nearly crushed me," (288) and she saw nothing but darkness ahead. Her letter exposes the depth of anguish upon learning of her soldier husband's death, especially his suffering as a prisoner of war at Libby Prison. It also illustrates how intimately familiar Wisconsin and midwestern women were with the Civil War.

Arnold is one of eight Wisconsin women, ranging in ages from eighteen to forty-three-years old and hailing from six different locales, whose personal writings were collected from several repositories and edited by librarian Jo Ann Daly Carr in *Such Anxious Hours: Wisconsin Women's Voices from the Civil War*. Along with their age range, their perspectives are varied. Some resided in cities and villages, and others lived on farms. They were variously employed in school teaching, sewing, farming, typesetting, and one as an aspiring artist. With a goal of using these writings to create a kind of straight-line narrative of women on the Wisconsin home front, Carr has chosen to organize them into chronological chapters rather than analyze them topically, which in effect limits a deeper understanding of commonalities and differences among them and among midwestern women (one must make constant use of the index to get at this kind of information). This is also hindered by, more problematically, Carr's failure to identify fully and engage the burgeoning regional historiography of midwestern women on the

home front, instead making only repeated general references to northern women.

Where Carr succeeds is in creating a platform for Wisconsin's Civil War era women to add their voices to the tumultuous times that surrounded them. Some of their observations are insightful gems for historians. For example, historians have long sought to know the degree to which mid-nineteenth-century women shared their political views. Ann Waldo observed to her husband in a letter dated February 16, 1862, that "I find it is the very general opinion (among Republicans even) that Lincoln and McClellan are neither of them the right men in the right places" (66). From Waldo's vantage point, by the end of the war's first year apparently some midwesterners had as many concerns about President Lincoln as they did about General McClellan. Similarly, from Madisonite Emily Quiner readers gain insight into the impact at home of the shock and grief over the sudden tragic death of Governor Louis P. Harvey, who drowned in the Tennessee River in April 1862 while leading an effort to get medical supplies to Wisconsin troops wounded at Shiloh. "We all felt a shock of deep sorrow this morning," Quiner wrote, noting that stores and businesses "were all closed and draped in mourning as also the State House" (81). His wife, however, may have been among the last to know. Quiner described how Mrs. Harvey was "on the street when the report came getting subscriptions for the relief of a poor family in town" upon noticing that capitol and court house flags were at half-mast. The news caused her to drop "senseless to the ground" (81).

Carr's volume of Wisconsin women's writings from the home front offers insight about the sense of immediacy experienced by women and localities during the Civil War. The lack of regional historical grounding and analysis reduces its value somewhat and leads to some misstatements by the editor. Nevertheless, Carr's editing efforts and these women's voices represent an invaluable addition to nineteenth-century women's, midwestern, and Civil War era histories.

Iowa Confederates in the Civil War, by David Connon. Mount Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2019. 208 pp. Timeline, maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.99 paperback.

Reviewer Tim Roberts is a professor of history at Western Illinois University. His newest book, "*The Infernal War*": *The Civil War Letters of William and Jane Standard*, was published by Kent State University Press in 2018.

David Connon, an independent scholar, has compiled biographies of seventy-six men, residents of Iowa, who served the Confederacy during the Civil War. These individuals' political sympathies and military service on behalf of the seceded South reveal how Iowans' robust support for the Union—the state's population in 1860 was just under 700,000 and some 76,000 Iowans served in the Union's forces—was not absolute.

Connon defines Iowa residents as people who lived in the state as civilians before the Civil War for at least two years, no earlier than 1850, and were at least thirteen years old during residency. Based on impressive research in some seventy-one archives, forty-one period newspapers, and equivalent period published sources, Connon determined that nearly half of the Iowa Confederates moved or returned to the South as a result of the economic Panic of 1857, because the region's more agrarian orientation helped it recover more quickly than the North. The war came to these migrant Hawkeyes in 1861, in other words, not the other way around. But, Connon still finds that nearly all Iowa Confederates served willingly, rather than being pressured to enlist or conscripted.

On the other hand, Connon emphasizes that two-thirds of his cohort joined "out of opportunism, often related to earning a living, with little regard for principles or circumstances" (14). This explanation coincides with the self-perception of another Iowa soldier, Cyrus Boyd, who claimed "patriotic motives," but also admitted that his "dull" life in Palmyra (Warren County) and fear the war would prove ephemeral prompted his enlistment as a Yankee (*The Civil War Diary of Cyrus F. Boyd, Fifteenth Iowa Infantry, 1861–1863*, ed. Mildred Throne, 2015, 6, 7). Notable Civil War scholars including James McPherson (*For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*, 1997), Chandra Manning (*What this Cruel War was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War*, 2007), and Aaron Sheehan-Dean (*Why Confederates Fought: Family & Nation in Civil War Virginia*, 2009) have emphasized soldiers' ideological inspiration to join the ranks, North and South. However, Iowa Confederates' more practical approach to the war, as well as their hardcore racism, coincides with the attitude of Union soldiers of southern background who had settled in southern and western Illinois ("*This Infernal War*": *the Civil War Letters of William and Jane Standard*, ed. Timothy Roberts, 2018). Indeed, forty-five percent of Iowa Confederates enlisted in the Confederate military because they or their father or mother were southerners by birth.

Other than a three-page synopsis and two-page appendix where the statistics noted above are stated, *Iowa Confederates in the Civil War* does not offer an overall interpretation of Iowa Confederates' historical significance. The book's first two chapters describe Iowa politics on the

eve of and during the war, which pressured a minority of Iowans to decide to migrate. Abraham Lincoln ascended as a ruthless anti-secession president. Republican provost marshals arrested antiwar newspaper editors and a former U.S. Senator and Dubuque slave owner, George Wallace Jones (Jones's image is one of the book's numerous illustrations of Iowa Confederates and their networks). And Republican newspapers stoked hysteria about secret societies of southern sympathizers. These chapters confirm that Iowa likely had little of the "Copperhead" resistance movements that swept southern Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois until Lincoln's 1864 re-election.

After this introduction, the book is organized in six chapters, each one comprised of a series of individuals' profiles reflecting patterns of experience. Chapter 3 focuses on wartime Dubuque, the home of a dozen Confederates. Chapter 4 identifies fourteen Iowa families whose fathers, sons, and brothers fought on different sides during the war. Chapter 5 describes three individuals who served the Confederacy out of "principled commitment," including "hints of southern-defined honor" (84). The following two chapters examine the odysseys of a half-dozen Iowans who deserted the Confederate ranks (Chapter 6), and Iowans who rendered professional service to the Confederate military as physicians, chemists, lawyers, chaplains, and armorers (Chapter 7). Chapter 8 highlights fifteen Iowans raised or educated in the South who chose to return to the region.

Of the seventy-six Iowa Confederates that Cannon documents, ten were killed in the war, a mortality rate about half that of Confederate troops' overall death rate. This discrepancy may reflect the relative social affluence of the Iowa Confederates. Overall, Cannon reveals patterns in these men's backgrounds that predisposed them to join the rebellion, their various forms of wartime service, and their postwar lives spent either building careers in the reconstructed South or, if they returned to Iowa, seeking to live down reputations as traitors.

The Frontier Army: Episodes from Dakota and The West, edited by R. Eli Paul. Pierre, SD: South Dakota Historical Society Press, 2019. 189 pp. Maps, photographs, illustrations, artwork, notes, index. \$29.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Paul N. Beck is professor of history at Wisconsin Lutheran College. His publications include *Columns of Vengeance: Soldiers, Sioux, and the Punitive Expeditions, 1863–1864* (2013) and *The First Sioux War: The Grattan Fight and Blue Water Creek, 1854–1856* (2004).

A number of works have studied the frontier army, and the officers and enlisted men who served in its ranks. Don Rickey's *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay* (1963), Robert Utley's *Frontiersmen in Blue* (1981) and *Frontier Regulars* (1984) are three of the standard works in the field. More recently, *Life of a Soldier on the Western Frontier* (2008) by Jeremy Agnew and Doug McChristian's *Regular Army O!* (2017) have added to our understanding of the army that fought in the Indian Wars. *The Frontier Army: Episodes from Dakota and the West*, edited by R. Eli Paul, presents seven chapters dealing with various aspects of military life in the Dakotas and the West. The articles include writings by some of the top historians of the Indian-fighting army of the American West. These authors include Paul Hedren, Brian Dippie, R. Eli Paul and Jerome Greene.

There is no specific unifying theme for the articles except for the general one of dealing with the army in the West. The articles are wide ranging and consist of various aspects of the frontier military. The time period ranges from 1855 to 1890. The book also includes an appendix of "Notable Works on the Frontier Army and Indian Wars" by Thomas Buecker and John McDermott.

The first article by R. Eli Paul focuses on an eye-witness account of the Battle of Blue Water Creek. Two articles respectively authored by Paul Hedren and Douglas McChristian follow on the role of the artillery in the Indian Wars. Both provide information on the most neglected branch of the military in the Indian Wars. A lighter-hearted essay by Lori A. Cox-Paul looks at recreational pursuits of the enlisted men, officers and their wives. These numerous activities aimed at fighting the boredom of frontier life. Two chapters by Brian Dippie and Frank Schubert address art and the frontier army. Schubert, whose article included some unnecessary social commentary, considered the creation of statues for the Buffalo Soldiers while Dippie follows the career of Frederic Remington and his positive artwork dealing with the army. Finally, Jerome Greene's excellent study of eye-witness Sioux accounts of the massacre at Wound Knee completes the book.

Editor R. Eli Paul states that the purpose of the book is to present new sources and authoritative scholarship on a series of familiar topics: the history, organization, society, and culture of the frontier army. This is accomplished in the articles presented in the book. Several of the articles, such as McChristian's study of the artillery during the Indian Wars and Greene's dealing with Sioux accounts of Wounded Knee, although well done, would only have benefited from a more in-depth and longer essay on the topics. The appendix of key studies on the frontier army and the Indian Wars is an excellent inclusion that will be of interest and use to students of the time period.

Although there is no direct link to Iowa, the articles addressing the use of artillery in the Great Sioux War and the Native American view of Wounded Knee do occur in the upper Midwest and are welcome additions to the history of the region. The interaction and warfare between white settlers, the military, and the Sioux is an important aspect to the settlement of Iowa and the Midwest. This warfare lasted over forty-five years, starting with the Spirit Lake Massacre in Iowa and not ending until another massacre, this time of the Sioux at Wounded Knee in present-day South Dakota. The role of the frontier army in these conflicts and a study of the men who served in this army is a needed contribution to the history of the region.

Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America, by Thomas J. Brown. Civil War America Series. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2019. 366 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$29.95 paperback.

Reviewer Edith M. Hunter is a graduate student in history at Iowa State University. Her research focuses on the destruction of Civil War monuments during WWII scrap metal drives.

“If the nation is to continue as a whole,” warned former Confederate General Fitzhugh Lee in 1869, “it is better to forget and forgive rather than perpetuate in granite proofs of its civil wars.” Yet, the United States failed to heed Lee’s warning, and now its landscape is dotted with monuments to, memories of, and myths about this internal conflict. The first of these persistent myths that Thomas Brown busts in *Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America* is the existence of a code that revealed the fate of the rider in an equestrian statue based on the number of his horse’s hoofs that were touching the ground. Despite this debunked mythology, Brown argues that public monuments are worthy of much deeper and richer study than any simple code can reveal. Memorials, then as now, can tell us as much about the subject they seek to commemorate as the times in which they were dedicated.

Brown organizes this work both thematically and chronologically. He moves from honoring the dead with simple funerary obelisks, recognizing ordinary citizens in common soldier statues, and memorializing public leaders with equestrian statues to celebrating the war and its veterans with triumphal arches and allegorical figures of victory. The book is richly illustrated with examples from the anonymous creations of Gorham Manufacturing and the New England Granite Company to

those of pivotal artists Augustus Saint-Gaudens, John Quincy Adam Ward, Fredrick Law Olmstead, and Gutzon Borglum.

Expanding the breadth and depth of his 2004 work *The Public Art of Civil War Commemoration*, this new study traces American attitudes concerning memorials from the toppling of the equestrian statue of George III at the beginning of the American Revolution through the years after World War I. Brown argues that the creation and dedication of Civil War monuments in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries replaced concepts of iconoclastic Republicanism, the American ideal of the yeoman farmer, and a voluntary army of citizen-soldiers. Ultimately, he contends that “democratic postwar creativity gradually gave way to more violent, hierarchical, self-aggrandizing representations of social and political order” (7).

For example, he traces criticism of early common soldier statues—posed with rifles raised—as too aggressive and militaristic. This resulted in their rejection in favor of the more passive and reflective “parade rest” and “flag bearer” poses in keeping with American attitudes toward individualism, soldiering as a career, and the need of a standing army. But as Civil War commemoration evolved from memorializing the dead to honoring the veterans of the rebellion, by the centennial of the Revolution “Americans increasingly looked upon independence as primarily a military achievement rather than an inspirational political movement” (58) and returned to more active representations of victory.

With recent controversies regarding the removal of Confederate memorials across the American South, Brown brings overdue and timely research on Civil War monuments in both the North and the South. As such, readers in Iowa should find this book especially interesting as, unlike much of the state’s participation in the Civil War which took place on far away battlefields, statues and memorials can be found in public squares, parks, and cemeteries across the state. Each of the memorial types Brown explores in his book, obelisks, common soldier statues, equestrian, and allegorical figures, can be found in nearly every county in Iowa, throughout the Midwest, and across the nation. Reading Brown’s work will give a deeper appreciation for these tangible reminders of Iowa’s participation in the American Civil War.

Poles in Illinois, by John Radzilowski and Ann Hetzel Gunkel. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2020. xii, 224 pp. Illustrations, tables and figures, graphs, appendixes, notes, index. \$24.50, paperback.

William J. Galush is Associate Professor History, Loyola University Chicago (emeritus). He is an expert on the Polish immigrant experience, and the author of *For More than Bread: Community and Identity in American Polonia* (2006).

Poles in Illinois affords an excellent overview of this ethnic group in the state of its greatest density of settlement. Because of the centrality of Chicago as the capital of American Polonia, it has a wider relevance than other state studies. The authors also address rural settlement in the state, utilizing jubilee books and other local sources to discuss small communities, all too often slighted. They write for a broad audience, but specialists in the field will find the work helpful.

The organization is thematic, with an underlying chronological development that brings the work up to the present. A brief introduction on the history of Poland provides a helpful historical background. Most who left were peasants of modest means and education but with a scattering of educated lay and clerical persons who provided valuable leadership in a strange new land. While the vast bulk of Poles entered Illinois after the Civil War, settlement began in the 1850s, especially to the burgeoning city on the south end of Lake Michigan.

Family, faith, community, culture and work form the bulk of the study. Gunkel's contribution appears most clearly in "Kultura" (culture). She describes not only popular culture such as choral singing but also the role of dance (polka) and the surprisingly extensive business undergirding music in general. Technology encountered ethnicity in Polish radio, which became important in the interwar years as an attractive new medium.

Family was different since immigrants lacked the presence of an older generation, which both enlarged burdens on young parents but also allowed marriage for love rather than the arranged pattern often present in the homeland. American-born children were sometimes drawn to delinquency in Chicago and inter-generational relations underwent strains not found in the ancestral villages. Both parents had to contribute to family support, typically with the husband in a low-skill industrial job and the wife often taking in boarders to supplement the budget. After elementary school, children tended to start working in order to help provide for the family, something which slowed upward mobility. Ethnic leaders deplored this, but it remained a common pattern before World War II.

Radzilowski shows effectively how the role of religion was very important in Polonia. Poles were overwhelmingly Roman Catholic and the parish was the central institution of the community. While priests enjoyed high prestige, some immigrants were critical of their often-authoritarian style. In Illinois as elsewhere, this led to schismatic movements framed in a more democratic structure, notably the Polish National Catholic Church. But for most Poles and their offspring Roman Catholicism remained the preferred expression of faith. The work concludes with two

chapters on later waves of immigrants, whose background and experience in America differed significantly from the earlier overwhelmingly peasant immigration.

The authors enhance the value of the study by addressing rural settlements in addition to the typical focus on the massive ethnic presence in Chicago. Well-chosen photographs and helpful charts enrich the work. The focus on large national fraternal federations headquartered in Chicago tends to over-emphasize the role of ideology as a salient factor; smaller settlements often showed cooperation and indifference to official viewpoints propagated by Chicago-based national organs whose interest lay in distinguishing their organization from others. The book provides a useful and well-written overview of a major immigrant group in Illinois.

Avant-Garde in the Cornfields: Architecture, Landscape, and Preservation in New Harmony, edited by Ben Nicholson and Michelangelo Sabatino. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019. xlv, 351 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$40.00 paperback.

Thomas A. Guiler is Assistant Professor of History and Public Humanities at Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library in Delaware. He is completing work on his book, *The Handcrafted Utopia: Arts and Crafts Communities in Progressive America*.

Avant-Garde in the Cornfields is an impressive work that highlights the history of innovation, utopia, and spirituality in the built environment of New Harmony, Indiana. Over seven chapters and an introduction, the authors argue that through historic preservation and the erection of important works of modern architecture, New Harmony was revitalized as a spiritual retreat in the twentieth century—effectively striking a utopian through line from its Harmonist founding under George Rapp and the socialism and intellectual accomplishments of Robert Owen and William Maclure in the nineteenth century to the eco-spiritual vision of Jane Blaffer Owen in the twentieth century. Each chapter highlights a specific aspect of modern New Harmony: a biographical sketch of Jane and Kenneth Dale Owen, artistic patronage, and the timeline of historic preservation before diving into specific architectural case studies. These case studies include, Philip Johnson’s Roofless Church, Frederick Kiesler’s unrealized grotto, New Harmony’s gardens, and Richard Meier’s Athenaeum. This is ultimately an unexpected and well-argued work that is sure to become an important resource for scholars

of modern architecture, historic preservation, midwestern studies, and intentional communities.

Most importantly, the authors extend the timeline of New Harmony's utopian tradition arguing that like George Rapp and Robert Owen before her Jane Blaffer Owen was herself a utopian dreamer who used modern architecture and her own spiritual vision to establish New Harmony as a reborn utopia. In making this claim, the authors rightly contend that there were not two, but actually three iterations of utopian experimentation in New Harmony—making it not only a historic utopian community, but also a contemporary one. This book also does a standout job of resurrecting the figure of Jane Blaffer Owen and placing her alongside figures such as the Rockefellers, Henry Ford, and the du Ponts who reinterpreted American history through their own twentieth-century lenses. Like those pivotal figures, the authors show how Blaffer Owen not only preserved historic New Harmony, but also reimagined it, with the help of theologian Paul Tillich and modern architect Philip Johnson, into a contemporary spiritual meditative retreat nestled amidst art and nature. Moreover, the authors do great service to New Harmony by once again reminding readers that New Harmony is a foundational locale for some of the most cutting-edge and important modern architecture in the United States, boasting formative works by Philip Johnson and Richard Meier among many other artists and architects.

However, the authors might have paid more attention to the specific ideological visions, built environments, and historical trajectories of the two nineteenth-century utopian communities in New Harmony—especially as they relate to their visions of utopia and specific communal practices, which while related, are fundamentally different. Diving into how these two histories and principles influenced Blaffer Owen's landscapes would have added significantly more texture and further elucidated the connections between Blaffer Owen's work and that of Rapp and Owen/Maclure, which sometimes get muddled amidst the twentieth century vision for New Harmony. In this sense, the reader is left wondering how much of the communal aspect of historic New Harmony influenced Jane Blaffer Owen, especially in the Cold War era when expressing notions of communism found people on blacklists and the hippie communes of the 1960s flourished. Finally, it would have been interesting to hear the voices of the New Harmony residents who lived through this era. As battles over the future of New Harmony raged in upper society, what did ordinary people who lived in this site think of the ideas, structures, and outsiders that came into town?

Nevertheless, *Avant-Garde in the Cornfields* is a tremendous achievement that promises to be the crucial resource for chronicling New Harmony's long and important utopian evolution.

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Contributors

EMILY PRIFOGLÉ is an Assistant Professor of Law at the University of Michigan and holds a law degree from the University of California, Berkeley and a doctorate in history from Princeton University. Her current book project argues that the legal remaking of rural midwestern communities was a central feature of twentieth-century American law, culture, and politics.

JONATHAN D. NEU completed his PhD in history at Carnegie Mellon University in 2018. He now works in the publishing field in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He remains active in researching Union veterans' civic and reform activities around the turn of the twentieth century. Most recently, he has contributed a chapter entitled "A Building Very Useful: The Grand Army Memorial Hall in US Civic Life, 1880–1920" in *The War Went On: Reconsidering the Lives of Civil War Veterans* (2020).

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