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## In This Issue

RICHARD M. BREAUX describes the racial climate in the schools of Buxton, Iowa, in the early twentieth century. He argues that at a time when segregation and racial violence were on the rise across the country, the presence of African American teachers and integrated schools in Buxton were key factors in residents' memories of racial harmony in the town.

Richard M. Breaux is assistant professor in the Center for Applied Study of American Ethnicity and the Department of History at Colorado State University.

DAVID W. SCHWIEDER AND DOROTHY SCHWIEDER trace and analyze the political career of H. R. Gross, U.S. congressman from Iowa's Third District from 1948 to 1974. They conclude that his focus on government spending did not result in a major budgetary impact, but his legislative style improved the deliberative process and his close scrutiny of fiscal legislation provided a degree of accountability often lacking in the U.S. House of Representatives.

David Schwieder is assistant professor of political science at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. Dorothy Schwieder is University Professor Emeriti of history at Iowa State University.

## Front Cover

At a meeting of the Bull Elephant Club in 1974, former broadcasting colleague and then Governor of California Ronald Reagan presented Congressman H. R. Gross with a shirt bearing the logo "H.R. Gross 144." Every session, Gross introduced in Congress the eponymous H.R. 144 (cleverly named because House bills start with "H.R.," for "House Resolution," and a gross equals 12 dozen, or 144), a measure that proposed a general program of fiscal restraint. For more on Gross's political career, see the article by David and Dorothy Schwieder in this issue.

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# The Annals of Iowa

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# “We Were All Mixed Together”: Race, Schooling, and the Legacy of Black Teachers in Buxton, 1900–1920

RICHARD M. BREAUX

IN MAY 1985, Iowa State University professor Janice Beran interviewed former Buxton resident Dorothy Neal Collier about blacks’ and whites’ experiences in that long-disappeared coal-mining town. Collier was a child when the Consolidation Coal Company maintained the small town in south-central Iowa from 1900 to 1920. She had attended Fifth Street elementary school, one of the town’s three racially integrated grade schools. After the Neals, like an increasing number of black families, left Buxton in 1916 for Cedar Rapids and other parts of Iowa and the Midwest, Dorothy, her brother Harry, and other black children like them began to notice that their educational experiences in Buxton had differed greatly from those in other towns in Iowa. Racial tensions and racial discrimination in education and employment were more obvious in towns elsewhere, and black teachers were extremely rare.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Dorothy Collier, interview with Janice Beran, 6/19/1991, cited in Janice A. Beran, “Diamonds in Iowa: Blacks, Buxton, and Baseball,” *Journal of Negro History* 75 (1992), 93. Here I focus primarily on schooling rather than education generally; hence, important institutions such as the church, home, and YMCA are discussed briefly and only in relation to the school.

I am grateful to Marvin Bergman, V. P. Franklin, Robert F. Jefferson, Christine A. Ogren, Katrina M. Sanders-Cassell, and four anonymous viewers for helpful comments and suggestions. Research for the article was supported by a 2004–2005 State Historical Society of Iowa Research Grant.

THE ANNALS OF IOWA 65 (Fall 2006). © The State Historical Society of Iowa, 2006.

In interviews conducted in the 1980s, many former Buxton residents spoke of their lives and education in the context of their personal and collective experiences before, during, and after their time in Buxton. Always conscious of life for African Americans outside Buxton, both within and beyond Iowa's borders, African Americans from Buxton realized that although Buxton was not perfect in regards to race relations, it was indeed a utopia relative to places in other parts of the United States and places to which they later migrated. For example, former resident Charles Taylor remembered that his grandparents received the education in Buxton that they had been denied in Virginia. Taylor also pointed out that his grandparents had a difficult time adjusting to the racial climate in Buxton because in the South they did not believe that whites could be trusted.<sup>2</sup> Another former Buxton resident recalled, "Buxton was a good place to live. . . . They were good times. Then we moved to Des Moines and stepped back one hundred years."<sup>3</sup> Former residents' statements contrasting Buxton with places with more tense racial conditions were not limited to working conditions; Dorothy Collier remembered of her school days in Buxton, "We were all mixed together. I couldn't understand the prejudice when we moved to Cedar Rapids when I was nine."<sup>4</sup>

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2. Charles Taylor, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 7/8/1980; Dorothy Schwieder, Joseph Hraba, and Elmer Schwieder, *Buxton: Work and Racial Equality in a Coal Mining Community* (Ames, 1987). Schwieder, Hraba, and Schwieder offer some insights into education in Buxton, but they omit many of the details concerning education in Buxton from their monograph, although two-fifths of their interviewees at least mentioned schools and education. Those interviews and reports from the *Bystander*, Iowa's statewide African American newspaper, based in Des Moines, inform this article. All interviews, unless otherwise noted, refer to those conducted by Joseph Hraba or Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder. They are stored in audiotape and transcribed form in the Dorothy Schwieder Collection at the State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines. Interview page numbers refer to those designated when the transcribed interviews were catalogued.

3. Former resident quoted in David M. Gradwohl and Nancy M. Osborn, *Exploring Buried Buxton: Archaeology of an Abandoned Iowa Coal Mining Town with a Large Black Population* (Ames, 1990), 191.

4. Collier, interview. See also Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996), 5–6, 224; and Faustine Childress Jones, *A Traditional Model of Educational Excellence: Dunbar High School of Little Rock, Arkansas* (Washington, DC, 1981), 3.

At a time when Jim Crow reigned supreme in the North and the South, the residents of Buxton carved out a space for themselves where African Americans and European Americans worked side by side as laborers and professionals. In Buxton's schools, expressions of white supremacy and racial tension were relatively rare. Buxton was one of a few towns in Iowa that employed African American teachers in racially integrated schools before the 1940s, and it was possibly the only town to employ more than one African American teacher in its schools simultaneously.<sup>5</sup> Buxton's schools and black teachers left the imprint on the minds of Buxtonites that blacks and whites could learn, work, play, and live together with little fear of racial hostility.

INTEGRATED SCHOOLS and the practice of welfare capitalism fostered the idea of Buxton as a racial utopia from the town's inception. In 1900 the Chicago and North Western Railroad moved its Consolidation Coal Company (CCC) from the town of Muchakinock, Iowa, in Mahaska County to Buxton in Monroe County.<sup>6</sup> The town of Buxton was typical of many other coal-mining towns in that the CCC developed a paternalistic system of welfare capitalism.<sup>7</sup> The CCC owned most of the property in the unincorporated town. Without incorporation, residents did not elect town officials. Elected county officials supervised those affairs that the CCC did not. For the town's first seven years, white Buxtonites barred blacks from the

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For assessments of "good schools" among free blacks in the antebellum United States, see V. P. Franklin, *Black Self-Determination: A Cultural History of African-American Resistance*, 2nd ed. (Brooklyn, 1992), 4. Sarah Lawrence Lightfoot also applied the model of the "good schools" to black and non-black schools in *The Good High School: Portraits of Character and Culture* (New York, 1983).

5. In 1911 C. W. Lewis, an African American graduate of Upper Iowa University, taught in a white school in Fayette County.

6. Hubert L. Olin, *Coal Mining in Iowa* (Des Moines, 1965), 44-45; Ronald L. Lewis, *Black Coal Miners in America: Race, Class, and Community Conflict, 1780-1980* (Lexington, KY, 1987), 89.

7. Stuart D. Brandes, *American Welfare Capitalism, 1880-1940* (Chicago, 1976), 5-6, 14-19; Schwieder, Hrabá, and Schwieder, *Buxton*, 88-91; Joe William Trotter Jr., *Coal, Class, and Color: Blacks in Southern West Virginia, 1915-32* (Urbana, IL, 1990), 3, 65; David Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion in the Coal Fields: The Southern West Virginia Miners, 1880-1922* (Urbana, IL, 1981), 117-18.

town's ruling body, the Buxton Mining Colony.<sup>8</sup> In 1907 an observer from the *Southern Workman* described Buxton as a place ruled paternalistically, but where blacks hoped to uplift themselves through education and work.<sup>9</sup> Such paternalism within company towns was quite common.<sup>10</sup> In the spirit of welfare capitalism, three schools, two YMCAs, a company store, shops, and a host of other institutions were developed to keep workers or their families from being idle for too long. Residents also established their own institutions, including churches, Masonic orders, local affiliates of the Iowa State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, athletic teams, and musical organizations.<sup>11</sup> The world that black and white Buxtonites and the CCC created functioned to prevent the racial friction that could result from labor shortages, segregated schools, and limited recreational facilities.<sup>12</sup>

The opening of the Chicago and North Western Railroad's mines in Muchakinock (1881) and Buxton (1900) attracted many African Americans to south central Iowa. In Mahaska County, where Muchakinock was located, the number of African American residents quadrupled from 524 in 1880 to 2,138 in 1895. By 1905, approximately 600 more African Americans lived in Buxton than in all of Mahaska County a decade earlier; and at least 1,200 more African Americans lived in Monroe County than in Mahaska County at their respective peaks. Of Buxton's

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8. The Buxton Mining Colony was originally for white employees only. Buxton Mining Colony, *Constitution and By-Laws* (Buxton, 1906), 1, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. By 1908, the Mining Colony was open to black workers.

9. Richard R. Wright Jr., "The Economic Conditions of Negroes in the North," *Southern Workman* 37 (1908), 498; Gradwohl and Osborn, *Exploring Buried Buxton*, 22, 192.

10. Lewis, *Black Coal Miners*, xii-xiii; Trotter, *Coal, Class, and Color*, 15-17.

11. *Bystander*, 12/6/1907, 10/29/1909; *Des Moines Register and Leader*, 2/20/1910. The *Bystander* printed stories on Buxton almost on a weekly basis in a section called "Buxton, Iowa" or "Buxton Briefs."

12. The most complete account of life in Buxton is Schwieder, Hraba, and Schwieder, *Buxton*. They build on Olin, *Coal Mining in Iowa*; Stephen H. Rye, "Buxton: Black Metropolis of Iowa," *Annals of Iowa* 41 (1972), 939-57; Beverly Shiffer, "The Story of Buxton," *Annals of Iowa* 37 (1964), 339-47; and J. A. Swisher, "The Rise and Fall of Buxton," *Palimpsest* 26 (1945), 179-92.



*Bird's-eye view of Buxton, ca. 1919, looking north from the water tower.  
Photo from State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.*

total population of 5,000 in 1905, 2,700 were black.<sup>13</sup> The migration of African Americans to Buxton, like that to coal mines in West Virginia, “was neither rural to urban nor rural to rural, but rather rural to rural-industrial.”<sup>14</sup> African Americans who migrated to Buxton from states such as Virginia, Missouri, Alabama, and Tennessee often forged new class alliances that crossed racial lines and created an atmosphere based on racial cooperation and mutual respect.

Schools helped the children of African American migrants to Buxton make the transition from “peasants to proletariat.”<sup>15</sup> By

13. *Census of Iowa, 1925*, 718–21. Buxton’s racial composition changed considerably over the years. In 1905 there were 2,707 blacks and 2,215 whites; in 1915 there were 1,818 blacks and 2,700 whites. *Census of Iowa, 1905 and 1915, Manuscript Population Schedules for Bluff Creek Township, Monroe County*.

14. Joe William Trotter Jr., “Race, Class, and Industrial Change: Black Migration to Southern West Virginia, 1915–1932,” in Joe William Trotter Jr., ed., *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective: New Dimensions of Race, Class, and Gender* (Bloomington, IN, 1991), 46. See also Trotter, *Coal, Class, and Color*.

15. This phrase was taken from the title of a dissertation by Richard Walter Thomas, “From Peasant to Proletariat: The Formation and Organization of the Black Working Class in Detroit, 1915–1945” (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1976). See also Joe William Trotter Jr., “Introduction: Black Migration in

the time of their migration, federal troops had been withdrawn from the South, planters had regained control of southern governments, and African Americans had lost substantial control of their rights to labor negotiation and education. As James Anderson points out, blacks lost economic and political power after Reconstruction, and in turn they "lost substantial control of southern educational institutions especially in the public sector, and the shape of their education took a different turn."<sup>16</sup> Poor working conditions, the co-opting of southern education, the looming threat of white mob violence, and the purposeful diversion of financial resources away from black schools focused on classical training served as push factors in the trickle that later developed into a broad stream during the Great Migration of African Americans from the South to the North.<sup>17</sup> Besides, southern whites' use of education as an instrument of racial, economic, and political subordination contradicted the liberation, social advancement, and self-determination blacks had sought for themselves.<sup>18</sup> In the late nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century, small rural northern towns such as Buxton offered African American children educational opportunities equal to that of whites rather than schooling that perpetuated racial hierarchies, with poor whites one stratum above all blacks regardless of class or education.

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Historical Perspective: A Review of the Literature," in *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective*, 14.

16. James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1988), 3. For a general idea of the social and political climate in the South after Reconstruction, see C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1966), esp. 35-37, 44-45, 82-92.

17. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 152, 202-3, 260-61; Henry Allen Bullock, *A History of Negro Education in the South, from 1619 to the Present* (Cambridge, 1967), 208; Horace Mann Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama: A Study in Cotton and Steel* (New York, 1969), 234-37.

18. For more on blacks' desire for education during slavery and after emancipation, see Thomas L. Webber, *Deep Like the Rivers: Education in the Slave Quarter Community, 1831-1865* (New York, 1978); Janet Duitsman Cornelius, "When I Can Read My Title Clear": Literacy, Slavery, and Religion in the Antebellum South (Columbia, SC, 1991); Bullock, "Introduction" in *History of Negro Education in the South*; Franklin, *Black Self-Determination*, 29-67; Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 4-5; and Linda Perkins, "Black Women and the Philosophy of 'Race Uplift' Prior to Emancipation," in Filomina Chiema Steady, ed., *The Black Woman Cross-Culturally* (Cambridge, 1981), 317-34.

As news from the North spread along African American kinship networks, the promise of equal educational opportunities became one of the reasons families with children came to Buxton. Extended black kinship networks, which included children too young to work in the mines, also played an important role in the CCC's decision to provide schools.<sup>19</sup> Black men recruited to work for the company settled down and sent for their wives, sisters, mothers, and a host of other relatives to join them. Schools gave southern black parents incentive to migrate to communities where a formal education for their children might help break the cycle of sharecropping or the exploitation of child labor and convict leasing. The CCC might not have built permanent schools if such kinship networks, which included children, had not been in place.<sup>20</sup> Schools reduced cases of truancy, imparted the company's unwritten policy of interracial cooperation, and kept children busy and out of trouble.

The state's elimination of racial segregation in its schools in the 1860s and 1870s was one of several reasons blacks came to Iowa and Buxton. African Americans in Buxton, like others in the coal mines of southern West Virginia, "faced fewer incidents of mob violence, fewer debilitating forms of labor exploitation, and, since they retained the franchise, fewer constraints on their exercise of political power" than blacks outside Iowa.<sup>21</sup> The lives of African Americans in Buxton were different from those in southern coal mining communities in one major way—there was no state-mandated system of segregated education in Iowa.

By 1900, Iowa had long settled the debate over racially segregated schools, at least according to the letter of the law.<sup>22</sup> In

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19. For more on the development of kinship ties and the treatment of that subject in black migration historiography, see Joe William Trotter Jr., "Introduction," in *The Great Migration in Historical Perspective*, 13–15.

20. *Census of Iowa, 1925*, 718–21; James L. Hill, "Migration of Blacks to Iowa, 1820–1960," *Journal of Negro History* 66 (1981–82), 298–99.

21. Trotter, *Coal, Class, and Color*, 3.

22. The most comprehensive history of African American education in Iowa is Hal S. Chase, "'You Live What You Learn': The African American Presence in Iowa Education, 1839–2000," in Bill Silag et al., eds., *Outside In: African American History in Iowa, 1838–2000* (Des Moines, 2001), 135–63. The most complete study of northern black education is Davison M. Douglas, *Jim Crow Moves North: The Battle over Northern School Segregation, 1865–1954* (New York, 2005).

terms of state laws and taxation, African Americans initially moved from invisibility to partial recognition within a Jim Crow school system. The connection between Jim Crow and Iowa schools arose as an issue of African American population density. In towns where there were one or two African American families among a community of whites, schools were desegregated quietly; in towns where the African American population was substantially larger, however, whites barred blacks from local schools and blacks established their own educational institutions.<sup>23</sup> For example, African American parents established a school for black children in Dubuque in 1865. By 1867, African Americans in Keokuk and Muscatine operated grade schools for black children.<sup>24</sup> The debate over segregated schools came to a head in Muscatine and Keokuk when African Americans sought to enroll their children in grades beyond those offered at African American schools. In 1868 the Iowa Supreme Court struck down racial segregation in a 2 to 1 decision; however, white Iowans challenged the constitutionality of desegregation twice more in the nineteenth century before the courts settled the debate.<sup>25</sup> Some historians have celebrated these decisions as the end of school segregation in Iowa. Unfortunately, while black students could attend desegregated schools, whites

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23. Arnie Cooper, "A Stony Road: Black Education in Iowa, 1838-1860," *Annals of Iowa* 48 (1986), 126-29. Cooper develops his thesis from earlier work by Clarence Aurner, *History of Education in Iowa*, 5 vols. (Iowa City, 1914), 2:375. Aurner claims that there were three phases to the racial desegregation of schools: 1) total exclusion and exemption from property tax; 2) limited school privileges in separate schools; and 3) equal school privileges.

24. Aurner, *History of Education in Iowa*, 1:91; Marilyn Jackson, "Alexander Clark: A Rediscovered Black Leader," *The Iowan* 23 (Spring 1975), 45-46.

25. *Clark v. The Board of Directors, Etc.*, 24 IA 266 (June 1868). For other cases in which separate schools were ordered to desegregate after *Clark*, see *Smith v. The Directors of the Independent School District of Keokuk*, 40 IA 518 (June 1875); and *Dove v. The Independent School District of Keokuk et al.*, 41 IA 689 (December 1875). The *Original Minutes of the Independent School District of Mt. Pleasant from 1849 to 1876*, from the Charles Rogers Estate, Mt. Pleasant, SHSI, Iowa City, IA, state that blacks had operated a school for children in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, since 1863. Schools there were desegregated in 1868. Such decisions only protected the rights of students. Except in Des Moines, Ottumwa, Buxton, and Fayette, African American teachers could not teach white children in the state until the 1940s. For more on the Oralabor school, see Chase, "You Live What You Learn," in *Outside In*, 147.



in most Iowa towns barred African American teachers who had taught in all-black schools from teaching in desegregated schools.<sup>26</sup>

After legally sanctioned separate schools for African American children disappeared, race-based discriminatory residential patterns emerged in towns with relatively large African American populations. Des Moines, and later Waterloo, were the most obvious examples: most African Americans lived in the Center Street area of Des Moines and in Waterloo's East Side Triangle.<sup>27</sup> Because children attended schools closest to their homes, residential segregation meant segregated schools. Despite its reputation, Buxton had its own race-based residential segregation. Shortly after the CCC established Buxton, two all-white suburbs, East and West Swedetown, developed on the outskirts of Buxton proper. Buxton's two predominantly black schools were in Buxton proper, and its predominantly white school was in East Swedetown. The racial demographics of Buxton's schools reflected the demographics of the adjoining neighborhoods.

Despite a steady increase of European immigrants in Buxton over the years, and the growing divide between African Americans and European Americans in social activities, two of Buxton's three schools remained mostly African American and all three were racially integrated. The number of African Americans enrolled in the Swedetown School cannot be determined, but its racial composition would have reflected the racial population of East Swedetown. Swedetown School was predominantly European American, but as one former student remembered, "there were some colored that went over there, the ones that lived" within short walking distance from the school.<sup>28</sup> The composition of the two schools in Buxton proper appears to have been predominantly African American. A photograph of Minnie London's sixth grade class in 1907-08 shows 29 black

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26. Leola Bergmann, *The Negro in Iowa* (1948; reprint, Iowa City, 1969), 87.

27. Charline J. Barnes and Floyd Bumpers, *Iowa's Black Legacy* (Charleston, SC, 2000), 109; and Philip G. Hubbard, *My Iowa Journey: The Life Story of the University of Iowa's First African American Professor* (Iowa City, 1999), 25-26.

28. Jacob Brown, interview with Joseph Hraba, 11/18/1980, 321 (also quoted in Schwieder, Hraba, and Schwieder, *Buxton*, 179); Sister Maurine Sofranko, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 9/28/1980, 990.



*Minnie London's sixth-grade class in 1907, with 29 black students and 7 white students. Photo courtesy Kenneth R. Tow, Iowa Mines and Minerals Bureau.*

and 7 white students. Dorothy Neal Collier's class picture, taken about 1912, at the Fifth Street Elementary School shows 48 blacks and 20 whites.

Although all three schools were racially integrated, two former students remembered that some whites in West Swedetown walked clear through Buxton proper to attend the school in East Swedetown. Some whites, to be sure, were afraid of blacks and chose to walk past Fifth or Eleventh Street schools to East Swedetown.<sup>29</sup> At best, blacks and whites might have agreed that parents had the right to choose which school their child attended.

Furthermore, contrary to some informants' claims that the schools were completely integrated, several students and one teacher recalled that the Fifth and Eleventh Street schools employed all African American teachers and the Swedetown School employed all white teachers. Although African Ameri-

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29. Charles Lenger, interview with Joseph Hraba, 7/22/1981, 532; Alex Erickson, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 8/15/1980, 1048; Earl Smith, interview with Joseph Hraba, 7/13/1981, 1119-20; Wilma Stewart, interview with Joseph Hraba, 7/21/1981, 172.



*A class picture from Fifth Street Elementary School, about 1912, showing 48 black students and 20 white students. Photo courtesy Mary Jane Collier Graves.*

can teachers taught in racially integrated schools in Buxton, much of the evidence suggests that white teachers taught in the predominantly white school and black teachers taught in mostly black schools.<sup>30</sup> Reports of black and white teachers in the same school were probably more the case with Fifth Street and Eleventh Street schools and not Swedetown.

Teachers in Buxton generally seem to have received equal salaries regardless of race, but there seem to have been exceptions. On average, public school teachers in Buxton made about \$45 per month, ranging from a low of \$32.25 per month in 1908 to a high of \$70 per month in 1920.<sup>31</sup>

30. Lola Hart Reeves, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 6/21/1980, 1592. For student recollections of the racial composition of teachers, see Nellie King, interview with Joseph Hraba, 12/23/1980, 1060; Naomi Ambey, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 6/16/1981, 878; Earl Smith, interview, 1119. Helen Clay and Robert Wheels remembered having both white and black teachers. Helen Clay, interview with Joseph Hraba, 6/28/1981, 582; and Robert Wheels, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 6/8/1981, 390. This is confirmed in Dorothy Schwieder and Elmer Schwieder, "Sources for Social History: A Case Study of a Local Community," *Annals of Iowa* 49 (1988), 258.

31. *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1914), 246–47; Schwieder, Hraba, and Schwieder, *Buxton*, 129–30. Compare *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1906), 94–95; *ibid.* (1908), 286; *ibid.* (1910), 210–11; *ibid.* (1916), 164–65. On average, in 1914, white teachers in Buxton made \$37 more *annually* than black teachers. There was no similar equality in pay by gender. In all but one year, male teachers were paid between \$18 and \$80 more than female teachers.

BUXTON SCHOOLS were somewhat of a northern anomaly and an anomaly among schools in other coal mining communities with regard to their treatment of African Americans; however, Buxton's schools shared characteristics of both northern urban and southern rural schools.<sup>32</sup> Although most Iowa towns prohibited African American teachers from teaching in racially integrated schools, ample opportunities existed for African American women and men to teach in Buxton. African American teachers taught both white and black children and had little reason to protest racial injustice in the context of their immediate environment.

It is not clear whether people in Buxton favored completely racially segregated schools. The development of East and West Swedetown and the Swedetown School suggests a combination of prejudice and the desire to recreate an ethnic community among Buxton's newly arrived immigrant population.<sup>33</sup> Some African Americans in northern cities openly opposed school desegregation because they feared that black teachers, whom school officials barred from teaching white children, would lose their teaching jobs.<sup>34</sup> That is what happened even in Iowa,

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32. In the past decade, there has been increasing interest in the history of black education in northern urban areas and in black life, including black education in northern rural and semi-industrial communities. See, for example, Jack Dougherty, *More Than One Struggle: The Evolution of Black School Reform in Milwaukee* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2004); Dionne A. Danna, *Something Better for Our Children: Black Organizing in Chicago Public Schools, 1963–1971* (New York, 2003); Sundiata Keita Cha-Jua, *America's First Black Town: Brooklyn, Illinois, 1830–1915* (Urbana, IL, 2000); Stephen A. Vincent, *Southern Seed, Northern Soil: African-American Farm Communities in the Midwest, 1765–1900* (Bloomington, IN, 1999); Don Wallis, *All We Had Was Each Other: The Black Community of Madison, Indiana* (Bloomington, IN, 1998); and Kenneth Marvin Hamilton, *Black Towns and Profit: Promotion and Development in the Trans-Appalachian West, 1877–1915* (Urbana, IL, 1991).

33. The majority of Buxton residents were native-born. The foreign-born never accounted for more than 14 percent of the total population, although if second-generation immigrants are included, European immigrants accounted for nearly one-third of Buxton's population. The largest immigrant groups were Swedes (3 percent in 1905 and 1.9 percent in 1915) and Slovaks (2 percent in 1905 and 4.8 percent in 1915). See *Census of Iowa, 1905 and 1915*; and Schwieder, Hraba, and Schiweder, *Buxton*, 148–49, 162–68.

34. Judy Jolley Mohraz, *The Separate Problem: Case Studies of Black Education in the North, 1900–1930* (Westport, CT, 1979), 101–2, 105; Carleton Mabey, *Black Education in New York State: From Colonial to Modern Times* (Syracuse, NY, 1979),

where black teachers who had taught in all-black schools before 1875 could not find work in desegregated Iowa schools. Buxton's leaders, however, apparently recognized the value of African American teachers and administrators even in racially integrated schools. If they recognized it in principle, however, they did not always do so in practice. An editorial in the April 1905 *Buxton Eagle* pointed out that the CCC had "ruined the educational principle of the town by establishing and maintaining a separate white school and at the same time placing a white principal over the deserving and cultured colored teachers of the colored school."<sup>35</sup>

Racial bias could be compounded by class and gender bias. Swedetown School remained totally segregated and private for six years, and only men were appointed to the superintendent's position. Although four of Buxton's African American women teachers had college degrees, the CCC did not select any of them to be the town's school superintendent. As historian Linda Perkins notes, African American college women "may have outnumbered black men in the college population, but they were not in major decision making positions; black men controlled [predominantly] black institutions."<sup>36</sup>

M. J. Gilliam, a graduate of Cornell University, was Buxton's first superintendent. Gilliam, a white male, held the position from 1905 to 1907. Some residents believed that a college graduate should hold the position, especially because Buxton had a short-lived high school.<sup>37</sup> Although some sources contend that Gilliam left Buxton when the high school burned down, three former residents suggest that Gilliam was fired for mistreating one of the daughters of Buxton's most prominent black

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189-90, 208-27; David S. Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road: Hyde County, North Carolina and the Fate of Black Schools in the South* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1997), 7-8, 124-25.

35. Quoted in Schwieder, Hraba, and Schwieder, *Buxton*, 111, 232 nn. 43 and 44.

36. Jeanne Noble, "The Education of Black Women in the Twentieth Century," in *Women and Education in American History*, ed. John Mack Fargher and Florence Howe (New York, 1998), 90-91. See also Linda Perkins, "The Education of Black Women in the Nineteenth Century," *ibid.*, 79-80; Lucy D. Slowe, "Higher Education of Negro Women," *Journal of Negro Education* 2 (1933), 357.

37. *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1906), 286; *By-stander*, 11/24/1905, 4/13/1906.

resident, Hobe Armstrong. All three recalled that Gilliam had a policy of locking the doors to encourage students to get to school on time. On an occasion when Armstrong's biracial children were late for school, Gilliam refused to unlock the doors. To retaliate, Armstrong had Gilliam fired.<sup>38</sup> After Gilliam's departure, the CCC selected A. J. Hicks, a college-educated African American, for the position.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps the CCC's appointment served as an act of reconciliation or came in response to protests by black Buxtonites. If the CCC fired Gilliam at Armstrong's request, perhaps Armstrong's seniority and tenure meant more to white CCC officials than Gilliam's whiteness.<sup>40</sup>

In most years, the CCC and the county school board employed an equal number of black and white teachers in an effort to perpetuate the town's relative equality. Buxton schools employed approximately 10 to 12 teachers, at least 6 of them African American during any given year.<sup>41</sup> Minnie London had taught in the schools operated by the CCC since 1891. London not only taught in Muchakinock, Buxton, and Haydock; she also served as principal of one of Buxton's grade schools. In her

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38. Gertrude Stokes, Agnes Walker, and Nina Bragg, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 6/15/1981, 633.

39. The 1920 *United States Federal Census* lists A. J. Hicks as a resident of Bluff Creek Township, Monroe County, Iowa. He was 39 years old, born in Ohio, and is possibly the Ananias J. Hicks who was a student at Wilberforce University in Ohio in 1900. See 1920 *United States Federal Census*, Roll T625-503, 9A; 1900 *United States Federal Census*, Roll T623 1272, 1B; and Jeremy J. Brigham and Robert Wright Sr., "Civil Rights Organizations in Iowa," in *Outside In*, 326.

40. Sources do not reveal whether any of Buxton's African American women teachers sought the superintendency. With regard to tenure, Minnie London was possibly best suited for the position, but she did not have a college degree, as Gilliam and Hicks did. Contrary to the claim that Minnie London graduated from the University of Iowa, no university records, catalogs, registrar records, London's memoirs, or the Schwieder interview with her daughter Vaeletta London Fields suggest that London ever attended the University of Iowa. See both sides of the argument in Susan Fletcher, "Minnie London," *Goldfinch* 16 (Summer 1995), 8. See also Richard M. Breau, "'We Decided What We Wanted and Went About Getting It': A History of African American Women at the University of Iowa, 1907-1949" (paper presented at Midwest History of Education Society, Chicago, October 1999).

41. *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1904), 36; *ibid.* (1906), 286; *ibid.* (1908), 338; *ibid.* (1910), 211; *ibid.* (1912), 238-39; *ibid.* (1914), 302-3; *ibid.* (1916), 164-65; *ibid.* (1918), 308-9; *ibid.* (1920), 332-33; Schwieder, Hraba, and Schwieder, *Buxton*, 126-29.

memoirs, London remembered that some 13 African American teachers taught school in Buxton during the town's existence.<sup>42</sup> Some of them stayed in Buxton for a year or two and then found work in other states. Nell Leftridge moved on to take a job at Bishop College in Texas, and Nora Harris moved to New Jersey to teach.<sup>43</sup> Others, such as Minnie London, Grace Harris Potter, and Georgia Blackburn, worked for the CCC for more than five years. Whether teachers remained in Buxton for one or five years, the community provided a rare opportunity for Buxton's African American teachers to challenge the racial and class prejudices of its black and white students. Consequently, Buxton's school-age residents learned what it took for the races to have a relatively equal and interdependent relationship.

African American teachers in Buxton possessed the credentials and demonstrated the teaching skills to challenge white stereotypes concerning African American and women's intellectual inferiority to white men. Some African American teachers in Buxton had earned credentials that greatly exceeded the minimum state requirements. During much of Buxton's existence, all teachers in Iowa were required by law to have earned a teaching certificate by passing an examination administered by the State Board of Educational Examiners after graduating from high school and securing a strong teaching recommendation.<sup>44</sup>

Colleges and universities throughout the state also granted teaching certificates along with bachelor's degrees. Georgia Blackburn, a longtime teacher who later became principal of Buxton School #1, had graduated in 1902 from Penn College in Oskaloosa, Iowa. A college administrator described Blackburn as "a student of fair ability" who "since graduation has been teaching and has met excellent success."<sup>45</sup> Ina Lafayette also

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42. London, "As I Remember," 3. Those teachers included Eliza Bates, Beatrice Terrell, Georgia Blackburn, Grace Harris Potter, Nora Harris, and Lola Hart Reeves.

43. *Bystander*, 11/23/1917; Bessie Lewis, interview with Joseph Hraba, 1/17/1981, 916, 940.

44. Herbert Cook, *The Administrative Functions of the Department of Public Instruction in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1929), 59.

45. Unknown administrator quoted in W. E. B. Du Bois, "The College-Bred Negro American," *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Conference for the Study of Negro Problems* (Atlanta, 1910), 30. Du Bois mentions Blackburn as being one of

served as a teacher and principal in Buxton School #1 in 1910 after graduating that year from Penn College.<sup>46</sup> Eliza Bates, another African American teacher, graduated from Oskaloosa High School and Western College in Macon, Missouri.<sup>47</sup> Nell Leftridge graduated from the University of Kansas before coming to Buxton to teach; and Nora Harris and Grace Harris Potter graduated from Iowa Wesleyan College in 1906 and 1912 respectively.<sup>48</sup> Murda Beason, also a teacher in Buxton, was one of two African American women to graduate from Iowa State Teachers College in 1916.<sup>49</sup> Other Buxton teachers, such as Beatrice Terrell, had only completed high school in other Iowa towns.<sup>50</sup> Still, these teachers' credentials not only demonstrate that Buxton students probably received an education equal to that of other students in Iowa; they also showed residents of Buxton at the time that African American women and men possessed the intellectual ability to compete with European Americans, thus cementing the idea of racial equality in the town.

African American teachers in Buxton sought out opportunities to develop their teaching and administrative skills. They attended teaching methods workshops and classes in various towns throughout the state. On several occasions, teachers such as Minnie London, Georgia Blackburn, and Mayme Findley attended mandatory refresher normal courses and renewed their

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the alumnae teaching in Buxton although not by name. *Ibid.*, 31. Blackburn was principal and teacher in Buxton School #1 from 1911 to 1917. For more on Blackburn's college years, see Penn College *Aurora* yearbook (1902), 51-52, 176, William Penn College Archives, Oskaloosa, Iowa. *Who's Who Among Pennites* (Oskaloosa, 1927), 18, lists Georgia Blackburn as a teacher in Chicago.

46. *Bystander*, 11/4/1910, 3/8/1912; Penn College *Aurora* yearbook (1910), 6; *Penn College Bulletin* (1909-10), 50, William Penn College Archives. Lafayette taught in Buxton for one year. *Who's Who Among Pennites* (Oskaloosa, 1927), 31, lists Ina Lafayette as a resident of Saskatchewan, Canada.

47. *Bystander*, 1/5/1906.

48. *Bystander*, 6/16/1911; C. J. Kennedy and Lilian Kendig Rogers, *History and Alumni Record of Iowa Wesleyan College, 1842-1942* (Iowa City, 1942), 165, 173.

49. "Our Graduates," *Crisis*, July 1916, 123. Murda Beason attended Iowa State Teachers College with Vivian Smith, but graduated five months earlier. Smith appears in cap and gown on the cover of the Summer 1995 *Goldfinch*.

50. *Bystander*, 11/17/1905. Terrell was from a middle-class African American family. Two of her sisters worked at the Monroe Mercantile Company store.



certificates in nearby Albia.<sup>51</sup> Buxton's African American teachers had attended the county-directed normal training course since 1906, although the Iowa General Assembly did not mandate that county normal institutes operate under the direction of the state superintendent until 1911.<sup>52</sup> Teachers such as Gertrude Lucas attended summer courses at Drake University to keep up on current approaches to teaching.<sup>53</sup> African American educators living inside and outside the state with family connections to Iowa met to establish their own workshops and professional networks.<sup>54</sup>

Several of Buxton's African American teachers, including Minnie London, Eliza Bates, Georgia Blackburn, and Mayme Findley, were active members of the Iowa State Teachers Association.<sup>55</sup> In his work on rural Iowa schools, David Reynolds argues that the name Iowa State Teachers Association was a misnomer because the organization "was controlled by school administrators, principally the 'college men' in the state's colleges and universities and the superintendents of schools in the state's cities and larger towns."<sup>56</sup> That centralization of control, however, may have enabled Buxton's black teachers to become members of the association. If power had been in the hands of a more localized or grassroots leadership, black teachers might have been barred from the association. Despite teachers' general

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51. *Bystander*, 4/13/1906, 3/29/1912, 11/27/1914. During 1914, all six African American teachers who taught in Buxton attended the two-day session in Albia.

52. *Laws of Iowa* (1911), chap. 131; Cook, *Administrative Functions of the DPI*, 55; *Bystander*, 4/13/1906. For more on the development and control of normal schools and the teacher certification process in Iowa, see Cook, *Administrative Functions of the DPI*, 55–66 and 68–70.

53. *Bystander*, 6/21/1912, 6/28/1912.

54. *Bystander*, 9/4/1914.

55. *Bystander*, 11/4/1911; *Proceedings of the Fifty-sixth Annual Session of the Iowa State Teachers Association* (1910), 127, 139, 152, 164. Black Buxton teachers C. W. Rodgers and Murda Beason also attended the 1910 ISTA meeting. Only Minnie London appears to have renewed her membership the following year. *Proceedings of the Fifty-seventh Annual Session of the Iowa State Teachers Association* (1911), 190. As early as 1905, M. J. Gilliam (white) was a member of the ISTA. *Proceedings of the Fifty-first Annual Session of the Iowa State Teachers Association* (1905), 227.

56. David R. Reynolds, *There Goes the Neighborhood: Rural School Consolidation at the Grass Roots in Early Twentieth-Century Iowa* (Iowa City, 1999), 63.

lack of power and control in the association, Buxton teachers probably used its conferences to establish pipelines through which they could send their most promising students on to high schools throughout the state.

Of particular interest to London and her cohorts at the 1911 Iowa State Teachers Association meeting was the speech given by Booker T. Washington, who despite his most famous pronouncements, found that Buxton's schools were social institutions where blacks and whites could work toward "mutual progress."<sup>57</sup> Principal of Tuskegee Institute and the most influential African American educator in the first 15 years of the twentieth century, Washington was often consulted on matters concerning African American work, political participation, and education in the North and South. Just as he had in his previous talks in Iowa, Washington suggested that African Americans could benefit more from the southern economy than from the northern one.<sup>58</sup> In fact, in several public speeches, Washington urged northern whites to discourage African American migration to the North.

Washington chose this particular occasion to deviate slightly from his more widely known mantra, acknowledging that "in certain industries, as in mining, it is possible for the Negro to succeed in a state like Iowa," an obvious reference to Buxton. Washington had, in fact, visited the CCC town of Muchakinock in 1899 and had been impressed by the town's social and economic efficiency.<sup>59</sup> But, he continued, "in a larger sense, the colored people are best adapted to agricultural life, and the average southern state furnishes them with a greater opportunity

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57. Booker T. Washington, "Education and Its Influence on Solutions of the Race Problem," in *Proceedings of the Fifty-seventh Annual Session of the Iowa State Teachers Association* (1911), 7; *Bystander*, 11/10/1911.

58. *Bystander*, 2/24/1911. The next month Washington spoke at the North West State Teachers Association Conference in Sioux City (March 10); at Iowa State College in Ames (March 11); and at the Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls (March 14). Washington had recruited George Washington Carver from Iowa State College and Frank J. Armstrong from Cornell College.

59. Booker T. Washington to Charles A. Kent, 10/22/1898; Booker T. Washington to Charles A. Kent, 10/27/1898; Booker T. Washington to Charles A. Kent, 2/21/1899, all in William Penn College Library Archives; *Bystander*, 2/3/1899, 2/10/1899; Schwieder, Hraba, and Schwieder, *Buxton*, 31.

than Iowa as land is one-quarter as cheap in the South."<sup>60</sup> Although he clearly did not advocate a mass African American migration, Washington conceded that African Americans found better opportunities in Buxton than in the northeastern states.<sup>61</sup> Perhaps Buxton teachers attending the 1911 conference took Washington's point about mining towns as an affirmation of their efforts to provide Buxton children with one of the best educational opportunities for African Americans in the state.

OVERLOOKED PORTIONS of the interviews conducted in the 1980s with former Buxton residents offer information on the organization of Buxton's schools and the day-to-day activities that took place within them. Classes met eight months out of the year for approximately six hours each day. Students walked to school. Occasionally, deep snow prevented students from walking to school and classes were cancelled. One spring a tornado swept through the outskirts of town and schools were dismissed. Teachers divided their classes by grades. Each teacher taught two grades; there was no kindergarten. According to Gertrude Stokes, who attended Fifth Street School through the eighth grade, children in grades 1–4 attended classes downstairs while children in grades 5–8 were upstairs. Sources do not reveal how often grade reports or report cards were issued; however, Herman Brooks recalled that students received "Ps" for poor or "Fs" for fair.<sup>62</sup>

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60. Washington, quoted in *Des Moines Register and Leader*, 11/12/1911. Washington's wife visited Buxton and Des Moines in 1914 as a guest of the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs. *Bystander*, 11/27/1914 and 12/11/1914.

61. Washington, quoted in *Des Moines Register and Leader*, 11/12/1911. Washington had worked in West Virginia coal mines before he enrolled at Hampton Institute. See Booker T. Washington, "The Story of My Life and Work" and "Up from Slavery," reprinted in Louis Harlan and John Blassingame, ed., *The Booker T. Washington Papers* (Urbana, IL, 1972), 1:17, 233, 236; Louis R. Harlan, *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader, 1856–1901* (New York, 1972), 48. Washington was influential among educators in black towns, according to Hamilton, *Black Towns and Profit*, 56–57, 126–27, 145.

62. Herman Brooks, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 7/30/1981, 475; Minnie B. London, "As I Remember," (1940), 2, copy of typescript, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City; Mike Onder, interview with Joseph Hraba, 6/23/1981, 860; Adolph Larson, interview with Joseph Hraba, 7/23/1981, 971; Gertrude Stokes, interview, 628; Harvey Lewis, interview with Joseph Hraba, 12/29/1980, 1293.

During recess and lunch, black and white students regularly ate and played together, in sex-segregated rather than racially segregated groups. Lara Wardelin, Hucey Hart, and Charles Lenger all remembered that black and white children played together at school, and on occasion outside school. They did segregate by gender, however. On the schoolyard, boys played baseball and marbles, while girls played hopscotch and jump rope.<sup>63</sup> It is unclear whether sex segregation was imposed by regulation or by choice. Inside the classroom and in most other school activities, however, even this division seems to have disappeared.

Unlike in the South and portions of the North, the racial makeup of Buxton's staff and student body played little or no role in the county's or CCC's allotment of resources to Buxton's schools. All of the schools in Buxton likely had equal resources and similar structure. Schools took the name of the street or the part of the town in which they were located. All were four-room, two-story structures with two rooms upstairs and two rooms downstairs. There was no auditorium or central meeting room. Large events, such as assemblies, were held in the YMCA because the schools had no room large enough to hold all students at once.

Buxton's schools were crowded.<sup>64</sup> Several accounts in the *Bystander* noted that the classrooms in Buxton were filled to capacity "especially at the lower grades." Alex and Agnes Erickson, who attended school in Swedetown, remembered that there were about 50 students per class. In 1917 Dr. F. F. Walker visited Buxton and suggested the development of a parent-teacher association because the schools were "overcrowded"

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63. Lara Wardelin, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 7/8/1981, 345; Hucey Hart, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 11/1/1980, 270; Charles Lenger, interview, 539–40. See also Douglas, *Jim Crow Moves North*, 145.

64. According to the state superintendent's biennial reports, an average of 625 total students attended school in Buxton, about 225 students per school. Averaged from the *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1904), 36; *ibid.* (1906), 286; *ibid.* (1908), 338; *ibid.* (1910), 211; *ibid.* (1912), 238–39; *ibid.* (1914), 302–3; *ibid.* (1916), 164–65; *ibid.* (1918), 308–9; *ibid.* (1920), 332–33. Only the 1911–12 school report gives a school-by-school breakdown. The schools where Georgia Blackburn, Minnie London, and Verena Drohan were principals enrolled 223, 243, and 210 students respectively. *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1912), 238–39.

and needed more teachers. A report by a joint committee of the United Mine Workers, the Iowa Coal Operators Association, and personnel chosen by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, published in the *United Mine Workers Journal*, echoed Walker's concerns. The report declared that schools in Buxton and other Iowa mining towns "were overcrowded and badly in need of additional teachers, more classrooms, and better textbooks." Similar reports led to legislation that increased state support to camp schools and helped to relieve the burden of unequal tax revenues.<sup>65</sup>

Despite their overcrowded classrooms, black and white teachers served as important points of contact for parents to remain informed about their students' progress and development. This shaped parents' perception that black and white teachers cared equally about their students. Several former students remembered that teachers constantly kept parents abreast of what was going on in the classroom. Jacob Brown, who attended Eleventh Street School, remembered that "if you didn't learn, your teacher went to your parents and from there on in you would learn something, because if you did not learn, the teacher had a right to see that you did." Marjorie Brown's parents would scold her if she couldn't tell them what she had learned in school. On the other hand, Elmer Buford and Harold Reasby recalled that their parents did not seem very interested in "the happenings" of school, although the teachers kept parents notified of their children's progress.<sup>66</sup> Lola Reeves, an African American teacher, remembered that some children brought

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65. *Bystander*, 9/22/1911, 9/14/1917; Agnes and Alex Erickson, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 8/15/1980, 787. State expenditures for camp schools rose from \$50,000 in July 1919 to \$100,000 in 1921. An additional \$10,000 was added for an emergency fund in 1927. *Laws of Iowa* (1919), chap. 373; *ibid.* (1921), chap. 295; *ibid.* (1925), chaps. 218, 233; *ibid.* (1927), chaps. 275, 259; Cook, *Administrative Functions of the DPI*, 65–66; *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1920), 66; *ibid.* (1924), 5; Dorothy Schwieder, *Black Diamonds: Life and Work in Iowa's Coal Mining Communities, 1895–1925* (Ames, 1983), 146–47; and Schwieder, Hraba, and Schwieder, *Buxton*, 81.

66. Jacob Brown, interview, 320; Marjorie Brown, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 8/19 and 8/20/1980, 53 and 57 (also quoted in Schwieder, Hraba, and Schwieder, *Buxton*, 144); Elmer Buford, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 6/30/1980, 1191; Harold Reasby, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 8/19/1980, 741.

punishments upon themselves, and “parents would come to the school because the student did not tell the entire story.”<sup>67</sup> The depth of parents’ concerns about their children’s education varied from home to home; however, the value that teachers placed on doing their job is clear. Teachers believed that parents, regardless of race, should be informed about their students’ intellectual growth.

Students who did not complete their work or stepped out of line with a teacher were often punished or received beatings. Such discipline was apparently handed out equally, although black teachers seem to have physically punished only black students and white teachers physically reprimanded only white students. Earl Smith, a white student who attended the Eleventh Street and East Swedetown schools, remembered:

When we went to class we stayed in our own seats[.] See it was just the two classes, half of us there seventh and the other half eighth. Everybody took a book and you read a whole paragraph. And then the one in back of you would read a paragraph and just went that way clear through the school. Then you shut your book and buddy you’d better be paying attention to what everybody read. If he [Mr. Baker] asked you a question and you didn’t know it, he’d flog some of them big old kids.<sup>68</sup>

Teachers in Buxton challenged their students to master the broad range of subjects necessary for pupils to move to the next grade. Charles Lenger remembered that Georgia Blackburn “was an excellent teacher that I recall and we had different programs we had to do and we were taught things as our grade.”<sup>69</sup> Another former student, Elmer Buford, who attended Fifth Street School, recalled,

Buddy, you learnt there you’d better believe it. Here [in Des Moines] they pass you on just to get you out of one grade into another. Down there [in Buxton] they didn’t do that. You stayed there until the seat got too small for you to sit in. And you could believe it.

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67. Lola Reeves, interview, 1601.

68. Earl Smith, interview, 1139.

69. Charles Lenger, interview with Joseph Hraba, 7/22/1981, 538. Students said the same thing about Grace Harris Potter. See Jeanette Adams, interview with Joseph Hraba, 6/21/1980, 37.

Mrs. London, Miss Dimitri, Miss Golds, Miss Baxter. Buddy let me tell you, you stayed there until you learned! They didn't pass you just because you got too big for the seat. They set you on the bench, and you still stayed in the same class. But when you come out of there, you knowed your [stuff]. If you was in fifth grade, you knowed everything that you could learn in the fifth grade.<sup>70</sup>

Only a few sources reveal the specific content of the curriculum in Buxton's schools. Former students and teachers who mentioned the curriculum usually talked about learning math, spelling, reading, and writing. Charles Taylor, who attended Fifth Street School, remembered, "The biggest thing that they taught [were] reading, writing, and arithmetic and a lot of history, geography, a lot of religion that's about [all]." Earl Smith remembered that, in addition to the three Rs, students learned "hygiene, civil government, history, [and] geography." And on one occasion, Minnie London used a traumatic event to teach science and nature. After a tornado stormed through the outskirts of town, London wrote, "we went out for a lesson in nature study."<sup>71</sup> In general, the curriculum was apparently similar to that taught in other Iowa common schools.

Neither the racial demographics of Buxton's students nor the presence of black teachers influenced the formal curriculum enough to include African American history or literature.<sup>72</sup> Even if teachers did not integrate African American history into the curriculum, Charles Taylor noted that his grandparents

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70. Elmer Buford, interview, 1190–91.

71. Charles Taylor, interview; Earl Smith, interview, 1140; and Minnie London, "As I Remember," 2. See also Lola Hart Reeves, interview, 1601.

72. Earl Smith, interview, 1140. Teachers in Buxton might have used the *Bystander* and other black newspapers as teaching tools. In the Educational Meeting of the Iowa Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, members discussed the educational value of newspapers and periodicals. *Bystander*, 5/19/1911. Buxton members might have passed that on to local teachers. For more on the use of black newspapers and speakers, see Mabee, *Black Education in New York State*, 152–53; and Vincent P. Franklin, *The Education of Black Philadelphia: The Social and Educational History of a Minority Community, 1900–1950* (Philadelphia, 1979), 97–98. In racially segregated schools in southern West Virginia's coal fields, African American teachers were free to teach whatever they wished as long as they avoided any discussion of labor policies or practices. Teachers in West Virginia took advantage of that opportunity to teach African American history and literature. Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion*, 72.

taught him and his siblings about African American history. Taylor stressed that his grandparents, who had been slaves, told them about their and others' experiences during slavery.<sup>73</sup>

Manual training and vocational education also appear to have been absent from the curriculum. On occasion, representatives from Tuskegee Institute and Piney Woods Country Life School in Mississippi visited to recruit students, and individual townspeople offered manual training classes through the YMCA.<sup>74</sup> But children learned much of what they came to know about work from parents, relatives, and employers. For example, middle- and working-class girls of both races learned to cook, clean, and care for children from female family members. And miners often took their sons, nephews, and other younger relatives to the mines when they turned 14 to learn the ins and outs of coal mining. Several Buxton residents recalled assisting their fathers in the mines until they were old enough to work with little supervision. Working-class male children were more likely to leave school by age 14 to work in the mines. If families needed to supplement their income, both girls and boys left school to work in town.<sup>75</sup>

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73. Charles Taylor, interview. Black Buxtonites were not the only people to educate their young people about a past that reflected the unique experiences of their racial or ethnic group: older white Buxtonites imparted similar knowledge to their children. Among Buxton's Swedish population, teachers held summer school where instruction was in Swedish only. Some Swedish students referred to school during the regular school year as English school. Adolph Larson, interview with Joseph Hraba, 7/23/1981, 970–71; Agnes and Alex Erickson, interview, 764. Larson remembers Swedish school being mostly catechism. According to the Eriksons, interview, 787, the Swedetown School was founded as a private school. For more on Americanization and parent resistance to assimilationist pedagogy in immigrant education, see David B. Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of Urban Education* (Cambridge, 1974), 229–54.

74. *Bystander*, 2/2/1906, 12/17/1909, 4/8/1910, 7/29/1910, 6/30/1911. The larger of the two YMCAs in Buxton served African Americans predominantly. Almost every Buxton report in the *Bystander* took note of the educational activities held there. For more on the impact of the YMCA on African American education, see Jesse Moorland, "The Young Men's Christian Association among Negroes," *Journal of Negro History* 9 (1924), 354–62; and Franklin, *Education of Black Philadelphia*. Moorland visited Buxton's YMCA in October 1912. *Bystander*, 10/11/1912.

75. Schwieder, Hraba, and Schwieder, *Buxton*, 67, 121–23, 132–35, 141–42.



On the other hand, school subjects such as English and math prepared girls and boys to work as sales clerks, stock workers, and small business owners. The CCC's board members also thought that the presence of educated miners reduced the number of accidents in the mines. Some students learned trades through YMCA classes in millinery, furniture building and repair, and carpentry. Other students, such as Edward Carter and William Brown Jr., who became members of Buxton's emerging black middle class, worked in the mines or at the Monroe Mercantile Company during the summers to pay for advanced education outside Buxton. Some African Americans, such as W. H. and A. E. London, took advantage of the savings plan initiated by the CCC superintendent and saved enough money and acquired enough property to leave the mines and start businesses. The presence of black middle-class youngsters in the mines, however, was rare. Black working-class Buxtonites were much more likely to work in the mines.<sup>76</sup>

Boys from working-class families rarely stayed in school beyond age 14. In the early twentieth century, many parents saw little utility in educating their sons beyond the primary levels. Boys often went to work to supplement the family income. Girls who attended the upper grades and secondary school added to the family income by obtaining a teaching license.<sup>77</sup> Harold Reasby remembered that parents were generally more interested in their children becoming old enough to work than in furthering their education. In his home, family members only discussed the value of education in relation to work and the immediate needs of the household. When the children became a certain age, work was more important than school.<sup>78</sup> Parents' attitudes concerning the relationship between school and work possibly account for the low number of students who completed the eighth grade.

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76. Edward A. Carter, MD, to Prof. Paul S. Pierce [sic], 12/7/1909, Edward A. Carter Papers, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines; Ben C. Buxton, letter reprinted in *Bystander*, 5/4/1906.

77. David Tyack and Elisabeth Hansot, *Learning Together: A History of Coeducation in American Public Schools* (New Haven, CT, 1990), 135–38.

78. Harold Reasby, interview, 741. Adolph Larson quit school to go to work for the company store. Larson, interview, 972.

Buxton's well-educated black teachers helped students meet state eighth-grade graduation requirements. To graduate, Buxton students, like all other students in Iowa, were required to pass the state eighth-grade examination, which was administered at least once a year. Students could retake the exam if they failed. In 1914 Buxton's teachers administered tests in February, May, and August. After students completed the exam, teachers sealed and mailed the tests to Des Moines to be scored. Those who passed were determined eligible for high school. According to the *Bystander*, Minnie London's entire eighth-grade class passed the state examination in 1911. In 1914, 38 students took the exam, and 18 students graduated with eighth-grade diplomas. On average, approximately 9 students per year graduated from Buxton's eighth grade. In the reports that enumerated graduates by sex, a total of 61 girls and 23 boys completed the eighth grade between 1912 and 1918.<sup>79</sup>

All of Buxton's schools combined their respective graduations into one ceremony, thereby affirming the spirit of interracial and community harmony. Although no more than 18 students graduated in any year, the schools had to reserve the auditorium in the Buxton YMCA because no room in the schools was large enough. Commencements included speakers, concerts, and a host of other events.<sup>80</sup> In her memoirs, Minnie London recorded the typical end-of-the-school-year activities: "The closing exercises of the school, which marked the graduation of eighth grade pupils was always looked upon with great anticipation, and at such times the County Superintendent was usually present. To the YMCA we went and the plays, pageants and drills were always greeted with cheers and enthusiasm."<sup>81</sup>

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79. Copies of lists of students who passed the eighth-grade examination, in "School Records File," Filing Cabinet, Microfilm Room, Albia Public Library, Albia, Iowa (these might be the lost school records mentioned in Walter and Mildred Gardner, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 6/4/1981, 602); *Bystander*, 4/14/1911, 5/19/1911; *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1904), 36; *ibid.* (1906), 286; *ibid.* (1908), 338; *ibid.* (1910), 211; *ibid.* (1912), 238-39; *ibid.* (1914), 302-3; *ibid.* (1916), 164-65; *ibid.* (1918), 308-9; *ibid.* (1920), 332-33.

80. Vaeletta London, interview with Dorothy and Elmer Schwieder, 437; *Bystander*, 5/10/1912.

81. London, "As I Remember," 2; *Bystander*, 5/25/1917.

Several accounts in the *Bystander* noted that a “large and appreciative audience” witnessed the eighth-grade commencement exercises.<sup>82</sup> Teachers, parents, and students from the town’s predominantly white school and two predominantly black schools worked together to make these occasions pleasant for the children and their families.

Black teachers helped black Buxtonites determine whether high school or college was within reach for black children. Some working- and middle-class black Buxtonites sent their children to other Iowa towns to attend high school, and some sent their children on to college. The CCC completed a high school in Buxton in 1906; other coal-mining towns in Iowa, and coal towns in other states, tended not to have high schools.<sup>83</sup> In the only year that Buxton High School was open, 36 students enrolled. By 1907, the high school in Buxton had burned down, and CCC board members never constructed another school.<sup>84</sup>

In 1911 the Iowa General Assembly passed a free-tuition law that required all towns with no high school to pay their students’ tuition to attend any school in the state. The extent to which Buxton’s black families took advantage of that law remains unclear. Long before the passage of the free-tuition law, black and white middle-class Buxtonites had developed a tradition of sending their children to other Iowa towns for high school. For example, Edward Carter’s parents, who lived in Muchakinock and later in Buxton, sent him to high school in Oskaloosa, Iowa, and later to the University of Iowa, where he received a B.A. and an M.D. (1900–1907). He subsequently worked as the CCC’s only African American doctor. Eva Bates graduated from Oskaloosa High School in 1903, and Vaeletta and Hubert London attended high school in Des Moines and Oskaloosa, respectively. Vaeletta London remembered that while attending high school, she lived with her aunt and later with a woman recommended to her family by the principal of the high school. Vaeletta and Hubert London went on to graduate from the

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82. *Bystander*, 5/19/1911, 5/10/1912, 5/25/1917; Jacob Brown, interview, 320.

83. Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion*, 72, notes that “high schools were conspicuously absent from the coal fields” in West Virginia.

84. *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (1906), 286; Reynolds, *There Goes the Neighborhood*, 72–73.

University of Iowa. The Carter and London families had been with the CCC since the late 1880s and early 1890s; their longevity with the company provided them with the resources to build a strong family kinship network and a firm economic foundation for future generations. Both families used those resources to educate their children through the college level.<sup>85</sup>

INTERRACIAL SCHOOLS and African American teachers proved to be crucial forces in shaping blacks' and whites' fond memories of Buxton. Both black and white former residents remember that schools were essential to maintaining the town's "racial harmony." The very presence of African American teachers challenged mainstream stereotypes about blacks' and women's intellectual inferiority, and stretched the commonly conscribed boundaries of race and gender through their involvement with formal educational organizations and institutions. Despite the continuous expansion of Jim Crow throughout the country and the rise of violence against blacks in the years immediately following World War I, Buxton remained a place where manifestations of racism and discrimination were minor relative to places such as Des Moines, which would not see a black teacher until 1946, and Waterloo, where officials barred African Americans from teaching until 1952.<sup>86</sup>

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85. Edward A. Carter, M.D., to Prof. Paul S. Pierce [sic], 12/7/1909, Edward A. Carter Papers, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines; Schwieder, Hraha, and Schwieder, *Buxton*, 143–45; Vaeletta London, interview, 423. Cleo Cary and Percy Smith attended Albia High School. *Bystander*, 1/19/1912. Like Vaeletta and Hubert London, Ruth Southall and Mary Perkins attended the University of Iowa. London and Southall's college roommate, Helen Lucas, had family in Buxton as well. *Bystander*, 6/21/1912, 6/28/1912, 1/9/1914. William A. Brown Jr., Lucy Rhodes, Orvel Carter, Louis Garland, and Earl Watson attended Western College in Missouri. *Bystander*, 12/30/1910, 5/26/1911, 5/31/1912. Frank Perkins attended Fisk University, and his brother George attended Lincoln University in Missouri. *Bystander*, 12/30/1910, 6/28/1912. See also Schwieder, Hraha, and Schwieder, *Buxton*, 145.

86. Bergmann, *Negro in Iowa*, 87–88.

# The Power of Prickliness: Iowa's H. R. Gross in the U.S. House of Representatives

DAVID W. SCHWIEDER AND DOROTHY SCHWIEDER

IN 1948 Iowans from the Third Congressional District elected Republican Harold Royce Gross, better known as H. R., to the U.S. House of Representatives. They would reelect him for 12 more terms until his retirement following the elections of 1974. A lifelong maverick, Gross's philosophy centered on an austere fiscal conservatism, and he advanced his views with a determined legislative style. He worked hard in Congress, and he devoted great effort and long hours to his quest to restrain federal spending. Gross was also a bit of a curmudgeon. He had a keen wit and an often sarcastic sense of humor, and he used both to advance his personal legislative agenda. Ultimately, these characteristics and qualities combined to yield a distinctive House career and a national reputation as the "Watchdog of the Treasury."

Gross's style and views dated from his boyhood on a farm in southern Iowa, an experience that left him with a strong sympathy for farmers. His subsequent career choices reflected his perspective: he worked as an editor for the *Iowa Union Farmer*,

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THE ANNALS OF IOWA 65 (Fall 2006). © The State Historical Society of Iowa, 2006.

and later as a popular radio broadcaster in the state. A sense that government was failing to serve farmers led him to challenge the sitting Republican governor, George Wilson, in the 1940 Republican primary. Although Gross lost, eight years later he successfully challenged incumbent Third District Republican congressman John W. Gwynne to win election to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Gross's philosophy and style seem to have resonated with a broad swath of the public, and he proved to be a highly effective vote getter. He was far from being a polished politician, but he cultivated his core constituency with a weekly newsletter that delivered his conservative message in a blunt, direct manner, and he provided a variety of services to residents of the Third District. Moreover, he maintained an unswerving advocacy for the district's farm population.

Gross's maverick ways strongly shaped his career in Washington. He was known for his tart tongue and for his willingness to buck House leaders, fellow Republicans, and presidents in his efforts to advance his views. Moreover, his colorful persona made him a popular figure with the press, and he attracted substantial media attention. He was able to leverage his visibility and nonconformity into substantial influence in the House, particularly in the area of spending. Would-be spenders kept Gross in mind, and some spending bills were quietly modified, slashed, or even dropped for fear of attracting the diminutive Iowan's withering scorn (and the press attention that might then follow). There is little evidence that Gross significantly reduced spending in major budget categories, but he often did manage to cut unpopular expenditures such as foreign aid, congressional junkets, and pay raises. More broadly, he made several significant contributions to the chamber. His active legislative style facilitated improved deliberation on many bills, and his untiring scrutiny of fiscal legislation provided a degree of accountability often missing in a body as fragmented as the U.S. House of Representatives.

HAROLD ROYCE GROSS was born on a farm near Arispe in southwest Iowa in June 1899. He attended the local public schools and worked on the family farm. At 16, he dropped out of school and falsified his age in order to join the First Iowa

Field Artillery. In 1916 he served in the Mexican border campaign. A year later, when the United States entered World War I, he served with the American Expeditionary Forces in France. Following his military discharge, he attended Iowa State College for a brief time, and then found his first true calling when he spent two years studying journalism at the University of Missouri–Columbia. After graduating, he worked for newspapers in Iowa, Texas, Florida, and South Dakota. For a time, he was also employed by the United Press News Service in various parts of the country. In 1929 he married Hazel Webster from the northeastern Iowa town of Cresco.<sup>1</sup>

That same year, Gross's journalism career took a different turn when he went to work for the *Iowa Union Farmer*. He edited the publication and wrote a column titled "Mustard Seed, Thistles, and Quack Grass," which one scholar later noted "could be informative, humorous and vitriolic all at the same time." Gross soon became a close associate of Milo Reno, the president of the Iowa Farmers Union. Often described as a firebrand, Reno was a well-known figure in Iowa politics. Like Gross, he had been born

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1. H. R. and Hazel would have two sons, Philip and Alan. The Harold Royce Gross Papers at the Herbert Hoover President Library, West Branch, Iowa (hereafter cited as Gross Papers), contain a wide variety of archival information on all stages of Gross's life. Published sources on his life are, however, extremely limited. There is no Gross biography. Two theses constitute the bulk of research on his political career. The most informative is James Leon Butler, "A Study of H. R. Gross and How He Gets Elected to Congress" (M.A. thesis, State University of Iowa, 1956). A second thesis covers Gross's speeches on agriculture: Bonita Jean Dostal, "The Speaking of H. R. Gross in the House of Representatives from January 3, 1949 to August 30, 1964 on the Area of Agriculture: Analysis of Arguments, Evidence, and Style" (M.A. thesis, University of Northern Iowa, 1966). In 1968 Donald Feuerhale wrote on Gross's career for his senior thesis at Luther College, "The Impact of One Man in Congress." Most recently, Matthew T. Schaefer contributed a short article, "Harold Royce Gross (1899–1987) and the Curmudgeonly Side of Midwestern Politics," to *The American Midwest: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*, ed. Richard Sisson, Christian Zacher, and Andrew Cayton (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2007). In addition, myriad magazine articles have been written on Gross's political career, including articles in *Time*, *Washington Monthly*, *Nation's Business*, *Nation's Publisher*, *Redbook*, and *National Publisher*. Weekly newspapers in Iowa's Third District provided sporadic coverage of Gross's career. The *Des Moines Register* carried occasional feature stories on Gross but typically only reported on his re-election bids. Gross's hometown paper, the *Waterloo Courier*, provided more thorough but still limited coverage. The most informative source for Gross's political views is his weekly newsletter to constituents: "On the Capitol Firing Line."

and raised in southern Iowa, an area known for its thin soil and often hilly terrain, which rendered the region less productive than other parts of the state. Gross would later remember his upbringing: "Our family grubbed it out . . . in the hills and hollows of southern Iowa. . . . We fought pretty hard in the clay hills of Union County." He added that "one of his first recollections [was] of his father pouring dozens of eggs into a swill barrel for the hogs because eggs weren't worth taking to town to sell."<sup>2</sup>

Their shared farm background no doubt helped shape both men's views on agricultural policy. Reno was closely identified with the Iowa Farm Holiday movement, which had responded to the crisis of the Great Depression by agitating for higher farm prices and farm debt relief. Both men believed that the federal government needed to assist the nation's farmers with what they called a "cost of production program." Gross's views about agriculture, evident so early in his career, would persist throughout his life. He believed that farmers were mistreated, often forgotten, and denied adequate compensation for their labors. His solution, discussed frequently in the weekly newsletter that he would later write when serving in Congress, was to provide farmers with the cost of production plus a reasonable profit. Along with shaping his political thinking, Gross's time at the farm paper also helped develop his reputation as a "populist advocate for farmers."<sup>3</sup>

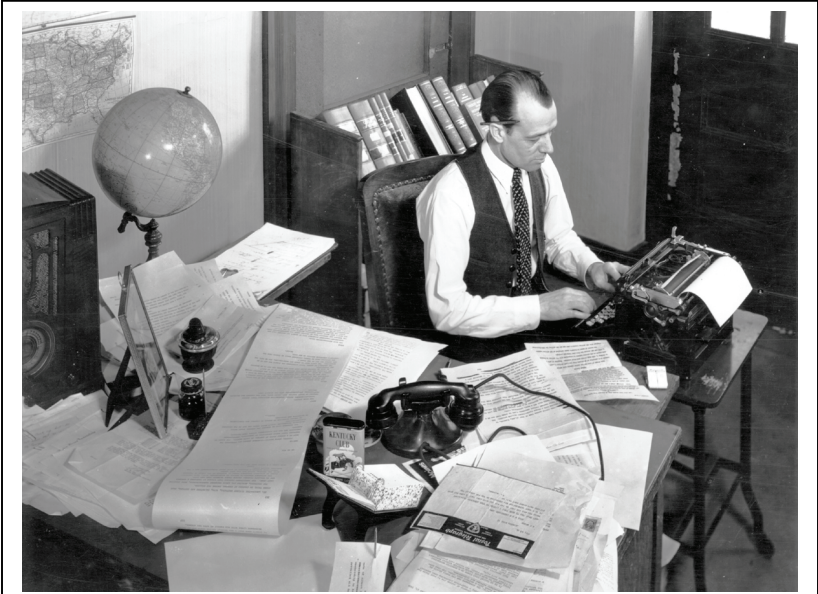
In 1935, with Iowa and the rest of the country mired firmly in the Great Depression, Gross switched media and went to work for WHO radio in Des Moines. WHO officials had noticed him when he came to the station to read a message for the Farmers Union. They were so impressed with his voice and delivery that they offered him a job as a newscaster. Gross later observed that WHO hired him despite his employment by "the 'radical' Farmers Union." His chief responsibility was to read

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2. *Des Moines Register*, 11/4/1974; Robert A. McCown, "B. H. Shearer, Country Editor," *Books at Iowa*, April 1975, 22.

3. "Biographical Sketch, Representative H. R. Gross," Personal, 1930-1979, box 82, Gross Papers; H. R. Gross, interview with Dwight Miller, 1979, transcript, WHO (Des Moines), 1935-1938, box 82, Gross Papers; Butler, "Study of H. R. Gross," 18. The Farmers Union was the first organization to urge adoption of a farm program featuring cost of production plus a reasonable profit for agriculture.





*H. R. Gross in his WHO office in 1936. All of the photos are from the H. R. Gross Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, Iowa.*

the news several times per day. While at WHO, Gross worked alongside a young sportscaster named Ronald Reagan. Jack Shelley, a longtime WHO newscaster during that period, remembered that Reagan and Gross were “great pals” who spent considerable time together.<sup>4</sup>

Then, as now, WHO was a powerful “clear channel” station, and its signal reached virtually all of Iowa as well as most of the western half of the United States. Judging from the fan mail Gross received from listeners around the country, he was a popular radio personality. In the dozens of letters still in existence—sent from states as diverse as Wyoming, Montana, Arizona, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Wisconsin—listeners complimented Gross on his excellent reporting skills and

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4. Gross, interview; Jack Shelley, interview with Dorothy Schwieder, Des Moines, 9/29/2006. Jack Shelley remembered that Gross hired him to work at WHO in 1935, and that often they were the only two people in the newsroom. He recalled Gross as a “demanding but fair boss.” Jack Shelley, interview with Dorothy Schwieder, Ames, 5/30/2006.

seemed to regard him as an old friend. A Lafayette, Louisiana, listener wrote: "I think you can rattle off more news in a minute than all other announcers can in fifteen."<sup>5</sup>

Gross was particularly well known in Iowa. In his memoirs, William Barlow Quarton III, a pioneer in Iowa's radio industry and a principal in creating WMT radio in Cedar Rapids, wrote that WHO was the most powerful radio station in "this part of the country" in the 1930s. He added that their "two radio personalities— . . . Dutch Reagan, who did sports, and H. R. Gross, who did the news at noon . . . were the voice of Iowa radio and it was hard to break through that powerful signal."<sup>6</sup>

In 1940 Gross took another career turn and decided to try his hand at politics. He resigned his WHO position in order to challenge the incumbent Republican governor, George Wilson, in the Republican gubernatorial primary. Gross's move was motivated, in large part, by his dissatisfaction with Republican agricultural policy. He viewed Wilson as a disappointment because the governor had failed to develop strong aid programs for the state's farmers. Gross had also criticized President Herbert Hoover for similar failings, snidely referring to him as "Dr. Hoover" and "the Great Engineer" and lambasting him for not helping farmers. Leaving few stones unturned, he had also berated the state Republican Party organization. Not surprisingly, party leaders opposed Gross's candidacy. Not only did they believe that Wilson had earned a second term, they also took a dim view of Gross. Beyond his criticisms of the party and its officials, his tenure at the Farmers Union had left the suspicion that he held radical views not representative of Iowa Republicanism.<sup>7</sup> Whatever the exact basis of the disagreement, Gross's 1940 campaign was an early harbinger of one of the core characteristics

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5. A May 1940 survey showed that WHO was heard regularly by 79 percent of Iowa radio listeners; on Iowa farms, the percentage was 85 percent. See Butler, "Study of H. R. Gross," 19.

6. William Barlow Quarton III, *Lucky Man: Memories of a Life in Communications* (West Branch, Iowa, 2005), 64.

7. Butler, "Study of H. R. Gross," 4, 5, 31, 35, 36; Vernon Louviere, "The House is Losing its 'Conscience,'" *Nation's Business*, June 1974, 26, in Press Relations, 1949–1974, box 93, Gross Papers; Bert Mills, "The Remarkable Mr. Gross of Iowa," *National Publisher*, July 1961, 30, in Press Relations, 1949–1974, box 92, Gross Papers.



*This portrait of H. R. Gross appeared in the Des Moines Register in 1940, at the time the paper reported that Gross had filed to run for the Republican nomination for governor.*

he would later show in Congress: a fierce independence and a contrary—even conflictual—relationship with his own party.

During his time at the *Iowa Union Farmer*, Gross had also offended other influential constituencies. He had written that “certain editors in the state suffered from ‘a chronic case of running off [at] the mouth’ and that some newspapers were published by ‘ever[-]yapping editors.’” A month before the 1940 primary election, the *Cedar Rapids Gazette* returned the favor. The paper ran a long editorial lauding the Wilson administration and claiming that Wilson had eliminated “graft, corruption and intolerable waste” in state government spending: “Hold your hat while reading that by the end of this fiscal year . . . about \$2,600,000 will have been slashed from the reckless an-

nual expenditures of preceding administrations." The editorial also raked Gross, noting that almost a decade earlier, in 1931, he had encouraged the "ill-advised" Cedar County Cow War. (Fearing that their herds would be liquidated if found to be infected with bovine tuberculosis, hard-pressed local farmers had fought disease testing by state veterinarians. That defiant action had focused much negative publicity on Iowa.) The editorial also pointed out that two years later, in 1933, Gross had "publicly endorsed the action of the irresponsibles who dragged Judge C. C. Bradley from his bench" in Le Mars and threatened to lynch him. (The judge had angered local farmers by refusing to halt the process of issuing farm foreclosure notices). The editorial also accused Gross of refusing "to come out into the open," apparently a reference to the fact that Gross campaigned entirely through radio ads, and added that the campaign against Wilson was "of a mysterious and insidiously deceptive nature." The editorial seemingly echoed the views of some Republican officials when it rhetorically cast Gross out of the party, concluding that he was "not a Republican then, is not now. He was and remains an unanchored radical."<sup>8</sup>

Wilson prevailed in a "bitterly fought campaign," winning 49.6 percent of the vote to Gross's 43.6 percent. (A third candidate, Irving Knudsen, received 6.6 percent of the vote.) Gross made a respectable showing for an insurgent, especially given his resource constraints. In a later interview, he said that he didn't campaign across the state because he didn't have the money to do so. Jack Shelley thought that Gross's reliance on radio ads had hurt his campaign. While Gross did well in central Iowa, he fared relatively poorly in eastern and western Iowa, where WHO's signal was not as strong. Following his defeat, Gross returned to broadcasting, taking a news commentator job at WLW radio in Cincinnati. Four years later, in 1944, he returned to Iowa to take a similar position at KXEL radio in Waterloo, thus positioning himself for another try at elected office in Iowa.<sup>9</sup>

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8. Correspondence, 1930-1940, Farmers Holiday Assoc./Iowa Farmers Union, Personal, 1930-1979, box 82, Gross Papers; *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 5/24/1940; Butler, "Study of H. R. Gross," 31.

9. Butler, "Study of H. R. Gross," 38, 42; Gross, interview, 19; Shelley, interview, 5/30/2006.

In 1948 H.R. Gross returned to the electoral arena. Again, he challenged a Republican incumbent, Third District Congressman John W. Gwynne, and again he bucked Republican Party leaders in doing so. One of eight Iowa congressional districts at the time, the Third District was located in north central Iowa and contained 14 counties: Black Hawk, Bremer, Butler, Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Floyd, Franklin, Grundy, Hardin, Howard, Marshall, Mitchell, Tama, and Worth. Four counties—Black Hawk, Cerro Gordo, Marshall, and Floyd—included industrial areas with a considerable labor vote. The district contained two cities, Waterloo (pop. 65,198) and Mason City (pop. 27,980), with Waterloo being the major manufacturing center. Two of the city's largest firms were Rath Packing Company, a multi-line meatpacking company, and John Deere, the tractor manufacturer. The city also served as an important railroad center for the Illinois Central. Mason City contained a cement company as well as a meatpacking firm and numerous smaller companies. Smaller cities and towns in the district served as retail trade centers for their surrounding rural populations.<sup>10</sup>

Incumbent Gwynne enjoyed several advantages. He was the dean of the Iowa congressional delegation, having served seven terms. Furthermore, times were good; in 1948 Iowa was still enjoying the strong agricultural economy that had been generated during World War II. Iowa farm families had produced record-breaking harvests between 1941 and 1945, each year producing larger crop yields and more livestock than the year before. For these and other reasons, Gwynne was widely regarded as "invincible."<sup>11</sup>

At the same time, Gross's own support was seen as somewhat suspect; shortly before the primary, the *Des Moines Register* referred to Gross as "an enigma in politics. Nobody ever

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10. Louviere, "The House is Losing," 26. The Third District was redrawn in 1961 when Iowa's eight districts were reduced to seven and District Three was enlarged from 14 counties to 16. Four additional counties—Winnebago, Hancock, Wright, and Hamilton—were added, while Marshall and Tama counties were moved out of the district. *Iowa Official Register, 1961-62; A Report of the Seventeenth Decennial Census of the United States, Census of Population: 1950, Number of Inhabitants* (Washington, DC, 1952), 1-15-8.

11. Dorothy Schwieder, *75 Years of Service: Cooperative Extension in Iowa* (Ames, 1993), 101, 127; Butler, "Study of H. R. Gross," 45.

knows where he'll get votes." Apparently, the *Register* meant that it was difficult to pigeonhole Gross on issues. Although he was running in the Republican primary, some state Republican officials had again branded him as a "radical leftist." For his own part, Gross believed that he enjoyed several important advantages. In an interview with the *Register*, he explained that his voice "was still familiar to radio listeners in the area" and that his name was widely known among district voters.<sup>12</sup>

Gross's voice may indeed have been familiar to Third District voters, but such familiarity did not always translate into political support. Area newspapers ran editorials reflecting a favorable view of Gwynne and a dislike for Gross. In a short but clearly anti-Gross editorial, the *Reinbeck Courier* predicted that Representative Gwynne "would still be in the race when it was over." The editorial added that voters had rejected Gross in his 1940 gubernatorial primary campaign; "now Gross is asking for another dose of the same medicine." The editor of the *Grundy Register* noted that "Iowa voters were warmed [by Gross's voice over the airwaves] but they were left with a chill when he tried to speak to them from a platform." Such sentiments extended even beyond the Third District. The *Manchester Press*, a newspaper in northeastern Iowa, also opposed Gross's candidacy, stating that Gwynne was "one of the ablest and most popular members of the Iowa delegation," and "a man of [much] prestige and influence."<sup>13</sup>

Although Gwynne enjoyed general popularity in the district, Gross benefited from the labor situation there. The Third District had a significant labor presence; in Waterloo, the C.I.O. was organized at both the Rath Packing Company and the John Deere plant, and each firm had about 6,000 employees. The A.F. of L. was also organized in the area. Two recent events had strained the unions' relationship with Representative Gwynne. The previous year, 1947, Gwynne had supported the Labor-Management Relations Act, more commonly known as the Taft-Hartley Act, which had challenged a number of labor union prerogatives.

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12. *Des Moines Register*, 6/4/1948; Robert E. Bauman, "H. R. Gross: The Taxpayers' Favorite Mr. 'No,'" *Human Events*, 7/22/1969, 9, in Press Relations, 1949-1974, box 93, Gross Papers.

13. Reprinted in the *Waterloo Courier*, 11/4/1948.

Then, during a subsequent labor strike at Rath, rioting and the death of a picketer had prompted Republican governor Robert D. Blue to dispatch the National Guard to the Waterloo plant on May 20, 1948, only days before the primary. According to the *Register*, both of these actions angered organized labor, making it determined to defeat Gwynne. Gross believed that any candidate opposing Gwynne would win the labor vote, and he also counted on the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation and the League of Women Voters to secure a high turnout, believing that would be to his benefit.<sup>14</sup>

Gross prevailed by a surprising 56 to 44 percent margin in the party primary. As expected, he benefited from "an angry labor vote" against Gwynne, and he was also assisted by a wave that produced a number of upsets. Along with seven-term congressman Gwynne, voters ousted the incumbent Republican governor, Robert D. Blue, and two incumbent Republican state legislators (one the Republican House floor leader) from Black Hawk County.<sup>15</sup> The day after the election, a *Waterloo Courier* editorial stated that voters were in a mood for change, and that they were not willing to wait for the fall election. The editorial also noted that the "revolt against office-holders was particularly strong in the Third district and Black Hawk county." In the same edition, a *Courier* article noted that "Black Hawk county's Republican 'old guard' was still reeling Tuesday from the effects of a political explosion" in the primary. Given these sentiments among the Republican rank and file, it seems that 1948 was a good year for Gross to challenge a Republican Party insider. Gross was magnanimous in victory. "This is not a personal victory," he said. "It is a victory for you citizens of every walk of life in Iowa's Third congressional district."<sup>16</sup>

In the November general election, Gross defeated the Democratic candidate, Parkersburg publisher Dan J. Ryan, by a vote of 80,030 to 58,076 (58 percent to 42 percent). As with the pri-

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14. *Des Moines Register*, 6/4/1948; Butler, "Study of H. R. Gross," 46; Personal, 1930-1979, and General, 1955-1975, box 82, Gross Papers; *Des Moines Register*, 11/5/1961; Sgt. 1st Class Carolyn Tenney, "History of the Iowa National Guard," [www.iowanationalguard.com/Museum/IA\\_History/State\\_Service.htm](http://www.iowanationalguard.com/Museum/IA_History/State_Service.htm).

15. *Waterloo Courier*, 6/8/1948.

16. *Ibid.*

mary, the fall campaign and election took a few unusual twists and turns. In what the *Courier* would call a race with "many odd features," local C.I.O. members gave substantial support to Gross, while some GOP leaders supported Democrat Ryan during the campaign. The state Republican Party's antipathy toward Gross, evident earlier in his 1940 challenge to the Republican governor, had continued as many Iowa Republican leaders still saw Gross as "an outsider." Similar sentiments existed among the party's rank and file. An October story in the *Courier* explained, "Some of the district's Republicans have said they are going to vote for Ryan. . . . This is on the theory that it would be easier to defeat Ryan than Gross two years hence." Additional opposition came from out of state. Perhaps pursuing a similar logic, the conservative *Chicago Tribune* endorsed Ryan, sounding the by now familiar warning that Gross harbored "leftist tendencies."<sup>17</sup>

AS A CONGRESSMAN FROM IOWA, Gross was entering an electoral environment that was highly favorable for a Republican. As historian Leland Sage has pointed out, with the easing of the Depression in 1938, politics returned to "normal" in Iowa, which meant the return of Republican Party dominance and "its traditional control of state and local governments at every level." From 1938 to 1946, Republicans controlled the statehouse and all congressional offices except for one Senate seat held by Democrat Guy M. Gillette, elected in 1938. Harry Truman did carry the state in 1948, but by 1950 all U.S. congressmen and senators from Iowa were Republicans.<sup>18</sup>

With five consecutive successful campaigns, by 1958 H. R. Gross was a proven vote getter for the Iowa Republican Party. Two years earlier, he had received the third-highest winning margin, 59 percent, among the eight victorious Iowa congressional candidates. That did not mean that Gross had won the favor of the Republican Party. He was a consistent critic of the Eisenhower administration, and that proved jarring to state party officials. Gross was particularly critical of Eisenhower's

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17. *Waterloo Courier*, 11/3/1948, 10/17/1948; Bauman, "H. R. Gross," 9.

18. Leland Sage, *A History of Iowa* (Ames, 1974), 318.





*The Iowa congressional delegation (with Gross on the left) posed with Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson on the day President Eisenhower delivered his farm message to Congress. Gross was not pleased.*

farm program, and of the president himself for retaining Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson in the face of Republican congressional criticism. When Eisenhower responded that “those who head the various executive departments, once having been appointed, are no longer the concern of Congress,” Gross accused the president of “treading dangerously close to autocratic rule.”<sup>19</sup>

Against this backdrop, state Republican officials must have found Gross’s electoral success rather confounding; indeed, one source described these officials as both “aghast and amazed” at Gross’s vote-getting skills. Perhaps reflecting that sentiment, Gross was the only Iowa congressman to face primary opposi-

19. *Des Moines Register*, 5/14/1958; weekly newsletter, “On the Capitol Firing Line,” final versions (hereafter referred to as NL), numbers 181, 196, 419, 422, 428, box 97, Gross Papers. Boxes 97–107 of the Gross Papers contain a complete set of newsletters. Gross’s closest call came in the Democratic landslide of 1964, when he won re-election by only 419 votes. However, that victory actually showed his relative electoral strength, since he was the only Republican congressman from Iowa returned to Washington that year.

tion in 1958. His opponent was Enid Robinson of rural Hampton. Robinson, a graduate of St. Olaf College, had been a teacher before her marriage to a Hampton area farmer, William L. Robinson Jr., who came from a politically prominent family; his uncle, T. J. B. Robinson, had previously served in Congress. Enid Robinson was a well-known Republican Party figure in her own right; she had served six years as the party's Third District vice-chair and four years as state vice-president. She was also active in 4-H and women's club work.<sup>20</sup>

Robinson apparently saw Gross as politically vulnerable on several fronts, and she argued that he had failed to successfully represent two key constituencies in the district: farmers and industrial workers. In what the *Des Moines Register* labeled as a "key speech," Robinson said, "I believe that the farmers of the third district are too smart to be ignored, too important to be handicapped by negative representation in Congress. I have a good idea of what our congressman is against—but I'm in the dark as to what he favors." Robinson's appeal to farmers was probably bolstered by the state of the agricultural economy in Iowa; while the postwar farm economy had been strong when Gross was first elected in 1948, demand for farm products and farm income had begun to drop by 1953, and what was described as "the farm problem" had begun to emerge in the form of agricultural surpluses, lower farm prices, lower farm incomes, and higher farm costs.<sup>21</sup>

Robinson's decision to oppose Gross was probably also influenced by the congressman's strained relationship with labor. Although Gross had managed to maintain the confidence of farmers—and would continue to do so throughout his congressional career—his honeymoon with unions had lasted for only a short time, and he faced considerable labor opposition as early as the election of 1950. In 1956 the president of the United Auto Workers of America local in Waterloo wrote, "Mr. Gross was an improvement over John Gwynne," Gross's predecessor, "but that isn't saying much on his behalf." It seems that any initial ambiguity in Gross's labor views had dissipated to reveal a more

20. Butler, "Study of H. R. Gross," 51; *Des Moines Register*, 5/14/1958, 5/28/1958.

21. *Des Moines Register*, 5/14/1958, 4; Schwieder, *Cooperative Extension*, 134.

traditional Republicanism in that area; evidently, his populist leanings extended only to agriculture. For her part, Robinson courted unions by declaring, "The labor man is the important part of any economy. Legislation that protects the interests of the working man is desirable."<sup>22</sup>

A Robinson campaign ad that asked "Why be 'Gross-ly' Confused?" listed six reasons to support Robinson: sound labor and farm programs, the encouragement of world peace and world trade, the claim that she was a "full time Republican," and the need for a positive approach in representing the Third District. Although Gross stressed his experience and included laudatory comments from two fellow members of the House in his advertising, Robinson also ran on the claim that Gross was unpopular with other members of the House and was, therefore, an undesirable representative. Those themes reflected long-standing party antagonisms. Party loyalists saw Gross as disruptive and disloyal—most obviously in the claim that he was not a "full time" Republican—but also in the suggestion that he was at odds with other Republicans in the House. Moreover, Robinson's promise to provide a positive approach clearly, if implicitly, painted Gross as being negative in his own approach and style.<sup>23</sup>

Yet another interesting subtext in the race involved the nature of the national Republican Party in the 1950s. A traditionalist Republican faction, mostly centered in the Midwest, favored a smaller federal government and abhorred much New Deal legislation. The other wing of the party, chiefly located in the East, supported a somewhat larger, more activist state. The two camps were particularly divided over the degree of internationalism that was desirable in postwar foreign policy. In most respects, Gross's views placed him at least in the general vicinity of the traditionalist camp, while Robinson's advocacy of world peace and world trade suggested that she was following the eastern faction's more progressive lead. This national party division played itself out in Iowa's Third District Republican race.<sup>24</sup>

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22. Letter from Gene Condon, U.A.W. Local 838, C.I.O., 5/16/1956, quoted in Butler, "Study of H. R. Gross," 75; *Des Moines Register*, 5/14/1958.

23. *Waterloo Courier*, 6/1/1958; *Kansas City Star*, 7/12/1958.

24. James T. Patterson, *Mr. Republican: A Biography of Robert A. Taft* (1972), chaps. 17–19.

Although the consensus among state Republicans held that Robinson had run a good race, Gross defeated Robinson in the June primary by garnering 52 percent of the vote.<sup>25</sup> The 1958 primary turned out to be something of a watershed in the relationship between Gross and the Iowa Republican Party. Gross faced little if any primary opposition after 1958. Apparently, the state party, if it did not exactly embrace Gross's maverick ways, at least learned to accept them. The seeming rapprochement was probably further facilitated by the election of 1960, when Eisenhower left office and John F. Kennedy inaugurated an eight-year span of Democratic control of the presidency. Gross would continue to criticize presidents, but for the foreseeable future his attacks would no longer represent a divisive force among Republicans.<sup>26</sup>

BY 1958, Gross's maverick image, long familiar to Republican regulars, had also become well established throughout Iowa, supplementing the recognition that had come from his earlier farm advocacy work. Moreover, the congressman was also developing a national reputation. In an article profiling Gross that ran in the *Kansas City Star* in July 1958, a month after his primary victory, a reporter wrote that the Iowan had no intention of "treading the primrose path to influence among his colleagues." The reporter portrayed Gross as a "lone wolf" who opposed what he viewed as improper spending bills, regardless of how his actions might infuriate his colleagues.<sup>27</sup> Other publications repeatedly echoed much the same sentiments, commenting on Gross's independence, his obvious disregard for colleagues' opinions, and his seeming immunity to criticism and ridicule.<sup>28</sup> Once in Congress, Gross had earned the image of a hard-working, straight-talking, independent, and frugal lawmaker, and that portrait would prevail throughout the rest of his career. His emphasis on fiscal prudence, while valuable in its own right,

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25. *Des Moines Register*, 6/3/1958.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Kansas City Star*, 7/12/1958.

28. See, for example, *Des Moines Register*, 11/5/1961; and Jacques Leslie, "H. R. Gross: The Conscience of Uncle Sucker," *Washington Monthly*, August 1971.

also served to effectively distance him from association with the sorts of radical measures that he had supported in the 1930s.

At the same time, Gross's early congressional career offered a clear view of another fundamental facet of his style: his habitual pessimism about America. After two years in the House, Gross sat for a radio interview with NBC News in Washington, D.C. Gross was asked: "What in your opinion is the outlook for the people of the world in general and the United States in particular in the weeks and months to come?" He reeled off a litany of problems facing the United States, including high unemployment, a decline in national income, and a drop in farm income. He believed that the country had tried to solve every problem at home and abroad with money; that approach had put the United States in a "rat race" that he believed could only end in "an economic crackup or World War III." Gross's concern for agriculture was clearly evident, as over one-third of his radio comments related to the recent drop in agricultural prices and the difficulties facing Iowa farmers; he also touted the "cost of production farm bill," which he had introduced into Congress two months before. That radio interview featured not a single positive comment about current or future conditions in the country. Gross ended the interview the same way he would later end many of his constituent newsletters, with a story: "To sum up and try to answer your question, the outlook for the world in general and for our country in particular is very much like the man who fell from the window of a 25 story building. When he passed the 10th floor he was heard to say, 'I'm all right — so far!'" Such persistent pessimism was evident to others; a magazine feature article would later describe Gross as "preaching impending Apocalypse like a backwoods circuit rider."<sup>29</sup>

CLEARLY, Gross was good at winning elections, even though he seemed to lack some characteristics commonly associated with political success. Why did he do so well? Most broadly, he was aided by several general factors. He had gained broad recognition in his radio broadcasting days, and Iowa was heavily

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29. Leslie, "Uncle Sucker," 36; "Coffee in Washington," NBC Radio Program, 5/6/1950, Speeches, 1949–74, box 95, Gross Papers.



*Congressman Gross congratulates Donald E. Johnson of West Branch, Iowa, on his appointment as administrator of the Veterans Administration, the largest independent agency in the federal government. Johnson was a prominent Iowa farm supply executive, World War II Army combat veteran, and national commander of the American Legion. Standing between Gross and Johnson is Iowa Senator Jack R. Miller, with Iowa Representatives Fred Schwengel and William J. Scherle to Johnson's left.*

Republican during the crucial early years of his congressional career. Once in office, Gross also benefited from his incumbency; House re-election rates ranged around 85 to 90 percent during his tenure in Washington. Moreover, he also worked hard to ensure his own success.

Congressional scholars have noted that House members have multiple constituencies. Gross used various means to cultivate different groups in his district. Early in his House career, he began publishing a weekly newsletter titled "On the Capitol Firing Line." Sometimes with humor, but more often with sarcasm and scorn, Gross wrote about political issues in Washington, pending House legislation, and his views on various political figures. He often criticized presidential administrations, both Democratic and Republican, but he reserved his greatest ire for spending legislation and the ever expanding national debt. Readers soon learned that each issue contained large doses

of Gross's personal political philosophy as well as summaries and discussions of national political issues. Unlike other members of Congress, Gross wrote the newsletter himself. The *Des Moines Register* reported that "he isolated himself in his office every Friday to write it for release the following Wednesday." Office staffers mimeographed and printed each issue on a legal size sheet of paper; typically, each issue ran about 600 words. By 1956, the newsletter's circulation was over 2,600. According to an administrative aide, the newsletter was mailed to party leaders in his congressional district, newspaper editors, and "constituents who request it." The aide also noted that Gross was the only congressman who sent out a regular weekly newsletter. Some other congressmen had newsletters, but they were published only while Congress was in session or during election years. The newsletter also appears to have been of relatively high quality; in 1965 House Speaker Joseph Martin said that Gross's newsletter was one of the best to be published by a member of the House.<sup>30</sup>

Gross, like all members of Congress, communicated with voters in a variety of ways, but the newsletter probably provided the most direct and consistent link. Week after week it connected him to much of his core constituency in the district, repeatedly reminding them of the myriad ways their congressman was working on their behalf in Washington, and giving Gross a chance to speak his own mind in an unmediated manner. As a former journal editor and newscaster, Gross understood the power of words as well as the most effective ways to frame issues. He used many stock phrases and emotionally laden terms, and his writing was clear, direct, and often repetitive. His style helped readers understand his positions, an understanding no doubt aided by the fact that those positions rarely

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30. David C. Huckabee, "Reelection Rates of House Incumbents: 1790-1994," Congressional Research Service Report 95-361 (1995), at [www.thirty-thousand.org/documents/huckabee2.pdf](http://www.thirty-thousand.org/documents/huckabee2.pdf); Richard F. Fenno Jr., *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts* (Boston, 1978), 27; *Des Moines Register*, 12/19/1974; Butler, "Study of H. R. Gross," 62; Memo from Joseph Martin to Clare Boothe Luce in Correspondence, Congress Members, box 2, Gross Papers. Some of the early newsletters were longer, but by mid-1951, each newsletter was one page, legal size.

changed. Furthermore, Gross's sarcastic humor probably left many readers with a chuckle or two.

Each newsletter covered a variety of issues, but over the course of its 26-year run, certain topics appeared with particular regularity, including the United Nations, foreign aid, agricultural parity, the Peace Corps, the national debt, and salary increases for members of Congress and other federal officials. Surprisingly, the newsletter contained few references to major political events between 1948 and 1974, such as Joseph McCarthy's anti-Communist crusade or the Watergate scandal. During the first year or two, Gross occasionally referred to labor issues and labor legislation, but he rarely mentioned those topics after 1950. Discussion of economic issues often dominated the newsletters.<sup>31</sup> Whether writing about reckless government spending, wasteful political junkets, or lavish entertainment expenses, Gross not only informed voters about what he saw as unnecessary expenditures, he also clearly positioned himself as an opponent of those measures. He peppered the newsletters with his favorite nicknames for public programs that he saw as wasteful or otherwise flawed. The Pentagon was "Fort Fumble," a label meant to disparage its allegedly profligate usage of tax money, and he called NASA's lunar landing program a "moondoggle." Gross seemed to take particular delight in lambasting the Peace Corps, which he believed was nothing more than a haven for draft dodgers, and he frequently criticized the United Nations, calling it the "Tower of Babel." In Gross's view, all foreign-aid programs, including the Marshall Plan, were simply giveaways of Americans' hard-earned money. And he had total scorn for government funding of any arts or humanities programs, believing that such efforts ought to be paid for privately. Summarizing his views, Gross often referred to Uncle Sam as "Uncle Sucker" or "Uncle Sap."<sup>32</sup>

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31. Most issues of the newsletter contained some comments regarding unnecessary government spending or the poor condition of the U.S. economy. See, for example, NL 17, 41, 49, 100, 105, 118, and 303.

32. For examples of the prevalence of economic discussions, see NL 17, 42, 49, 65, 99, 100, 106, and 303; for the Peace Corps, 1030; United Nations, 65, 106, and 120; foreign aid, 98, 102, 119, and 531. Examples of frequent references to Uncle Sam as Uncle Sucker or Uncle Sap are in NL 263 and 529.



Letters sent to the congressman indicate his constituents' admiration for his direct style and frugality. Cedar Rapids resident Nancy C. Zook wrote Gross in December 1964: "We like your plain talk, your down-to-earth expression of just what under the sun is going on in Washington and elsewhere. We need more men like you." In September 1971, Maude and Stone Linstrum's letter touched on another popular theme: "You have certainly worked hard to prevent reckless spending of taxpayers' money." Ding Darling, the popular *Des Moines Register* political cartoonist and conservationist, was another Gross fan. In February 1960, he wrote, "I notice with pleasure that you are up for re-election. I wish I lived in your District so that I could vote for you. If we don't stop the wage spiral and the consequent inflation now I'm afraid we will pass the point of no return."<sup>33</sup>

Along with issues and public policies, the newsletters often took square aim at a variety of political figures. Eleanor Roosevelt, for example, became "Lady Bountiful" because she was supposedly so bountiful with other people's money. Gross criticized the policies of all the presidents who served during his congressional tenure, but he reserved special scorn for Democrats, especially President Harry Truman. Gross leveled strong, sometimes biting criticism at Truman's foreign and domestic policies, and he also seemed to personally dislike the president. During Truman's time in office, Gross repeatedly called him the "Pendergast-trained Truman," referring to his prior association with the Pendergast political machine in Kansas City. In one newsletter, Gross described the Truman regime as "shot through with corruption"; in another, he alleged that Truman "lived like a king." On various occasions, Gross criticized Truman's actions in Korea. At one point, he referred to the Korean War as "Operation Killer." Gross acknowledged that the United States was opposing the Chinese Communists, but he wrote that the "youth of America [are] being slaughtered, too, and what is the objective? We're still waiting for the Pendergast politician to tell us." Gross believed that a number of Truman's domestic economic policies, enacted in response to the war, had led toward a con-

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33. Correspondence, 1948-1975, box 20, Gross Papers; Ding Darling, People, box 79, Gross Papers.

trolled economy and came “dangerously close to totalitarianism.” Even after Dwight Eisenhower became president, Gross continued to criticize Truman for his “big spending.”<sup>34</sup>

John and Jacqueline Kennedy were also frequent targets of Gross’s scorn. Gross particularly seemed to enjoy poking fun at what he described as the couple’s “high living” lifestyle. To Gross, the Kennedys epitomized the Washington social elites he seemingly despised. At various times he referred to the “black tie and monkey suit atmosphere” and to the “striped pants crowd.” Gross also expressed great concern about the expense of Kennedy’s inauguration and the costs of creating what would become the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Following Kennedy’s assassination, he opposed giving his widow a government pension, cracking that “she certainly doesn’t need it”; and in a maneuver once described as “the single most heroically curmudgeonly act in the history of Congress” he stood on the floor of the House and argued against placing an “eternal flame” at JFK’s gravesite in Arlington National Cemetery. His rationale? Because the natural gas needed to fuel it would cost too much.<sup>35</sup>

Tirades against the Kennedys and others also allowed Gross to charge that Washingtonians drank too much alcohol, abetted by what he called the federal government’s “booze allowance.” Beyond attacking disliked elites, tactics such as this allowed Gross to contrast the behavior of wealthy Washingtonians with that of ordinary, hard-working—and, presumably, abstemious—folks from Iowa, character traits Gross presumably applied to himself as well. Gross disliked any display of pretentiousness and often pointed out that he and his wife lived a quiet, simple life. He noted with some pride that his wife had never owned a ball gown, nor had he ever owned a tuxedo. The couple typically spent evenings at home, where H. R. read bills or other

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34. NL 581, 586, 116, 21, 71, 66, 181.

35. NL 579, 584; Bauman, “H. R. Gross,” 9; Bill Kauffman, “The Eternal Flame-thrower,” *The American Enterprise*, November/December 1999, n.p. Gross later refuted the claim that he had opposed the “eternal flame,” arguing that his remarks had been misunderstood. See Campaign Memo #2, 1964 Campaign (3rd Congressional District-Iowa), Literature and Advertisements, box 87, Gross Papers.



*H. R. Gross poses with his wife, Hazel, and sons, Philip and Alan.*

material relevant to House legislation, and his wife, Hazel, circled articles that might be of interest to her husband. Sometimes the couple indulged in a few games of cribbage before bed.<sup>36</sup>

Many of Gross's writings showed a decidedly populist cast, harking back to the late nineteenth century, when Populists had condemned eastern financiers' conspiratorial behavior and control of the country's economy.<sup>37</sup> Gross often lambasted wealthy

36. Louviere, "The House," 29; *Des Moines Register*, 11/5/1961; NL 150.

37. Populism was a movement in the late 1880s and 1890s that involved farmers, laborers, and reformers who believed that rapid technological change had benefited industrialists and financiers but had drastically hurt the economic interests of farmers and laborers. Such views were first manifested in various farmers' alliance organizations. Before long, however, the Populist Party, a short-lived third party, became most visible in representing these views. The term *populist* has since become part of Americans' political vocabulary and is often used to describe people who claim to represent the interests of ordinary Americans as opposed to economic and political elites. See "Populism," in *Dictionary of American History*, ed. Stanley I. Kutler, 3rd ed., 10 vols. (New York, 2003), 6:416–18. Other standard sources on Populism include John D. Hicks,

easterners, criticizing their influence in government and the money they spent on “lavish” entertaining. One of his favorite terms of derision for the wealthy was “the fat boys.” He contrasted the financial concerns of ordinary Iowans—such as the March 15 income tax deadline—with what he described as “plush affairs” in Washington, such as the Democrats’ Jefferson-Jackson Day dinner, where tickets cost \$100 per seat. Gross often reminded his readers that he was on their side. He portrayed himself as standing up for small business and the “little man,” protecting them from wealthy easterners and a federal government that often sought to pick the pockets of ordinary folk.<sup>38</sup>

WHILE GROSS’S NEWSLETTERS connected him with an important core constituency, his broader contacts with Third District residents were another key part of his continued political success. Gross was particularly adept at paying attention to individual voters. When he returned to his district, he rarely delivered major speeches, opting instead for conversations with individual Iowans. Apparently it was not unusual for Gross to interrupt a farmer in his fields, seeking his views about agriculture and farm issues. Gross also served individual voters by reading and answering all letters promptly, believing that no request was “too small or inconsequential for his attention.” And his replies were no mere form letters: until at least 1971, he apparently sent personally written replies. His prompt, personal replies to hundreds of constituents paid dividends on election day. One area newspaper editor wrote that Gross “has done so many little favors for so many little people that he would be extremely difficult to defeat in either a primary or a general election.” Gross never strayed far from his voter base, whether traveling in Iowa or serving in Washington.<sup>39</sup>

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*The Populist Revolt: A History of the Farmers’ Alliance and the People’s Party* (Minneapolis, 1931); Lawrence Goodwyn, *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* (New York, 1976); Robert C. McMath, Jr., *American Populism: A Social History, 1877–1896* (New York, 1993); Jeffrey Ostler, *Prairie Populism: The Fate of Agrarian Radicalism in Kansas, Nebraska and Iowa* (Lawrence, KS, 1993); and Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (New York, 1995).

38. NL 10, 63, 65, 73.

39. Quoted in Butler, “Study of H. R. Gross,” 65.

Such efforts to stay connected with voters were especially important since Gross was not active in bringing federal programs and spending back to his district. There were exceptions, however. In October 1958 Gross issued a press release announcing that the Post Office Department was to expand rural mail delivery service, and that approximately 3,500 farm families in the Third Congressional District would benefit from the change. He also noted that he had long pushed for the development. Shortly thereafter, he also announced that he had recommended that the Post Office Department conduct surveys in Sumner and La Porte City "with a view to establishing city carrier service" in those towns. Upon completion of the surveys, postal officials in both communities began home mail delivery. Such activities were evidently not the norm for Gross, however. Despite the obvious political benefits of pursuing constituency "pork," Gross seems to have remained essentially faithful to his underlying philosophy of fiscal conservatism.<sup>40</sup>

Political scientists Paul Karpis and Heinz Eulau argue that members of Congress engage in several forms of representation: allocative representation (securing allocations of federal programs and services), service representation (doing casework and other favors for constituents), and symbolic representation (representation involving public gestures that create a sense of trust between members and constituents). That framework illuminates the approaches used by Gross. Although he largely eschewed allocative representation, doing little to secure federal benefits for the Third District, he devoted substantial attention to providing constituent services, and his diligent efforts to position himself as a champion of the people clearly involved a strong element of symbolism.<sup>41</sup>

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40. Press Release, Press Relations, 1949-1974, box 94, Gross Papers. Gross started his policy of fiscal responsibility early in his career, and Iowa newspapers were quick to take note of it. In September 1951, the *Traer Star-Clipper* ran an editorial praising Gross for objecting to \$19 million (in a \$6 billion military spending bill) for the construction of an airport at Grandview, Missouri. Although his effort failed, other Iowa newspapers in Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Marshalltown, and Waterloo all hailed Gross's efforts at cost-cutting. See *Congressional Record* 97, 82nd Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, DC, 1951), A5581.

41. Heinz Eulau and Paul D. Karpis, "The Puzzle of Representation: Specifying Components of Responsiveness," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 2 (1977), 241.

Finally, Gross also benefited from generally favorable treatment by the media. Most newspapers in the Third District supported Gross. Some, notably the *Traer Star-Clipper*, offered unqualified support, while others, such as the *Eldora Herald-Ledger*, supported the congressman with reservations. *Herald-Ledger* editor George R. Stauffacher wrote, "We have less of a rubber stamp Congress because of men like Gross and this is always a healthy condition in politics." A few papers were generally critical, most notably the *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, one of five dailies in the district, whose editor, Earl Hall, had a long-running feud with the congressman. Editors of both the *Osage Press-News* and the *St. Ansgar Enterprise* criticized Gross for his negativism and his supposedly poor committee assignments.<sup>42</sup>

Earl Hall was Gross's strongest and most tenacious critic. On December 2, 1954, he wrote a particularly hard-hitting editorial, listing ten reasons why Gross was unfit to represent the Third District. Gross, he said, was a "lone wolf" who had no personal friends, possessed no personal warmth, had difficulty obtaining recommendations from radio stations or newspapers where he had been employed, had been "savage" in his criticism of President Eisenhower, and was shunned by other Iowa congressmen. Following this lengthy recitation of grievances, Hall lamented the lack of a credible contender who could successfully challenge Gross.<sup>43</sup>

A 1958 Republican primary endorsement by the *Hampton Chronicle* took a more typically positive tone toward the congressman. Indeed, the endorsement was notable in this regard, as Gross's primary opponent, Enid Robinson, was from rural Hampton, and thus the *Chronicle* was her hometown paper. As reporter George Mills pointed out in a *Des Moines Register* article at the time, county-seat newspapers typically either supported a local candidate or remained neutral. Explaining the endorsement, *Chronicle* editor Dwight Purcell said the paper backed Gross simply because he was the better candidate.<sup>44</sup>

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42. Quoted in Butler, "Study of H. R. Gross," 85, 86.

43. *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, 12/2/1954.

44. *Des Moines Register*, 5/28/1958.

AS THE DISCUSSIONS of his background and "home style" suggest, Gross's fiscally conservative philosophy was firmly established by the time he reached Washington. While he manifested a general disdain for government spending, with the exception of agricultural appropriations, the main objects of his opposition were the same programs that he railed against in his newsletter. He was especially opposed to foreign aid, pay raises for legislators or other government workers, and foreign junkets by colleagues. His opposition to the latter was so persistent that junketing colleagues took to sending him postcards from their various far-flung destinations, often expressing some form of the sentiment, "Wish you were here!" Besides his disdain for fiscal imprudence, he also focused on other matters that might be seen as involving government abuse, including any self-serving arrangements among congressmen, and scandals such as the ones involving Representative Adam Clayton Powell, Lyndon Johnson associate Bobby Baker, and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortas.<sup>45</sup> In general, one might say that Gross opposed impropriety, fiscal or otherwise.

Gross advanced his legislative priorities through a distinctive legislative style. Perhaps most fundamentally, he devoted a striking level of effort to his job. He attempted to read all bills that made it to the House floor, a daunting task, given the number and length of those bills. As a result of his diligent reading of bills, most of which took place in the evening, at home, after the daily legislative session had ended, he generally had advance notice of the nature and details of upcoming legislation, and often a better understanding than most of his colleagues had. He devoted a similar level of effort to actual House legislative sessions; he was known for arriving early and staying late. The picture that emerges is of an active legislator, verbally engaged and frequently in the thick of things.<sup>46</sup>

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45. Leslie, "Uncle Sucker," 39, 43. The term *home style* is from Ferno, *Home Style*.

46. Many articles describe Gross's work habits. See, for example, *Kansas City Star*, 7/12/1958; *Des Moines Register*, 11/5/1961; Louviere, "The House is Losing"; Mills, "Remarkable Mr. Gross"; Norman Miller, "Iowa's Mr. Gross Wins Fame by Viewing Life With Jaundiced Eye," *Wall Street Journal*, 5/28/1969, in Press Relations, 1949-1974, box 93, Gross Papers.

Furthermore, Gross expended his unusual level of effort in an unusual place. In the House, members have traditionally devoted most of their effort to committee work, which, for most Representatives, becomes the source of most of their legislative input and clout. Committee recommendations and expertise tend to carry substantial weight on the floor, and thus a members' committee work can ultimately affect legislation. Woodrow Wilson, a professor of politics before he was president of the United States, famously declared, "Congress in its committee-rooms is Congress at work."<sup>47</sup>

Gross turned that traditional approach on its head. He did serve on several committees, but he devoted most of his effort to addressing legislation in the central chamber of the House. Exercising his customary diligence, Gross spent long hours on the House floor, evidently animated by the possibility that others might try to pass expensive legislation or sneak something else through during times when most members were inattentive or absent. He even went so far as to stake out his own personal seat. In a chamber where rank-and-file members did not enjoy formally assigned seating, "H. R. Gross's seat" was located front and center, giving him a useful perch from which to monitor all activities on the House floor. An observer vividly portrayed the scene: "And there he sits, day after day, on the aisle of the Republican side near the committee table, the little Dutch boy with his finger in the dike, a solitary sentry of thrift watching the mountainous seas which threaten, he believes, to engulf the treasury."<sup>48</sup>

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47. Tim Groseclose and David C. King, "Little Theatre: Committees in Congress," in *Contemplating the People's Branch: Legislative Dynamics in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Kelly D. Patterson and Daniel M. Shea (Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2000), 204; Steven S. Smith, *The American Congress*, 2nd ed. (Boston, 1999), 198; Woodrow Wilson, *Congressional Government* (New York, 1956), 69. The House has a set of standing committees, organized by substantive areas, such as appropriations or foreign affairs. These committees formulate, revise, and review legislation before it can be considered on the chamber floor. Members are assigned to several of these standing committees—most typically to committees involving matters that are important in their districts, or where the substantive focus happens to interest them—and they then work assiduously to become experts on the committee's subject matter.

48. Louviere, "The House is Losing," 24; *Des Moines Register*, 11/5/1961. Gross served on the Foreign Affairs, Post Office, and Civil Service committees.



Literally, the U.S. House of Representatives just didn't get much past H. R. Gross.

Strong parliamentary skills complemented his diligent labors. He was regarded as an effective parliamentarian, and he employed a variety of legislative tactics to advance his interests (or, one could say, to obstruct the passage of bills). One of his favorite devices was the quorum call. House rules require a sufficient number of members to be present before official business can occur. This requirement, however, is often overlooked for purposes of expediency. But if a member requests a quorum call, that request must be granted. That temporarily suspends legislative activity until the roll is called, a rather lengthy procedure in a body as large as the U.S. House. Further delay results if the chamber falls short of a quorum. The House would then either have to adjourn, or the sergeant at arms would have to go out and round up a sufficient number of members. Gross was also famous for objecting to unanimous consent decrees. In Congress, unanimous consent is used to suspend burdensome and time-consuming rules, thus allowing faster processing of routine business and noncontroversial measures. Since "unanimous" is taken literally, Gross's lone objection was enough to scuttle a decree, forcing more formal—and lengthier—floor procedures. At one point, House leaders eliminated a minor chamber procedure to prevent Gross from creating delays by invoking it.<sup>49</sup>

Such strategies suggest that Gross was not afraid to inconvenience colleagues, embarrass them, or even incur their wrath, even in a body that was generally considered collegial (at least for most of his tenure). Like most mavericks, he often objected to the usual ways of doing things. His tendency to challenge leaders and other rank-and-file members, and to object to "business as usual," sometimes caused serious difficulties and disruptions for others. One important example involved the House calendar. Many members preferred to schedule important floor business on Tuesday through Thursday, creating a long weekend, which gave members more time to return to their home

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49. Walter J. Oleszek, *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process*, 6th ed. (Washington, DC, 2004), 335, 339; Mills, "Remarkable Mr. Gross"; "Useful Pest," *Time*, 6/15/1962, 21, in Press Relations, 1949–1974, box 93, Gross Papers; Miller, "Jaundiced Eye"; Bauman, "H. R. Gross," 8.

their home districts. Consistent with his firm personal beliefs that serving in Congress was a full-time responsibility and that members belonged on the floor, Gross often objected, forcing other members to revise their schedules and reshuffle their plans. One time he objected to a unanimous consent decree that would have allowed members to travel to Florida to see the Apollo 11 moon launch, thereby forcing the chamber to meet on that day. He proved so nettlesome to his own party leadership that House Minority Leader Gerald Ford reportedly quipped, "There are Three Parties in the House: Democrats, Republicans, and H. R. Gross." House Speaker Carl Albert once said that Gross had disrupted his plans "so many times, I can't recall." As these comments by two House leaders show, Gross had definitively rejected the advice of another House Speaker, Sam Rayburn, who had once counseled, "To get along, go along."<sup>50</sup>

ONE MIGHT WONDER how Gross could continue to clash with the Republican Party, in elections and in the House, throughout his congressional career, without suffering serious repercussions. Simply put, Gross could be independent because he could attain his own personal goals despite his clashes with his party. What were those goals? Surveying House members in the 1960s, political scientist Richard Fenno determined that representatives generally held three goals: re-election, good public policy (as defined by the member), and personal influence in the chamber.<sup>51</sup>

Gross embraced the goal of re-election, as every member of Congress must, but he had little reason to fear that his maverick status in the party would harm him. Although political parties in many foreign countries can bar nonconformist legislators from running as party members in future elections—thus giving members a powerful incentive to toe the party line—American parties cannot control access to the ballot in that manner.<sup>52</sup> Ac-

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50. Leslie, "Uncle Sucker," 41, 42; *Kansas City Star*, 7/12/1958.

51. Richard F. Fenno Jr., *Congressmen in Committees* (Boston, 1973), chap. 1.

52. Burdett A. Loomis, *The Contemporary Congress*, 3rd ed. (Boston, 2000), 127. It is important to note that party leaders in the House can sanction uncooperative members in other ways. They can deny nonconformists access to valuable

cordingly, in the United States, the party's only option is to attempt to defeat a maverick member in the party primary, as Iowa Republicans tried in 1958. However, a strong vote getter such as Gross generally had little to fear from that kind of challenge.

Within the chamber, Gross deviated from Fenno's findings: he had no desire to occupy a party leadership position or to win appointment to a prestigious committee, the usual means for achieving personal influence in the House. Absent the desire for personal position, he had no need to court the support of other Republicans. Gross himself once remarked on this: "You can't aspire to leadership and do the things I feel I must do."<sup>53</sup> Accordingly, because Gross's re-election prospects were secure, and because he was not interested in personal prestige, he was free to focus on his third goal: he could pursue his personal vision of good public policy—fiscal prudence and member integrity—no matter how much his actions might sometimes anger his party.

Finally, besides his other legislative resources and skills, Gross's legislative efforts were also bolstered by his personal characteristics, most notably his sharp wit and sense of humor. When his dogged efforts had identified questionable expenditures, he could level humor—or scorn—with devastating effect, often making colleagues squirm. On at least one occasion he was involved in a "Bundles for Congress" program that satirized a congressional pay raise by collecting old clothing for lawmakers, the implication being that they must have been destitute to need the extra money. Gross also had a thick skin. That is a virtue—and to some degree, probably a necessity—for all politicians, but Gross seems to have been more impervious than most. That allowed him to persist in his isolated, maverick ways when more sensitive members might have buckled under pressure from party officials or the anger or dissatisfaction of peers.<sup>54</sup>

All of these factors combined to bring Gross substantial national media attention. He was featured in stories in a variety of

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resources such as shared campaign funds and information on bills and other chamber activities. Gross did incur some such costs for being a party maverick, but none that he could not easily bear. Smith, *American Congress*, 182–84.

53. Bauman, "H. R. Gross," 10.

54. Ibid.

national publications, and he received many more incidental mentions. Such treatments varied in tone. Some were largely positive; others could be quite critical. *Redbook* magazine once listed him among the worst members of Congress, and *Life* counted him as a member of the "Neanderthal Right." Others dubbed him the "Abominable No-Man" in reference to his habit of voting against most bills and his general legislative obstructionism. Gross also enjoyed broad recognition among the public; a *Time* magazine reader from Georgia nominated him for the magazine's "Man of the Year" award in 1963.<sup>55</sup>

Gross's physical characteristics probably contributed to his notoriety. He had a deep, booming voice and something of a distinctive appearance. Perhaps referencing his Iowa connection, one writer once compared him to the man pictured in Grant Wood's *American Gothic*. All of the attention he received was probably magnified by the fact that so much volume came from such a little wisp of a man; former WHO Radio colleague Jack Shelley recalled that Gross could not have been over 5'3." The press attention, while noteworthy in itself, is even more striking given that Gross served in the House. Senators typically receive far greater media attention; members of the House tend to toil in obscurity. Not H. R. Gross.<sup>56</sup>

LEGISLATIVE STYLE ASIDE, any analysis of Gross must ultimately consider the question of legislative effectiveness: simply put, did H. R. Gross succeed in his core mission of reducing, or at least restricting, federal spending? By the most obvious yardsticks, his influence would seem to have been relatively slight. He sponsored relatively few bills—a common benchmark of legislative influence—and many of the ones he did propose were symbolic or even quixotic. Every session, he introduced the eponymous H.R. 144 (cleverly named because House bills start with "H.R.," for "House Resolution," and a gross equals 12 dozen, or 144), a measure that proposed a gen-

55. "Our Worst Congressmen," *Redbook*, October 1952, 73, in Press Relations, 1949–1974, box 92, Gross Papers; "While Eisenhower Proposes the Old Guard Disposes," *Life*, 6/21/1954; Letter to the Editor, *Time*, 12/27/1963.

56. *Ames Daily Tribune*, 1/18/1974; Shelley, interview, 9/29/2006; Ross K. Baker, *House and Senate*, 3rd ed. (New York, 2001), chap. 5.



*At a meeting of the Bull Elephant Club in 1974, former broadcasting colleague and then Governor of California Ronald Reagan presented Gross with a shirt bearing the logo "H.R. Gross 144."*

eral program of fiscal restraint. More fundamentally, House Republicans were the minority party for almost all of Gross's tenure. During his 13 terms, Republicans controlled the chamber only from 1952 to 1954. That impeded Gross's ability to sponsor or back successful legislation. Finally, Gross was truly a singular voice. Indeed, he appeared to revel in such a status; one author noted that Gross seemed to cultivate the image of a loner by choice. The status of an isolated, rank and file, minority party member is not a recipe for influence in the U.S. House of Representatives.<sup>57</sup>

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57. Jude Wanniski, "With Jeers and Jests, Mr. Gross Makes His Point," *The National Observer*, 7/24/1967; Louviere, "The House is Losing," 26; Edward V. Schneier and Bertram Gross, *Congress Today* (New York, 1993), 351; *Kansas City*

However, this does not necessarily mean that Gross was entirely ineffective. It is important to appreciate the distinction between “positive” and “negative” power in the legislature—the ability, respectively, either to pass new legislation or to block new laws and preserve the existing status quo. As a champion of fiscal restraint, Gross had relatively little interest in passing additional measures; instead, he focused on blocking new spending proposals, and the record shows many examples of him working to oppose new raids on the federal treasury. When a 1964 bill attempted to raise the pay of congressmen and other federal employees, for example, Gross forced a roll call vote on the measure. The *Des Moines Register* believed that his tactic had led to the bill’s defeat, since many members were unwilling to go on record in support of it. Happily for Gross, his general stance complemented the basic nature of the congressional policymaking process, which tends to give the advantage to the exercise of negative power. One of the most fundamental aspects of congressional lawmaking is its inherent bias toward the status quo. In the long legislative process, with its many individual steps, each new proposal typically has to win majority approval at every step, offering multiple opportunities to block, stall, or kill new legislation.<sup>58</sup>

One specific form of obstructionism, however—Gross’s exercise of parliamentary procedures—was less effective than commonly supposed. Talented parliamentarians are often presumed to wield great clout in the House, yet their efforts rarely constitute more than a delaying tactic. The House lacks the Sen-

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*Star*, 7/12/1958; Baker, *House and Senate*, 91–92. H.R. 144 was designed “to provide that federal expenditures shall not exceed Federal revenues except in time of war or grave national emergency declared by the Congress, and to provide for systematic reduction of the federal debt.” See *Congressional Record* 105, part 16, index, 86th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, DC, 1960), 1058. A survey of the *Congressional Record* from 1949 through 1974 shows that Gross introduced an average of between 11 and 12 bills per legislative session. Few, if any of the bills constituted major legislation. A number of bills dealt with agricultural issues and Post Office matters. See *Congressional Record* 95, part 1, index through vol. 120, part 32, index (Washington, DC, 1949–1974).

58. *Des Moines Register*, 3/13/1964; Roger H. Davidson and Walter J. Oleszek, *Congress and Its Members*, 3rd ed. (Washington, DC, 1990), 308; Smith, *American Congress*, 50–51.

ate's tradition of individualism, a practice that grants real power to individual members and allows a single senator to impede or even scuttle legislation. In the House, the rules permit the majority party and its leaders to "work their will." Accordingly, even a strong parliamentarian such as Gross typically could not hope to do more than slow down the spending train; tactics such as demanding quorum calls and opposing unanimous consent could be used to harry opponents and cause delays, but ultimately not to block most legislation. No matter how skilled, one rank-and-file House parliamentarian simply could not have a major legislative effect.<sup>59</sup>

Clearly, then, Gross's influence was affected by broad factors within Congress. By itself, however, such an explanation is incomplete. Party balances and institutional structures are basic features of the legislature, and parliamentary skills are wielded by a variety of members. Thus, general factors cannot explain Gross's unique role and notoriety. Understanding his impact requires specific attention to his unique personal and legislative style. Several factors are particularly important here: Gross's focus on financial matters and scandals, his practice of legislating from the House floor, his personality and style, and the lavish attention he received from the news media.

Although Gross wore the general mantle of "Watchdog of the Treasury," he focused primarily on a smaller subset of legislation, prioritizing financial matters such as pay raises, junketing, lavish spending, and other questionable congressional practices such as attempts to boost congressional perks through "backdoor" means. Such matters have at least one thing in common: members who engage in them risk the appearance of malfeasance or impropriety, which can be exploited by rivals, and can thus potentially affect the members' future chances for reelection. Obviously, members would prefer that such matters not receive much attention. Gross stood in the way of such obfuscation. His detailed scrutiny of floor bills meant that such activities were likely to be discovered and brought to light. And all of that activity was likely to occur in a highly public place, the House floor, which is much more visible than the various

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59. Baker, *House and Senate*, 27.

committee chambers. As Woodrow Wilson had observed, "Congress in session is Congress on public exhibition."<sup>60</sup>

For all these reasons, H. R. Gross was tailor-made for the media. His self-chosen legislative mandates held intrinsic interest for the press. Questionable expenditures and other seeming improprieties have always tended to draw press attention. The media like to highlight conflict and controversy, and scandal and impropriety are perennial subjects of interest. Accordingly, Gross's actions tended to attract a significant press following. His personality probably further heightened the media attention. His wit and humor served as a draw, and his pithy quotes provided highly desired color for reporters writing stories on the doings of Congress. Gross was said to greet new legislation with quips such as "Just what's in this turkey?" or "How much will this boondoggle cost?" As one writer noted, H. R. Gross was the "best show in town."<sup>61</sup>

Thus, Gross's ability to focus attention on controversial matters seemed to grant him some measure of legislative clout. Other House members often took Gross into account as they considered or devised legislation. If their bill fell into one of the categories that interested Gross, they knew that it would probably attract his attention, and that his reaction might then prove embarrassing. Indeed, the whole affair might even end up in the news. Accordingly, some evidence suggests that spending bills were trimmed, revised, or even killed in anticipation of Gross's response. An article on Gross noted, "Many committee chairmen try to iron out possible differences with Gross by notifying him of their intentions in advance. Some congressmen report that they have changed legislation in committee to anticipate Gross's objections on the floor." Another piece quoted an anonymous colleague as saying, "I've attended many committee hearings when the chairman will study a bill and make sure we can answer the knotty questions Gross will ask. Many times items will be dropped before the bill hits the floor because

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60. Paul S. Herrnson, *Congressional Elections: Campaigning at Home and in Washington*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC, 1998), 145, 193; Wilson, *Congressional Government*, 69.

61. Louviere, "The House is Losing," 24; Kauffman, "The Eternal Flame-thrower"; Wanniski, "With Jeers and Jests."



of him." This sort of situation—involving the hidden exercise of power—has attracted substantial interest from political scientists. Although the publicly apparent exercise of influence is the most visible face of power, the quiet, invisible suppression or modification of proposals can also be important. Unfortunately, however, this second, veiled face of power can be far more difficult to detect, measure, or study. Thus, while it is hard to gain a firm grasp of how much influence Gross wielded in this less visible manner, available evidence suggests that it was considerable.<sup>62</sup>

Despite the difficulties, it is tempting to try to devise a more precise measure of Gross's legislative clout. Given his focus on financial matters, one approach would be to focus on actual levels of spending, since dollars offer a precise standard for measurement. Even here, however, one's conclusions ultimately rest on how the matter is framed. In one sense, Gross could be seen as having had little effect; he could embarrass colleagues on questionable or difficult to defend expenditures, but that left him with little influence over other, broader spending categories. He often opposed outlays in a variety of general areas, but his one vote had little impact on the overall outcomes. Viewed in percentage terms, then, Gross's impact on reducing federal expenditures was slight; because he affected only a small percentage of budget items, he could affect only a small percentage of the budget. Considering actual dollar amounts, however, Gross fares better. One author noted, "It is conservatively estimated he has saved the taxpayer hundreds of millions of dollars. The total may even run into billions."<sup>63</sup>

Whatever the value of the financial savings Gross achieved, it would be a mistake to assess his influence only in that light. He made several more general contributions to the House. For one, he helped to facilitate an improved style of deliberation on the floor. Because of his nearly constant presence and his willingness to engage in debate, he was involved in a substantial

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62. Leslie, "Uncle Sucker," 41; Bauman, "H. R. Gross," 8; Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, "Two Faces of Power," *American Political Science Review* 56 (1962), 948–49.

63. Louviere, "The House is Losing," 23. It is important to note that sources can vary widely in their estimates of the "savings" Gross was responsible for. See *Des Moines Register*, 11/5/1961. Commenting in 1965, House Speaker Carl Albert cited the figure of "many millions of dollars." Bauman, "H. R. Gross," 8.



*H. R. Gross in his office, date unknown.*

amount of deliberation, and his contribution to the quality of deliberation matched his contribution to the quantity of deliberation. One author noted that Gross "is generally well prepared, he is a good debater . . . and his questions are germane." Longtime Georgia Representative Carl Vinson once remarked, "There is really no good debate unless the gentleman from Iowa is in it." Some House observers have raised serious questions about the general quality of congressional deliberation—suggesting that it is not a priority for many members. Gross, however, dedicated his congressional career to raising the standard of deliberation in the chamber. Furthermore, Gross's attentions seem to have ensured a closer fidelity to rules and other official standards of operation. Republican James Utt of California once stated that other members of the House "have come to rely on

Representative Gross to do much of their work, and they have come to rely upon him to stop rule violations." Finally, and most generally, Gross's legislative style was a means to a broader end. With his careful scrutiny of bills, his fealty to prudent spending (at least as he saw it) and his uncompromising insistence on integrity, Gross brought a measure of accountability to the chamber. The U.S. House is a sprawling body, and, to a significant degree, it is a fragmented and decentralized one. Accordingly, it suffers from a lack of centralized focus or accountability. In his own way, Gross provided some such accountability; members who tried to pass weak or questionable legislation knew they would likely have to answer for it. John Bell Williams, a Democratic congressman from Mississippi, once declared that Gross was "the most valuable single member of the House" largely because of his close scrutiny of all legislation. On the occasion of Gross's retirement, Minority Leader Gerald Ford said that he was sorry to see Gross go, adding, "I have had the greatest admiration for H. R.'s dedication to the principle that every penny of federal spending must be scrutinized by the Congress." Ford concluded, "Future Congresses will miss H. R. Gross, but the taxpayer will miss him more."<sup>64</sup>

DURING GROSS'S TIME IN CONGRESS, a picture hung on the wall of his office in Washington. The photo showed a municipal swimming pool in Rockwell, Iowa, a town in Gross's district, and the caption declared, "Constructed without ANY federal funds, 1967."<sup>65</sup> That, perhaps as much as anything, seems to capture H. R. Gross's spirit: a flinty insistence on fiscal prudence and a strong work ethic, manifested in a straightforward style and a willingness to sacrifice popularity in order to pursue the principles he held dear.

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64. Leslie, "Uncle Sucker," 40; Mills, "Remarkable Mr. Gross," 11; Charles A. Vanik, "Congress is Deliberative: Compared to What?" in *The United States Congress: Proceedings of the Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Symposium on the U.S. Congress* (Chestnut Hill, MA, 1982), 13-19; *Des Moines Register*, 9/20/1962; Lawrence C. Dodd, "Congress and the Quest for Power," in *Congress Reconsidered*, ed. Lawrence C. Dodd and Bruce I. Oppenheimer (New York, 1977), 283-89; Loomis, *The Contemporary Congress*, chap. 2; *Ames Daily Tribune*, 1/18/1974.

65. Bauman, "H. R. Gross," 7.

The essentials of Gross's style had been nurtured early, rooted in a boyhood on a southern Iowa farm, and honed by a close-up view of the effects of the Great Depression. Those experiences led to a lifelong belief in the virtue of agriculture, a lifelong dedication to the farmer, and, more broadly, a populist philosophy, originally seen by many as radical, that came to be viewed as staunch conservatism. Those principles would shape his tenure in Congress, where he fought for his causes for 26 years.

After he retired in 1974, Gross did not return to Iowa; instead, he and Hazel remained in Washington, where he died on September 22, 1987. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Perhaps he and his wife had remained in Washington to be near friends or family, or perhaps, while he retained his simple personal lifestyle, Gross had grown comfortable in a town with which he had so often seemed to be so much at odds.

It was a town that, seemingly, had grown comfortable with H. R. Gross. He certainly had his detractors, but Gross did win widespread respect from his colleagues on both sides of the aisle. One account described an informal ceremony, marking Gross's birthday, that took place on the House floor: "One congressman after another arose to pay tribute to the little man from Iowa who had caused them so much 'trouble' over the years." For all of Gross's prickliness and dour disposition, others seemed to sense his deep personal integrity and to recognize the manifold and unique contributions he made to the House. Recognizing Gross's contradictions, as well as his strengths, perhaps this perspective summarizes things best: A Congress filled with men like Gross would be unworkable, but Congress nonetheless needs one man like H. R. Gross.<sup>66</sup>

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66. Bauman, "H. R. Gross," 10; Geoffrey Gould, "Rep. Gross: His Ax Cuts Your Tax," AP, 4/21/1963, Press Relations, 1949-1974, box 92, Gross Papers.

## Book Reviews and Notices

*American Confluence: The Missouri Frontier from Borderland to Border State*, by Stephen Aron. History of the Trans-Appalachian Frontier. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006. xxi, 301 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, index. \$29.95 cloth.

*The Boundaries Between Us: Natives and Newcomers along the Frontiers of the Old Northwest Territory, 1750–1850*, edited by Daniel P. Barr. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006. xix, 261 pp. Map, notes, bibliography, index. \$52.00 cloth.

Reviewer Rebekah M. K. Mergenthal is a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Chicago. Her dissertation is "The People of the Lower Missouri River Valley and the Expansion of the United States, 1803–1855."

*The Boundaries Between Us*, edited by Daniel P. Barr, and *American Confluence*, by Stephen Aron, are worthy additions to the growing literature on midwestern frontiers. The essays collected by Barr investigate "the first national frontier" (ix) of the Old Northwest Territory – what would become the states of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Aron examines what he calls the "American confluence" (xiii), which he designates as the area where the Ohio and Missouri rivers meet the Mississippi. Despite their focus on different geographic locations, these books can helpfully be considered together because, following the lead of historian Richard White, both illuminate larger processes of colonialism and expansion and the implications thereof. Both volumes also focus on roughly the same time frame, the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries, and foreground interactions between Indians and white settlers. Both deliberately consider their area before as well as after the United States was a factor. In that way, they importantly help us consider how and why borders shifted, as well as the meaning of those alterations for those on the ground and the kinds of intercultural accommodations that were possible. Together, Aron's book and the anthology edited by Barr provide an opportunity to understand the range and possibilities of interactions on early American frontiers.

*The Boundaries Between Us* begins with a succinct introduction by Barr and contains 11 original essays by scholars whose methodologies range from cultural history to legal history to anthropology. Four essays discuss the period before American presence in the area, and

seven explore continuities and discontinuities in the period when the American government tried to solidify its control of the region. Together, the articles offer a compelling look at the variety of accommodations and conflicts on the frontiers in this region. The anthology's strongest pieces are by Lisa Brooks and Ginette Aley. Brooks explores differing visions of native autonomy after the American Revolution by insightfully comparing and contrasting the views of Stockbridge Mohican leader Hendrick Aupaumut and Mohawk leader Joseph Brant. Aley intriguingly considers the links between Indian removal and the developments of the transportation revolution in Indiana. Also of particular note are the essays by Ian K. Steele and Phyllis Gernhardt. Steele explores the British and Shawnees' contrasting understandings of captivity as well as how the differences shaped the interactions between those two groups in the era of the Seven Years War. Gernhardt focuses on the crucial role of Indian traders in shaping the timing of and the extent of federal payment for the removal of the Miamis and the Potawatomis from northern Indiana. The interactions described in those and the other essays in *The Boundaries Between Us* resonate with relations on other frontiers and thus could be useful for comparison.

Unfortunately the strengths of the specific essays are not fully supported by the volume's too brief introduction. It is fine if Barr does not want to give a "definitive account of the region's history" (xviii), but a more thorough contextualization would help readers better understand the collection's broader importance. The introduction never clearly defines how the anthology uses important terms such as *frontier*, *region*, and *boundaries*, so it is not apparent how the essays together expand upon our understanding of those ideas. More broadly, it does not clarify in what ways the collection can reshape our conceptualizations of frontier history. Barr's claim that the Old Northwest territories served as a "primer" (x) for conflict and contact on later American frontiers is intriguing. However, without further elaboration or engagement with other borderlands literature, it is difficult to assess precisely what he understands the legacy of that area to have been for other frontiers. (For a more effective introduction to a collection of regionally based essays, see Samuel Truett and Elliott Young, eds., *Continental Crossroads: Remapping U.S.-Mexico Borderlands History* [2004]. Although that volume considers an area far from the Midwest, the introduction frames its questions in such a way as to engage with larger historiographical trends and broader implications for other borderlands.) Without a more comprehensive introduction or more explicit thematic connections between the essays, the underlying logic that brings together the particular articles in *The Boundaries Between Us* remains a bit murky.

Thus the usefulness of the anthology for comparisons to other frontiers is less evident than it should have been because of the lack of a clearly articulated identification of its stakes.

In contrast, Stephen Aron's volume has an abundance of broad claims and sweeping analysis. *American Confluence* makes a strong case for the comparison of "how overlapping forms of colonialism mapped multiple frontiers" (xviii) and just as importantly shows how those remappings shaped and were shaped by the interactions of people on the ground. The introduction explains the distinction Aron draws between *frontier* (a meeting place of different groups) and *borderland* (a meeting place—or boundary—between different colonial regimes). Aron uses the tension between those two types of boundaries to illustrate how the French, Spanish, and British colonial powers were not able to dictate the shape of colonialism in the confluence region. Indeed, in the book's first several chapters Aron fruitfully explores the opportunities presented by the fluidity of the confluence region, and even makes the case that in the mid- to late eighteenth century that area was the best poor man's country, better than the usually designated Pennsylvania frontier.

Aron effectively moves between the larger imperial negotiations and demands of the area's diverse and changing inhabitants. In particular, the Osage become a regular touchstone for Aron as he traces the opportunities they seized and the limitations they struggled under, whether their nearest Euro-American rivals were French, Spanish, British, or American. Another strength of Aron's work is his underlying insistence on the importance of rivers in shaping the settlement of the period. On that aspect and others, *American Confluence* offers several intriguing points of comparison and contrast to those primarily interested in other frontier regions.

As the introduction makes clear, Aron wants to keep the boundaries of the confluence region loosely defined. That approach allows him to follow a variety of groups and trace a range of intercultural interactions. However, it also leads to a certain amount of fuzziness about where exactly some of those groups were located at particular times. To that end, the discussion is hampered by the book's not very detailed maps. They do not identify some places important to the story, such as the Boon's Lick area, and when Aron's attention moves farther west of the Mississippi, the maps do not follow him. That westward shift is most apparent in the last chapter, which offers a fine overview of early Missouri history. That allows Aron to illustrate his claim that once borderland conditions (the meeting of Euro-American empires) were removed from the area after the Louisiana Purchase, "the history

of congenial minglings and peaceful accommodations" was "erased" (211). Yet, with this change in focus to a bounded state, the discussion is less rich than what precedes it, perhaps in part because it moves away from the earlier emphasis on rivers. Aron also increasingly emphasizes politics and sectional negotiations and gives less consideration to the cultural interactions and negotiations on the ground than he had in previous chapters. Given this discontinuity with his earlier discussions, it is not always possible to see the full implications of the trajectory he traces.

Together, *American Confluence* and *The Boundaries Between Us* contribute to a kind of greater midwestern history for the mid-eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century. Both illustrate the importance of including and understanding the range of actors in a frontier story. Giving full consideration to that variety allows these books to illuminate the richness and possibility of frontier relations, even as neither glosses over the tensions and conflicts also to be found there.

*Forbidden Fruit: Love Stories from the Underground Railroad*, by Betty DeRamus. New York: Atria Books, 2005. xiv, 269 pp. Illustrations, bibliographies, index. \$25.00 cloth, \$14.00 paper.

Reviewer Deborah A. Lee is an independent scholar and public historian currently working with the Virginia Center for Digital History and The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership.

Among the most compelling stories of the Underground Railroad are those of enslaved people who, when faced with separation from their beloveds, daringly eloped to freedom in the northern United States and Canada. Award-winning journalist Betty DeRamus turned her investigative skills and poetic sensibilities to this neglected topic, including also biracial couples. She tells the stories for a general as well as scholarly audience. She read primary and secondary accounts, explored historic sites, and interviewed descendants and local historians. The chapters are documented by separate bibliographies.

Most of the stories take place in central North America; one, chapter eight, unfolds largely in Iowa. Henry Pyles, a free mulatto, lived with his enslaved wife, Charlotta, on the farm of her owner in Kentucky. Frances Gordon inherited Charlotta and some of her children, but Frances's brothers kidnapped and sold one child and sued for control of her assets. Frances fled with the family to Keokuk, Iowa, where she freed the enslaved Pyleses and lived close by. In the 1850s the Pyleses became Underground Railroad agents.



Although DeRamus's prose is somewhat overdone, *Forbidden Fruit* puts flesh on enslaved peoples' bones and acknowledges their hearts and minds as well. It gives them the central role they deserve in the Underground Railroad's genesis and development. It shows the value of accessing black communities for historical research. Finally, by depicting loving relationships and aid that resisted unjust laws and crossed the color line, DeRamus helps document the history of a better world.

*Iowa's Forgotten General: Matthew Mark Trumbull*, by Kenneth L. Lyftogt. Iowa City: Press of the Camp Pope Bookshop, 2005. xi, 127 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$10.00 paper.

Reviewer Patrick G. Bass is professor of history at Morningside College. He is the author of "The American Civil War and the Idea of Civil Supremacy over the Military" (*Proteus*, 2000).

Local history is often a labor of love, particularly when biographical in nature. *Iowa's Forgotten General: Matthew Mark Trumbull*, by Kenneth L. Lyftogt, is no exception. This work provides a short overview of the life of English radical immigrant, early Iowa attorney, and Civil War officer M. M. Trumbull, an important figure in Iowa's Cedar Valley in the mid-nineteenth century. Lyftogt's study primarily concerns Trumbull's career as a Union officer, tracing his rise from the volunteer captain who raised his own company in Butler County in 1861 to his mustering out of the service in 1866 as a brevet major general of volunteers.

Trumbull's story is most engaging when Lyftogt narrates his roles in the battles of Blue Mills Landing, Shiloh, and Corinth in 1861 and 1862; the writing at those points is energetic, and the images are vivid. The account is also enlightening about partisanship, individual political ambitions, and the stakes of command and placement for Union volunteer officers. Lyftogt's account of the infighting and vicious personal rivalries among company and field grade officers, particularly in his discussion of Trumbull's early days in the Third Iowa Volunteer Infantry regiment, for example, is a fine case study of a recognized but understudied issue of the war. His brief analysis of the major roles of local loyalties and their effects on unit function and command, as those operated in the Third Iowa Infantry and the Ninth Iowa Cavalry, is also interesting.

Other interesting tidbits about Iowa and prominent Iowans in the 1850s and 1860s emerge in the narrative, including revealing observations about Dubuque, Cedar Falls, Samuel Kirkwood, William Stone, William B. Allison, and John Scott, demonstrating Lyftogt's mastery of the inner workings of the spoils-oriented politics of the late Jacksonian

era. The author, as in his other works on Iowa during this era, also shows just how much can be gleaned from avid research into local newspaper archives and local memoir collections, particularly when combined with forays into larger national archival materials.

Despite its many virtues, *Iowa's Forgotten General* has flaws that detract from the value of the work. Importantly, readers never really get to know the protagonist. Trumbull's overall egalitarian radicalism is mentioned often, but not clearly analyzed, particularly in terms of its effects on his military leadership effectiveness and style; his personal life, and its broader effects, remains mysterious; and his motivations and personality remain hidden. Lyftogt is too dependent on Trumbull's own autobiography, without independent corroboration, for much of the book's content. His research, beyond the local, is not thorough; neither does it display sound source criticism. For example, he underutilizes the *War of the Rebellion* in his chapters on the Civil War, and his use of out-of-date and inappropriate (for his purposes) secondary accounts of Chartism and the European scene in the early nineteenth century is unsound. The author's prose style is uneven in clarity and quality. Lastly, there are annoying spelling errors and minor errors of fact, such as the misspelling of Max Lerner's name in the bibliography (120) and the mistaken name assigned to Elmer (not Ephraim) Ellsworth (38).

Kenneth Lyftogt's *Iowa's Forgotten General* is admirable in many ways and always interesting, but its subject awaits a better treatment.

*"Behind Bayonets": The Civil War in Northern Ohio*, by David D. Van Tassel, with John Vacha. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006. x, 125 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00 cloth.

Reviewer Donald C. Elder III is professor of history at Eastern New Mexico University. His latest book is *Love Amid Turmoil: The Civil War Letters of William and Mary Vermilion* (2003).

About 40 years ago, the city of Cleveland began to experience problems that tarnished its image. That denigration is unfortunate, because Cleveland has played an important role in the development of the United States, especially in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, Cleveland and its surrounding environs helped shape the sectional debate in the decade preceding the Civil War, contributed mightily to the Union war effort during the conflict, and experienced profound change as a result in the postwar period.

*"Behind Bayonets."* *The Civil War in Northern Ohio* helps to put this crucial aspect of Cleveland's history in perspective. David Van Tassel

began the project, but John Vacha completed the manuscript after Van Tassel died in 2000. Vacha obviously took pains to ensure that his writing style conformed to that of the original author.

*"Behind Bayonets"* begins with a proud moment in Cleveland's history: the dedication in September 1860 of a monument dedicated to Oliver Hazard Perry, the victor of the War of 1812's Battle of Lake Erie. In the prologue Van Tassel and Vacha place this event in the context of the growth of the city, and show how the dedication was as much a celebration of the growing stature of the town as it was a celebration of the naval hero.

After looking back that September day to a proud moment in the nation's past, the residents of Cleveland found their attention rudely shifted to the present two months later, when voters went to the polls to select a new president. Cleveland and the surrounding area supported Abraham Lincoln, with all but two counties in northeastern Ohio giving him a majority. In the first chapter of the book, Van Tassel and Vacha explore this period, noting how incidents in the state of Ohio involving enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law had indicated the fiery emotions that would flare up during the 1860 presidential campaign. In the second chapter, the authors examine Cleveland's response to the outbreak of hostilities in 1861. In the third chapter they discuss northeastern Ohio's military contributions, and then, in the fourth, turn their attention to how the people at home supported the Union cause. Chapter five focuses on how the war affected the political and economic landscape of northeastern Ohio. The book concludes with an examination of how Cleveland chose to commemorate the contributions of the Union volunteers from the area through the construction of a Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument.

Van Tassel and Vacha write effectively, but they allow the participants—both supporters and opponents of the Union war effort—to speak for themselves whenever possible. In addition, the book includes photographs and illustrations that effectively capture Cleveland and its surroundings during the Civil War era. It is thus an interesting book just to glance through as well as to read.

That said, a few minor points of caution should be noted. First, this is essentially "top down" history, told from the vantage point of those who held, or would eventually assume, power. And the book does have an occasional error, such as having Rutherford B. Hayes writing from West Virginia in 1861, two years before it became a state. But as a whole, *"Behind Bayonets"* represents a very successful effort to depict an area that played an important part in, and found itself transformed by, the Civil War.

*Banners South: A Northern Community at War*, by Edmund J. Raus Jr. Civil War in the North Series. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006. xiv, 327 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.00 cloth.

Reviewer Kenneth L. Lyftogt is a lecturer in history at the University of Northern Iowa. He is the author of several books on Iowa and the Civil War, including *From Blue Mills to Columbia: Cedar Falls and the Civil War* (1993).

*Banners South: A Northern Community at War*, by Edmund J. Raus Jr., is a study of local Civil War history, in much the same vein as my own *From Blue Mills To Columbia: Cedar Falls and the Civil War* (1993), the story of an Iowa town, or *Fire Within: A Civil War Narrative from Wisconsin*, by Kerry A. Trask. Each attempts to examine the war by studying the experiences of one community. Each story is representative of other communities but is also a unique story in its own right.

*Banners South* begins by telling the story of Cortland, New York, "the city of the seven valleys" in the Appalachian Mountains, which took its name from Pierre Van Cortland, the first lieutenant governor of New York. The religious effects of the Second Great Awakening, the economic challenges of an isolated area, and the growing abolitionist movement all contributed to the character of Cortland and its people. After setting this context, the book follows the story of the volunteers from Cortland County who served in the 12th New York Volunteer Infantry, and the 23rd New York Volunteer Infantry.

Raus has done a splendid job of gathering information on the county and its volunteers. He introduces readers to the volunteers as individuals and follows them through the war. His impressive collection of photographs brings the story to life. Raus is no sentimentalist in his depictions of the men; they can be viciously racist, often selfish, as well as brave and patriotic. Military service can be corrupting as well as noble. Raus pulls no punches on such issues.

One of the strengths of the book is its introduction of interesting Civil War figures, especially Colonel Henry Cane "Barney" Hoffman, a tragic character, and General Marsena R. Patrick. Patrick, as the Union military governor of occupied Fredericksburg, is a great example of the old-school professional soldier in the difficult position of commanding volunteer troops. Patrick was also a Union conservative who wanted to put down the rebellion without making war on southern civilians, which often put him at odds with his own men, who sought to punish rebels wherever they found them.

The largest difficulty of this approach to Civil War studies is how the author judges the potential audience. How much knowledge do readers have of the war? Do they look to a local study to learn about the war itself? Or are they knowledgeable about the war and look to

local studies to flesh out and enhance the larger picture? It is on this edge that the book is at its weakest. Raus has served as a historian at Manassas, Gettysburg, and Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania, and his battlefield expertise dominates the work. The campaign descriptions are as good as any but are superfluous for readers with a basic knowledge of the war. As a result, the Cortland volunteers become lost in the larger stories of the Manassas, Fredericksburg, and Antietam campaigns.

The book ends, as it begins, in Cortland, New York, taking the story of the county and its soldiers through the end of the war. The beginning and the end are the briefest but best parts of the book, with the long campaign histories sandwiched between. There is little to offer scholars of Iowa history here except in the book's approach. Every soldier represented a community and had a family, loved ones, and a job back home, and that was true in every part of the nation.

*The Untold Story of Shiloh: The Battle and the Battlefield*, by Timothy B. Smith. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006. xxii, 206 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$34.00 cloth.

*Shiloh: A Battlefield Guide*, by Mark Grimsley and Steven E. Woodworth. *The Hallowed Ground: Guides to Civil War Battlefields*. A Bison Original. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006. xv, 169 pp. Illustrations, maps, table, bibliography. \$19.95 paper.

Reviewer Dwight T. Pitcaithley is college professor of history at New Mexico State University. Former Chief Historian of the National Park Service (1995–2005), he is the author of several articles about the NPS and the preservation of public memory, especially in regard to the Civil War.

Former National Park Service historian Timothy Smith has followed his insightful *This Great Battlefield of Shiloh: History, Memory, and the Establishment of a Civil War National Military Park* (2004) with a pleasing companion volume. *The Untold Story of Shiloh* probes into little-known and little-analyzed aspects of the battle, Shiloh's national cemetery, the story of the battle as presented by generations of historians, and the founders of the park. With a most accessible writing style, Smith covers a range of subjects, adding depth to the reader's understanding of the place called Shiloh.

Several of his chapters deal with battle-related subjects—"The Ten Greatest Myths of Shiloh," the campaign against Corinth, Mississippi, and the role of the U.S. Navy—but it is the non-military-related sections that make *The Untold Story of Shiloh* captivating reading. In "Historians and the Battle of Shiloh: One Hundred Years of Controversy," Smith observes four distinct schools of thought that have shaped the

historiography of the battle. Historians first offered straightforward accounts of the battle. Then they emphasized the action at the Hornet's Nest and the Sunken Road as the keys to understanding the battle. A third school discounted the contest at those two places and argued instead that the death of Albert Sydney Johnson determined Shiloh's outcome. Finally, Smith discerns a fourth school developing, one that emphasizes that Confederate misunderstanding of "enemy positions, deployment, and geography" (2) led to the Confederate defeat. Smith's skillful handling of the construction and evolution of these historical perspectives adds an important dimension to the study of battles.

All Civil War battlefields possess monuments and markers, yet few if any historians of the battles spend much effort to analyze the dedication of the monuments and their role in national reconciliation. Smith not only presents a refreshing analysis of the relationship between the monuments and the gauze of reunion they attempted to create, but he also offers readers the dedication speeches themselves. Stepping away from the role of intermediary, he presents unfiltered transcripts of the speeches dedicating monuments honoring troops from Michigan, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. The state commission from Iowa dedicated 11 regimental monuments and one state monument in 1906, with the keynote speech presented by Iowa governor Albert B. Cummins. The speeches from those dedications, as well as that given at the unveiling of the United Daughters of the Confederacy's Confederate monument, offer insights into the memory of the war by those actively engaged in shaping that memory. Smith astutely observes that the contested memory of the war today was shaped by battles during the 1950s and 1960s over civil rights for African American citizens and that the rhetoric of peace and unity evident in the dedication speeches was aimed solely at white audiences.

Students of Iowa history will appreciate the attention the author gives to David Wilson Reed, "The Father of Shiloh National Military Park." A citizen of Allamakee County, Iowa, veteran of the battle, and author of *The Battle of Shiloh and the Organizations Engaged* (1902), Reed also became the driving force behind the preservation and development of the battlefield. Appointed secretary and historian of the Shiloh battlefield commission, he played a pivotal role in marking the battlefield and shaping a history of the event that accentuated the action at the Hornet's Nest, action in which Reed and the Twelfth Iowa Infantry featured prominently. Given Reed's indefatigable efforts to preserve the battlefield and chronicle the battle, Smith concludes, "If it had not been for D. W. Reed, Shiloh National Military Park would not be the national treasure it is today" (155).

Mark Grimsley and Steven Woodworth's *Shiloh: A Battlefield Guide* is the third entry (following Chickamauga and Gettysburg) in their battlefield guide series titled *This Hallowed Ground: Guides to Civil War Battlefields*. The series is designed to provide more than a cursory description of the battle and the terrain upon which it was fought and less than a heavily detailed and documented guide demanding considerable time to absorb. *Shiloh: A Battlefield Guide* succeeds admirably. Each "stop" is divided into clearly defined sections labeled Directions, Orientation, What Happened, Analysis, and Vignettes. Following an introduction to the Shiloh campaign and an overview of the first day of the battle, the authors begin their tour with very detailed directions to the first stop at Pittsburg Landing. From there, the battlefield visitor is led in a largely chronological fashion around Shiloh National Military Park.

The guide's clear and concise directions, combined with clearly drawn maps and descriptions of each battle action, followed by a short analysis, makes the volume a very efficient tool for quickly and effectively exploring the battlefield. Many of the entries are followed by "Vignettes," useful anecdotes or eyewitness accounts of the battle or its aftermath. The section on Bloody Pond, for example, concludes with a report posted two days after the battle: "Of the effective nature of our fire upon this point I was enabled to judge from the appearance of trees shattered by case shot at very low range; of carriage wheels strewn over the ground; of one caisson completely disabled and abandoned; of dead horses, four of which were left here; and of the enemy's dead, nine of whom still remain, besides those already buried." The guide provides a list of sources for all quotations and a short list of books on Shiloh for those who wish to probe more deeply into those bloody events of April 1862.

*Shiloh: A Battlefield Guide* and *The Untold Story of Shiloh* offer two different, yet highly compatible, methods for viewing and understanding the battle and battlefield of Shiloh. Whether the reader craves detailed on-the-ground directions for the battle—"Walk about 100 yards to the 7th Iowa Infantry monument"—or a studied understanding of how historians construct their narratives of past events, these two very readable volumes contribute much to our knowledge of the events of almost 150 years ago on the banks of the Tennessee River.

*On Jordan's Banks: Emancipation and its Aftermath in the Ohio River Valley*, by Darrel E. Bigham. Ohio River Valley Series. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2006. x, 428 pp. Illustrations, map, appendixes, notes, index. \$45.00 cloth.

Reviewer Mitch Kachun is associate professor of history at Western Michigan University. He is the author of *Festivals of Freedom: Memory and Meaning in African American Emancipation Celebrations, 1808–1915* (2003).

Darrel E. Bigham's *On Jordan's Banks* makes a significant contribution to our understanding of African American experiences in communities along an important section of the Ohio River valley from the 1850s to the 1880s. The author's astute choice to focus on the region defined by the Ohio River, rather than a particular state or community, is one that more scholars should emulate for other parts of the United States, especially those with relatively small and scattered black populations.

*On Jordan's Banks* examines black life in river communities large and small in Kentucky's 25 river counties and in 25 on the northern bank: 6 in Ohio, 13 in Indiana, and 6 in Illinois. Bigham uses an impressive range of primary and secondary sources, including monographs, articles, and theses on particular states and communities, and those mainstays of the local historian—census data, city directories, slave schedules, county histories, newspapers, memoirs, and birth, death, and marriage registers.

The book is organized into three major chronological segments. The first two, dealing with the late antebellum period and the years of the Civil War, respectively, each contain two chapters—one each addressing conditions on the northern and southern banks of the Ohio. These are effective in laying the groundwork for the more thorough and detailed discussion in section three, which addresses the postwar years through the 1880s and comprises fully two-thirds of the book's pages. There the author compares black experiences in communities north and south of the river, with separate chapters on demographics, citizenship, civil rights, suffrage, employment, family and community, social institutions, and education.

Bigham's presentation of this material is rather dry, as he chronicles each topic in turn from one community to the next, usually working along one bank before shifting to the next. Transitions often involve phrases such as "Patterns were similar downstream" (218), or "Circumstances in other cities and towns up and down the Ohio were little different" (189). This comparative analysis of similarities and differences is helpful, though often superficial. We learn that racial segregation became more typical on both sides of the river after Emancipation, though it was more entrenched in Kentucky, which also saw more ra-



cial violence. Other differences were related to population density, blacks' percentage in the population, geography, economics, or cultural factors. Generally, it seems that blacks throughout the region experienced much the same sort of conditions, with only minor variations due to local circumstances. They were constrained in all aspects of civic life, though they worked assiduously to build religious, educational, mutual aid, and social institutions to sustain their communities.

The strength of this book is its meticulous chronicling of black community life within each of the different cities and towns along the Ohio. Future researchers in the region will be grateful to Bigham for the wealth of detail he has drawn from his sources, which provide a strong foundation for deeper analyses of black experiences. Another strength of the book is its regional conceptualization; oddly, however, the author tends to look at each community as if it were an isolated entity, without any significant contact with other communities. There is never any attempt to identify regional networks of activism, organization, or even communication. One would think that African American religious denominations (Baptist or AME, especially) or national fraternal orders such as the Masons, Odd Fellows, and Knights of Pythias—all of whose activities Bigham notes for separate communities—would have been in regular contact with other regional affiliates. Another obvious site for regional interaction would have been the Emancipation celebrations that Bigham identifies as important annual community events in numerous locales. Yet he neither acknowledges the presence of blacks from other communities attending those events nor appreciates the extent to which those events facilitated regional social, economic, and political networking.

This criticism aside, the book's contribution is a large one. The author offers an effective synthesis of a wide range of sources to provide substantial information about black communities along the Ohio. And his regional focus challenges us to push against the boundaries of the narrow community study. Perhaps that is enough to ask. The next essential step is for others to build on this foundation—in the Ohio valley or in other similarly coherent regions—to develop deeper analyses that explore the ways nineteenth-century African Americans envisioned their lives beyond the community and built regional networks in order to pursue their social, economic, and political aspirations.

*Frank Springer and New Mexico: From the Colfax County War to the Emergence of Modern Santa Fe*, by David L. Caffey. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2006. xvii, 261 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliographies, index. \$34.95 cloth.

Reviewer Jeffrey P. Brown is associate professor of history at New Mexico State University. He has written about several key figures in the development of the Old Northwest frontier.

David L. Caffey, vice-president for institutional effectiveness at Clovis Community College in New Mexico, has written several books about New Mexico topics. His most recent book assesses the career of Frank Springer, an Iowan who moved to New Mexico in the 1870s and played a significant role in his new home as an attorney, businessman, scholar, and philanthropist.

Many nineteenth-century Americans moved from one frontier to another, bringing traditions and training from their original homes while maintaining contacts with friends and family. This helped to link diverse regions into a unified nation. Attorneys often achieved particular success in new communities. Frank Springer typified these patterns. Born in Wapello, Iowa, to a well-known New England-born judge, he followed a college friend to frontier New Mexico and established a successful legal career in a violent frontier community. Springer was joined by a brother, but continued to visit other Iowa relatives, maintained for years a working relationship with Charles Wachsmuth, an internationally known paleontologist in Iowa, and relied on his father's Republican contacts in Washington, D.C., at crucial moments.

Trained as an attorney in Iowa, Springer defended the Maxwell Land Grant Company's claims to more than two million acres in New Mexico and Colorado against Hispanic and newer Anglo-American farmers and herders and against well-connected speculators and political manipulators. He negotiated with British and Dutch investors while maintaining effective control of the company. While Springer fought such powerful New Mexico politicians as Thomas Catron, he also built alliances with them when necessary. Springer argued cases before the U.S. Supreme Court, served for many years as president of the Maxwell trustees, and joined his brother in other successful New Mexico enterprises.

Springer's goal was to become economically independent in order to devote his time to the study of prehistoric crinoid fossils. He had become fascinated with scientific research while a college student in Iowa and maintained that interest all of his life. Springer became a respected crinoid scholar, published several illustrated books about crinoids, and gave his crinoid collection to the National Museum of Natural History

(later the Smithsonian). Springer funded artistic projects as well, including museum murals in Santa Fe. He helped shape New Mexico Normal University, served on the boards of the School of American Archaeology and the Museum of New Mexico, and supported the development of Santa Fe's distinctly revised architectural style. Like many successful businessmen in the Progressive Era, Springer eventually moved east. He lived most of his last 20 years in Washington and Philadelphia, dying in 1927.

This is a well-written and well-researched book, although it ascribes a political appointment to President Hayes that was actually one of President Arthur's (71). It provides a balanced assessment of an Iowan who became successful in a new frontier, became a respected paleontologist, and was an active university regent, museum board member, and philanthropist. Readers interested in the impact of Iowans on the greater nation will enjoy this volume.

*Minneapolis and the Age of Railways*, by Don L. Hofsommer. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005. xii, 337 pp. Maps, illustrations, tables, notes, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewer Kevin B. Byrne is professor of history at Gustavus Adolphus College. His research has focused on the history of railroads, technology, and the military.

Don Hofsommer knows railroad history, and in this volume he draws deeply on his extensive knowledge, recounting the rise and decline of the relationship between Minneapolis and many of its railways. The prominence of more than 200 black-and-white photographs, maps, and other illustrations—many of them full-page—make this book appropriate for a coffee table, but Hofsommer's prose constitutes its heart. Although the book ostensibly covers the period from the 1850s to the 1970s, the focus in all but the final chapter is on the years from 1860 to 1920, often using the history of the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad as a vehicle for the story. Narrating the chronicle of that railway, which was begun largely by area milling interests, Hofsommer weaves together the complex history of Minneapolis railroads with the economic and population growth of the Mill City, the burgeoning state of Minnesota, and the upper Midwest.

Viewing the subject chiefly from a business history perspective, Hofsommer is sympathetic to the viewpoint of railroad managers, some of whom lend their colorful personalities to the story. The history also touches on Iowa, its northern regions in particular, due to their trading relationship with Minneapolis, as grain and coal went north while flour and lumber came south. Larger railroad combina-

tions, including several important to Iowans, eventually serviced Minneapolis as it reached out to an enormous economic hinterland that ultimately extended to the West Coast. In sum, Hofsommer and the University of Minnesota Press have produced a history that will interest railroad buffs and local historians alike.

*Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement and the Bombing that Divided Gilded Age America*, by James Green. New York: Pantheon Books, 2006. 383 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, index. \$26.95 cloth.

Reviewer David M. Anderson is assistant professor of history at Louisiana Tech University. He is completing a book manuscript titled *The Battle for Main Street, U.S.A.: The 1955 Perfect Circle Strike and the Myth of Heartland Consensus*.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Midwest underwent a profound economic transformation that made it a center of industrial capitalism with Chicago as its hub. That transformation produced massive wealth, created great individual fortunes, and attracted millions of European immigrants, but it came at the cost of an unstable economy, vast social inequality, and bloody episodes of class conflict that still stand as the labor movement's historical touchstones.

In *Death in the Haymarket*, labor historian James Green claims that the most important of these episodes occurred at Chicago's Haymarket Square on May 4, 1886, near the end of a rally organized by local anarchists to protest the killing of four strikers a day earlier during a citywide general strike for the eight-hour day. As city police moved in to break up the rally, a bomb exploded, and amid the ensuing confusion, seven police officers and three civilians were killed, and scores were wounded. In the bombing's aftermath, eight anarchists, none of whom had actually thrown the bomb, were tried and found guilty in what amounted to a show trial. Four anarchists were hanged, one committed suicide while awaiting execution, and the other three were eventually pardoned. For Green, an ideal of civic unity also died at the end of the same hangman's noose that choked the life out of the Chicago anarchists. The event, he concludes, "marked a turning point in American history—a moment when our industrial relations could have developed in a different, less conflicted way," but instead "ushered in fifty years of recurrent industrial violence" (319).

Green sees the Haymarket bombing as the climax of two decades of increasing civic polarization. He opens the book in May 1865, when Abraham Lincoln's funeral train passed through Chicago, the last moment when city residents stood together in unity. From that point on,

relations between the city's working class and its employers spiraled downward. Inspired by Republican "free labor" rhetoric, workers organized politically to achieve a statewide eight-hour law in 1867, but saw their efforts overturned when employers ignored the law. As labor leaders became increasingly disillusioned with the ballot box, a collection of working-class intellectuals—some native-born, but many German immigrants steeped in a rich cultural life of mutual aid societies and a vibrant foreign-language press—emerged to seek an alternative to industrial capitalism.

Tracing the formation of that intellectual subculture constitutes the core of Green's engaging narrative that deftly synthesizes 30 years of the new labor history. His main character is Albert Parsons, a former Confederate soldier who converted to Radical Republicanism during Reconstruction, married an ex-slave named Lucy, and moved to Chicago, where he joined a cadre of German socialists, led by the dashing August Spies, an upholsterer-turned-labor agitator. In the wake of the uprising that accompanied the 1877 national railroad strike, that radical cadre adopted a romantic brand of revolutionary unionism—the "Chicago Idea" of "one big union" that would lead to a general strike to establish a "self-governing community of equal producers" (130). But as employers turned to state militias to crush unions, the radicals drifted toward anarchism, advocating the use of dynamite as the "great equalizer" in the ongoing class war.

While Green sympathizes with the anarchists' revolutionary vision, he shows that other working-class leaders, either through the Knights of Labor or factory-based trade unions, opted for more practical goals—such as the eight-hour day—capable of rousing workers to militant action. Indeed, as Green shows, the anarchists were initially caught off guard by the "Great Upheaval" for the eight-hour day that inspired their call for the fateful rally at the Haymarket Square.

Both anarchists and the Chicago labor movement would be victims of the "red scare" that followed the Haymarket bombing. Fueled by a sensationalistic press, the public response to the Haymarket case "provoked a new kind of paranoia among native born citizens" who would henceforth demonize immigrants as dangerous revolutionaries and condemn trade unionists as "irresponsible troublemakers" (11). The end result, Green laments, was a society deeply divided by "an atmosphere of fear and hatred," a legacy that he claims we still live with today (12).

But we also live with another legacy that emerged out of the ashes of Haymarket, one that Green implicitly discounts. After the hysteria over the bombing subsided, mainstream union leaders joined with middle-class intellectuals and party politicians to create the modern

liberalism that led to important labor reforms in industrial cities throughout the Midwest. Despite his disillusionment with modern liberalism, Green has produced the best narrative history of Gilded Age labor conflict, ideal for anybody interested in an important chapter in the Midwest's wrenching transition from labor republicanism to industrial capitalism.

*Building Environments: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture X*, edited by Kenneth A. Breisch and Alison K. Hoagland. Vernacular Architecture Studies Series. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005. x, 320 pp. Illustrations, maps, floor plans, notes, bibliographical references, index. \$32.00 paper.

Reviewer Mary Anne Beecher is associate professor of architecture at the University of Oregon. She has published articles on a wide range of vernacular architecture topics, from farmhouse designs to roadside architecture.

*Building Environments*, a collection of essays based on papers presented in meetings of the Vernacular Architecture Forum, represents a broad geographical perspective on historic vernacular architecture from New England to Alaska to Jamaica. All present a strong case for using the built landscape as a lens through which to read the influence of cultural factors such as gender, race, and class. Many serve as excellent examples of how to employ underused sources, such as paint analysis, compensation claims, and the materials deposited in walls by rats, to conduct building research, and of the importance of unconventional building types or "architectural sculptures," such as Great Lakes fisheries, Lithuanian wayside shrines, and umiak skin boats inverted on beaches for use as shelters.

Pamela Simpson's well-researched essay on "grain architecture" includes information specific to the historical built landscape of Iowa, including Sioux City's series of late nineteenth-century corn palaces, but most of the essays do not focus on Iowa. There is still much relevance for this work to investigators of the midwestern vernacular landscape, however. For instance, Kirk E. Ranzetta's careful reading of nineteenth-century tobacco barns in Maryland offers a sound model for evaluating the significance of now obsolete agricultural structures; and Marla R. Miller's account of the place of domestic help in early Federal middle-class houses demonstrates architecture's sometimes subtle role in reinforcing a hierarchy of authority within extended rural households. These and other essays present models of methods for research and draw conclusions that relate directly to scholars of midwestern history.

*Alcoholism in America: From Reconstruction to Prohibition*, by Sarah W. Tracy. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005. xxiii, 357 pp. Notes, index. \$50.00 cloth, \$23.00 paper.

Reviewer Rachel E. Bohlmann is director of public programs at the Newberry Library in Chicago. Her dissertation was "Drunken Husbands, Drunken State: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union's Challenge to American Families and Public Communities in Chicago, 1874-1920" (University of Iowa, 2001).

In *Alcoholism in America: From Reconstruction to Prohibition*, Sarah W. Tracy examines the history of alcoholism in the United States. She describes the processes by which people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries slowly and incompletely came to consider inebriety a disease rather than a moral failing. Using a history of science perspective, Tracy argues that immediately after the Civil War doctors took the lead in defining inebriety as a physical ailment. Even so, nearly 50 years later and on the eve of Prohibition, Americans still held no consensus on whether heavy drinking was an illness; even doctors who treated inebriates used a mixture of medical and social or behavioral approaches. Tracy finds that over the course of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era the question of what inebriety was became more complex as medical men asserted their professional authority to combat alcoholism as a public health issue, but found their treatments ineffective and the goal of finding a cure elusive. This is a fascinating story of incomplete medicalization. Tracy dispenses with a top-down narrative of the history of alcoholism in the United States by showing that doctors interested in the alcohol problem competed with other public health experts, taxpayers and voters, drinkers, drinkers' families, quack healers, and temperance and religious reformers in their efforts to define, diagnose, treat, and prevent alcohol-related disease.

Through seven chapters, Tracy tells a story that begins as a history of disease and turns to analysis of institutional care, through which she examines public and private attempts to treat people, mostly men, with drinking problems. In the last portion of the book she focuses on two case histories, one in Massachusetts and the other in Iowa. To trace the medicalization of inebriety, imperfectly as it occurred, she relies on meeting notes, proceedings, reports, and publications from the American Medical Association, and of course, the American Association for the Cure of Inebriates, as well as on the copious amount of secondary literature in alcohol studies, the history of temperance reform, and the history of science. For the case study chapters Tracy relies on patient case files, correspondence files, annual reports, and newspapers. The depth of her reading in the field of alcohol studies shows in the footnotes, which comprehensively display the literature.

One of the strongest aspects of Tracy's book is the way she complicates our understanding of alcoholism. Although physicians in the 1870s defined it as a physical disease, Tracy demonstrates that their treatments for inebriates drew on social as much as medical models. Physicians drew on older traditions of self-help, religious discipline, moral persuasion, and social control in addition to modern medicine and physical therapies. In Iowa, for example, inebriates admitted to the state hospital were given medical examinations, medicines (strychnine was frequently used as a digestive aid), tonics, and physical therapies (including hydrotherapy and massage). As patients improved physically, doctors placed them on regimens of light exercise and vocational therapy, as well as a program of entertainments, lectures, and general socializing. Not everyone considered inebriety a medical problem, however; in 1906 the Iowa state legislature, as a punitive measure, provided patients with wheelbarrows and offered their labor to area farmers during harvest time. Such incidents suggest how people found it difficult to think about problematic drinking outside of moral frameworks.

If the book has a weakness, it is the author's too heavy reliance on an organizing binary between "moral" and "medical" models for inebriety over the course of the period. That contrast can indeed be drawn quite clearly in the 1870s and 1880s, but by the turn of the twentieth century and the rise of prohibition reform, it becomes difficult to use "moral" to describe how Americans summed up the social problem of inebriety. With the rapid rise of the prohibition reform movement and Progressivism, drinking was seen less as a personal moral failure and more as part of larger social, economic, and even legal processes that went beyond individual drinkers. Drinking was criminalized in new ways during the Progressive Era, as Tracy points out, but Progressives placed crime and criminals within social and economic contexts rather than an exclusively moral one.

Tracy treats the significant problem of alcoholism sympathetically. She tells new and important histories of people's efforts to find a cure for themselves or others and provides examples of heartbreaking failures. Her book enriches our reading of reform in this period. One can only wish that her study extended through the Prohibition period, when people's struggles with alcohol addiction continued, even though states stopped providing public health care for drinkers. Unfortunately, the sources she uses to such good effect for the period before 1920 disappear for the next decade. What she shows, however, through careful and thorough readings of medical and institutional records, are people's potent struggles with a human condition—addiction—that is dramatic, tragic, and, it seems, a fundamental part of being human.



*Winning the Vote: The Triumph of the American Woman Suffrage Movement*, by Robert P. J. Cooney Jr., in collaboration with the National Women's History Project. Santa Cruz, CA: American Graphic Press, 2005. xv, 496 pp. 960 photographs, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$85.00 cloth.

Reviewer Kathleen M. Green is professor of history at Morningside College. Her research and writing have focused on woman suffrage, temperance and prohibition, and Sioux City.

*Winning the Vote: The Triumph of the American Woman Suffrage Movement* is a photographic and documentary history of an often overlooked movement in American history. This visually pleasing work is a balanced account of the seven-decade campaign on the local, state, and national level to secure the right to vote for American women. Robert Cooney, through his extensive research in archival sources, tells the story of four generations of American women who worked tirelessly to empower American women to exercise their most basic civil right.

The volume is arranged chronologically in 18 chapters that cover the years from 1848 to 1920. Each chapter begins with a narrative passage that clearly and concisely introduces the important themes and events of the movement, and each contains a stunning array of photographs, posters, political cartoons, leaflets, buttons, and documents. Suffragists come to life in the 78 individual biographical sketches with photographs that are incorporated throughout the book. A brief epilogue describes the impact of woman suffrage in the twentieth century.

Although *Winning the Vote* emphasizes the first two decades of the twentieth century, the earlier history of the movement is clearly grounded in the nineteenth-century antislavery and women's rights movements. One of the least understood aspects of the woman suffrage movement has been the state campaigns. Beginning with the unsuccessful 1867 referendum in Kansas, Cooney provides documents, photographs, and analysis of the 52 state referendum campaigns, including the failed 1916 Iowa referendum (316). He also includes documents from the antisuffragists and explains the significant financial resources of the opponents, especially the liquor interests. The early suffrage victories in the West and the suffrage failures in the East are emphasized. The successful 1911 referendum in California and the triumphant 1917 New York campaign are covered in detail.

The author does not avoid controversial issues and divisions within the suffrage movement. Rather, this history documents the numerous disagreements over strategy and tactics. This is a real strength because those disagreements show the diversity of activities that made up the movement. The drive for a federal constitutional amendment

revealed the level of strategic flexibility possible. The National American Suffrage Association avoided confrontational tactics, supported the war effort, and continued state campaigns. Members of the Congressional Union picketed the White House, campaigned against Democrats, and went on hunger strikes while in jail. All of these activities are covered in abundant photographs and documents.

Readers of the *Annals of Iowa* will find that Carrie Chapman Catt, Iowa's best-known suffragist and the leader of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in its final years, is given the attention she deserves. Cooney traces Catt's career in Iowa from 1885, when she joined the Iowa Suffrage Association (68), until she helped to organize the League of Women Voters in the 1920s. Midwestern readers will also appreciate the careful coverage of the state referendum campaigns in Illinois, Nebraska, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and South Dakota.

For the general reader, this work is an excellent introduction to the history of woman suffrage. For the collector of campaign and woman suffrage memorabilia, it displays rare campaign posters and buttons. This volume is valuable for those who pursue research in state and local history because of the index and bibliographical references. Cooney has done the hard work of finding, identifying, and analyzing some new primary sources from dozens of research collections scattered across the country. *Winning the Vote* is the successful culmination of the National Women's History Project to celebrate the 85th anniversary of the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.

*A Mind of Her Own: Helen Connor Laird and Family, 1888–1982*, by Helen L. Laird. Wisconsin Land and Life Series. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006. xvii, 508 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 cloth.

Reviewer Theresa Kaminski is professor of history at the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point. She is the author of *Prisoners in Paradise: American Women in the Wartime South Pacific* (2000).

What makes an individual worthy of a full-length biography? Typically, subjects of biographies are national or international figures or, a bit more unusually, they are ordinary people whose lives represent something important about larger issues. Although Helen Connor Laird came from an influential Wisconsin family, she fits more easily into the latter category. So the critical question, at least for assessing the value of this book for historians, is whether author Helen L. Laird has been able to connect her life to the important issues of twentieth-century political history and American women's history.

In her prologue, Helen L. Laird argues that her mother-in-law's life "reflects the proud and painful American twentieth century," that it speaks to "a stridently materialistic nation with a deep and persistent spiritual component." Moreover, by examining Laird's life within the context of Laird family politics, the biography "broadens the scope" of the history of the progressive movement in Wisconsin (xiii).

The biography is written chronologically, beginning with information on Helen Connor's family and its ties to Wood County, Wisconsin, and ending with her death in 1982. A 1912 graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Helen Connor married Melvin R. Laird the following year and immediately started a family. Their third son, named for his father, would become U.S. Secretary of Defense in 1969. Helen found the traditional roles of wife and mother stifling, and she suffered a breakdown. In the 1920s she convinced her husband to abandon his ministerial calling and work for her father's lumber business. During the Great Depression, Helen was an active clubwoman. In the 1940s she helped found the Wood County Republican Woman's Club to promote her husband's state senate campaign, contributed to the Council on Foreign Relations, and supported the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. In 1951 Helen began a nine-year stint on the University of Wisconsin's Board of Regents, where she chaired the education committee.

Helen L. Laird is a graceful writer, even when she gets bogged down in the minutiae of Laird family life. Her use of primary sources, including private family papers and collections from the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison, is meticulous. Her decision to make the book about the entire Laird family in addition to Helen C. Laird provides for a broader look at state-level political and economic issues. In this, the book is a model of local history and should appeal to anyone with an interest in Wisconsin history, especially its politics. The largest disappointment is the author's inability to connect Helen C. Laird's life to women's history. Beyond a general sense that she was an unusual woman for her time, we do not learn exactly why that was so. If Helen L. Laird had opened that avenue of analysis, this biography would be invaluable.

*The War Comes to Plum Street*, by Bruce C. Smith. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005. xiii, 308 pp. Illustrations, note on sources, index. \$29.95 cloth.

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

The war mentioned in this book's title is World War II, and Plum Street in New Castle, Indiana, is the focal point of this engaging study of a midwestern neighborhood's response to a global conflict. Bruce C. Smith, who earned a Ph.D. in history at the University of Notre Dame, promises "a different kind of book about World War II," one that "looks at the war through the eyes of people who lived through it" (xi). He does so by examining New Castle through oral history interviews with selected individuals and an intensive reading of the local newspaper. He attempts to see the war as it unfolded for those involved, not with the perspective that historians usually achieve with the wide study of primary and secondary accounts.

Smith begins his story in the years after World War I with the migration of couples to New Castle in search of jobs. From Kentucky came Fred Smith, followed by his fiancée Lillian Frogge. Jess and Ethel Moles journeyed north from Tennessee with their infant daughter Gemma in 1923. With a growing family—three more daughters were born in New Castle—the Moleses acquired a house on Plum Street. Smith's subjects consist principally of the Smith and Moles families (brought together with the marriage of the Smiths' son Ed to Gemma in 1943), their friends and acquaintances, and the families into which the remaining Moles daughters would marry. Only in his closing pages does Smith reveal that Ed and Gemma are his parents.

The first three chapters consider the lives of these families from their arrival in New Castle through the hopeful 1920s and the desperate Depression years to the outbreak of war in Europe. A fourth chapter takes the story to the attack on Pearl Harbor. Eight chapters examine the wartime years. A brief epilogue covers the postwar lives of the neighbors on Plum Street.

The war chapters trace the mobilization of New Castle residents into the armed forces and growing defense industries, the course of military campaigns overseas, and the attendant casualties from the area, who are noted one by one. Using newspaper coverage, Smith ably recounts the onset and evolution of rationing. Readers see how young people, faced with an uncertain future, chose to marry and how young wives followed husbands to training camps until their units departed for war. The wives, often pregnant, then returned to their parental homes to await anxiously the homecoming of loved ones.

Smith offers the most detail on the lives of Ed, who served in Europe, and Gemma.

This narrative history, providing insights into how the war affected average people in a typical community, is a welcome addition to the growing literature on the U.S. home front in World War II. The work lacks notes, so readers cannot always determine where the information comes from. Smith relies on a limited selection of secondary works, used largely as references on military affairs, and does not seek to fit his work into the historiographical framework of other home front studies. Conspicuously absent from his bibliography are citations to overviews of the home front, at least one of which, Paul Casdorph's *Let the Good Times Roll: Life at Home in America during World War II*, uses periodicals in an approach similar to Smith's. Although scholars would prefer more documentation and analysis, readers who seek to understand the lives of the generation that fought World War II will enjoy this book.

*An Opportunity Lost: The Truman Administration and the Farm Policy Debate*, by Virgil W. Dean. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006. xv, 275 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewer Richard S. Kirkendall is professor of history emeritus at the University of Washington, Seattle. He has written extensively about American farm policy and international politics in the Roosevelt and Truman administrations.

This book is a welcome addition to the literature on the history of American farm policy. It makes a strong argument about the crucial significance of the Truman period for that history. It was a time of "opportunity lost," of failure to develop a much needed, new, and long-range policy to replace the New Deal program. Established in response to the Great Depression, that program had been reshaped during World War II into an emphasis on high price supports designed to persuade farmers to meet the heavy wartime demands for food and fiber. By the end of the war, Virgil Dean maintains, an "agricultural revolution" was increasing the output of American farmers and thereby generating pressure for a new policy, but the political system, headed by Harry Truman, failed to produce one.

Dean devotes most of his pages to a description and analysis of that failure during the years 1947 to 1950. Truman relied heavily on his secretaries of agriculture, first Clinton Anderson and then Charles Brannan. In 1947 Anderson believed that, because of the agricultural revolution, the United States must move away from a policy of supporting prices at high levels and should endorse a "policy of abun-

dance." Many farm organizations and farmers' representatives in Congress agreed, but the high degree of unity broke down in 1948 under pressures from election-year politics and from a fear of falling farm prices. Instead of something quite new, the legislators extended high price supports for a year and put off a new policy of flexible supports, linked with changing levels of production, until 1950.

After blaming Truman's and Brannan's rhetoric in the 1948 campaign for the rise of partisanship in farm politics, Dean moves on to an extended discussion of a plan Secretary Brannan introduced in 1949. He favored a continuation of price supports for some commodities, "production payments" (government subsidies) rather than high prices for producers of commodities that could not be stored for long periods, and a way of limiting the amount of money individual farmers could receive from the programs so that they would not encourage large operators to enlarge their farms still more. Highly controversial, Brannan's plan generated much debate in the press, within farm organizations, and among economists. It failed in Congress in 1949. Dean attributes that failure mostly to partisanship among both Democrats and Republicans; he also gives some credit to the southern Democrats, some to the American Farm Bureau Federation, and some to Secretary Brannan. Instead of enacting the Brannan Plan, Congress in 1949 once again delayed implementation of flexible price supports and extended high supports. The next year, war in Korea became an additional obstacle in the path of change in farm policy.

Dean does not regard the Brannan Plan as an adequate response to the new situation. It was too close to the old program. He appears to prefer the policy of flexible price supports, and he notes that the Eisenhower administration established a flexible program but that it had only a short life.

Dean builds his history on a strong research base, taking full advantage of the riches now available for work on the Truman period. He draws together the relevant and abundant scholarly work. That includes the basic book on the subject by Allen J. Matusow, *Farm Politics and Policies in the Truman Years*, published 40 years ago. Since then, many scholars have made contributions to Truman-era historiography, but Dean still finds much value in Matusow's early work. Dean's book also benefits from manuscripts that could not be seen in the 1960s, including the Anderson and Brannan papers and important portions of Truman's papers.

There is one underdeveloped theme in this good book. That is the discussion of the agricultural revolution that Dean regards as *the* source of the need for a change in policy. He refers to it often, but his references

are short and scattered. He defines it as technological, but it was more than that. It was demographic, too. Technology was replacing people in farming. Participants in his story knew that farmers were becoming more productive and that that change had implications for policy, but they, he suggests, were not really aware that something so big as to be labeled a revolution was under way. How far had it progressed? Was there much discussion of it in the press, in the congressional committees, and elsewhere at the time? A discussion of such questions would have strengthened the book. A full chapter on the revolution, following the introduction, could have been a helpful addition.

Even without such a chapter, the book makes a significant contribution on a topic of great importance in Iowa and much importance elsewhere as well.

*Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade*, by Donald T. Critchlow. Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century America Series. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005. xi, 422 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Glen Jeansonne is professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His many books and articles on right-wing politics in the twentieth-century United States include *Women of the Far Right: The Mothers' Movement and World War II* (1996).

Some years ago I delivered a paper on Elizabeth Dilling at the American Historical Association's annual convention. My paper was appropriately critical of Dilling, who preferred to fight beside Hitler rather than against him. After the paper was applauded, the first questioner asked me to compare Dilling to Phyllis Schlafly. I replied that Schlafly was a mainstream conservative who worked within the system and seldom lost her temper; Dilling belonged to the lunatic fringe, was infatuated with conspiracy theories, and described herself as "even-tempered, mad all the time." I could not persuade my listeners that Schlafly and Dilling were not ideological soulmates. The session quickly disintegrated, and I left the room feeling as if I had been exiled to the academic equivalent of Siberia.

More than a decade later, the stereotype of Schlafly persists in academia that lumps her with the Ku Klux Klan and the John Birch Society and just short of Lizzie Borden. Donald Critchlow's book is a useful corrective. Some people are misled to label Schlafly a fanatic by her ferocious drive, powerful energy, and fierce determination. But it is a focused, purposeful, controlled drive, although passionate.

It is important to define what Critchlow's book is not. It is not a biography, and the personal detail is parsimonious. There is overwhelming data about the evolution of grassroots conservatism, its temporary takeover in 1964, and its rejuvenation and triumph in 1980. Schlafly is an actor in the drama, but the study is more about the movement and Schlafly than about Schlafly and the movement.

Viewed at close range, as the author had the opportunity to do, it is difficult not to respect Schlafly, whether or not one concurs with her views, which are to the right of her party. If Schlafly were a feminist, feminists would consider her a model, someone who really has it all and is never subservient. Her marriage was happy, and through her own efforts and her husband's, they became moderately wealthy. Although never elected to political office, she helped others win. She wrote best-selling books and inspired and mobilized women. She juggled running a home and a hectic speaking, writing, and organizing career, and, at the height of her battle against the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), at age 51, she enrolled in law school and graduated three years later, ranking high in her class. Tireless is an understatement.

Schlafly met the world on her terms. In a word, she was liberated. Sometimes what she did was popular and sometimes it was not. She did not always win her political battles and was purged by her own party twice, but she never became bitter or alienated. It begs the question of this book, but one wonders if she ever relaxes. Does she watch the Bears, eat tofu, enjoy rap music? If work and fun are actually the same things to Schlafly, that would not make her different from many highly successful people. I suspect, however, that although she takes her causes seriously, she takes herself less seriously. Most survivors have that trait.

Schlafly fused the two most significant issues in the New Right's arsenal of causes: anticommunism and limited government. Among her other interests were maintaining nuclear superiority, banning abortion and pornography, and abolishing conscription. She opposed limited conventional wars such as Korea and Vietnam on the grounds that they would divert America from the graver Soviet nuclear threat. Schlafly opposed arms control and any appeasement of communism. Most of her books dealt with the nuclear arms race, but the one that made her famous was *A Choice Not an Echo*, a 1964 campaign biography of Barry Goldwater.

There was a David versus Goliath quality to Schlafly's crusade to deny ratification of the ERA. She entered the fray in 1973, when 30 states had already ratified it and only 8 more were needed. When time expired, Congress extended it. The amendment had the support



of both parties, Hollywood celebrities, women's organizations, and mass magazines and enjoyed generous financial backing. Its defeat, more than any single factor, led to Schlafly's demonization by feminists. Her opponents called her an "Aunt Tom," wanted to slap her into reason, and suggested burning her at the stake. Schlafly replied that the amendment would weaken the nuclear family; it was unnecessary; and most remedial steps could be achieved through simple legislation—in fact, women would lose some rights under existing laws. In the end, time ran out on the ERA.

Iowa readers will find that Schlafly's influence, especially before she became a national figure, overlapped from neighboring Illinois, where she made her home. Her losing campaigns for Congress in 1952 and 1970 received substantial coverage in Iowa. She struck a high profile in the Midwest and never left her roots, moving back to the St. Louis area after her husband's death in 1994.

Schlafly's long career necessitated exhaustive research. The author, fortunately, had access to Schlafly's personal papers, still in her possession, with no restrictions. He also scoured presidential libraries, archives, and scores of monographs. He resists hyperbole and writes in a non-judgmental style, although clearly he admires Schlafly. He is somewhat short on philosophical analysis. The book explains Schlafly's battles on conservative issues case by case, yet there is little attempt to place her conservatism into an overall scheme that ties these issues together. One would like more probing of the intellectual, philosophical, and religious foundations that animated her activism. Someone so determined must have a core philosophy that synthesizes her causes and motivates her. The book is richly detailed in many respects, but Schlafly comes across as one-dimensional.

## New on the Shelves

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

### Manuscripts and Records

Correctionville, Iowa. 2 booklets, 1894 and 1898. Art catalog listing artwork shown at the Art Exhibition at the Opera House in Correctionville, Iowa, April 4, 1894; and commencement booklet for graduating class of Correctionville school, 1898. IC.

Jones County Federated Women’s Clubs. Records, 1926–2003. 1 ft. (5 vols.). Records from various clubs including convention reports and scrapbooks. IC.

Melrose Historic District, Iowa City. Papers, 2003–2004. ½ ft. Includes historical photographs, site inventory forms, and information about architect Byron James Lambert; file on Rudolph Kuever’s home at 5 Melrose Circle, biographical information about Kuever and family, speech by Kuever, correspondence with daughter, 2004, and reminiscence by son, 2003. IC.

New Pioneer Cooperative Society, Inc. Records, 1970s–2005. 42 ft. Records for Iowa City food cooperative include minutes, 1999–2005 (including transcripts and audio/video recordings), correspondence, annual reports, newsclippings, Catalyst newsletter, bylaws and articles of incorporation, and artifacts (including cookbook, buttons, membership giveaways, etc.). Also educational, promotional, and political materials, including fliers, handouts, newsletters, etc. Minutes of executive session of board of directors (both audiotapes and paper minutes), 1990s–2005, remain closed for 30 years. IC.

Nigbor, Joyce Hasselman. Family history of John William Ashbach, 2006. Includes information about his service in the 3rd Iowa Infantry during the Civil War, and life in Leon, Iowa. 65 pp. IC.

Wenger, Ezra. Diary, 1904, of Ezra Wenger of Wayland, Iowa. 1 folder. IC.

Witt, William. Papers, ca. 1983–2002. 11 ft. Papers relating to campaigns for and career in Iowa legislature. Also materials on involvement in Sierra Club and items from childhood. (Bill Witt photographs listed below.) IC.

## Audio-Visual

Conard, H. S. Glass plate negative collection and prints of plant specimens, ca. 1900–1920. 1,117 glass plate negatives (5" x 7") and selected prints created by University of Iowa and Grinnell College botanist. IC.

The Ghost Players. 1 DVD, 1996. Color, 4:50, sound. Short documentary trailer for *The Ghost Players*, a film about baseball players who formed the team at the Field of Dreams movie set near Dyersville, Iowa. IC.

Iowa's Great Lakes. *The Iowa Great Lakes Remembers: A Look at the Past, A Dream for the Future*. 1 DVD, 2006. Historical documentary with oral history interviews, etc. Distributed by the Friends of the Spirit Lake Library. IC

Manchester, Iowa. 1 original stereograph, ca. 1875–1880, of exterior of frame house with picket fence and boardwalk. IC.

Mountain, George E. (Dr.). Home movies, 1944–1964. Six 400-foot reels, regular 8 mm, color, approximately 2 hours, silent. Includes footage of the state centennial parade in Des Moines, vacations, family gatherings in Des Moines and other locations around the United States. IC.

## Maps

Maps. 38 maps and brochures of towns around Iowa, ca. 1930–2000, collected by Bob McDonald. IC.

## Published Materials

*Note:* Once per year, in the Fall issue, we list separately in this section all of the books processed since the last such listing about specific locales (towns or counties), schools, and churches, listed alphabetically by town or school name. Full publication data will be included for local and school histories; only the names of churches and the years covered will be included for church histories.

### Local Histories

Brayton. *History of Brayton, Iowa, 1878–1978*. [Brayton: Book Committee], 1978. 116 pp. DM, IC.

Burlington. *Crapo Park: A City's Pride*. Burlington: River Basin Publications, 2003. 60 pp. IC.

Cedar Rapids. *Cedar Rapids, a Poem*, by Jay G. Sigmund. N.p.: Prairie Pub. Co., 1926. 6 pp. DM, IC.

Cherokee. *Cherokee, Iowa*. [Cherokee?]: W. P. Goldie, 1907. 45 pp. *Photo album*. DM, IC.

Coin. *Coin Centennial: Pages of Time, 1879, September 1979*. [Coin?: Coin Centennial Committee?, 1979?]. 48 pp. DM.

Dubuque. *Wish You Were Here: Dubuque Historic Postcards*. [Dubuque]: Telegraph Herald, 2004. DM, IC.

Fayette. *Lewis Bottoms: Its Legacy and Lore*, by Elinor Day. Cedar Rapids: WDG Pub., 2004. vii, 110 pp. DM, IC.

Fontanelle. *Old Glory Has Flown over Fontanelle, Iowa for One Hundred & Fifty Years*. N.p., [2005]. 64 pp. DM, IC.

Forest City. *Forest City, Iowa: Photographs from the Past, 1855–2005*, photographs compiled by Cindy Carter et al., heritage series articles by Riley Lewis. N.p., 2005. 171 pp. DM, IC.

Grinnell. *Grinnell, Iowa, Jewel of the Prairie: Sesquicentennial, 1854–2004*, edited by Mary Schuchmann. [Grinnell]: Grinnell Sesquicentennial Committee, 2003. 47 pp. DM, IC.

Hamburg. *Hamburg: The Home City*. Hamburg: Davidson & Hill, [190-?]. 50 pp. IC.

Henry County. *Looking Back: Abandoned Towns of Henry County, Iowa*. N.p.: Henry County, Iowa Historic Preservation Commission, 2004. 209 pp. DM, IC.

Kalona. *A Pictorial History of Kalona, Iowa on the Occasion of the 125th Anniversary of Its Founding: 1879–2004*. [Kalona]: Kalona News, [2004]. 128 pp. DM, IC.

Lake Comar. *Lake Comar*, by Katherine Munsen and Steve Corneliussen. N.p., 2005. 43 pp. DM, IC.

Mahaska County. *Mahaska County, Iowa, Land Atlas and Plat Book: 1981*. Rockford, IL: Rockford Map Publishers, 1981. 36 pp. DM.

Muscatine. *From Muscatine: Verses*, by George Meason Whicher. Muscatine, F. A. Neidig, 1912. 71 pp. DM, IC.

Muscatine County. *Atlas, Muscatine County, 1943*, prepared by Stanley Engineering Co. Muscatine: Stanley Engineering Co., 1943. 13 pp. IC.

Newton. *Newton: An Iowa Story*, by Will Stuart. N.p.: Xlibris Corp., 1999. 153 pp. Fiction. DM.

Oskaloosa. *The Greenview Story: "As I Recall" : The Old Cottonwood Tree*, by Max L. Hoover. [Blythewood, SC, 1982.] ca. 200 pp. *Memories of an Oskaloosa neighborhood*. DM, IC.

Oto. *Oto Sesquicentennial History Book: A Collection of Memories, Pictures and Family Histories of Yesterday and Today Belonging to Those Who Have Roots to Oto, Iowa*, by Merlene (Jackson) Flynn et al. Oto, 2004. 666 pp. DM, IC.

Palmyra. *Palmyra, Iowa: Stories of a Pioneer Town, Founded 1847*, by Lloyd D. (Eric) Miller, William R. (Bill) Schooler, Sr., et al. Baltimore: Eric Meyrick Studios, 2006. 30 pp. IC.

Rock Falls. *Rock Falls, Iowa, Nee Shell Rock Falls, Iowa: 150 Year Anniversary, 1855–2005*, by John R. Cunningham. St. Cloud, MN, 2005. 192 pp. DM, IC.

Sac City. *Sac City, Established 1855*. N.p., 2005. 351 pp. DM, IC.

Story City. *Story City: Celebrating 150 Years*. N.p., 2006. 36 pp. IC. [See also Lake Comar.]

Tioga. *Tioga: A Community and Its People*. Oskaloosa: Keo-Mah Genealogical Society, [2004]. DM, IC.

Traer. *Traer's Quasquicentennial: 125 Years of Pride and Progress*. [Traer: Traer's Quasquicentennial Committee], 1998. 114 pp. DM, IC.

West Branch. *Danish Immigrants to West Branch, Iowa*, by Paul Friis. N.p. [2005]. IC.

Wyoming. *The History of Wyoming, Iowa, 1855–2005*. Monticello: Julin Printing Co., 2005. 250 pp. DM, IC.

### Church Histories

Butler Center. Peace Lutheran Church and Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 1886–1950. DM, IC.

Cedar Rapids. Eden United Church of Christ, 1906–1981. DM.

Gowrie. Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Records, 1871–2000. *Microfilm copies of 43 books of church records*. DM.

Independence. First Presbyterian Church, 1854–2004. DM, IC.

Iowa City. Trinity Episcopal Church, 1851–2001. IC.

North English. Pleasant Grove Grace Brethren Church, 1880–2005. DM, IC.

### School Histories

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