

The Annals of Iowa

Volume 77 Number 2
Spring 2018



A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF HISTORY

In This Issue

LINDA M. CLEMMONS, professor of history at Illinois State University, shows how Dakota prisoners of war at Camp Kearney in Davenport during the 1860s found ways to capitalize on local citizens' fascination with the "exotic" Indian prisoners, thereby ameliorating to some extent the brutal conditions of their captivity.

EMILY KATHRYN MORGAN, assistant professor of art history at Iowa State University, analyzes two collections of photographs related to labor strife in the meatpacking industry in mid-twentieth-century Iowa, one amassed by members of a meatpacking union, the other by a meatpacking company. Her analysis of these images demonstrates that both labor and management used photographs not only for passive purposes of record-keeping but also for active purposes: identification, intimidation, and retaliation. During times of conflict the camera became not simply a tool but a weapon, wielded by both sides.

Front Cover

Striking workers pose in front of a makeshift shelter, Cedar Rapids, 1948. For an analysis of this and many other photographs of meatpacking workers in the mid-twentieth century, see Emily Kathryn Morgan's article in this issue. Photo from United Food and Commercial Workers International Union Local P-3 Records, Iowa Labor Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

Editorial Consultants

Rebecca Conard, Middle Tennessee State University

Kathleen Neils Conzen, University of Chicago

William Cronon, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Robert R. Dykstra, State University of New York at Albany

R. David Edmunds, University of Texas at Dallas

H. Roger Grant, Clemson University

William C. Pratt, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, Iowa State University

Malcolm J. Rohrbough, University of Iowa

The Annals of Iowa

Third Series, Vol. 77, No. 2
Spring 2018
Marvin Bergman, editor

Contents

- 121 “The young folks [want] to go in and see the Indians”:
 Davenport Citizens, Protestant Missionaries,
 and Dakota Prisoners of War, 1863–1866
 Linda M. Clemmons
- 151 Striking Images:
 Photographs of Iowa
 Packinghouse Labor Conflict, 1948–1960
 Emily Kathryn Morgan
- 190 Book Reviews and Notices
- 223 Announcements
-

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF HISTORY FOUNDED IN 1863
Copyright 2018 by the State Historical Society of Iowa
ISSN 0003-4827

Book Reviews and Notices

- 190 CURT MEINE AND KEEFE KEELEY, EDs., *The Driftless Reader*, by Patrick Nunnally
- 192 FRANKLIN D. MITCHELL, *Locale and Universe: The Shared Story of the Heartland's Lucas County, Iowa, and the American Nation, 1846–2012*, by Kimberly K. Porter
- 193 JAMES KROHE JR., *Corn Kings & One-Horse Thieves: A Plain-Spoken History of Mid-Illinois*, by James A. Edstrom
- 195 JOHN REDA, *From Furs to Farms: The Transformation of the Mississippi Valley, 1762–1825*, by William E. Foley
- 197 ANNE TWITTY, *Before Dred Scott: Slavery and Legal Culture in the American Confluence, 1787–1857*, by Rebekah M. K. Mergenthal
- 199 GUY C. FRAKER, *Looking for Lincoln in Illinois: A Guide to Lincoln's Eighth Judicial Circuit*, John A. Lupton
- 199 GRAHAM A. PECK, *Making an Antislavery Nation: Lincoln, Douglas, and the Battle over Freedom*, by Stephen Hansen
- 201 AARON ASTOR, *Rebels on the Border: Civil War, Emancipation, and the Reconstruction of Kentucky and Missouri*; and MATTHEW E. STANLEY, *The Loyal West: Civil War and Reunion in Middle America*, by Kevin M. Gannon
- 205 TIMOTHY B. SMITH, *Altogether Fitting and Proper: Civil War Battlefield Preservation in History, Memory, and Policy, 1861–2015*, by Jonathan D. Neu
- 207 DAN O'BRIEN, *Great Plains Bison*, by Gregory J. Dehler
- 208 RICHARD EDWARDS, JACOB K. FRIEFELD, AND REBECCA S. WINGO, *Homesteading the Plains: Toward a New History*, by Paula M. Nelson
- 210 ANE-CHARLOTTE FIVE AARSET, *They Sang for Norway: Olaf Oleson's Immigrant Choir*, by Kristin Elmquist
- 211 JON K. LAUCK, ED., *The Midwestern Moment: The Forgotten World of Early-Twentieth-Century Midwestern Regionalism, 1880–1940*, by Charles Johanningsmeier
- 213 DENNIS M. SPRAGG, *Glenn Miller Declassified*, by Paige Lush
- 215 MOLLY LADD-TAYLOR, *Fixing the Poor: Eugenic Sterilization and Child Welfare in the Twentieth Century*, by Michael Rembis
- 217 SERGIO M. GONZÁLEZ, *Mexicans in Wisconsin*, by Janet Weaver
- 219 CARLY A. KOCUREK, *Coin-Operated Americans: Rebooting Boyhood at the Video Game Arcade*, by Matt Schaefer
- 221 SUSAN FUTRELL, *Good Apples: Behind Every Bite*, by Maureen Ogle

“The young folks [want] to go in
and see the Indians”:
Davenport Citizens, Protestant
Missionaries, and Dakota
Prisoners of War, 1863–1866

LINDA M. CLEMMONS

ON MAY 6, 1863, the *Davenport Daily Democrat and News* published a short paragraph about the Dakota prisoners confined at nearby Camp McClellan. According to the article, Captain Robert M. Littler, the camp’s chief commanding officer, had experienced “a good deal of trouble and annoyance from repeated requests of the [city’s] young folks to go in and see the Indians.” To halt the frequent appeals, he promised to “make arrangements to receive all the children and the teachers of the different Sabbath Schools in the city on Saturday afternoon of this week. This will be a rare chance for the young folks, and they should turn out *en masse*.”¹ Littler would allow the observers to stand on the raised walkway that surrounded the prison compound and gaze down on the Dakota inmates.

Captain Littler’s order permitted visitors to view the Dakota prisoners who had recently arrived in Davenport from Minnesota. Beginning in April 1863, more than 260 male prisoners were imprisoned at Camp McClellan (renamed Camp Kearney in December 1863) for their alleged roles in the Dakota War of 1862. Most

Research for this article was supported by a State Historical Society of Iowa Research Grant.

1. “The Indian Prisoners,” *Davenport Daily Democrat and News*, 5/6/1863.

THE ANNALS OF IOWA 77 (Spring 2018). © State Historical Society of Iowa, 2018.

remained jailed until spring 1866. During their incarceration, the prisoners faced physical and emotional abuse, separation from family members hundreds of miles away on the Crow Creek Reservation in Dakota Territory, and an extremely high death rate. They also were subject to the whims of their commanding officers and guards and a public that treated them as a spectacle at best, and as “savages” deserving of extermination at worst.

During their traumatic incarceration, which continued for three years, some prisoners eventually turned the public’s desire to “see the Indians” and purchase their handmade souvenirs into a form of resistance. During the second half of their incarceration, the Dakota prisoners developed ways to raise money that capitalized on the citizens’ fascination with the “exotic” Indian prisoners. They sold handmade objects to tourists, charged for photographs and for viewing their “Indian ceremonies,” and fought to have money released for lands they lost in Minnesota. They used those funds to purchase blankets, clothing, books, and even religious tracts for themselves and their families. They also bought stamps, paper, ink, and postage, which they used to communicate with their distant family members. Most important, some used the funds to fight for their freedom. In many cases, the prisoners and their families relied on Protestant missionaries affiliated with the Episcopal church and especially the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) to serve as their intermediaries.²

Other historians have commented on the Dakota prisoners’ metaphysical, cultural, and religious defiance; this article focuses mainly on material resistance.³ As historian Colette Hyman argues, “Production of items for sale [for tourists] is . . . recognized

2. ABCFM missionaries, including Thomas Williamson and Stephen Riggs, collectively spent many months in Davenport ministering to the Dakota prisoners during their incarceration. Their sons, John Williamson and Alfred Riggs, also visited the prisoners. The ABCFM missionaries established a school and a church at Camp Kearney. Episcopal missionaries, including Samuel Hinman and Bishop Henry Whipple, also visited the prisoners, although they spent less time with them than their ABCFM counterparts did.

3. Christopher J. Pexa, in “Transgressive Adoptions: Dakota Prisoners’ Resistances to State Domination Following the 1862 U.S.-Dakota War,” *Wicazo Sa Review* 30 (2015), 32, 34, argues that “Dakota resistance . . . takes a humble, but powerful form: as continuity of a Dakota kinship ethics and epistemology.” The Dakota prisoners and their families “resisted colonial forces by translating and

as both a strategy for material survival” and as a form of resistance.⁴ All forms of resistance—both material and metaphysical—illustrate that even under grievous conditions, the Dakota prisoners showed resilience and countered the pervasive narrative of the time that defined them as defeated.

In order to illustrate the prisoners’ creative responses to incarceration at Camp Kearney, this article follows a rough chronology. First, background information about the United States–Dakota War of 1862 and the Dakotas’ subsequent exile from Minnesota sets the stage for further analysis of the prisoners’ responses to their incarceration. Next, I discuss the prisoners’ first year (1863–1864) at Camp McClellan, when the prisoners suffered from disease, lack of health care, poor living conditions, and draconian rules, which left few opportunities for resistance. In the third section, I examine the following two years of incarceration, 1864–1866, when commanders relaxed some restrictions, allowing limited opportunities for resistance. The prisoners’ ability to raise money to fight for their freedom and families did not, however, end their continued trauma, which included exile from Minnesota, separation from kin, and imprisonment.

adapting powerful state and religious rhetoric to suit their own purposes.” Sarah-Eva Ellen Carlson, in “They Tell Their Story: The Dakota Internment at Camp McClellan in Davenport, 1862–1866,” *Annals of Iowa* 63 (2004), 254, contends that the prisoners “courageously chose to assimilate themselves in an effort to preserve their most basic social units—especially their families—and to protect the individuals who were most endangered and least likely to survive the internment.” Colette A. Hyman, in *Dakota Women’s Work: Creativity, Culture, and Exile* (St. Paul, MN, 2012), writes that the Dakota prisoners “worked to preserve their humanity and dignity,” which allowed them to defy “the genocidal efforts to eradicate their culture” (117). In a previous article, I focused on the prisoners’ adoption of literacy as a form of resistance and survival. See Linda Clemmons, “‘We are writing this letter seeking your help’: Dakotas, ABCFM Missionaries, and Their Uses of Literacy, 1863–1866,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 47 (2016), 183–209.

4. Hyman, *Dakota Women’s Work*, 14. For information on Native Americans, tourism, and consumerism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington, DC, 1996); and Louise Lamphere, “Women, Anthropology, Tourism, and the Southwest,” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 12 (1992), 5–12. Susan Roades Neel, in “Tourism and the American West: New Departures,” *Pacific Historical Review* 65 (1996), 517, argues that tourism “obliterate[s] indigenous land uses and convert[s] native cultures into exoticized objects for tourist consumption.”

The United States–Dakota War of 1862 and its Aftermath

The traumatic odyssey of the Dakota prisoners began after the United States–Dakota War of 1862. Many factors contributed to the outbreak of war. By 1862, the Dakota had lost 90 percent of their traditional territory, and a growing number of settlers infringed upon their remaining impermanent reservation.⁵ Dakota men, women, and children also faced increasingly aggressive “civilization” and Christianization programs promoted by government agents and Protestant missionaries. Traders regularly overcharged and cheated Dakota customers in various ways; crop failures in the 1860s led to further dependence on traders and government annuities. For these and numerous other reasons, war broke out on August 18, 1862, and ended six weeks later with the Dakotas’ defeat.⁶

Although the military phase of the war ended relatively quickly, the war’s legacy influenced the treatment of the Dakota for decades to come. Following the Dakotas’ defeat, Minnesotans absolved themselves of any responsibility for the war. Instead, newspapers across Minnesota dehumanized and vilified all Dakota men—whether they had participated in the war or not—calling them “Red Fiends,” “wild beasts,” “hyenas,” and “red-jawed tigers whose fangs are dripping with the blood of innocents!”⁷ Minnesotans derided the Dakota for their supposed “cruelty, blood-thirstiness and general bad character.”⁸ Four Lightning (David Faribault) commented on this virulent anti-

5. John Bell, “The Sioux War Panorama and American Mythic History,” *Theatre Journal* 48 (October 1996), 285.

6. For general information on the Dakota War of 1862, see Gary Clayton Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind: Dakota White Relations in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1660–1862* (St. Paul, 1997), 261–80; idem, *Through Dakota Eyes: Narrative Accounts of the Minnesota Indian War of 1862* (St. Paul, 1988); Kenneth Carley, *The Sioux Uprising of 1862* (St. Paul, 1976); Linda Clemmons, *Conflicted Mission: Faith, Disputes, and Deception on the Dakota Frontier* (St. Paul, 2014), chap. 7; Jennifer Graber, “Mighty Upheaval on the Minnesota Frontier: Violence, War, and Death in Dakota and Missionary Christianity,” *Church History* 80 (2011), 76–108; Roy W. Meyer, *History of the Santee Sioux: United States Indian Policy on Trial* (Lincoln, NE, 1993), 109–32; and John Peacock, “An Account of the Dakota–US War of 1862 as Sacred Text: Why My Dakota Elders Value Spiritual Closure over Scholarly ‘Balance,’” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 37 (2013), 185–96.

7. “Peace with the Sioux,” *St. Cloud Democrat*, 11/13/1862.

8. “Removal of the Minnesota Indians to Dakota,” *The Dakotian*, 5/19/1863.

Dakota sentiment, writing that the “white people . . . think of us as dogs.”⁹ The supposed inhuman nature of Dakota warriors was used to justify “white acts of retribution against ‘Indian savagery.’”¹⁰ Indeed, calls for vengeance appeared daily in local and national newspapers and magazines. An article in the *St. Cloud Democrat* proclaimed that although the “defensive war” had ended, the “offensive war . . . has just begun.”¹¹

The demand for vengeance appeared simultaneously with calls to remove all Dakota from Minnesota—even though many had not participated in the war and some had even rescued settlers.¹² In a letter to President Lincoln, Minnesota Governor Alexander Ramsey demanded “the removal of the whole body of Indians to remote districts, far beyond our borders” to “prevent the constant recurrence of sanguinary collisions.” Those Dakota who refused to leave Minnesota might face “extermination.”¹³ Across Minnesota, settlers likewise demanded the “extermination” of the “Fiends.”¹⁴ Four Lightning feared for his life, writing that “the white men think we should have all been killed because of what happened.”¹⁵

Amid the public’s calls for vengeance, extermination, or at the very least their removal from Minnesota, the military held Dakota prisoners in a hastily constructed prison in Mankato, Minnesota. Henry Sibley, who headed the volunteer army during the war, created a five-man military commission to try the prisoners. By the time the trials ended, the commission had brought approximately 400 Dakota men before the panel and convicted 323. Of those convicted, 303 were sentenced to death and 20 received prison sentences; 69 were acquitted. After

9. Clifford Canku and Michael Simon, *The Dakota Prisoner of War Letters: Dakota Kaškapi Okicize Wowapi* (St. Paul, 2013), 11.

10. Bell, “The Sioux War Panorama,” 281.

11. “The Sioux War,” *St. Cloud Democrat*, 11/6/1862 (emphasis in original).

12. See Sylvia D. Hoffert, “Gender and Vigilantism on the Frontier: Jane Grey Swisshelm and the U.S.-Dakota Conflict of 1862,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 29 (1998), 344.

13. “What Shall Be Done with the Sioux? Letter From Governor Ramsey to President Lincoln,” *New York Times*, 11/9/1862; “Peace with the Sioux,” *St. Cloud Democrat*, 11/13/1862.

14. Stephen Riggs, *Mary and I: Forty Years with the Sioux* (Boston), 205.

15. Canku and Simon, *Dakota Prisoner of War Letters*, 9.

appointing a two-man committee to examine the trial records, President Lincoln decreased the number to be hanged to 40; one additional prisoner had his sentence commuted by the military commissioners, reducing the number to be executed to 39.¹⁶

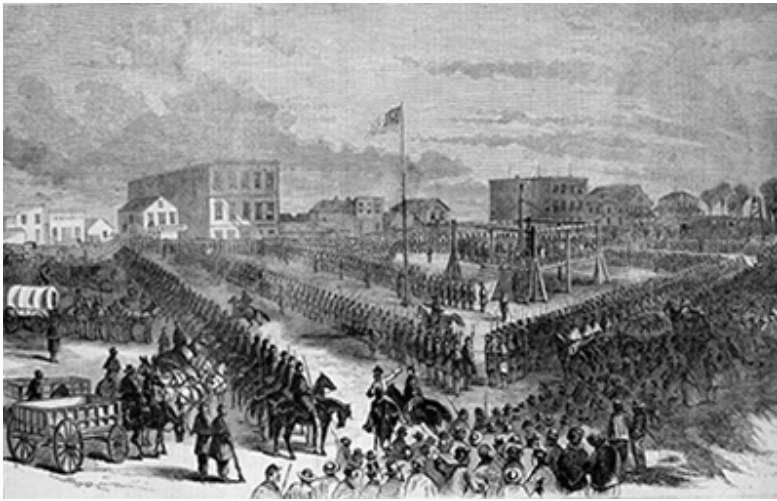
On December 26, 1862, 38 Dakota men (one man received a last-minute reprieve) were simultaneously hanged in Mankato, Minnesota.¹⁷ This hanging was the largest mass execution in U.S. history. Approximately 1,400 soldiers and a crowd of over 4,000 spectators witnessed the executions of the condemned prisoners.¹⁸ The *New York Times* reported that after the hanging a “prolonged cheer [arose] from the soldiery and citizens who were spectators.” As the crowd dispersed, soldiers buried the men in a shallow grave, but local physicians quickly exhumed the bodies for study. The public’s macabre fascination led several men to sell portions of the wooden gallows as souvenirs; later, Minnesota stores sold spoons, coins, and even a beer tray engraved with an image of the gallows. According to historian Julie Humann Anderson, these gruesome and disturbing souvenirs “bolstered the sense of triumphalism white Minnesotans felt when the Dakota were defeated at the end of the war.”¹⁹

16. Meyer, *History of the Santee Sioux*, 128, 136; Winifred W. Barton, *John P. Williamson: A Brother to the Sioux* (New York, 1919), 59; Peacock, “An Account of the Dakota-US War of 1862 as Sacred Text,” 194. See also Carol Chomsky, “The United States-Dakota War Trials: A Study in Military Justice,” *Stanford Law Review* 43 (1990), 7.

17. Charles Lewis, “Wise Decisions: A Frontier Newspaper’s Coverage of the Dakota Conflict,” *Journal of American Journalism* 28 (2011), 48. For a lengthy contemporary description of the execution, see “Execution of the Indians in Minnesota,” *New York Times*, 1/4/1863.

18. In 1862 Mankato’s population was approximately 1,500. Lewis, “Wise Decisions,” 48. If the reported crowd of 4,000 is correct, people traveled from other areas around Minnesota to witness the hanging. For example, William Mayo (father of the founders of the famous Mayo Clinic) traveled 25 miles from Le Sueur to Mankato to view the execution. Scott W. Berg, *38 Nooses: Lincoln, Little Crow, and the Beginning of the Frontier’s End* (New York, 2012), 238.

19. “Execution of the Indians in Minnesota: Their Confessions of Guilt—Descriptions of the Parting Scenes—The Execution,” *New York Times*, 1/4/1863; Berg, *38 Nooses*, 240, 242; Meyer, *History of the Santee Sioux*, 130; Julie Humann Anderson, “Memory on the Landscape: Monuments and Historic Sites Commemorating the U.S. Dakota War of 1862,” in Jeffrey Lee Meriwether and Laura Mattoon D’Amore, eds., *We Are What We Remember: The American Past through Commemoration* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 2012), 35.



On December 26, 1862, 38 Dakota men were hanged simultaneously in Mankato, Minnesota. This hanging was the largest mass execution in U.S. history. From Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, 1/24/1863.

As Minnesotans witnessed and celebrated the execution, the remaining prisoners nervously waited in the Mankato prison, unsure of their future. The government held at least 1,500 Dakota women, children, and the elderly in a crowded and unhealthy prison camp at Fort Snelling in St. Paul. In spring 1863 Congress passed legislation abrogating all Dakota treaties and removing the Dakota from Minnesota. Officials sent those held at Fort Snelling to an isolated and undeveloped reservation called Crow Creek in Dakota Territory; the Mankato prisoners would be transferred to Camp McClellan, a Civil War recruitment camp located in Davenport, Iowa. That meant that many Dakota families at Crow Creek would be separated by over 600 miles from their husbands, fathers, and sons.

On April 22, 1863, guards shackled 272 prisoners together and marched them under strict guard onto the steamer *Favorite* for transport down the Mississippi River to Iowa. Those prisoners—along with 16 Dakota women and 4 children—reached Davenport on April 24. Military authorities took charge, assuring the public that the prisoners would be “confined to hard labor . . .

probably for life." The majority of prisoners also faced death sentences, as Lincoln had not officially decided whether to free or execute the remaining prisoners. This led to constant fear that the 38 hanged at Mankato were but "the first installment."²⁰

Public calls for continued vengeance certainly added to the prisoners' anxiety. Two days after the prisoners arrived, Davenport newspapers, echoing the vitriolic language of the Minnesota press, lamented the influx of the "bloodthirsty copperskins" and "murderers." An article in the *Daily Democrat and News* expressed "horror" that the government compelled their city to "harbor in our midst nearly three hundred of the red devils." The author complained that the "most beautiful camp in the West must be polluted by these fiends in human shape, fed and taken care of by the people they would not hesitate to murder and scalp at the first opportunity." Davenport citizens should not be "burdened forever with the worthless, cruel vagabonds." The article ended with a macabre solution: "The State of Minnesota offers \$25 each for male Sioux scalps. We have over \$50,000 invested in the article right here in Davenport, and the sooner the Government realizes on them the better satisfied will be the people." Another article also suggested extermination, proposing that the government "arm the Winnebago braves to hunt their enemies, the Sioux," which would save the "expense" of imprisonment.²¹

Despite the calls for vengeance that appeared in local newspapers, Davenport citizens gathered to witness the prisoners' arrival. From about 40 miles downriver, the *Muscatine Daily Journal* reported that a "large number of our citizens visited the boat to gratify their curiosity by a sight of the Indians."²² Bill Boldt, who was 10 years old when the prisoners arrived, remembered that

20. "The Indian Murderers at Post McClellan," *Daily Democrat and News*, 4/27/1863; "Minnesota Indian Matters: The Mankato Murderers Sent to Iowa," *Chicago Tribune*, 4/2/1863; Walt Bachman, *Northern Slave/Black Dakota: The Life and Times of Joseph Godfrey* (Bloomington, MN, 2013), 299; Riggs, *Mary and I*, 217.

21. "The Indian Murderers at Post McClellan"; "More Indian Barbarities in Minnesota," *Daily Democrat and News*, 7/18/1863; "More Indians," *Daily Democrat and News*, 5/18/1863.

22. *Muscatine Daily Journal*, 5/9/1863, quoted in "Chapter 19—Camps at Davenport—Camp Kearney," in "Iowa's Rendezvous Camps, 1861–1866," 558. This unpublished manuscript, held at the Davenport Public Library, contains transcriptions of primary source records related to the Davenport prison.

"the folks stood here watching the Indians get off the boat. . . . I can see them marching now. The soldiers were there to guard them. When they marched them offboard, down the gang-plank they had them chained two by two. There were women, pa-pooes and kids coming off the boat—all those over 12 or 14 years were chained. Soldiers lined up on each side and they marched them up hill through the swath that had been cut through the woods."²³ This duality of responses to the prisoners—both fear and fascination—continued throughout their three-year confinement.

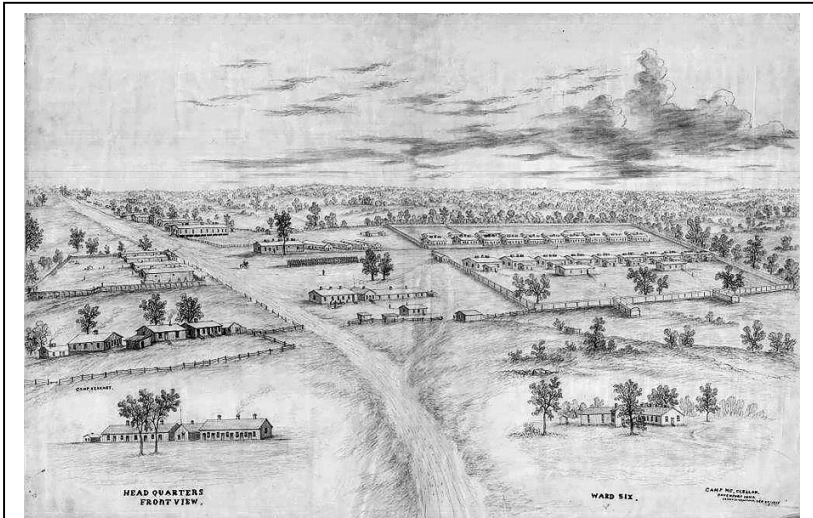
The Trauma of Prison Life, 1863–1864

During their first year at Camp McClellan, the Dakota prisoners faced harsh conditions and discipline, which left few opportunities for resistance or challenges to their imprisonment. Upon entering the camp in April 1863, the so-called "Indian Murderers at Post McClellan" were confined to a 200-square-foot "pen" that contained four barracks with the bunks taken out. "Two of these barracks are occupied by the prisoners as sleeping quarters, one is assigned for hospital and the occupation of the women, and the other is the guard house of the Post. Outside of the fence and four feet from the top is a staging running clear around, on which the sentries walk." In December 1863 commanders further separated the Indian prisoners from the Civil War soldiers training in the other portion of the camp. The commanders drew "a line along the west side of the wagon road that passes through Camp McClellan, and afterwards erect[ed] a partition fence. The Indian quarters will be in Camp Kearney. . . . This entirely separates the Indian business from the recruiting and instructing camp."²⁴

According to an article in the *Daily Democrat and News*, the Dakota prisoners were "highly satisfied with their new quarters,

23. "Sioux Indian Prison, Post McClellan, Davenport, IA, 1863–66, per Bill Boldt, January 31, 1927," in Notebook #14: The Sioux Prison at Camp McClellan, Davenport, Iowa, scans 101–2, John Henry Hauberg Papers, Augustana College, Rock Island, IL. This collection is available digitally at http://collections.carli.illinois.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/aug_hauberg/id/390/rec/1.

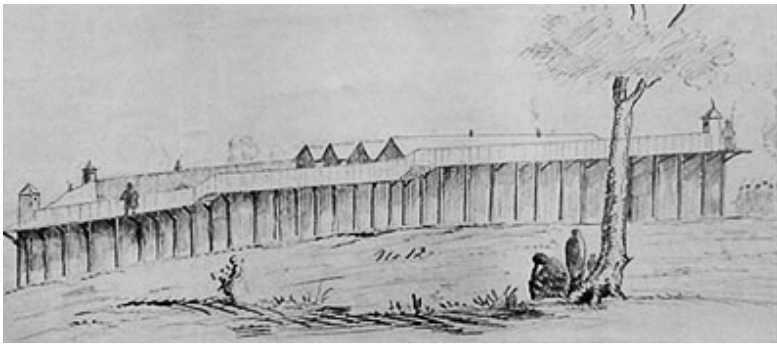
24. "The Indian Murderers at Post McClellan"; "Camp Kearney," *Daily Democrat and News*, 12/5/1863.



In this 1865 drawing of Camp McClellan, Camp Kearney – the Dakota prison – is located at the upper left. Image from Record Group 92, Post and Reservation File, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

where they have plenty of room outdoors and in.”²⁵ Conditions in the Indian prison supposedly compared favorably with the Civil War training camp located on the other side of the fence. Private military correspondence, as well as letters written by the prisoners, however, challenge the positive evaluations of the prison’s rations, living quarters, and work conditions. Despite reports to the contrary, rations were insufficient and paled in comparison to those provided on the other side of the camp. Robert Hopkins, a Dakota prisoner, reported that “we are living in great difficulty with little or no food.” They “say the food we are given is good” but “it is terrible.” Initially, the commander supplied the prisoners with coffee, sugar, and other provisions, but orders from Washington discontinued these “luxuries” after the first months of their incarceration. The prisoners subsisted on “only such quantities of beef, salt, and corn as shall be found necessary for their health and the support of life.” Just across the fence, however, the Civil War trainees ate “vastly superior rations” of “beef,

25. “The Indian Murderers at Post McClellan.”



Soldiers guarded the Dakota prisoners from the raised walkway that surrounded Camp Kearney. Captain Littler allowed members of the public to stand on the walkway and gaze down on the Dakota men. Image from Record Group 92, Post and Reservation File, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

fresh and salt, good bread, rice, beans, sugar, potatoes, onions and other vegetables . . . in liberal quantities, they themselves choosing what articles they prefer.”²⁶

The prisoners also lived in “housing of the most temporary kind.” Military officials in Washington ordered the camp commander to construct a “small cheap guard house and such other cheap buildings as are actually necessary.” The poor construction meant that the barracks were drafty and freezing during the Iowa winters. ABCFM missionary Stephen Riggs noted that the barracks “were so cold and uncomfortable that I would hardly stay two hours at a time.” In contrast, earlier inspectors had a “very

26. Canku and Simon, *Dakota Prisoner of War Letters*, 41, 209; Orders to General Littler, 5/12/1863, Record Group 393, entry 3436, part 1, lot 3, vol. 4/4, p. 486, National Archives (hereafter cited as NA), Washington, DC; Command of Brigadier General Benjamin S. Roberts to General Robert Littler, 6/19/1863, Record Group 393, entry 236, part 3, lot 2, vol. 59/55, NA; “Camp McClellan Under a New Administration,” *Daily Democrat and News*, 10/12/1861. It is important to note that I am comparing the Dakota prisoners’ rations and living conditions to those of Camp McClellan (located next door to the Indians’ barracks), which served as a training camp for Union soldiers. Nearby Rock Island held a Confederate prison, where inmates also suffered from hunger and disease—such as smallpox—and lacked warm clothing. See Benton McAdams, *Rebels at Rock Island: The Story of a Civil War Prison* (DeKalb, IL, 2000).

favorable opinion of Camp McClellan and the buildings," which were supplied with ample stoves and were "comfortable."²⁷

Poor diets and unheated barracks led to illnesses, including pneumonia, smallpox, tuberculosis, and an eye disease that led to blindness.²⁸ The prisoners received no medical care for these illnesses. Riggs, after a visit to the prison, wrote that the "care and the surroundings are not favorable to health. . . . The physician who only occasionally comes to see them wishes them all dead."²⁹ Thomas Williamson, another ABCFM missionary, also reported that the sick prisoners "look very badly. The confinement and hot weather is very detrimental to their health which pleases Gen. Roberts [the commander in charge of the camp] who wishes them to die of sickness since he cannot hang them."³⁰

The lack of food, heat, and medical care contributed to the death of numerous prisoners. In March 1864 the *Daily Democrat and News* reported that "the Indians confined at Camp McClellan are dying off fast. There are but about 250 left, and fifty of them are in the hospital and pest house. Smallpox has got among them and is thinning them out rapidly." By April 1864, 45 had died since their arrival in Davenport. When the prison finally closed in 1866, ABCFM missionaries estimated that 120 prisoners had died while incarcerated, which they thought represented about 25 percent of the total population.³¹ Given the relatively fluid nature of the prison inhabitants (transfers in and out), and poor record-

27. Riggs, *Mary and I*, 221; Orders to Benjamin Roberts, 12/12/1863, Record Group 393, entry 3436, part 1, vol. 5/5, NA; Stephen Riggs to Thomas Williamson, 11/11/1863, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, Oahe Mission Collection, South Dakota Conference of the United Church of Christ Archives, Center for Western Studies, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD (hereafter cited as CWS); "Local Matters," *Davenport Daily Gazette*, 7/10/1862.

28. For references to illnesses at the prison, see Barton, *John P. Williamson*, 72; and Riggs, *Mary and I*, 221, 229.

29. Stephen Riggs to Selah Treat, 11/7/1863, MSS 310, no. 36, ABCFM Papers (typed transcripts of ABCFM Papers, Minnesota Historical Society [hereafter cited as MHS], St. Paul, MN; originals found at Houghton Rare Book Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA).

30. Thomas Williamson to Stephen Riggs, [n.d., 1863], folder 8, box 1, Stephen R. Riggs and Family Papers, MHS.

31. "Indians Dying Off," *Daily Democrat and News*, 3/11/1864; Canku and Simon, *Dakota Prisoner of War Letters*, 35; *Missionary Herald* 60 (May 1864), 137; *Missionary Herald* 62 (January 1866), 11; Barton, *John P. Williamson*, 72.

keeping, the missionaries' estimate is difficult to confirm. Historians' estimates of the number of prisoners vary from 250 to 407.³² If the number of prisoners is the median of those estimates (i.e., about 300), and 120 died while in prison, the death rate, approximately 40 percent, would be much higher than the missionaries' estimate of 25 percent.

The trauma and indignities associated with the "Indian prison" continued even after death. Soldiers buried the deceased men in unmarked graves just outside the Indian prison.³³ Bill Boldt remembered that members of the public—including a prominent dentist—dug up the Dakota graves looking for "relics," just as their relatives' bodies had been exhumed following the hangings at Mankato. The grave robbers, however, were disappointed to find that most of the Dakota prisoners "had been buried without anything," so they "found nothing but bones."³⁴ Even without the discovery of artifacts, the desecration of the graves continued for decades. On July 25, 1878, a group of workers associated with the Davenport Academy of Natural Science opened four graves and removed several skulls, which remained at the Putman Museum of Natural History until 1986, when they were supposed to be repatriated to the Dakota of Morton, Minnesota, for burial.³⁵

32. According to an article in the *Davenport Daily Democrat*, the prison records were "kept in a very irregular manner." See "Camp Kearney—The Indian Prisoners," *Daily Democrat*, 2/19/1866. For the range of 250–407 prisoners, see Peacock, "An Account of the Dakota-US War as Sacred Text," 196. Confederate inmates at the nearby Rock Island Prison also suffered from smallpox, pneumonia, and tuberculosis, with an overall death rate of 16 percent. However, at Rock Island, the Confederate prisoners had a hospital and medicine, while for much of their imprisonment the Dakota prisoners had neither medical care nor a doctor. Of course, given the medical knowledge of the time, treatments for the Confederate prisoners were not necessarily effective. See McAdams, *Rebels at Rock Island*, xi, 210.

33. In the 1920s Bill Boldt remembered the Indian graveyard as having "three or four rows" of unmarked graves just outside of the camp. See Notebook #14: The Sioux Prison at Camp McClellan, Davenport, Iowa, scans 104, 111.

34. *Ibid.*, scan 104.

35. "The Two Sides of Camp McClellan," 4–5 (pdf), Davenport Public Library, www.davenportlibrary.com/files/5213/2586/6624/Camp_McClellan_also_known_as_Camp_Kearney.pdf.



Soldiers buried the deceased Dakota men in unmarked graves just outside the Indian prison. Members of the public – including a prominent dentist – dug up the Dakota graves looking for “relics.” This photograph of the graveyard was taken in 1927 based on information provided by Bill Boldt, who lived in Davenport during the 1860s and visited Camp Kearney. Image from Notebook No. 14, pp. 15–16, undated, folder 1, box 44, in MSS 27 Hauberg (John Henry) Papers, Special Collections, Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois.

Witnessing the desecration of the graves of their compatriots was just one example of the emotional abuse and trauma experienced by the surviving prisoners. Commander Benjamin S. Roberts, who was in charge of the prisoners for the first year, stated that the prisoners needed “to feel that they are objects of abhorrence and undergoing punishments for crimes of unexampled enormity.” To achieve that goal, he implemented a series of punitive rules. First, the majority of prisoners remained in chains during their first year-and-a-half of incarceration. Second, Roberts attempted to socially isolate the prisoners. He ordered that the prisoners could not “be visited by any parties or persons on any pretense without special authority from these headquarters.”

No one could “pass up on the platform or . . . hold any conversation or intercourse of any kind with them from there or elsewhere.” Third, he prohibited the prisoners from holding “their dances and games or amusements.” Finally, Roberts forbade them from receiving “presents of food or clothing of any kind.” Each of these orders was designed to “make their confinement hourly felt as part of the retribution that is awaiting their inhuman murder of men and slaughter and torture of women and children.” In addition to these strict rules, Roberts warned the prisoners that they could be executed at any time. During one visit, Thomas Williamson noted that “in an interval of about 20 minutes he [Roberts] thrice repeated that if it was in his power he would have them all hung before sunset.”³⁶

While Commander Roberts treated the prisoners as savage murderers, some members of the public viewed the men and women held at Camp Kearney as exotic spectacles and entertainment. In spring 1863, just after the prisoners’ arrival at Camp McClellan, an article in the *Davenport Democrat and News* described them as possessing “native majesty” and as “fiery . . . strong patriotic savages.” Members of the public also read about the “Indian princesses” who lived at Camp Kearney and worked as cooks, servants, and nurses. One article described the imprisoned daughter of Little Crow (the leader of the war) as a “splendid specimen of an Indian princess.” She was “very agreeable in appearance—probably a decided belle among the Indian damsels. She dresses better, has finer blankets and ornaments than the rest of the females and has a really distinguished air.” Echoing the wording of these articles, Levi Wagoner, a resident of Davenport, planned to visit the “stalwart warriors” he called “models of muscular build and strength.”³⁷

Like Levi Wagoner, numerous other citizens of Davenport demanded to be allowed to observe the prisoners. General Roberts complained that “strangers” constantly inundated him with re-

36. Benjamin Roberts to Robert Littler, 6/19/1863, Record Group 393, entry 236, part 3, lot 2, vol. 59/55, NA; Thomas Williamson to Stephen Riggs, 8/18/1863, folder 8, box 1, Stephen R. Riggs and Family Papers, MHS.

37. *Davenport Democrat and News*, 4/27/1863; “The Indian Murderers at Post McClellan”; Levi Wagoner, “Camp McClellan and the Red Skins,” *Annals of Jackson County Iowa* (1908), 20.

quests to visit Camp Kearney. He lamented that "the prison at Camp McClellan has become a sort of Menagerie, where all the idle and curious people [want] to congregate and amuse themselves with the antics of these savages." ABCFM missionary Stephen Riggs confirmed that whenever he visited the prison, "there were a good many white people about the doors." Even Civil War recruits in the other portion of Camp McClellan spent so much time watching the Dakota prisoners that they failed to perform "their proper duties." The local tourists became so intrusive that Commander Roberts (begrudgingly) rescinded his ban on visitors and allowed the public to stand on the platform and look down on the prisoners for two hours every afternoon except Sunday.³⁸

In contrast to Roberts's grudging willingness to allow citizens of Davenport into the prison, Captain Littler played up the spectacle. In June 1863 Littler proposed "fitting up a car on the 4th of July in which he will place about twenty Indians in 'full dress,' the whole surmounted by a gay bower of flowers, with a young girl perched on the top representing the 'Goddess of Liberty.' The Captain is going into the celebration with his whole soul and energy, and when he takes hold with a will things have to move."³⁹ It is not clear whether Littler carried out his plan, but the proposed float would have symbolically portrayed the Dakota as defeated and under the control of the United States; the commander wanted to dress the prisoners according to his specifications and to have them literally stand under Lady Liberty, a symbol of the United States. The proposed float illustrated the prisoners' position in Davenport in general: because the Dakota had been defeated militarily and imprisoned, they had been redefined as harmless objects of fascination. The commanders' contrasting actions actually were two sides of the same coin: one attempted to keep the Dakota subservient through punishment and restrictions; the other used humiliation and symbolism to achieve the same goal.

38. Benjamin Roberts to Robert Littler, 6/23/1863, Record Group 393, entry 236, part 3, lot 2, vol. 59/55, NA; Benjamin Roberts to J. F. Meline, 8/22/1863, Record Group 393, entry 236, part 3, lot 2, vol. 59/55, NA; Stephen Riggs to "My own dear home," 10/22/1865, folder 8, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Correspondence, CWS; Benjamin Roberts to Pickenpau, 9/4/1863, Record Group 393, entry 236, part 3, lot 2, vol. 59/55, NA; Carlson, "They tell their story," 262.

39. "Big Ingin," *Davenport Democrat and News*, 6/2/1863.

Resistance at Camp Kearney, 1864–1866

Even as members of the public gazed down at the prisoners from the platform surrounding Camp Kearney or perhaps in the Fourth of July parade, the prisoners looked back at the tourists. Evidence from disparate sources shows that the prisoners eventually capitalized on the public's fascination to raise funds that made their lives – and the lives of their families at Crow Creek – a little more tolerable. By 1864, conditions within Camp Kearney had improved slightly for the prisoners, which opened up a space for resistance.

On January 13, 1864, General Roberts left his post as Camp Kearney's commander. After his resignation, Thomas Williamson reported "great changes" in the camp. Subsequent commanders treated the prisoners somewhat less harshly, in large part because of the prisoners' "highly commendable" conduct. In May 1865, for example, the new commander commented that the prisoners' "conduct has been good. They work well and they do work cheerfully. They seem to be very much changed from the wild Indians and are very quiet and very much devoted to religion. . . . They seem to entertain friendly feeling toward the whites." This change in tone from the camp leadership trickled down to the guards. Stephen Riggs noted, "Generally, the soldiers who guarded them treated them kindly. It was remarked that a new company . . . when assigned to this duty, at the first treated the prisoners with a good deal of severity and harshness. But a few weeks sufficed to change their feelings, and they were led to pity, and then to respect, those whom they had regarded as worse than wild beasts."⁴⁰

Most important for the prisoners, subsequent commanders ordered the removal of their irons, after which "they enjoyed comparative liberty."⁴¹ Although still confined within Camp Kearney at night, some could leave the prison under guard during the day. At first, however, "freedom" meant that the prisoners performed forced labor for the prison or for surrounding Davenport farmers.

40. Thomas Williamson to Stephen Riggs, 12/24/1863, folder 9, box 1, Stephen R. Riggs and Family Papers, MHS; *Missionary Herald* 61 (1865), 183; "Headquarters Indian Prison, Camp Kearney," 5/17/1864, folder 2, box 1, Thomas S. Williamson Papers, MHS; Riggs, *Mary and I*, 221.

41. Barton, *John P. Williamson*, 69.

For example, several prisoners, along with a small guard, left Camp Kearney "to cut wood, carry up water from the river, and, in general, to do the work of the camp." In August 1864 the camp commander hired out the prisoners to work on the harvest for local farmers. That practice continued over the next two years, and "during hoeing and harvest times, squads of prisoners were sent out to the farm-houses around, with or without a guard."⁴²

Over the months, the prisoners' time outside of the camp extended beyond work details. Some men went out "frequently . . . even to the city." Other times "a dozen Dakota men would be permitted to go out on a deer-hunting excursion, with but a single white soldier accompanying them."⁴³

As their time outside of the prison increased, some considered running away. When word of the escape plans spread, a group of elders took the plotters aside and convinced them that running away "would result in their all being more severely dealt with, and perhaps they would again be reduced to chains; and, finally, that it would put off the time of their hoped-for release." They also worried about retribution against their families at Crow Creek for infractions committed within the prison.⁴⁴ Moreover, any escaped prisoners faced the daunting challenge of traveling over 600 miles to reunite with their families.

Not all members of the public supported allowing the prisoners to spend time outside of the camp. In August 1864 an anonymous "tax payer" wrote to the *Davenport Daily Gazette* demanding to know "why the Indian prisoners of Camp McClellan are escorted about the city by a small guard and allowed to enter private garden[s]." The citizen thought it "a sufficient hardship [for] the people to labor in the harvest field and on the streets to furnish taxes to pay for the food of these murderers of defenseless and innocent women and children, without having our homes invaded and disturbed by them." The author suggested that the "idle prisoners . . . be placed at labor on some of the Government works and be made useful, at the same time relieving the guard at the camp

42. Stephen R. Riggs, *Tah-Koo Wah-Kaí: or, The Gospel Among the Dakotas* (Boston, 1869), 370, 371; Canku and Simon, *Dakota Prisoner of War Letters*, xix.

43. Thomas Williamson to Stephen Riggs, 12/24/1863, folder 9, box 1, Stephen R. Riggs and Family Papers, MHS; Riggs, *Tah-Koo Wah-Kaí*, 371.

44. Riggs, *Tah-Koo Wah-Kaí*, 371-72.

for duty in the field." Another unidentified "tax payer" also complained about the "laxity in allowing the Indians to be out of camp." The prison commanders reassured the public that the prisoners were compelled to "do as much work as possible," and they only left the prison to "obtain water from the river." At all times guards accompanied the prisoners to ensure that "nothing shall be permitted that in any way annoys our citizens."⁴⁵

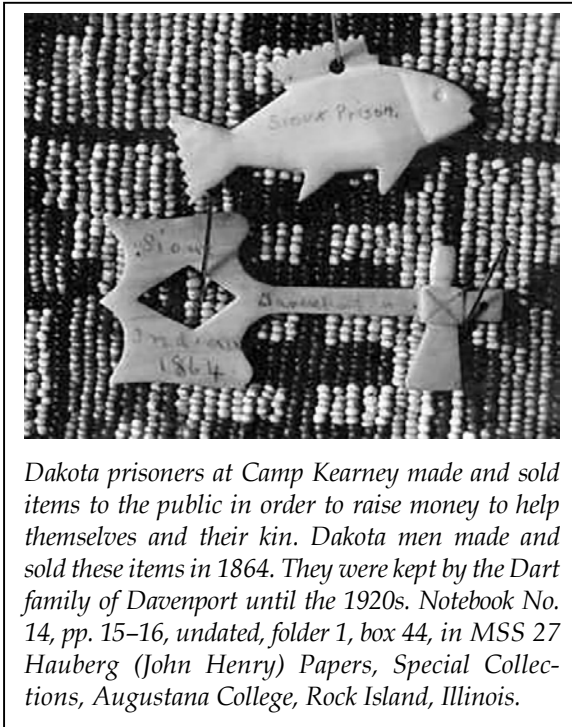
While some citizens complained about the prisoners' time outside of the prison, others remained fascinated with their plight. The Dakota men used this knowledge to help themselves and their families survive their forced separation and poor living conditions. Throughout the second half of their confinement, the prisoners gathered materials such as shells, wood, feathers, and stones during their expeditions outside the camp. The few women and children living at the prison also collected shells and other materials from the banks of the Mississippi. The prisoners used these supplies to carry on "a brisk business in making finger rings from clam shells."⁴⁶ By 1864, Stephen Riggs reported that "every one [was] busy making rings, crosses . . . watch chains, etc. They have presented me with about fifty rings, a dozen hatchets, and a few fish, and also a couple of large birds." The prisoners added moccasins, beadwork, crosses, and "other ornaments" to their repertoire. They made bows and arrows, which appealed to "little boys." The prisoners were so industrious that they continued their production on Sunday, leading to a strong rebuke from staunch Presbyterian Thomas Williamson, who demanded rest on Sundays.⁴⁷

Beginning with their arrival in Davenport in 1863, the prisoners had noted the public's fascination. By 1864, they had par-

45. "Editor Gazette," *Davenport Daily Gazette*, 8/19/1864; "The Indians," *Daily Democrat and News*, 8/20/1864.

46. Stephen Riggs to Selah Treat, 11/7/1863, ABCFM MSS 310 no. 36, ABCFM Papers. The prisoners actually started to make "trinkets" in 1863 from materials gathered by the women and children, but Commander Roberts took away the tools used to make the items. See Stephen Riggs to Selah Treat, 11/7/1863, MSS 310 no. 36, ABCFM Papers.

47. Stephen Riggs to Thomas Williamson, 9/12/1864, folder 7, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS; Riggs, *Tah-Koo Wah-Kari*, 372; "Put Them Where They Belong," *Morning Democrat*, 6/23/1865; Thomas Williamson to Stephen Riggs, 3/3/1864, folder 11, box 1, Stephen R. Riggs and Family Papers, MHS.



layed that interest into selling items to the public. John P. Williamson, the son of Thomas Williamson, wrote that the prisoners were "often permitted to go to town to trade their bows and arrows and other trinkets." Little boys clamored for their parents to buy them "Indian bows and arrows," which sold for "four bits a piece." Returning Civil War soldiers, many of whom were flush with cash, provided an especially lucrative market for the prisoners' goods. Stephen Riggs reported that "the Indians here are in possession of more money than at any time previous when I have been here. Many Iowa soldiers are returning and have plenty of money, which makes quite a demand for their trinkets." The prisoners even sold their goods to "the soldiers who guard them." The ABCFM missionaries extended the prisoners' market beyond Iowa. After a brief visit to the prison, Alfred Riggs received "a quantity of rings . . . for the sale of the prisoners," which he probably sold back in Chicago, where he attended seminary at the time. Anticipating a trip to Washington, D.C., Stephen Riggs

promised to “scatter [the Dakota ‘trinkets’] along my path in the East.”⁴⁸

In addition to making and selling trinkets, the prisoners received payment or provisions for performing their “Indian dances.” Stephen Riggs noted that “a white man, for the purposes of making money,” hired several Dakota prisoners to dance in the camp center. For their efforts, the man “furnished them food and drink and paid them \$2 each.” In 1865 “Arnold the settler” hired a “party of the young men to dance Indian dances at the County Fair.” In September 1865 “the soldiers persuaded Antoine Leblanc to get up a dance. In this there was some twelve engaged.”⁴⁹ Missionaries like Riggs sharply criticized these dances, not because the settlers exploited the Dakota – which they did – but because they believed that Indians should not participate in such “savage displays.” Certainly, the settlers exploited the Dakota for their own gain and amusement; as prisoners, the Dakota men could hardly refuse. However, the Dakota added the compensation they received from the dances to their profits from selling items.

Compensation aside, the prisoners “said very frankly that they liked to dance – they had grown up with the love of dancing.”⁵⁰ These hired dances let them outside of the prison and allowed them to perform something that had been forbidden, especially under Commander Roberts. The prisoners also may have used the dances as a way to help the sick. When “Arnold the settler” hired the young men to dance at the County Fair, the “wapiyapi” (medicine man) led the dance to help the sick left behind at the prison. Upon questioning by Stephen Riggs, a dancer “took the

48. Barton, *John P. Williamson*, 69; “Put Them Where They Belong,” *Morning Democrat*, 6/23/1865; Stephen Riggs to Thomas Williamson, 7/7/1865, folder 12, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS; *Missionary Herald* 60 (1864), 138; Thomas Williamson to Stephen Riggs, 3/23/1864, folder 11, box 1, Stephen R. Riggs and Family Papers, MHS; Stephen Riggs to Mary Riggs, 9/12/1864, folder 7, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS.

49. Stephen Riggs to “My Dear Home,” 10/25/1865, folder 3, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS; Stephen Riggs to Thomas Williamson, 12/12/1865, folder 12, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS; Stephen Riggs to “My Dear Home,” 9/30/1865, folder 3, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS.

50. Stephen Riggs to “My Dear Home,” 10/25/1865, folder 3, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS.

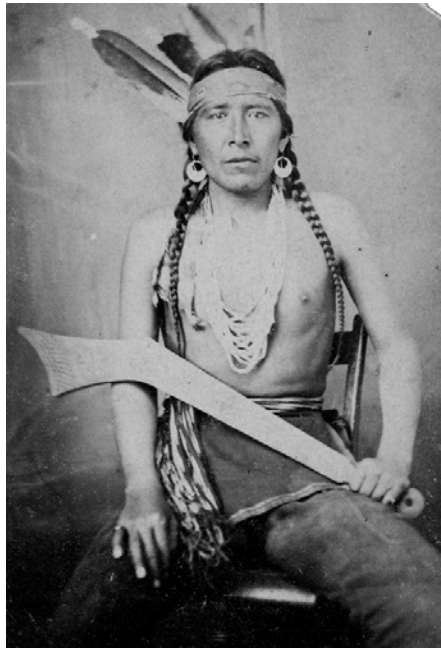
ground that the wapiyapi was right. It was right to heal the sick and to keep men from dying, and this was the only mode of doing so that they understood."⁵¹ Thus, the dance can be viewed from multiple perspectives. Arnold and fair participants were entertained and amused by the "savage" dance. As a Protestant missionary, Stephen Riggs derided the dancers for embracing "superstition" and "heathenism." The dancers themselves, however, may have viewed their dance as a way to save the lives of their fellow prisoners who were dying from smallpox and other diseases without medical care.

Wamditanka (Jerome Big Eagle) — and perhaps other prisoners as well — also demanded payment for taking his picture. W. W. Hathaway, the assistant commissary at the prison, wanted to take a formal portrait of Wamditanka dressed up in his "Indian clothing." According to an article in the *Davenport Weekly Democrat*, "Big Eagle put on all his finery and paraphernalia and we went down to the studio of a photographer. . . . Everything went well until we neared the place when Big Eagle began to remove his finery. We asked him what the trouble was and he said he would not pose unless we paid him \$15."⁵² In addition to asking for payment, Wamditanka, historian Stephanie Pratt argues, transformed the portrait into "a means of self-expression and self-representation." In the photograph, he wore six eagle feathers and held a gunstock club (although the blade had been removed) which signified his importance as a warrior. He posed without a gun, thus insisting "on a more Native based understanding of warfare and indigenous signification systems."⁵³ On several different levels, Wamditanka manipulated a situation that at first glance seemed designed to exploit and stereotype the warrior.

51. Stephen Riggs to Thomas Williamson, 12/12/1865, folder 8, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS. Riggs translated *wapiya* as "to conjure the sick"; *wapiyapi* was "conjuring," while *wapiye* was "a conjurer, an Indian doctor." Of course, from Riggs's perspective, "conjuring" was a "savage" practice that needed to be discontinued prior to accepting Christianity. See Stephen R. Riggs, *A Dakota-English Dictionary* (1890; reprint, St. Paul, MN, 1992), 533–34.

52. *Davenport Weekly Democrat*, 9/28/1905, quoted in "Iowa's Rendezvous Camps," 563.

53. Stephanie Pratt, "Restating Indigenous Presence in Eastern Dakota and Ho Chunk (Winnebago) Portraits of the 1830s–1860s," in *Indigenous Bodies: Reviewing, Relocating, Reclaiming*, ed. Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Rebecca Tillett (Albany, NY, 2013), 18, 25–26.



Wamditanka (Big Eagle) demanded payment for this portrait and staged the image himself. "Big Eagle, leader in the U.S.-Dakota War," 1863, Simon & Shepherd, Collections Online, Minnesota Historical Society, E91.1W r19. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Finally, several prisoners enlisted missionaries who visited them throughout their confinement to fight for compensation owed to them for lands lost in Minnesota following their exile from the state. Red Iron spoke to John Williamson during his visit to Camp Kearney. After the visit, Williamson wrote to Stephen Riggs, stating that "Red Iron has heard he has some money in lands. He wants you to draw it and send it to him. I send you his receipt which you can use if the money is there. . . . If you send a draft I can cash it here" and give it to Red Iron. Another time, Thomas Williamson received some "Minnesota money" from a prisoner's land claim. In Iowa, however, the Minnesota money was useless, so Williamson worked to find out how much the

money was worth so that he could “pay the amount . . . to whom it belongs.” Sarah Marpihdagawin asked Episcopal Bishop Henry Whipple for assistance getting land for her son so that they could “once more look upon the faces of our relatives in Minnesota.”⁵⁴

The amount of money collected from all of these sources was not insignificant. Compensation for land claims and photographs tended to bring in one-time payments. The sale of manufactured items was much more lucrative. Weekly forays into Davenport to sell “trinkets” brought in approximately \$80 to \$100 a week – and sometimes more. For example, “in the last week of their imprisonment, the [prisoners] worked in real earnest, making bows and arrows, which the women and boys took down to the town to sell.” By Saturday, they had raised \$80. Another week netted them “nearly ninety dollars.” In one month, Stephen Riggs reported, the prisoners raised over \$230 of “their own money” (equivalent to approximately \$3,600 in 2016 dollars).⁵⁵

The prisoners used these funds to help survive their confinement. Although conditions improved slightly after 1864, inmates at Camp Kearney still lacked necessities, including blankets, clothing, and food. The money they raised helped to fill some of those gaps. At times, the prisoners shopped for themselves. However, some members of the public complained about prisoners “congregat[ing] before stores to the great annoyance and fright of the women and children.” It was easier, then, to have intermediaries, especially Protestant missionaries, make purchases for them. In June 1864 Thomas Williamson wrote that he spent “four to five or six hours a week in going to the city and making purchases for them.” Over the months, Williamson used the Dakotas’ money to purchase spectacles, clothing, blankets, bread, “light” (presumably lanterns), and other “sundries.”⁵⁶

54. John P. Williamson to Stephen Riggs, 7/14/1864, folder 13, box 1, Stephen R. Riggs and Family Papers, MHS; Thomas Williamson to Stephen Riggs, 2/17/1865, folder 17, box 1, Stephen R. Riggs and Family Papers, MHS; Hyman, *Dakota Women's Work*, 115.

55. *Missionary Herald* 62 (1866), 164; Riggs, *Tah-Koo Wah-Ka'i*, 372; Stephen Riggs to Thomas Williamson, 3/26/1863, folder 12, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS.

56. Editorial, *Davenport Daily Gazette*, 8/19/1864; Thomas Williamson to Stephen Riggs, 6/12/1864, folder 11, box 1, Stephen R. Riggs and Family Papers, MHS; *Missionary Herald* 60 (1864), 138.

In addition to purchasing goods for themselves, the prisoners sent blankets, clothing, and money to their families at Crow Creek. In 1865 the prisoners mailed their relatives "a supply of clothing." A prisoner called "Joe Allord" sent \$20 to his wife, "Mniordawin," at Crow Creek. Another prisoner sent Thomas Williamson \$10 to forward to his family.⁵⁷ The mailed goods went both ways. Although those at Crow Creek also suffered starvation, disease, and oppression, they managed to send mocasins, clothing, blankets, and money from Crow Creek to Camp Kearney.⁵⁸ Unfortunately, on numerous occasions the prisoners failed to receive their packages from their relatives. During his visits, Thomas Williamson heard complaints from prisoners who failed "to get money and other things sent them by their friends." Williamson agreed to investigate. Visiting the camp's "mail shanty," he found it to be a mess and agreed that the prisoners' packages were probably lost. Williamson stopped short of accusing the guards of stealing the prisoners' goods, but that was certainly implied by his investigation.⁵⁹

Although the prisoners failed to receive some of their packages, they did successfully exchange hundreds of letters with their relatives at Crow Creek. By 1864, almost all of the prisoners had learned to read and write in the Dakota language from the Protestant missionaries.⁶⁰ The amount they spent on sending letters to Crow Creek illustrates the importance they placed on maintaining kin ties during their forced separation. Again, Thomas and John Williamson and Stephen Riggs used Dakota funds to facilitate this communication. During one trip to Davenport, Williamson "purchased for them stationary, including postage

57. John P. Williamson to Thomas Williamson, 1/24/1865, folder 3, box 1, Thomas S. Williamson Papers, MHS; John Williamson to Stephen Riggs, 7/5/1864, folder 13, box 1, Stephen R. Riggs and Family Papers, MHS; Hyman, *Dakota Women's Work*, 115.

58. John Williamson to Thomas Williamson, 1/5/1865, folder 3, box 1, Thomas S. Williamson Papers, MHS.

59. Thomas Williamson to Stephen Riggs, 1/22/1865, folder 17, box 1, Stephen R. Riggs and Family Papers, MHS. Evidence does not show whether Williamson's inquiry yielded any improvements.

60. In November 1863 Stephen Riggs noted, "I think the number of readers is about two hundred" at Camp Kearney. Stephen Riggs to Selah Treat, 11/7/1863, MSS 310 no. 36, ABCFM Papers.

stamps to the amount of between twenty and thirty dollars, with their own money." Riggs confirmed that the prisoners used money from their sales to supply themselves with "materials for writing." On July 1, 1864, Williamson spent \$116 on postage for letters and packages mailed from Davenport to Crow Creek.⁶¹

Of course, communicating with their relatives through letters was not enough. The prisoners wanted to leave Camp Kearney entirely and be reunited with their families. The missionaries noted that "there is an increased longing to be released. They want to get back to their own people."⁶² To achieve that goal, some prisoners again enlisted the missionaries to fight for their freedom. First, the prisoners used the paper, ink, and stamps they purchased to write numerous letters to Stephen Riggs and Bishop Henry Whipple proclaiming their innocence. Fifty of the letters they wrote to Riggs have been translated by contemporary Dakota elders; many more letters in the Minnesota History Center's archives remain untranslated. While covering numerous issues, including conversion to Christianity, many of these letters professed the prisoners' innocence and asked the missionaries to fight for their freedom. For example, Elias Ruben Ohanwayakapi wrote to Riggs asking for "help from you all." He noted that he had "killed not one American, yet I have suffered for a long time." He implored Riggs and his fellow missionaries to let government officials know that he was innocent of charges so that he could end his lengthy prison sentence. Another prisoner, Antoine Provençalle, wrote that he had "not participated in any bad things our Dakota have done, now I have suffered terribly for a long time." He asked Riggs to "see Major Forbes" about obtaining his release. Wamditanka stated that he "had not been a murderer, or present when a murder had been committed." He especially pleaded his case to Thomas Williamson, noting that he "was at home on the morning when the traders were killed at the Lower Agency." Many other prisoners also professed their innocence to both missionaries and government officials.⁶³

61. *Missionary Herald* 60 (1864), 138; Riggs, *Tah-Koo Wah-Kaí*, 372; "Postage Receipt," 7/1/1864, Thomas S. Williamson Papers, MHS.

62. *Annual Report of the ABCFM* (1865), 143.

63. Elias Ruben Ohanwayakapi to Stephen Riggs, 6/25/1864, folder 12, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS (translated in 2016 by Louis Garcia and Eric

In addition to writing letters asking the missionaries to fight for their freedom, the prisoners helped to pay for Thomas Williamson's April 1864 trip to Washington, D.C., where the elderly missionary met with government officials to ask for the prisoners' release. Prior to his trip, "Dakota prisoners . . . gave Williamson \$80 of their own money which they had raised selling bows and arrows to local citizens." After his return, Stephen Riggs reported that the prisoners "appropriated the entire earnings of a week, amounting to nearly ninety dollars, to reimburse expenses incurred in efforts to obtain their liberation." During his time in Washington, D.C., Williamson met with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and President Lincoln, both of whom "declared themselves in favor of releasing part of the prisoners." However, the president "made a proviso" that the Minnesota delegation in Congress needed to approve the prisoners' release. Unsurprisingly, the Minnesota congressmen refused.⁶⁴

Although Williamson failed to obtain the release of the majority of Dakota prisoners as he had hoped, on April 30, 1864, Lincoln issued an order releasing 25 of them. Lincoln also promised Williamson that he would soon free all of the other prisoners. Unfortunately, Lincoln's assassination put the plan on hold, and the surviving inmates waited another two years until President Andrew Johnson finally ordered their release in April 1866.

Conclusion, 1865–1867

In the 1867 *Annual Report of the ABCFM*, Thomas Williamson and Stephen Riggs noted that, following their exile from Minnesota, the Dakota "encountered many trials and discouragements."⁶⁵

DuMarce); Canku and Simon, *Dakota Prisoner of War Letters*, 61; Jerome Big Eagle, "A Sioux Story of the War," *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society* 6 (1884), 399; Thomas Williamson, "Information on Prisoners," 2/12/1864, in MSS 122 Williamson Family Papers, Special Collections, Augustana College, Rock Island, IL.

64. *Missionary Herald* 62 (June 1866), 164; Riggs, *Tah-Koo Wah-Ka'i*, 372; Stephen Riggs to Alfred Riggs, 4/19/1864, Alfred L. Riggs Papers, Oahe Mission Collection, South Dakota Conference of the United Church of Christ Archives, CWS. The ABCFM also contributed funds to Williamson's trip. See Selah Treat to Thomas Williamson, 1/25/1864, ABCFM Indians vol. 23, p. 282, ABCFM Papers.

65. *Annual Report of the ABCFM* (1867), 130.

By any standard, that is an understatement. The prisoners in Davenport and their relatives at Crow Creek faced disease, emotional and physical abuse, and separation from their kin. It is a testament to both groups that they used all options available to endure the unspeakable hardships that followed their expulsion from Minnesota in 1863. As one survival tactic, the Camp Kearney prisoners used various techniques to raise money; they spent those funds on items that would ameliorate their situation and that of their families. They also used some of the funds to fight for their freedom and to attempt to maintain kinship ties through letters.

Despite this resistance, the amount of suffering—both emotional and physical—cannot be overstated. Blankets, clothing, and lanterns certainly helped, but deaths continued within the unhealthy prison during their last year of imprisonment. Stephen Riggs made two visits to Camp Kearney in September 1865 and January 1866, the latter just prior to the prisoners' release in April. In 1865 he noted that the prisoners still suffered from pulmonary consumption, smallpox, and "opthamalia," which led to blindness.⁶⁶ In January 1866 five prisoners died, as "the waves of cold prove[d] to be waves of death to the sick." Also in 1866 the poor, cheap construction came back to haunt officials when "one of the buildings in the Indian camp fell down—being pressed by a weight of snow. . . . Fortunately no one was injured by its fall."⁶⁷ The collapsed building was just one symbol of the generally decrepit nature of Camp Kearney after three years of use. While a brisk correspondence continued between Crow Creek and Davenport, the letters produced anguish, as they often brought bad news, and both sides felt powerless to help their relatives.

Yet the money the prisoners raised allowed them to purchase items that helped themselves and their families. The funds, however, were predicated on the fact that members of the public viewed the Dakota as less than human—as exotic, defeated spectacles and even as animals to be "petted."⁶⁸ Nothing illustrates this better than the "horse-versus-Indian races" that were held at

66. Stephen Riggs to Mary Riggs, 9/30/1865, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS.

67. Stephen Riggs to "Dear Ones at Home," 1/25/1866, folder 3, box 3, Stephen R. Riggs Papers, CWS.

68. A journalist described visitors at the prison "petting" the "animals." See Carlson, "They Tell Their Story," 262.

a racetrack in Muscatine, Iowa, in October 1865. Guards transported several Camp Kearney prisoners to the racecourse and dehumanized them by giving them stereotyped names, including "Deerfoot" and "Fleetwing." For a purse of \$1,000, the Dakota racers ran a little over four miles, while racehorses brought in from Chicago covered eight miles at the same time. Organizers also staged a series of shorter man-versus-horse races with prizes of \$500, \$100, and \$50. The *Davenport Daily Gazette* enticed its readers to attend, noting that "it would be *very* funny to see a half-naked human trying to outrun a beast." The races would be "excellent," "exciting," and "lots of fun." Spectators watched a horse win the longer race, but Dakota runners won some of the shorter contests. The prize money was not insignificant, but it came at a great cost. No amount of money could compensate for the fact that the races dehumanized, exploited, and humiliated the Dakota racers for entertainment. Even the *Davenport Daily Gazette* later questioned the races. One of its editorials criticized its rival, the *Democrat*, for calling the races "excellent" and observed that while "there is some excuse for trying the speed . . . of horses," there is "none for matching a man against a brute."⁶⁹

Not just at the races, but during their entire imprisonment, citizens of Davenport constructed "white man's Indians," as historian Robert Berkhofer Jr. called them. These "Indians" had no relationship to the prisoners' daily lives, personalities, or life histories.⁷⁰ The representations presented the Dakota as caricatures and attempted to silence their voices. However, Dakota men and women, including Wamditanka, Elias Ruben Ohanwayakapi, Antoine Provençalle, Robert Hopkins, and hundreds of the other prisoners, refused to be silenced. They turned the public's gaze back on itself, and used the public's fascination "in ways not intended by the dominant culture."⁷¹ The prisoners made and sold objects to tourists and performed dances that capitalized on the

69. "Indian Races," *Daily Democrat*, 10/17/1865; "What Next?" *Davenport Daily Gazette*, 10/18/1865; "The Democrat Thinks . . ." *Daily Democrat*, 10/21/1865; "The Races," *Daily Democrat*, 10/20/1865; "The Races," *Daily Democrat*, 10/21/1865.

70. Robert F. Berkhofer Jr., *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York, 1979).

71. Neel, "Tourism and the American West," 518.

public's fantasies of stalwart Indian warriors and exotic Indian princesses. While funds raised from these activities helped to ameliorate some of the material conditions at Camp Kearney and Crow Creek, they could not begin to erase the three years of continuous trauma suffered by the prisoners and their families.

Striking Images: Photographs of Iowa Packinghouse Labor Conflict, 1948–1960

EMILY KATHRYN MORGAN

MEATPACKING has long been a major Iowa industry. Archives in the state are replete with information about the industry, and many authors have documented its history and impact in the state.¹

Research for this article was supported by a State Historical Society of Iowa Research Grant.

1. For general histories of labor relations within the meatpacking industry in the Midwest, including Iowa, see Bruce R. Fehn, "Ruin or Renewal: The United Packinghouse Workers of America and the 1948 Meatpacking Strike in Iowa," *Annals of Iowa* 56 (1997), 349–78; Roger Horowitz, "'It Wasn't a Time to Compromise': The Unionization of Sioux City's Packinghouses, 1937–1942," *Annals of Iowa* 50 (1989), 241–68; Shelton Stromquist and Marvin Bergman, eds., *Unionizing the Jungles: Labor and Community in the Twentieth-Century Meatpacking Industry* (Iowa City, 1997); Wilson J. Warren, *Struggling with "Iowa's Pride": Labor Relations, Unionism, and Politics in the Rural Midwest Since 1877* (Iowa City, 2000); idem, *Tied to the Great Packing Machine: The Midwest and Meatpacking* (Iowa City, 2007); and Gregory Zieren, "'If You're Union, You Stick Together': Cedar Rapids Packinghouse Workers in the CIO," *Palimpsest* 76 (1995), 30–38. For discussions of gender in the industry, see Dennis A. Deslippe, "'We Had an Awful Time with Our Women': Iowa's United Packinghouse Workers of America, 1945–75," *Journal of Women's History* 5 (1993), 10–32; Bruce R. Fehn, "Striking Women: Gender, Race, and Class in the United Packinghouse Workers of America (UPWA), 1938–1968" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1991); idem, "'Chickens Come Home to Roost': Industrial Reorganization, Seniority, and Gender Conflict in the United Packinghouse Workers of America, 1956–1966," *Labor History* 34 (1993), 324–41; and Roger Horowitz, "'Where Men Will Not Work': Gender, Power, Space, and the Sexual Division of Labor in America's Meatpacking Industry, 1890–1990," *Technology and Culture* 38 (1997), 187–213. For discussions of race relations in the industry, including in the United Packinghouse Workers' Association (UPWA), see Bruce R. Fehn, "'The Only Hope

THE ANNALS OF IOWA 76 (Spring 2018). © State Historical Society of Iowa, 2018.

The visual history of meatpacking, however, has received less attention. Thousands of photographs in Iowa archives are largely unstudied. Though often treated as auxiliary to and less authoritative than the written record, photographs act as dynamic social forces, not just recording but shaping events. This article examines two bodies of photographs related to the meatpacking industry, one amassed by members of a meatpacking workers' union, the other by a meatpacking company. Made between 1948 and 1960, the photographs depict contentious, large-scale strikes. This article looks at images from these two caches and compares them with press coverage of the strikes, demonstrating that both labor and management used photographs not only for passive purposes of record-keeping but also for active purposes: identification, intimidation, and retaliation. During times of conflict the camera became not simply a tool but a weapon, wielded by both sides.

The first group of photographs comes from the archive of the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) Local P-3 in Cedar Rapids, now held in the Special Collections of the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City.² This archive incorporates records from the UFCW as well as earlier iterations of the union. All of the photographs included in this article date from 1948 to 1960, when the union was known as the United Packinghouse Workers of America (UPWA) Local 3.

Of the unions affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), the UPWA was one of the most outspoken and progressive in its politics. From its inception, the UPWA took racial equality as a fundament of its platform, recognizing that meatpacking's highly diverse workforce meant that any union aiming to establish a strong collective bargaining position had to adopt an inclusive stance.³ The UPWA remained a dominant

We Had': United Packinghouse Workers Local 46 and the Struggle for Racial Equality in Waterloo, Iowa, 1948-1960," *Annals of Iowa* 54 (1995), 185-216; and Roger Horowitz, "Negro and White, Unite and Fight!" *A Social History of Industrial Unionism in Meatpacking, 1930-1990* (Urbana, IL, 1998).

2. United Food and Commercial Workers International Union Local P-3 Records, Iowa Labor Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

3. See Horowitz, "Negro and White, Unite and Fight!" esp. 1-4, 162-63, and 192-233. See also Rick Halpern, *Down on the Killing Floor: Black and White Workers in Chicago's Packinghouses, 1904-1954* (Urbana, IL, 1997); and Fehn, "'The Only Hope We Had.'"

meatpacking union until the late 1960s, when industry reorganization drove it to join first with other meat industry unions and later with unions from other commercial industries to become the UFCW.

Amassed over time at the headquarters of Local P-3, the photographs in the UFCW archive overall offer a wide-ranging, multifaceted vision of union activity. Union members took some of the pictures themselves and collected others from outside sources, such as by ordering copies of news images from local papers. The UFCW pictures make it possible to reconstruct a sense of the day-to-day texture of union culture. More important, however, photographs created or collected by union members, for union members, made a significant, active contribution to the formation of a sense of community and shared identity within the organization. This proved particularly important during periods of conflict between labor and management, including lengthy, large-scale strikes, when the ties that bound union members could be tested by economic, social, and familial pressures. At such times of crisis, some photographs helped unions maintain solidarity among members, enabling them to envision community as a concrete and representable entity. Other pictures served to define community in the negative, allowing union members to identify those they believed to be working against union interests — strikebreakers and company managers, for instance, or union members who elected to “scab” by going back to work before the strike had ended. Some pictures came to play an almost weaponized role, assisting in and exacerbating intimidation of scabs and strikebreakers.

The second group of images comes from the archive of meatpacking company Farmstead Foods, formerly T. M. Sinclair and Company and Wilson and Company, now held at the Brucemore Historic Site in Cedar Rapids.⁴ More narrowly focused, the image

4. The Brucemore Historic Site in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, encompasses historical collections and a historic house and grounds. Collections relate to the personal and business lives of the owners of the house. Built by meatpacking entrepreneur T. M. Sinclair, the house later came into the possession of the Douglas family (founders of Quaker Oats). A Douglas daughter then married entrepreneur Howard Hall, whose business ventures are also reflected in the Brucemore collections. The meatpacking company T. M. Sinclair and Co. later became Wilson and Company, then still later Farmstead Foods. When the latter closed for good in 1990, the Brucemore site received a donation of documents and pho-

selection examined here concentrates on a single labor-management conflict, a strike in 1959–1960. For management, photos could be critical tools, helping company executives study a strike from a distance, understand its scope, and form an overall image of it without experiencing it directly — offering a sort of top-down vision of labor conflict, an extension of their top-down vision of day-to-day plant operations. Photographs permitted company executives to identify major players in a strike, to comprehend what was happening and who was present on the picket lines: to form a vision of the overall operations of the strike and the place of individual strikers within it, just as they had a vision of the plant itself and of the place of workers in it during normal operations. Pictures also served as justification for post-strike retaliatory action by the company, helping management determine who had played a particularly active role in the strike and potentially rationalizing the company's refusal to rehire some workers.

The two archives differ in their fundamental characteristics. As Allan Sekula has written, "Archives are not neutral: they embody the power inherent in accumulation, collection and hoarding. . . . Photographic archives by their very structure maintain a hidden connection between knowledge and power."⁵ They also maintain and extend the power relationships of those who created or compiled them. Company-created archives, for instance, tend toward unity and linearity. A well-run company controls its master narrative, presenting itself as a unified entity with a single voice. Photographs are often commissioned for official purposes, put to uses that the company as a holistic entity supports, and which in turn will advance the company's long-term strategies and goals — publicity pictures, for instance. Also, companies often employ or contract with professional photographers to take and process pictures for them, lending the photographic materials a relatively uniform quality. Overall, photographs amassed into company archives tend to uphold and advance the image that

tographs. More material came into the collection after the destruction of the former T. M. Sinclair building from flooding in 2008. See www.brucemore.org.

5. Allan Sekula, "Reading an Archive: Photography Between Labour and Capital," in *The Photography Reader*, ed. Liz Wells (London and New York, 2003), 446–47, reprinted from Patricia Holland, Jo Spence, and Simon Watney, eds., *Photography/Politics Two* (London, 1986).

the company has of itself and that it wishes to project into the public sphere.⁶

The archives of organizations such as labor unions, on the other hand, reflect their more democratic nature. Without an official photographer in its employ, a union local depends on individual members to document its activities. Whether an event—from a Christmas party at the local's headquarters to a strike—appears in photographs depends on the presence of individual members who possess cameras and a desire to depict what they see. Some events may go entirely undocumented in pictures while others receive ample documentation by multiple photographers. Preservation of materials similarly may depend on the goodwill and organizational skills of individual members. Union members may have circulated these photographs as physical objects, different possessors using them for different purposes or to various ends. The egalitarian nature of a labor union comes through in the visual and material culture it produces, myriad voices and points of view coming together into a collective.⁷

6. Of course, company archives are not guaranteed to be complete. A corporation, even a well-organized one, does not retain every photograph it ever used or every document it ever created. Survival of materials may be haphazard, and organization may be as well. Photographs may not be retained in a manner that permits one to reconstruct how or by whom the pictures were made or to what end they might have been used. The company archive examined here, that of the Sinclair/Wilson/Farmstead Foods plant in Cedar Rapids, emerged from the disastrous 2008 flood of the city in an extremely fragmentary state. That even a single group of photographs and some minimal accompanying documentation survived the disaster collected and intact is remarkable. Still, even a fragmentary company archive retains, among its fragments, a singularity of purpose.

7. The nature of the archive as both concept and institution has been the subject of considerable study. As Jacques Derrida and others have pointed out, the very existence of an archive connotes some degree of enfranchisement or representation as part of an acceptable, officially sanctioned history. As such, one might argue that because both packinghouse companies and packinghouse labor unions have deposited archives in some repository or other, both receive equal representation in the historic record. But organizational systems within the archive matter equally. Derrida writes of "consignation," which refers not only to "the act of assigning residence [of objects, artifacts and documents to an archive] . . . so as to put into reserve," but also to "the act of *consigning through gathering together signs*," which "aims to coordinate a single corpus, in a system or a synchrony in which all the elements articulate the unity of an ideal configuration" (*italics in the original*). Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago, 1996), 3–4. If those signs all, or mostly all, tend to point in one direction—as I am arguing that they do in a company archive—then what has

FEW PEOPLE any more really believe that an individual photograph can tell a complete and absolute truth.⁸ There are myriad ways to make a photograph illustrate a partial truth, offer a biased vision, or tell an outright lie: even aside from retouching and other forms of overt manipulation, selective framing or carefully chosen camera angles may eliminate key details, limiting or altering the viewer's understanding of what a photograph depicts. Uses of a photograph shift over time and at the will of the user, too. A photograph made to commemorate an event may later become, in the hands of others, evidence of who participated in the event. Context matters, as well: a photograph in a union-run newspaper, for instance, would be contextualized quite differently than a similar image in a community newspaper or the newsletter of a meatpacking industry organization.

Many theorists of photography have written of the camera's tendency to serve as a tool for maintaining and extending existing power structures. Susan Sontag famously regarded the camera not only as a metaphor for the gun but as a weapon in its own right, nearly as dangerous as a pistol in its capacity to turn human beings into objects. She saw photography as a key tool of Western-style capitalist expansion, a way of imaging and knowing the world specifically so that it could be conquered, controlled, and organized.⁹ John Tagg, too, has discussed photography's capacity to serve the purposes of power and governance: the way it has become integral to the endeavor of cataloguing and classifying prisoners, for instance, or any other population of human beings to be regulated.¹⁰

been preserved in the archive is not only a group of objects, documents, and artifacts but also some vestige of the meaning they originally carried, the end toward which they were originally put. The archive of a multivocal entity—a community organization, a labor union, etc.—will, similarly, retain multivocality as one of its fundamental features but potentially at the expense of “the unity of an ideal configuration.”

8. Many writers have challenged the notion of photography as an absolutely truthful medium. By far the most influential has been Susan Sontag. See especially *On Photography* (New York, 1977).

9. Sontag, *On Photography*.

10. John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* (Basingstoke, 1988); idem, *The Disciplinary Frame: Photographic Truths and the Capture of Meaning* (Minneapolis, 2009).

A more focused body of scholarship concentrates on the uses of visual imagery in the service of American corporate interests. Much of this, however, focuses on public relations, on corporations' attempts to shape and control public image and the uses of pictures in service of that goal.¹¹ Almost no attention has been paid to the use of photographs by corporations specifically in the service of labor relations.

Likewise, the use of photographs by workers themselves is an underexamined avenue of exploration, the literature consisting of a relatively few studies. Leah Ollman's *Camera as Weapon: Worker Photography between the Wars* focuses on imagery created by German workers in the 1920s and '30s. An exhibition catalog, Ollman's book was among the first to look at photography by laborers and to place it specifically in the context of the mass-media publications in which much of it appeared.¹²

In a 1992 article about the uses of photography by laborers and management at the Pullman Company, Larry Peterson illuminates how both the corporation and its employees deployed photographic imagery in the service of their sometimes competing interests. The corporation attempted to use photography to control its public image and build (what it saw as) community among its workers; workers themselves photographed strikes, parades, picnics, and various other activities. Peterson points out, crucially, that while photographs made by the corporation and by laborers appear stylistically similar—"objective" and "realist"—laborers' photographic production tends to present workers as subjects. Corporate photographs of workers, on the other hand, present them as objects to be manipulated, much as machinery and other tools are manipulated.¹³

11. See, for example, two works by Roland Marchand: *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940* (Berkeley, CA, 1986); and *Creating the Corporate Soul: The Rise of Public Relations and Corporate Imagery in American Big Business* (Berkeley, CA, 1990). A number of studies focus on specific corporations: see, for example, David Nye, *Image Worlds: Corporate Identities at General Electric* (Cambridge, MA, 1985).

12. Leah Ollman, *Camera as Weapon: Worker Photography between the Wars* (San Diego, 1991).

13. Larry Peterson, "Producing Visual Traditions among Workers: The Uses of Photography at Pullman," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 42 (Fall 1992), 55.

One extensive examination of photography and labor relations, Carol Quirke's *Eyes on Labor: News Photography and America's Working Class*, concentrates specifically on the representation of labor conflict in the American popular press, particularly newspapers and *Life* magazine. Quirke finds that while individual laborers sometimes received heroizing (albeit anonymous) treatment, American popular media tended to depict labor conflict itself as disruptive, only rarely addressing the underlying reasons why workers might feel compelled to strike in the first place.¹⁴ Quirke notes that labor unions' house publications treated union activity far more sympathetically, as one might expect, but since their circulation was much smaller and tended to be restricted to union members themselves, their impact was comparatively minimal.¹⁵

THIS ARTICLE focuses on photographs related to two major meatpacking industry strikes, one in 1948 and the other in 1959–60. The 1948 strike involved members of the United Packinghouse Workers Association (UPWA) in meatpacking plants nationwide, including many in the Midwest. Of 65 plants nationwide in which workers went on strike, 15 were in Iowa. The strike began in March, partially as a means of pressuring meatpacking company managers into raising wages and partially over dissatisfaction with the restriction of labor unions' power enacted under the Taft-Hartley (Labor-Management Relations) Act of 1947.¹⁶ The conflict quickly grew contentious. Tensions rose particularly

14. Carol Quirke, *Eyes on Labor: News Photography and America's Working Class* (New York, 2012), esp. 5 and 64–65.

15. *Ibid.*, 47–48.

16. Fehn, "Ruin or Renewal," 349, 357. Roger Horowitz writes that the Taft-Hartley Act "restricted the ability of labor organizations to exercise power at the point of production. It banned secondary boycotts and sympathy strikes, permitted the federal government to impose mandatory sixty-day strike delays, and made unions subject to severe financial penalties for defying the NLRB [National Labor Relations Board] or engaging in a series of newly defined unfair labor practices. In addition to these constraints, the act required union officials to file affidavits stating that they were not Communist Party members, and made access to the certification machinery of the NLRB contingent upon compliance with these new rules of behavior." Horowitz, *Negro and White, Unite and Fight!* 181.

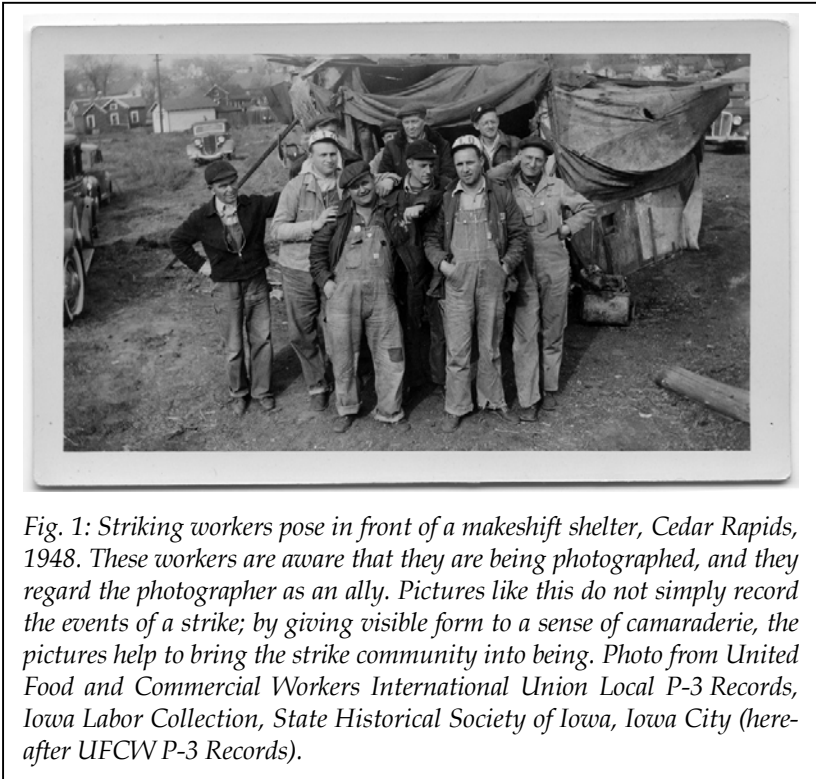


Fig. 1: Striking workers pose in front of a makeshift shelter, Cedar Rapids, 1948. These workers are aware that they are being photographed, and they regard the photographer as an ally. Pictures like this do not simply record the events of a strike; by giving visible form to a sense of camaraderie, the pictures help to bring the strike community into being. Photo from United Food and Commercial Workers International Union Local P-3 Records, Iowa Labor Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City (hereafter UFCW P-3 Records).

sharply in Waterloo, home of the Rath Meatpacking Company, and in Cedar Rapids, where the local Wilson and Company plant was encouraged by its parent company in Chicago to maintain a hard line against strikers.

Within the first two months of the 1948 strike, both the Rath plant in Waterloo and Wilson in Cedar Rapids began hiring strikebreakers to staff the plants and keep them running. Some of the strikebreakers were brought in on hired buses; some were driven into the plants by plant executives or shop-floor managers; and some drove into the plants in their own cars. However they entered the plants, they often crossed through picket lines, coming into direct contact with striking workers in the process. Strikers sometimes surrounded the vehicles, hemming them in, banging on them, taunting the inhabitants or entreating them not to take jobs as “scabs.” Such encounters occasionally grew violent.



Fig. 2: Picketers from UPWA Local 3 pose in front of strike headquarters, Cedar Rapids, 1948. By posing for photographs such as this one, the participants declare themselves as proud, active members of the strike community. Photo from UFCW P-3 Records.

One strikebreaker in Waterloo, encountering intimidation as he tried to drive into the plant, fired a weapon, killing a striking UPWA member and sparking a riot. In the short term, UPWA members received just a modest raise, but the union ultimately found its bargaining power strengthened by the strike, as the meatpacking industry came to recognize the desirability in subsequent negotiations of bargaining with labor rather than risking another strike.¹⁷

Whereas the 1948 strike had been among UPWA members industry-wide, the 1959–60 strike involved only UPWA members at Wilson and Company plants. Most meatpacking companies, following the longstanding practice of “pattern bargaining,” had managed to settle a contract with their workers in 1959 that was much the same across the industry, but Wilson declined to go along, and bargaining stalled. After UPWA members in the Wilson plant in Albert Lea, Minnesota, walked off their jobs in protest over mandatory overtime, among other grievances, UPWA

17. Fehn, “Ruin or Renewal,” 349–68; Horowitz, “Negro and White, Unite and Fight!” 176, 187–94.

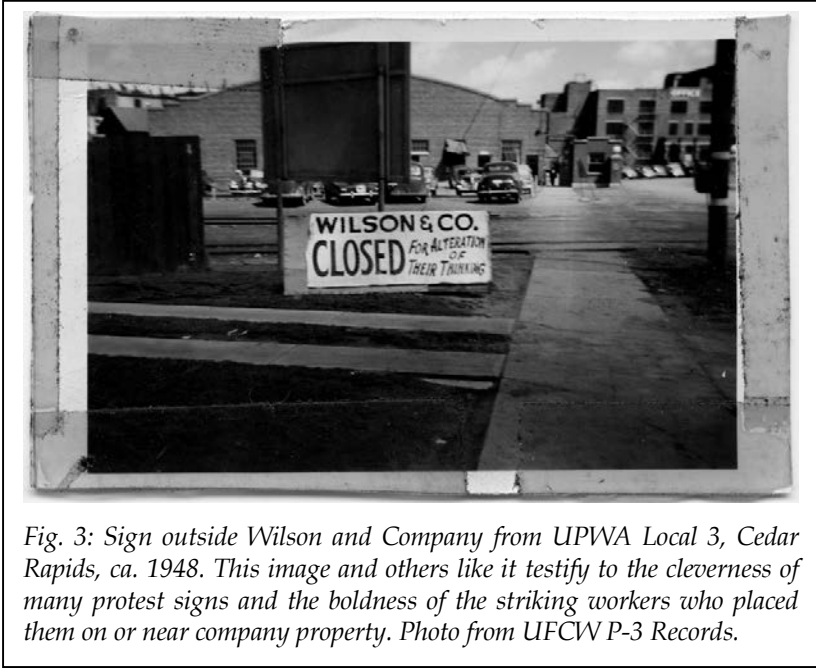


Fig. 3: Sign outside Wilson and Company from UPWA Local 3, Cedar Rapids, ca. 1948. This image and others like it testify to the cleverness of many protest signs and the boldness of the striking workers who placed them on or near company property. Photo from UFCW P-3 Records.

members in other Wilson packinghouses followed suit. The strike was extraordinarily contentious, and incidents of violence and intimidation became commonplace. Wilson gained a reputation among packinghouse workers as “the most hostile adversary the UPWA ever encountered in its twenty-five-year-existence.” The company refused to bend to workers’ demands and issued threatening memos to strikers that came to be called “Dear John” letters.¹⁸ At strike’s end, the company conceded little, though workers did retain the right to resume the same jobs at the same level of seniority as they had held prior to the conflict.¹⁹

18. Cheri Register, *Packinghouse Daughter: A Memoir* (St. Paul, MN, 2000), 163–64. Register discusses the 1959–60 strike at various points in her book, but see especially pages 154–226 for discussion of the underlying issues of the strike as it unfolded in Albert Lea.

19. “Board Sends Wilson Scabs to Bottom of List; Rules Over 3,000 Strikers Go Back on Jobs,” *Packinghouse Worker*, March 1960, 1, 3–4. See also Register, *Packinghouse Daughter*, 226. As Rick Fantasia has noted in *Cultures of Solidarity* (Berkeley, CA, 1988), 184–85, a challenge to union seniority would have been a challenge to the very existence of the union itself, a move even Wilson was unlikely to undertake.

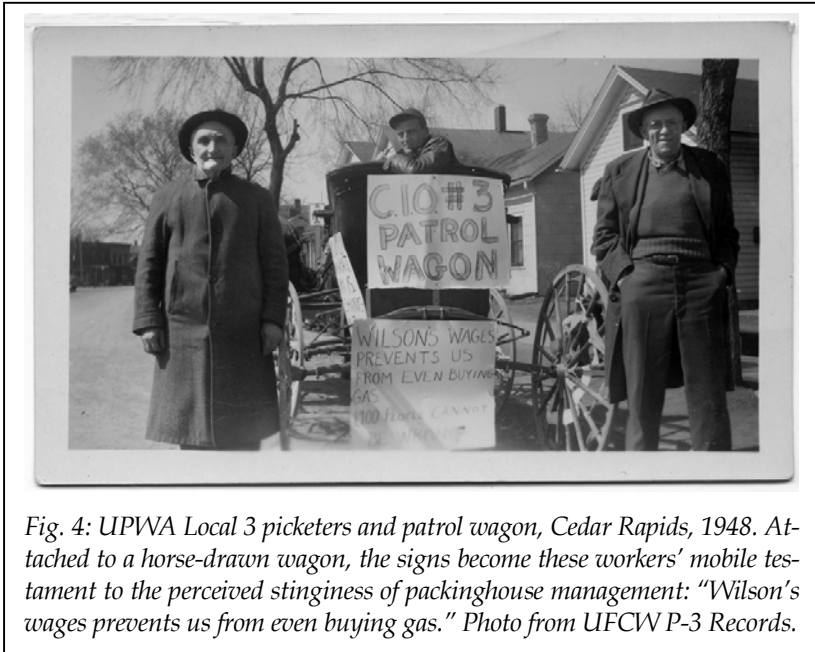


Fig. 4: UPWA Local 3 picketers and patrol wagon, Cedar Rapids, 1948. Attached to a horse-drawn wagon, the signs become these workers' mobile testament to the perceived stinginess of packinghouse management: "Wilson's wages prevents us from even buying gas." Photo from UFCW P-3 Records.

The archive of UFCW Local P-3 at the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City retains photographs from several labor conflicts, most in Cedar Rapids, with a few from nearby Waterloo. Many of these images derive from the industry-wide 1948 strike; others are from the 1959–60 strike affecting only Wilson employees. Where available, information about the photographs' acquisition and provenance—the source and history of the images—has been written on the archival sleeves that now house the pictures. For some pictures this information is augmented by writing directly on the images themselves. One may also glean a great deal of information simply by analyzing the pictures, which can sometimes tell their own stories independent of other documentation. The majority of the pictures were made by members of the union, but some appear to have been collected from outside sources. A few were either requested or purchased from local newspapers.

True to the democratic nature of the union as a whole, pictures in the UFCW Local P-3 archive serve multiple purposes and speak in myriad voices. Many commemorate their subjects' proud,



Fig. 5: A sign reading “We Want a Contract” was put on a Wilson company car by a striking worker. It is no wonder the union obtained and preserved a copy of this press image in its archives: by its very existence, the picture elevates the placement of the sign from a lark to a guerrilla protest action, memorializing the event and allowing it to live on after the fact. Photo by John McIvor from Cedar Rapids Gazette, 11/30/1959, in UFCW P-3 Records.

open participation in strike activities such as picketing and leaf-letting. In a series from the 1948 conflict, groups of striking workers in Cedar Rapids face and pose for the camera (see, e.g., figs. 1, 2). The subjects know they are being photographed and have had time to arrange and prepare themselves to be depicted by someone they clearly see as a friend and ally. Some pose in front of the Local, others outside of makeshift picket shelters erected near the packinghouse. Their willingness to be photographed speaks not only to a desire to remember the strike but also to declare their participation in it, to see themselves and to be seen by others as active members of the strike community. As Rick Fantasia has noted, the structure and routine of strike activities—the



Fig. 6: UPWA Local 3 picketers near a car containing strikebreakers, Cedar Rapids, ca. 1948. The close range of this picture and others like it demonstrates that the image was made by a participant in the strike. The camera served as an active tool of identification and intimidation, a way for striking workers to show strikebreakers that they were being seen and that their actions would be remembered. Photo from UFCW P-3 Records.

scheduling of picket, kitchen, and staffing duty at the Local—replaces the structure and routine of the workday and gives the difficult strike period a much-needed sense of regularity. Collective activities provide “a sense of mutuality and sociability,” helping to engender and support “the intense sense of community nourished by the strike.”²⁰ Posed photographs of striking workers do not simply record a community spirit that already existed—they do not just passively image a worker’s preexisting identity as a loyal union member—the pictures actively create such individual and community identities, bringing them into being by giving them visible form.

Other images record the handmade signs strikers carried, wore, or posted in various locations. One depicts a sign outside

20. Fantasia, *Cultures of Solidarity*, 192–93.

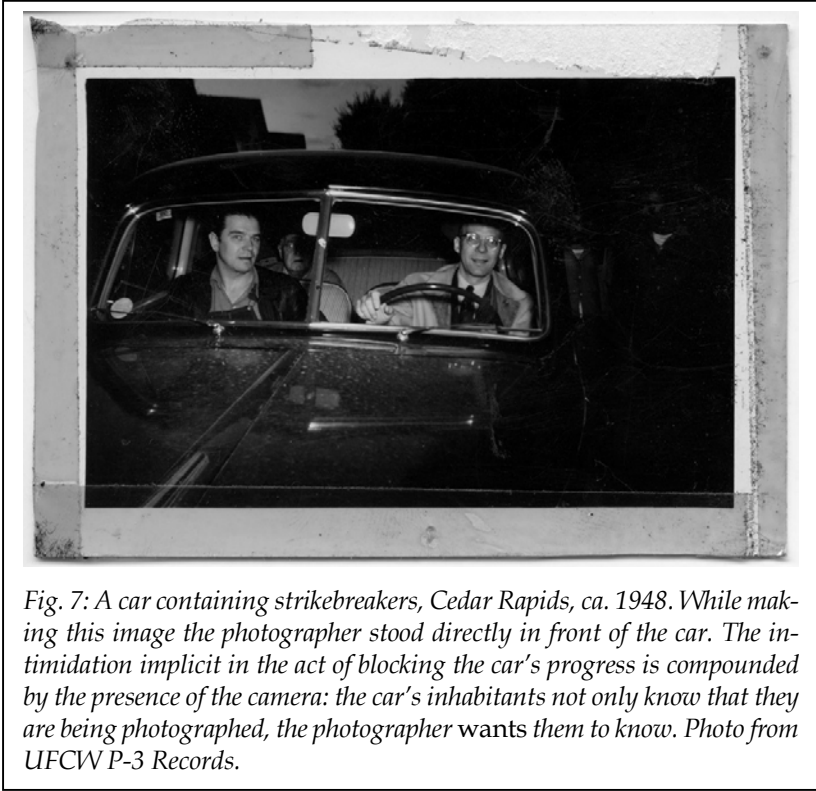


Fig. 7: A car containing strikebreakers, Cedar Rapids, ca. 1948. While making this image the photographer stood directly in front of the car. The intimidation implicit in the act of blocking the car's progress is compounded by the presence of the camera: the car's inhabitants not only know that they are being photographed, the photographer wants them to know. Photo from UFCW P-3 Records.

the Wilson plant: "Wilson & Co. CLOSED for alteration of their thinking" (fig. 3). In another, a group sits in and stands around a horse-drawn cart, the back hung with signs reading "C.I.O. #3 Patrol Wagon" and "Wilson's wages prevents us from even buying gas" (fig. 4). Here, too, photographs record the presence and wording of the signs, and also function to build community among the participants. In photographing and being photographed, union members knew they were creating a persistent document of strike actions, carrying relevance of the events beyond the immediate, testifying to future viewers and union members about the sense of community among striking workers.

Another photograph, this one from the 1959–60 Wilson and Company strike, records a kind of guerrilla action. Someone has attached a sign reading "We Want a Contract" to the bumper of a car belonging to Wilson and carrying the company's logo. The

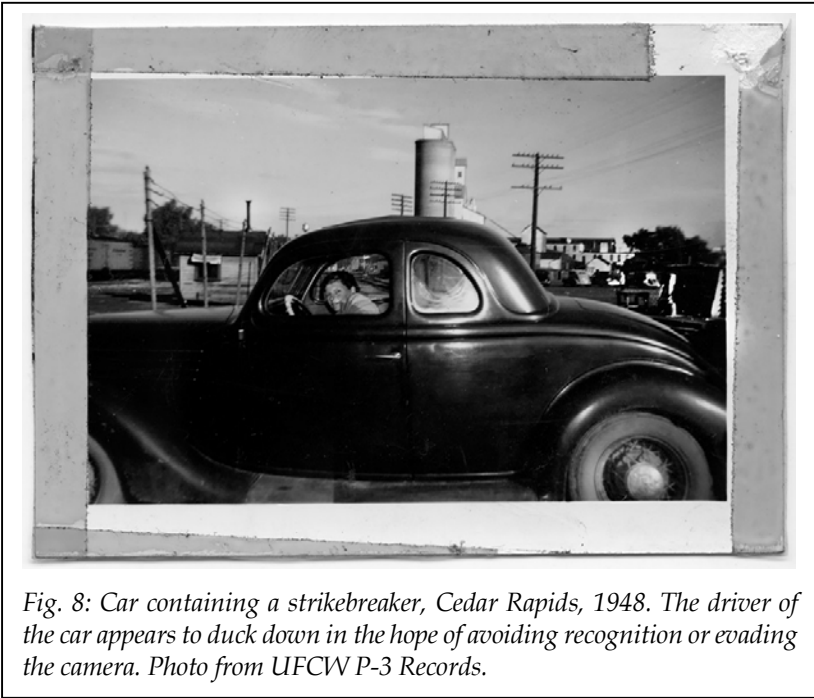


Fig. 8: Car containing a strikebreaker, Cedar Rapids, 1948. The driver of the car appears to duck down in the hope of avoiding recognition or evading the camera. Photo from UFCW P-3 Records.

unsuspecting driver carries it away with him like a “kick me” sign (fig. 5). John McIvor, photographer for the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, made the picture, which appeared in the paper in late November 1959 with the caption “Unwitting Picket.”²¹ Without the picture, the action would exist only as rumor and memory, reading as a lark and living on as a funny story. The news photographer’s picture, however, makes the event persistent, multiplying its impact. It is easy to see why union members would have wanted to collect this image and keep it at the Local’s headquarters: the picture raises the illicit sign from a juvenile hack to a protest action.

The UFCW Local P-3 archive also includes a significant number of images from the 1948 nationwide strike depicting the cars, buses, and other vehicles in which strikebreakers arrived (see, e.g., figs. 6–7). These pictures show the crowds through which the strikebreakers traveled to reach the plant, but again the images

21. John McIvor, “Activity on Wilson Picket Line,” *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 11/30/1959.

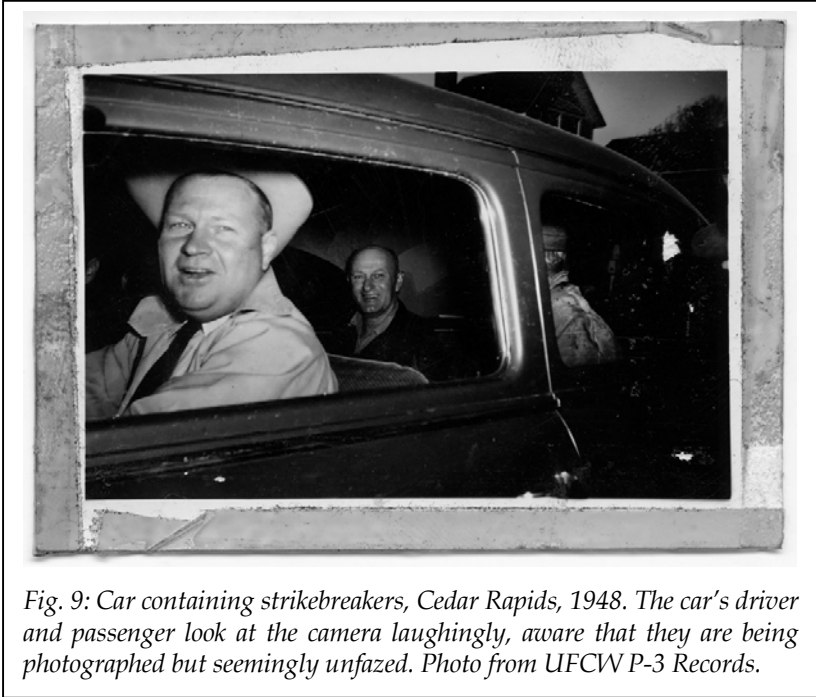


Fig. 9: Car containing strikebreakers, Cedar Rapids, 1948. The car's driver and passenger look at the camera laughingly, aware that they are being photographed but seemingly unfazed. Photo from UFCW P-3 Records.

offer more than dispassionate recording of the situation: they were made in the thick of it by participants. A newspaper reporter or other nonparticipant observer might stand back, taking a picture with a wider angle that would encompass both crowds and vehicle. The individuals who made the pictures in the UFCW archive involved themselves in the action, standing among the people crowded around strikebreakers' cars, taking pictures with narrow, concentrated fields of vision. The resulting photos were more than basic snapshots. Makers of these images aimed not to document the situation for posterity but to capture pictures of the cars themselves, and of the people inside them, with the aim of identifying those people.

Photographing the strikebreakers was not only a means to an end, not only a way of getting a picture for purposes of recognition. In this situation the camera became both a tool for creating pictures and an implement of intimidation. Simply making a picture of a person in that situation constituted a means of applying pres-

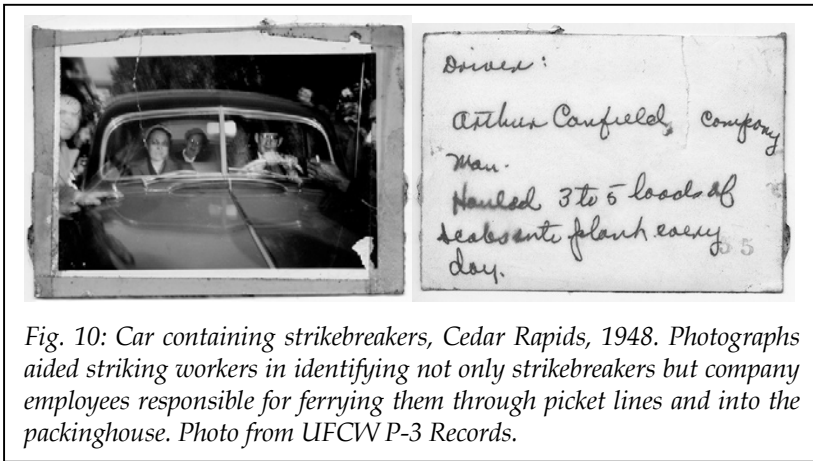


Fig. 10: Car containing strikebreakers, Cedar Rapids, 1948. Photographs aided striking workers in identifying not only strikebreakers but company employees responsible for ferrying them through picket lines and into the packinghouse. Photo from UFCW P-3 Records.

sure. By pointing the camera at the strikebreakers, the photographer let them know that they had been seen. Looking at the pictures, it is clear that the people in the cars knew this, too. In some pictures, the subjects hide their faces from both the crowds and the camera (fig. 8). Others laugh, aware that they have been viewed both by the people around them and by the lens (fig. 9).

Many of these photographs bear physical evidence of their use, indications that they were put on display and/or circulated. Virtually all still retain some tape residue around their margins, having been either taped to a board for public view or placed inside a scrapbook to be kept at the Local. Some images also have handwritten commentary or identifications on back or front. One picture includes on the back the names of three people, two women and a man, plus the words "own car." Supervisory and managerial staff, too, appear in photos made by Local 3 photographers: another image reads on the back "Driver: Arthur Canfield, Company man. Hauled 3 to 5 loads of scabs into plant every day" (fig. 10). One wonders what the strikers planned to do with this information: perhaps follow the subjects away from the picket lines and harass them? Such harassment was not unheard of: Bruce Fehn reports an incident during the 1948 strike in which a carload of Local 3 members stopped a station wagon full of strikebreakers. "The strikers," he writes, "tried to convince the potential strikebreakers not to go to the plant. When the latter said

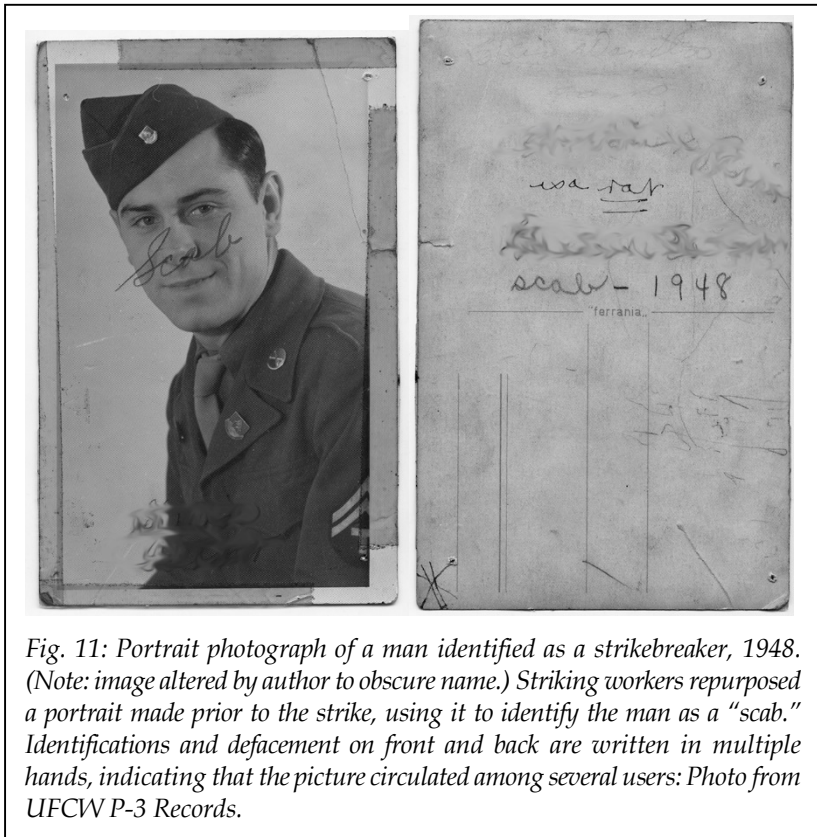


Fig. 11: Portrait photograph of a man identified as a strikebreaker, 1948. (Note: image altered by author to obscure name.) Striking workers repurposed a portrait made prior to the strike, using it to identify the man as a "scab." Identifications and defacement on front and back are written in multiple hands, indicating that the picture circulated among several users: Photo from UFCW P-3 Records.

they were going to go on to the plant, the strikers slashed their tires."²² Supervisors and managers, too, sometimes found striking workers at their homes when they returned from work, sparking confrontations that occasionally became violent.²³

Striking workers not only made pictures for purposes of identification and intimidation; they acquired and repurposed other photographs as well. In addition to copies of images made by local news photographers, the archive also includes a few portrait photographs and casual snapshots originally made for purposes unrelated to the strike. These pictures, too, have tape around their margins, showing that they were publicly displayed

22. Fehn, "Ruin or Renewal," 368.

23. Wilson J. Warren, "The Heyday of the CIO in Iowa: Ottumwa's Meatpacking Workers, 1937-1954," *Annals of Iowa* 51 (1992), 377-80.



Fig. 12: Photograph of a man and woman identified as strikebreakers, 1948. A snapshot made for a different function has been repurposed to identify strikebreakers and has been displayed or circulated in some manner among striking workers. Photo from UFCWP-3 Records.

or placed in a strike scrapbook. They clearly circulated among multiple users. One studio portrait, for instance, shows a man in military uniform. His name and other defacement have been written on both back and front (fig. 11). On the front, someone has written the word *scab* across his face. On the back, beneath his name, another person with different handwriting has inscribed the words *is a rat*. A second photograph from the same group depicts a man and woman embracing (fig. 12). Someone has written taunting epithets on the images of each: the word *rat* across his arm,

and *scab* on her skirt. It seems that these pictures were on display at the Local in some fashion for an extended period of time. Various people marked them, adding identifications and commentary.

Images of strikers themselves might also be modified, should the occasion arise. Among the posed pictures of picketers from the 1948 strike, one has been “revised” by a commenter after the fact to identify a subject who later decided to return to his post before the strike was over, or otherwise expressed disloyalty to the labor cause (fig. 13). On the front of the image, a drawn bracket identifies the man as a *scab*. We might read the annotation, like the designations *scab* and *rat* written on other pictures, as simple name-calling. This particular annotation, however, also set the record straight, gesturing at something that occurred after the picture was taken. Left unaltered, the image might imply that the man remained loyal to the strikers’ cause. At least one viewer

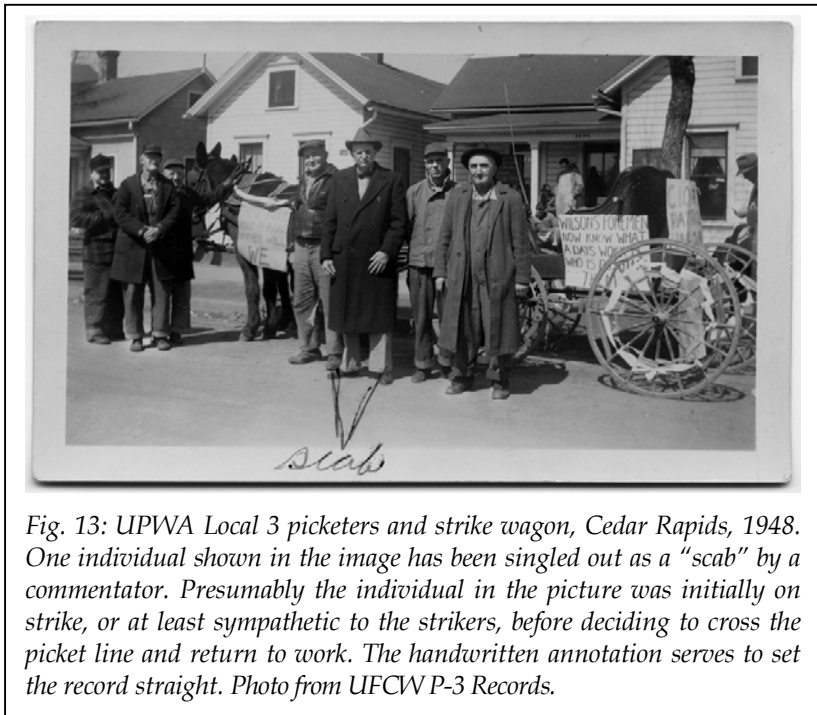


Fig. 13: UPWA Local 3 picketers and strike wagon, Cedar Rapids, 1948. One individual shown in the image has been singled out as a "scab" by a commentator. Presumably the individual in the picture was initially on strike, or at least sympathetic to the strikers, before deciding to cross the picket line and return to work. The handwritten annotation serves to set the record straight. Photo from UFCW P-3 Records.

(who also happened to have a pen handy) felt that was not the case. A great deal of emotion is bound up in this marked image: the sense of pride in labor organization that drove the creation of the picture; the potentially wrenching decision by one individual to return to work; the fury of others at the disruption of community, at what they saw as disloyalty both to them as individuals and to the union as a whole. Initially created as part of an effort to create and maintain solidarity among people in a difficult situation, with its handwritten epithet the image elides an entire narrative into its small frame.

During the contentious strike of 1959–60, union photographers again made pictures of cars full of strikebreakers for purposes of identification and intimidation. One image, dated January 29, 1960, reads on the reverse, "Taken 10:50 a.m. Unable to get license number" (fig. 14). Another, undated but labeled "circa 1950s" on the archival sleeve, makes breathtakingly clear the use of photography to conduct a kind of pictorial warfare (fig. 15).

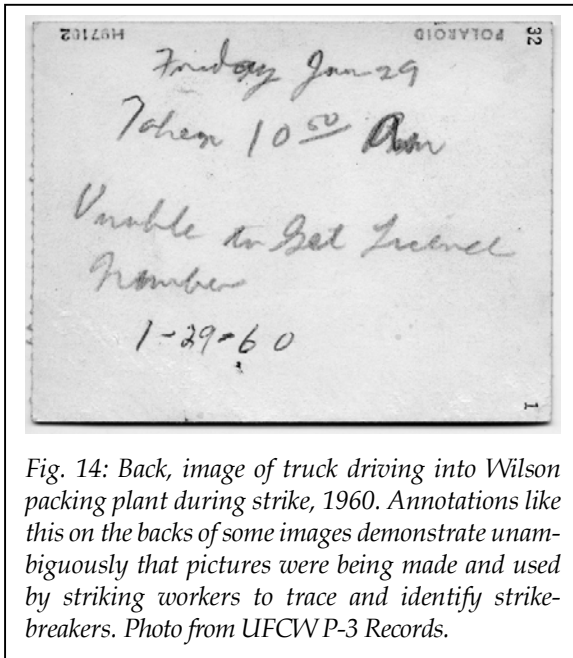
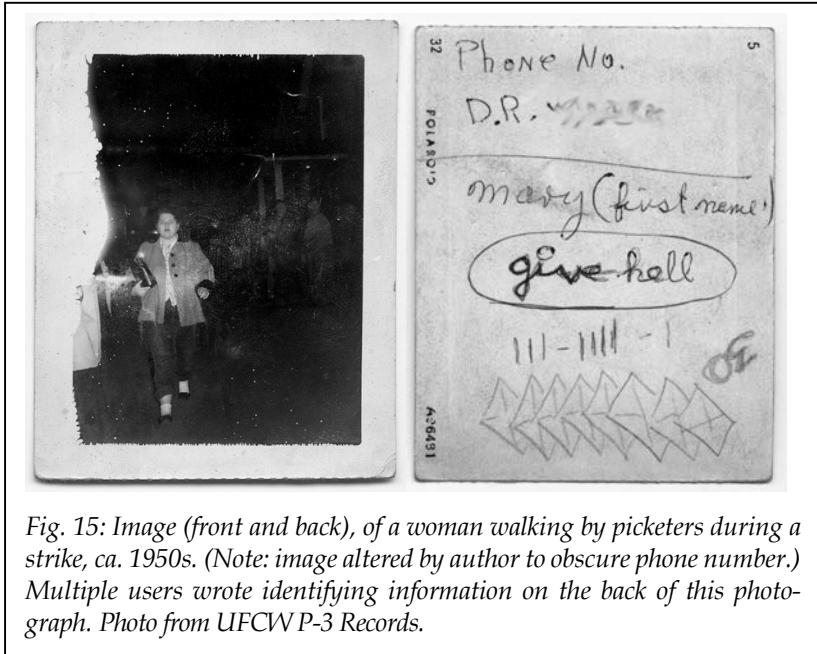


Fig. 14: Back, image of truck driving into Wilson packing plant during strike, 1960. Annotations like this on the backs of some images demonstrate unambiguously that pictures were being made and used by striking workers to trace and identify strike-breakers. Photo from UFCW P-3 Records.

The photograph depicts a female pedestrian walking past a group of strikers with her purse on one arm. Although blurred and of poor quality, the image nonetheless showed the subject's face clearly enough that users could employ it for identification. On the back, the image bears the woman's name, as well as other details supplied by various users with distinct handwriting: "Phone no. D.R. [number]. Mary (first name). Give hell." The last two words have been gone over three times — first in pencil, then again in both black and blue ink — and circled for further emphasis. Thus accentuated, "Give hell" goes from being a suggestion to an imperative.

MEATPACKING COMPANIES, too, used photography for identification and intimidation during times of labor conflict. The archive of Wilson and Company (later Farmstead Foods), housed at the Brucemore Historic Site in Cedar Rapids, includes two sets of images from late 1959 and early 1960 made during the UPWA-Wilson strike. One shows the automobiles of striking workers and their supporters participating in what appears to be a parade.



The cars carry signs with various slogans protesting Wilson and Co. and professing support for the strike. “Don’t Buy Wilson’s Products,” read a few of the signs (e.g., fig. 16). “‘Dear John’ letters didn’t fool us COCKRILL,” says another, referring to Wilson’s vice president at the time, John Cockrill, who signed the threatening letters the company sent to striking workers (fig. 17).²⁴

An interoffice memo accompanies these images. Dated November 20, 1959, and written on Wilson letterhead, the memo is addressed to a group of executives at the Chicago headquarters of Wilson and Company and signed by H. S. Amalong, the president and CEO of the Wilson plant in Cedar Rapids. It reads, “Am enclosing a number of pictures taken of automobiles participating in the UPWA parade. A similar set of pictures has been furnished Attorney V. C. Shuttleworth.”²⁵ That the company not only collected the photographs but also sent some to its attorney

24. Register, *Packinghouse Daughter*, 179.

25. Interoffice memo, H. S. Amalong to R. G. Haynie, G. B. Thorne, and J. L. Cockrill, 11/20/59, Farmstead Foods Archive, Bruce more, Cedar Rapids.



Fig. 16: Car carrying strike sign, Cedar Rapids, 1959. Collected by meatpacking company Wilson and Co., this photograph and others like it show cars participating in pro-union displays during the 1959–60 strike. Photo from Farmstead Food Collection, 1871–1990, series 5, box 7, Brucemore, Inc. Archives, Brucemore, Cedar Rapids (hereafter Farmstead Food Collection).

suggests that Wilson gathered them expressly as evidence. In part, they may have served to substantiate the company's claims in a lawsuit that it was pursuing against the UPWA for copyright infringement: the phrase "Don't Let the Wilson Label Disgrace Your Table," visible on some cars, derived directly from Wilson's official advertising slogan, "The Wilson label protects your table," and Wilson had filed a lawsuit against the UPWA to prevent its use (fig. 18).²⁶ But not every car in the photographs collected by Wilson bears this phrase or any other that might be construed as a satire of Wilson's slogan. This suggests that in collecting or commissioning the pictures, Wilson aimed to do more than just document misuse of copyrighted material. The company was gathering evidence of simple participation, potentially for purposes of retaliation against individual workers. From its

26. Register, *Packinghouse Daughter*, 177.



Fig. 17: Car with strike sign, Cedar Rapids, 1959. This picture, collected by Wilson and Co., shows the car of a strike sympathizer as well as the faces of some men gathered around it. An accompanying memo on Wilson letterhead states that the pictures were to be sent to a company attorney. Photo from Farmstead Food Collection.

perspective, to ride in or drive a sloganized car constituted an endeavor to undermine the company, and these photographs served as proof.

The second set of photographs in the Wilson/Farmstead Foods archive reinforces the notion that the company used photographs for purposes of identification and possibly to justify retaliation against individual strikers. Greater in number than the first set, these photographs show striking workers picketing, holding signs, and approaching cars carrying strikebreakers, among other activities. The company did not make or commission all of the images, but deliberately gathered them together as a body, purchasing or otherwise collecting them from various sources. For instance, Wilson, as the striking workers had done, acquired images from local news outlets. Indeed, the company seems to have done this much more regularly than the union: many pictures in this group have uniform, typed or mechanically printed labels on the front, listing the date of the image, sometimes the



Fig. 18: Car carrying strike sign, Cedar Rapids, 1959. Wilson and Co.'s official slogan, "The Wilson Label Protects Your Table," is satirized in the sign attached to this car. This satirical riff on the company slogan was deployed widely among UPWA members in the early days of the 1959–60 strike. Wilson later mounted a successful legal campaign against the UPWA for copyright infringement, blocking continued use of the satirized slogan. Photo from Farmstead Food Collection.

location, and the source, usually a media outlet. Some came from the *Des Moines Register*, others from the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, still others from the Cedar Rapids-based TV and radio station WMT.

The presence of press images in the company archive does not necessarily demonstrate collusion between the press and the industry; press outlets often make their images available for acquisition or purchase, and the company probably simply amassed images by requesting them from various newspapers. But the company's use of these images does shine a light on the biases of the midcentury press, which often tended to regard striking workers as forces of chaos threatening the order and prosperity brought by large corporations.²⁷ In *Eyes on Labor*,

27. See Quirke, *Eyes on Labor*, esp. 58–75.

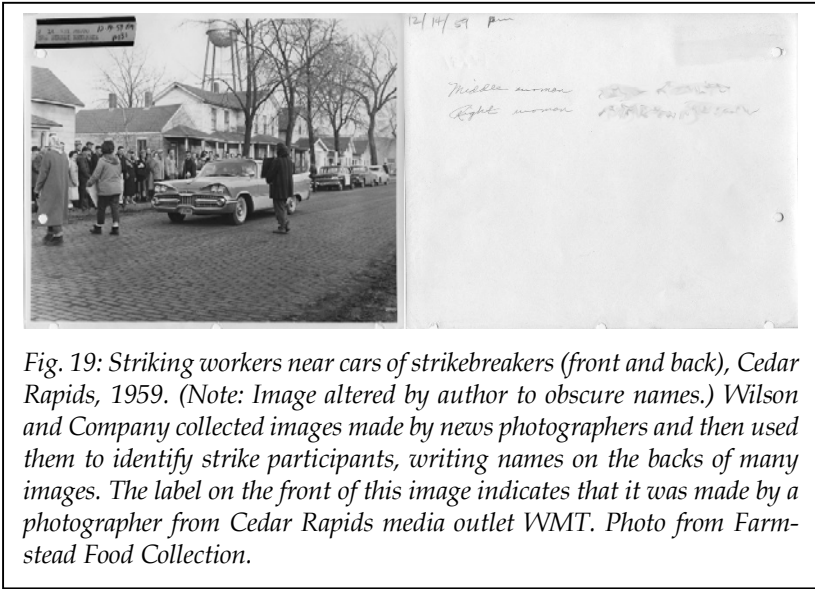


Fig. 19: Striking workers near cars of strikebreakers (front and back), Cedar Rapids, 1959. (Note: Image altered by author to obscure names.) Wilson and Company collected images made by news photographers and then used them to identify strike participants, writing names on the backs of many images. The label on the front of this image indicates that it was made by a photographer from Cedar Rapids media outlet WMT. Photo from Farmstead Food Collection.

Carol Quirke demonstrates how such media biases betray themselves in subtly—or sometimes overtly—antilabor language in newspaper stories and image captions, as well as by arrangements of images selected for layouts.²⁸ Indeed, as some of the images in the Farmstead Foods archive demonstrate, a news photographer's ideological point of view may reveal itself in the very choices—including physical point of view—made within the images themselves. Many of the pictures in this set show scenes similar to those depicted in the UPWA Local 3 photographs: striking workers picketing or surrounding the cars of strikebreakers. But, unlike the Local 3 pictures, it is clear that the press images were made by nonparticipant observers who stood apart from the action rather than inside of it. For a news photographer, the position of observer comes naturally; wide angles and distant vantage points connote neutrality and professional disinterest. But here, collected by the corporation, they also connote a passage of judgment on the activity being photographed,

28. Quirke, *Eyes on Labor*, addresses this particularly in her discussion of striking workers at the Hershey candy factory (pp. 108–48) and in her analysis of news coverage of the 1937 Memorial Day Massacre in Chicago (pp. 149–85).

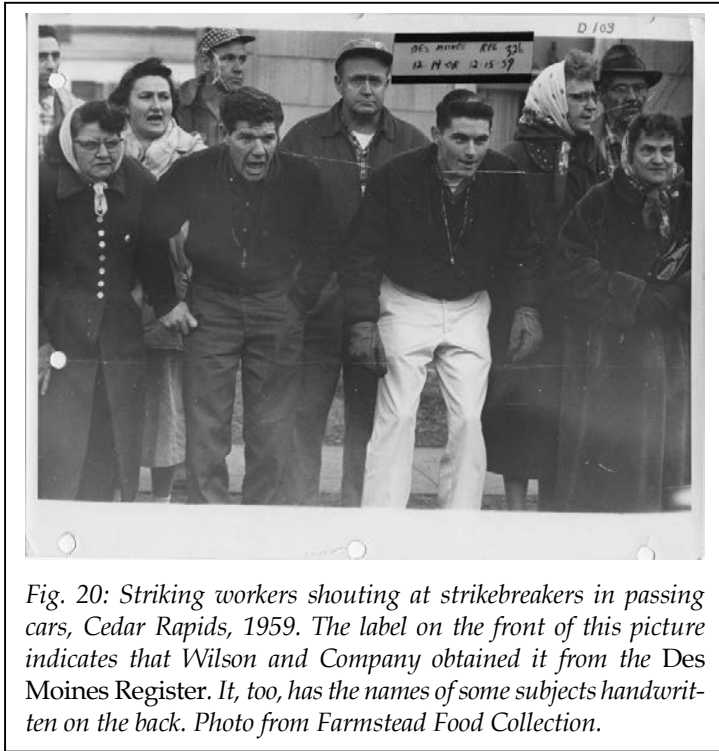


Fig. 20: Striking workers shouting at strikebreakers in passing cars, Cedar Rapids, 1959. The label on the front of this picture indicates that Wilson and Company obtained it from the Des Moines Register. It, too, has the names of some subjects handwritten on the back. Photo from Farmstead Food Collection.

a distancing of the photographer from the object depicted. The clarity of the detached, middle-distance vantage point also permitted company managers to identify as many of the striking workers as possible.²⁹

Wilson clearly did view the pictures it collected and commissioned as evidence. Names of certain picketers and sometimes also their home departments at Wilson were handwritten on the backs of many images (see fig. 19). The overall body of images serves as evidence of a photograph's malleability, the way any picture may be repurposed and recirculated. News photographers created their images to document and inform, but once

29. News photographers did not make all of the pictures in the Farmstead Foods archive: some images from the 1959–60 strike carry no labels or attribution at all. Still, the value of both types of images to Wilson's management would have been the same; company executives saw in the images what they hoped to see, the strike as an unruly and lawless activity.



Fig. 21: Striking workers looking at strikebreakers in passing cars, Cedar Rapids, 1959. Made by a photographer from the Cedar Rapids Gazette, this image shows one subject pointing a flashlight toward passing cars, presumably shining a light on the strikebreakers within. Photo from Farmstead Food Collection.

acquired by the meatpacking company, the pictures took on evidentiary value. If the participants identified in the images were later to be discharged by Wilson, or at least denied a return to their former job at the same pay and seniority scale, the photographs would become yet a third thing, offering justification for the decision.³⁰

30. Cheri Register notes that something like this happened to her own father. He stood on the picket lines for just one day, the first day of the strike. At the main gate, he exchanged greetings — “none too enthusiastically,” writes Register, but apparently not heatedly — with a management employee who subsequently turned around and left. A Wilson employee caught the exchange on movie film, and the management employee later claimed that he had been threatened at the time. Although the movie film was incapable of capturing sound, it was used as evidence of wrongdoing, and Register’s father was not permitted to return to Wilson after the strike. An arbitration board later overruled the finding, and he did eventually return to work at Wilson. See Register, *Packinghouse Daughter*, 157–58, 226–29.

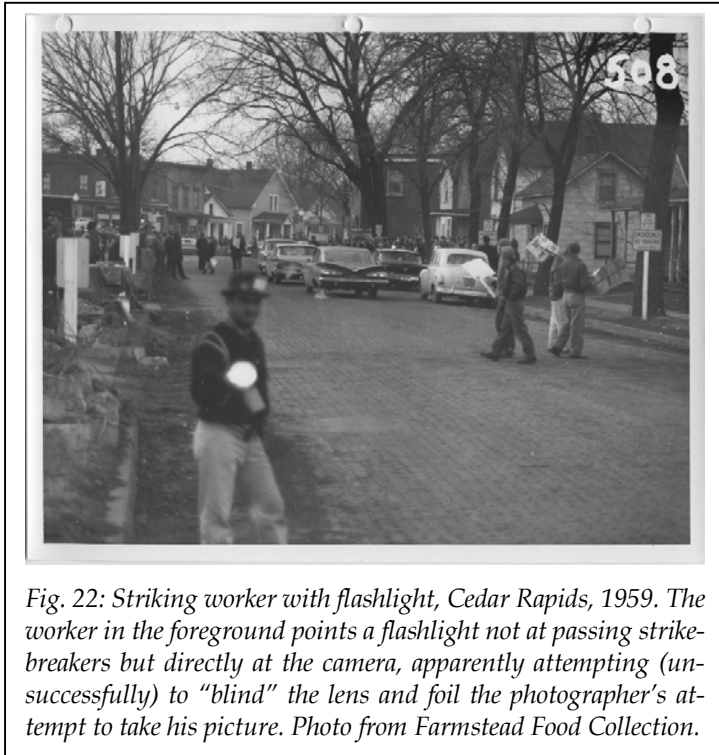
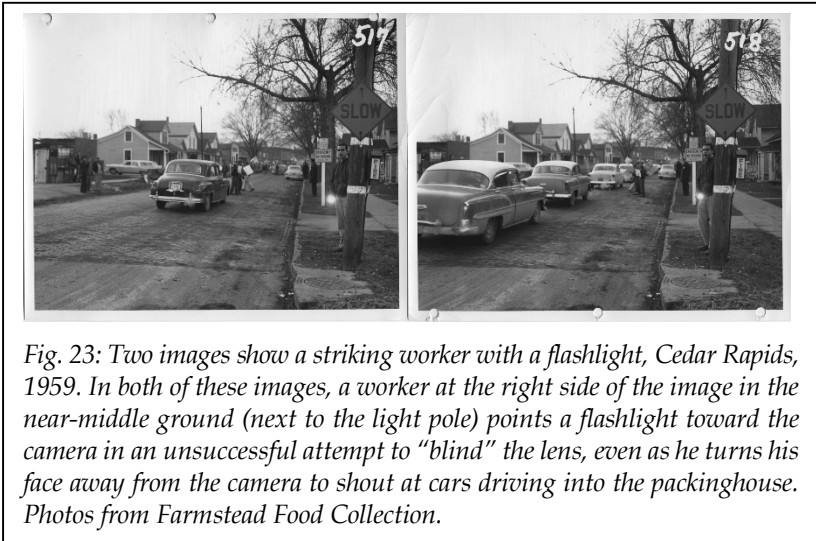


Fig. 22: Striking worker with flashlight, Cedar Rapids, 1959. The worker in the foreground points a flashlight not at passing strike-breakers but directly at the camera, apparently attempting (unsuccessfully) to "blind" the lens and foil the photographer's attempt to take his picture. Photo from Farmstead Food Collection.

In some ways, the photographs in the Wilson/Farmstead Foods archive are similar to those collected in the UPWA/UFCW Local 3 archive. Both groups used pictures for identification: just like the pictures made by UPWA members, those collected by Wilson often have names written on the back or, in a couple of instances, directly on the front. But there are also significant differences in how the two parties made and used photographs. Whereas the union used the camera itself as an instrument of intimidation, making it clear to strikebreakers that they were being photographed, Wilson and Company preferred that striking workers *not* realize the presence of the camera. The company could make its case more easily if strikers did not know that they were being photographed, since awareness of the camera might change their behavior. Whereas striking workers wielded the camera openly, the meatpacking company preferred subterfuge, or at least subtlety.



Still, looking at the pictures in the Wilson/Farmstead Foods archive, it is clear that many striking workers did know they were being photographed, if not by company representatives—that is, by the enemy—then at least by newspaper reporters or by unknown parties with unknown motives. Some strikers even attempted to avoid being imaged, aware of the potential for the pictures to become evidence against them. Many striking workers carried flashlights—simply to see in the dark, of course, since the strike occurred during the winter months when dawn came late and dusk early—and also to peer into the automobiles of strikebreakers (fig. 21). But photographs indicate that they also used their flashlights deliberately to “blind” the camera by pointing the lanterns directly at the lens (fig. 22). One sequential pair of images, for instance, shows a striking worker who wields his flashlight even though it is not dark outside and keeps pointing it toward the camera even as he turns to shout at passing cars (fig. 23). This suggests that he was employing the flashlight solely in an attempt to disorient the photographer and disrupt the picture so that he could not be properly seen. As these images also demonstrate, however, the strategy did not work all that well. Only one picture in the set shows evidence of a successful “blinding” of the camera, and even then one subject remains identifiable,

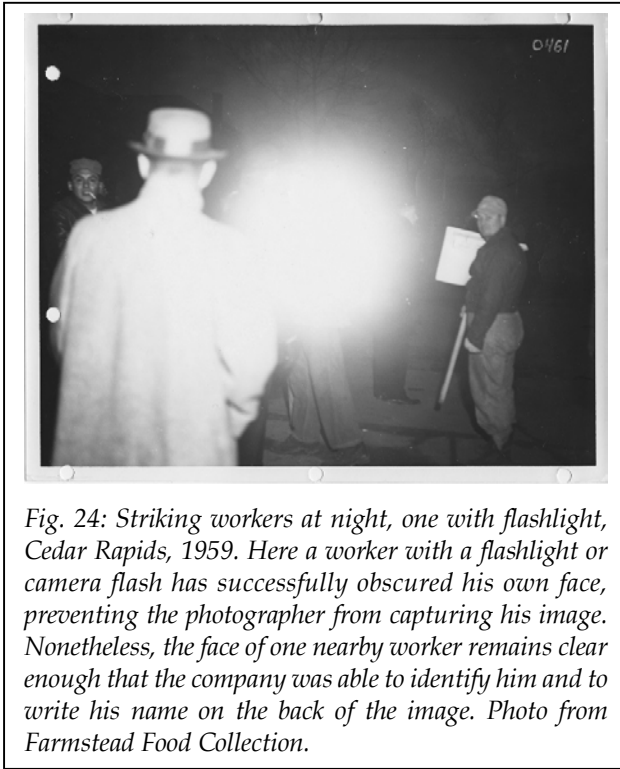


Fig. 24: Striking workers at night, one with flashlight, Cedar Rapids, 1959. Here a worker with a flashlight or camera flash has successfully obscured his own face, preventing the photographer from capturing his image. Nonetheless, the face of one nearby worker remains clear enough that the company was able to identify him and to write his name on the back of the image. Photo from Farmstead Food Collection.

the back of the picture carrying his name (fig. 24).³¹ These images demonstrate that the striking workers knew photography could be used as a weapon against them, just as they were in turn wielding it in their own efforts.

LABOR UNIONS and corporations both circulated physical images among themselves for purposes of community-building, identification, and intimidation. It is also worth briefly examining how photographs were deployed in press coverage of the strikes. Various press outlets covered the 1948 and 1959–60 strikes, some allied with labor interests, others with industry, others with their home communities. Perhaps the most avid and innovative user of

31. It is possible, of course, that the flashlight strategy worked more frequently than this set of images makes it seem. Wilson may simply have discarded, or never printed, images that were ruined by subjects' use of a flashlight.

photographic imagery was the house publication of the UPWA, the *Packinghouse Worker*. Appearing in its early years in a newspaper-like format and later becoming more magazine-like, the *Packinghouse Worker* was not only forward-thinking in its deployment of photographs but also more assertive than other union publications in printing dynamic and even violent imagery of strike activity.³²

From the start of the nationwide meatpacking strike of 1948, the *Packinghouse Worker* used photographs to show how effective labor's actions had already been. On March 19, 1948, the front page showed stockyards emptied of cattle, the caption noting how the image "demonstrates the necessity of work done by the packinghouse workers and justifies their demands for fair wages."³³ For the remainder of the strike, every subsequent issue carried at least one photograph of the strike from somewhere in the United States, and many issues carried entire spreads of photographs, created or gathered from around the country.³⁴ Images and captions from the 1948 strike tended to promote a vision of striking workers as dedicated but peaceful, one caption noting that their disciplined devotion to the cause had been "the order of the day since the strike began."³⁵ When the *Packinghouse Worker* did acknowledge that violent words and actions had occurred during the conflict, it placed responsibility with packing companies and strikebreakers, not striking workers. One photograph, part of a full-page spread of strike pictures from April 16, 1948, depicted what the caption described as a "blackjack and loaded cane! . . . Armour's weapons in their attempt to break the strike of Local 73 in Fargo, North Dakota."³⁶

32. For discussion of the *Packinghouse Worker's* use of photography in general, see Quirke, *Eyes on Labor*, 48 (quoting Quirke's interview with *Packinghouse Worker* editor Les Orear); for discussion more specifically of the publication's use of strike imagery, see pp. 243 and 337–38n79.

33. "On the Picket Line: Packers Refuse Arbitration and Force UPWA Strike," *Packinghouse Worker*, 3/19/1948, 1.

34. At that point in its history, the *Packinghouse Worker* was published every two weeks.

35. "We Will Fight!" *Packinghouse Worker*, 4/2/1948, 1.

36. "Coast to Coast: Action Shots on the UPWA-CIO Strike Front," *Packinghouse Worker*, 4/16/1948, 2.

The issue of May 28, 1948, containing news of the death of a striking worker at the hand of a strikebreaker in Waterloo, incorporated on its front page a somber image of a large group of pickets and their children gathered in a half-circle around a pool of blood on the ground. Created by a photographer apparently kneeling, the image offers an impressive composition, fore- and middle ground occupied by a smear of blood and sawdust while the striking workers' families—standing as representatives for the family left behind by the dead man—loom above it and above the camera, confronting the photographer mutely.³⁷ The accompanying article offered little discussion of the immediate reason for the killing, the strikebreaker's claim that pickets surrounding his car had made him fear for his life. Instead, the text shifted blame to A. D. Donnell, executive secretary of the Rath Company, claiming that he was indirectly responsible for engendering a volatile situation in the street outside the meatpacking plant and thus for causing the chaotic melee in which the striking worker was killed.³⁸

The strike of 1959–60 was much narrower than the industry-wide 1948 strike, concentrated solely among UPWA members at plants owned by Wilson and Company. Coverage in the *Packinghouse Worker* reflected that, the later strike occupying less space in its pages. Still, the publication devoted sustained attention to the Wilson strike, covering it consistently from June 1959, when Wilson first locked out its workers at several plants, to March 1960, when arbitration agreements were put in place. Strike coverage included photographs of UPWA president Ralph Helstein standing alongside strikers at the Wilson plant in Albert Lea, Minnesota; in addition, a number of images focused on the nationwide "Don't buy Wilson" campaign that the union was waging in support of striking Wilson employees.³⁹

37. "Strike in Big 3 Over, Wilson Continues Fight: Rath and Morrell Workers Also Hold Picketlines Solid in Eleventh Week," *Packinghouse Worker*, 5/28/1948, 1.

38. Lee Simon, "Blame Company in Murder of Striking Worker," *Packinghouse Worker*, 5/28/1948, 3.

39. For the photograph of Helstein, see *Packinghouse Worker*, Dec. 1959, 4; for coverage of the "Don't Buy!" campaign, see, for example, "Don't Buy These Wilson Brands," *Packinghouse Worker*, Dec. 1959, 3; and "Passing the Word, 'Don't Buy Wilson!'" *Packinghouse Worker*, Jan. 1960, 1, 6–7.



Fig. 25: John McIvor, "Packinghouse Pickets," Cedar Rapids Gazette, 11/30/1959. This photograph, an image of striking workers looking at a strikebreaker's car, made an appearance in three widely varying contexts: in the pages of the Cedar Rapids Gazette, McIvor's employer; in the pages of the *Packinghouse Worker*, the explicitly prolabor house media organ of the UPWA; and among the images collected by meatpacking company Wilson and Company, where it helped the company identify striking workers. Photo from Farmstead Food Collection.

One image from this coverage, made in Cedar Rapids, is particularly interesting. The picture shows pickets surrounding a car. The accompanying caption reads, in part, "Strikers at Cedar Rapids, Ia. plant of Wilson & Co. give razzberry to car passing through the main gate."⁴⁰ The caption does not deny the seriousness of the situation, but it emphasizes that the striking workers engaged primarily in mockery and verbal, not physical, assault of managers and strikebreakers (fig. 25). What is especially noteworthy about this image is that it appeared originally not in the *Packinghouse Worker* but in a local paper, the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*. John McIvor, staff photographer at the *Gazette*, took the picture

40. *Packinghouse Worker*, Dec. 1959, 12.

at the end of November 1959. The caption in that paper read "PACKINGHOUSE PICKETS—Large numbers of pickets, including 50 from Waterloo, massed Monday morning in front of the Wilson and Co. plant's main gate. However, as shown here, they broke ranks to permit cars to enter the gate."⁴¹ Emphasis in the *Gazette*, then, lay on the picketing workers' large and enthusiastic ranks, but also on their general orderliness—a quality also emphasized in the *Packinghouse Worker* caption.

But it was not only labor interests that claimed ownership of this image. A copy of the picture, purchased from the *Gazette*, is also among those collected by Wilson and Company as evidence of their workers' participation in the strike. A single photographic image thus appeared in three separate contexts, its meaning and the messages it conveyed varying with each new placement. In the labor press, it served to show the Cedar Rapids pickets behaving exactly as the union hoped they would: giving strike-breakers a much-deserved hard time but at the same time remaining nonviolent. In the local newspaper, it functioned as news and information, showing the size of the picketing crowd and (with its caption) attesting to the group's law-abiding behavior. In the corporate collection, the picture demonstrated individual workers' participation in the strike and thus, by extension, their fundamental opposition to company interests—workers' very presence on the picket lines, not just the nature of their behavior, became suspect.

While corporations like Wilson collected strike photographs such as these for official use, companies and industry organizations were unlikely to devote any space to strike-related images in their newsletters and glossy publications. In contrast to the *Packinghouse Worker* and local news outlets, packing industry media organs printed no photographs of labor conflict at all. The *National Provisioner* was the official publication of the American Meat Institute, the meatpacking industry trade organization. Reaching an audience of independent grocers, butchers, and meatpacking plant managers and executives, the publication covered a broad range of industry-related topics in a tone as clearly pro-business as the *Packinghouse Worker* was pro-labor.

41. "Activity on Wilson Picket Line," *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 11/30/1959.

Although the *National Provisioner* used photographs in its pages, the images were there to convey information or provide evidence, not to document current events.

The issue of March 6, 1948, for instance, included text coverage but no pictures of the growing conflict between the packing industry and the UPWA: the articles "CIO Union Spurns 9¢ Raise and Sets March 16 Walkout" and "Labor Politics Seen in CIO Strike Action" have no illustrations.⁴² The publication did include pictures of workers, but not as social actors; rather, workers were represented as the engines by which the work of meatpacking got done. To give just one example, a three-page story from early 1947 about a new plant owned by Capitol Beef Packing Company incorporated five images: one of equipment, the other four including human figures. In captions for the latter, the plant executives and the killing floor foreman were identified by name, but the other workers—many of them nonwhite, unlike the supervisor and executives—were referred to by their role as "boners" or simply as "workers."⁴³ Such coverage persisted in the *National Provisioner* throughout the 1950s and '60s. Union activity received (skeptical or negative) textual coverage; workers themselves appeared as objects, never as active subjects.

THE RELATIVE PAUCITY in the popular press of images of workers, made by workers, for workers, renders study of union-made and union-collected archival images of labor conflict that much more critical. The camera permits self-representation on both sides, allowing its possessors to depict themselves and thus to shape how others see them in the present and future. Companies base their advertising and publicity campaigns on this principle, of course; but individuals and organizations engaging in self-representation, even informally, enact a version of the same activity. Self-representation may serve to counter, or at least to complicate, the vision presented in representations made by others. In group snapshots made in front of strike shacks and on picket lines, for instance, union members present themselves as proud and well-organized groups of orderly demonstrators,

42. *National Provisioner*, 3/6/1948, 15, 29.

43. "Capitol's New Beef Plant in Operation," *National Provisioner*, 1/11/1947, 8–10.

caring for their own and one another's needs. This vision counters the one that appears in many other pictures, such as those residing in the Wilson/Farmstead Foods archive, which show picketers mostly when agitated. From the latter sort of image one would receive an impression of striking workers solely as angry militants. Union-made pictures show a more complete and comprehensive vision, with striking workers engaging both in confrontation and in community-building efforts. Images in packinghouse union and company archives offer a complex vision of the uses of photography, difficult to assimilate into a single narrative but certainly disruptive of any notion that photography always serves the mechanisms of power at the expense of those with less.

The images discussed in this article demonstrate the inadequacy of a unidirectional, top-down conception of photography. While many theorists have correctly pointed out photography's active role in making and shaping knowledge, not simply passively depicting the world, images from the Iowa meatpacking industry remind us that the camera may serve both sides in any battle. In the examples discussed here, both labor and management used the camera for purposes of reconnaissance, gathering information to use as a means of control, to manipulate the behavior of their opponents. Both labor and management deployed photographs for purposes of strategic intimidation. The history of the midwestern meatpacking industry is, in part, contained in these and other photographs, in individual images and also in the ways these images interact with one another, play off of and inform one another. Far from being simply a means of passive illustration, auxiliary to the written record, photography and other forms of visual culture actively create and circulate meaning. Comprehensive study of the meatpacking industry depends on the recognition of images as an integral part of any archive, and on both physical and digital preservation of these invaluable documents.

Appendix

PHOTOGRAPHS have to be separated out from surrounding materials if those materials might otherwise threaten their survival: taken out of albums made of acidic paper, for instance; or removed from non-archival mounts; or liberated from documents to which they might originally have been stapled. If care is not taken in the process of such preservation, however, the photograph's original context will be lost. An image unmoored from context does not become completely meaningless, of course; it still contains information within itself, constituting its own form of documentation. But such an unmoored image loses some of its ability to illuminate a particular event at a particular moment in time. To the extent possible, archives should be processed in a manner that preserves or at least records the original context of a photograph.

If the preservation of context is difficult in a physical archive, it becomes even more so when one encounters the archive solely in a digital state. Although digitization is a worthy endeavor and hugely helpful to researchers, it must complement rather than replace the preservation of physical objects. With regard to photographs, a great deal may be lost in digitization: context, order of presentation, format of presentation. Even an object's physical size becomes difficult to understand, when this may be key to understanding its use. Just as photographs must be archived in a manner that preserves their context, they must also be digitized in as complete and contextualized a manner as possible. Backs must be scanned as well as fronts, and the two preserved together; links must be made to other photographs in the same series (or album, or book, etc.); the original sequencing or other existing organizational scheme must be indicated.

Because photos are now often not physical objects, many of them never achieving concrete existence, this emphasis on their material properties may seem unnecessary. Photographs today may be—and routinely are—labeled and relabeled, circulated and recirculated, at will and virtually without repercussion. But the lessons about context—about circulation, about labeling and captioning, about repurposing—that we learn from physical images in physical archives, can be applied just as readily to digital imagery. Indeed, such lessons have more, not less, relevance today, when visual literacy skills have become vitally necessary to informed negotiation of the digital realm.

Book Reviews and Notices

The Driftless Reader, edited by Curt Meine and Keefe Keeley. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2017. xxxix, 348 pp. Maps, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$26.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Patrick Nunnally is coordinator of the River Life Program, part of the Institute for Advanced Study at the University of Minnesota. His Ph.D. dissertation (University of Iowa, 1990) was "Visions of Sustainable Place: Voice, Land, and Culture in Rural America."

The "Driftless Region," so called because the most recent glaciations missed the area and therefore did not leave the deep glacial "drift" soils that characterize so much of the upper Midwest, has long been recognized as anomalous within the broader historical and geospatial contexts of the Midwest. The terrain is steep and rocky, with bluffs drained by a network of rivers, most prominently the Mississippi. Distinctive topography has created conditions for specialized ecologies; plant communities found here are more characteristic of distant places. The area's lands and waters, near the watershed boundaries of the Mississippi River basin and the Great Lakes, have given rise to distinctive historical patterns of settlement, resource exploitation, and conservation that are interesting and nationally significant.

The region in question encompasses southeastern Minnesota, southwestern Wisconsin, generally along the Wisconsin River, extreme northwestern Illinois in the area around Galena, and northeastern Iowa. It centers around the historic lead mining region, includes rivers that were major fur trade and lumber transportation routes, and bears many earthen mounds left by indigenous inhabitants over thousands of years. A number of books have explored this place, usually through the medium of personal essay and reflection. Editors Curt Meine and Keefe Keeley pursue a different approach, excerpting 81 works of prose and poetry created across a span of some 350 years, adding a number of visual works as well such as maps, painting, etchings, and drawings. Meine is a conservation biologist who is the author of a well-known biography of Aldo Leopold, and Keeley manages a regional nonprofit that brings ecological and agricultural knowledge together. Their choices are judicious and reflect well both the historical and biological/physical systems that make up this complicated place.

The book is composed of 12 sections, which are arranged more or less chronologically. Each section is headed by a short overview, and each piece is introduced by the editors. This editorial touch offers an

important “wayfinding” in a book like this, which has poetry and memoir juxtaposed with nineteenth-century scientific journals. The sections begin with the land. Then a section on “Ancient Peoples” is followed by a collection on “Historical Ecologies.” Here the editors’ sense of the dynamic forces at work in the driftless becomes clear. The region isn’t the same topographically or ecologically as it was 10,000 years ago, 1,000 years ago, or even 100 years ago. Incessant physical forces of running water carrying soil mean that vegetation changes in ways visible and invisible. This sense of a “landscape in motion” is paralleled in the ordering and composition of sections; topics and excerpts are not strictly chronological or artificially thematic. “Historical Ecologies” is followed by “Native Voices” and then by “Explorations,” a section that opens with a mid-twentieth-century poem about crossing the Mississippi in a rapidly moving car and closes with a personal history essay on gathering moss at the turn of the twenty-first century and a poetic meditation/reflection on fishing. The sections pick up with “Early Economies,” “Settler Stories,” and “Farming Lives” before turning to “Waterways” and “Conserving Lands.” Readers should be creative in exploring the book, forming their own orders and following their own interests across the range of subjects and titles.

The sections Meine and Keeley develop may frustrate scholars and academic experts in these fields of study. “Settler colonialism” is a central theoretical critique in the academy these days, and the selections of readings don’t really respond to that critique, although a college course, for example, might use them as texts for analysis. The discussion of acquisition and economic ordering of the land through survey, treated here as a rather painless process, might usefully be brought into discussion with other texts to explore the topic more deeply.

The readings demonstrate how the various colonial enterprises of the French, Spanish, and British, not to mention the American, all played out here. The driftless may have been out of the way of the dominant narratives of cross-country exploration, railroad-based expansion, and urban growth, but nevertheless events here were central to broader reaches. Often overlooked, for example, is the conservation history of the region, with soil conservation by watershed discussed here. Another story, perhaps in a subsequent volume, would include the establishment of the Upper Mississippi Fish and Wildlife Refuge by Will Dilg and the Izaak Walton League.

A place-based approach like this, so long out of fashion in academic scholarship, offers a chance to learn a little about many things that would be found in different departments or even colleges in a university. Native people, ecology, history, hydrology—all are contained

here; sometimes, as in excerpted work by Robin Wall Kimmerer, several strands come together in one piece.

The book is valuable simply for the lovely writing and illustrations it has gathered. But it is also testimony to impressive erudition and the result of a bold vision. Other editors would have sorted differently, would have perhaps made more clear why “Ancient Peoples” has so much writing by recent European settlers, but it’s a good discussion to have and exemplary of how other place-based writers might want to think about the layering in their landscapes.

Locale and Universe: The Shared Story of the Heartland’s Lucas County, Iowa, and the American Nation, 1846–2012, by Franklin D. Mitchell. Self-published, 2016. 480 pp. Maps, illustrations, table, notes, bibliographical essay. \$32.00 paperback.

Reviewer Kimberly K. Porter, a native of Poweshiek County, Iowa, is professor of history at the University of North Dakota. Her work has focused on local, rural, and agricultural history and oral history. She is working on a biography of Iowan Henry Field.

Self-published books are often poorly received: the editing is usually poor, the argument flimsy, the purpose vague. . . . That can be said of some works I’ve been called upon to review or have stumbled upon in research endeavors, but it’s not entirely true of Franklin D. Mitchell’s history of Lucas County, Iowa.

Mitchell, emeritus professor of history at the University of Southern California, is trained in the ways of academic research and writing, which shows throughout the text. He has also published previously, most notably *Harry S. Truman and the News Media: Contentious Relations and Belated Respect* (1998).

Mitchell’s goal in undertaking *Locale and Universe* is unstated at the onset, but as his work comes to a close, he records his purpose, using the third person: “A historian, native of the county but a non-resident for many years, became a resident once again in the new century’s first decade to take the retrospective measure of a people and a place in time. He recalled in his mind the county’s unsung citizens and its illustrious sons and daughters. They were the pioneers who settled the land and established homes, schools, churches, farms, trades, and professions, followed by railroad workers, coal miners and men and workers in numerous varied enterprises and callings” (464). Some of the county’s residents had been “gentle and wise and a few mean and cruel,” but “the historian” felt the need to tell their tale, relating it to the American experience as a whole.

Accordingly, readers are treated to snippets regarding the area's native population, the arrival of the first European-American settlers, the coming of the railroad, and the heinous activities of assorted criminals that have remained a subject of conversation over the decades. Of greater significance to Mitchell's effort to connect Lucas County to the national experience is his valuable discussion of the coal mining communities that once dotted the region. John L. Lewis, perhaps the most famous miner to come from the county, provides an interesting segue into union activities in the early twentieth-century coalfields.

Chapters detailing life in the late twentieth century and the early years of the twenty-first do not receive as much attention as more distant decades. Of merit, however, is the examination of two Lucas County companies that gained national attention: Johnson Machine Works and the Hy-Vee supermarket chain. The changing face of agriculture also makes a worthy appearance.

A few problems do appear. The vast majority of the research for *Locale and Universe* comes from secondary sources, community wits, and local newspapers. Even those are cited rather enigmatically as a "source" or a "conversation." More serious are the factual errors that occasionally arise. James B. Weaver did not run as the Republican candidate for president in 1880; he did run as a member of the Greenback Party. Mitchell's assertion that, for the Amish, "genetics determine which men wear beards that rim their jaw and leave the rest of their pinkish face smooth and free of hair while others have full beards" (411) is decidedly in error.

Such issues should make readers wary of the "facts" Mitchell provides. However, for those interested in a rather simple tale of one county as an exemplar of the nation, the text should suffice, especially if they happen to be from southern Iowa.

Corn Kings & One-Horse Thieves: A Plain-Spoken History of Mid-Illinois, by James Krohe Jr. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2017. xii, 346 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$29.50 paperback.

Reviewer James A. Edstrom is professor of library services and history at William Rainey Harper College in Palatine, Illinois. A scholar of local and Illinois history, he has written a history of Illinois's admission to the Union in 1818 that is under consideration for publication.

Researching and writing the history of even well-defined geographic entities is no simple matter. Boundaries of cities, villages, townships, and counties evolve over time and in the process exert a profound influence over the histories of those political jurisdictions. The central

problem facing a scholar focusing on larger regional histories, by contrast, is the challenge of clearly delineating a given geographic entity. Such is the task confronted by James Krohe Jr. in *Corn Kings & One-Horse Thieves*. A prolific writer and observer of Illinois culture over four decades, Krohe has written a lively and engaging study of a region he calls mid-Illinois, encompassing "the territory that lies wholly or in part between the Indiana state line and the Mississippi River and between interstates 70 and 80" (2).

It is natural, perhaps, to think of Illinois primarily in terms of Chicago versus Downstate, so the concept of focusing on other regions is a novel one. The difficulty, as Krohe readily acknowledges, is that mid-Illinois is "defined by its lack of definition. The region as a whole lacks Chicago's and southern Illinois' self-consciousness as a place. . . . In sum, mid-Illinois is a mini-Illinois . . . its averageness, its lack of a specific identity, its unambiguous ambiguity, its Illinois-ness, is mid-Illinois' true identity—the region of Illinois that is both the most and the least like itself" (3-4).

This is a clever conceit—contrasting the ordinariness of mid-Illinois against bustling Chicago and colorful southern Illinois. It runs the risk of sounding like a rather half-hearted rationale for exploring an arbitrarily defined geography, but Krohe creates a narrative encompassing a fascinating amalgam of anecdote and scholarly research. Indeed, the lack of a clearly defined region to some extent provides Krohe with the basis for exploring a variety of important themes. These range from the region's demographics stretching back to the pre-Columbian era to its natural resources, its industrialization, its urbanization, its politics, its religion, and its infrastructure. He writes knowledgeably, for example, of the challenges faced by early settlers in breaking up the prairie—"like ploughing through a heavy woven door-mat," remarked one pioneer (51)—and of their ultimate success in more or less completely eradicating it from the state of Illinois. He observes that remnants of the prairie persist in places "safe from plows" such as "steep creek banks or railroad embankments" or pioneer cemeteries. "What more apt resting place for a dead ecosystem than a graveyard?" (48).

Krohe is both entertaining and enlightening on a wide variety of issues, events, and personalities. His literary voice is knowledgeable and bemused, with a dry wit that makes for an enthralling narrative. If *Corn Kings and One-Horse Thieves* makes something less than a convincing case for mid-Illinois as a discrete geographic entity, it nonetheless underscores the value and appeal of a work focusing on regions defined by their topography and infrastructure as opposed to their

political geography. Stephen Aron's *American Confluence*, which considered the lands bordering the conjunction of the Missouri, Mississippi, and Ohio Rivers comes to mind as a successful example of such a study. The idea could be applied to a study of the Galena lead region and its impact on the surrounding areas of Iowa and Wisconsin, or to an analysis of the Quad Cities. It could provide a particularly valuable approach to a better understanding of Native American history. Krohe's book will be of interest to scholars as an example of lively writing and innovative regional history and to lay readers looking for a diverting and fascinating perspective on the Prairie State.

From Furs to Farms: The Transformation of the Mississippi Valley, 1762–1825, by John Reda. Early American Places Series. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2016. xiii, 201 pp. Maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$38.00 hardcover.

Reviewer William E. Foley is professor of history emeritus at the University of Central Missouri. He is the author of *Wilderness Journey: The Life of William Clark* (2004) and *The Genesis of Missouri: From Wilderness Outpost to Statehood* (1989).

John Reda's carefully crafted account of the region once known as the Illinois Country details its transformation from a multiracial, multicultural borderland powered by a thriving fur trade to a place where agricultural cultivation by white American farmers was the driving force. Between 1762 and 1825 powerful indigenous nations competed with French, Spanish, English, and, eventually, American powers for control in the territory encompassing the present-day states of Illinois and Missouri, but Reda contends that imperial clashes mattered far less than economic forces in the quest to establish sovereignty over the region.

Notwithstanding the river barrier separating Illinois and Missouri, Reda makes a compelling case for viewing both as parts of a coherent society linked by common historical experiences. In the late eighteenth century the fur trade tied French settlers on both sides of the river to their indigenous neighbors. Following the Seven Years War, British officials staked a claim to land on the Mississippi's east bank while Spanish authorities sought to establish control on the west side, but their ambitious imperial designs fell short of the mark as long as native people remained a dominant force and the fur trade held sway.

Conditions began to change in the wake of an onslaught of agriculturally oriented Americans who settled on both sides of the Mississippi following the American Revolution and the Louisiana Purchase. Their arrival hastened a decline in the fur trade, intensified demands for the

appropriation of Indian lands, and paved the way for their incorporation within the American republic. The War of 1812 brought increased violence to the area and further complicated relationships among Native Americans, white traders, and white settlers. The agreement to conclude hostilities left many of the conflict's precipitating factors unresolved, but the war and its aftermath accelerated the fur trade's marginalization. Even as the economic transformation from furs to farms proceeded apace, inhabitants of the Illinois Country had not fully attached themselves to the American government. Inadequate federal support for the war effort left many white settlers alienated and unhappy with the territorial authorities. But that was about to change.

Assurances that the American regime would safeguard the white settlers' personal security, uphold their property rights, and maintain white supremacy won them over. After securing promises of loyalty from the settlers, the U.S. government successfully imposed its authority in a place where others had failed. The process was lengthy and complicated and came at the expense of the Native Americans and Métis forcibly removed from their lands and the enslaved Africans retained in bondage. Tragically, the subjugation of non-whites was an all-too-common element in America's story.

As Illinois and Missouri advanced toward statehood, societal fissures created new challenges for governing officials. The contentious slavery issue generated intense disagreements on both sides of the river. In Illinois the restrictions imposed on slavery by the Northwest Ordinance prompted the institution's proponents to call for *de facto* slavery in the form of long-term indentures. By contrast, in Missouri, where slavery had been legal from its earliest days, its citizens found unity in opposing federal attempts to place limitations on the well-entrenched institution as a condition for the territory's admission to the Union.

In the post-statehood era, debates over the future of slavery continued, demands for the forcible dispossession and removal of Native people intensified, and fur-trading operations moved farther west. Proslavery politicians in Illinois unsuccessfully sought to legalize slavery by amending the state's constitution, while in Missouri state officials turned a blind eye to congressional attempts to impose limits on the institution. Efforts by Superintendent of Indian Affairs William Clark to acquire additional Indian lands by negotiation rather than by violence found little support locally. Claims by his political opponents that he was an Indian lover contributed to his defeat in Missouri's 1820 gubernatorial election, but the treaties he negotiated resulted in the governmental confiscation of all remaining indigenous landholdings in both states, a result that completed the establishment of U.S. authority

in the former Illinois Country and the emergence of agriculture as the region's dominant economic activity.

The transformation from furs to farms is the book's organizing theme, but, as Reda skillfully demonstrates, the transition was neither direct nor easy. His story is multifaceted and complex, boasts a disparate cast of characters, is well documented, and reflects current scholarship. His emphasis on the local perspective offers a richness of detail absent from more generalized accounts. Among other things, he makes a compelling case for the importance of local and regional history. Readers with an interest in the history of the Midwest will find much to like in this well-written book.

Before Dred Scott: Slavery and Legal Culture in the American Confluence, 1787-1857, by Anne Twitty. Cambridge Historical Studies in American Law and Society. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016. xiii, 285 pp. Map, charts, tables, appendix, index. \$49.99 hardcover.

Reviewer Rebekah M. K. Mergenthal is associate professor of history at Pacific Lutheran University. Her research explores the accommodations and exclusions among the variety of racial and ethnic groups in the lower Missouri River valley during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Anne Twitty's *Before Dred Scott* is a legal history of the freedom suits filed in the St. Louis Circuit Court, where the particular legal culture enabled some slaves to bring suit. The most common grounds the 241 plaintiffs used were prior residence in a free territory or state, previous emancipation, or free at birth. Most did not ultimately gain their freedom (40.2 percent won freedom and 46.5 percent did not, with the rest unknown), and most slaves in the region did not file such suits. However, Twitty shows that careful reading of the cases can illuminate how regular people "made savvy use of the law," often for their own goals (21). These lawsuits were filed in St. Louis, but, because of the mobility of slaveholders and their slaves, they illuminate a broader region, one encompassing the convergences of the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri Rivers. Twitty does not explicitly discuss Iowa, although its eastern end is included on her map of the "American Confluence" region (4). Still, her ideas about the unclear boundary between slavery and freedom, and its legal ramifications, could certainly resonate with the study of antebellum Iowa.

In three chapters in the first section of *Before Dred Scott*, Twitty shows the "ambiguity" (56) between slavery and freedom in the region, the way some slaves learned "to use formal law to their own advantage" (94), and the limited antislavery perspectives of their lawyers.

The four richly detailed chapters in the second section each focus on a specific example drawn from the freedom suits and illustrate in particular the general points made in the first section. (Twitty's structural choices do lead to some looping back and repetition.) Chapter 4 traces the physical and legal journeys of the slave Maria Whiten, illuminating how small slaveholders "used the law to fashion their own identities and the identities of others" (138), an emphasis echoed in chapter 6. Chapter 5 more directly showcases a slave's own initiative through the story of Vincent, a slave in Kentucky who was hired out in Illinois. "By conducting an ongoing battle" about the location and shape of his labor, Vincent "carved out a kind of independence for himself" (178), of which filing a suit was only part. Chapter 7 juxtaposes the freedom suits of Polly Wash in the 1830s and '40s with the slave narrative written by her daughter near the end of the century (Lucy A. Delany, *From the Darkness Cometh the Light, or Struggles for Freedom*, [1891?]) to explore how slavery was remembered in the area. This intriguing chapter opens up *Before Dred Scott* to repercussions *after* that case, which would have been interesting to analyze more broadly, especially in terms of its regional implications. The book culminates in a conclusion that focuses directly on the *Dred Scott* case. By placing this crucial case in the context of her previous discussion, Twitty is able to show that it was "utterly unexceptional" (237) because of the similarities to other suits, and also that Judge Roger B. Taney's decision signaled a "death knell" (239) for the long-standing legal culture of the American Confluence region.

Twitty helpfully engages the broader literature on slave agency, especially Walter Johnson's *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (1999), which grounds her analysis and provides important context. There is also a growing historical literature focusing on the St. Louis Circuit Court freedom cases. Twitty references several works, although she does not fully set up the historiographical debates and differences between them. She does, though, critique the breadth of Lea VanderVelde's conclusions in *Redemption Songs: Suing for Freedom before Dred Scott* (2014) as incorrectly focusing on the "transhistorical sublime motives" instead of "the fine-grained contexts in which those motives and rationales were deployed" (22), which are Twitty's focus. Yet, because *Before Dred Scott* focuses so narrowly on the St. Louis freedom suits, it is not as broadly compelling and regionally illuminating as Matthew Salafia's recent work, *Slavery's Borderland: Freedom and Bondage along the Ohio River* (2013). However, Twitty is an able guide to the details and implications of the St. Louis freedom suits, and her book provides important evidence of how regular people engaged with and utilized formal law on the antebellum frontier.

Looking for Lincoln in Illinois: A Guide to Lincoln's Eighth Judicial Circuit, by Guy C. Fraker. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. xiii, 130 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendix, bibliography, index. \$21.95 paperback.

Reviewer John A. Lupton is the executive director of the Illinois Supreme Court Historic Preservation Commission. He was formerly an assistant editor on *The Papers of Abraham Lincoln* and has written extensively about Lincoln as a lawyer.

Guy Fraker's new book is the third in a series that offers guided tours of Lincoln sites in Illinois. Specifically, Fraker leads us around central Illinois on the Eighth Judicial Circuit during the height of Lincoln's circuit-riding practice. The guide provides valuable information about highways, roads, and streets, including a key to different types of markers and wayside exhibits. Many illustrations show readers the people and places Lincoln experienced. Fraker demonstrates that Lincoln's time on the circuit served two important purposes: building a substantial law practice while also creating a network of political operatives.

Fraker does not delve into scholarly issues related to Lincoln's law practice, but this book is not meant for that. The purpose is to hold the reader's hand while Fraker points out many Lincoln sites in a very well-done driving and walking tour of Lincoln's circuit law practice. The book provides tidbits about some of Lincoln's cases and personal interactions—not enough to know full details, but enough to whet the appetite. As a result, a larger "For Further Reading" section would have been helpful to direct readers to some of those cases. Surprisingly absent were the two *Papers of Abraham Lincoln* publications on Lincoln's law practice. The four-volume book edition, particularly, has two in-depth tours of Lincoln's circuit. Minor quibbles aside, Fraker succeeds in giving readers a taste of what life was like on the circuit with Lincoln, whose practice mirrored that of many attorneys in the Midwest.

Making an Antislavery Nation: Lincoln, Douglas, and the Battle over Freedom, by Graham A. Peck. Urbana, Champaign, and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2017. ix, 264 pp. Maps, appendix, notes, index. \$34.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Stephen Hansen is emeritus dean and professor of history at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. He is the author of *The Making of the Third Party System: Voters and Parties in Illinois, 1850–1876* (1980).

In this study of the rise of antislavery politics, Graham A. Peck uses Illinois as the context for examining the political conflict over slavery from the Northwest Ordinance in 1787 to the election of Abraham

Lincoln in 1860. Peck's well-written and insightful analysis argues that Lincoln's ideas and leadership wedded the concept of freedom with national expansion and economic opportunity into a compelling antislavery ideology for the Republican Party. While not attempting to provide a major reinterpretation of the formation of the Republican Party, Peck offers a useful, lively, and discerning study of the evolution of antislavery politics.

Peck, professor of history at Saint Xavier University in Chicago and writer, director, and producer of a documentary on Stephen A. Douglas, examines antislavery politics using Illinois as a microcosm for the nation. He argues five major points: (1) antislavery politics cannot be properly understood without recognizing that slavery was a constant issue in American politics since the Northwest Ordinance of 1787; (2) the role of Northern Democrats as political centrists in the Sectional Crisis has not been fully appreciated; (3) Northern Democrats, even though political centrists, were essentially proslavery; (4) the ability of Lincoln and the Republican Party to link antislavery with nationalism was key in transforming the antislavery movement into a major political party; and (5) secession was the culmination of a fundamental conflict between slavery and freedom, deeply rooted in American history, and not the result of a failure to compromise in the 1850s.

Peck does an excellent job of describing the paradoxes and contradictions of antislavery politics in Illinois. He does so by deftly arguing that economic interests, racial attitudes, religious convictions, and definitions of freedom all shaped antislavery politics but with varying degrees of emphasis. He explains, for example, how the motives of antislavery voters in 1824 who rejected an attempt to make slavery constitutionally legal in Illinois differed from those of the antislavery voters who defeated the Democratic Party in 1854 in the wake of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. In 1824 voters were concerned primarily with slavery's degradation of labor along with a racist concern about bringing more African Americans into the state. In 1854 antislavery voters focused more on the future of Free Soil in the territories and the broken promise of the Missouri Compromise. Peck's nuanced description of antislavery politics in Illinois illustrates well the nation's complex and uncomfortable history of slavery, race, and politics.

Another strength of Peck's book is his explanation of how Abraham Lincoln framed antislavery politics. Peck argues that Lincoln "turned the moralism of abolitionists into the duty of the nation" (178). More specifically, he maintains that Lincoln transformed antislavery into a nationalistic purpose by arguing that universal freedom was the guiding principle of the nation. According to Peck, Lincoln's ability to link

antislavery with national values, expansion, and promise made a compelling ideology in the Free States that transformed the United States into an antislavery nation in 1860.

Peck's analysis could have been strengthened by explaining more fully his use of the terms *slavery* and *freedom*. The way Peck juxtaposes these terms implies a twenty-first-century meaning that seems to discount the nineteenth-century proslavery view that white slaveowners' political, social, and economic freedom depended on the enslavement of African Americans. Closely related to this issue is Peck's insistence that slavery had been a central political issue for the nation since 1787. It's doubtful that a majority of the people living in the antebellum United States saw it that way. Even Lincoln didn't become motivated by slavery as a political issue until the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. Lastly, Peck could have benefited from better use of electoral data. His aggregated voting results broken down by geographic region add little to the analysis, a problem that could have been easily addressed by using already existing township- and county-level voting data.

Regardless of these reservations, Peck has provided a useful and interesting framework for understanding antislavery politics in Illinois and in the nation. His argument that Lincoln and the Republicans fused a view of the past with the issues of the present and a vision for the future into a powerful nationalistic antislavery ideology is compelling and insightful. Scholars and students of the Midwest and of the Sectional Crisis will find this book an important addition to the literature on antislavery politics.

Rebels on the Border: Civil War, Emancipation, and the Reconstruction of Kentucky and Missouri, by Aaron Astor. *Conflicting Worlds: New Dimensions of the American Civil War*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2012, 2017. viii, 332 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00 paperback.

The Loyal West: Civil War and Reunion in Middle America, by Matthew E. Stanley. Urbana, Champaign, and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2017. xi, 268 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$95.00 hardcover, \$24.95 paperback.

Reviewer Kevin M. Gannon is professor of history and director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Grand View University. He is working on a continental history of the Civil War era.

The American Civil War was a many-faceted conflict, but one common thread runs through the various strands of the era's conflict: in an es-

sential way, the Civil War was a clash of identities; it was a struggle to determine exactly what identity the American Republic would assume as it approached its century mark. Would the United States be a republic that was ostensibly dedicated to liberty and equality but also one that sanctioned the brutal institution of chattel slavery? Or would the nation remove the stain of its "original sin" and fully enact the ideals of the Declaration of Independence and Constitution without regard to racial categories? Was the United States a pastoral, ordered, agricultural society? Or should it follow the path already trod by European industrializing powers, even if that meant the eclipse of farming and the rise of commercial values? Complicating such dichotomies was the mix of local and regional identities swirling within nineteenth-century American political culture: Northern, Southern, and—by the 1840s—western.

Some of the most interesting recent scholarship on the Civil War era—including the two volumes under review here—focuses on this newer but still vigorously asserted "western" identity. Primarily encompassing the region that we now call the Midwest, westerners of the Civil War era cultivated an identity that blended Northern and Southern folkways but also sought to transcend that older cultural dichotomy. The northern tiers of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and even Iowa were settled by migrants from the New England/upstate New York cultural hearth, but the southern portions of these newer states drew their white populations from the upper South—primarily Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky. These dual migratory strands, as Matthew Stanley argues for the Ohio valley, were the root of "an accommodationist western identity—one rooted in political moderation, cultural centrism, and racial apartheid" (Stanley, 36). Aaron Astor asserts that a similar dynamic prevailed in Kentucky and Missouri, although they were also categorized as "Southern" and were slaveholding states; they had a "political culture . . . [that] embraced pragmatism over ideological inflexibility, tradition over revolutionary cant, and social diversity over plantation monoculture" (Astor, 244).

But the center could not hold. By the 1850s, the region was a microcosm of the larger clash of identities and allegiances that was tearing the American Union apart by the end of the decade. During the war years (1861–1865), southern Ohio and Indiana and northern Kentucky and Missouri were regions of complicated and competing loyalties. Allegiances to the Union and Confederacy, respectively, were not so clear-cut in this middle ground. The particularities of western identity persisted into the postwar years, too, as westerners sought to shape the memory and narrative of their home's role in the conflict and its aftermath. Where both of these volumes excel is in providing an anal-

ysis that doesn't stop at 1865, as do so many treatments of identity and political culture in the Civil War era, but rather extends into the latter decades of the century. Both books draw revealing conclusions that add to our understanding of the Civil War and Reconstruction years in all their complexity.

Aaron Astor's *Rebels on the Border* is an intensive study of selected counties in Kentucky and Missouri. His methodological discussion and evidence support his contention that those areas were both representative and trendsetting for those states as a whole. Astor sees this region as one neglected by much of the historiography for this period, which he contends often oversimplifies the sectional crisis as the industrial North versus the plantation South. The border region Astor examines, though, is a remarkably diverse and complex society: slaveholders with strong economic ties to the free-labor North across the Ohio River; the predominance of small farmers rather than landed gentry; and diversified agricultural output as opposed to the monoculture of the Cotton South. This kaleidoscopic character meant that the region's citizens eschewed what they saw as the dangerous extremes of both abolitionism and fire-eating secessionism. But, as Astor notes, it wasn't just the allegiances and worldviews of whites that mattered here; enslaved people who then became freedmen and freedwomen were important political agents as well. Following Stephen Hahn's work (particularly *A Nation Under Our Feet*), Astor looks at politics as a set of interlocking processes that occur in both formal (elections, legislative votes) and informal (collective struggles over power and claims to civil rights) ways. The political agency of the region's African American population was latent but still feared by the region's whites during the prewar years; being adjacent to the Free Soil North meant that the slaves of Kentucky and Missouri were automatically suspected of insurrectionary—even revolutionary—leanings. That anxiety over control, Astor argues, manifested itself during the Civil War as whites struggled to come to terms with blacks' pro-Unionism. It was also at the root of the white-supremacist revanchism embraced by the region's white population during Reconstruction. Even those who had been Unionists before the war (a fair number, according to Astor's study) saw emancipation and black military service as the destruction of their (particularly conceived) Union and thus moved quickly into the ranks of the Lost Cause rejection of the Union victory and what it was supposed to have meant in the immediate aftermath of the war. Conflict before and during the war in Kentucky and Missouri did not pit the advocates of free labor and slavery against one another but rather two subsets of proslavery Americans; the assurance of white supremacy via the subjugation of

blacks was never an open question for them. Astor's conclusion here is an important one, as we see that even such potent forces as reconciliation and nationalism could not overcome the deep-seated racialized – and racist – ideologies of the border's white population.

Matthew Stanley's examination of the West north of the Ohio River complements Astor's analysis and, in significant ways, affirms its conclusions. The creation of a "Loyal Western" identity by whites in "middle America" was also predicated on the region's self-conscious antipathy towards "extremism" of both the far Northern and deep Southern varieties. During the war, Unionism in this area was "loyal" in only the conditional sense; it was a deeply conservative stripe and vehemently anti-emancipation in its nature. While the Ohio River was in one sense "the boundary between contending nations," it was also the area "where treason and loyalty overlap" (32, 56). The dissenting Copperhead movement drew its main strength from the southern tier of the "loyal West," underscoring just how contingent the conservative Unionism of the West was. No factor was more decisive in creating that contingent character than race. Stanley expertly demonstrates how emancipation and the postwar struggles over the precise meanings of freedom and equality ultimately made white political culture in "middle America" as anti-Reconstruction and pro-segregation as one might have found in the South. The war, this ideology stipulated, had been fought only to preserve the Union, not to advance a radical agenda of black equality. Emancipation unleashed forces with which western whites did not want to engage. "The Union as it was" became the rallying cry of a renascent conservatism after war's end, a phenomenon that Stanley rightly argues lay under much of the North's eventual retreat from Reconstruction. It is in this process, as it unfolded across the late 1800s, that we find Union veterans' strongly worded disavowals of fighting for anything that smacked of racial equality, military reunions that explicitly barred African American veterans, and an overweening emphasis on sectional reconciliation – which was only possible through an implicit agreement among whites to deny emancipation and black civil rights their rightful place in American society (164–71).

Aaron Astor and Matthew Stanley have each given us well-researched, richly nuanced books that challenge us to reexamine our conceptions not just of the Civil War but of such larger historical themes as liberty, Union, and the nature of U.S. citizenship. Readers of this journal will appreciate the authors' well-supported contention that the Middle West, in all its complexity, is an essential part of our understanding of this complicated and crucial epoch of U.S. history.

Altogether Fitting and Proper: Civil War Battlefield Preservation in History, Memory, and Policy, 1861–2015, by Timothy B. Smith. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2017. xxiv, 328 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Jonathan D. Neu is a Ph.D. candidate in history at Carnegie Mellon University. His research focuses on the Grand Army of the Republic and Union veterans' civic and reform activities around the turn of the twentieth century.

The Civil War sesquicentennial now lies behind us. But with continued commercial encroachment on historic lands, new threats to the 1906 Antiquities Act and our national parks, and intensifying debates surrounding Confederate monuments, current events have ensured that the war and its sacred sites have not strayed far from the nation's collective interest. In this sense, historian Timothy B. Smith's latest work tracing the history of Civil War battlefield preservation is especially pertinent as Americans continue to grapple with the ways we remember and conserve our heritage.

Smith's volume discusses several distinct eras of battlefield preservation—an activity that he convincingly demonstrates is “an evolutionary process”—each with its own accomplishments, failures, and major players (xvi). He tracks four key entities over time (federal, state, and local governments, as well as private organizations), assesses their strengths and limitations, and ultimately applauds the good work that grassroots initiatives have achieved in filling the vacuum that a comprehensive, federally backed preservation policy should have provided from the beginning.

Nascent battlefield tourism and the burial of Union soldiers in proliferating national cemeteries sparked the earliest preservation efforts. The wartime and Reconstruction-era years were dominated by non-government and veterans groups whose activities, Smith argues, largely resulted in “disjointed and partisan” outcomes (16). That gave way to a “golden age” of battlefield preservation (the subject of Smith's 2008 book, *The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation: The Decade of the 1890s and the Establishment of America's First Five Military Parks*) that emerged as a result of North-South reconciliation and the willingness of a veteran-dominated Congress to establish national military parks around the turn of the twentieth century.

Later chapters break new ground by carrying the story up to the present day. The early twentieth-century transfer of battlefields from the War Department to National Park Service control, for instance, was a watershed moment marked by “change from veteran stewardship and visitation to nonveteran operation and clientele” (99). The

New Deal era brought money and labor to help consolidate and improve existing parks, even as the federal government began ceding new preservation efforts to state and local entities, as well as private groups. That trend intensified from the Civil War centennial through the era of 1980s fiscal conservatism (a preservation "dark age," according to Smith), steeling historians and preservationists to take control through grassroots activism. Smith concludes by touting such private organizations, particularly the Civil War Trust, which he admiringly credits as "an all-out, comprehensive, undeniable" leader in today's preservation efforts (192).

Readers may be struck by Smith's assertion that postwar reconciliation between white Northerners and white Southerners (a phenomenon that historians have long linked to hindered social progress for African Americans and contemporary Americans' obscured understanding of race and slavery as key causes of the war) had a forgotten silver lining. North-South accord, Smith argues, was a prerequisite for successful battlefield preservation as "the two sections . . . eagerly toiled in the same efforts" (35). That said, Smith at times overstates the amicability between Union and Confederate veterans, downplaying the many instances (recently highlighted by historians like John R. Neff, Barbara A. Gannon, and Caroline E. Janney) when white Union veterans stood up for their African American comrades and against Lost Cause mythology. More discussion explaining why cross-sectional cooperation over battlefield preservation transcended Union and Confederate veterans' lingering hostilities may have given Smith a greater claim to engage with this newer scholarship on the boundaries of Civil War reconciliationism.

Meanwhile, historians of state or local history will likely appreciate the lengths to which Smith goes in describing lower-level governmental efforts to preserve the many peripheral battlefields that escaped the federal government's attention. Smith frequently analyzes the ways federal legislation (for instance, the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act) presented new opportunities for state and local entities to wrest control of preservation policy. The narrative occasionally gets bogged down in long lists of preservation initiatives that may have been better addressed in appendixes. But this should not take away from the recognition that the author has done yeoman's work compiling countless state and local preservation projects, backed by an impressive array of archival documentation.

The book's greatest strength lies in persuasively characterizing battlefield preservation policy as ever changing and sensitive to political, economic, and cultural trends occurring in U.S. society. Smith also pro-

vides insightful suggestions about how and why certain persons or entities wield the power not only to preserve battlefields but also to interpret those sites for the public at large. With so many Civil War memory studies populating academic discourse recently, Smith has commendably added battlefield preservation policy as yet another concept influenced by Americans' contentious relationship with the war's legacy.

Great Plains Bison, by Dan O'Brien. Discover the Great Plains Series. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2017. xiii, 150 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendix, bibliography, index. \$14.95 paperback.

Reviewer Gregory J. Dehler is a history instructor at Front Range Community College. He is the author of *The Most Defiant Devil: William Temple Hornaday and His Controversial Crusade to Save American Wildlife* (2013).

The decline of the American bison, more commonly referred to as the buffalo, is a well-known story. At one point as many as 30 million buffalo thundered across the Great Plains and beyond, but by 1890 only a handful of wild animals remained in its vast former range. Dan O'Brien does not introduce any new research on this historical drama but brings a fresh perspective as a South Dakota buffalo rancher. His love and appreciation of the animal and its natural habitat come through the pages of *Great Plains Bison*. As part of the University of Nebraska Press's Discover the Great Plains series, this slim volume of just over 100 pages is an introduction designed to be a quick-reading historical and ecological overview of the bioregion's keystone species.

Even though tens of millions of buffalo ranged through the Great Plains, the region always seemed vacant to successive waves of white settlers. According to the prevailing mindset, elimination of the buffalo was a prerequisite to settlement and development. But without the buffalo, the flora and fauna of the region were likewise destroyed, with disastrous ecological consequences. Cattle ranches were the first to fill the void, but the inhospitable Great Plains, with its blizzards and droughts, ended that experiment. Throughout the twentieth century chemical-intensive industrial agriculture expanded to almost every available acre, replacing the native environment with a regime of imported crops and animals that were protected by artificial fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides, and supported by government policies and subsidies.

O'Brien's strongest chapters are the ones on agriculture, land use and transformation, and ranching, which are clearly the subjects the author knows the best. He shares several personal, almost spiritual, observations from his career as a buffalo rancher, which are the most thought-provoking and valuable aspects of the book. His closing chapter calls for greater respect for the buffalo and the environment.

He practices what he preaches. O'Brien's ranch follows a free-range, sustainable approach, unlike the mass herding typical of the cattle industry. As he summarizes his view, "A buffalo that does not move at least a few miles per day is not a buffalo" (99). To some extent, *Great Plains Bison* reads as an extended explanation of why he treats his herd the way he does. (Readers can access his personal website at www.wildideabuffalo.com for more information.)

The chapters on Native Americans and the conservation of the buffalo are a little weaker, with several minor errors, such as referring to the 1848 Free Soil Party as a coalition of Democrats and Republicans (the latter did not yet exist as a political party) and stating that the American Bison Society supplied the animals for the Wichita Bison Preserve, the nation's first (it was the New York Zoological Society). Both are topics with an expansive literature and historiography that are underrepresented in the bibliography.

For those with little knowledge of the history of the buffalo or the Great Plains, O'Brien provides a handy introduction to the subject, although without reference notes and with only a small, somewhat dated bibliography, readers might struggle to find where to go from here if they wish to read more. Readers already familiar with the buffalo may also find value in O'Brien's telling of the story.

Homesteading the Plains: Toward a New History, by Richard Edwards, Jacob K. Friefeld, and Rebecca S. Wingo. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2017. vi, 294 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, graphs, charts, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 hardcover.

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

In 1873 D. John Johnson, his wife, Kristina, and their two children left Dalarna, Sweden, and emigrated to Minnesota. After working awhile elsewhere, they took up a homestead in Winfield Township, Renville County, earned their patent, and, by 1888, owned 400 acres of land. John and Kristina were my great-grandparents. I am one of their many descendants, and we are all part of the 46 million or more Americans who today descend from homesteading families. The authors of *Homesteading the Plains* provide that surprisingly large 46 million figure (1). They also challenge many negative academic assumptions about the impact and importance of homesteading for American history, as-

sumptions that have limited further research into the subject. The American public holds a different, much more positive view of homesteading and homesteaders, one the authors, academics themselves, find to be closer to their own estimations of its role.

Why have homesteading studies languished? Authors Richard Edwards, Jacob K. Friefeld, and Rebecca S. Wingo spell out four “stylized facts” — that is, what everyone “knows” to be true — that result in a lack of scholarly interest in the subject: (1) homesteading was unimportant to the acquisition of farmland because most bought their land; (2) homesteaders often failed to earn their claims; (3) homesteaders and the homesteading process were corrupt as people lied and cheated to gain land; (4) and homesteading was a major cause of Native American land loss as homesteaders moved in and pushed tribes aside. After carefully analyzing each “fact” to determine its veracity, the authors find that none are indisputably true. Fred Shannon, a well-known “public land scholar” (14), is especially at fault for the “homesteaders failed” canard, for example. He assumed that claim abandonment meant failure, developed a statistical analysis of that data point, used it as gospel, and others then followed along. Interpretations of all of these issues froze in place. As often happens in academia in such cases, scholars lose interest, graduate advisers tell their doctoral students to look elsewhere for topics because “it’s been done,” and a likely field of study falls by the wayside.

Homesteading the Plains is a carefully done and interesting investigation of old interpretations. Step by step the authors dismantle old knowledge and replace it with new. In each case they provide detailed accountings of their reasoning and their calculations. Their study of fraud in homesteading is especially interesting, providing as it does stories of individuals and their actions. Their analysis of the “fact” of Indian dispossession concludes that government and booster actions in Dakota do demonstrate a link between homesteading and dispossession. Elsewhere the link is not established. The book also suggests new fields for investigation. The authors develop innovative ways to identify community leaders in homesteading neighborhoods. Homesteaders had to supply witnesses who would testify that they had followed the rules and fulfilled requirements to prove up on their lands. The same names appear as witnesses for homesteader after homesteader. These men were usually early arrivals who had earned the respect of their neighbors and who felt responsible for the success of the community. Women homesteaders receive considerable attention here as well. The authors assess residency, land sales, community links, the problems posed by widowhood, and the importance of neighborhood coopera-

tion for their survival and success. Mapping techniques help assess community formation, ethnic concentration, places of origin, and other information important for community success. The digitization of land records, which is bringing voluminous and often scattered documents together and making them accessible to everyone, the application of geographical tools such as GIS, and innovative techniques such as analysis of claim proof witnesses create a world of research possibilities.

Homesteading the Plains is an important book. The authors apply new tools and innovative techniques to an old, nearly moribund topic. A regeneration of the field should certainly follow. Anyone interested in the history of the Great Plains will benefit from this exciting research.

They Sang for Norway: Olaf Oleson's Immigrant Choir, by Ane-Charlotte Five Aarset. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2017. ix, 266 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paperback.

Reviewer Kristin Elmquist teaches history at Park Center Senior High School in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota. She earned an M.A. in cultural anthropology at New York University, specializing in immigration history.

They Sang for Norway tells the story of the author's ancestor Olaf Oleson, who emigrated from Norway in the 1870s and rose to prominence in Fort Dodge, Iowa, as a businessman and philanthropist and as the driving force behind Norwegian men's choirs in the United States. Oleson's life is a classic example of an immigrant success story. Trained as a gardener and botanist in Norway, after arriving in the United States he established a successful pharmacy in the growing city of Fort Dodge. He became one of the city's most successful early residents and shaped its development in lasting ways: he financed a department store and other real estate projects, supported a church, became politically active, and made many charitable contributions. At the same time, he devoted much of his energy and resources to his passion for music. He began by forming a small singing quartet. Later, he was instrumental in promoting Norwegian male choirs through supporting organizations and planning festivals throughout the United States and abroad where these choirs would perform. Music was the medium he used to promote the influence of Norwegians in the United States.

Oleson's story is one of many examples of immigrant success in the United States. But in the context of his family and political events in Norway it becomes exceptional. One of Olaf's brothers who stayed behind—Ola Five—was the founder of an armed militia rooted in Norwegian nationalism and liberal politics and devoted to independence from Sweden. He is the subject of a previous text by this author.

Nationalism took two very different paths in these brothers' lives. Their stories connect in interesting ways—at times directly when proceeds from concerts helped finance the militias. The conflict between Norway and Sweden over their separation—while very tense at times—manifested itself in conflict between these two immigrant communities in the United States. One example included here is of the pointed removal of a Swedish song from a concert program. These are interesting details that reflect the complexity of immigrant communities' relationships to their home countries and to each other. The shift in focus—from success in the United States to the larger context of Norwegian identity—is interesting and refreshing; often the immigrant success story seems to leave the homeland behind. Being reminded of the continuing connections between immigrant communities and the politics of the homeland is an important part of this text.

For those interested in the place of immigration history in the development of Iowa, this will be an invaluable contribution. Oleson's life had a lasting impact on Fort Dodge. The author provides detailed historical evidence about his life and contributions, including extensive accounts of his business dealings, names of his associates, details of the programs of each choir concert, and each trip he took. This level of detail and the inclusion of all the archival research will be invaluable to others researching related topics. The text includes far less interpretation of these details; the connections between topics are not always present but are left for the reader to put together. The context and significance are not clearly established, and the text would have benefited from a stronger narrative thread. I appreciated the detailed treatment of the history of Fort Dodge and Oleson's impact on the male choir movement; on the historically important context of nationalism and immigrant identity and on the interesting ways communities retained links to their homeland, I would have liked to read more.

The Midwestern Moment: The Forgotten World of Early-Twentieth-Century Midwestern Regionalism, 1880–1940, edited by Jon K. Lauck. Rediscovering the American Midwest Series. Hastings, NE: Hastings College Press, 2017. xv, 287 pp. Illustrations, notes. \$24.99 paperback.

Reviewer Charles Johanningsmeier is professor of English at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is the author of numerous works of scholarship about regionalist authors of fiction, with a special interest in Willa Cather.

Editor Jon K. Lauck has, during the past decade, served as a prolific booster of midwestern studies. The present volume is a collection of 16 essays that deal with various elements of the region's history during a

period defined here as "The Midwestern Moment," when the Midwest appeared poised to serve as a shining example of the best of America and thus lead the nation into the future.

Taken together, these essays do valuable work in the project of documenting important aspects of midwestern life from this era. Many bring forth the region's previously well-known, and now much lesser-known, voices (many with strong connections to Iowa) for new generations to consider. Figures receiving detailed attention include fiction authors Ruth Suckow, Booth Tarkington, Bess Streeter Aldrich, Jay G. Sigmund, Frazier Hunt, Sherwood Anderson, Sinclair Lewis, and Edna Ferber, as well as syndicated humor poet Walt Mason, painter Harvey Dunn, radio personality Henry Field, and social activist Jane Addams. The Society of Midland Authors, the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, and the Catholic agrarian movement of the 1930s also are the subjects of separate chapters.

Some of the contributions, unfortunately, do not contribute much new knowledge to any relatively well-informed reader's understanding of midwestern culture, since much fuller treatments of these subjects (such as book-length biographies) already exist. In addition, too many of the essays are almost wholly descriptive, merely recounting information rather than subjecting it to rigorous, theoretically informed analysis. Almost all of these writers needed to ask harder questions of their subjects. For instance, the basic history of the Society of Midland Authors, including its goals, has already been fairly well documented; of greater value would be an investigation into what, exactly, the society actually accomplished. In a number of other instances, coastal elites are, as usual, depicted as the villains responsible for the relative lack of success achieved by various midwestern artists and cultural organizations; left unasked, though, is the question of the role midwestern audiences and cultural arbiters themselves played in the failure of these artists and groups to achieve positive, lasting reputations.

The most glaring shortcoming of the collection as a whole, though, is its almost total lack of attention to questions involving ethnic and racial diversity. Was part of the appeal of Catholic agrarianism during the 1930s, for instance, due to any racially tinged rhetoric? Did radio personality Henry Field traffic in ethnic humor in order to achieve large audiences? Second, of the 16 contributors, only three are women. Third, and most important, there is no engagement with the artistic achievements of any members of the wide variety of ethnic groups that inhabited the region during this period. One would have appreciated an essay, for example, looking at a Swedish, Norwegian, Bohemian, or German writer or artist, or the role played by the ethnic press in the

Midwest's culture, both in urban and rural areas. What, too, about the many midwestern authors of color? If the Midwest of this era is not to be regarded as a region justifiably left behind by the modernizing nation but rather as a place where issues relevant to the country's future were being worked out, more scholarship must be carried out about the conflicts and alliances among its various cultural groups.

Despite these shortcomings, this collection includes some good points. For one thing, the endnotes for a good number of the essays yield a rich trove of resources worthy of future exploration. A few of the essays also either bring to light extremely under-researched topics or offer intriguing revisions of previous ways of thinking about them. Paul Emory Putz's essay about Walt Mason's syndicated poetry is one highlight, for he astutely shows how Mason's poetry skillfully negotiated the boundaries of "high" and "middlebrow" culture. I was also fascinated by Kimberly K. Porter's article about radio station owner and on-air personality Henry Field, an Iowan I had never heard of. Allan Carlson's piece about "Midwestern Catholicism and the Last Agrarian Crusade" brings to light an influential, yet little-known, social movement and makes interesting connections to the Nashville Agrarians responsible for the similarly antimodernist manifesto *I'll Take My Stand* (1930). Jon K. Lauck himself provides a provocative revisionist reading of Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* and Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street*, contending that neither one is actually the type of wholehearted critique of small-town midwestern life it has been made out to be.

This volume makes a number of valuable contributions to the ongoing project of making today's readers more aware of the cultural achievements of midwesterners in the past. Most important, its essays both draw attention to a number of lesser-known elements of midwestern culture that deserve to be examined in greater detail and indicate the type of scholarship that needs to be carried out on them.

Glenn Miller Declassified, by Dennis M. Spragg. Lincoln: Potomac Books, an imprint of the University of Nebraska Press, 2017. xvii, 386 pp. Tables, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Paige Lush is director of bands and instructor of music at McHenry County College. Her doctoral dissertation was "Music and Identity in Circuit Chautauqua, 1904-1932."

There is perhaps no more cinematic story in the history of American music than that of Glenn Miller's disappearance over the English Channel on December 15, 1944. The mystery surrounding Miller's dis-

appearance has led to considerable scholarly research but also to speculation and sensationalism. In *Glenn Miller Declassified*, broadcasting and media researcher Dennis Spragg separates fact from fiction and presents the reader with a compelling, insightful, and thorough narrative of Miller's military service, disappearance, and legacy.

Spragg is most effective in subtly countering conspiracy theories by reminding twenty-first-century readers that Miller's disappearance happened under circumstances far removed from our own. He quotes General Ray Barker exclaiming, "How the hell did we lose Glenn Miller?" (278). That is certainly a question that crosses the mind of the modern reader. The idea that a celebrity could be missing for days—especially on a short military flight—before anyone realized it seems incredible to us and invites speculation. Spragg, through exhaustive documentation, sets up the worst-case scenario that led to Miller's disappearance, making it comprehensible to modern readers.

Glenn Miller Declassified offers an invaluable look into the Allies' use of radio during World War II, including Miller's direct involvement in day-to-day decisions and operations. Spragg meticulously details the circumstances surrounding the broadcasts and live performances of the American Band of the Supreme Allied Command and the strategy behind the programming. Miller's civilian career was closely intertwined with the business of radio, so it is not surprising that his military life revolved nearly as much around broadcasting as it did music making.

Spragg's research relies heavily on military records, many of which are reprinted verbatim in the book. These can be hard to follow, despite Spragg's inclusion of a list of abbreviations. Because of the sheer number of abbreviations, it might have been better not to abbreviate items that appear less frequently, saving acronyms for frequently used terms of unwieldy length. Similarly, Spragg introduces readers to dozens of Miller's associates and colleagues, and it can sometimes be difficult to keep them straight.

Although *Glenn Miller Declassified* focuses primarily on Miller's service in World War II, Spragg includes enough early biographical information that a reader possessing little or no prior knowledge of Miller would not be lost. He is similarly thoughtful with his selective use of musical terminology and historical references. He does an excellent job of engaging readers whose interests in Miller's story are varied and specialized while still being accessible to casual readers.

Spragg spends considerable time addressing the once-popular theory that Miller was a victim of "friendly fire" (or, perhaps more accurately, "friendly bomb jettisoning") from the Royal Air Force (RAF).

That theory is based largely on the recollection of South African navigator T. E. "Fred" Shaw. Spragg's detailed timeline of RAF movements in the vicinity of Miller's flight and fact-checking of anecdotal evidence supporting Shaw's claim thoroughly debunk this theory and its underlying assumptions.

Glenn Miller Declassified will, of course, be of interest to scholars of military history and American music. But it is also an excellent resource for understanding broadcasting (both of music and spoken word) during World War II. Furthermore, *Glenn Miller Declassified* will be of interest to scholars of Iowa and the Midwest, as Miller was a native son of Iowa whose musical mind was shaped by the band culture of the interwar American heartland.

Fixing the Poor: Eugenic Sterilization and Child Welfare in the Twentieth Century, by Molly Ladd-Taylor. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017. xi, 275 pp. Illustrations, tables, map, graph, appendix, notes, index. \$54.95 hardcover and ebook.

Reviewer Michael Rembis is associate professor history and director of the Center for Disability Studies at the University at Buffalo (SUNY). He is the author of *Defining Deviance: Sex, Science, and Delinquent Girls, 1890–1960* (2011).

Molly Ladd-Taylor has written a superb history of sterilization in Minnesota that has far-reaching implications for the study of both the history of eugenics in the United States and the history of the practice of sterilization throughout the country. Using a mix of archival sources, such as state institution records, the Social Welfare History Archives, and the collections of organizations such as the Eugenic Record Office, the Women's Welfare League of Minneapolis, and the Association for Voluntary Sterilization, as well as published works, such as the memoir of Mildred Thomson, who ran the state's sterilization program for almost 35 years (1925–1959) and was instrumental in the creation of the Minnesota Association for Retarded Children (MARC) in 1950, *Fixing the Poor* tells the deeply researched and carefully argued story of sterilization in a state that has not been known for its history of eugenics.

Because Minnesota's circuitous path through eugenic sterilization (1925–mid-1970s) was not as clearly lit as the more direct experiences of some states, such as California, North Carolina, or Virginia, it provides a unique and valuable opportunity to show how eugenics and sterilization were enmeshed as much with state welfare systems as they were with prevailing racialized, gendered, and class-based assumptions about proper or "fit" citizenship. As Ladd-Taylor argues throughout

the book, "Although historians [of eugenics] have focused on the surgeon's knife, sterilization was just one aspect of a protracted and often callous crusade to 'fix' the poor" (117).

Building on a U.S. eugenics historiography that has been growing over the past 30 years, Ladd-Taylor uses her own meticulous research and thoughtful approach to write a long history of eugenic sterilization that stretches from the child welfare and "mother saving" interventions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, through mid-twentieth-century efforts to "normalize" "mentally retarded" citizens and selectively sterilize women of color, to the early twenty-first-century sterilization of women prisoners. Her study shows that "in Minnesota [and in certain other locations throughout the country], worries about bad heredity and preventing the birth of 'socially inadequate offspring' were secondary to the more prosaic—and, sadly, more enduring—concerns about sex, illegitimacy, 'bad' parenting, overcrowded public institutions, and the cost of relief" (144).

Fixing the Poor is divided into six chapters, with an introduction and conclusion. In the introduction, Ladd-Taylor situates the story of eugenic sterilization in Minnesota within an expanded understanding of the history of eugenics made possible by detailed studies of this troubling and often deceptively mundane past both in the United States and abroad. The reach of eugenics extended well beyond the worst abuses of expert power and state control into the fabric of public welfare systems like the one created in Minnesota. Although many historians have focused on the abuses of eugenics, Ladd-Taylor intentionally focuses on what she calls a "best-case scenario" in Minnesota—the state sterilized 2,350 people out of a total of more than 63,000 Americans sterilized, and surgical sterilization remained "voluntary" in Minnesota—precisely because it reveals the ways the logics of eugenics insinuated themselves into twentieth-century social welfare policies and practices, often in damaging and discriminatory ways. Ladd-Taylor sees eugenics as something more ordinary and perhaps more powerful than a desire to create a "master race." She is one of a handful of historians whose reading of the history of eugenics is importantly and rightly influenced by the history of disability and of disabled people in the United States as well as the disability rights movement. As Ladd-Taylor contends, "Eugenic sterilization was never only about 'race betterment' or social engineering; from the beginning, state sterilization policies [like the one in Minnesota] were rooted in a chronically underfunded and locally variable public welfare system that pathologized persistent poverty and disparaged welfare-dependent individuals as mentally incompetent and undeserving" (225–26).

Readers of the *Annals of Iowa* may take a special interest in the care with which Ladd-Taylor explains the importance of migration and settlement to (and within) Minnesota, as well as the state's colorful social and political history in telling the story of eugenic sterilization in one upper midwestern state. I highly recommend this book for use in undergraduate courses in Minnesota history and in the history of eugenics and for graduate students and experts in the field as well as general readers interested in learning more about this deeply nuanced and troubling past.

[For a fascinating account of eugenics and sterilization efforts in Iowa, see Amy Vogel, "Regulating Degeneracy: Eugenic Sterilization in Iowa, 1911-1977," *Annals of Iowa* 54 (1995), 119-43. — Ed.]

Mexicans in Wisconsin, by Sergio M. González. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2017. People of Wisconsin Series. 144 pp. Illustrations, index. \$12.95 paperback.

Reviewer Janet Weaver is assistant curator at the Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa Libraries. She is the author of "From Barrio to '¡Boicoteo!': The Emergence of Mexican American Activism in Davenport" (*Annals of Iowa*, 2009).

Sergio González's *Mexicans in Wisconsin* is the latest in a series of 11 "reader-friendly" books published by the Wisconsin Historical Society Press designed to provide concise introductions to the history of Wisconsin's diverse immigrants. Joining earlier publications about German, Irish, Swedish, Jewish, and other European immigrants to Wisconsin, González shines a much-needed spotlight on the migration paths of Mexicans to Wisconsin from the late nineteenth century to the present. Beginning with musician Raphael Baez, who settled in Milwaukee in 1896, González concludes with the explosive growth of Wisconsin's Latino population between 1990 and 2010 and the renewal of "anti-immigrant fervor, this time spurred on by unfounded statements made by the Republican candidate Donald Trump" (122). Employing a chronological approach, he integrates Mexicans into the fabric of Wisconsin's social, economic, and labor history, situating their life stories within the history of European immigration, war, and civil rights.

Well written, engaging, and astute, *Mexicans in Wisconsin* provides insight into the factors that fueled Mexican migration to Wisconsin throughout the twentieth century and propelled activism, from the social and economic upheaval of the Mexican Revolution to the termination of the bracero program in 1964. González contextualizes compelling individual and family stories with big-picture analysis that

holds readers' attention. He describes conditions that brought Mexicans such as Ismael Cárdenas to work in the fields and factories of Wisconsin in the 1920s. Often coming from central Mexico and traveling through the Southwest, Kansas, and Iowa before settling permanently in Wisconsin, this new wave of Mexican immigrants replaced earlier European immigrants in the state's sugar beet fields, foundries, tanneries, and railroads. As he addresses how the bracero program affected labor migration at mid-century, González analyzes the limitations of New Deal legislation that upheld poverty wages for farmworkers and the racial discrimination that precluded social mobility for many Mexican Americans in Wisconsin. Linking this to local activism, he explains how Tejano migrant workers fought for better wages and working conditions in Wisconsin's cucumber fields and describes the political mobilization led by Jesus Salas that shaped a grassroots Chicano farmworker movement in Wisconsin in the 1960s.

The rich context of local history and activism that encompasses small-town, rural, and urban spaces helps readers understand how Wisconsin's Latina/o history is similar to that of other midwestern states. Iowa, for example, reflects similar patterns of migration, employment, military service, and political activism. While the population of agricultural laborers in Iowa was relatively small in comparison to Wisconsin, there are nonetheless parallels in patterns of local resistance. Both states saw the emergence of midwestern Chicano leaders, Chicana feminism, and the formation of numerous community activist organizations that channeled black-brown and interdenominational solidarities.

The lack of footnotes or even a bibliography weakens *Mexicans in Wisconsin*. Although González—a Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Wisconsin–Madison—does incorporate a few sources into the text of his narrative, that fails to satisfy the curiosity of readers about the original documents from which his insights and assertions are drawn. A bibliographical essay would have enabled him to situate his work within the context of other compelling scholarship that addresses Mexicans in Wisconsin, such as *The Tejano Diaspora: Mexican Americanism and Ethnic Politics in Texas and Wisconsin*, by Marc Simon Rodriguez (2011).

Mexicans in Wisconsin raises awareness of the need for more in-depth Latina/o histories of midwestern communities. The scholarship that is sure to follow will provide a solid base for interpreting the distinctive history of the Latina/o Midwest, redefining the field and shaping a new understanding of Latina/o and U.S. history.

Coin-Operated Americans: Rebooting Boyhood at the Video Game Arcade, by Carly A. Kocurek. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015. xxvii, 244 pp. Illustrations, graph, notes, bibliography, index. \$22.95 paperback.

Reviewer Matt Schaefer is an archivist at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library. His wide-ranging interests include issues related to gaming and masculinity.

Carly Kocurek's *Coin-Operated Americans* is a challenging book. It aims to "explore gaming culture along two major threads: the rise and fall of the early coin-op video game industry, and the consolidation of gamer identity as it came to be allied with an idealized vision of youth, masculinity, violence, and digital technology" (xvii). Kocurek labels this cluster of ideas as "technomasculine." This is an ambitious thesis to demonstrate using only the building blocks of arcade video games, trade journals, popular magazines, oral histories, and deep analysis of selected movies. At points Kocurek's argument is persuasive. Within chapters, it is sometimes compelling. For the book as a whole, however, the threads of her argument do not hold.

As someone for whom video game arcades were a part of my mispent youth in the suburban Midwest, Kocurek's descriptions of these arcades resonates. These were immersive environments, largely supported by young men. But her broader analytic points seem strained. The young men in the arcade with me were not a disruptive cohort aiming to subvert existing economic and cultural values by mastering a new video game. We did not see the arcade as a microcosm of the "generalized economic values we now confront as consumer, laborers, and citizens" (35), as Kocurek concludes at the end of her first chapter. We were young men with time (and quarters) to burn, having more in common with our miscreant forefathers who hung out at pool halls than with the technomasculine future.

Kocurek dates the birth of the video game era to 1972 with the introduction of *Pong*. Arcade video games boomed for the next decade, reaching their peak in the early 1980s, being featured in *Life Magazine's* 1982 "Year in Pictures" issue. The image used to represent the pinnacle of gaming culture shows 16 clean-cut boys, 5 girls in cheerleading garb, and 6 arcade video games on Main Street in Ottumwa, Iowa. The photo was shot there at the behest of Walter Day, proprietor of Twin Galaxies Arcade and creator of the national scoreboard to track the top scores across a range of video games. In a chapter titled "Gaming's Gold Medalists: Twin Galaxies and the Rush to Competitive Gaming," Kocurek uses this single photograph to analyze "the representational threads evident in the image . . . gender, athleticism, youth, and Amer-

ican national identity" (38). She concludes, "The *Life* photograph attempts to frame the gamers as All-Americans, drawing on the ethos of athletic display and boy-genius narratives . . . suggesting that the new medium of the video game, and by extension, the newly domesticated technology of the computer were nothing to worry about: they were merely new arenas for American men to prove their masculinity and superiority" (65). The argument has merit, but the foundational photograph may not bear the full weight of her conclusions.

Kocurek's next two chapters examine the resistance to this emergent technology and the moral panic attending some of the more violent extremes presented in arcade games such as *Death Race*, which debuted in 1976. Kocurek aptly notes that the moral panic surrounding *Death Race* may have been misplaced given that the violence within the game is stylized, the on-screen graphics are rudimentary, and the gameplay involves running over stick-figure gremlins in a graveyard. The negative publicity surrounding *Death Race* enhanced sales of the game and set the stage for ensuing moral panics in the late 1990s over *Grand Theft Auto*, which enjoyed decades of solid sales, evolving over time to be judged the "most controversial video game ever" by *Guinness World Records* (90).

Kocurek devotes the fifth chapter of the book to a detailed analysis of two movies from the early 1980s, *Tron* and *War Games*, which she asserts "helped reify the gamer identity" and to establish "the emerging digital landscape in the popular imagination as a dangerous proving ground for young men coming of age in an age of computerization" (146). Kocurek's analysis of these two films is solid insofar as they reflect on the nature of the uneasy relationship between humans and machines. She capably situates *Tron* and *War Games* in the cultural and historical contexts of John Henry as a steel-driving man, Chaplin in *Modern Times*, Lucy and Ethel working the line in the chocolate factory, and the *Terminator* films that followed. She astutely notes that the two movies are unique in presenting the human-machine conflict as taking place within the tightly defined space of computerized game. The argument begins to strain when Kocurek holds that *Tron* and *War Games* "are establishing texts in constructing a distinctive, late 20th century masculine identity that has profound implications for the development of video gaming and the tech industry more broadly" (125). It is hard to assign this much credit to two movies that enjoyed such modest box office success.

Kocurek closes with a chapter titled "The Future Is Now: Changes in Gaming Culture," bringing the history of video gaming to the present. She points out that video games, born in the arcade and moving to

home computers over time, have been enjoying a resurgence as an arcade-based enterprise, trading on the nostalgia felt by folks like me longing to recapture their misspent youth. Today's video games still skew heavily toward a male point of view, pushing limits of stylized violence, and offer escape for the disaffected and the displaced. As Kocurek notes, "Video games became a point of articulation for anxieties over economic, cultural and technological changes" (195). This more circumspect conclusion has merit.

Good Apples: Behind Every Bite, by Susan Futrell. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2017. xiv, 252 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$20.00 paperback.

Reviewer Maureen Ogle, an author and historian, lives in Ames. She is the author of *In Meat We Trust: An Unexpected History of Carnivore America* (2013) and *Ambitious Brew: The Story of American Beer* (2006).

Susan Futrell, who grew up in Ames and now lives in Iowa City, realized young that she "love[d] business when it's done right" (5). To that end, she built a career in the "alternative" food system—marketing, sales, distribution—in Iowa and beyond. That work deposited her on the frontlines of the American apple industry and led to the realization that apples are a microcosm of the complexities and contradictions of the nation's "food system."

Futrell's narrative structure in *Good Apples* is standard in contemporary popular nonfiction writing: She opens with an anecdote about her failed effort to buy an Iowa apple orchard that might otherwise be plowed under. (The auction quickly deflated her dream: She'd underestimated, significantly, the property's value.) That's followed by a short history of American agriculture in general and apple culture in particular and then by the bulk of her narrative: tales of orchard owners and farmers' markets, geneticists and breeders, pickers and packers.

Futrell is especially good at detailing the obstacle course that is agriculture/food production in America: If it's not wildfire, drought, and floods, then it's federal and state paperwork, cutthroat competition, corporate farming, and grocery chain clout. And that's just for "regular" apples. Toss organic and local into the equation and making apples becomes exponentially more difficult.

Then there is the apple itself. Futrell learns that an apple worth marketing must offer the illusion, however engineered, of adhering to a platonic ideal: perfect in shape and color; blemish-free; able to endure both shipping and storage and still offer its buyer crisp flavor and texture.

Like everything connected to food, making apples is complicated, messy, and frustrating. Thus her conclusion that agriculture and food production should be treated as a "public good." Only then can we ensure that small farmers survive and that all of us can afford to eat what we want, whether local, cheap, or somewhere in between.

Americans must abandon their propensity for "civic abdication," she writes, and embrace consumer-citizenship (217). Citizens must educate themselves about farming methods and technologies and support family farms, extension agents, and public research. "A healthy democracy requires civic responsibility: informed citizens, appreciation of difference, willingness to be good neighbors. Growing apples that feed local communities requires a democracy of taste, diversity, enterprise, science, and civic-mindedness. A democracy of apples" (219).

What Futrell misses is the long history of the American food system. For two centuries, policy, law, and cultural values have enshrined food/agriculture/food production as a "public good." In fields and factories Americans built a food production system designed to feed masses of people with minimum labor, a system designed to ensure low-cost food (Americans pay less for food than anyone else on the planet) and an income for the men and women who labor in the fields and factories. The end goal? To free citizens from the drudgery of hands-on food production, leaving them free to invent and build; dream, think, and write—leaving them sufficiently well-fed, educated, and leisured to write books about the nation's flawed food system. And reviews about the flaws in those books.

Announcement

THE IOWA HISTORY CENTER at Simpson College seeks nominations for the outstanding master's thesis in Iowa history for 2018. Selection will be based on contribution to the knowledge of Iowa history; originality of the subject matter or methodology; use of sources; and written expression. Nominees must have completed their master's degree between July 1, 2017, and June 30, 2018.

The winner will be announced in the fall of 2018 and will receive a \$1,000 cash prize and an award plaque. Three copies of the thesis and a brief letter of nomination from the thesis advisor, which must include contact information for the nominee, should be submitted to Bill Friedrichs, Director, Iowa History Center, Simpson College, 701 North C Street, Indianola, IA 50125. Application deadline is June 30, 2018.

For further information, contact Linda Sinclair, (515) 961-1528 or linda.sinclair@simpson.edu.

EACH ISSUE of *The Annals of Iowa* brings to light the deeds, misdeeds, and accomplishments of our predecessors and shows how they fit into the intricate mosaic of Iowa's past. Its in-depth articles will satisfy even the most serious explorer of Iowa's past.

Anyone with a serious interest in Iowa history will gain valuable perspective from the pages of the *Annals*. Give it as a gift to a friend or relative. Check to see if your public, school, or academic library subscribes; if they don't, encourage them to do so or, better yet, donate a subscription.

✂-----

- ☐ *Annals of Iowa* Subscription
- ☐ New ☐ Renewal ☐ Gift*
- ☐ One year, \$24.95
- ☐ Two years, \$44.95
- ☐ Three years, \$64.95

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make check payable to the State Historical Society of Iowa and return with this coupon (or a photocopy of it) to:

Subscriptions
State Historical Society of Iowa
402 Iowa Avenue
Iowa City IA 52240

- ☐ Please send information on membership in the State Historical Society of Iowa.

*For gift subscriptions, write the recipient's name and address on this form, and include your name and address on the back or on a separate sheet of paper. Also indicate how you would like your gift card signed.

Contributors

LINDA CLEMMONS is professor of nineteenth-century American and Native American history at Illinois State University. She is working on a book about the years following the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, tentatively titled *After 1862: Exile, Trauma, and Survival among the Dakota, 1863–1866*.

EMILY KATHRYN MORGAN is assistant professor of art history at Iowa State University. She received her M.A. and Ph.D. in art history from the University of Arizona. Her research focuses on the circulation and distribution of photographic imagery, with attention to how photographic meaning shifts and accrues as images circulate in publications, change hands among users, or are appropriated to new ends. She is the author of *Street Life in London: Context and Commentary*, published by MuseumsEtc. in 2014.

The State Historical Society of Iowa

The Annals of Iowa is published quarterly by the State Historical Society of Iowa, the Historical Division of the Department of Cultural Affairs of the State of Iowa. The society operates from two centers, Des Moines and Iowa City. A museum, research library, state archives, special collections, community programming, historic preservation, and membership programs are located at 600 East Locust Street, Des Moines, IA 50319, phone 515-281-5111. Publications, a research library, and special collections are located at 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, IA 52240, phone 319-335-3916. The society also operates several historic sites across the state.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions to *The Annals of Iowa* are \$24.95 per year; single copies are \$7. Contact Publications, State Historical Society of Iowa, 402 Iowa Avenue, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

The *Annals* is available on microfilm from Xerox University Microfilms, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

Submissions

The Annals of Iowa invites the submission of articles on Iowa history and on subjects concerning the nation and the Midwest with an Iowa focus. State, local, and regional studies of political, economic, social, cultural, intellectual, institutional, ethnic, religious, material culture, archeological, and architectural history are welcome. The *Annals* also reviews significant books on related topics. A detailed set of editorial guidelines is available on request. All correspondence concerning editorial matters should be addressed to:

Marvin Bergman, editor
The Annals of Iowa
State Historical Society of Iowa
402 Iowa Avenue
Iowa City IA 52240

The Annals of Iowa is a participating member of the Conference of Historical Journals.



Printed on
Recycled Paper



The acid-free paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Services—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z739.48B1984.