
BOOK REVIEWS

Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher. By Ray Allen Billington.

(New York, Oxford University Press, 1973. x, 599 p. Illustrations. \$17.50.)

THE RELEVANCE of the career and influence of Frederick Jackson Turner for Minnesota history is sufficient to warrant full notice of the thorough and sympathetic biography by Ray Allen Billington, senior research associate, the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Since 1960 the author has been working through the Huntington's vast collection of Turner papers together with related collections throughout the United States. The documentation of the new book is impressive; the bibliographical essay is comprehensive. No doubt this will remain the definitive biography of Turner.

Turner's brief but significant memorandum on the Kensington rune stone in 1910, and his dedicatory talk on the occasion of the opening of the main building of the Minnesota Historical Society in 1918, are actually minor elements in his influence on Minnesota history. More important was the fact that his student, Solon J. Buck, took over a refuge for antiquarians in 1915 and transformed the Minnesota Historical Society into a great learned organization. Buck was deeply imbued with Turner's theories as to the significance of the frontier in American history. He built up the society's library, manuscript, newspaper, picture, and museum collections with heavy emphasis on frontier history. Buck's seminars and lectures at the University of Minnesota were also in large part directed to this field, as this reviewer can testify from membership in one such seminar. Buck's successor at the society, Theodore C. Blegen, was also strongly influenced by Turner's theories. Buck was only one of the almost innumerable products of the Turner seminars at Wisconsin and Harvard and of seminars conducted in universities across the land by Turner students. There was, in short, a vast Turner cult of interpretation of American history, a vogue now much abated. Even today, through the Western History Association, regional, state, and local historical societies, and individual enthusiasts, the influence of Frederick Jackson Turner remains a force in historiography.

In his approach Mr. Billington chose to emphasize the life of a university professor. The book is therefore in many ways the biography of a profession, for Turner came into

the history field at an early stage. This approach causes the author to include a vast amount of information about Turner's personal, family, and occupational life, much of it indistinguishable in pattern from what might be written about any number of college and university professors. The principal justification for this detailed exposition is the celebrity and influence of the man. Another justification, implicit and repeatedly explicit throughout, is to explain Turner's failure to publish much. The chief reasons offered are perfectionism, escapism, teaching obligations, constant financial worries, family tragedies, academic busywork, and, only toward the end of his life, ill health. Within the limitations of his approach, the author presents a warm and affectionate portrait of a university seminar master. However, one also needs to read other Billington studies of Turner, as well as perceptive critiques such as those by David M. Potter and Richard Hofstadter, to achieve any degree of understanding of the Turner theories and influence.

Turner's life is traced from his birth in Portage, Wisconsin, November 14, 1861, to his death in California March 14, 1932. Included are his boyhood as the son of a frontier newspaper editor and publisher, his schooling, his enrollment in the then primitive University of Wisconsin, his recruitment to history by an inspirational teacher (William Francis Allen), the migration to the new and exciting graduate school in Johns Hopkins University, his return to Madison to join the university faculty, the completion of his doctorate, the gradual assimilation of ideas from a variety of sources and writers (notably Walter Bagehot, Francis A. Walker, and Achille Loria), and the presentation of the epoch-making paper in 1893 on "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." Within a decade he became a celebrity, and, with the assistance of a distinguished group of historians recruited by Turner, the University of Wisconsin became the mecca of aspiring graduate students from all over the nation. His first completed book, *The Rise of the West, 1819-1829*, for the American Nation Series, described enthusiastically in this volume as a masterpiece, turned out to be the only one of its kind published in Turner's lifetime, the others being collections of essays. The other completed book, *The United States, 1830-1850*, was published over three years after Turner's death. Turner's disenchantment with Wisconsin, his acceptance of Harvard's offer, his years in Cambridge, his retirement, and his final refuge at the

Huntington Library are all described in detail and with unflinching sympathy. The account of the devotion of his friends and students is touching, and the recognition of his contribution to historical interpretation is more than adequately presented.

It is, of course, this contribution which is so controversial. That he was an inspiring teacher, a good family man, a lover of the wilderness to which he escaped whenever possible, and a conscientious worker in the affairs of the American Historical Association and his universities goes without dispute. But what of his theories on the frontier and on sections? Mr. Billington is at pains to insist that at no time did Turner claim that his theories were the only explanation of American history. He emphasizes Turner's multiple hypotheses approach and his pioneering in social history. But here there were others equally or more influential. Turner's claim to fame inevitably comes back to the famous frontier thesis and to some extent unfortunately to the sectional thesis. Turner throughout his career was an environmentalist, with special fondness for geography. One peels off leaf after leaf of the less nourishing parts of the artichoke of Turner's theories — the free land concept, the cutting edge of the frontier, the evolutionary stages of development at each stopping place, the nationalism of the West, the American democracy fostered there, the individualism, the safety valve factor for eastern areas, and the uniqueness of the frontier experience. When one finally gets to the heart of the vegetable, one finds a simple and to us rather obvious idea — that American history needs to be studied in a series of microscopic analyses of localities and regions in which people and environment combine to form changing societies. When Turner carried his regions into sections, the unit became unwieldy and vague. But the emphasis on need for detailed, quantitative study of manageable units was in his time highly useful. That Turner did not proceed to practice what he preached, except vicariously through his students, should not be held against him. One of his students, Merle Curti, in *The Making of an American Community* (1959), ultimately did the testing job for him, and modern quantitative historians are moving into the field at last. So Turner was a prophet with an important idea. Few other historians have had any such basic concept.

Reviewed by CARLTON C. QUALEY, retired professor of history at Carleton College and now research fellow at the Minnesota Historical Society.

***The New Citizenship: Origins of Progressivism in Wisconsin, 1885–1900.* By David P. Thelen.**

(University of Missouri Press, Columbia. 340 p. \$12.00.)

ACCORDING TO Professor David P. Thelen, Wisconsin progressivism was rooted in a new civic consciousness generated primarily by the trauma accompanying the depression of 1893, a catastrophe that struck the state with unusual force. Such a thesis sharply challenges the notion that Robert M. La Follette, Sr., was Wisconsin progressivism's true

founder. Thelen persuasively argues that far from being a prophetic leader who boldly sacrificed expediency for principle, La Follette was a skilled politician who deftly adapted his course to the climate of his time. By 1900, when he won the governorship, progressivism had become a dominant influence in Wisconsin politics, both ideologically and programmatically.

As told by Thelen, the emergence of Wisconsin's "new citizenship" is a fascinating story. From the Civil War down to 1890 the state's political development was rather commonplace. As elsewhere, corporate influence dominated societal processes, and issues rooted in ethnic and religious differences shaped political activity. At the same time two reform thrusts emerged: mugwumpery, which resolutely opposed political bossism and corruption in government but whose appeal was limited by its elitism, nativism, and dogmatic commitment to *laissez-faire*; and organized attempts by interest groups, primarily economic and including agriculture and labor, to secure aid from government. The incompatibility of these two thrusts, coupled with the inability of the interest groups to establish a common front, largely negated their efforts.

The new civic consciousness emerging after 1893 discarded mugwumpery's less engaging attributes — nativism, elitism, and *laissez-faire* dogmatism — and acknowledged the validity of the complaints being advanced by the interest groups. At its core it was consumer-oriented (an important point and one that distinguishes Thelen's understanding of progressivism from that of several other historians), egalitarian, humanitarian, moral (perhaps to some degree moralistic), and thoroughly pragmatic. Its specific aims included purging the political system of machine influence and "restoring" popular rule, rehabilitating the urban environment, subjecting the corporate sector to strict community discipline, and eliminating the blatant tax evasions being practiced by the wealthy. The men and women who sponsored these reforms were, according to Thelen, "conservatives and radicals at the same time." Their ultimate goal — restoration of a social harmony imperiled by urban industrialization — was conservative. However, the means proposed to achieve this goal (municipal ownership, income taxes, the direct primary, home rule, and the like) were "important contributions to the radical tradition."

In explaining why Wisconsinites responded to the trauma of depression as they did, Thelen underscores their ability to transcend "the social barriers that had divided individuals and groups before the depression" in favor of a pragmatic and co-operative attack on immediate local problems. They were able to do this partly because social and ethnic differences, while present, had never been as deep in Wisconsin as in other states and hence were more easily overcome. Thelen also gives credit to "social" Christianity, both Protestant and Catholic, as well as to the academic community whose expertise the reformers gladly appropriated, and the "new woman" whose concerns embraced the entire community, not only the rights of her own sex.

Without fundamentally quarreling with Thelen's line of interpretation, this reviewer wonders if he places Wisconsin's diverse cultural and ethnic traditions in appropriate

perspective. Were these traditions primarily divisive barriers that had to be removed as a precondition to co-operative, pragmatic problem-solving, or did they also make distinctive contributions to the "new citizenship"? Did not the post-1893 reformers appropriate much of the Anglo-American mugwump tradition, albeit in modified form? Did the municipal reform movement in Milwaukee gain any reinforcement from the traditions of the city's substantial German-American population? And may not traditional Norwegian hostility to Establishments have sharpened the attack on deviant corporations?

This caveat notwithstanding, Professor Thelen has produced a superb book, perhaps a seminal one that will significantly influence future work on the Progressive era.

Reviewed by CARL H. CHRISLOCK, *professor of history at Augsburg College and author of The Progressive Era in Minnesota, 1899-1918.*

***The Laurel Culture in Minnesota.* By James B. Stoltman.**

(St. Paul, Minnesota Historical Society, 1973. viii, 146 p. Illustrations. Paper \$5.50.)

AS THE FIRST detailed description of Laurel culture from the central area of northern Minnesota, this book will be most welcomed by archaeologists concerned with the prehistory of the Upper Great Lakes. It will also be of considerable interest to scholars involved in the development of more effective methods of analysis and interpretation. The study is based upon material recovered from burial mound excavations carried out by Professor Lloyd A. Wilford on or near the Rainy River (McKinstry mounds one and two in 1939; Smith mounds three and four in 1956 and 1933, respectively) and near Lake Vermilion, more than 100 miles southeast of the Rainy River mounds (Pike Bay mound in 1940), as well as a multicomponent habitation site (Pearson), also in the Lake Vermilion area, that was test-excavated by the author and others under the direction of Professor Elden Johnson in 1961.

The author introduces the book with a history of research on Laurel culture in Minnesota and adjacent states and provinces, outlines the organization of the volume, and reconstructs the ecology of northern Minnesota during the Middle Woodland period occupation. He describes the sites used in the analysis and presents the faunal analysis by Paul W. Lukens, Jr. More than one-third of the volume's text is devoted to the description of Laurel ceramics. The non-ceramic Laurel artifacts are described by David L. Webster. The final chapter summarizes the volume and its conclusions.

Three overlapping but basically temporal phases are proposed for Laurel culture in Minnesota. These run from early to late: Pike Bay, McKinstry, and Smith. The rim sherds analysis upon which the phases are based follows four stages: the selection of attributes; the defining of modes

from among the attributes (an attribute being "any physical or locational quality of an artifact" and a mode "the customary behavior of past artisans that is inferred by the archaeologist from the attributes of artifacts"); the defining of types from the modes; and, finally, the application and testing of the types relative to cultural-historical problems. Much commendable effort is expended upon the third stage of analysis in order to reduce the subjective aspect of types. Chi square tests are used to separate independent modes from dependent modes. From the sixteen dependent modes six major Laurel pottery types are established. Using the Robinson coefficient of agreement and checking it with the double-link method of Renfrew and Sterud, a seriation of the sites is established.

The published information on Laurel culture is like the tip of an iceberg, and a number of new discoveries and radiocarbon dates will alter some of the proposed hypotheses. I am in complete agreement, for example, with the rejection of my hypothesis of an Asiatic origin for Laurel culture, but for quite different reasons. My two major concerns are with the nature of the site samples and assigning the Summer Island site to Laurel culture. Mr. Stoltman is very explicit concerning the weaknesses of his sample, but for comparative purposes he has been forced to treat each site sample as the product of a single component. Since the burial mounds are constructed from village floor scrapings in favored regions for prehistoric occupation, the probability of a substantial time depth in the mound debris is very high. Two of the six site samples are also very low. The Summer Island site in Lake Michigan is used as the anchor for the Minnesota seriation and, therefore, has a direct bearing upon the hypothesis of a south to north drift of Laurel culture. Not only is the lithic assemblage of the Summer Island site dramatically different for Laurel lithics, but, in my opinion, the ceramics are, for the most part, significantly different from ceramics generally accepted as Laurel.

Within the space limitations of a review it is impossible even to touch upon many interesting aspects of this truly excellent piece of work. Mr. Stoltman is to be congratulated for a very valuable contribution to Upper Great Lakes prehistory and, in particular, his scholarly inquiry into new methods of ceramic analysis and their application to cultural history.

Reviewed by JAMES V. WRIGHT, *head of the research section, archaeological survey of Canada, National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada, in Ottawa.*

***From the Missouri to the Great Salt Lake: An Account of Overland Freighting.* By William E. Lass.**

(Lincoln, Nebraska State Historical Society, 1972. xv, 312 p. Illustrations. \$7.95.)

PROFESSOR WILLIAM LASS of Mankato State College has done it again. Just when we all think that the problems of the overland freighting business have been settled by the

Settles (in their *Empire on Wheels*), he comes along and opens up new vistas for us to peruse. Since he did the same with steamboating in an earlier work, we should perhaps be used to it. In any event, he is to be congratulated for this work, which undertakes to study overland freighting on somewhat less than the grand scale of the freighting firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell. By lessening the scope and concentrating on figures less known, Mr. Lass brings a truer picture to this important business than the studies of the larger corporations could.

The major thrust of the book concerns freighting in Nebraska in the period from 1848 to 1869 and in its extensions to Utah, Pike's Peak, Montana, and the Black Hills. Of special interest is the competition between various cities trying to control the big wagon freighting along the Platte River route. In particular, the rivalries between Omaha and Nebraska City in Nebraska, and between St. Joseph, Atchison, Leavenworth, and Kansas City in Kansas and Nebraska, point out that freighting was not exclusively private business but took on civic connotations upon which the fortunes of communities and the development of areas depended. The rivalry between Omaha and Nebraska City is especially intriguing in that Nebraska City had the better of it. It took the technological progress and extension of the railroad to make Omaha the key point in the development of Nebraska. Equally intriguing is the picture of the intense competition between various freighting concerns. One gets the idea, when reading about Ben Holladay's ventures or the firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell, that this was a business dominated by big monopolistic concerns that quickly gobbled up all their opponents and had things pretty much their own way. The author shows quite clearly that this was not the case on the northern Great Plains and that competition was the byword as long as the business continued. This may be only mild revisionism, but certainly it is welcome and necessary in order to bring things into focus.

In addition to many solid descriptions of how freighting was conducted, the book contains a sizable section of biographical sketches placed in a long appendix. This was a practice much followed in the nineteenth century and much neglected in the twentieth. The first reaction to it tends to be negative; however, further reading of the book proves it quite defensible, and in a complex situation of numerous enterprises and numerous people it is very useful.

In the entire work, Mr. Lass exhibits his usual meticulous scholarship and gives solid evidence that all the homework has been well done. The illustrations are carefully chosen and well presented. The maps look terrible, but are clear, very useful, and show what one needs to know. All in all, this is an exemplary work that will prove to be of great use to scholars and a great joy to anyone who likes to read western history. The Nebraska State Historical Society is to be complimented for publishing it. One might hope that other historical societies would emulate this type of publishing.

Reviewed by JOSEPH H. CASH, *Duke Research Professor of History at the University of South Dakota at Vermillion.*

***Charles Round Low Cloud: Voice of the Winnebago.*
By William Leslie Clark and Walker D. Wyman.**

(River Falls, University of Wisconsin – River Falls Press, 1973. lx, 93 p. Hard cover \$4.50, paper \$2.95.)

THIS SLIM VOLUME is not going to be a best seller, nor will it be cited as a monumental contribution to history. Yet it well deserves publication, for it is a nugget of social history and of Indian history and a legend of significance to the story of all the people of Wisconsin.

While the editors must be commended for originating the idea for the book, for excellent research involving interviews, newspapers, and intensive digging, the real author is Charles Round Low Cloud, the "Indian Report." He was one of that large number of amateur, unsung, underpaid newspapermen and women who deserve the proud title of "country correspondents." Yet "Charley" was a correspondent with a difference, for his was the voice of the Winnebago Indians in west central Wisconsin.

Born in 1872, he was raised in the area of Black River Falls, Wisconsin, and in his youth spent six years at the Carlisle [Pennsylvania] Indian School. But his years of distinction, and they were that, did not come until the 1930s and 1940s when his column, "Indian News," appeared in the weekly *Black River Falls Banner-Journal* and in scores of other papers in the area.

This reviewer remembers fondly and with nostalgia the writings of Mr. Low Cloud. They were "must" reading in the *Whitehall Times* of Trempealeau County. I, and I am sure many others, owe the "Indian Report" a debt. While he was read by most people in the area for the news content of his column, a point which the editors perhaps underplay, he furnished us a pleasant, bemused, sympathetic insight into Indian life and thought.

Many of us wondered if the twisted syntax and often penetrating expressions were not just a bit contrived. The editors do not think so. But that really does not matter, for his message was human, trenchant, and timely. Many recall with understanding an abbreviated column which concluded, "Not much news this week, Indian Report in Jail." A disarming frankness pervades all the writings of Low Cloud, whether he is dealing with community affairs, personal notes, Indian-white relations, "Too Bad News," weather, school news, religion, relief and pensions, politics, World War II, or tribal affairs.

His words are to be savored not only because of the spirit they give us of Low Cloud himself and the Wisconsin Indians but because of their basically human quality. It is good even in these later years to read his voice, long since stilled: "We know that the white people always defrauded the Indians ever since Christopher Columbus and increasing at present. He was one came here first." Or a bit of poignant philosophizing: "Too bad news. A baby boy was born last Thursday afternoon by Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Greengrass. Passed away last Saturday afternoon . . . We can not help when our time come they have to go."

And again: "We know that Indians can not become white, no matter how many soap they spent, and we know

that God made every creature and human being, they never change one to another, foolish way to do that, and our old Indians used to say, God know everythings, even your mind too. You can not hide anything in your tradition."

Reviewed by E. B. "PETE" LONG, *associate professor of American studies at the University of Wyoming at Laramie.*

***This Country Was Ours: A Documentary History of the American Indian.* By Virgil J. Vogel.**

(New York, Harper and Row, 1972. xxix, 473 p. \$12.95.)

IN HIS INTRODUCTION to this recent volume, one of many American Indian documentaries to emerge of late, Professor Vogel reminds us that "What we are witnessing today is a demand of the dispossessed and overlooked groups that their role in history receive the attention to which it is entitled." His laudable aim in producing this book is to encourage such a new course, particularly in the college classroom. For purposes of organization, he has divided the history of the United States into four chronological periods and has assessed the Indian role during each period through brief introductory passages and selected documents representing various points of view. In addition, there is a final catchall chapter, "The Indian in Perspective," and extensive appendixes.

Although documents are necessarily selective, some may ask if the book is, as the subtitle says, a "history of the American Indian." "Our aim," he notes, "will be to show the Indian's side wherever possible, and in his own words as often as that can be done." But much of the documentary material has to do with non-Indian observations on the native American, and thus the author may have left himself open to the charge that Indian history is presented once again as the record of Indian-white relations rather than as the history of American Indians. The Indian point of view, to be sure, is represented, but with the current emphasis on oral history, and with the author's emphasis on the "other side of the story," more Indian views might have been employed. The Indian response to termination, for example, and more emphasis on revivalistic movements and Indian interpretations of historical events would have added considerable perspective to the study. Moreover, a more comprehensive treatment of Indian cultural values (the Indian concepts regarding land ownership and use, for example) would have greatly enhanced the reader's understanding of Indian history and the course of Indian-white relations. Such sections of the book as "History of the Indian: Contrasting Views," "Distorted History," "Liberty and Authority Among the Indians," and "The Indian Concept of Time" are based largely on the observations of non-Indians.

These observations aside, an understanding of Indian history, Indian-white relations, and current problems necessitates some knowledge of the historical attitudes of whites toward Indians, and in this respect Mr. Vogel's book is

of great value. (It should be noted that Mr. Vogel, in several previous publications, has already demonstrated his extensive knowledge of and concern for the American Indian.) The seven appendixes, including important dates, an Indian "Who's Who," guides to audiovisual aids and Indian publications, as well as an extensive bibliography, will prove useful indeed. This is an interesting book, and may serve, despite the aforementioned observations, to enlighten the student and general reader (not the specialist) for whom it is intended. The author suggests that his book could be put to good use in the college classroom, but the price tag may discourage its utilization as a text.

Reviewed by MICHAEL B. HUSBAND, *assistant professor of history at Morningside College, Sioux City. Mr. Husband's special fields of study are Indian people of the Plains and the Far West.*

***Moneymaking in the Twin Cities Local Over-the-Counter Marketplace.* By James R. Ulliot.**

(Economic Information, Inc., Box 5127, St. Paul, 55104. 137 p. Illustrations. Paper \$4.95.)

ACCORDING TO MR. ULLYOT, it all started in 1957 with the founding of Control Data Corporation and the historic public stock offering of one dollar per share on the local over-the-counter market. Today Control Data stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange, and its story is a legendary part of the creation of millionaires through investments in the stocks of Twin Cities over-the-counter companies.

Control Data may have been the most spectacular example, but the rest of the Twin Cities over-the-counter business community was not idle from the 1950s to the present 1970s. This book high lights management people, publicly held companies, stock market investments, and business occurrences over the past fifteen years that helped motivate and distinguish the super-active local over-the-counter marketplace. It is unique. As Wheelock Whitney notes in his foreword to this book, "It is indeed a phenomenon. You can visit any major metropolitan area in the USA . . . and nowhere can you find a local market of some 300 stocks."

The book is a blend of brief accounts of the successes and failures of these local corporations with twenty-six valuable biographical sketches (and often photographs) of their founders and leaders — businessmen, brokers, underwriters, managers, and analysts. Based on interviews and other scattered local sources, it is a rich source of information nowhere else drawn together. *Moneymaking* offers lessons from the past, investment information, and a look at the future. It is generously illustrated. Everyone interested in the Twin Cities business community and especially the over-the-counter market will find Mr. Ulliot's book fascinating.

Reviewed by JOHN J. WOOD, *deputy director of the Minnesota Historical Society.*

news & notes

A COMBINED Minnesota Historical Society Public Affairs Conference and Annual Meeting will be held Saturday, October 20, at the Hilton Hotel in St. Paul. Nationally known men and women will take part in a day-long program of seminars and discussions.

The main speaker at the noon luncheon will be Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Schweitzer Professor of Humanities, City University of New York, and noted author. The Hall Brothers, of the Emporium of Jazz at Mendota, will provide a change of pace at the evening dinner when they present "A History of New Orleans Jazz."

Sessions will include such subjects as "Modern Collections and the Public's Right to Know," "Labor Organizations on Minnesota's Iron Range," "The Media and the Candidate," and "Political Reform." Some of the participants will be Daniel J. Reed, assistant archivist for presidential libraries, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.; Clark MacGregor, former congressman from Minnesota and campaign director of the Committee to Re-elect the President (1972); Geri Joseph, contributing editor, *Minneapolis Tribune*, and former vice-chairman, United Democrats for Humphrey (1968), and vice-chairman, National Democratic Committee; Martin Ridge, professor of history, Indiana University, and managing editor, *Journal of American History*; and Lee Loevinger, former associate justice, Minnesota Supreme Court, and member of the Federal Communications Commission.

WINNER of the Solon J. Buck Award for the best article published in *Minnesota History* during 1972 is C. Allyn Russell, whose "William Bell Riley: Architect of Fundamentalism" appeared in the Spring issue. Mr. Russell received his Ph.D. from Boston Univer-

sity, where he has been a member of the faculty of the Department of Religion since 1959. He became a full professor recently. A native of Oneonta, New York, Dr. Russell is an ordained clergyman and served Baptist congregations in Massachusetts, New York, and Rhode Island prior to taking up college teaching. He will receive \$175.00 of the \$250.00 award. The remaining \$75.00 will go to the honorable mention winner, Carol Jenson, associate professor of history at the University of Wisconsin, La Crosse, for her "Loyalty as a Political Weapon: The 1918 Campaign in Minnesota" which appeared in the Summer issue.

Winner of the Theodore C. Blegen Award for 1972 is Alan Ominsky for his "A Catalog of Minnesota-Made Cars and Trucks" which appeared in the Fall issue. Mr. Ominsky, a long-time car buff, is production supervisor for the Minnesota Historical Society's publications division. The Blegen Award of \$125.00 honors from time to time (but not necessarily annually) outstanding articles in *Minnesota History* by society staff members who are not eligible for the Buck Award.

The 1972 awards will be presented at the society's annual meeting October 20 at the Hilton Hotel in St. Paul. The committee for both awards this year consisted of Gretchen Kreuter, president of Women Historians of the Midwest (WHOM); Carl H. Chrislock, professor of history at Augsburg College; and Kenneth Carley, editor of this magazine.

MANTORVILLE ARTIST Ron Hunt offers a fresh, charming view of historic places administered by the Minnesota Historical Society in the new booklet, *A Living Past: 15 Historic Places in Minnesota*. Mr. Hunt was commissioned by the society especially to do the drawings for the souvenir

booklet. His pen-and-ink portrayals are reproduced on quality paper, are pale gold or pale blue, and are suitable for framing in the 10½ by 7¾ inch size.

A brief descriptive text by Nancy Eubank, supervisor of interpretation for the society's historic sites division, accompanies each drawing. The booklet begins with the State Capitol and includes such diverse sites as the Alexander Ramsey House, Connor's Fur Post, the Mille Lacs Indian Museum, the Jeffers Petroglyphs, and the Folsom House. The booklet is part of the Minnesota Historic Sites Pamphlet Series.

Also available are separate prints, 18 by 24 inches in size, of the Ramsey and Burbank-Livingston-Griggs houses and Fort Snelling. The booklet is \$1.75; separate prints are \$2.00.

THE AUTHOR of the short volume, *A History of the Swedish People From Prehistory to the Renaissance* (New York, Pantheon, 1972. 210 p. \$6.95), is the novelist whose books on Swedish emigration have achieved so much fame. Wilhelm Moberg's best-known work is his trilogy, and the first of these books has been released as the much-acclaimed film, *The Emigrants*. (The other two are forthcoming.)

Mr. Moberg's interest in nineteenth-century emigrants led him to fill in the vast emptiness in historical literature concerning the common people of Sweden. He asked himself, "How have they managed to survive at all?" despite constant exploitation, judicial and ecclesiastical sanction of status, catastrophes, plagues, and other diseases, and frequent wars that shortened life to an average of twenty-five years. He is surprisingly scholarly in his selection and use of sources and leading secondary works. Unlike books of greater erudition, Mr. Moberg's is highly readable. A dramatic and im-

agulative account of pre-Christian life and beliefs, the long period of transition to Christianity, the emancipating effects of Viking expeditions, the emergence and the results of a centralized monarchical government, the revolutionary consequences of the great plague of 1349, and the very slow evolution of legal protection of the rights of commoners — these and allied topics hold the reader's attention.

From this account, one gathers that the answer to the author's question lies in certain qualities and traditions held by the Swedish common people: the idea that it is a duty to reproduce, the importance of endurance under hardship, and a spirit of independence. These qualities and ideas, dating from prehistory, were discernible in the nineteenth-century commoners, a stock from which Mr. Moberg himself is descended. These are the qualities that are manifest in his novels about the emigrants to America.

Carlton C. Qualey

IN THE PREFACE to his *A History of the Middle West from the Beginning to 1970* (Little Rock, Arkansas, 1972. xvii, 533 p. \$9.95), Kenneth R. Walker remarks that it is virtually impossible to generalize about the Middle West. He does not make much effort to generalize, either, or even to analyze why generalizations are difficult. This is unfortunate. An interpretative history of the Middle West is badly needed. Professor Walker provides no insights, raises no questions, fails to point the way to further research.

A principal weakness of this volume is that it lacks any thematic organization. It is hardly history at all but merely a hodgepodge of vague and well-worn truisms that pass for analysis and irrelevant facts that pass for detailed scholarship. Perhaps the book's best feature is its bibliography, but no original research went into this work. Nearly every entry is a standard text or monograph on American history.

Although the Middle West is diverse, it possesses unifying features and themes that provide a sound structure for any thoughtful history of the region. Just two examples are the area's political tradition and its urban history. For the present, stu-

dents of Middle Western history are advised to read widely and shy clear of one-volume histories.

Newell Searle

IN AN ARTICLE entitled "With Pencils, Paints, and Palettes, Early Artists Portrayed the Upper Mississippi," published in the Spring, 1972, issue of *Wisconsin Trails*, the late Bertha L. Heilbron adds to her authoritative writings on this region's first painters. "The upper Mississippi . . . has long been an artist's paradise," Miss Heilbron points out, and she deals with the "painter-reporters, the panorama painters, and the settlers' artists who produced pictorial records of the area while it was still frontier wilderness."

Among artists she treats are panoramist Henry Lewis, who produced a 1,325-yard travelogue; Samuel Seymour, "the first artist to visit in an official capacity what was to become Wisconsin"; Peter Rindisbacher, "Wisconsin's first resident artist"; Indian painters George Catlin and Seth Eastman; land promoter Edwin Whitefield, whose dainty water colors of land, lakes, and towns contrasted sharply with the works of panorama painters; and two German visitors, Adolph Hoeffler and Franz Hölzlhuber.

A MINNEAPOLIS attorney, Robert W. Garrity, is the author of a new book for nonlawyers entitled *Minnesota Divorce Law* (Minneapolis, Wellington Publishing Company, 1972. 170 p. \$5.95). A thorough but intelligible primer for laymen, it is written with wit and understanding (and, occasionally, outrage).

The first chapter is a brief history of Minnesota divorce law. In territorial days, divorce was granted by the legislature, and the first such bill was passed in 1849 granting Stanislaus and Mary Bielanski (Bilansky) of St. Paul a dissolution of their marriage. Stanislaus went on to further historical fame, albeit somewhat indirectly, when his fourth wife poisoned him in 1859. She was convicted of murder and became the first and last woman executed in Minnesota. "We are a chivalrous people," comments Garrity.

Most of the book is devoted to a simple, practical explanation of divorce

laws, the eight grounds for divorce in Minnesota, the problems and pertinent laws that follow in the wake of divorce — child custody, support money, division of property, visitation rights, and others. He explains divorce procedure, counseling before, during, and after marriage, and miscellaneous laws on marriage and divorce. Illustrative cases enlighten the reader and enliven the text.

THE SECOND ISSUE of a new magazine called, the *Nor'Wester*, the "journal of the North West Company," made its appearance in the spring of 1973. According to the magazine's masthead, the North West Company was rechartered in 1967 by a group of descendants of members of the original fur trading firm and other persons interested in preserving the heritage and traditions of the voyageur, the fur trade, and its routes. The publisher is Hugh MacMillan and the new firm's editorial offices are located at 212 King Street West, Suite 214, Toronto, 1 Ontario.

The Spring, 1973, issue of *Nor'Wester* includes an article on the Camerons, a Scottish family whose members served both the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, the "Stone Fort Letter," a fur trade satire written in the early 1820s, a brief account of a 1970 canoe trip from Grand Portage to Lake Winnipeg, and comments on conservation.

News items and notices as well as descriptions of various articles for sale — canoes, tobacco, reproductions of Indian and white "trade goods" — and art, books, and services, including guided canoe trips, are included in its pages. The cost of the journal is \$1.00 per issue.

INDEX AVAILABLE

THE INDEX for volume 42 of *Minnesota History*, covering the eight issues published in 1970 and 1971, is now ready. The price for this and earlier indexes is now \$3.00. Indexes can be purchased for the following volumes of *Minnesota History*: 8, 16, 17, 23, 24, 27-32, 34-42. Orders should be directed to the Minnesota Historical Society Order Department, 1500 Mississippi Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101.

Since 1849, when it was chartered by the first territorial legislature, the Minnesota Historical Society has been preserving a record of the state's history. Its outstanding library and its vast collection of manuscripts, newspapers, pictures, and museum objects reflect this activity. The society also interprets Minnesota's past, telling the story of the state and region through publications, museum displays, tours, institutes, and restoration of historic sites. The work of the society is supported in part by the state and in part by private contributions, grants, and membership dues. It is a chartered public institution governed by an executive council of interested citizens and belonging to all who support it through membership and participation in its programs. You are cordially invited to use its resources and to join in its efforts to make Minnesota a community with a sense of strength from the past and purpose for the future.

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