

cherished objects in the interest of the public." The existence of the Grand Portage medals was still on historians' minds.<sup>14</sup>

Mike Flatte continued to hold the artifacts until his death in August, 1953. Then he passed them on to John Flatte, his son, with whom they remained until he in turn died in April, 1979. It was John Flatte's wife and

sisters who donated the medals and flags to the Historical Society. We believe that this move will not be a loss to the Grand Portage band, but on the contrary will help make historians realize that those Ojibway and their ancestors played a crucial role in the mainstream of North American history.

THE BLACK-AND-WHITE photographs used in this article are all from the Minnesota Historical Society's audio-visual library. MHS Staff Photographer Elizabeth Hall made the color photos on p. 29.

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<sup>14</sup> Densmore to Babcock, July 13 and 18, 1930, Babcock to Densmore, July 15, 1930, all in General Correspondence File, 1930, MHS Archives, in the Minnesota Historical Society division of archives and manuscripts; Grace Lee Nute, "Indian Medals and Certificates," in *Minnesota History*, 25:270 (September, 1944).

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *Iron Frontier: The Discovery and Early Development of Minnesota's Three Ranges.* By David A. Walker.

(St. Paul, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1979. x, 315 p. Illustrations. \$16.00.)

PROFESSOR WALKER'S study of the great iron frontier of northern Minnesota at last provides us with the accurate and succinct account of the opening and early development of the Vermilion, Mesabi, and Cuyuna ranges that we have long needed. In a minimum amount of space, he has successfully told the complicated story of this development as no other historian of the iron industry has done. He has mastered the geological, financial, and legal technicalities of the story and has been able to present them lucidly so that the most uninformed lay reader will have no difficulty understanding the details and the significance of this history.

Quite properly, Walker provides a brief account of the opening of the first great midwestern iron frontier along the southern shore of Lake Superior — the Marquette, Menominee, and Gogebic ranges of Michigan and Wisconsin — as a necessary introduction to the central drama in Minnesota with which he is mainly concerned. Though it makes sense to include them in the book, the eastern ranges are not a prototype of the three great ranges that lay to the north and west of Lake Superior, for the latter were to present quite different problems, both natural and man-made, from the others.

It is one of the great ironies (no pun intended) of the history of the Minnesota iron ranges that here lay an incredible treasury of wealth which a few men of vision and greed, but with no capital, had to beg the great capitalists of the East — Charlemagne Tower, John D. Rockefeller, and Andrew Carnegie — to accept when they offered it up with open hands. The initial reluctance of eastern capitalists to accept this bid for a bonanza, as Walker makes clear, is not difficult to understand. The inaccessibility of these ranges, the fact that, with the Mesabi at

least, a new kind of soft, powdery hematite ore presented new problems of utilization, and the critical impact of the economic depressions of 1873 and 1893 — all provided deterrents in the first instance but great opportunities for exploitation later on. For Carnegie, in particular, these remote Minnesota ranges were to bring the final stage in achieving the verticality of steel production he sought and were to transform his company into an industrial empire.

Walker writes in his preface: "The trend in business and economic history seems to be moving away from a focus on the individual toward analysis of inanimate institutions and corporations. In many ways I regret this new direction because it tends to ignore the central fact that men and women create history." This is a sentiment which this reviewer shares. Walker could have done more than he does, however, to make more vivid and distinct the remarkable characters in his story. The characterizations are correctly drawn, but they are in rather muted pastels instead of the bold, impressionistic streaks of color that a Tower or members of the Merritt family demand.

My main criticism of the book, however, is concerned not with what Walker has given us but rather with the regret that he has not given us more. He goes into great detail, for example, in relating the complicated story of the legal battles between Rockefeller and Frederick T. Gates versus the Merritt family. No one has ever told that story better, even though Walker carefully avoids any final judgment as to who was telling the truth. But the development of the western Mesabi and the Cuyuna range gets rather short dismissal in a final brief chapter. It is particularly interesting to note that, after having stressed the point that the depression of 1893 marks the real

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watershed in American economic development in that it drove out the small entrepreneurs and opened the door to the great industrial consolidators, Walker states in passing that the Cuyuna, the last range to be opened, was developed by small local businessmen — the Cuyler Adamses and the William Whites, not the Rockefellers, Olivers, and Carnegies. This is an interesting corrective to his basic thesis, and it needs greater amplification than he gives it. The full exploitation of this iron frontier in the twentieth century is only briefly summarized in production figures. We need a companion volume, a sequel to the discovery and early development that is given here, on the exploitation and exhaustion of one of America's greatest nonrenewable resources. Professor Walker should do this for us.

*Reviewed by* JOSEPH FRAZIER WALL, *professor of history at the State University of New York at Albany and the author of Andrew Carnegie (New York, 1970). A native Iowan, he also is the author of Iowa: A Bicentennial History (New York, 1978).*

**"Give Us Good Measure": An Economic Analysis of Relations Between Indians and the Hudson's Bay Company Before 1763.** By Arthur J. Ray and Donald Freeman.

(Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1978. xvi, 298 p. Cloth \$17.50, paper \$4.95.)

"THE BEAVER does everything perfectly well," a Montagnais chief told his Jesuit guest, Father Paul La Jeune, "it makes kettles, hatchets, swords, knives, bread; and in short, it makes everything." The chief's comment suggests a practical, utilitarian view of the fur trade as a way to obtain useful goods. Recent scholarship has tended to reject the interpretation of motivation implied in this jest, to question the usefulness of price theory in the analysis of Indian behavior, and to maintain instead that exchange was so thoroughly "embedded" in Indian society that considerations of ceremony, kinship, reciprocity, politics, and warfare rather than the market shaped their participation.

In an earlier book, *Indians and the Fur Trade: Their Role as Hunters, Trappers and Middlemen in the Lands Southwest of Hudson Bay, 1660-1870* (Toronto, 1974), Arthur Ray, a Canadian geographer, questioned these interpretive tendencies through a detailed account of several Indian groups that stressed their responsiveness to changing economic opportunities, their willingness to adapt and specialize, and their ability to manipulate competing European traders in order to increase the price of furs. In *Give Us Good Measure*, Ray and fellow geographer Donald Freeman provide a more theoretical, explicit, and sharply focused test of the relative power of market and nonmarket concepts of exchange in accounting for Indian behavior in the fur trade.

Ray and Freeman are on the side of the market, although with some qualification. The Indians around the bay behaved in "rational" (by European standards) fashion and subordinated ceremonial and political concerns to trade, as demonstrated by the content of the ceremonies surrounding exchange which

were used to set the terms of trade, by their efforts to reduce transaction and transport costs, in their ability to exploit Anglo-French rivalry to maximize returns, and in their willingness to migrate or specialize to capture new opportunities. Indians were not Europeans, however. Their demand for goods was rigid and limited and remained so throughout the history of the trade despite efforts of factors to introduce new products and increase consumption. There was good reason for this. The Indians' mobile life-style limited personal possessions to those easily carried; the capacity of their canoes limited the quantity of goods that could be brought into the interior; and the traditions of reciprocity and generosity (themselves quite "rational" responses to life near the margin of subsistence) also limited individual acquisitiveness.

The authors have difficulty with the analysis at this point. "Indian reaction" to price movements, they argue, "was the reverse of the conventional economic behaviour observable among suppliers in a competitive market." Indians exhibited what is known as a "backward bending supply curve": above some price level they offered fewer rather than more furs for sale. Such behavior appears unconventional only because Ray and Freeman focus on products rather than labor. If Indians are viewed as suppliers of labor to a European industry, their behavior seems less odd. Everyone's labor supply curve bends backward at some point: the question is where. The authors imply that most Indians reached that point at much lower income levels than did most Europeans, but mercantilist writings on the behavior of workers in early modern Europe suggest that the conclusion is not self-evident. Complaints are legion that workers labored less rather than more when their modest wages rose.

Ray and Freeman attempt to demonstrate the supply response among individual Indians through an analysis of aggregate data: the total supply curve for Indian labor could prove highly elastic despite the failure of individuals to respond positively to price increases, especially if higher prices enticed additional workers to the posts by attracting Indians from greater distances or detaching them from competitors. Further, the authors are unable to separate the impact of competition from that of supply. Competition between the English and the French could produce higher prices for furs, a larger total supply, and fewer furs for the English if the French greatly increased their market share. Conversely, a decline in French activity could lead to lower prices, more furs at the English posts, and a fall in total supply.

Despite these difficulties, this is a good and useful book, although one written more for specialists than the general reader. Ray and Freeman are careful, diligent scholars who have handled a massive amount of seemingly intractable source material with great skill. Their persuasive study illuminates all aspects of the fur trade and provides a useful corrective to that scholarship which finds Indian behavior unyielding to market concepts. And even when their analysis is less than satisfying, they present the issues clearly and suggest promising strategies for additional research. Further, the book provides a useful introduction to the records of the Hudson's Bay Company, a major and underutilized source for fur-trade history, which should prove most helpful to scholars. Although the book is concerned with the activities of the company before 1763, its findings are more broadly applicable, a feature enhanced by a

theoretical conclusion which places their study in context, assesses the major conceptual devices available to students for the fur trade, and describes the implications of their work for future scholarship. In sum, this is a valuable book that demands the close attention of all serious students of the European invasion of North America.

*Reviewed by* RUSSELL R. MENARD, *associate professor of history at the University of Minnesota who specializes in the economic history of British North America.*

### ***The History of the School of Agriculture, 1851–1960.***

By Ralph E. Miller.

(St. Paul, University of Minnesota Institute of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics, 1979. xi, 171 p. Illustrations.)

ALTHOUGH now deceased for two decades, a vigorous and much-loved School of Agriculture lived on the farm campus of the University of Minnesota for seventy-two years — from 1888 to 1960. Not to be confused with the College of Agriculture — though the two shared faculty members — the school was designed to furnish practical training in farming for young men and (from 1897 on) women of modest formal education. It was the first institution of its kind in the United States.

Such factors as economic depression, wars, and rural indifference (if not downright antagonism) to "book farming," however, caused the school's birth pangs to endure for thirty years and more. Similarly, the organism did not expire easily. But even as conditions in its surrounding society once provided a definite need for such an educational institution, so did circumstances change and in time render the school obsolete.

The future lay with local high schools, colleges, and universities, but this evolution took time. Hence, by 1903 the School of Agriculture had enrolled more than 2,500 students; 480 had graduated. That same year the College of Agriculture at Minnesota could claim only a meager twenty to twenty-five undergraduates. Not until 1921–1922 did the school reach its peak enrollment of 672. Later on, depression and World War II struck the enterprise severe blows, only 191 students registering in the fall of 1932 and a modest 200 a decade thereafter. Both times, attendance bounced back. However, the College of Agriculture underwent similar experiences, and by 1950 its enrollment exceeded that of the school by three and four to one.

An outside consultant concluded in 1952 that, despite its many achievements, the school must face reality and yield to changing conditions. An impressive fight was waged to save the septuagenarian, but this effort only postponed the inevitable. By the winter of 1960, attendance had dropped to 160. The seventy-first, and final, commencement took place on March 16 of that year. While it lasted, the School of Agriculture made tremendous contributions to the life of Minnesota — and to that of the world beyond. It not only served as a pattern for similar schools in other states but also "set the stage for the development of higher education in agriculture and home economics in Minnesota." In addition, the school sent

thousands of young men and women (86 per cent of those who had matriculated by 1938) back to their home farms to spread the gospel and assume positions of leadership in their local communities. Of the total student body over the years, 5,585 men and women completed the various programs and graduated. Of these, the current United States secretary of agriculture, Robert Bergland ('48), is the best known.

No one, certainly, was better equipped than author Ralph E. Miller to tell in detail and with great affection this significant chapter in the history of Minnesota. A graduate of Iowa State College in Ames, he came to the school in 1934 to teach rural sociology. He remained there in a variety of capacities until the closing in 1960. Then he moved to the college to teach until his retirement in 1976 — a remarkable tenure of forty-two years.

Miller's book is divided into twenty-two brief chapters, thirteen of which deal specifically with the school's five administrations — those of principals William W. Pendergast, Henry W. Brewster, Frederick D. Tucker, Dexter D. Mayne, and J. O. Christianson. The remaining segments cover such matters as early developments, the student exchange and summer project programs, the extracurriculum, and the alumni association.

Illustrations abound, many being of historic value and interest. Equally valuable are vignettes of scores of former faculty members and students and excerpts from their speeches and writings. Would that space allowed an elaboration here on J. O. Christianson, whom this reviewer remembers well, and a repetition of some of the reprinted jokes with which he began his speeches. All these materials underline generally recognized features of the school — its high esprit de corps, the commitment to excellence of its teachers and staff, the permanent impact which it left on its students.

The professional historian will bemoan the absence of an index in Miller's book and wish for more complete annotation. He will wince when encountering numerous redundancies, and the lack of critical analysis will perhaps disturb him. But for the hundreds of alumni of the school, a perusal of the volume will be a rare delight, a means of dredging up myriads of fond memories of new and exciting experiences. Other individuals may find the history of less personal interest, but the story should prove both educational and inspiring.

Anyone wishing to receive a copy of the book should write Ralph E. Miller at 1403 N. Hamline Ave., St. Paul, Mn. 55108 or call him at 646-4727.

*Reviewed by* MERRILL E. JARCHOW, *historian-in-residence at Carleton College. He is the author of The Earth Brought Forth: A History of Minnesota Agriculture to 1885 (1949) and Private Liberal Arts Colleges in Minnesota: Their History and Contributions (1973), both published by the Minnesota Historical Society.*

### ***The Fur Trade of the American West, 1807–1840: A Geographical Synthesis.***

By David J. Wishart.

(Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1979. 237 p. Maps, illustrations. \$15.00.)

THIS SLIM VOLUME is an excellent addition to the substantial body of literature dealing with the fur trade in the Upper



Missouri River and Rocky Mountain areas. The stated objective of the author, in which he largely succeeds, is to present a "new synthesis which adopts an interdisciplinary approach and focuses on the interrelationships between the biological, physical and cultural environment of the fur trade."

The book begins with a description of the "geographical setting" of the fur trade in the West. This is followed by two chapters dealing with "strategy" and the "annual cycle of operations" of the Upper Missouri fur trade and by two more covering the same subjects for the fur trade of the Rocky Mountains. The final chapter is a general "assessment" of the western fur trade. Although the author's style is rather pedantic, he does succeed in giving a good account of the many facets of his theme.

Most serious writers have recognized the significance of geography on the fur trade; the access routes to the fur-gathering areas were of critical importance. Similarly, many writers have discussed the "biological" situation in terms of the depletion of the prime fur-bearing animals because of over-trapping. The organizational structure of the fur trade and the annual cycle of operations have been studied and reviewed. What makes this particular volume valuable is that the author has considered all of these aspects of the fur trade in a single book of modest size.

The book is not without shortcomings. A number of the graphics are of poor quality. The Arrowsmith and Lewis, Drouillard, and David Burr maps are hardly legible. On other maps, areas are so heavily shaded that the place names in the shaded areas can be read only with difficulty. Some of the maps do not locate place names appearing in the text. For example, the text adjacent to a map of the Rocky Mountain trapping system refers to the Powder River, Owl Creek Mountains, Bighorn River, and the Wind River, but these are not on the map.

Based on the author's notations of his sources at the end of each chapter, it appears that, in some cases at least, he failed to consult important primary source material. For example, although the Snake River trapping expeditions of Peter Skene Ogden are discussed in some detail, there is no reference to Ogden's *SNAKE RIVER JOURNALS* published by the Hudson's Bay Record Society.

Despite these deficiencies, however, this is an excellent book which provides a fresh perspective of the fur trade in the American West. The volume includes an extensive bibliography and a useful index.

*Reviewed by* CURTIS L. ROY, a Minneapolis attorney who has a special interest in collecting and studying fur-trade literature. He currently is a vice-president of the Minnesota Historical Society.

**Rochester: Mecca for Millions.** By Harold Severson.

(Rochester, Marquette Bank & Trust Company, 1979. 322 p. Illustrations. \$22.95.)

LOCAL HISTORIES of this caliber make me want to either weep or swear. Informative, well-illustrated in black and white and in color, printed on good paper, bound in hard covers, and

dressed in a handsome jacket, they are invaluable. But virtually every serious user and certainly every librarian will curse them. Why? Because there is no index! As a result, much of the wealth of detail in such a book is buried and well nigh lost.

All too often the dedicated people who produce these books operate on the assumption that their readers are all going to settle down in a comfortable armchair in a local home and read the book from cover to cover. But that reader is only one of the many audiences a serious local history serves. What about the librarian in California who wants only to look up hospitals associated with the Mayo Clinic, the social scientist in Minneapolis who is studying police departments in medium-sized cities, or the Duluth student who is interested solely in development of municipal water plants? Groaning over the lack of an index, these people will scan the table of contents in the hope of locating their topic; if they do not see it, they will usually give up.

Users of this book are at least blessed with a moderately informative table of contents which reveals some — but far from all — of the material on the above sample topics. As might be supposed, for example, this large volume by a retired Rochester newspaperman contains numerous bits and pieces of fascinating local lore on the Mayos — especially on brothers Will and Charlie. Much more than you are ever going to spot by looking at the contents page! And what is a nonlocal reader to make of a chapter entitled "They'll Never Forget Clare Fischer, the Man Who Lost a President," which turns out to concern President Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1934 visit to Rochester to honor the Mayo brothers? Then there is "Dr. Haines Remembers Dr. Plummer, Cow Pastures and Frog Legs," a delightful word portrait of the man for whom the Mayo Clinic's Plummer Building was named. All of these elusive fragments would have been gathered up in a good index under the appropriate Mayo entries, leaving the imaginative chapter titles to perform the function for which they were intended — intriguing the reader.

The contents of this volume are both varied and fairly comprehensive, for the author has done his job well. (But I missed any extended discussion of the city's ethnic composition.) They are also confusing, nonchronological, and hard to follow. The text does not always read along consecutively from one page to the next. For example, the top of page 22 concerns "No Fireworks on That First 4th of July," while the bottom of the page continues a discussion of the establishment of smaller communities in Olmsted County and how they were named, which then jumps to page 25. In between on pages 23 and 24 is another insertion entitled "City's 'Father' Had His Ups and Downs," which presents an interesting (but unrelated) sketch of George Head and his wife Henrietta. And so it goes throughout the book. If you take your finger out of the place where you came across a notable piece of information you would like to be able to find again, all is lost. Only by carefully reviewing page by page can you perhaps come across it again. And in a work of over 300 pages that process repeated time and time again tends to raise a reader's blood pressure.

The thirty-two more-or-less arbitrary chapter divisions in the order in which they appear concern the founding and settlement of Rochester and Olmsted County; the Mayo family and the clinic (three chapters); the tornado of 1883, "credited with being responsible for the origin of St. Mary's Hospital";

other hospitals and hotels, especially the Kahler complex; banks and bank robberies; the Olmsted County Historical Society and "Mayowood," the home of the Charles H. and Charles W. Mayo families, for which the society is responsible; the public library; the cultural scene — circuses, theater, music, art, movies, and the Mayo Civic Auditorium; autos and auto dealers; "Six Who Rose to Fame" — Doctors Edward S. Kendall and Philip S. Hench who evolved cortisone and won a 1950 Nobel prize for their work, the Doctors Mayo, and Supreme Court Justice Harry A. Blackmun; Rochester mayors; the flood of 1978; the local airport, light plant, and police force; President Roosevelt's 1934 visit; Dr. Henry Plummer; the Olmsted County Fair; churches; the fire department; Rochester State Hospital; schools and the junior college; newspapers, radio, and television; IBM and other business enterprises; the farm-orientation of the community in the past; and sports.

This list could be multiplied by several hundred additional topics and still not reflect the full range of the book. Hence my sincere plea to all future publishers of similar local histories: Please, kind sir or madam, omit the pretty jacket or the colored pictures and put the money into an adequate index that will reflect the fact that you have done your job well.

*Reviewed by* JUNE DRENNING HOLMQUIST, *the society's assistant director for publications and research and co-author of at least half a dozen books on various aspects of Minnesota's history. They have indexes!*

### ***The Terrors of Justice: The Untold Side of Watergate.***

By Maurice H. Stans.

(New York, Everett House, 1978. xii, 478 p. \$12.95.)

"SHAKOPEE BOY makes good! Maurice H. Stans, formerly of Shakopee, Minnesota, whose career has taken him from a partnership in a Chicago accounting firm to the deputy postmaster generalship, then to the directorship of the bureau of the budget, then to the office of Secretary of Commerce in President Nixon's cabinet, now has resigned to become finance chairman of the Republican National Committee for the 1972 presidential campaign." So might a news story have read.

Then, as the old movies used to say, came the dawn. Watergate put an end to the Horatio Alger story, and Stans found himself the target for lawsuits totaling \$95,000,000. In addition, he was accused of various misdeeds, haled into court for a long battle over the Robert Vesco affair, and then pleaded guilty to several offenses for which he was fined a thousand dollars each, although his guilt seems less than convincing. However, rather than spending a year fighting the charges and incurring large legal fees, Stans felt it practical to plead guilty, pay a nominal fine, and be shed of the terrors of justice which he relates in this account of guilt by association for any person even remotely connected with Watergate.

How did Stans happen to get involved in Watergate? He was a very successful money raiser who had demonstrated his skills in the Nixon campaign for governor of California and in the 1968 presidential campaign. Thus, in 1972 it came naturally for him to be chosen to head the Republican party's finance committee. He raised some \$60,000,000, of which a little more

than \$56,000,000 was spent in the campaign. He had no control over how the money was used, but as a prominent Nixon associate he became a target for any prosecutor, ambitious investigator, or local or national politician seeking publicity and name recognition. He was, of course, a legitimate target for the opposing political party. All in all, it was not a pleasant experience.

Besides showing how guilt by association has not been confined to liberals during the Senator Joseph McCarthy days of the 1950s but has hit conservatives during Watergate, this book has an excellent account of how money has been raised in political campaigns. It also contains a moral: if any reader has ambitions to become a political money raiser — don't!

*Reviewed by* RODNEY C. LOEHR, *professor emeritus of history at the University of Minnesota and a frequent book reviewer for Minnesota History and other magazines and for such newspapers as the Minneapolis Tribune.*

### ***Grade "A" Fresh Scandinavian Yokes.*** Edited by Paul F. Anderson.

(Minneapolis, Eggs Press, 1979. 39 p. Illustrations. \$1.50.)

### ***Yust for Fun: Norwegian-American Dialect Monologues.*** By Eleonora and Ethel Olson. Edited by Paul F. Anderson.

(Minneapolis, Eggs Press, 1979. 47 p. Illustrations. \$2.50.)

ETHNIC JOKES, although they currently have a bad reputation, are nevertheless often revealing about some characteristics of the groups which figure in them. *Grade "A" Fresh* provides what many of us Scandiphiles have long awaited: A Scandinavian-American joke book with funny jokes in it — jokes which point out aspects of the "national character" of Norwegians, Danes, Swedes, and Finns as perceived by the people themselves as well as by the American society they joined. An example: "Fredrik: 'Is it true dat a Dane vill always answer a kvestion vid a kvestion?' Hans Christian: 'Who told you dat?'"

Many of the jokes have Minnesota settings, like this one which speaks to the larger immigrant experience: "A tramp was being bothered by a stray dog over by Swede Hollow in St. Paul. It was the dead of winter, and when the tramp tried to pick up a stone to throw at the dog, he found that it was frozen fast. 'Dis is a fine country,' he said, 'vare de stones are tied down and de dogs let loose!'"

Another major category of jokes in the book has to do with linguistic misunderstandings, such as the one about the horse trader who recommended to a Norwegian a horse that "goes ten miles without stopping." "Vell, I can't yoose it den," said the Norwegian. "I only live eight miles from town, and vid dat horse I'd hafta valk back two miles." The Finnish jokes are almost all linguistically based and did not seem as funny to me as some of the others, probably because I have heard far fewer people with Finnish-American accents than with the other kinds illustrated here.

There are also jokes which show ethnic rivalry among the

Scandinavian groups — like the one in which a Swede and his pet monkey performed in a Cedar Avenue bar in Minneapolis. When the monkey carried his tin cup around for contributions, Olaf, a dyed-in-the-wool Norwegian with a low opinion of Swedes, put in a coin to the surprise of everyone present. "As he put his money into the cup, he looked over at the monkey's owner and said in a rather loud voice, 'Ya, dare so cute ven dare little!'"

The illustrations, by Ruth Askegaard, are not at all trite. The cover drawing of Hjalmar and the penguin is particularly good, as is the joke it depicts: "One night Per heard a noise behind his house. He went outside and saw that there was a strange animal in the next yard. His neighbor Hjalmar was there too, with a puzzled look on his face. 'I got a pengvin in my yard!' said Hjalmar. 'Vat am I gonna do vid a pengvin?' 'Maybe you should take it over ta Como Zoo,' said Per. 'Ya, I tink dat would be best.'

"A couple of days later Per was walking down the street, when to his surprise, he saw Hjalmar and the penguin, walking side-by-side and coming in his direction. 'Hey, I tawt you vas gonna take dat bird over ta Como Zoo!' he shouted to Hjalmar. 'Ya, I did dat yesterday,' said Hjalmar. 'Yust now ve're going over ta see Minnehaha Falls!'"

It would be interesting to know where editor Paul Anderson found these jokes. I would have appreciated an introduction or a general note on sources at the end of the booklet. Not all the jokes in the book have redeeming social value, of course, but there are enough good ones to make it a buck and a half well spent to help while away an evening.

A MORE SERIOUS effort to document historical Scandinavian-American humor appears in *Yust for Fun*, a 1979 reprint of a 1925 publication by Ethel and Eleonora Olson, Norwegian-American sisters who toured Scandinavian communities in the Midwest to give "a program of vocal works, piano solos, and comic monologues." Editor Anderson has added an introduction, notes, a kind of time line of the Olson family, and a discography which lists the recordings the Olsons made for Victor and Brunswick records. Photographs, programs, and reviews of the sisters' performances during their 1905-1925 heyday combine with drawings to illuminate their lives and presentations. In addition to Askegaard's illustrations, two of the drawings are attributed to the noted Norwegian-American artist Herbjørn Gausta, who appears in a 1919 photo with the Olson sisters and others at their Minneapolis boarding house.

The monologues are funny and informative, ranging from a

tale about an old hypochondriac woman from Sogn to such subjects as piano lessons and weddings, home accidents and newsreels at the movies, a gem called "The Ladies Aid," a first visit to a baseball game, another wonderful first called "A Norwegian Woman at the Telephone," and others. In addition to poking fun, the monologues inform the reader about life in the Scandinavian Midwest early in the twentieth century, especially for women of varying ages and classes. It is not only the people represented in the pieces who are spoofed; they too have some sharp points to make from time to time. For example, a woman discusses her daughter's marriage prospects: "And den dat grand banker dat vas crazy for Mabel. He vas everyting grand. He vas a Elk's tooth, he vas a Skriner, he belonged to de Sons of Norway, I tink he even belonged to de Daughters of Norway."

Insights are also offered into women's lives and positions in Scandinavian-American communities, especially in the monologue called "The Trial Marriage," in which a perfect specimen of Norwegian-American young womanhood agrees — but with a very qualified yes — to marry a young man who falls all over himself to woo her. An older woman recounting the story says: "Betsy knew how his fader treated his moder; it vas as if she vas an old rocking chair — good enough ven he vas tired, but in de vay de rest of de time." So Betsy told Ole that she would marry him, but only with a five-year renewable contract if the satisfaction was mutual. Ole was not any better of a husband than Betsy had expected, so on their fifth anniversary she told him that "de five years is up, you haven't lived up to your end of de deal and I'm tru." And she left. The narrator had put the moral at the beginning of the tale: "De vimen iss different from ven ve was young. You can't vipe your feet on dem."

Norwegian women trying to fit into middle-class American society were the object of some of the Olsons' humor, particularly in "A Norwegian Woman at the Beach (with a Brood of Erring Children)," wherein the narrator's problems are pointed up in the line, "I vanted my children to veare Norwegian flags in dere hair saa I could tell dem apart in de vater, but day von't do it." Occasional sentences in some of the pieces are in Norwegian, but it is not necessary to know that language to get the point and the humor of these affectionate looks at Norwegian-American society.

*Reviewed by* DEBORAH M. STULTZ, assistant editor in the MHS publications and research division and co-ordinator of research for a forthcoming ethnic history of Minnesota. She herself is one-quarter Norwegian and three-quarters German.



# NEWS & NOTES

AN UNUSUAL company history, entitled *NSP, Northern States People: the past 70 years*, by Carol Pine, was published by the utility to mark not only its seventieth anniversary but also the 100th birthday of Thomas A. Edison's invention of the incandescent light bulb in 1879 (144 p.). Handsomely printed and paperbound, the book was written for internal use by the firm's employees and stockholders, to whom it was distributed.

Effectively combining oral history with a chronological narrative divided into four sections — 1909–20, 1921–29, 1930–45, and 1946–79 — it carries the company's story from the days of kerosene lamps to those of nuclear power plants. Quotations from taped interviews with current and retired employees supplement the text to provide vivid vignettes of NSP's many activities.

"This is an interpretive history," writes President Donald W. McCarthy in the book's introduction, "it does not recount every important fact from the company's past. Rather, it gathers together tales and occurrences as employees, past and present, remember them." McCarthy's description of the book's content is too limited, for the "tales and occurrences" provide a good understanding of regional and national industry movements of which the company was a part.

Some of the employees' memories reach back to the first decade of the twentieth century when Minneapolis General Electric and other NSP forerunner firms were part of the empire of Henry M. Byllesby. That "paternal empire builder," who worked for Edison, Westinghouse, and Samuel Insull of holding company fame before branching out on his own, "picked up an arm load of companies in Minnesota, the Dakotas and Wisconsin — small properties with promise," transformed them with infusions of "cash and engineering skill," and sold shares in the resulting combination, which he named Northern States Power Company in 1916.

Over 300 employees or their families contributed information, interviews, or the superb illustrations that inform every page of this work. Buttressed by an informal but carefully structured text, it

paints upon a board canvas — Reddy Kilowatt, Homer and Roy, and other advertising campaigns; floods and blizzards; safety regulations; how to climb an icy pole; the expanding market for electricity; the discontinuance of the appliance sales division in the late 1960s that resulted in the "first layoff in company history" (400 salesmen) and the end of "cake decorating contests in NSP's lobby," cooking schools, recipes, and traveling demonstrators (largely women in an otherwise predominantly masculine firm); the public opposition to the building of the King plant on the St. Croix River in 1965–68 ("NSP wasn't ready for that outcry"); and the continuing controversies of the 1970s over the nuclear plants at Prairie Island, Monticello, and Tyrone, Wisconsin.

Historians will find this book candid and readable — adjectives not often applicable to the murky, self-serving texts of many company histories. It is far less useful than it could have been, however, had its creators completed their exemplary task by providing a comprehensive index.

JUNE D. HOLMQUIST and  
LUCILE M. KANE

*LAND OF THE GIANTS* (Minneapolis, 1979, ii, 176 p., \$6.95) is a history of Minnesota business written by Don W. Larson, senior editor of *Corporate Report*, a monthly magazine covering business in the Ninth Federal Reserve District. In an ambitious undertaking, Larson attempts to place in perspective twenty-four Minnesota giants headquartered in the state, qualifying for giant-hood by annual business volume or assets exceeding a billion dollars, and representing food companies, computer manufacturers, transportation companies, diversified manufacturers, financial institutions, retailers, and insurance firms. Reaching backward in time, he traces the emergence of the firms that now, in a state with only 1.7 per cent of the nation's population, comprise 4.4 per cent of the nation's biggest businesses.

The effort to place the state's major companies in perspective has led the author to touch many subjects, among them Minnesota's tax structure, invest-

ment capital, wars, depressions, economic diversification, and business leadership. Enlivening the pages are sketches of men like William Cargill, Frank Peavey, Frederick Weyerhaeuser, and James J. Hill, as well as tales of derring-do such as the Hill-Harriman battle for control of the Northern Pacific. Included, too, are discussions of industries not represented among Minnesota's giants. Prime among these are lumbering firms once headquartered in the state and iron mining, long controlled by firms located in distant cities.

Most useful for students of Minnesota history is information on economic trends in the post-World War II era. Important, too, are discussions of Control Data, IBM, Honeywell, and Sperry Univac which, with over 100 other firms producing hardware and software, have made Minnesota one of the nation's leading computer centers.

LUCILE M. KANE

*THE CHRISTMAS, 1979*, booklet of the Northprint Company of Grand Rapids has as its subject *The Minnesota Forest History Center* which is being developed by the Minnesota Historical Society near Grand Rapids (1979, 31 pages. Maps and illustrations). Written by Robert C. Wheeler, retired associate director of the society, and Robert M. Drake, center supervisor, the colorful booklet explains how the center came into being, its planning and financing, and what visitors will see. Among the topics covered is the initiation of the idea in 1967, why the Grand Rapids site was chosen, the role of the Blandin Company, and the completion of a reconstructed 1900 logging camp of eight buildings in 1979. Also described is the development of a system of trails, as well as a wanigan, forest ranger cabin, fire tower, Finnish farm, and an interpretive center to tell the story of Minnesota's forest through four themes — the Forest and the Indian, the Forest and the Lumberman, the Forest in Transition, and the Forest of Today.

DESIGNED to assist "the general public, educators, and the scholarly commu-

nity," *Minnesota Folklife: An Annotated Bibliography* (St. Paul, the Center for the Study of Minnesota Folklife, 1979, 51 p., \$3.50) offers its readers 337 entries plus a useful guide to general reference works in folklore and folklife. Equally valuable are the introductory essays which provide a brief look at current definitions and theories in the discipline and also detail the limitations dictated by the scope and material of the volume.

Compiler Pamela Mittlefehldt chose to follow the encyclopedic definition of folklife presented in the Minnesota legislative act which created the Folklife Center: "the traditional customs and expressions common to a group of people . . . [which] includes vocal and instrumental music, dance, drama, lore, beliefs, language, humor, handicraft, painting, sculpture, architecture, other forms of creative and artistic expression, and skills related to the preservation and exhibition of the cultural heritage of any family, ethnic, religious, occupational, racial, regional, or other groups of Minnesota people." Since folklorists have been arguing for decades over the proper definition of their field, Mittlefehldt was probably wise to avoid the temptation to refine this enumeration. However, problem areas such as the overlap of folklore with historical, linguistic, or anthropological materials are mentioned but never clarified. As the preface states, annotations are descriptive rather than critical. Thus, the volume lists many articles of uneven quality and gives us no guidance in evaluating them. Since the scholarly study of folklore is a relatively new endeavor, more critical thinking along these lines would have been helpful.

Aside from these flaws, *Minnesota Folklife* is a handy volume. Little of substance has been published about Minnesota folklife, and even less under the rubric of the discipline. This volume presents material winnowed from historical journals, almanacs, linguistics texts, regional histories, local magazines, and the like. An excellent subject index leads the reader right to the material, whether the area of inquiry is as broad as "folk art" or as specific as "Icelandic foodways." As a first harvest of Minnesota folklife — an introduction to the richness and broad range of the field, or a glimpse into printed materials of a particular subject area — this bibliography should be especially useful to schoolteachers and students of everyday culture and customs, whether historians, anthropologists, folklorists, linguists, or simply curious browsers.

ANNE R. KAPLAN

TWO DISSIMILAR paperback guides to historic sites are *Around the Shores of Lake Superior*, by Margaret B. Bogue and Virginia A. Palmer (University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Program, 1979, 179 p., \$7.95) and *Saint Paul Omnibus: Images of the Changing City*, by Patricia Kane, David A. Lanegran, Eileen Michels, Christopher Owens, and Ernest R. Sandeen (Old Town Restorations, Inc., 1979, 144 p., \$6.00).

The former, seemingly intended for auto tourists in a hurry, offers a fold-out map and extremely brief data on some 113 scenic and historic places on the Circle Tour of Lake Superior. At least half of its 179 pages are devoted to Michigan; twenty-seven cover Duluth, Superior, Voyageurs National Park, Superior National Forest, and Minnesota's North Shore. History buffs will find the latter section lacking in both color and detail. For example, the entire Grand Marais entry reads: "The excellent natural harbor at Grand Marais was recognized early in its history. Federal surveyors visiting the area found a trading post there in 1859. The U.S. Coast Guard station welcomes visitors." More readable are eight narrative insertions, entitled "Glimpses of the Region's Past," which provide meager historical background on ships, the fur trade, exploration, missionaries, copper (and some iron) mining, lumbering, fisheries, and the Chippewa people. All can be read in a few minutes.

The St. Paul book is considerably more ambitious and detailed, as befits its subject — a city's neighborhoods — which can be explored leisurely and on foot. Seven essays and tours are contributed by its five authors. Their viewpoint is largely architectural, with essays on government buildings (state, county, and municipal) by Michels, churches and residential architecture by Sandeen and Lanegran, and "Rise of the Architect" by Owens. Readers will find information on many well-known landmarks such as the State Capitol, City Hall, and numerous structures designed by Cass Gilbert, but they will also encounter new material on hundreds of buildings of lesser fame. Lanegran's chapter on the Historic Hill district and Merriam, St. Anthony, and Macalester parks provides ample grist for several Sunday afternoon rambles, as does the innovative essay by Kane on some St. Paul neighborhoods utilized by various writers of fiction. She devotes most of her space to F. Scott Fitzgerald's Summit Avenue area but also touches on locales used by Grace Flandrau, Sheila Alexander, J. F. Powers, Ramsey Benson, Frederick Manfred, Sinclair Lewis, and Mabel Seeley.

Both books are illustrated with black-and-white photographs, maps, and drawings. The Lake Superior volume has a bibliography and a good index. Unfortunately, the St. Paul book, which has more need of both, has neither. Only Kane's essay makes any effort to acknowledge its indebtedness to various authors by listing them in a bibliography.

JUNE D. HOLMQUIST

TWO CLASSICS of Great Lakes fur-trade history have recently been made available in new editions. The first is a narrative by Jean Baptiste Perrault, a French-Canadian fur trader of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which is one of the most important and interesting sources of information on the fur trade of the area southwest of Lake Superior in the period from 1780 to 1800. The narrative has never been published in its original French, although English translations of parts of it were included in several of Henry R. Schoolcraft's compendiums of Indian history. A complete translation first appeared in 1909 in volume 37 of the *Collections of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society*. Now Louis P. Cormier has edited a long-overdue French-language edition based on the original manuscript in the Schoolcraft Papers of the U.S. Library of Congress. Entitled *Jean Baptiste Perrault, Marchand voyageur parti de Montréal le 25e de mai 1783*, it was published by Boréal Express of Montreal in 1978 (paper 170 p.) and sells for \$6.75 in Canada.

Perrault worked at various times as a free-lance trader and as a clerk for the North West Company. Under John Sayer, Perrault supervised the building of the North West Company's Fond du Lac regional depot on the site of Superior, Wisconsin, in 1793. Later on he was in charge of several Minnesota fur posts, including the Red Cedar (now Cass) Lake post, until about 1799, when he was transferred to other North West posts in Canada. He also later worked for the Hudson's Bay Company. In the 1820s Perrault retired to Sault Ste. Marie where he met Schoolcraft, who inspired him to record his reminiscences. This he did in detail, bearing out Schoolcraft's description of him as "a man of good education, happy memory and great urbanity."

The new edition of Perrault's work contains all of the footnotes found in the 1909 edition, in addition to other informative notes inserted by the present editor. It should also be noted that a



number of fascinating maps drawn by Perrault of areas in which he traded, including Minnesota, have been redrawn and included in this new edition.

Also now available is a paperback edition of David Lavender's *The Fist in the Wilderness* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1979, 490 p., paper \$8.95). Lavender's work, first published by Doubleday in 1964, tells the story of the creation of the American Fur Company's near monopoly of the Great Lakes fur trade in the 1810s, 1820s, and 1830s, and in particular the key role played in that story by Ramsay Crooks. The best explanation of these events available, Lavender's book is written in a readable, popular style which will win it many new readers.

BRUCE M. WHITE

MINNESOTA'S "twins" on the United States Supreme Court, Chief Justice Warren Burger and Justice Harry Blackmun, receive biographical and analytical treatment in *The Justices of the United States Supreme Court: Their Lives and Major Opinions: Volume V, The Burger Court, 1969-1978* (New York, 1978, \$45.00). The book contains essays on twelve justices, examining the development and fruition of the judicial philosophies of each. The sections on Burger, by Andrew E. Norman, and on Blackmun, by Michael Pollet, show both to be constitutional constructionists and believers in judicial restraint. Major opinions of each, which in part belie their conservatism, are printed in full. Burger's include the decision requiring then-President Nixon to turn over the Watergate tapes and his dissent in the Bivens case, attacking the exclusion of illegally seized evidence; Blackmun's include his famous decisions in *Roe v. Wade* on abortion and *Bates v. The State Bar of Arizona*, which gave lawyers the right to advertise their services. Both essays are eminently readable and instructive.

ANN REGAN

ORAL HISTORY is coupled with black-and-white photographs in *Island Folk: The People of Isle Royale*, by Peter Oikarinen (Houghton, Mich., Isle Royale Natural History Association, 1979, 158 p., paper \$4.95). Based on tape-recorded interviews with twelve oldtimers (four women and eight men),

the book captures with rare success the story-telling qualities of good reminiscences. These elderly people of predominantly Scandinavian ancestry convey multifaceted images of island life since the early 1900s, depicting Isle Royale's transition from commercial fishing and copper mining to summer resorts and a national park. Glen Merritt of Duluth recalls his family's long association with the island — his father Alfred's first visit in 1866, the family's interest in copper mining, and their purchase of land when it was offered to the public in 1908. Others touch on the frictions that arose after Isle Royale was named a national park in 1940 (the properties of the remaining twenty-one private owners are scheduled to be added to the park as present life leases expire).

In spite of the fact that Isle Royale is part of Michigan, the residents interviewed were Minnesota-oriented, and the island has been served over the years by boats making regular runs from Grand Portage on the Minnesota North Shore. Interviews with the captains of the "Voyageur" and "Wenonah," the current vessels, recall earlier boats and their own years of navigating treacherous Lake Superior, delivering tourists, groceries, and other supplies and returning to the mainland with the dwindling catches of the commercial fisher folk.

Among the three who still have commercial fishing licenses are Milford and Myrtle Johnson, a husband-wife team, who came to Isle Royale in 1906 and 1908, respectively. Oikarinen's interview with the Johnsons and others records a now virtually extinct fishing life on Lake Superior with its open boats, cotton nets, large catches, hard work, dangers, and unregulated freedoms. The author, who skillfully provides narrative bridges and background information on each interview, has also included a brief historical introduction and a useful map. Unfortunately there is no index.

JUNE D. HOLMQUIST

EXHIBITS and the research that goes into them frequently unearth forgotten or unknown resources that enhance Minnesota Historical Society collections. Visitors, stimulated by museum displays, sometimes recall information and material from their own backgrounds. Researchers, in the process of tracking down a story, also uncover new sources. A case in point is the MHS exhibit,

"How They Spelled Relief: NRA, AAA, FERA, CCC, WPA." As part of her research for the show, Patricia Gaarder of the MHS education division interviewed Ezra B. Curry, who was assistant WPA administrator in Minnesota from 1939 to 1941. This interview is now part of the MHS audio-visual collection.

At the beginning of the interview, Curry brought out six publications documenting WPA achievements. These include Minnesota's Work Projects Administration (WPA) *Final Report* (now added to the MHS manuscripts collection), which describes the development of Minnesota's WPA, its administrative structure and projects; a photographic album, *America First — And Always — Persons and Events Affecting the Minnesota WPA 1935-1943*; and three volumes recording the progress of relief projects in the Minneapolis parks program. These publications came to the society, through Curry, from Mrs. Sidney Stolte, widow of the Minnesota WPA administrator, 1939-1943. The sixth document, "Accomplishments, Minnesota 1935-1939," contains a photographic record of state WPA projects during those years.

PATRICIA GAARDER

LAKE HARRIET is the subject of a recently published pamphlet by Tine Thevenin called *Lake Harriet Until 1925* (Minneapolis, 1979, available from the author, P.O. Box 16004, Minneapolis, Mn. 55416, illustrations, 32 p., paper \$3.10). The book is a survey of the lake's history from the earliest days of Indians, missionaries, and travelers, to its later life in the Minneapolis park system as a haven for pleasure seekers and bicyclists.

RAILROAD BUFFS will enjoy *The Great Northern Railway: A Pictorial Study*, by Charles and Dorothy Wood (Edmonds, Washington, 1979, \$49.50). Historical sketches give brief summaries of the early history of the line in St. Paul, the development of Glacier Park, construction through the Cascades, the selection of the western terminus, and the technological development of railroad engines. The pictures run heavily to locomotives but also include shots of stations, yards, bridges, and construction along the line.

ANN REGAN



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