

BOOK REVIEWS

Minnesota's Boundary with Canada: Its Evolution since 1783. By William E. Lass.
(St. Paul, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1980. 141 p.
Maps, illustrations. Cloth \$16.50, paper \$8.75.)

IN PRESENTING the history of identifying and marking the boundary between Minnesota and Canada, the author of this volume offers regional diplomatic history at its best. Good regional history not only describes and interprets events that relate to a particular area but also places those events in a broader national and international context. Perhaps the very nature of diplomatic history lends itself to a wide perspective, but too frequently international affairs are described in isolated time and space.

This volume contains much more than the title indicates. Minnesota's boundary with Canada constitutes only a segment of an international line that stretches from Passamaquoddy Bay in the East to the Strait of Juan de Fuca in the West. With constant focus on the Minnesota boundary, Lass describes first the diplomats' and then the surveyors' 142-year occupation with this line.

Between 1783 and 1842 four major agreements highlighted the diplomatic negotiations. Lass reviews for us the initial mistakes made by the 1783 diplomats when they relied on the erroneous cartography of the John Mitchell map. By the Treaty of Paris the international boundary ended at the northwest point of Lake of the Woods since it was impossible to extend the line due west to the Mississippi River. Thus the Northwest Boundary Gap was created. Just as the gap was about to be closed by the Convention of 1803 the United States acquired Louisiana, and the problem now turned to identifying the northern border of the purchase. Acting mistakenly under the assumption that the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht identified the forty-ninth parallel as the southernmost line of British possessions, the Convention of 1818 extended the international boundary along that latitude to the crest of the Rockies. Amid the 1820s controversy over the Neebish Channels (the eastern approach to Sault Ste. Marie) there arose the question of location of the "Long Lake" mentioned in the 1783 treaty. The British claimed the St. Louis River as the site while the Americans countered with the Kaministiquia River. Unable to resolve their differences and unwilling to submit the dispute to arbitration, the diplomats quietly shelved the matter for almost a decade. When the Maine boundary question reappeared in

1838, Daniel Webster and Lord Ashburton took their turn at determining not only that boundary but also the Lake Huron-Lake of the Woods line as well. Clarifying once and for all the ambiguities of the 1783 treaty, the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 ended the diplomatic phase of the boundary question. Lass does a masterful job of showing how each problem impinged upon all other border questions.

Myths and legends die hard, but Lass points out that in successfully moving the line from the St. Louis River to the Pigeon River, Webster did not intentionally gain for the United States the mineral deposits of Minnesota's Iron Range. Lass notes that the secretary of state's often quoted remark to the Senate that his treaty secured for the United States an area ". . . considered valuable as a mineral region" was intended to placate westerners who were upset by the failure to acquire Oregon. The existence of iron ore deposits on the Vermilion and Mesabi ranges was not known until 1875-80 and 1890 respectively. Despite Lass's efforts, the Webster legend will undoubtedly persist, as will the myth of Ben Franklin and the copper deposits on Isle Royale.

With the boundary defined, Lass turns his attention to surveying and marking the line. The problems were no less thorny. In a chapter superbly narrated, Lass describes the ambition and intrigue that prompted the forces of Manifest Destiny to press for annexation of central and western Canada even as the survey crews assembled their equipment. The expansionist Americans were frustrated by the passage of the British North American Act and the closely followed organization of the province of Manitoba. Plagued by a controversy over the proper method of determining latitude, encumbered by seemingly unrelated problems, and occasionally routed from their work by mosquitoes, the men of the survey did not complete their work until 1926, and the final reports were not filed until 1937.

Although no fault of the author's, several questions persist, although I suspect the answers will produce only trivia rather than scholarly substance. Here are only two: Why did the diplomats in 1783 use the Mitchell rather than the Ellis Huske map, both drawn in 1755? How did Benjamin Vaughn become "somehow alert" to the fact that the peace commissioners in 1783 were creating a Northwest Boundary Gap?

This volume will serve a variety of readers. The diplomatic specialist will find a thoroughly researched and carefully documented history composed from primary and secondary sources. The regionalist will appreciate Lass's skillful weaving

of international events. The casual reader will enjoy an intriguing tale of international diplomacy. Three large maps and several others co-ordinated with the text will guide readers, while the photographs show terrain, personnel, and equipment.

Reviewed by ROY HOOVER, professor of history at the University of Minnesota, Duluth.

Tomorrow Is a Day: A Story of the People in Politics.

By John Beecher.

(Chicago, Vanguard Books, 1980. viii, 386 p. Illustrations, \$16.95.)

THIS IS the second history of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor party to appear in the past year. The first, Millard Gieske's *Minnesota Farmer-Laborism*, is solid political history, well researched and ponderously written. In contrast, John Beecher's work is impressionistic, lively in style, and designed to be inspirational.

Beecher wrote *Tomorrow Is a Day* in the years following World War II. A poet, social activist, and descendant of the abolitionists whose name he bears, he reportedly was attracted to the task by friends within the Farmer-Labor movement and by the movement's emphasis upon social justice. The manuscript was not published when completed in 1948 for reasons never made clear. Presumably, this decision was related to the political climate at the time. The postwar liberal consensus, which praised America's pluralism and unquestionably accepted the assumptions behind the policy of containment, was judged too hostile for a book treating the politics of the people to have a chance. Presumably, too, the diminished lustre of cold-war liberalism led to the decision to publish the book in 1980.

Tomorrow Is a Day is less a history and more a call to action. This is particularly true of the epilogue, written by David Foster, which traces, with indifferent success, political developments in Minnesota since World War II. In spite of this caveat, Beecher's book is worth reading. The story is well told, and his historical interpretations generally are judicious.

The dream of a government responsive to ordinary people is a real possibility for Beecher. Early on, he offers a romantic, idealized version of frontier Minnesota's potential for a people's politics. From the beginning, he states, "Minnesota was different from the old [commonwealths] to the east. Here the people sought to rule themselves and to win independence from their economic masters with a blind and turbulent energy that more than a century of frustrations could not extinguish."

Farmer-Labor success had its origins in this faith. Yet, Beecher presents another view of the people that is not so idealized. As might be expected, he portrays the career of Ignatius Donnelly in some detail. Visionaries like Donnelly, Beecher asserts, would benefit if they understood why the Granger movement had failed. "For the people is only the sum of its individual components, who are quite generally guided by what they perceive to be their immediate bread-and-butter interests rather than by imperishable ideals." Beecher concludes that "the people" as an abstraction is "unfortunately, all too human."

Beecher's ambivalence toward the people distinguishes the volume and perhaps is necessary to it. This may be seen in his characterization of the book's two central figures, Governors Floyd B. Olson and Elmer A. Benson. In one sense, his descriptions of the two men are quite standard. Olson is portrayed as a winner who understood that politics is people first and ideals second. Benson is described as inflexible, intolerant, and lacking in the personal qualities needed to hold the organization together following the death of Olson.

Benson may not have been a winner, but he is as necessary as Olson to this story of the people in politics. Both are needed as symbols. Beecher's primary objective is to affirm the possibility of a people's politics. Olson's success demonstrates that the people once had a winner. Perhaps they could have one again —

For Floyd Olson had been a winner.

That is why the people loved him, in spite of all his faults and all the disturbing questions which they asked themselves about him. Before he came, they had been fighting so long and winning so seldom. They expected him to go on forever winning for their side, and perhaps he would have.

Benson symbolizes steadfastness to the faith. Ill-equipped temperamentally to follow Olson as a winner, Benson was admirably suited to serve as the "prophet of tomorrow." He would not join those who accepted the pernicious assumptions which underlay the liberalism of a cold-war America. "For long years to come he would remain, unchanging and unchangeable, a symbol of bitter-end, last-ditch hostility and a rallying point for all the politically discontented. He thus gave continuity to the century-long tradition of protest in a state whose history has been one of violent alternation between political extremes."

Reviewed by GEORGE W. GARLID, professor of history at the University of Wisconsin at River Falls. He has written many articles and reviews on Farmer-Labor history.

Finnish Radicals and Religion in Midwestern Mining Towns, 1865-1914. By Arthur E. Puotinen.

(New York, Arno Press, 1979. vii, 339 p. Illustrations, \$24.00.)

THIS ADDITION to the *Scandinavians in America* collection brought out by Arno Press is an interesting and well-written book with much broader scope than the title suggests.

Minnesotans who consider the immigrants from Finland as part of the Scandinavian settlement of rural Minnesota will discover in this book the role of the Finns in the mining industry of the Lake Superior region in which nearly half of all Finnish immigrants to America settled. Instead of viewing them as the *smallest* of nineteenth-century immigrant groups from the Nordic countries who settled in agricultural communities of Minnesota, we should view the Finns as the *largest* of the immigrant groups from eastern and southern Europe (Finns, Italians, Poles, Slovenes, Croatians, Serbs, Russians, and others) who came primarily in the early twentieth century to settle in upper Midwest mining towns.

Puotinen writes of the divisive conflicts among the Finnish immigrants in the copper and iron mining communities of upper Michigan and northern Minnesota. He sketches the development of the mining industry and its multiethnic towns and mine "locations" dominated by the mining companies through a combination of paternalism and ruthless exploitation of natural and human resources. Through the experience of the Finns beginning in 1865, when they first settled in the Michigan "copper country," we discover a good deal about life, work, and industrial conflict in the various communities.

For Puotinen, the many ethnic institutions created by the Finnish immigrants were "more than transplants from the Old World to preserve a clannish culture, these ethnic associations resembl[ing] coping devices by which Finns sought leverage in a society largely determined by mining company interests and policies." He sees the primary stimulus to the schism among Finns, in which "debate over the existence of God, authority of local clergymen, and theological issues clearly figures," as coming from outside the ethnic community in the economic and political pressures that "forced Finns to decide whether to acquiesce or to rebel." The issue, as defined by Puotinen, "was the belief by some Finns that they were victims of unjust labor practices and wage slaves to an autocratic industrial system. Conservative churchmen in Michigan and Minnesota primarily adopted a strategy of accommodation, maintaining that future employment for American Finns and their economic well being dictated prudent responses."

The most explosive moment of confrontation between church and clergy and the Finnish radicals came during and immediately following the Minnesota iron miners' strike of 1907 and the copper country strike of 1913-14 in which Finnish miners of all political and religious affiliations became engaged.

Puotinen describes these events with a sense of both excitement and history and succeeds in conveying the complex set of circumstances that led to such drastic divisions in the Finnish community as the formation of the Finnish anti-socialist league whose aim was to drive the Western Federation of Miners and the Finnish radicals out of the industry and area. Readers are provided in earlier sections of the book with a highly readable background of church and labor history in Finland and on the formative years of both Finnish American church and radical movements.

This is the first of recent publications on Finnish immigrant history to deal with Finnish radicalism and the schism in the Finnish immigrant community from the perspective of the church; yet it displays a sympathetic grasp of the problems of immigrant workers and radical movements. The one significant weakness in this respect is the author's failure to differentiate the Western Federation of Miners at the time of the copper country strike when it had reaffiliated with the American Federation of Labor from its earlier connection with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). This is important since this strike was not led by anarcho-syndicalists; the strike had legitimacy and was supported by the AFL. The Finnish copper country socialists who helped lead the strike were committed to the Socialist party's policy of working with the mainstream unions of the AFL and did not adopt the pro-IWW line of their compatriots in Minnesota. This was not understood at the time by the conservative Finnish leaders. It is not, therefore, accurate to ascribe to the socialist strike leaders, as Puotinen does,

the primary goal "to overthrow paternalism in the mining industry and establish a socialistic system."

Paradoxically, if a lot of these misconceptions had not prevailed during the strike, this would have been the best opportunity for church and radicals to present a common front in behalf of labor unionism and industrial reforms for the working class constituency of both sides. They both muffed the opportunity since they were caught up in ideological differences and divergent ideas of whether to fight against or seek accommodation with the mining companies.

The impressive evidence Puotinen presents in support of his thesis testifies to the comprehensive resources that scholars of the Finnish immigrant experience have at their command, especially in the archives of the Immigration History Research Center of the University of Minnesota and at Suomi College in Michigan. All in all, this book succeeds in demonstrating how internal ethnic community life was shaped through the interplay of ethnic heritage and the pressures of American society. The process of integration and acculturation of Europeans into the industrial society of this area is presented in a manner that will increase our understanding of regional history and of contemporary American culture.

Reviewed by CARL ROSS, who was born in Michigan's copper country and grew up in Finnish immigrant communities of the Lake Superior region. He is author of The Finn Factor in American Labor, Culture and Society.

The Shipwrecks of Lake Superior. By Julius F. Wolff, Jr.

(Duluth, Lake Superior Marine Museum Association, Inc., 1979. 180 p. Illustrations. Cloth \$25.00.)

RESIDENTS AND VISITORS to Great Lakes shipping ports such as Duluth often pause as the freighters pass by wondering what they are carrying and where they are bound. Such a fascination from his boyhood on prompted Julius F. Wolff, Jr., who has taught political science at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, since 1949, to do more than just wonder. Through more than two decades of research, Wolff has come to be the leading authority on the history of Lake Superior shipwrecks. The result is this fascinating resource volume full of well-documented histories of hundreds of Great Lakes ships and shipwrecks in the occasionally tragic history of Lake Superior.

In the decades before construction of the Soo Locks, Great Lakes vessels were small and their cargoes varied, but their sailors learned to view Lake Superior with as constant an eye on the weather as today's crews do. Severe weather caused well over half of the total losses of 350 vessels on the lake and an even larger percentage of the nearly 1,000 additional shipwrecks identified in the book. Stranding, collision, fire, ice damage, age, and mechanical breakdown were other rather common casualty causes.

The text shows that each decade since the 1840s and earlier had its share of shipwrecks but that the 1890s loomed particularly large in frequency of wrecks. This was due in part to the

large number of vessels operating and to the age of many as older schooners were pressed back into service — two and three at a time being towed behind lumber hookers and steam barges servicing an increasing industrial base and a burgeoning population.

Regardless of the year, vessel type, or cargo, each faced the same mystifyingly beautiful and horrendously violent moments of Lake Superior. The vessels that survived usually did so through their staunchness and the skill of their masters and crewmen. Many technological advancements helped reduce the number and severity of shipwrecks over the past century and a half. Yet, Wolff devotes an entire chapter to the wreck of the "Edmund Fitzgerald" in 1975. This clearly demonstrates that shipwreck history is still being written.

The book's scope is exhaustive. There can be few casualties that it does not cover. Equally extensive are the bibliographic entries and more than 500 footnotes appearing at the end of the text. Interspersed throughout are some 150 photographs from private and public collections, many not previously published, which graphically show the severity of some casualties. Unfortunately, the pictures are for the most part poorly reproduced.

Although destined to become a standard reference volume, *The Shipwrecks of Lake Superior* neglects, in its index, the several thousand noncasualty vessels involved in search, rescue, or salvage efforts. Addition of these would greatly enhance the book's reference value. Also, capitalizing all vessel names throughout the text would contribute to readability and reference value. The first mention of casualties is all that is now capitalized. The book also badly needs a regional map highlighting important early place names. Presumably, a single wreck chart would be too cluttered with entries to work well.

Shipwrecks is a worthwhile book for both the curious reader and the concerned researcher. Its faults are largely mechanical and minor in comparison with its scope and depth of research. It is the only book of its type not only for Lake Superior but for the other Great Lakes as well.

Reviewed by THOMAS R. HOLDEN of the Canal Park Marine Museum in Duluth and research editor for *Wilderness Port Shipwrecks, Ltd.* in Superior, Wisconsin. He is author of several articles on shipwrecks at Isle Royale in Lake Superior.

Truth in History. By Oscar Handlin.

(Cambridge, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979. xi, 437 p. Cloth \$17.50.)

THE SEVENTEEN ESSAYS in this collection are diverse, covering such topics as the political thought of eighteenth-century pamphleteer James Burgh, the changing meaning of the term "laissez-faire," and American fears of the machine. They reveal the wide range of Oscar Handlin's scholarly interests — he has ventured far beyond the study of immigration and ethnicity which gave us such books as *Boston's Immigrants* and *The Uprooted* and has steadfastly refused to be confined to a narrow field of specialization.

Throughout, Handlin develops the idea that historians

should adhere to a standard of value which is not derived from the fashions of the moment such as the demands of students and readers for relevance or the pressures to address current issues in social policy. Instead, says Handlin, they should remain loyal to more traditional conceptions of learning and craftsmanship in their work. He concedes that historians can never be entirely free of bias, but he argues eloquently that the goal of presenting "what actually happened" is a "noble cause" to which all historians should dedicate themselves.

Unfortunately, in several essays Handlin alternately attacks and condescends to the vast majority of his fellow historians who were so misguided as to have accepted employment at "collegiate institutions and advanced secondary schools." Such people generally have no conception of the historian's high calling as patient and dispassionate searcher after truth. As higher education expanded in the 1960s, we learn, "scores of universities undertook to grind out doctorates" and used their "docile students" as cheap instructors for undergraduates while supplying them with "the cachet of the Ph.D." in return for "intellectually arid" attempts at scholarship in the dissertation. Handlin, from his vast study atop the ten floors of book stacks at Harvard's Widener Library, lacks all sympathy for these benighted and useless souls.

Proceeding with his jeremiad, Handlin dismisses whole fields of historical inquiry. His own work represents truth, or a near approximation thereto, while the work of most others represents not merely error but the crudest forms of political bias and cowardice. When he names names, his villains often turn out to be no mediocrities or time-servers but honored figures such as John Higham and Winthrop Jordan. Not merely incorrect, they show "utter disregard for the evidence" and write "tortuous apologetics" which have "befogged the issue." But Handlin rarely really grapples with those he attacks. Usually he either dismisses an entire work of history in one sentence, or he demolishes one assertion or footnote and implies that the remainder of an opponent's work is equally flawed and contemptible.

In criticizing Handlin, I do not mean to say that all is perfectly well with the profession, but its real problems are not addressed in *Truth in History*. The increasing specialization of working historians has resulted in a more sophisticated understanding of long-term social changes, many specific events, and particular subgroups in American history — but our sense of the larger synthesis has crumbled. Generalizations about American character and values have been particularized to death and probably cannot be resurrected. We have no reigning paradigm at the moment, but we can reasonably expect that new ones will emerge.

Handlin's notion of truth, his sense of the historian as a man of learning whose answers may be particularly important precisely because they are not answers to the questions the general public is currently asking, is a noble ideal which we must keep before us. It is saddening to see Handlin himself too often slipping into polemics. Instead of instructing his professional colleagues, he has written insultingly of their intelligence and integrity.

Reviewed by KIRK JEFFREY, associate professor of history at Carleton College.

NEWS & NOTES

WITH THIS ISSUE I conclude my editorship of *Minnesota History*, although I will continue on as a senior editor in the MHS publications and research division. In the course of putting out fifty-two issues of the quarterly in thirteen years, I have necessarily benefited considerably from the help of many people to whom I am grateful. Leading the group, I suppose, are the numerous authors — some history professionals, others amateurs, still others somewhere in between — whose hard work both in research and writing is the lifeblood of a magazine such as *Minnesota History*. Not only were their initial efforts substantial but they also co-operated when the editor asked numerous questions, sometimes seemingly nit-picking, or requested further research, or required some rewriting.

My thanks go, too, to MHS executives who have given me a free hand in selecting and handling material and to fellow staff members who have generously assisted me through the years with the numerous processes behind publishing what we have attempted to make a quality product. Editing *Minnesota History* has, among other things, enhanced my appreciation for the excellence of the MHS staff. Fellow workers and friends were especially helpful to me, and earned my lifelong gratitude, in recent years when I underwent surgery three times and then was prostrated by the sudden, senseless death of my wife in a truck-automobile accident.

During my years at MHS I have been acutely aware of the solid work of my able predecessors as editor. I have striven to continue their high standards of scholarship while at the same time making the quarterly appealing to look at and to read. In this sometimes delicate balancing act, achieved better

in some issues than others, we have increased the number of illustrations and the use of color and have instituted such features as MHS Collections and Minnesota Profiles. My best wishes are hereby given my immediate successor, Mary Cannon, and those who follow her in the coming years.

KENNETH CARLEY

THE DAKOTA, or Sioux, Indians have inspired a very large body of writing through the years. Therefore it is probably fitting that the new and welcome *Bibliography of the Sioux*, by Jack W. Marken and Herbert T. Hoover (Metuchen, N.J., the Scarecrow Press, 1980, 388 p., \$17.50), should be the first volume published in the Native American Bibliography Series. A score or more of such bibliographies for other tribes has been promised for the 1980s decade under the general editorship of Marken, professor of English at South Dakota State University. Hoover is professor of history at the University of South Dakota.

The authors "have attempted to list all the important books and articles published through 1978" on the Sioux Indians — a total of 3,367 entries. They divided these into thirty-three topics and arranged entries alphabetically, by author, under each topic. Topic headings include Arts and Culture, Canadian Sioux, Contemporary Sioux, Forts and Military Posts, George A. Custer and His Sioux Wars (181 entries!), Indian Authors, Language, the Minnesota Sioux War (123 entries), and Wounded Knee I and II.

The compilers have provided two indexes, an authors' name index and a subject index, to aid users. They have annotated nearly half of the entries to offer descriptions and some evaluations of the major works mentioned. More evaluations would have been welcome.

Sioux writer Virginia Driving Hawk Sneeve has written an amusing preface in which she admits being "overwhelmed" by the enormity of the literature on the Sioux.

AMONG MANY local histories inspired by the nation's bicentennial is Frank Ziegler's *Ken-Å-Big: The Story of Kanabec County*, arranged and edited by Robert H. Beck (Mora, B&W Printers, 225 p.). In classic historical tradition, the handsome volume describes the geology and early background of the area, the beginnings of state government, and the early logging era, followed by a 164-page section on "Kanabec County Origins" and "Memories of Early Kanabec." Published in association with the Kanabec County Historical Society, the well-printed work abounds with photographs and maps and has both a bibliography and an index.

THE STORY OF a leading Protestant missionary in Minnesota is told interestingly by Sister Claire Lynch, O.S.B., of St. Paul's Priory in an article, "William Thurston Boutwell and the Chippewas," in the Fall, 1980, issue of *Journal of Presbyterian History*. Sister Claire traces Boutwell's career from Dartmouth College (1828), to Mackinac Island, to Leech Lake in Minnesota (where he established a mission among the Pillager Indians in 1833), to Pokegama Mission in 1838, and finally to Stillwater in 1847 for many years of service as an evangelist to both Indians and whites in the St. Croix area until his death in 1890.

RON WALRATH, director of the society's newspaper microfilming project, has written a meticulous account of the ten-year program under which these "rich mines of the

historical" are being saved. His article appears in *National Preservation Report*, 1:57-59 (December, 1979), published three times a year by the Library of Congress. Part of the article was reprinted, under the title of "Preservation of Minnesota Newspapers at the Minnesota Historical Society," in the September, 1980, issue of "Minitex Messenger," a mimeographed publication of the Minnesota Interlibrary Telecommunications Exchange.

IN A PUBLICATION entitled *Rediscovery and Restoration of Fort St. Charles* (1979, 202 p., mimeographed, \$10.00), Robert M. Tegeder of Apple Valley tells of the efforts since 1949 of the Minnesota Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus to memorialize and restore the French fort built in 1732 by Pierre Caultier de Varennes, Sieur de la Vérendrye, and his men in what is now Minnesota's Northwest Angle. The book also tells the story of La Vérendrye's explorations in the area and the role of several Catholic priests in that work. In addition, author Tegeder describes the rediscovery of the fort site in 1908 by Catholic fathers of St. Boniface, Manitoba. Various trustees and donors involved in the restoration are named. Illustrations and maps are included in the volume, a very few copies of which remain for sale by the author.

THE 1980 ISSUE of *Finnish Americana: A Journal of Finnish American History and Culture* includes an article by Timo Riipa, the annual periodical's associate editor (Michael G. Karni is editor), Finnish teaching associate at the University of Minnesota, and author of a chapter in the forthcoming Minnesota Historical Society's ethnic history project. The article, entitled "Toimittaja Lähde: The Story of a Finnish Immigrant Newspaperman, Temperance Advocate, and Minister," traces the life history of Johan Wilhelm Lähde, who lived more than thirty years in New York Mills, Minnesota.

Lähde had a varied and colorful career. As an editor, he had a hand in at least seventeen Finnish-language publications in many parts of the United States and for twenty-five years edited *Uusi Kotimaa* (New Homeland) in New York Mills. As a Finnish Lutheran minister and an advocate of temperance

in press and pulpit, he influenced the Finnish-American community; yet he was also an alcoholic who went on occasional drinking binges. Riipa has gathered together a large amount of material that has previously been scattered in Finnish-language newspapers, personal papers and reminiscences, and occasional references in books on the Finnish-American experience.

LINDA LOUNSBURY

A BOOK of impressive scope and scholarship is *Waterpower in the Century of the Steam Engine* (Charlottesville, Va., 1979, xxiv, 606 p., \$24.95), the first volume to be issued in Louis C. Hunter's projected three-part series entitled *A History of Industrial Power in the United States, 1780-1930*. Delineating with equal facility various facets of waterpower such as technology, law, management, mills, and community development, Hunter provides an integrated account that adds a new understanding of the nation's transition to an industrial economy in the nineteenth century. Among the locations receiving particular attention is the Falls of St. Anthony. "Until it was eclipsed by the far more striking conquest of Niagara Falls, whose development in the early nineties symbolized the beginnings of the hydroelectric age," the author writes, "the massive cataract in Minneapolis led the field."

Contributing to the book's usefulness are 122 illustrations, including water wheels, transmission equipment, layouts of waterpower sites, and interior and exterior views of mills.

LUCILE M. KANE

WRITER Thomas J. Abercrombie gives a flattering review of the metropolis he once called home in "A Tale of Twin Cities: Minneapolis and St. Paul" in the *National Geographic* for November, 1980. Revisiting haunts familiar from almost a generation ago and exploring new dimensions of the cities, he found that they had blossomed during years of urban stress in other parts of the nation. Indicative of the enthusiasm pervading the article is the comment of one of his local informants: "Promise me you won't go back and write another one of those stories about 'the good life' in the Twin

Cities. The whole country will be migrating here in droves."

Although Abercrombie's account of the cities' characteristics is chiefly contemporary, necessarily episodic, and relentlessly upbeat, some of the insights are intriguing. Too, a new image is added to the timeworn comparisons of the Twins through the quoted words of "disc jockey-philosopher" Garrison Keillor: "The difference between St. Paul and Minneapolis," he said, "is the difference between pumpernickel and Wonder Bread."

LUCILE M. KANE

ANYONE WORKING in the field of American Indian history is certain to come across names of men who have been commissioners of Indian affairs and, until now, had reason to bemoan the lack of information about them. This situation has been remedied in large measure with the publication of *The Commissioners of Indian Affairs, 1824-1977*, edited by Robert M. Kvasnicka and Herman J. Viola (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1979, xviii, 384 p., \$19.75). Designed as a reference tool, the book consists of short biographical essays by thirty-one scholars of the forty-three men who served as commissioner before the position was abolished in 1977.

The job of commissioner, say the editors, "was one of the most important yet anonymous in the federal bureaucracy." Many of the commissioners, the essays show, were spoilsmeat rather than specialists in Indian policy. The permanent bureaucracy under them sometimes thwarted the efforts of commissioners who had good intentions but also kept the machinery going in spite of poor leadership. There are several Minnesota references in the volume, notably in Harry Kelsey's sketch of William P. Dole (1861-65), but strangely no mention is made of the 1851 treaties of Traverse des Sioux and Mendota in Robert A. Trennert's article on commissioner Luke Lea (1850-53) who took part in those key events in Minnesota history. Roy A. Meyer of Mankato State University wrote the sketch on Ezra A. Hayt (1877-80). The volume suggests research sources for writers who might want to do more ambitious studies of various commissioners.



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