

piled biographical sketches of the major individuals mentioned in the accounts. The prologue and introductions to sections provide invaluable continuity to the many narratives, so that all the prison experiences of the 12th Iowa Infantry may be read as one.

Colonel Heg and His Boys: A Norwegian Regiment in the American Civil War, by Waldemar Ager, translated by Della Kittleson Catuna and Clarence A. Clausen. Travel and Description Series 13. Northfield, MN: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 2000. vii, 262 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, appendix, index. \$24.95 cloth.

Reviewer Stephen Engle is professor of history and director of graduate programs at Florida Atlantic University. He is the author of several books and articles on leading Civil War military figures, including *Struggle for the Heartland: The Campaigns from Fort Henry to Corinth* (2001).

Waldemar Ager's *Colonel Heg and His Boys* provides invaluable material on the role of the Norwegian Fifteenth Wisconsin Volunteer Regiment's involvement in the Civil War. It is not, however, a history of the regiment. More than half of the volume is taken up by the diary of Colonel Hans Christian Heg, detailing the role he and his regiment played in the war and the battles in which his unit was engaged. Colonel Heg and his boys fought mainly in the war's western theater, participating in the battles of Chickamauga and Stone's River. The latter portion of the volume includes short essays and incidental observations by Heg on particular battles and the Norwegian Regiment's losses. He also includes letters from other Norwegian soldiers in the 15th Wisconsin, detailing their experiences and impressions of the war.

Students of the Civil War will find this a welcome addition to the growing body of literature focusing on the ethnic dimensions of the conflict and how midwestern ethnic groups contributed to the effort to preserve the Union.

The Civil War's Last Campaign: James B. Weaver, The Greenback-Labor Party and the Politics of Race and Section, by Mark A. Lause. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001. viii, 256 pp. Illustrations, notes, appendix, index. \$33.00 cloth.

Reviewer Wallace Hettle is associate professor of history at the University of Northern Iowa. He is the author of *The Peculiar Democracy: Southern Democrats in Peace and War* (2001).

Mark Lause's book traces the 1880 presidential campaign of Iowa congressman James B. Weaver on the Greenback-Labor ticket. The title of

the book seems to portend an analysis of the ways that the issues of the Civil War era—the politics of race and section—cast their shadow over politics in the Gilded Age. In fact, this book is primarily a narrowly focused narrative of the making (and undoing) of a third party political insurgency.

Nodding to a generation of scholarship on the role of republican ideas in American radicalism, Lause portrays Weaver and the Greenback-Labor Party as drawing on the republican legacy of the American Revolution. But he goes a step further, arguing that the antebellum Republican Party had “plebian or even socialist roots” (9–10). Unfortunately, he offers little evidence to buttress this remarkable assertion, and devotes little attention to Weaver’s career prior to 1880. After tracing the origins of the Greenback movement in postbellum labor reform circles, he proceeds to the heart of the book: an account of Weaver’s 1880 campaign and the political infighting that it provoked in both the North and the South.

Lause argues that Weaver’s chief campaign plank, currency reform, raised fundamental issues about class and power. Sectionalism undermined that campaign in the South, as southern Bourbons engaged in fraud and intimidation to suppress Weaver’s candidacy. Ironically, southern outrages against democratic rights strengthened Weaver’s chief opponents in the North, the Republicans, as outrage over Bourbon aggression created a northern backlash that eroded the potential for insurgency in traditionally Republican states. Writing with a keen moral fervor, Lause also suggests that Weaver and his campaign suffered from “treachery” and “betrayal” at the hands of the two major parties (183). He argues that although the Weaver campaign garnered only 300,000 votes, it served as a forerunner to later radical movements, including the socialist campaigns of Eugene Debs.

Lause’s book is often tendentious, marred by typographical errors, and based almost entirely on newspaper accounts supplemented by secondary sources. The nearly exclusive reliance on newspapers and the virtual absence of archival research means that his book yields few new insights into Gilded Age politics. It offers little of interest on Weaver, his Iowa background, or his constituents. Further, the author’s extensive discussion of ideological bickering within the socialist press over Weaver’s third-party movement suffers as the author fails to illumine the moral and intellectual world within which those debates were shaped.

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