

not address that question, her subtle presentation and discussion of regionalism raises it, leaving readers wondering just what a non-hegemonic construction of region—perhaps some kind of a segmented realm or a coalition of diverse views—might look like. In her concern about this issue, Morrissey deals with one of the central concerns of western and other regional historians. Though dealing with the Far West, this study compels one to think more deeply about region and to ask questions that may reinvigorate the discourse on regions in general. If residents and scholars of the Middle West will take Morrissey's analysis and conclusions to heart, we may be able to reinvent our concept of region and better understand its role in our lives.

Buckeye Schoolmaster: A Chronicle of Midwestern Rural Life, 1853–1865, edited by J. Merton England. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1996. xi, 308 pp. Illustrations, map, index. \$49.95 cloth, \$24.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY TERRY A. BARNHART, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

John M. Roberts (1833–1914), a denizen of Madison County, Ohio, was an inveterate observer of the local and national scene. A schoolmaster, miller, itinerant bookseller, and farmer, he was a keen student of human nature and the events of his day. The "thick description" of daily life present in Roberts's writings will be much valued by social and cultural historians. Social customs, school life, and politics were of interest to him, and those seeking to make comparative studies of common schools and life in midwestern rural communities during the mid-nineteenth century will be rewarded by familiarizing themselves with the life, times, and thought of John M. Roberts. This chronicle ranks alongside Edward Eggleston's *Hoosier Schoolmaster* as a source of information and local color on the history of rural education in the Midwest, while Roberts's comments on social groups and politics give new testimony to how deeply seated were the social prejudices and sectional jealousies of his generation.

Roberts's orbit was in and around the communities of Summerford and London in central Ohio, but his social views on aristocrats, abolitionists, and African Americans and his political commentary on the Civil War will be of interest to historians of those subjects beyond their local context. Indeed, Roberts's commentary is notable for the breadth of its topical coverage. The American Protective Association, John Wilkes Booth, conscription during the Civil War, John C. Breckinridge, and the activities of Ohio Copperheads are but a partial sam-

pling of that topicality. His comments on the Civil War are, perhaps, historically the most compelling. A supporter of Stephen Douglas before the war, he was reviled by his enemies as a Copperhead once the struggle began. Excerpts from his wife's wartime diary for 1862 are included here, since, regrettably, Roberts's diaries for 1860-1862 are missing and perhaps no longer extant.

A brief version of what became editor J. Merton England's introduction and epilogue appeared as "A Buckeye Candide" in the June 1989 issue of *Ohio Magazine*, but the fullness of Roberts's journals and diaries are brought forward here for the first time. In doing so, England has done a great historical service. A minor caveat, however, concerns the lack of annotations and a general bibliography. Although the book is published through a university "popular press" which doubtless eliminates such trappings as a matter of editorial policy, these features would expand the context and utility of the book. General readers would benefit, for example, from explanations of problematic terms such as *butternut* (a term applied to southern sympathizers in the North and often used as a synonym for *Copperhead*) and could be directed to the principal works relating to the events chronicled in Roberts's writings. As it is, they are left to ferret out archaic usages and seek additional information on their own. Even so, this volume will long be consulted by those interested in the social fabric of the mid-western communities in which Roberts lived, worked, and wrote.

Alexander William Doniphan: Portrait of a Missouri Moderate, by Roger D. Launius. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1997. xiv, 316 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$37.50 cloth.

REVIEWED BY THOMAS BURNELL COLBERT, MARSHALLTOWN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

On August 8, 1887, Alexander William Doniphan died. The epitaph on his tombstone read: "An Orator, Jurist, Statesman, Soldier, and a Christian" (280). It might also have said "Unappreciated War Hero and Political Moderate," or so one might surmise from reading Roger Launius's biography of Doniphan.

A respected lawyer and Whig political leader, Doniphan helped organize and eventually led the First Regiment of Mounted Missouri Volunteers during the Mexican War. As a military commander, he ultimately gained fame for his role during the conquest of New Mexico and the invasion of Mexico, especially with his lopsided victories at the battles of El Brazito and Sacramento.

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