

Book Notices

Iowa's Geological Past: Three Billion Years of Change, by Wayne I. Anderson. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1998. xi, 424pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, references, index. \$49.95 cloth, \$39.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY WILLIAM M. JOHNSON, STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

With *Iowa's Geological Past*, Wayne Anderson updates his earlier text, *Geology of Iowa*, with new information and graphics. It provides students and Iowa enthusiasts with a readable explanation of Iowa's geological history.

Anderson interprets the past three billion years by examining the environment, deposits, and fossils in the separate time periods recognized in Iowa. Starting with a general overview of Iowa's geological setting, he provides a platform from which to understand the state's geological past. Beginning with the complexity of the Precambrian basement rocks, Anderson places Iowa as a part of the larger geological structure of North America and carries it through the following chapters, which construct progressive layers of the state through the marine deposits of the Paleozoic Era to the veins of Pleistocene deposits left by retreating glaciers.

Throughout the work, Anderson puts a human face on geology. He comments about scientists and amateurs who have interpreted rocks and fossils. In chapters where mineral deposits are significant, he provides information on the economic and social values associated with their production.

In the concluding chapter, Anderson reviews Iowa's economic resources and their use. Here Anderson stresses the importance of the various aquifers, explaining where the recharge waters originate and how Iowa and other populations depend on their purity and continued availability.

Anderson has included a chronological listing of geological features present in Iowa state parks and public lands. Unfortunately, in this expanded area he removed the listing provided in the earlier edition that cited an article from the *Iowa Conservationist* magazine describing many of these geological features.

Iowa's Geological Past, is a good choice for those who wish to understand Iowa history with an appreciation for the framework of our land. It is suitable for the inquisitive traveler or avid student of earth science.

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