

pulse at the heart of his work. As William Towner Morgan notes in his conclusion, "I wrote this book not only to understand and appreciate the lives of my ancestors but also to understand myself" (115). Based on the response of this reader, his attempt is a decisive success.

Dear Family: A Family Saga, through Letters, Diaries, and Personal Stories, Including Four Civil War Journals, by Marjorie Heaton Lynn. Mahomet, IL: Mayhaven Publishing, 1998. xi, 480 pp. Illustrations. \$29.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY CHERILYN A. WALLEY, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Opening the covers of *Dear Family* is much like opening a box of family papers you have inherited from your great-aunt Mary. The box is sure to contain wonderful information, but you have to patiently sift through and organize it before the best comes to light. Marjorie Heaton Lynn has collected various journals, letters, and reminiscences from the Heaton family archives and published them in book form. Unfortunately, the published collection is scarcely more accessible than that box of family papers.

The general format of the book is chronological. The volume begins with a short history of Lynn's third-great-grandfather John Heaton and his family. Lynn briefly traces the family's activities in England, and then follows their emigration to America in 1839. A short journal written by John Heaton tells of his joining the Methodist church and his subsequent life as a minister. The family finally settled in Glasgow, Iowa, in 1848. The second section contains short journals and collected letters written by Heaton men during the Civil War. The Civil War section is followed by a few short biographical notes written about various ancestors and about Lynn's great-grandfather Edward Bamford Heaton and grandfather Ernest John Heaton.

The last of the six chapters actually takes up 360 of the 480 pages of the book. Lynn's father, Foss Osmond Heaton, grew up on a farm just west of Shannon City, on the border of Union and Ringgold Counties in southwest Iowa. Lynn includes letters home from Foss Heaton's days at the academy in Indianola and at Simpson College, from which he graduated in 1908. In 1909 Foss married Lillie George, whom he had met and courted at Simpson. Lillie grew up in Dexter, Iowa, and in 1902 (at the age of 17) she began to keep a journal. The journals are printed in full and cover Lillie's life from 1902 through 1915. Also included are letters Foss and Lillie wrote during their courtship. Then, nearer the end of the book, author Marjorie Heaton Lynn includes her own journals. She began to keep a journal in 1926 at age

10 as part of a school assignment, but continued to write throughout her life. This volume concludes in 1929, when Lynn was in her mid-teens, though the last page promises a second volume full of Lynn's teenage and young adult journals.

Once you figure out how to work the book, the text is pretty interesting. Lillie's journals and her courtship letters provide an intimate portrait of her life, and Lynn's own journal offers a rare glimpse of childhood. The challenge comes in finding the parts you want to read. With no page numbers in the table of contents, without even bolded section headings to separate Lynn's journals from her mother's, it becomes easy to get lost in the pages. The book would also benefit immensely from a family relationship chart. The good news is that when you accidentally drop this box of family papers, they stay in order.

The Farmer's Benevolent Trust: Law and Agricultural Cooperation in Industrial America, 1865-1945, by Victoria Saker Woeste. Studies in Legal History. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. xviii, 369 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY PHILIP J. NELSON, UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

In the late nineteenth century, farmers often viewed the cooperative movement as a panacea. True believers in cooperation included agriculturalists as diverse as grain and livestock raisers in the Midwest and raisin producers in California, and they all trusted coops to solve their marketing problems. They usually attributed their problems to the "money power"—a supposed conspiracy of bankers, corporate grain dealers, railroads, middlemen, and commodity brokers. Historians, in turn, have tended to characterize cooperators as saintly underdogs battling villainous agribusinesses. In a welcome addition to the field, Victoria Saker Woeste challenges this one-dimensional interpretation. *The Farmer's Benevolent Trust* is based largely on a case study of what came to be known as Sun-Maid Raisin Growers, but its implications are much broader. It provides a multifaceted, richly nuanced, interdisciplinary view of the formative period of American agricultural cooperatives; a fascinating look at the interaction of agriculture, law, and the modern state; and a story of one way farmers came to terms with industrialization.

Despite achieving record profits in the case of the California raisin industry, farmers everywhere found that cooperation contained its own pitfalls, especially when played out against the background of the

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