

*The Country Railroad Station in America*, by H. Roger Grant and Charles W. Bohi. 2d ed. Sioux Falls, SD: Center for Western Studies, 1988. iv, 192 pp. Illustrations, additional reading list, index. \$19.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY JAMES BERANEK, MOUNT VERNON, IOWA

Since its original publication in 1978, *The Country Railroad Station in America* has been the definitive work on the American small-town depot. The second edition, though expanded and revised, retains the same strengths and some of the same weaknesses present in the original. [James C. Hippen pointed out the book's weaknesses in his review in the *Annals* 45 (1981), 591-93.—Ed.]

Unlike much of the other literature on railroad buildings which has focused either on ornate urban terminals or on the depots of a particular railroad or region, Grant and Bohi trace the national evolution of the small-town depot from the wildly exuberant architectural styles of mid-nineteenth century New England to the restrained and standardized station designs of the prairie and plains states in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Through contemporary and historic photographs, elevations and floor plans, the authors reveal the standardization of depot design and the subtle variations the railroads used on those standard plans (fancier trim, a hipped roof, brick instead of wood construction). Such variations were a language of hierarchy the townspeople of the time understood well, ever vigilant as they were about what their depot, the town's front door, said about their community.

Though the book is national in scope, coverage of depots in New England, the North Central states, and the Upper Midwest is strongest. For Iowa, the authors provide a wealth of information on the Milwaukee Road's depots, and good coverage of Chicago & North Western's post-1899 standard depots as well as C&NW predecessor Toledo & Northwestern. Unfortunately, the destruction or unavailability of old records permit only scattered information on the Rock Island and even less on the other Iowa lines.

With the exception of a helpful new chapter on electric inter-urban railroad depots (which includes a fine photograph of the bank-like interior of the Centerville, Iowa, waiting room), changes in the second edition are minor. Advertising blurbs promising "greatly enhanced photographs" turn out to mean reproduction improvements or changes in a total of five photographs. The text has been updated and the bibliography expanded, though the annotations and manuscript references of the first edition have been deleted, an unfortunate loss.

Two changes that would help the readers of any future editions would be, first, more variety in the contemporary photographs. While informative and serviceable, author Bohi's depot pictures are relentlessly repetitive three-quarter oblique views that become as standardized as many of the buildings they portray. Surprisingly, in a book devoted to the importance of architectural details, there is not a single photographic closeup of one piece of ornamentation. Second, the biggest help to the reader would be the addition of footnotes. It is this major omission that prevents this book, as helpful as it is to students of railroad architecture, from being fully accepted as a piece of serious scholarship.

*Pella Dutch: The Portrait of a Language and Its Use in One of Iowa's Ethnic Communities*, by Philip E. Webber. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1988. ix, 163 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$14.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY SUZANNE SINKE, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

You don't have to be Dutch, or a linguist, to enjoy Philip Webber's *Pella Dutch*. In fact this work is, in many ways, best suited for "seriously interested nonspecialists" (102). As the subtitle indicates, this is a portrait not only of the form of Dutch spoken in Pella, but also an exploration of community history and the attitudes of townspeople towards ethnicity in this, Iowa's oldest Dutch-American settlement. The book is divided into three sections which reflect this broad scope: people, culture, and language.

Philip Webber, a professor of German and teacher of Dutch at Pella's Central College, uses a series of questionnaires and interviews as the core of his linguistic research. In addition, he draws on secondary and archival material to illustrate how aspects of community history have had an impact on the language. His insights into the waning vitality of Pella Dutch are predictable, though his discussion of which persons are most likely to continue using the language is less so.

As a sociolinguistic work, *Pella Dutch* cries out for comparison with Jo Daan's *"Ik was te bissie . . .": Nederlanders en hun taal in de Verenigde Staten* (1987), a study similarly based on interviews with Dutch-Americans, though not confined to one community. Whereas Daan offers an extensive array of statistics from her research, and places the results firmly within the context of existing sociolinguistic theory, Webber keeps both the quantitative data and the theoretical discussion to a minimum. Instead, he frames the study of vocabulary, grammar, conversational style, and humor in anecdote. Further,

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