

and viability of towns and Masonic lodges, what was the impact of automobiles and better highways, of the contraction of railroad service, of consolidated high schools, and of television on the lodges? Who were the Masons as the decades passed and how did they differ from the members of other fraternal and civic organizations and from other male Iowans? What did Freemasonry do for Iowa and Iowa life? Why was there a decline in qualified and capable authors for articles in Masonic magazines and bulletins (3)? What "Mormon influences" had to be purged from Iowa Masonry and why (10)?

Perhaps out of deference to the Masonic position held by the author, this work is further marred by much that apparently slipped by the editor. The material relating to the numbers of lodge members, "demits," and "extinct" lodges found in chapters three to six could have been placed more effectively in a single table, freeing space for the inclusion of other material. In several instances, reference is made to something or a question is raised, but the point is not discussed. Then why mention it at all? Why, for example, was Parvin Lodge No. 85 forced to surrender its charter in 1860 (32), and why did Hiram Lodge surrender its charter in 1888 (5)? Inconsistencies of style relating to magazine titles and magazine article citations, numerous one-sentence paragraphs (eight on pages four and five), inappropriate capitalization (61-62), punctuation problems (6), the lack of references to cited works (1-3), and other infelicities abound. In general it reads like a poorly prepared freshman term paper.

In the foreword, the editor states that "Iowa has never had a proper Masonic history. . . . what was needed was a short, concise, well-written history of the Craft in Iowa" (vii). Unfortunately, after the publication of this book, these statements are still true.

"A Secret to Be Buried": The Diary and Life of Emily Hawley Gillespie, 1858-1888, by Judy Nolte Lensink. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989. xxvi, 445 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00 cloth, \$12.50 paper.

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"*A Secret to Be Buried*" represents a double labor of love: historically, in Emily Hawley Gillespie's effort to maintain a daily diary over a period of thirty years; and recently in Judy Nolte Lensink's fine condensation and analysis of the diary for us today. A more timid person would not have undertaken this formidable project. Lensink confronted 2,500 pages of writing concerned not with "important" historical events but with the details of everyday life. Part of the undertak-

ing was editorial: Lensink distilled the diary down to one-tenth of its original size while remaining faithful to the sense and spirit of the original. But by far the larger part of Lensink's effort was conceptual, for she had to explain (presumably to her own satisfaction as well as ours) why mundane daily entries about household work merit our notice today. Here, for example, are two complete daily entries for April and May of 1867:

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|--------------------|---|
| Wednesday April 24 | cut & sew Henry's pants, plant 24 hills potatoes & 50 hills of cabbage sell a pint of milk to Juliette Stephens she paid me \$.25 |
| Wednesday May 1st | we went to town to see Pa I bought Sarah a hat \$2.10; myself ribbon, buttons & flower \$2.00. & pay \$.65 for slates & books for children, & me a lead pencil . . . James go & stay with his Father to night,—he is very low. sent a letter to Mother. |

Although the vast majority of the diary is like this—straight-forward recountings of daily activities with no emotion—there are tantalizing outbursts, such as this entry from October 1886:

cannot walk yet, it is indeed a trial to bear. The heart sometimes is broken by trouble & its possor [*sic*] dies a martyr. I tried so hard to live through it without it being known by the outside world, suffered untold sorrow by hearing his abusive language, yet I did not dare to displease him. I have written so *many* things in my journal, but the worst is a secret to be buried when I shall cease to be. God alone knows I have prayed every night that I might have Wisdom, that I might know the right way, & do right in all my words and doings. *I can say with all my heart my conscience is clear.* (336)

We never do learn what the "secret to be buried" was.

Why is Emily Hawley Gillespie's thirty-year journal worth Lensink's trouble and ours? The excerpts above give us some clues. In this long diary of a hardworking farm wife with intellectual and economic aspirations and a contentious disposition, we have a unique glimpse into the inside of a prosperous Iowa family in the late nineteenth century. It is a partial glimpse, for we learn of Emily's grievances against her husband and others, but not theirs against her. Surely, though, it is better than none at all.

Emily Hawley Gillespie and her husband James lived and farmed near Manchester, Iowa. In her diary she describes her husband's work and her children's activities, as well as documenting her own work in great detail. The diary thus affords us a particular, daily account of the organization and work of a prosperous Iowa farm, making it of special

value to rural and women's historians in their attempt to reconstruct the work and family roles of nineteenth-century midwestern farmers. Emily Gillespie's diary shows clearly that through "women's work"—buttermaking, turkey-raising, feeding travelers, and sewing—she made a major contribution to the farm's cash income.

Another important aspect of the diary is the perspective it sheds on the private life of the Gillespie family. Although they were outwardly successful, with a large house, fine furnishings, and educational pretensions for their children, the private story reveals a deepening schism between husband and wife. The account ought to be of interest to all local historians who seek to go beyond the "official" stories of the histories of successful families.

For these two reasons alone, the publication of Emily Hawley Gillespie's diary holds significant value for rural and Iowa historians. But beyond these aims, Judy Nolte Lensink proposes a wider value, arguing that a lengthy diary such as this can—and should—be read as an autobiography. Further, she argues that the loose and episodic diary form is a distinctively female style that we need to take as seriously as the more formally constructed autobiographies (mostly male) that presently define the genre. Lensink makes a forceful and persuasive argument, but the diary itself, with its emotional sparseness and evident omissions, frequently strains one's patience. Nevertheless, Emily Hawley Gillespie holds our interest over the thirty-year span of diaries. Clearly, for her, writing the diaries was a labor of love, which, unfortunately, did not have a happy ending. Lensink's effort to bring the diary to publication is a much happier story, for her editorial contributions clearly demonstrate the multiple ways in which Emily Hawley Gillespie's lifework is of value to historians today.

Judy Nolte Lensink earned the 1990 Benjamin Shambaugh Award from the State Historical Society of Iowa. The award recognized "*A Secret to Be Buried*": *The Diary and Life of Emily Hawley Gillespie, 1858-1888* as the most important book on Iowa history published in 1989.—Ed.

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