

it because what they do with their hands feeds their minds. The things they make are fertile of ideas.

Rarely does the modern worker have the chance to make finished objects from so elemental a substance as iron or steel. The opposite is true with Reichelt's smiths. Whether they make and mount horse-shoes, fix edge tools, or sharpen plows—or make wood stoves, household implements, and sculptural shapes—these eight men and one woman have mastered the magic that made the Romans honor the smith in the figure of the forge-god Vulcan. Together, these midwestern iron-workers represent the survival (or revival) of artisanal skill—and artisanal satisfaction—in today's plastic world. Like the material with which they work, their lives as revealed in Reichelt's book seem marked by strength and integrity. All of them seem to be happier because they are doing what they love to do. That may just be the mark of a life wisely spent.

Reichelt's book gives a good deal of insight into how and why these individuals became smiths. Skilled in the craft himself, he asks intelligent questions of his subjects. The result is an especially pleasing book, modest but as elemental as iron in its own way. Reichelt is to be commended for having seen how satisfying such a series of vignettes of the modern craftsperson might prove, and for shaping that vision into such a well-made reality.

*A Record in Detail: Architectural Photographs of Jack E. Boucher*, by Jack E. Boucher. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1988. 107 pp. \$34.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY GERALD MANSHEIM, WEST BRANCH

This slim but elegant volume is a record in detail—not only the details inherent in Jack Boucher's large-format photography, but also the details of his workaday life as a photographer. Boucher is the full-time photographer for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), a position he has held for more than a quarter of a century. He has made more than half of the large-format photographs—some six thousand at the time of this publication—that HABS, through the Library of Congress, makes available to scholars and the general public copyright free. If his name is not familiar, his photographs should be, since they have appeared in numerous exhibitions and publications.

The seventy-four photographs presented here with commentary are an accompaniment to a selection of 145 photographs made into a traveling exhibition mounted by HABS and the Library of

Congress. The exhibit opened in 1987 at the National Headquarters of the American Institute of Architects, and represented a sample of the National Standards of Excellence in the field of documentary photography.

In addition to the seventy-four photographs, this volume contains a brief autobiography that is modest, personal, and explanatory almost to a fault. The preface and the two accompanying essays, as well as the captions, are written by four different associates of the photographer. These friends supply the technical details and make this volume a short treatise on the art of photographic documentation.

In the first essay, "The Art of Architectural Photography," William H. Pierson, Jr., analyzes the details of architectural photography. Pierson brings Boucher's work into focus by explaining what architectural photography is, how it is done, and how it should be done. He credits Boucher for his extraordinary accomplishments and long service at HABS. After putting Boucher into the picture, Pierson moves on to write a short history of architectural photography, from the very first photograph taken in 1826, which just happens to be a photograph of buildings, to the effects architectural photography has had on the study of architecture. Going even further back, Pierson brings in prephotographic illustrated books. He also compares architectural delineation to architectural photography, as these processes developed from one period to another. He considers the importance of the early collections of photographs belonging to American architects. And he discusses the problem of optics, that is, tall buildings fitting into the frame without looking like they are falling backward. He then moves on to late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century techniques, discussing such topics as the problems of small-format cameras and the usefulness of the versatile colored slide and the telephoto and sliding 35mm front lens. This brief analysis answers many questions commonly asked by students, and could save them hours of delving through numerous volumes. Here, as throughout the book, the sharpness of the large-format camera is the main topic. There is little sympathy for the loathsome automatic camera or laboratory processing or any other advances of the middle and late twentieth century.

The second essay, "The Historic American Buildings Survey," by William Ledovich, offers a chronological account of the effect HABS has had since it was established in 1933. It covers much of the same ground as the acknowledgment, the preface, and the first essay.

In his fifteen-page autobiography, "Life Behind the Lens," Boucher is modest without being diffident. Returning to his boyhood days in post-World War II Atlantic City, New Jersey, Boucher de-

scribes his first camera, his years of photographing and editing for the school paper, and his first job working for a photographer on the boardwalk. This, and his later work as a newspaper photographer, provided the background and productive spirit for his professional life. His awareness of the effects of changes in the environment has led him to become a preservationist. Weaving into his story a number of adventuresome anecdotes connected with his field work—often dangerous and always exciting—he makes his profession sound idyllic.

The seventy-four photographs of twenty-two outstanding American buildings are in keeping with the high standards described by the writers. The selection is a wise one, although there is no chronological or geographic progression. I do wish the publisher had included at least twice the number of Boucher's HABS photographs.

The major purpose of this volume is to honor the long service and dedication of one exceptional photographer and his contribution to the field of architectural photography. It is left to the reader to decide if Boucher's work should be acclaimed along with other great photographers. Regardless, Boucher's photographs and the HABS collection provide a record of the surviving historical structures of the middle and late twentieth century, a record that has proved its worth and has potential to be even more valuable in the future.

*Shake-Out: Iowa Farm Families in the 1980s*, by Mark Friedberger. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1989. xiv, 199 pp. Notes, tables, appendixes, index. \$22.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY JOHN OPIE, NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

In his second book on the subject, Mark Friedberger argues that family farming is a "sheltered" sector of the economy (8). This is simultaneously its short-term salvation and its long-term tragedy if the farm family remains the poor-relation "client" of the federal government that it has been for the last fifty years.

The independent farm family is an anachronism. There are fewer than a million left across the entire nation. When Thomas Jefferson wrote glowingly of the yeoman farmer as the salvation of the new nation, 90 percent of Americans lived on the land. Two hundred years later, the farm family has lost its place in American society, now heavily urbanized, with life centered around malls and media. But farm families have not lost their power; this is clearly evident from the continued heavy taxpayer support represented in the farm bills of 1985 and 1990. Even though agribusiness may skim most of the rewards of

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