

Train wrecks not only stirred a deep psychological response in viewers but also suggested that America's rapid and sweeping industrialization in the late nineteenth century had not been achieved without considerable costs. In the mid-nineteenth century, locomotives became the embodiment of speed, power, and technological progress. Yet that progress exacted a ghastly price, as thousands of Americans were injured or killed annually in railroad and industrial accidents. The popularity of harrowing newspaper accounts of accidents and stage plays about historic disasters attest to many Americans' morbid fascination with catastrophe. Connolly went the journalists and dramatists one better, offering his audience the sight and sound of two locomotives actually hurtling into one another, resulting in a mass of crumpled steel.

Reisdorff attributes the waning popularity of staged train wrecks to several causes. When Connolly staged his 73rd and final collision at the 1932 Iowa State Fair, Americans were still reeling from the "great crash," and the spectacle of gratuitous destruction seemed grotesquely wasteful in a nation in which one of four workers was unemployed. Americans' fascination with destruction had not entirely evaporated, but was now satisfied by newer technologies, such as automobile and airplane daredevils and motion pictures. In an era of rapidly advancing technology and streamlined design, mighty steam locomotives were no longer the emblem of technological progress but had become obsolete, and their final stop was the scrap heap. Yet, even at the outset of the twenty-first century, their legacy endures, and we still sigh that a needless political, social, or personal disaster is, of course, a train wreck.

Horse-Drawn Days: A Century of Farming with Horses, by Jerry Apps. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2010. xii, 199 pp. Illustrations (many in color), appendixes, notes, index. \$24.95 paper.

Reviewer Pamela Riney-Kehrberg is professor and chair of history at Iowa State University. She is the author of *Childhood on the Farm: Work, Play, and Coming of Age in the Midwest* (2005).

Jerry Apps grew up in central Wisconsin, farming with horses. In this colorful, highly illustrated book, he has brought together a wealth of information about farming before the tractor. Part one, titled "A Time for Horses," tackles a number of important issues, such as a history of horses, draft horses, and draft-horse equipment, the relation of horses to people, and the current use of draft horses. In part two, "A Horse Farming Year," he follows the use of horses throughout the agricultural calendar, detailing their use at each time of the year. He inter-

sperses his own family story with horses, as well as other oral histories, with a more general discussion of the use of draft horses in America.

Horse-Drawn Days is an engagingly written, very interesting volume, useful to anyone concerned with the rural and agricultural history of the Midwest. It is also worth picking up just to look at the beautiful illustrations, drawn largely from the collections of the Wisconsin Historical Society. Apps has chosen an intriguing selection of images, some photographs of horses at work, some advertising art featuring draft animals and implements to be used with them. Particularly interesting are full-color ads from McCormick-Deering, the Johnston Harvester Company, and International Harvester. The book is well worth a look and a read.

Barns of Wisconsin, by Jerry Apps, with photographs by Steve Apps. Places along the Way Series. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2010. xvi, 208 pp. Illustrations (most in color), map, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer James R. Shortridge is professor of geography at the University of Kansas. His many publications include *The Middle West: Its Meaning in American Culture* (1989) and "Kansas Barns in Time and Place" (*Kansas History*, 1999).

Coffee-table books that celebrate elements of the past are common fare. Most of these are beautifully designed, but lack informative commentary. *Barns of Wisconsin*, a collaboration between a professor emeritus at the University of Wisconsin and his photographer son, is a delightful exception. A reader's eye is drawn initially to more than a hundred color photographs nicely reproduced on quality, 8"x10" paper. Jerry Apps's words are arguably even more valuable. They occupy about half the book and provide historical and cultural context that brings the photographs to life.

The quality of *Barns of Wisconsin* derives in part from experience, for the book first appeared in 1977, with Jerry Apps providing captions for sketches and drawings done by Madison architect Allen Strang. The original book was modest, but successful, and inspired Apps to expand the project after Strang's death. Four of the earlier sketches reappear in the new edition (pp. 56, 73, 121, 145), but photographs now carry the visual message. Supplementing the contemporary shots by the junior Apps are several dozen historical ones drawn from the files of the Wisconsin Historical Society. Each contains a full caption, providing specific locations and insights.

The book includes twelve chapters and two appendixes. Opening essays discuss the significance of barns and their major forms (ethnic