

Pacific Coast Indian tribes' members to the hops fields, the German-Russians to sugar beet production, Mexican families to cotton farming, and Chinese and Japanese gang labor to a variety of crops. This restoration provides a more complete and nuanced picture of western labor and helps make sense of the political interactions between farmers and labor. A greater acknowledgment of the Reconstruction Era Black Codes of the South as the basis of the Tramp Laws, which had spread across the nation by the 1890s, would strengthen the argument, particularly in regard to the cotton frontier of the Southwest. By the 1920s, migrant agricultural labor was on its way to being re-racialized around an Anglo/Mexican binary; as Wyman notes, "The Rio Grande was no longer the border between the United States and Mexico — the real border was becoming racial rather than geographical" (260).

Wyman also focuses on agricultural labor as an industrial system, which highlights connections between the growth of the West in the nineteenth century and the monoculture factory farming of today. Locavores and current students of globalization may be surprised to find Washington apples in Manchester, England, and California peaches in Europe in the nineteenth century. They were, in fact, a key element in the development of the West. Finally, "because the West's new crops were now sold on both national and world markets, they were beset with sudden, sharp price swings, during growing season and between seasons. . . . In this regard fruit raising and other endeavors were no different from western mining and logging, which also had heavy start-up requirements and suffered frequent shutdowns over collapsing prices" (19). The arc of globalization is longer and more profoundly important than is often considered. Ironically, the regional nature of Wyman's study is what highlights this key element.

Hoboes were a key element of western history, and they have too often disappeared from the historical record. Wyman has helped restore to the historical record the multiethnic peoples who were key to harvesting and developing the West.

*Homer Croy: Corn Country Travel Writing, Literary Journalism, Memoir*, edited by Zachary Michael Jack. North Liberty: Tall Corn Books, 2010. 264 pp. \$24.95 paper.

Reviewer Katherine Harper is manager of foundation relations at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Her research and writing have focused on the Iowa short-story writer Ellis Parker Butler.

Homer Croy, favorite son of Maryville, Missouri, made his name writing warm, witty depictions of the American Midwest — the region he

dubbed “Corn Country.” The collection under review bundles samples of Croy’s 1910s–1950s magazine work, excerpts from his nonfiction works, and chapters from the memoirs *Country Cured* (1943) and *Wonderful Neighbor* (1945). The earliest tales bear the stamp of his friend Ellis Parker Butler, the Iowa-born humorist who first invited Croy to join the Authors League and who introduced him to the editors of the major magazines. By the early 1920s, Croy’s byline was appearing regularly in *Collier’s* and the *Saturday Evening Post*, and he had developed a distinctive style of his own. This was a writer capable of creating both the comic adventures of the culturally oblivious Peters clan (*They Had to See Paris*, 1926) and *West of the Water Tower*, a naturalistic novel of small-town sin and shame that earned its author a Pulitzer Prize in 1923. Croy’s reminiscences of rural Missouri are warm and whimsical, casual in tone but not slangy, often suggestive but never smutty. They paint a timeless picture of farming life.

Beyond one out-of-print monograph and a few articles, to date no serious examination has been made of Homer Croy’s writings. Nor has his fascinating life been documented in a full-length biography. The introduction and section headings to this book by editor Zachary Jack — a seventh-generation Iowan — are a valuable addition to what little today’s readers might know about the one-time chronicler of Corn Country.

*Murals of Iowa, 1886–2006*, by Gregg R. Narber. Des Moines: The Iowan Books, 2010. 234 pp. Illustrations, notes. \$24.95 paper.

Reviewer Breanne Robertson is a Ph.D. candidate in art history at the University of Maryland. She is the author of “‘The Cultivation of Corn in Mayan and Modern Times’: Lowell Houser’s Winning Design for the Ames Mural Competition” (*Annals of Iowa*, 2011).

As Maine politicians and cultural leaders clash over the fate of Judy Taylor’s labor-themed mural at the Augusta Department of Labor building, *Murals of Iowa, 1886–2006* offers a timely and persuasive argument for the preservation of Iowa’s endangered artistic heritage. In this foray into the history of Iowa murals, Gregg R. Narber expands the scope of his earlier research on New Deal murals to provide a comprehensive look at mural art in Iowa from the late nineteenth century to the present day. With this ambitious undertaking, he seeks to familiarize Iowa residents with their cultural heritage, thereby increasing their appreciation for and protection of these public monuments.

Narber chronicles concurrent developments in society, politics, and fine art to impart a more sympathetic attitude for public art com-