

nished by the taxpayers of Iowa—to help defend the liberty of white Kansans.

Because both sides strongly believed in liberty but had opposing conceptions of the term, violence soon resulted. Etcheson does well to recount specific incidents with supporting detail without losing sight of the broader issues involved. She also details the political side of the story, especially the multiple attempts to achieve statehood for Kansas. Because both sides believed they were fighting for their rights, each side could place its violent behavior in a moral context. Kansas quickly became a confusing, bitter, contested, violent political and military arena by 1856.

Although Kansas voters' rejection of the proslavery Lecompton Constitution made it clear that Kansas would not be a slave state, both sides continued their struggle. After 1858, the conflict began to involve not merely the rights of white Kansans but black ones, too. More free-state supporters began to attack the morality of slavery; some even went so far as liberating slaves from across the border in western Missouri and sending them through Iowa to Canada. Just as the Civil War would later evolve into a struggle over the freedom of slaves, the conflict in Kansas expanded to include blacks.

Etcheson's book is very well documented; she makes extensive use of primary sources, such as accounts, newspapers, and letters, to support her conclusions. Her interpretation of the importance of Kansas to the sectional conflict and the Civil War may not be news to most students of the era, but her explanations of the meaning of the issue are fresh and help explain why so many Americans cared about Kansas in the 1850s. This book helps to explain how the North and South were divided as well as how Kansas became a preview of the war to come.

Southern Sons, Northern Soldiers: The Civil War Letters of the Remley Brothers, 22nd Iowa Infantry, edited by Julie Holcomb, with an introduction by Steven Woodworth. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004. xxxii, 184 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$32.00 cloth.

Reviewer Patrick G. Bass is professor of history at Morningside College. He is the author of "The American Civil War and the Idea of Civil Supremacy over the Military" (*Proteus*, 2000).

Generally, educated Americans in the nineteenth century were avid writers, maintaining widespread correspondence that recorded their thoughts and experiences. Self-conscious and reflective, these Americans reacted powerfully to the stimulus of the American Civil War. This tendency is on display in *Southern Sons, Northern Soldiers*, a collec-

tion of the musings and observations of two college-educated common soldiers in their letters to their family between 1862 and 1864, as they participated in campaigns in the Mississippi Valley, Texas, and the Shenandoah Valley, and the still extant return letters from home. George and (until his death in mid-1863) Lycurgus Remley wrote home often and in great detail, providing anecdotes and description that help readers understand the campaigns they endured and provide commentary that illuminates the physical, political, and moral worlds in which they lived. The collection ends with the report of George's death in battle in Virginia in late 1864.

Steven Woodworth's concise and informative introduction to the collection provides solid direction to general readers. His summary of the campaigns (as they are relevant to the letters) is quite good, aiding understanding and enhancing reading enjoyment. Specialists in Civil War history may miss, however, more specific information on the Remley family circle and more analysis of the environs of Iowa City, Iowa, and of the western Virginia family background that would be enlightening contextually and would permit a more thorough mining of the information available in the letters.

As editor, Julie Holcomb has successfully remained unobtrusive; her textual corrections are minimal and well chosen, and her endnotes are excellent. The notes explain specific references in the letters that are not self-evident to people outside the Remley circle and define vocabulary that is no longer common. Brief chapter introductions might have been a welcome addition, providing handy reference to changing family issues and ready continuity without recourse to the endnotes.

This collection is more helpful for understanding military campaigns (especially Vicksburg) than it is in providing insight into distinctively Iowa issues. The few extant letters from home are less detailed than the letters from Lycurgus and George Remley, and the soldiers were eager to explore the war intellectually, not to discuss issues of civilian life. As recent immigrants into Iowa (from western Virginia), these correspondents also do not necessarily represent the views, attitudes, or priorities of midwesterners in general. The overall usefulness of the collection is clear, however—these are thoughtful, extensive, articulate letters, detailing the reactions of dedicated and religious men to the carnage and camaraderie of war, and providing invaluable perspectives on the many campaigns that their authors experienced.

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.