

Yountsville: The Rise and Decline of an Indiana Mill Town, by Ronald V. Morris, with contributions by J. B. Bilbrey, Jessica L. Clark, Mark D. Groover, Steven Lacey, and Colin Macleod. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020. xiv, 223 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, graphs, index. \$35.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Richard Nation is a professor of history at Eastern Michigan University where he specializes in the social and cultural history of the rural Midwest. He is the co-editor of *Indiana's War: The Civil War in Documents* (2009).

Ronald V. Morris begins *Yountsville* with the important insight that we as historians still know very little about rural industry. To begin to right that neglect, Morris examines the woolen mill at a small industrial village just west of Crawfordsville, Indiana, conducting research based primarily in local collections on the mill. The mill, which went under several names over the years despite continuous ownership by one family, the Younts, operated as an exchange mill. Farmers would bring wool to the mill and in exchange select goods produced by the mill and its ancillary operations, including tailoring, a system not unlike that which characterized smaller grist mills, in which the miller retained a portion of the grain that he or she milled. Yet, as Morris makes clear, the woolen mill had elements that we would characterize as more industrial, particularly mechanization, and I find fascinating how the mill had one foot in a more local economy and one in the broader marketplace, an insight which offers a potential contribution to the debate about capitalism in the countryside. The mill employed around thirty people at the height of its prosperity, and it sold most of its goods in the surrounding counties, although there were some sales out of state.

Morris begins and ends the book with an exploration of education and Caleb Mills, the Crawfordsville native who led school reform in Indiana; this diversion is never fully plumbed out, although its implications for apprenticeship of a sort and child labor are hinted at. A contextual chapter on the growth of industry is presented, followed by chapters focused on the production history of the mill, on the Yount family, on mill workers, and on reconstructing the landscape via archaeology. This thematic approach tends at times to lead to repetition, exacerbated perhaps by the fact that chapters are co-written with students and colleagues. The chapter on the mill workers offers the most to our understanding of these rural mills, particularly as it suggests that there was some stability in the workforce over time. The paternalism of the primary owner of the mill, Daniel Yount, may go far to explain this stability. Nevertheless, Morris never really explores this paternalism nor do he and his co-writers systematically establish that stability. Throughout the book,

analysis is absent, and the book is primarily descriptive, characterized by transcriptions of the primary sources alongside a text that describes them.

Morris's book asks a good question about rural industry, but ultimately, I find that not only is the analysis thin but that Morris has not taken full advantage of the available sources for his book, despite an innovative use of material culture. While free access to a number of Crawfordsville newspapers only became available in 2016, maybe too late for this project, there were some available through Google newspapers as early as 2011. Newspapers may have revealed efforts to bring a railroad through Yountsville in the late nineteenth century, which would have provided cheaper transportation and in turn made it possible to expand and prevent the closing of the mill circa 1907. Likewise, I was surprised to find no use of the U.S. Census Bureau's Censuses of Manufacturing from 1850 to 1880, which could have illuminated aspects of the early period of the mill.

The important lesson that *Yountsville* brings for scholars of Iowa and the Midwest is that we need to explore rural industry more. Morris' work is a starting point, but subsequent work needs to be more thorough and more analytical. For lay readers of history, I don't believe this volume will have much appeal beyond the confines of western Indiana.

Scandal on Plum Island: A Commander Becomes the Accused, by Marian E. Lindberg. New York: East End Press, 2020. 416 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$17.95 paperback.

Reviewer Suzanna Krivulskaya is assistant professor of history at California State University San Marcos. She studies the relationship between sexuality and religion in modern U.S. history. Her current project is tentatively titled *Disgraced: How Sex Scandals Transformed American Protestantism*.

All students of the history of sexuality inevitably run into a problem: how to interpret today the sexual dispositions and behaviors of eras past—eras which did not contain the categories of sexuality we now employ. When this methodological issue arises, it may be comforting to remember that the problem of appropriate categorization extends much farther than our own relatively recent realization that sexuality itself has a history. The past, too, contains a traceable archive of sexuality's illegibility. Marin E. Lindberg's excellent new book *Scandal on Plum Island: A Commander Becomes the Accused* spotlights a case of what we might today label a queer sex scandal. At the time, though, the strange ordeal eluded the categories available to either the accusers or the accused.

In 1913, Major Benjamin Koehler, who grew up in Le Mars, Iowa, was forced to publicly reckon with the question of the boundaries of