

The Arc of Iowa History

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The Stuff of Iowa History: 1857–1907

It's hard to miss the bumptious tone inscribed in the 1857 law creating the State Historical Society of Iowa. Charged with collecting all manner of materials "illustrative" of the state's past, the society's driving goal would be to rescue from oblivion the memory of its early pioneers; to obtain and preserve varieties of their exploits, perils and hardy adventures; to secure fact and statements relative to the history, genius and progress or decay of our Indian tribes; to exhibit faithfully the antiquities, past and present resources of Iowa.¹

The society also was authorized to undertake a publishing program, a function that began in 1863 with the appearance of the first volume of the *Annals of Iowa*, published in Iowa City. In the early years, the content was largely supplied by prominent men who penned their own memoirs or their recollections of pioneers and pioneer life; many sketches of settlement and county, township, and town formation; the establishment of churches, schools, and other community institutions; descriptions of Indian mounds and Native American chieftains; numerous accounts of Iowans' participation in the Civil War (which were still current events then); biographical sketches of other prominent men; notes on Iowa's natural resources; and in one case, a

1. As quoted in S[amuel] S[torr] Howe, "Introductory Article," *Annals of Iowa* First Series, 1863 (1863), 3.

surprising article on wage-earning working women in Iowa written by Jennie McCowen, M.D.²

In his delightful critique of the *Annals* through its first two incarnations, historian Joseph Frazier Wall profiled the members of the society's first board of curators, whom he called the "true pioneer historians" of Iowa.³ He found that "most of them had been born in either upper New York State or in New England," and had come to Iowa at a young age. Most of them also "had received some formal higher education . . . and were well grounded in classical learning." Thus, while Iowa was still frontier territory, "where most of the population were barely literate, they were able quickly to rise to prominence not only in their chosen professions [predominantly law, medicine, and the clergy], but in community service." Politically, they were conservative, and "nearly all were active in the formation of the Republican party in Iowa in 1856." A combination of political and community involvement propelled many of them to seek office at the local, state, and even national level. "They belonged," Wall concluded, "to the elite of the open prairie, and they created an elitist society."⁴

The notion runs deep that we do not need to study history formally in order to write history, and this was certainly true of the elite "pioneer historians" who produced state and local history for a narrow audience of the same class. There is no companion notion, however, about the role of the public in shaping the content of written history. If anything, there is a prevailing assumption that history is produced and delivered from the top down, and that the public's role is one of passive consumer. But the term "consumer" implies choice, at least in a market-driven economy, which imbues the "public," however defined, with some level of agency. The question then becomes how to determine the element of

2. Jennie McCowen, "Women in Iowa," *Annals of Iowa*, Second Series, 3 (1884), 97-113.

3. Two series of the *Annals of Iowa* preceded the current run (Third Series), which began in 1893: the first series ran from 1863 to 1875, the second from 1882 to 1884. In the footnotes that follow, the designation "Third Series" has been omitted from articles published in the *Annals* from 1893 to the present.

4. Joseph Frazier Wall, "The Pioneer Historians of Iowa," *Annals of Iowa* 47 (1984), 238.

public agency in shaping the content of history, or, in this case, how to account for the role of the public in the history of Iowa history. This is a tricky undertaking because the “public” is a slippery concept, but it is one that publishers necessarily grapple with every day. Publishers, in a manner of speaking, act as mediators between the producers and the consumers of history. In this essay, in an effort to capture some of the dynamic interplay between creator and audience in the arc of Iowa history, I will focus not so much on the writers of Iowa history as on the publication of Iowa history.

To return to the *Annals of Iowa*, its production was largely a volunteer effort, and lacking adequate state support the journal foundered in 1875. After a three-volume revival between 1882 and 1884, the society replaced the *Annals* in 1885 with a new publication, the *Iowa Historical Record*, “for the purpose of preserving scraps of history of great value.”⁵ “Scraps of history” adequately characterizes the content, which contained nothing as ambitious as a county history; if anything, the *Record* was more miscellaneous than the *Annals*. Its run ended in 1902, nine years after Charles Aldrich began to re-publish the *Annals*, this time in Des Moines. As curator of the new Historical Department under the State Library of Iowa, Aldrich held an appointment in an official state agency, which provided more stability than the State Historical Society enjoyed in Iowa City.⁶ Under his editorship, from 1893 to 1908, the *Annals* continued as a miscellany. But he also brought a statewide perspective, including articles about state laws, legal cases, institutions, and fiscal conditions and a more learned approach to Iowa’s geological history as well as its prehistoric past.

While Aldrich was reestablishing the *Annals*, the State Historical Society inaugurated a book-publishing program. The first three works, appearing in 1893 and 1894, prefigured the academic turn the society would soon take.⁷ After completing his

5. J[osiah] L. Pickard, “Introductory,” *Iowa Historical Record* 1 (1885), 1–2.

6. Charles Aldrich, “A Preliminary Note” and “Origins of the Historical Department,” *Annals of Iowa* 1 (1893), 53–59. See also Jerome Thompson, “Charles Aldrich,” in *The Biographical Dictionary of Iowa*, eds. David Hudson, Marvin Bergman, and Loren Horton (Iowa City, 2008), 7–8.

7. Benjamin F. Shambaugh, *Iowa City: A Contribution to the Early History of Iowa* (Iowa City, 1893); Barthinius L. Wick, *The Amish Mennonites: A Sketch of Their Origin, and of Their Settlement in Iowa, with Their Creed in an Appendix* (Iowa City,

doctorate, Benjamin Shambaugh—the author of one of these initial publications and the editor of one of the others—joined the University of Iowa faculty in 1896 and also became a member of the State Historical Society’s board of curators. These two affiliations anchored his career, and he immediately set on a course of aligning the society with the university.

During the next decade, Shambaugh used the society as a vehicle for publishing collections of important documents and public records pertaining to Iowa’s early history, including the messages and proclamations of Iowa governors, the debates of the constitutional conventions, and the executive journal of Iowa’s first territorial governor. Between 1897 and 1906, he edited fourteen more volumes of documentary material, which at the time was considered the best method of preserving valuable records.⁸ After the *Record* folded, Shambaugh began editing yet another history journal, the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*. The first volume, which appeared in 1903, set it clearly apart from its predecessor as well as the *Annals*. A sampling of the contents—“Joliet and Marquette in Iowa,” “The Political Value of State Constitutional History,” “Historico-Anthropological Possibilities in Iowa,” “State History in the Public High Schools,” “Congressional Districting in Iowa,” “Problems in the Administration of Iowa,” and “The Development of Party Organization in Iowa”—left no doubt that the new journal would be more academic and would present a mix of Iowa history, prehistory, and the emerging academic discipline of political science.⁹ The next few issues added sociology and ethnohistory to the mix.¹⁰ However, this expansion was short-lived, a

1894); Benjamin F. Shambaugh, ed., *Constitutions and Records of the Claim Association of Johnson County, Iowa* (Iowa City, 1894).

8. *First Census of the Original Counties of Dubuque and Des Moines* (Iowa City, 1897); *Documentary Material Relating to the History of Iowa*, 3 vols. (Iowa City, 1897–1901); *Fragments of Debates of the Iowa Constitutional Conventions of 1844 and 1846* (Iowa City, 1900); *Constitution of the State of Iowa with an Historical Introduction* (Iowa City, 1902); *Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa*, 7 vols. (Iowa City, 1903–05); *Executive Journal of Iowa, 1838–1841* (Iowa City, 1906).

9. *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* 1, nos. 1–4 (1903) [Hereafter *IJHP*].

10. See, for instance, John J. Louis, “Shelby County—A Sociological Study,” *IJHP* 2 (1904), 83–101 and *IJHP* 2 (1904), 218–55; George T. Flom, “The Coming of the Norwegians to Iowa,” *IJHP* 3 (1905), 347–83; George T. Flom, “The Early

retreat that might be explained by a lengthy discourse on “The Scope of Iowa History” in which historian Louis Pelzer argued that “Iowa history—as the history of Iowa or the subjective aspect of the subject—is concurrent in its beginning with the inception of Iowa as a body politic.” Further, he set the date precisely at 1833, “the common date for the opening of Iowa” to Euro-American settlement.¹¹

As the State Historical Society’s focus gradually shifted toward political and institutional history, gathering local history became the province of new organizations. The Lucas County Historical Society, organized in June 1901, claimed to be the first county historical society in Iowa, but others soon followed: Linn and Madison counties in 1904, Poweshiek in 1905, and Webster and Boone in 1906.¹² Commercial publishers also saw a local market for the packaged past. These publishers financed historical atlases and county histories by soliciting subscriptions from businesses and wealthier residents, whose biographies, in turn, appeared in the back pages, sometimes with photographs. Content was largely gleaned from the pages of newspapers and census data, but these volumes also were illustrated with bird’s-eye maps of towns and cities, township plat maps, and etchings of public buildings, farms, and homes of the well-to-do. Entrepreneur Alfred T. Andreas was perhaps the most ambitious publisher of historical atlases and, later, county histories. Atlases for Des Moines, Lee, and Louisa counties in 1873 and 1874 preceded his best-known Iowa publication, the monumental *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa*, published in 1875 and containing histories of all ninety-nine counties.¹³ Andreas was only one of several

Swedish Immigration to Iowa,” *IJHP* 3 (1905), 583–615; Duren J. H. Ward, “The Meskwaki People of Today,” *IJHP* 4 (1906), 190–219.

11. Louis Pelzer, “The Scope of Iowa History,” *IJHP* 8 (1910), 469–70.

12. Warren S. Dungan, “County Historical Societies,” *Annals of Iowa* 6 (1903), 55; “County Historical Societies,” *Annals of Iowa* 5 (1901), 230–31; “The Poweshiek County Historical Society,” *IJHP* 4 (1906), 155; “Linn County Historical Society,” *IJHP* 4 (1906), 309; “Historical Societies,” *IJHP* 4 (1906), 456; “Historical Society of Webster County, Iowa,” *IJHP* 4 (1906), 617, 620.

13. *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Des Moines County, Iowa* (Chicago, 1873); *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Lee County, Iowa* (Chicago, 1874); *Illustrated Historical Atlas of Louisa County, Iowa* (Chicago, 1874); *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of*

publishers working this genre, but his great achievement, observed historian Michael Conzen, was that he “seized upon the transition from county maps to atlases and created an atlas format designed to appeal to the broadest possible range of people.”¹⁴ Produced in comparative abundance during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, historical atlases and county histories intentionally burnished the past. Even so, they are still useful reference works for many aspects of local history, particularly the development of local commerce and community institutions.

The State Historical Society’s Publishing Program: 1907–1940

The year 1907 marked a turning point in the production of Iowa history. That year, the board of curators reorganized the State Historical Society’s administration by creating the Office of Superintendent and Editor and electing Benjamin Shambaugh to serve in this position. He would hold this office until his death in 1940. During that time, he directed one of the most ambitious state historical societies in the United States and introduced the concept of applied history. The evolution of that concept can be traced, in part, through the multifaceted publications program he oversaw.

Change, however, did not come immediately. In addition to his other responsibilities, Shambaugh worked with Charles Aldrich to develop legislative support for an addition to the new historical building in Des Moines, which was to serve as an archive for the state’s public records. That effort fell through in 1907, and Aldrich died the next year. Shambaugh succeeded Aldrich as curator of the Historical Department, accepting the post only with the understanding that he would retain his professorship and the Office of Superintendent and Editor in Iowa City. As a mark of his ambitions for both the society in Iowa City and the department in Des Moines, he spent considerable time and energy in 1908 and 1909 advancing a plan for a legislative reference bureau. For a

Iowa (Chicago, 1875, rpt. 1970 by SHSI). In the 1970 reprint, William J. Petersen, director of the State Historical Society at the time, noted that the 1875 volume had “been consulted more frequently than any other book in the rich collection of almost 100,000 volumes in the State Historical Society of Iowa Library.”

14. Michael P. Conzen, “Maps for the Masses: Alfred T. Andreas and the Midwestern County Map Trade,” *Chicago History* 13 (1984), 46–63 (quotation 63).

time, it looked as though this effort might succeed, but it, too, failed, a defeat that strengthened Shambaugh's distaste for politics and led him to resign as curator of the Historical Department.¹⁵ While all this was going on, Shambaugh oversaw the publication of five biographies between 1907 and 1909; the subjects all were men most of whom were linked to Iowa's early history.¹⁶ The State Historical Society also published the first monograph written by a woman: *Amana, The Community of True Inspiration* by Bertha Horack Shambaugh (Benjamin's wife).¹⁷

Shambaugh did not dwell on the lack of political support for a legislative reference bureau, but he was not finished with the concept. He turned his attention to developing what would become known as the Iowa School of Research Historians based at the State Historical Society's offices at the University of Iowa. The stated purpose was "to make practical application of investigations in State and local history in the solution of present-day political, social, and economic problems."¹⁸ Between 1910 and the mid-1920s, more than fifty men and women held paid positions on the research staff, many of them graduate students at the university, some of them professors at various other midwestern colleges and universities. During this time, the school produced an impressive body of work directly related to state and municipal governance. A good bit of researchers' work filled the pages of the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, but they also produced many book-length treatises. The first appeared in 1910—*History of Labor Legislation in Iowa*—quickly followed by a two-volume

15. For the complete story of this episode in Shambaugh's career, see Chapter 3, "The Politics of Public Institutions," 55–76, of Rebecca Conard, *Benjamin Shambaugh and the Intellectual Foundations of Public History* (Iowa City, 2002).

16. Charles Noble Gregory, *Samuel Freeman Miller* (Iowa City, 1907); John C. Parish, *Robert Lucas* (Iowa City, 1907); Louis Pelzer, *Augustus Caesar Dodge* (Iowa City, 1908); Harvey Reid, *Thomas Cox* (Iowa City, 1909); John C. Parish, *John Chambers* (Iowa City, 1909).

17. Bertha M. H. Shambaugh, *Amana, The Community of True Inspiration* (Iowa City, 1908); Mary Bennett, "Bertha Maude Horack Shambaugh," in *The Biographical Dictionary of Iowa*, 452–53.

18. Benjamin F. Shambaugh, "The Iowa School of Research Historians," *Proceedings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association for 1910–1911* (Cedar Rapids, 1912), 152.

history of taxation, a history of road legislation, and a history of work accident indemnity.¹⁹ Throughout the 1910s and into the 1920s, other volumes addressed the history of economic and social legislation, banking, legislation to relieve poverty, child labor legislation, education, senatorial elections, third party movements, special charter cities, township government, the legal and political status of women, and the production of beef cattle.²⁰

In 1912, the first volume of the Applied History Series appeared, a series that epitomized Shambaugh's hopes for the Iowa School of Research Historians. "Applied history" was a term he coined to signify the melding of history, political science, economics, and sociology for the purpose of making "a direct contribution to the public welfare."²¹ The series totaled six thick volumes published between 1912 and 1930, and each contained several lengthy policy studies on a variety of subjects related to municipal, county and state government. Some of the chapters were abridged versions of book-length works, such as those on road legislation, work accident indemnity, and child labor legislation. Others treated new subjects such as urban utilities, home rule, primary elections, and the merit system. The last three volumes were outgrowths of the Commonwealth Conferences, a series of conferences Shambaugh organized in the 1920s that brought state legislators, community leaders, and learned men and women together to discuss matters of civic importance. The

19. E. H. Downey, *History of Labor Legislation in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1910); John E. Brindley, *History of Taxation in Iowa*, 2 vols. (Iowa City, 1911); John E. Brindley, *History of Road Legislation in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1912); E. H. Downey, *History of Work Accident Indemnity in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1912)

20. Dan E. Clark, *History of Senatorial Elections in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1912); John L. Gillin, *History of Poor Relief Legislation in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1914); Fred E. Haynes, *Child Labor Legislation in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1914); O. K. Patton, *Removal of Public Officials in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1914); Clarence Aurner, *History of Township Government in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1914); Clarence Aurner, *History of Education in Iowa*, 5 vols. (Iowa City, 1914–20); John E. Briggs, *History of Social Legislation in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1915); Fred E. Haynes, *History of Third Party Movements since the Civil War, with Special Reference to Iowa* (Iowa City, 1916); Ivan L. Pollock, *History of Economic Legislation in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1918); Ruth Gallaher, *Legal and Political Status of Women in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1918); Howard H. Preston, *History of Banking in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1922); George F. Robeson, *Governments of Special Charter Cities in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1923).

21. "Editor's Introduction," *Applied History* 1 (1912), xiii.

thinking seems to have been that condensed treatments of weighty subjects would make it easier for lawmakers and their constituents to digest myriad aspects of policymaking, and because Shambaugh provided every state legislator with a copy, they may have had some practical effect. At the very least, Shambaugh was able to leverage higher appropriations from the legislature by supplying its members with these publications.

Although policy history became the major focus of the historical society's publishing program, Shambaugh did not abandon topics of broader interest. Biographies continued to appear regularly, and a number of works were devoted to Euro-American immigrants as well as Quakers and Mormons.²² As World War I approached, the society published a monthly pamphlet under the title of *Iowa and the War*, which for two years featured sketches of home front activities. A number of books on frontier military history also appeared during the war, presumably appealing to a heightened interest in military matters.²³ The society also began documenting home front activities, as did many state historical societies. Following the war, the society turned this material into the Iowa Chronicles of the World War Series, which covered welfare campaigns, welfare work, Red Cross operations and the Food Administration in Iowa, and the sale of war bonds, creating a remarkable record of Iowa's nonmilitary contributions to the war effort.²⁴

22. Biographies included John C. Parish, *George Wallace Jones* (Iowa City, 1912); Brigham Johnson, *James Harlan* (Iowa City, 1913); Dan E. Clark, *Samuel Jordan Kirkwood* (Iowa City, 1917); John E. Briggs, *William Peters Hepburn* (Iowa City, 1919); and Fred Emory Haynes, *James Baird Weaver* (Iowa City, 1919). Ethnographic works included Jacob Van der Zee, *The Hollanders of Iowa* (Iowa City, 1912); Jacob Van der Zee, *The Mormon Trails in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1914); Louis T. Jones, *The Quakers of Iowa* (Iowa City, 1914); and Jacob Van der Zee, *The British in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1922).

23. Louis Pelzer, *Marches of the Dragoons in the Mississippi Valley* (Iowa City, 1917); Marcus Lee Hansen, *Old Fort Snelling, 1819–1858* (Iowa City, 1918); Thomas Teakle, *Spirit Lake Massacre* (Iowa City, 1918); Jacob Van der Zee, *The Black Hawk War* (Iowa City, 1918).

24. Marcus L. Hansen, *Welfare Campaigns in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1920); Marcus L. Hansen, *Welfare Work in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1921); Earl Fullbrook, *The Red Cross in Iowa*, 2 vols. (Iowa City, 1922); Ivan L. Pollock, *The Food Administration in Iowa*, 2 vols. (Iowa City, 1923); Nathaniel Whitney, *The Sale of War Bonds in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1923). John H. Taber, *The Story of the 168th Infantry*, 2 vols. (Iowa City, 1925) and Jacob A. Swisher, *The American Legion in Iowa, 1919–1929* (Iowa City, 1929)

The *Iowa and the War* pamphlet series drew widespread notice across the state, which convinced Shambaugh that there was an audience for popular history. As a result, the *Palimpsest*, a popular history magazine, debuted in 1920. The inaugural issue, very tightly constructed, encapsulates ideas that society staff must have exhaustively debated. Shambaugh himself contributed only a short piece setting forth "The Vision," where he called upon readers to imagine the "history of Iowa as a splendid drama enacted on a giant stage" by "real men and women." Editor John C. Parish wrote the next three pieces: an eloquent essay explaining the meaning of "palimpsest," an article demonstrating the accessible writing style that readers could expect, and a final piece explaining how history differs from journalism and art and suggesting that *Palimpsest* articles would combine the accuracy of factual evidence with the immediacy of journalism and the essential truth that art often captures.

The State Historical Society forged a new path with the *Palimpsest*. It was one of the first state historical societies to publish a popular history magazine, and the society's research staff, who supplied much of the content, demonstrated considerable literary talent. The *Palimpsest* had none of the miscellany of the *Annals*—no obituaries, no bits of information that straddled the line between historical notes and current events, no diary excerpts, no published speeches. Under the editorship of John C. Parish (1920–22), John Ely Briggs (1922–45), and Ruth Gallaher (1945–48), the *Palimpsest*, published monthly, delivered a steady stream of narrative history in a style that still seems modern, if at times a bit didactic. Typically, each issue contained two or three articles of thematic or related content followed by an editor's comment that tied the threads together.²⁵ Actually, the society used the *Palimpsest* to support Iowa History Week, one of the precursors of today's National History Day educational program. Between 1926 and 1938, the society and the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs cosponsored and promoted a week of Iowa history activities in

could be grouped with the Iowa Chronicles of the World War, but both dealt with military history and were thus outside the scope of this series as it was presented.
25. *Palimpsest*, 1–9 (1920–29), passim.

schools during April. To help teachers prepare, the January, February, or March issue of the *Palimpsest* carried material on the Iowa History Week topic for that particular year.²⁶ In the bigger picture, the *Palimpsest* was the cornerstone of several public outreach initiatives that the society undertook after World War I, which included radio programs, bulletins of historical items distributed monthly to newspapers, and even a silent film. All the while, the society continued to produce a steady stream of books.²⁷

There is some irony in the fact that Shambaugh, who was at the forefront of professionalizing state historical societies, would become, as Alan Schroder pointed out, a popularizer of history.²⁸ In the larger picture, however, he was among a handful of scholars and practitioners who genuinely believed that lay readers were a worthy audience.²⁹ Unfortunately, budget cuts during the Great Depression forced Shambaugh to trim the society's outreach activities, but he kept the publications program going as best he could. The Applied History Series ended in 1930, although between 1929 and 1934, research associates compiled four volumes summarizing the legislative records of the 43rd, 44th, and 45th general assemblies and produced monographs on a number of political and institutional topics that in an earlier time might have been more fully developed for this series.³⁰ Five more biographies

26. Alan M. Schroder, *History, Analysis and Recommendations Concerning the Public Programs of the Iowa State Historical Department, Division of the State Historical Society* (Iowa City, 1981), 78–80, 102–04.

27. Books published in the 1920s include Howard H. Preston, *History of Banking in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1922); Henry H. Wright, *A History of the Sixth Iowa Infantry* (Iowa City, 1923); Bruce E. Mahan, *State and Local History in the High School* (Iowa City, 1924); Bruce E. Mahan, *Old Fort Crawford and the Frontier* (Iowa City, 1926); John A. Hopkins, Jr., *Economic History of the Production of Beef Cattle in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1928); Thomas Huston Macbride, *In Cabins and Sod-houses* (Iowa City, 1928).

28. Alan M. Schroder, "A History of Iowa Histories," *Annals of Iowa* 46 (1982), 451–52.

29. The most notable example of this is *A History of American Life*, the thirteen-volume series edited by Arthur M. Schlesinger Sr. and Dixon Ryan Fox and published by Macmillan between 1927 and 1948. Many scholars disdained the editors' social-history approach to presenting the panoply of American history, but the series was very well received by the general public.

30. Jacob A. Swisher, *The Legislation of the Forty-third General Assembly of Iowa* (Iowa City, 1929); Jacob A. Swisher, *The Legislation of the Forty-fourth General Assembly of Iowa* (Iowa City, 1932); Jacob A. Swisher and Ruth Gallaher, *The*

appeared, but on the whole they were not up to the quality of earlier works.³¹ When, in 1932, Amana set aside its communal organization and established a profit-sharing corporation to encourage younger generations to remain, Bertha Shambaugh updated her earlier work to capture this monumental change in Iowa's best-known intentional community.³² In addition to Irving Richman's popular general history of Iowa, *Ioway to Iowa*, an assortment of titles rounded out the decade, including two books by Shambaugh himself.³³ Additionally, Shambaugh and his research staff assisted the Federal Writers' Project in producing *Iowa: A Guide to the Hawkeye State*.³⁴

Shambaugh's last contribution to the society's publishing program was the Iowa Centennial History Series. The first three works—another general history of Iowa, a two-volume work on the state's pioneer foundations, and a book on early mills—appeared in 1940, the year Shambaugh died. Only one more volume was published, Roscoe Lokken's *Iowa Public Land Disposal*, a

Legislation of the Forty-fifth General Assembly of Iowa (Regular Session) (Iowa City, 1933); Jacob A. Swisher, *The Legislation of the Forty-fifth General Assembly of Iowa (Extra Session)* (Iowa City, 1934); Herbert Clare Cook, *The Administrative Functions of the Department of Public Instruction in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1929); Ethan P. Allen, *Invalidation of Municipal Ordinances by the Supreme Court of Iowa* (Iowa City, 1933); Francis O. Wilcox, *Some Aspects of the Financial Administration of Johnson County, Iowa* (Iowa City, 1934).

31. Cyrenus Cole, *I Remember, I Remember* (Iowa City, 1936); Charles E. Payne, *Josiah Bushnell Grinnell* (Iowa City, 1938); Cyrenus Cole, *I Am a Man—The Indian Black Hawk* (Iowa City, 1938); Jack T. Johnson, *Peter Anthony Dey: Integrity in Public Service* (Iowa City, 1939); Jacob A. Swisher, *Robert Gordon Cousins* (Iowa City, 1939). The historical society also republished Black Hawk's autobiography as recorded by Antoine LeClaire, *Life of Black Hawk, Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak* (Iowa City, 1932).

32. Bertha Horack Shambaugh, *Amana That Was and Amana That Is* (Iowa City, 1932).

33. Benjamin Shambaugh, *The Constitutions of Iowa* (Iowa City, 1934), a revised and expanded edition of his 1902 book; Jacob A. Swisher, *The Iowa Department of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Iowa City, 1936); Melvin Gingerich, *The Mennonites in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1939); Benjamin Shambaugh, *The Old Stone Capitol Remembers* (Iowa City, 1939).

34. *Iowa: A Guide to the Hawkeye State*, compiled and written by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration for the State of Iowa (Iowa City, 1938).

tantalizing hint suggesting how much more Shambaugh had in mind to mark Iowa's centennial in 1946.³⁵

The University Presses: 1950s–2000

The decline in output from the State Historical Society created an opportunity for other publishers, which Iowa State University Press began to test in the 1950s. The press traced its roots to a small in-house operation, Collegiate Press, established in 1924 to publish student-produced serials, such as *Iowa Homemaker*. Iowa State was among the first public universities in the upper Midwest to establish a publishing arm, preceded only by the University of Illinois in 1918. They were joined by the University of Minnesota Press in 1925, Michigan in 1930, and Wisconsin in 1936. Gradually, Collegiate Press added book publishing, and the name changed to Iowa State College Press in 1946, then to Iowa State University Press in 1959. It essentially stopped publishing as a university press in 2000, but during its long run it developed internationally recognized strengths in agriculture, veterinary medicine, journalism, and aviation.³⁶ During the 1970s and 1980s, in particular, Iowa State was a major publisher of agricultural history, attracting many of the nation's top scholars. The press also excelled at publishing Iowa history.

Not surprisingly, the press gravitated toward agricultural history with its first Iowa-focused titles. During the 1950s, it released two scholarly books, one on farmer organizations and the other on the land-grant idea of access to a practical as well as a classical education as it had developed at Iowa State.³⁷ Two other

35. Cyrenus Cole, *Iowa Through the Years* (Iowa City, 1940); George F. Parker, *Iowa Pioneer Foundations*, 2 vols. (Iowa City, 1940); Jacob Swisher, *Iowa: Land of Many Mills* (Iowa City, 1940); Roscoe L. Lokken, *Iowa Public Land Disposal* (Iowa City, 1942).

36. Content Note for Iowa State University Press, RS 19/1/1, Special Collections, Iowa State University, Ames, IA. In 2003, Blackwell Science completed its acquisition of ISUP; see timeline for Blackwell Publishing, 1897–2006, in Mary H. Munroe, *The Academic Publishing Industry: A Story of Merger and Acquisition*, digital publication, <https://www.ulib.niu.edu/publishers/index.htm>.

37. George Max Beal, Joe M. Bohlen, and Everett M. Rogers, *Farmer Organizations in Iowa* (Ames, 1956); Earle Dudley Ross, *The Land-Grant Idea at Iowa State College: A Centennial Trial Balance, 1858–1958* (Ames, 1958).

books were reminiscences of farm life clearly aimed at a popular audience.³⁸ The number of Iowa history titles doubled in the 1960s, but the focus remained primarily on agricultural history, which accounted for five of eight books published in this decade. Two of them contributed to the press's growing national reputation in this field: Robert Swierenga's study of land speculation in the nineteenth century, and the first of a two-volume biography of Henry A. Wallace by Edward and Frederick Schapsmeier.³⁹ The other three titles signaled a branching out of sorts, although only Louise Noun's *Strong-Minded Women: The Emergence of the Woman-Suffrage Movement in Iowa* (1969), a history of feminism in Iowa, represented a true leap toward a new audience.⁴⁰

Although the Iowa Heritage Collection, also known as the Iowa Heritage Series, would not become a long series, Noun's book indicated that the press was making a serious commitment to publishing Iowa history. During the 1970s, more than twenty new titles appeared, and while several of them were scholarly agricultural history books or popular treatments of farm life, the topics covered a broader spectrum of Iowa's past.⁴¹ Three new

38. Hugh Orchard, *Old Orchard Farm: The Story of an Iowa Boyhood* (Ames, 1952, 1988; Iowa City, 2010); Herbert Ellery Wilkinson, *Sun Over Cerro Gordo: Vivid Memories of an Iowa Farm* (Ames, 1952).

39. Ralph K. Bliss, *History of Cooperative Agriculture and Home Economics Extension in Iowa—The First Fifty Years* (Ames, 1960); George Brandsberg, *The Two Sides in NFO's Battle* (Ames, 1962); Martin L. Mosher, *Early Iowa Corn Yield Tests and Related Later Programs* (Ames, 1962); Edward L. Schapsmeier and Frederick H. Schapsmeier, *Henry A. Wallace of Iowa: The Agrarian Years, 1910–1940* (1968); Robert Swierenga, *Pioneers and Profits: Land Speculation on the Iowa Frontier* (Ames, 1968).

40. Barbara Schneider Yambura, *A Change and a Parting: My Story of Amana* (Ames, 1960, 1986); Marshall McKusick, *Men of Ancient Iowa, as Revealed by Archaeological Discoveries* (Ames, 1964).

41. Scholarly titles included Edward L. Schapsmeier and Frederick H. Schapsmeier, *Prophet in Politics: Henry A. Wallace and the War Years, 1940–1965* (Ames, 1970); Seddie Cogswell, Jr., *Tenure, Nativity, and Age as Factors in Iowa Agriculture, 1850–1880* (Ames, 1975); James Wright Whitaker, *Feedlot Empire: Beef Cattle Feeding in Illinois and Iowa, 1840–1900* (Ames, 1975). Iowa farm and rural life titles included Henry C. Taylor, *Tarpolewick: A Century of Iowa Farming* (Ames, 1970); Cora Frear Hawkins, *Buggies, Blizzards, and Babies* (Ames, 1971); Carl Hamilton, *In No Time at All* (Ames, 1974), which became one of ISUP's top 20 bestsellers; H. Roger Grant and L. Edward Purcell, eds., *Years of Struggle: The Farm Diary of Elmer G. Powers, 1931–1936*.

titles in the Iowa Heritage Collection surely found ready audiences—one focused on well-known regional artists Grant Wood and Marvin Cone, another on the Old Order Amish, and the third presented an assortment of “rogues and heroes.”⁴² Other popular history books included a history of the *Des Moines Register and Tribune* and a collection of pioneer reminiscences.⁴³ Native American history was the subject of two books, and one of them, *The Worlds between Two Rivers*, contained a number of essays written by Native Americans.⁴⁴ These works not only reflected Iowans’ continuing interest in the past that pre-dated Euro-American settlement but also recognized an abundance of new scholarship coming from Iowa State University as well as the Office of the State Archaeologist, established in 1959 under the University of Iowa. In 1970, the office launched a Report Series with Marshall B. McKusick’s monograph *The Davenport Conspiracy*, a nineteenth-century hoax that pitted the Davenport Academy of Science against scientific archaeologists. His work received widespread notice among anthropologists and archaeologists.⁴⁵ New topics in scholarly history included banking in the mid-nineteenth century, newspaper opposition to the Civil War, the Prairie School of architecture in Iowa, the Iowa Civil Liberties Union, and Ding Darling, the Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist associated with the

42. Hazel E. Brown, *Grant Wood and Marvin Cone: Artists of an Era* (Ames, 1972); George Mills, *Rogues and Heroes from Iowa’s Amazing Past* (Ames, 1972); Elmer Schwieder and Dorothy Schwieder, *A Peculiar People: Iowa’s Old Order Amish* (Ames, 1975); expanded edition with essay by Tom Morain (Iowa City, 2009).

43. George S. Mills, ed. Joan Bunke, *Harvey Ingham and Gardner Cowles, Sr.: Things Don’t Just Happen* (Ames, 1977); Carl Hamilton, ed., *Pure Nostalgia: Memories of Early Iowa* (Ames, 1979).

44. Duane Anderson, *Western Iowa Prehistory* (Ames, 1975); Gretchen M. Bataille, David Mayer Gradwohl, and Charles L. P. Silet, eds., *The Worlds between Two Rivers: Perspectives on American Indians in Iowa* (Ames, 1978, 1987), expanded edition (Iowa City, 2000).

45. OSA published Reports 1–12 in the 1970s. Report 1, *The Davenport Conspiracy* by McKusick, received wide notice among archaeologists and anthropologists, which ultimately led McKusick to write a second book, *The Davenport Conspiracy Revisited* (Ames, 1991). Several 1970s reports in the OSA series followed emerging scholarship on the Oneota Culture.

Des Moines Register who died in 1962.⁴⁶ Two books on Herbert Hoover, a collection of his World War I correspondence with Woodrow Wilson and an analysis of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation from 1931 to 1933, coincided with the beginning of historians' reassessment of Hoover's influence on America's political economy.⁴⁷ Rounding out the 1970s, the press published two general works on Iowa history: Leland Sage's *A History of Iowa* and Dorothy Schwieder's edition of essays, *Patterns and Perspectives in Iowa History*.⁴⁸

To a degree, the trends apparent in Iowa State's catalogs through the 1960s and 1970s followed changing trends in academic research as reflected in doctoral dissertations. In his analysis of doctoral research in Iowa history during these two decades, Alan Schroder found that scholars were moving away from political and economic history toward the new social history by borrowing methods from the social sciences—namely quantitative analysis and behavioral theory—to study ethnic and cultural groups. Dissertations in agricultural history generally stayed within the traditional bounds of political and economic history with numerous studies of land tenure and federal farm policy, some of which ended up as books published by the press.⁴⁹ However, the press was initially disinclined to follow the surge of academic interest in community studies. Its interest in social and cultural history, at this time, was fairly limited to subjects that would be familiar to a cross-section of the reading public, but this would change in the 1980s.

46. Erling A. Erickson, *Banking in Frontier Iowa, 1836–1865* (Ames, 1971); David Lendt, *Demise of the Democracy: The Copperhead Press in Iowa, 1856–1870* (Ames, 1973); Edward Switzer Allen, *Freedom in Iowa: The Role of the Iowa Civil Liberties Union* (Ames, 1977); Richard Guy Wilson and Sidney K. Robinson, *The Prairie School in Iowa* (Ames, 1977); David Lendt, *Ding: The Life of Jay Norwood Darling* (Ames, 1978, 1989).

47. Francis William O'Brien, ed., *The Hoover-Wilson Wartime Correspondence, September 24, 1914 to November 11, 1918* (Ames, 1974); James Stuart Olson, *Herbert Hoover and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, 1931–1933* (Ames, 1977).

48. Leland Sage, *A History of Iowa* (Ames, 1974); Dorothy Schwieder, ed., *Patterns and Perspectives in Iowa History* (Ames, 1973).

49. Alan M. Schroder, "Two Decades of Doctoral Research in Iowa History, 1961–1980," *Annals of Iowa* 47 (1983), 19–45.

The University of Iowa ventured into publishing in the mid-1960s, a time of growth among university presses, but struggled to find a footing. Between 1966 and 1983, the University of Iowa Press published only ten books on Iowa history. The lead title, *Nineteenth-Century Home Architecture of Iowa City*, reflected an emerging interest in historic architecture and preservation.⁵⁰ More than a decade later came a compilation of Iowa buildings documented in the Historic American Buildings Survey.⁵¹ Three titles prefigured the reputation that the press would eventually establish as a publisher of literary works: *A Literary History of Iowa* by Clarence Andrews, a history of the *Midland*, a literary magazine published in Iowa City between 1915 and 1933, and a history of the Iowa Writers' Workshop.⁵² The press also published a history of the Iowa Testing Programs, which decades of Iowa students had experienced first-hand through the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the Iowa Test of Educational Development, and the American College Testing program.⁵³ To commemorate the centennial of President Herbert Hoover's birth, Iowa published two collections of essays in cooperation with the Hoover Presidential Library, one edited by Lawrence Gelfand and the other by Ellis Hawley, historians who made critical contributions to the re-assessment of Hoover's presidency and the political economy of the interwar years.⁵⁴ The press also paid attention to archaeology

50. Margaret N. Keyes, *Nineteenth-Century Home Architecture of Iowa City* (Iowa City, 1966, silver anniversary edition, 1993). The 1966 issue, a shortened version of Keyes's dissertation, was actually published as a University of Iowa monograph. The press was formally established in 1969.

51. Wesley I. Shank, *The Iowa Catalog: Historic American Buildings Survey* (Iowa City, 1979).

52. Clarence Andrews, *A Literary History of Iowa* (Iowa City, 1972, 2006); Milton M. Reigelman, *The Midland: A Venture in Literary Regionalism* (Iowa City, 1975); Stephen McCoy Wilbers, *The Iowa Writers' Workshop: Origin, Emergence, and Growth* (Iowa City, 1980).

53. Julia J. Peterson, *The Iowa Testing Programs: The First Fifty Years* (Iowa City, 1983).

54. Lawrence E. Gelfand, ed., *Herbert Hoover: The Great War and Its Aftermath, 1914-23*, papers presented at the Herbert Hoover Centennial Seminars, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library (Iowa City, 1974); Ellis W. Hawley, *Herbert Hoover as Secretary of Commerce: Studies in New Era Thought and Practice* (Iowa City, 1981). The University of Iowa Center for the Study of the Recent History of the United

and Native American history, publishing Lynn Alex's *Exploring Iowa's Past* and Virgil Vogel's *Iowa Place Names of Indian Origin*.⁵⁵

While the University of Iowa Press was searching for publishing foci in the 1980s, Iowa State University Press published more than thirty titles in Iowa history. Four of them represented a broadening of agricultural history toward topics of more general interest: a biography of Ruth Buxton Sayre, tireless advocate for improving the lives of farm women worldwide; a biography of James Howard, Iowa farmer and president of the American Farm Bureau Federation from 1919 to 1922; a biography of Wallace Short, an ally of Milo Reno in the effort to forge a farmer-labor coalition during the 1920s and 1930s; and an examination of the Close Brothers, the younger sons of British nobility who came to America in search of better fortunes and ended up playing an outsized role in the settlement of northwest Iowa and southwest Minnesota.⁵⁶ Julie McDonald's biography of Sayre also reflected the emergence of women's history as a new scholarly field, as did Glenda Riley's *Frontierswomen: The Iowa Experience*.⁵⁷ Books on rural life, however, catered to the popular history audience.⁵⁸ Community history, despite scholars' tendency to emphasize rigorous methodology, could also have general audience appeal. At a time when African American history was ascending, three books examined the abandoned coal-mining town of Buxton, a short-lived company town that attracted scholarly attention because it was a racially mixed community that demonstrated

States published two other essay collections that could be considered companions to the books on Hoover: *Three Progressives from Iowa: Gilbert N. Haugen, Herbert C. Hoover, Henry A. Wallace* and *Three Faces of Midwestern Isolationism: Gerald P. Nye, Robert E. Wood, John L. Lewis*, both edited by John Schacht.

55. Lynn Alex, *Exploring Iowa's Past: A Guide to Prehistoric Archaeology* (Iowa City, 1980, 2000); Virgil J. Vogel, *Iowa Place Names of Indian Origin* (Iowa City, 1983).

56. Julie McDonald, *Ruth Buxton Sayre: First Lady of the Farm* (Ames, 1980); Robert P. Howard, *James R. Howard and the Farm Bureau* (Ames, 1983); William Henry Cumberland, *Wallace M. Short, Iowa Rebel* (Ames, 1983); Curtis Harnack, *Gentlemen on the Prairie: Victorians in Pioneer Iowa* (Ames, 1985; Iowa City, 2011).

57. Glenda Riley, *Frontierswomen: The Iowa Experience* (Ames, 1981).

58. Floyd A. Robinson, *This Is Home Now* (Ames, 1983); Beulah Meier Pelton, *We Belong to the Land: Memories of a Midwesterner* (Ames, 1983); Harold Bennett Clingerman, *Field Man* (Ames, 1988).

a remarkable degree of social integration. One of the three books, *Buxton: Work and Racial Equality in a Coal Mining Community*, was the first recipient of the Benjamin F. Shambaugh Award, an annual award established in 1988 by the State Historical Society to recognize the most significant book in Iowa history.⁵⁹ The next year, *Prairie Grass Roots: An Iowa Small Town in the Early Twentieth Century* received the second Shambaugh Award.⁶⁰ A fifth community study focused on the role of language in Pella, a Dutch immigrant community.⁶¹ By now, Iowa's Native American history had an established audience, although Iowa State published only one title in this area during the decade.⁶² An annotated bibliography of materials on Iowa history and culture published between 1952 and 1986, a collaborative venture between the press and the State Historical Society, was purely for scholars, librarians, and bibliophiles.⁶³ Two books on Iowa's geological past represented a new area for the press, and both blurred the line between textbook and general audience appeal.⁶⁴

The decade of the 1980s was Iowa State's high-water mark for publishing history and heritage, the latter term now being applied to works that mixed history and traditional culture. In

59. Dorothy Schwieder, Joseph Hraba, and Elmer Schwieder, *Buxton: Work and Racial Equality in a Coal Mining Community* (Ames, 1987; Iowa City, reissued under the title of *Buxton: A Black Utopia in the Heartland, An Expanded Edition*, 2003). The other two books were Dorothy Schwieder, *Black Diamonds: Life and Work in Iowa's Coal Mining Communities, 1895–1925* (Ames, 1983) and David M. Gradwohl and Nancy M. Osborn, *Exploring Buried Buxton: Archaeology of an Abandoned Iowa Coal Mining Town with a Large Black Population* (Ames, 1984, 1990; reissued Iowa City, 2006).

60. Thomas Morain, *Prairie Grass Roots: An Iowa Small Town in the Early Twentieth Century* (Ames, 1988).

61. Philip Webber, *Pella Dutch: Portrait of a Language in an Iowa Community* (Ames, 1988; expanded edition, Iowa City, 2011).

62. Duane C. Anderson, *Eastern Iowa Prehistory* (Ames, 1981).

63. Patricia Dawson and David Hudson, comps., *Iowa History and Culture: A Bibliography of Materials Published Between 1952 and 1986* (Ames, 1989). Three supplements updating the bibliography to 1991 appear in the *Annals of Iowa* 52 (1993), 166–89, 282–324, and 418–65.

64. Wayne I. Anderson, *Geology of Iowa: Over Two Billion Years of Change* (Ames, 1983), new edition under new title, *Iowa's Geological Past: Three Billion Years of Change* (Iowa City, 1998); Jack Clayton Troeger, *From Rift to Drift* (Ames, 1983).

terms of total output, however, history represented a small percentage of the press's catalog, which included textbooks, flight manuals, and books on veterinary medicine. Revenue from textbook publishing made the whole operation possible, as the press was a self-supporting, not-for-profit corporation, receiving no university or state funding.⁶⁵ Editors thus had to look for works that would appeal to general audiences, which influenced editorial decisions even for scholarly titles and no doubt was the rationale for creating the Iowa Heritage Collection. Two new titles in this series appeared in the 1980s—both of them personal stories of rural communities left behind—and three previous titles were reissued as part of the Iowa Heritage Collection.⁶⁶ The press also published several biographies likely to have wider appeal. All of the subjects were men, with the exception of McDonald's book on Ruth Buxton Sayre, but they were individuals of note.⁶⁷ A handful of books catered to niche interests, such as the Civil War, or presented new topics in a way that might attract a new readership, including the commercial production of hometown talent shows in the 1920s and 1930s, the Iowa precinct caucuses as a media event, a legal case that led to the stunning 1972 reversal of Ernest Triplett's murder conviction in *State of Iowa v. Ernest Triplett* (1955), and a collection of essays on place and landscape in Iowa.⁶⁸

65. John Carlson, "U of I and ISU Presses—Not Identical Twins," *Des Moines Sunday Register*, 5/3/1987.

66. New titles were Barbara S. Yambura with Eunice Willis Bodine, *A Change and a Parting: My Story of Amana* (Ames, 1986); Douglas Bauer, *Prairie City, Iowa: Three Seasons at Home* (Ames, 1988). Reissued titles were *The Worlds between Two Rivers* (1987), *The Prairie School in Iowa* (1987), and *Pure Nostalgia: Memories of Early Iowa* (1988).

67. John Bowermaster, *Governor: An Oral Biography of Robert D. Ray* (Ames, 1987); Patricia Lounsbury Bliss, *Christian Petersen Remembered* (Ames, 1986); Clark R. Mollenhoff, *Atanasoff: Forgotten Father of the Computer* (Ames, 1988); George S. Mills, *The Little Man with the Long Shadow: The Life and Times of Frederick M. Hubbell* (Ames, 1988; Iowa City, 2007); Ros Jensen, foreword by Jim Leach, *Max: A Biography of C. Maxwell Stanley—Engineer, Businessman, World Citizen* (Ames, 1989); Chuck Offenburger, *Babe: An Iowa Legend* (Ames, 1989).

68. Hubert H. Wubben, *Civil War Iowa and the Copperhead Movement* (Ames, 1980); Lorelei F. Eckey, Maxine Allen Schoyer, and William T. Schoyer, *1,001 Broadway: Hometown Talent on Stage* (Ames, 1982); Hugh Winebrenner, *The Iowa Precinct Caucuses: The Making of a Media Event* (Ames, 1987; 2nd edition, 1998; 3rd edition, Iowa

The University of Iowa resumed publishing in the late 1980s after the university hired Paul Zimmer to revive and strengthen the operation. Because the university partially subsidized it, the press could afford, literally, to publish scholarly books for specialized audiences, and Zimmer determined to build on the renown of the Iowa Writers' Workshop by specializing in creative writing and literary studies with complementary fields of interest in the arts and humanities: anthropology, archaeology, theater, music, history, and biography.⁶⁹ Although aiming for award-winning books, the press also watched the bottom line. A review of history titles published during this time indicates that, like Iowa State, Iowa was searching for works with wide audience appeal, and it, too, teamed history with heritage. In 1987, the press launched Bur Oak Books, titles of regional interest with emphases in archaeology, history, natural history, and the environment. Four original works published as Bur Oak Books in the 1980s included the recollections of a centenarian horse trader, a collection of essays and photographs exploring the Midwest as a place, an illustrated history of Old Capitol, and a diary. The latter, which included extensive commentary by the editor, received the Shambaugh Award in 1990.⁷⁰ Another Bur Oak-like book, a photo-essay about *The Lincoln Highway*, targeted a regional audience beyond Iowa.⁷¹ *Fragile Giants: A Natural History of the Loess Hills* marked the press's initial foray into natural history and the environment, an area that would be increasingly emphasized in the coming

City, 2010); Robert Bartels, *Benefit of Law: The Murder Case of Ernest Triplett* (Ames, 1988); Robert F. Sayre, *Take This Exit: Rediscovering the Iowa Landscape* (Ames, 1989).

69. Carlson, "U of I and ISU Presses—Not Identical Twins"; Lynda Leidiger, "New Chapter in UI Press Story," *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, 5/4/1987.

70. Leroy Judson Daniels, as told to Helen S. Herrick, *Tales of an Old Horsetrader: The First Hundred Years* (Iowa City, 1987); Michael Martone, ed., photographs by David Plowden, *A Place of Sense: Essays in Search of the Midwest* (Iowa City, 1988); Margaret N. Keyes, *Old Capitol: Portrait of an Iowa Landmark* (Iowa City, 1988); Judy Nolte Lensink, "A Secret to be Buried": *The Diary and Life of Emily Hawley Gillespie, 1858–1888* (Iowa City, 1989). Two other books published in the 1980s were reissued in Bur Oak Books in the 1990s: John Kent Folmar, ed., "This State of Wonders": *The Letters of an Iowa Frontier Family, 1858–1861* (Iowa City, 1986, 1991) and Susan Puckett, *A Cook's Tour of Iowa* (Iowa City, 1988, 1990).

71. Drake Hokenson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street across America* (Iowa City, 1989, Tenth Anniversary Edition, 1999).

decade.⁷² Only one title, a history of the pharmacy profession in Iowa, truly targeted a niche audience.⁷³

Richard Kinney, who became the director of Iowa State University Press in 1987, had plans to expand the textbook and manual side of the operation in order to publish more scholarly works, but that effort barely survived the 1990s.⁷⁴ The press published about twenty new titles in history during the decade, about half of them for scholarly audiences. Among these works, three received the Shambaugh Award: *Baptism of Fire*, a history of the early Republican Party in Iowa; *Smith Wildman Brookhart*, a biography of a prominent radical progressive in the Republican Party during the early twentieth century; and “*To Go Free*,” an examination of the legal development of civil liberties in Iowa.⁷⁵ Other scholarly titles included a history of cooperative extension in Iowa, a documentary profile of Henry Wallace, the founding editor of *Wallaces’ Farmer*, a study of botanist Charles Bessey’s professional career, a community study of Cedar Falls during the Civil War, an overview of women serving in the Iowa legislature from 1928 to the early 1990s, and a collection of essays assessing Iowa’s economy through the lens of business history.⁷⁶

The other half of Iowa State’s catalog in the 1990s included titles that crossed the history-culture boundary in different combinations. Two books offered serious treatments of material culture,

72. Cornelia F. Mutel, *Fragile Giants: A Natural History of the Loess Hills* (Iowa City, 1989, 2010).

73. Lee Anderson, *Iowa Pharmacy, 1880–1905: An Experiment in Professionalism* (Iowa City, 1989).

74. Carlson, “U of I and ISU Presses—Not Identical Twins.”

75. Robert Cook, *Baptism of Fire: The Republican Party in Iowa, 1838–1878* (Ames, 1994); George William McDaniel, *Smith Wildman Brookhart: Iowa’s Renegade Republican* (Ames, 1995); Richard, Lord Action and Patricia Nassif Acton, “*To Go Free*”: *A Treasury of Iowa’s Legal Heritage* (Ames, 1995).

76. Dorothy Schwieder, *Seventy-five Years of Service: Cooperative Extension in Iowa* (Ames, 1993); Richard S. Kirkendall, *Uncle Henry: A Documentary Profile of the First Henry Wallace* (Ames, 1993); Richard A. Overfield, *Science with Practice: Charles E. Bessey and the Maturing of American Botany* (Ames, 1993); Kenneth Lyftogt, *From Blue Mills to Columbia: Cedar Falls and the Civil War* (Ames, 1993; Iowa City, 2007); Suzanne O’Dea Schenken, *Legislators and Politicians: Iowa’s Women Lawmakers* (Ames, 1995); Robert James Waller, *Iowa: Perspectives on Today and Tomorrow* (Ames, 1991).

one on furniture and furniture making in Amana, the other on opera houses in Iowa. For sports fans, there was a biography of Johnny Orr and a retrospective on girls' basketball. Louise Noun compiled a second book on Iowa's feminists and also penned her own memoirs. C. Maxwell Stanley co-authored a history of HON Industries. Other new popular history titles included a photo-essay about Middle America during the mid-twentieth century and a study of place names in Iowa.⁷⁷ Assessing the decade as a whole, Iowa State's production of history and heritage titles, while reduced, gave no hint that the press was about to close. The beginning of the end came in 2000, when the board took steps that eventually led to dismantling the press, citing unknown costs for moving into digital publishing, aging facilities in need of renovation, and an inability to attract promising candidates to fill the vacant director position. When the university administration refused to consider subsidizing the press, its fate was all but sealed.⁷⁸ Blackwell Science acquired most of the press in 2003, with University of Iowa Press picking up the history and heritage titles.⁷⁹

As Iowa State's press faltered, the University of Iowa Press ascended, publishing roughly forty new titles in history and heritage during the 1990s. With the Bur Oak Series, the press began to shape Iowanana as a genre. Titles in this series captured something that was quintessentially Iowan. As the series developed in this decade, "quintessentially Iowan" came to encompass books that focused on community, daily, or rural life, on the one hand,

77. Marjorie K. Albers, *The Amana People and Their Furniture* (Ames, 1990); George D. Glenn and Richard L. Poole, *The Opera Houses of Iowa* (Ames, 1993); Janice A. Beran, *From Six-on-Six to Full Court Press: A Century of Iowa Girls' Basketball* (Ames, 1992); Gene McGivern, *Here's Johnny Orr* (Ames, 1992); Louise Rosenfield Noun, *Journey to Autonomy: A Memoir* (Ames, 1990); Louise R. Noun, *More Strong-Minded Women: Iowa Feminists Tell Their Stories* (Ames, 1992); C. Maxwell Stanley and James H. Soltow, *The HON Story: A History of HON Industries, 1944-1985* (Ames, 1990); Don Ultang, *Holding the Moment: Mid-America at Mid-Century* (Ames, 1991); Harold E. Dilts, *From Ackley to Zwingle: The Origins of Iowa Place Names* (Ames, 1993).

78. "ISU Press' Future is Uncertain," *Tribune* (Ames), 2/15/2000; William Kunerth, "Future of ISU Press Uncertain," *Tribune*, 6/9/2000; Liz Allen, "Decision on ISU Press' Future Expected Soon," *Tribune*, 6/28/2000.

79. Munroe, *The Academic Publishing Industry: A Story of Merger and Acquisition*, n.p.

and, on the other hand, books on natural history. Titles in the former category included two compilations of historic photographs and one of early postcards, three books on Iowa cooking, and two explorations of women's diaries as autobiography.⁸⁰ Books on natural history, which eventually would come to dominate the series, included an overview of Iowa's geological history, a collection of essays on the landscape and peoples of the Loess Hills, a study of wildlife during the settlement era, natural histories of Okoboji wetlands and mineral deposits in Iowa, and two studies of Iowa birdlife.⁸¹ Another series, *Singular Lives: The Iowa Series in North American Autobiography*, sought out the stories of ordinary people with extraordinary life experiences. Three titles in this series introduced audiences to exceptional Iowans: Cecil Reed, businessman, civil rights advocate, community leader, and the first African American to serve in the Iowa legislature; mechanical engineer Philip Hubbard, the first Black faculty member and first Black administrator at the University of Iowa; and Ray Young Bear, who wrote a slightly fictionalized autobiography and lyric portrayal of Meskwaki culture.⁸² Another series, *American Land*

80. Mary Bennett, *An Iowa Album: A Photographic History, 1860–1920* (Iowa City, 1990, 2001); Mary Bennett and Paul C. Juhl, *Iowa Stereographs: Three-Dimensional Visions of the Past* (Iowa City, 1997); Lyell D. Henry, Jr., *Was This Heaven?: A Self-Portrait of Iowa on Early Postcards* (Iowa City, 1995); Evelyn Birkby, *Neighboring on the Air: Cooking with the KMA Radio Homemakers* (Iowa City, 1991); Carrie Young, *Prairie Cooks: Glorified Rice, Three-Day Buns, and Other Reminiscences* (Iowa City, 1993); Evelyn Birkby, foreword by Jane and Michael Stern, *Up a Country Lane Cookbook* (Iowa City, 1993, 2000); Suzanne Bunkers, "All Will Yet Be Well": *The Diary of Sarah Gillespie Huftalen, 1873–1952* (Iowa City, 1993); Martha Davis, *Sarah's Seasons: An Amish Diary and Conversation* (Iowa City, 1997).

81. Jean Prior, *Landforms of Iowa* (Iowa City, 1991); Cornelia Mutel and Mary Swander, eds., *Land of the Fragile Giants: Landscapes, Environments, and People of the Loess Hills* (Iowa City, 1994); James J. Dinsmore, *A Country So Full of Game: The Story of Wildlife in Iowa* (Iowa City, 1994); Michael J. Lannoo, *Okoboji Wetlands: A Lesson in Natural History* (Iowa City, 1996); Paul Garvin, *Iowa's Minerals: Their Occurrence, Origins, Industries, and Lore* (Iowa City, 1998); Gladys Black, *Iowa Birdlife* (Iowa City, 1992); Althea R. Sherman, foreword by Marcia Myers Bonta, *Birds of an Iowa Dooryard* (Iowa City, 1996).

82. Cecil A. Reed with Priscilla Donovan, foreword Albert E. Stone, *Fly in the Buttermilk: The Life Story of Cecil Reed* (Iowa City, 1993); Philip G. Hubbard, foreword Albert E. Stone, *My Iowa Journey: The Life Story of the University of Iowa's First African American Professor* (Iowa City, 1999); Ray A. Young Bear, foreword by Albert E. Stone, *Black Eagle Child: The Facepaint Narratives* (Iowa City, 1992).

and Life, was similar to the Bur Oak Series, but sought out studies of North American cultural and natural regions. Nonetheless, two titles in this series focused on Iowa: a vernacular landscape study of tiny Peterson, in northwest Iowa, and a history of Iowa's state park and preserve systems through an environmental history lens. The latter received the Shambaugh Award.⁸³

Three more University of Iowa Press titles published in the 1990s also received Shambaugh Awards: an institutional history of the University of Iowa, a study of regionalist thought in Iowa from 1894 to 1942, and a history of rural school consolidation in the early twentieth century.⁸⁴ The number of Shambaugh Award-winning books demonstrated the press's commitment to scholarly heft. The award itself, however, demonstrated that both scholars and scholarly presses were increasingly broadening their sights to encompass regional topics and audiences. Four other history books that won the award—a study of liberal female ministers on the midwestern frontier, a critical examination of Black Hawk as a militant traditionalist, a study of Black freedom and White supremacy in frontier Iowa, and a history of labor and the meatpacking industry in the Midwest—were published by scholarly presses outside Iowa, even outside the Midwest.⁸⁵ The flow ran both ways, however, with Iowa publishing an expanded edition of James Clifton's *The Prairie People*, an ethnohistory of the Potawatomi with an emphasis on the Prairie Band, which lived in far western Iowa during the 1830s and early 1840s, and an expanded edition of Osha Gray Davidson's *Broken Heartland*, a trenchant

83. Drake Hokanson, foreword Wayne Franklin, *Reflecting a Prairie Town: A Year in Peterson* (Iowa City, 1994); Rebecca Conard, foreword Wayne Franklin, *Places of Quiet Beauty: Parks, Preserves, and Environmentalism* (Iowa City, 1996).

84. Stow Persons, *The University of Iowa in the Twentieth Century: An Institutional History* (Iowa City, 1990); E. Bradford Burns, *Kinship with the Land: Regionalist Thought in Iowa, 1894–1942* (Iowa City, 1996); David R. Reynolds, *There Goes the Neighborhood: Rural School Consolidation at the Grass Roots in Early Twentieth-Century Iowa* (Iowa City, 1999).

85. Cynthia Grant Tucker, *Prophetic Sisterhood: Liberal Women Ministers of the Frontier, 1880–1930* (Boston, 1990); Roger L. Nichols, *Black Hawk and the Warrior's Path* (Arlington Heights, IL, 1992); Robert R. Dykstra, *Bright Radical Star: Black Freedom and White Supremacy on the Hawkeye Frontier* (Cambridge, 1993); Deborah Fink, *Cutting into the Meatpacking Line: Workers and Change in the Rural Midwest* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1998).

critique of the 1980s farm crisis.⁸⁶ Other scholarly titles published by the press in the 1990s included oral histories of labor and unionizing in Iowa, a new general history of Iowa, a collection of essays on Iowa history, and a biographical dictionary of Iowa architects.⁸⁷ On the whole, though, the press energetically sought to expand its reach by publishing works that offered a fresh approach to subjects familiar to a wide audience of potential readers. This is evident in collections of Civil War soldiers' letters, the diary and letters of football legend Nile Kinnick, the posthumously published memoir by noted author Paul Engle and a companion collection of essays about him and the Iowa Writers' Workshop, a biography of actress and cultural icon Donna Reed, and a history of two-story railroad depots richly illustrated with photographs from the John Vander Maas collection at the University of Iowa.⁸⁸

The Stuff of History: The Late Twentieth Century

The rise of two strong university presses in the latter half of the twentieth century greatly expanded the depth and breadth of Iowa history. Most notably, the contributions of women, Blacks, and Native Americans began receiving serious study. Likewise, works by female, Black, and Native American authors were getting published. By 1990, there also was a noticeable trend toward

86. James Clifton, *The Prairie People: Continuity and Change in Potawatomi Indian Culture, 1665–1965* (Lawrence, KS, 1977, expanded edition, Iowa City, 1998); Osha Gray Davidson, *Broken Heartland: The Rise of America's Rural Ghetto* (New York, 1990; expanded edition Iowa City, 1996).

87. Shelton Stromquist, *Solidarity and Survival: An Oral History of Iowa Labor in the Twentieth Century* (Iowa City, 1993); Dorothy Schwieder, *Iowa: The Middle Land* (Iowa City, 1996); Marvin Bergman, ed., *Iowa History Reader* (Iowa City, 1996; 2nd ed., 2008); Wesley I. Shank, *Iowa's Historic Architects: A Biographical Dictionary* (Iowa City, 1999).

88. Barry Popchok, ed., *Soldier Boy: The Civil War Letters of Charles O. Musser, 29th Iowa* (Iowa City, 1995); Donald C. Elder III, ed., *A Damned Iowa Greyhound: The Civil War Letters of William Henry Harrison Clayton* (Iowa City, 1998); Paul Baender, ed., *A Hero Perished: The Diary and Selected Letters of Nile Kinnick* (Iowa City, 1992); Paul Engle, foreword Albert E. Stone, *A Lucky American Childhood* (Iowa City, 1996); Robert Dana, ed., *A Community of Writers: Paul Engle and the Iowa Writers' Workshop* (Iowa City, 1999); Jay Fultz, *In Search of Donna Reed* (Iowa City, 1998); H. Roger Grant, foreword Wayne Franklin, *Living in the Depot: The Two-Story Railroad Station* (Iowa City, 1993).

regional history in academic publishing. In addition to the Shambaugh Award-winning books, other important works that covered Iowa but were published by non-Iowa presses include William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis*, Timothy Mahoney's *River Towns in the Great West*, and Mark Friedberger's *Farm Families and Change in Twentieth-century America*.⁸⁹

Interest in local history, never in short supply, mushroomed in the post-World War II era. Various reasons have been given for this: an appreciation for home and family after the dislocations of the war, the growth of local historical organizations, and a renewed national interest in civics education inspired by America's cold war with the U.S.S.R.⁹⁰ In Iowa, perhaps, one need look no further than the centennial of statehood in 1946. After the celebration, a parade of towns, cities, and counties began to mark their own 100th birthdays with commemorative histories, usually illustrated with vintage photographs. The bicentennial of the American Revolution in 1976 intensified local activity. In addition to a bicentennial history of Iowa, produced under the auspices of the American Association for State and Local History, the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction, in partnership with the Iowa Bicentennial Commission, published an expanded edition of *Discovering Historic Iowa*, a guidebook designed to supplement curriculum materials.⁹¹ Iowans enthusiastically participated in the celebration, leading the nation in terms of the number of official bicentennial communities (811) and projects (approximately 2,800). The variety of projects was limited only by the creativity and ambition of local commissions, but several counties opted to publish local history books. Some counties reproduced an early county atlas or history, while others undertook the

89. William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York, 1991); Timothy R. Mahoney, *River Towns in the Great West: The Structure of Provincial Urbanization in the American Midwest, 1820-1870* (New York, 1990); Mark Friedberger, *Farm Families and Change in Twentieth-century America* (Lexington, KY, 1988).

90. Carol Kammen, "On the Doing of Local History in New York," *Public Historian* 33 (2001), 63-65.

91. Joseph Frazier Wall, *Iowa: A Bicentennial History* (New York, 1978); LeRoy G. Pratt, *Discovering Historic Iowa: American Revolution Bicentennial Edition* (Des Moines, 1975; first edition 1972).

production of a new or updated history.⁹² Collectively, bicentennial projects reflected Iowa's dominant Euro-American ethnicity; few of them recognized either a past before Euro-American settlement or immigrant communities of color.

For the most part, the town, city, and county histories published in the latter half of the twentieth century—well over a thousand—were produced locally and usually in association with some centennial or bicentennial commission. They were the creative works of talented amateurs and assorted professionals who published through job printers. However, the sheer volume of interest in local history stimulated commercial interest. Just as nineteenth-century entrepreneurs had seen opportunities to profit from publishing county atlases and histories, commercial publishers increasingly gravitated to the local history market in the late twentieth century. Prominent among them was Taylor Publishing of Dallas, Texas, founded in 1939. Taylor, a pioneer in school yearbook publishing, began branching out in the 1960s and added local history to its specialty book portfolio during the 1980s.⁹³ The market was large enough to attract newcomers, too. In the mid-1970s, Windsor Publications, based in Northridge, California, and the Donning Company of Norfolk, Virginia, began vying for market share.⁹⁴ Like their nineteenth-century precursors, these companies worked with clients—a local historical society, chamber of commerce, or other organization—to develop content

92. Iowa American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, *Iowa and the U.S. Bicentennial, 1776–1976: The Final Report* (Des Moines, 1976), 27, 42–55. For examples of county history projects, see *Atlas History of Allamakee County, Iowa, from 1859 to 1978* (Evansville, IN, 1980); Clinton County Historical Society, *History of Clinton County, Iowa, 1976: A Bicentennial Project* (Clinton, 1978); *A History of Fayette County, Iowa*, reprint of 1878 edition (Evansville, IN, 1978); *History of Harrison County*, reprint of 1891 edition (Evansville, IN, 1975); and Bruce L. Godbersen, ed., *Our Heritage: A History of Ida County* (Ida Grove, 1976).

93. Taylor corporate biography, online at <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/economics-business-and-labor/businesses-and-occupations/taylor-publishing-company>. During the 1980s and early 1990s, Taylor published at least a dozen histories of Iowa counties.

94. Unsourced information on Windsor Publications, which published approximately 350 books, total, between the mid-1970s and early 2000s, is available online from <https://openlibrary.org>; Donning provides a state-by-state list of local history publications on its website: www.donning.com.

and find corporate sponsors to underwrite publication. While the illustrated coffee-table book format was template-driven, a single author usually wrote the text, and both companies courted authors from among a new professional class of public historians.⁹⁵

Although Shambaugh introduced popular history with the *Palimpsest* in 1920, William J. Petersen, widely known as Steamboat Bill for his love of the Mississippi River and knowledge of riverboat history, played an outsized role in popularizing Iowa history in the post-war era. During his long career with the State Historical Society—from 1930 to 1972—he raised popular history's profile significantly, wrote prolifically, and became a sought-after public speaker. After seventeen years as a research associate, he served as the society's superintendent from 1947 to his retirement. Upon assuming the superintendency, Petersen set out to cultivate a membership that was truly statewide by setting quotas for each county. Through personal solicitations, gift memberships, historical tours, and other strategies, membership increased from around 1,000 to nearly 11,000.⁹⁶

Chief among the other strategies was revamping the *Palimpsest*. When Petersen assumed the editorship of the magazine in late 1948, it was still a monthly publication comprising two or three articles and a signature cover that visually associated the magazine with its namesake, a hand-lettered manuscript on which the original text has been mostly erased and overwritten with the table of contents. He maintained the publishing frequency but soon updated the cover design to feature a photograph or image related to the content, and issues increasingly were theme-based. Pioneer history and political history were still mainstays, but as

95. David Colker, "Publishing Firm Puts City Pride into Words: Windsor Publications, a vanity press for communities, turns out 40–50 tomes a year," *Los Angeles Times*, 8/1/1991. The ability of these presses to attract authors with professional credentials is borne out by at least two Iowa books: Barbara Beving Long, *Des Moines and Polk County: Flag on the Prairie* (Northridge, CA, 1988); Gerald Mansheim, with Friends of Historic Preservation, *Iowa City: An Illustrated History* (Norfolk, VA, 1989).

96. William J. Petersen, "The State Historical Society of Iowa: 1947–1949," *Iowa Journal of History* 47 (1949), 346; Schroder, *History, Analysis and Recommendations Concerning the Public Programs*, 134–38; Michael Gibson, "William John Petersen," in *Biographical Dictionary of Iowa*, 408–09.

Petersen matured into the role of editor, these foci were more evenly balanced with social, cultural, and natural history topics, and the treatment often projected a link between past and present. For example, a series of thematic issues on various religious denominations—Methodist, Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, and Baptist—traced their history in Iowa and concluded with an article on the current status of each. Religion and church history were not exactly new subjects, for there had long been interest in Quakers, Mennonites, and faith-based communal societies, but spotlighting mainstream Christian denominations nudged the envelope. Bolder steps were evident in issues that focused on sports history—football, boys and girls basketball, and baseball—or natural history and phenomena—the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History, the history of quarrying, meteors that had hit Iowa, and the glacial history of the Mississippi River Valley. There were limits, of course, on how far the *Palimpsest* would venture down new paths. Native Americans and immigrants, both frequent subjects, were typically treated from an Anglocentric mindset, and the definition of “immigrant” was narrow enough to exclude communities of color. Such limits reflected the times, to be sure, but in retrospect they also reveal the long road ahead.

Perhaps more important than expanding subject matter and updating the cover was Petersen’s decision to pictorialize the *Palimpsest*. In 1950 he experimented by reprinting Bertha Shambaugh’s 1936 article, “Amana—In Transition,” itself a digest of her 1932 book, *Amana That Was and Amana That Is*. A few of Shambaugh’s photographs had illustrated the 1936 article, which was an unusual extravagance then, but the 1950 reprint augmented these with many photographs taken by William Noe, treasurer of the Amana Society.⁹⁷ “The results,” in Petersen’s words, “were electrifying!” Within a year, according to Petersen, more than 25,000 copies of this single issue had sold, compared to a 30-year average of approximately 2,000 copies per issue.⁹⁸ From this

97. Bertha M. H. Shambaugh, “Amana That Was and Amana That Is,” *Palimpsest* 31 (1950), 215–51; reprint of “Amana—In Transition,” *Palimpsest* 17 (1936), 149–84. The title of the 1950 reprint is identical to the title of Shambaugh’s 1932 book.

98. William J. Petersen, “The Palimpsest in Retrospect,” *Palimpsest* 36 (1955), 229–30.

point on, the *Palimpsest* would be illustrated. Adding pictures boosted the number of copies sold above subscriptions, which expanded the audience, which grew the membership. Petersen was most proud of increasing institutional school memberships from 30 to more than 300 between 1949 and 1955, significantly expanding the society's classroom audience.⁹⁹

Growing membership also entailed assessing the society's publication program as a whole. After Benjamin Shambaugh's death in 1940, the society took a long pause that lasted through World War II. An interim superintendent was at the helm, and the planned series of books commemorating the state's centennial lapsed. The *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, however, appeared quarterly without fail under the editorship of Ruth Gallaher, a veteran of Shambaugh's Iowa School of Research Historians. By 1940, the journal had a solid reputation as a scholarly journal. Its content, however, rarely broke new ground, so eyes must have popped when readers opened the January 1948 issue to find that it was entirely devoted to "The Negro in Iowa." An Iowan of Norwegian ancestry who was well-versed in the history of immigration, author Leola Nelson Bergmann compared the African American experience to that of European and Asian immigrants and observed that, "today [Black America's] voice is heard, clamoring passionately—and sometimes stridently—for a way out of the 'American dilemma.'"¹⁰⁰ Her monograph chronicled the legal status of African Americans in Iowa before and after the Civil War and detailed the achievements of individuals and communities into the 1940s, thereby opening a broad research pathway for others to follow.¹⁰¹ Publishing Bergmann's study would be

99. Petersen, "The Palimpsest in Retrospect," 230.

100. Leola Nelson Bergmann, "The Negro in Iowa," *IJHP* 46, no. 1 (1948). "American dilemma" refers to Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (1944), a lengthy study of the government policies, discriminatory practices, and institutionalized obstacles that denied Blacks the civil liberties and equalities of opportunity that White Americans could take for granted.

101. One of the earliest to follow was Lawrence C. Howard, a Des Moines native, who authored "The Des Moines Negro and His Contribution to American Life," *Annals of Iowa* 30 (1950), 211–21. His article appears to be the earliest published work by an African American author in the *Annals*. A graduate student

Gallaher's last major effort as editor. She left later that year to accept a faculty position at Asbury College in Kentucky, and Mildred Throne, her associate editor, succeeded her. At the same time, and without announcement, the journal's name was shortened to the *Iowa Journal of History*. Like Gallaher and other staff members, Throne held a doctorate from the University of Iowa, and she was a capable editor. However, her tenure was cut short in 1960 when she died at age 57 following a brief illness. Three more issues appeared, but rather than find a new editor, Petersen opted to discontinue the journal and redirect energy to the *Palimpsest*.¹⁰²

As the core staff of Shambaugh's generation aged out, Petersen increasingly focused on popular history. The society continued to publish books, but many of them were reprints of nineteenth-century publications, now considered historical documents, which also had popular appeal. After Earle Ross's *Iowa Agriculture: An Historical Survey* was published in 1951, original works appeared less frequently. The biographical series picked up in the 1950s and, as before the war, continued to chart the lives of Iowa's leading political figures in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but after three volumes this series began to sputter out.¹⁰³ A study of the Iowa State Tax Commission, published in 1950, was announced as the first in a new series called *Studies in Iowa Government*, but no other studies followed. Applied history was a thing of the past. *The Iowa Conference Study*:

at the time, Howard had plans to write a book-length work on African Americans in Iowa, but his research interests veered to sub-Saharan Africa. He went on to a distinguished career in political science and higher education administration; see "Lawrence Cabot Howard, 1925–2018," *University Times* (University of Pittsburgh), 5/9/2018. Bergmann's *The Negro in Iowa* was reprinted in booklet form by the State Historical Society in 1969; biographical information on Bergmann comes from "Guide to the Leola Bergmann Papers," Collection IWA0237, Iowa Women's Archives, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

102. Ginalie Swaim, "Mildred Throne" in *Biographical Dictionary of Iowa*, 512–13.

103. Edward Younger, *John A. Kasson: Politics and Diplomacy from Lincoln to McKinley* (Iowa City, 1955); Leland Sage, *William Boyd Allison: A Study in Practical Politics* (Iowa City, 1956); Thomas R. Ross, *Jonathan P. Dolliver: A Study in Political Integrity and Independence* (Iowa City, 1958); Mildred Throne, *Cyrus Clay Carpenter and Iowa Politics, 1854–1898* (Iowa City, 1974). The last of the political biographies was Peter T. Harstad and Bonnie Lindemann, *Gilbert N. Haugen: Norwegian-American Farm Politician*, largely written in the 1970s but not published until 1992.

Forty Years of Intercollegiate Sports, 1922–1961, by John E. Turnbull, most clearly signaled Petersen's concept of the society's mission: to become a giant storehouse of history that mattered to buffs whose particular interests ranged from the old—agriculture, industry, the Civil War, and politics—to the new—sports, entertainment, religion, education, art, railroads, riverboats, and more.¹⁰⁴

The *Palimpsest* played a central role in reshaping the society's identity. On its fiftieth anniversary, in 1970, it reached more than 10,000 members, and reprints of many issues ran into the tens of thousands.¹⁰⁵ Most of the articles were still written by the staff, chief among them Petersen himself. In-house writers enabled him, as editor, to produce copy on a monthly basis. Outside authors, however, broadened the pool of expertise somewhat. Frank T. Nye, a long-time political commentator and editor of the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, covered the work of the General Assembly every two years from 1951 to 1973. Frank Donovan, an amateur historian with great depth in railroad history, contributed many articles on Iowa's railroads. Petersen's refashioning was so complete that Alan Schroder, writing as a staff member in 1981, observed with some astonishment: "The Society had virtually abandoned its role as a promoter of the study of Iowa history, either scholarly or popular, by almost ceasing to provide an outlet for the publication of new work in the field."¹⁰⁶ Alternatively, given the ascendancy of public history, which began as Petersen was retiring, one might argue that he was ahead of the curve.

In any case, subsequent editors of the *Palimpsest* maintained Petersen's winning format and, as printing technology advanced, continued to modernize the magazine's appearance. In 1973, the physical dimensions were increased, and the publication schedule changed from monthly to bi-monthly to allow more time for production. A subtle change in editorial policy, initiated by Petersen's successor, Peter Harstad, and his associate editor, L.

104. Also signaling the turn to popular history was a new book by Petersen himself, *The Pageant of the Press: A Survey of 125 Years of Iowa Journalism* (Iowa City, 1962). Petersen's *Steamboating on the Upper Mississippi, The Water Way to Iowa: Some River History* was reprinted in 1968.

105. William J. Petersen, "The Fiftieth Anniversary," *Palimpsest* 52 (1971), 22–23.

106. Schroder, *History, Analysis and Recommendations*, 161.

Edward Purcell, invited “the participation of Society members in the writing of *The Palimpsest*” by presenting “finished manuscripts to the editors” for publication consideration.¹⁰⁷ Browsing the contents from 1973 through the early 1980s strongly suggests that editors coaxed submissions especially from academic historians and graduate students in history. As a result, the content began to incorporate newer subfields, such as women’s history, historic architecture and preservation, labor history, and the New Deal.¹⁰⁸ Articles also began to break through Native American stereotypes and recognize the place of African Americans in Iowa history.¹⁰⁹ Editorial staff members still contributed but fresh water flowed into the pool of authors.

When Ginalie Swaim assumed editorship of the *Palimpsest* in 1986, the look and feel changed again. Taking a less-is-more approach, she reduced the publication schedule from bimonthly to quarterly and simultaneously increased the number of pages per issue.¹¹⁰ While this change was immediate, it might have taken readers a bit of time to realize that Swaim also introduced her own editorial style. This began to emerge in the short pieces she occasionally penned, describing personal encounters with and reflections on the stuff of history and drawing readers’ attention to certain themes.¹¹¹ So, too, did her interest in the material culture of ordinary life gradually become apparent. In collaboration

107. The Editors, “The Palimpsest: Old Friend with a New Face,” *Palimpsest* 53 (1972), 501–06, quotation 505.

108. See, for instance, Arthur A. Hart, “M.A. Disbrow & Company: Catalogue Architecture,” *Palimpsest* 56 (1975), 98–119; Glenda Riley, “Women Pioneers” and “The Memoirs of Matilda Peitzke Paul,” *Palimpsest* 57 (1976), 34–65; Dorothy Schwieder, “The Granger Homestead Project,” *Palimpsest* 58 (1977), 149–61; Linda K. Kerber, “The Household: Conducted by Mrs. Nellie M. Rich,” *Palimpsest* 61 (1980), 42–55.

109. See, for instance, L. Edward Purcell, “The Mesquakie Indian Settlement in 1905,” *Palimpsest* 55 (1974), 34–55; Robert Neymeyer, “May Harmony Prevail,” *Palimpsest* 61 (1980), 80–91; William J. Maddix “Blacks and Whites in Manly: An Iowa Town Overcomes Racism,” *Palimpsest* 63 (1982), 130–37.

110. Ginalie Swaim, “An Announcement and an Invitation,” *Palimpsest* 67 (1986), 208.

111. See, for instance, Ginalie Swaim, “Territorial Thoughts,” *Palimpsest* 69 (1988), 50–51; “Working and Wandering,” *Palimpsest* 70 (1989), 75; and “Listening to the Voices,” *Palimpsest* 72 (1991), 50.

with other staff members, she encouraged readers to think about the value of family photographs and other things tucked away in drawers and attics.¹¹² And she had an expansive view of the people of Iowa, devoting entire issues or special sections to topics such as children and youth, recent immigrants from Southeast Asia, and itinerant workers.¹¹³ All of these ideas came together in a 1991 photo-essay she developed on Meskwaki traditional apparel and artifacts, which also marked the first time color photography was used extensively in the magazine.¹¹⁴

In 1996, Swaim announced the most radical change of all: rechristening the quarterly with the name of *Iowa Heritage Illustrated*. While recognizing that the uniqueness of “palimpsest” had an ineffable, endearing quality to many long-time readers, Swaim and her colleagues had nonetheless come to realize that it no longer fit the mission, or, as she put it: “history isn’t just for people who recognize unusual words like ‘palimpsest.’”¹¹⁵ Readers from across the Midwest replied with mixed reactions, from “tragic mistake” to “very progressive revision.” Summing up the combination of recoil and acceptance, one reader wrote: “Do you realize how much effort has gone into educating my family, friends, and writers’ group on the meaning and pronunciation of

112. See, for instance, Loren N. Horton, “Messages in Stone: Symbolism on Victorian Grave Markers,” *Palimpsest* 70 (1989), 62–72; Steven Blaski, “Quilts Reveal Lives of Early Iowans,” *Palimpsest* 71 (1998), 33; Loren N. Horton, “Interpreting the Image: How to Understand Historical Photographs, Part 1,” *Palimpsest* 71 (1990), 34–36 and “Interpreting the Image [. . .] Part 2,” *Palimpsest* 71 (1990), 90–92; Mary Bennett, “Tips on Handling and Labeling Historical Photographs,” *Palimpsest* 71 (1990), 37, and “Tips on Storing Historical Photographs,” *Palimpsest* 71 (1990), 93. It should also be noted that William Petersen continually solicited historical materials for the collections during his tenure.

113. The themes of childhood and family run through all articles in *Palimpsest* 86 (1987); Jack Lufkin, with Siang Bacchi and InNgeun Baccam Soulinthavong, “‘So we stayed together’: The Tai Dam Immigrant to Iowa,” *Palimpsest* 69, (1988), 163–72; *Palimpsest* 70 (1989) contains several articles on harvest hands, the postcard tramp, hobos, and the first Hobo Convention in Britt, Iowa, in 1900.

114. Ginalie Swaim, “‘Clothe Yourself in Fine Apparel’: Mesquakie Costume in Word, Image, and Artifact,” *Palimpsest* 72 (1991), 70–82.

115. Ginalie Swaim, “An Old Friend with a New Name,” *Palimpsest* 76 (1995), 146–47.

'palimpsest'? . . . I won't quote Shakespeare about that rose, but I will continue to be a loyal subscriber."¹¹⁶

The society's long-standing interest in getting Iowa history into school classrooms led to yet another publication: the *Goldfinch*. In 1975, Kathy Spencer, a fifth-grade teacher at Kate Mitchell Elementary School in Ames, teamed up with historical society staff in Iowa City on an experimental project. Her students would research and write reports on various Iowa history topics, and the society would publish them, with illustrations, in a magazine named after Iowa's state bird.¹¹⁷ The trial run was successful enough to convince Margaret Atherton Bonney, an editorial staff member, to develop a second issue, published a year later.¹¹⁸ Another single issue appeared in 1978, and then in 1980, the society began publishing the *Goldfinch* as a quarterly under Bonney's editorship. She enlisted the assistance of other staff to develop engaging content, devoting each issue to a particular theme. Topics varied widely, from the history of aviation to early manufacturing, the architecture of houses, immigrants to Iowa, one-room schoolhouses, and virtually anything that might be of interest to young people. The pages included vocabulary-building inserts, tips on good books to read for each topic, questions for further study, puzzles, fun facts, and loads of historical photographs. After Bonney passed the baton in 1984, a succession of editors headed what was essentially a staff production team. In later years, the society sought input from academic historians, an educators' advisory board, and a children's advisory board. The *Goldfinch* was highly successful, winning the Association of Educational Publishers' Golden Lamp Award in 1990 and the Parents' Choice Honor Award in 1994 and 1996. However, as happens to many good things, the *Goldfinch* came to an end in 2000. Financially, it was increasingly difficult for the society to sustain three publications, and classroom pedagogy was shifting to meet the digital age.

116 "Readers' opinions on the name change," *Iowa Heritage Illustrated* 77 (1996), inside front cover; "From our readers," *Iowa Heritage Illustrated* 77 (1996), inside front cover.

117. *Goldfinch*, Spring 1975 [no volume or issue number], 13.

118. *Goldfinch*, Spring 1976, 16.

When Petersen discontinued publication of the *Iowa Journal of History* in 1961, scholars working in Iowa history lost an important outlet for their research. A handful gravitated to the *Annals of Iowa*, but the nature of this quarterly had not changed much since Harlan assumed the editorship in 1908. There might be anywhere from one to four articles of varying length and quality, and many pages of each issue were devoted to notes and miscellaneous items of interest as well as obituaries and occasional in-memoriam biographies. Between 1958 and 1972, multiple editors held the post for only a year or two. Then, in 1972, a new editor, Judith Gildner, saw an opportunity to reorient the *Annals* to fit the scholarly niche that the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* and *Iowa Journal of History* had formerly occupied. Within short order, Gildner established a new format that focused on research articles and book reviews. In 1980, she reintroduced a notes section that now functioned as a place to describe books that did not receive a full review. Reflecting the times, she published articles by and about women. Reflecting her own literary interests, she occasionally included poetry or profiled writers with Iowa roots.¹¹⁹

Christie Dailey, who succeeded Gildner in 1980, continued down the same path. She deepened the pool of book reviewers to include scholars at universities across the United States and introduced readers to articles addressing race and class as well as gender. Her successor, Marvin Bergman, brought even more rigor to the editor's desk, nudging authors to sharpen their analyses, vastly lengthening the book review section and adding review essays, and expanding subject matter boundaries even farther to include urban history, labor history, religious history, and topics that once would have been considered unseemly, such as prostitution, lynching, social deviance, and abortion. Bergman also sought to "let in [more people] on the conversations that help shape the interpretations of our past."¹²⁰ Toward that end, he occasionally penned editorial pieces that introduced a suite of thematic articles and solicited scholarly roundtables to dissect important books in

119. Marvin Bergman, "The *Annals of Iowa*, 1947–1992 and Beyond: An Editor's Reflections," *Annals of Iowa* 52 (1993), 80–83.

120. Bergman, "The *Annals of Iowa*, 1947–1992 and Beyond," 83–84 (quotation 84).

Iowa history. Above all, Bergman sought to situate Iowa history in the broader patterns of regional and national history. In this respect, the *Annals* increasingly complemented what was emanating from the state's two university presses.

Iowa history flourished in the last two decades of the twentieth century. The *Annals of Iowa* had been transformed into a respected scholarly journal. The *Palimpsest* and *Iowa Heritage Illustrated* had been elevated to a handsome, full-color quarterly. The *Goldfinch* fed a measured diet of Iowa history to its fledgling audience. Two university presses published a combined total of approximately sixty scholarly and popular history titles during the 1990s. The preservation and production of history at the local level were stronger than ever.

This efflorescence is perhaps easier to spot in retrospect, but even at the time, there was a sense that Iowa history was coming into its own. A new State Historical Building, constructed near the state capitol, opened in 1987, giving Iowa history an architectural visibility in the center of Des Moines.¹²¹ This coincided with the reorganization of state government administrative functions in 1986, which merged the State Historical Society and the Historical Department, along with the State Office of Historic Preservation and the Iowa Arts Council, under a new Department of Cultural Affairs. Emblematic of this unification, in 1988 the society inaugurated an annual awards program to recognize excellence in Iowa history that included, in addition to the Benjamin F. Shambaugh Award bestowed upon so many university press books, the Mildred Throne and Charles Aldrich Academic History Award for the most significant article on Iowa history published in a professional journal, and the William J. Petersen and Edgar R. Harlan Lifetime Achievement Award for an individual, group, or organization that made a contribution to Iowa history.

Forethoughts on the Twenty-first Century

It is tempting to look back at the 1980s and 1990s as the golden age of Iowa history. In part, this is because the current state of

121. Importantly, the manuscript collections and publications office remained in the Centennial Building in Iowa City.

Iowa history seems unsettled, and it is still too early to know how the arc will bend in the twenty-first century. One thing is certain, however: the forces in play remain dynamic. Popular history, i.e., history that most people want to consume, remains quite strong, perhaps stronger than ever. At the same time, the professionals who engage in some aspect of history making—writers, teachers, practitioners—have more consciously sought to distinguish history from heritage. As a result, the producers of history writ large are a mixed bag. With this in mind, I offer some forethoughts on the arc as it is flexing on the 175th anniversary of Iowa's statehood, and I invite others to weigh in with their own thoughts.

The adage "all history is local" is deceptively simple. Among other things, it suggests that local history is a microcosm of the wider world. However, local history, whether written in the nineteenth century or the twenty-first, is always exclusionary.¹²² Social upheaval and controversy are infrequently covered in the chapters of local history; outsiders, however defined, are rarely mentioned. Nonetheless, the allure of local history—life as once lived in a particular place—will tempt even a hard-edged skeptic to pick up a book if that place is familiar territory. Commercial publishers have banked on this assumption since the first historical atlases appeared in the mid-nineteenth century, and the role of commercial publishers in local history has only grown stronger.

One of the most successful, Arcadia Publishing, founded in 1993, has turned local history into a formula: 128 pages with approximately 200 sepia-toned photographs and text fitted around the images. Arcadia's high-volume, low-cost business model has been phenomenally successful. Its current library exceeds 12,000 titles, which, in company-speak, "animate the cherished memories,

122. David D. Van Tassel alone argues in *Recording America's Past: An Interpretation of the Development of Historical Studies in America, 1607–1884* (Chicago, 1960) that "local historians all over the United States helped to raise the standards of historiography and critical scholarship" during the decade before the Civil War (133–34), but this brief exception proves the rule. See also David J. Russo, *Keepers of Our Past: Local Historical Writing in the United States, 1820s–1930s* (Westport, CT, 1988), and "Some Impressions of the Nonacademic Local Historians and Their Writings," in *Local History Today: Papers Presented at Three 1979 Regional Workshops for Local Historical Organizations in Indiana* (Indianapolis, 1980), 4–20.

people, places, and events that define a community."¹²³ Iowa history titles, currently 133, will surely grow in number. These "snapshot versions of the past," as one critic calls them, "work well as entertainment, but they often don't help readers truly understand how the past gave rise to current dynamics of a community."¹²⁴ In essence, many Arcadia books isolate the past from the present.¹²⁵ There is nothing inherently wrong with this—to be frank, many history museums and heritage sites have long done the same. But, as historian Michael Wallace has observed, "disconnecting the past so thoroughly from the present" tends to "diminish [people's] capacity to situate themselves in time."¹²⁶ The isolating nature of heritage can open the door to fond memories, joy, and even gratitude, but isolating the past also reinforces the societal fragmentation that abounds in our everyday lives.

In addition to Arcadia books, two new commercial publishers have entered the popular history market. In 2008 *Our Iowa Magazine*, a slick-cover bimonthly, began publishing nostalgia to keep Iowans "in the pleasant tense."¹²⁷ A year later, former newspaperman Michael Swanger began publishing *Iowa History Journal*, a bimonthly that aims to "keep alive the memories of Iowa's heritage in a manner that is both educational and entertaining."¹²⁸

123. Arcadia Publishing (website), <https://www.arcadiapublishing.com/arcadia-publishing-books>.

124. Mark Rice, "Arcadian Visions of the Past," *Columbia Journal of American Studies* 9 (Fall 2009), 10–12.

125. Any number of scholars have made this observation about the dynamics of heritage; see especially Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York, 1991); David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge, UK, 1985) and *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (New York, 1996); Michael Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory* (Philadelphia, 1996); and Roy Rosenzweig, "Marketing the Past: American Heritage and Popular History in the United States," in *Presenting the Past: Essays on History and the Public*, eds. Susan Porter Benson, Stephen Brier, and Roy Rosenzweig (Philadelphia, 1986), 21–49.

126. Michael Wallace, "Visiting the Past: History Museums in the United States," in *Presenting the Past*, 137–61, quotation 160–61.

127. *Our Iowa Magazine*, Facebook post, 4/12/2021. The magazine's website invites readers to submit brief pieces, preferably with photographs, about the "joys of living in our state."

128. Michael Swanger, "Publisher's Perspective," *Iowa History Journal* 1 (2009), n.p.

Iowa History Journal now boasts that it is “Iowa’s only popular magazine devoted exclusively to its fascinating history.”¹²⁹ This is true because *Iowa Heritage Illustrated*, which faced competition from the *Iowa History Journal*, ceased publication in 2014. While many of the articles in the journal are well written, the loss of *Iowa Heritage Illustrated* has deprived the State Historical Society of an important publication for showcasing its collections.

Popular history now is readily available at gift shops and supermarkets, not just in bookstores or by subscription. Acknowledging that popular history and local history, sometimes one and the same, are part of the greater body of Iowa history, the State Historical Society expanded its annual awards program to include a popular history award that recognizes the author of the most significant article about Iowa history published in a popular history periodical.¹³⁰ A similar community history award recognizes the best project that increases awareness of and participation in Iowa history on a local level.¹³¹ By setting standards of “most significant” and “best,” the professionals who created these awards and those who annually determine the winners are subtly distinguishing between works that meet the traditional yardsticks of historical research and writing and those that do not.

Since the late twentieth century, the research and practice of history have become more interdisciplinary in both scope and outlook, particularly in the study, preservation, and interpretation of material culture. The society’s expanded awards program reflects this trend, too, starting with the Excellence in Archaeology and Historic Preservation Award for the best archaeology or historic preservation project at the local or state level. Four additional

129. “About IHJ,” *Iowa History Journal* (website), <http://iowahistoryjournal.com/about/>.

130. The George Mills and Louise Noun Popular History Award honors George Mills, a journalist who wrote several popular Iowa history books, and Louise Noun, a social activist and philanthropist who wrote about the history of feminism in Iowa and co-founded the Iowa Women’s Archive at the University of Iowa.

131. The Loren Horton Community History Award recognizes the work of Loren Horton, who, between 1973 and 1996, served first as field services coordinator and later as senior historian with the State Historical Society. In both capacities, he worked with many local historical organizations.

awards for excellence in various categories of preservation projects are named for individuals who helped build Iowa's historic preservation program.¹³² While these awards are designed to highlight actual preservation work, any number of books, pamphlets, and articles have been published about historic places in Iowa that have been preserved since Congress passed the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966.

The tilt toward popular history also is reflected in titles published by the University of Iowa Press, which has been Iowa's only university press since 2000. While scholarly history, including natural history, still has strong editorial support, the number of books that fit under the broad umbrella of Iowana is a sizable portion of the press's catalog. As a university press, Iowa maintains a level of scholarly integrity in this genre and occasionally is rewarded for it, as happened in 2013 when *The Farm at Holstein Dip*, "a combination of memoir and social history," won the Shambaugh Award.¹³³ The press also continues to remind us that Iowa's history is not all White, as evidenced by two other Shambaugh Award-winning books: *Necessary Courage: Iowa's Underground Railroad and the Struggle against Slavery* and *Dakota in Exile: The Untold Stories of Captives in the Aftermath of the U.S.-Dakota War*.¹³⁴ Likewise, the trend of situating state history in regional context continues, as evidenced by yet another Shambaugh

132. The Adrian D. Anderson Award recognizes the highly regarded Iowa archaeologist who spearheaded the creation of the State Historic Preservation Office and served as Iowa's first Historic Preservation Officer. The Judith A. McClure Award is named for the preservation architect who was instrumental in the revitalization of the Sherman Hill Historic District in Des Moines. The Margaret Keyes Award recognizes the University of Iowa professor who led the restoration of Iowa's original state capitol in Iowa City. The William J. Wagner Award is named in honor of an Iowa preservation architect who was a pioneer in architectural preservation.

133. Carroll Engelhardt, *The Farm at Holstein Dip: An Iowa Boyhood* (Iowa City, 2012). Quotation, Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, "Leaving Home—Three Farm Memoirs from the Midwest: A Review Essay," *Annals of Iowa* 72 (2013), 162.

134. Lowell J. Soike, *Necessary Courage: Iowa's Underground Railroad in the Struggle against Slavery* (Iowa City, 2013); Linda M. Clemmons, *Dakota in Exile: The Untold Stories of Captives in the Aftermath of the U.S.-Dakota War* (Iowa City, 2019).

Award winner, *Tied to the Great Packing Machine: The Midwest and Meatpacking*.¹³⁵

The heart of scholarly publishing in Iowa history, however, beats in the *Annals of Iowa*. It is where scholars nudge critical analysis forward by venturing down new paths of inquiry, such as Susan Lawrence's three-part series on the history of medical practice in Iowa, or by reexamining old subjects from new perspectives, such as Derek Oden's study of the physical hazards that came with mechanized farming.¹³⁶ Although the cumulative effect of publishing eight-to-ten research articles per year is hard to gauge, my retrospective survey of articles, review essays, and book reviews over the past two decades strongly suggests that the *Annals* functions, at least in part, as a quasi-public forum where scholars are invited to focus a historical lens on issues that resonate in contemporary discourse. That invitation is both implicit and explicit in the "Editor's Perspective," a column that appeared regularly from 2000 to 2005 and occasionally since then. It also is explicit in a research grant program introduced in 1996 that is open to independent researchers, graduate students, and established scholars who would like to publish in the journal. First among the evaluation criteria is that proposals should demonstrate "significance and originality (or fresh treatment) of the topic and argument."¹³⁷ The aim is to cultivate innovative ideas about Iowa history subjects and explain why they should matter to readers.

While both popular history and scholarly history appear to be thriving at this moment, it also seems as though the distance between the two has grown. One of the mantras of historical training is that by examining the unvarnished past we gain insight

135. Wilson J. Warren, *Tied to the Great Packing Machine: The Midwest and Meatpacking* (Iowa City, 2007).

136. Susan C. Lawrence, "Iowa Physicians: Legitimacy, Institutions, and the Practice of Medicine," *Annals of Iowa* 62 (2003), 151–200; 63 (2004), 1–62; 66 (2007), 1–74; Derek Oden, "Perils of Production: Farm Hazards, Family Farming, and the Mechanization of the Corn Belt, 1940–1980," *Annals of Iowa* 73 (2014), 238–68.

137. Research Grant for Authors, grant guidelines, on the State Historical Society of Iowa website: <https://iowaculture.gov/history>. This program is funded by State Historical Society, Inc., and the number of annual awards has gradually increased over the years. Initially, the research grant program included an award for *Iowa Heritage Illustrated*, but this was discontinued after a few years.

into issues that confront us in the present. When historians and others are faulted for being negative in their assessments of the past or critical discussions of unvarnished history are avoided, my eyebrows raise.¹³⁸ The remarkable growth of popular history in recent decades leads me to wonder whether the commercialization of heritage has contributed to a growing chasm between history as critical analysis of the past and heritage as feel-good past. To call it a chasm may seem odd because history and heritage are commonly conflated, yet that is my point. When we begin to think of history and heritage as being the same or very similar, is there an implicit expectation that history should always point to progress, accentuate achievements, or otherwise aspire to a high note? And when it does not—when critical historical analyses reveal fault lines, expose shortcomings, or otherwise challenge the narrative of progress—does cognitive dissonance follow? As Michael Wallace might phrase the question, is there a built-in tendency to reject critical history because it is disconnected from a past that seems to be more comfortable, more in keeping with an idealized identity? While it may be too soon to know which way the arc of Iowa history will bend in the twenty-first century, I raise these questions because we are living in unsettled times.

138. My perception is perhaps skewed by recent legislative action, specifically HF 802, an Act providing for requirements related to racism or sexism trainings at, and diversity and inclusion effort by, governmental agencies and entities, school districts, and public postsecondary educational institutions, which went into effect July 1, 2021.