

# The Annals of Iowa

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## In This Issue

H. ROGER GRANT examines the rise and decline of an important twilight railroad in Southwest Iowa, the Atlantic Northern & Southern. Grant's work reveals the complex and occasionally competing interests that contributed to the development of the line. In a saga that ranges from hamlets like Grant and Kimballton to cities like Des Moines and even to international railroad syndicates across the Atlantic, Grant demonstrates the importance of railroads, even in the early twentieth century.

VOLUME 80 & 81 INDEXES are also featured in this issue. Each fall, the *Annals* publishes an index for the previous year's volume; however, last year we opted to delay the Volume 80 index to make more room for some of the award-winning content that we featured in our special 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition. These indexes are helpful guides to the material we've covered in the past two years.

## Front Cover



ANGELA WASESKUK

*Common Milkweed*, 2020

Ink on Paper

20" x 30"

*Artist statement included inside.*

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Andrew Klumpp, editor

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## Editor's Perspective

AS WE WRAP UP VOLUME 81 of the *Annals* this fall, our two features—on the cover and in the main article—focus on two pieces of Iowa history that represent distinct yet ubiquitous parts of our state's past: the railroad and the milkweed.

H. Roger Grant, a longtime friend and supporter of the *Annals*, explores the rise and decline of a twilight railroad in Southwest Iowa: the Atlantic Northern & Southern. His piece reminds us of the tremendous value of railroads, especially prior to the rise of motorized travel. He highlights how the drama, excitement, and politicking associated with the rails was not confined to the cluster of communities served by the new line but extended throughout the state and even across the Atlantic.

If the railroad marked a rise in industrialization and the transformation of the prairie, Angela Waseskuk's milkweed on the cover reminds us of the persistence of Iowa's prairies. While much of the prairie gave way to agriculture, community building, and industry, the prairie survived, even if it had retreated to ditches, preserves, and open spaces between developments.

Fittingly, railroads and milkweeds continue to stretch to all corners of Iowa. When I grew up in O'Brien County, milkweed lined the ditches on my daily bus ride to school along Highway 18, and at least once a day, a train still sped through my hometown. Today in Des Moines, every day I walk my dog by a neighbor's patch of the same milkweed that marked my youth and trains rumble along not far from the *Annals* offices at the Iowa Capitol Complex. In many ways, milkweed and railroads are as iconic in Iowa as corn or the Field of Dreams.

In a change of pace, this issue also includes two indexes, one for last year (Volume 80) and another for our current year (Volume 81). In order to make room for the extra content we published in last year's award-winning special issue, we had to delay the index for the 2021 volume, but we're glad to share it with you now. Even in this increasingly digital age, many folks continue to use our annual indexes, especially when they stop by to research with us.

Although I am happy to share these indexes with you, they are, of course, reference guides and rarely make for riveting reading. Even an editor can admit as much. If you take the time to peruse them, though, I hope that these indexes are not only handy, reliable references but also intriguing glimpses at the ground that we've covered together and those who've joined us along the way. We've explored a fantastically diverse set of topics ranging from Civil War riots, Indigenous resistance to white settlement, and anti-GMO activism to the Farm Crisis, Chinese immigration, and Southwest Iowa railroads. We've featured articles and essays by 28 authors, reviewed over 100 books, and highlighted work by 20 Iowa artists. Our articles have taken us from Ruthven in the far northwest to Keokuk in the southeast and from cities like Des Moines to hamlets like Beacon. Much like the railroads and milkweed that take center stage in this issue, these indexes reveal that readers of the *Annals* have traveled widely over the past two years into fascinating nooks and crannies of Iowa's past—and I can't wait to keep exploring with you next year.

—Andrew Klumpp, editor