

The Wapsie Valley Route: Chicago, Anamosa & Northern Railway, by Gary L. Holzinger. Quasqueton, IA: Quasqueton Area Historical Society, 2022. 117 pp. Illustrations, bibliography. \$25.00 paperback.

Reviewer H. Roger Grant is Kathryn and Calhoun Lemon Professor of History at Clemson University. He is the author of many books and articles, including *Railroads and the American People* (2012) and *A Mighty Fine Road: A History of the Chicago, Rock Island, & Pacific Railway Company* (2020).

When railroad building comes to mind, most people think of the wedding of the rails at Promontory, Utah Territory, in 1869. They are unlikely to recall the national mileage explosion that followed. It would be in the 1880s when workers installed more than 70,000 route miles. Yet there would be another wave that occurred after the depression of 1893–97 and continued until the outbreak of World War I. Iowa participated in both booms. In the 1880s residents saw their trackage soar from 4,779 miles in 1880 to 8,366 a decade later. Finally, in 1914 the state’s network peaked at 10,019 miles, ranking it fourth in the nation.

Branches built by trunk roads mostly contributed to these latter-day construction activities in Iowa. Yet independent shortlines were part of the story. The greatest cluster appeared in the southwestern section of Iowa between 1907 and 1913 with the fifty-four-mile Atlantic Northern & Southern being the largest. Several also emerged in central and eastern counties. While the longest was the Muscatine North & South, the Chicago, Anamosa & Northern (CAN) sported considerable mileage when compared to other Hawkeye State shortlines. Resembling many of its “twilight era” counterparts it too disappeared during the World War I era.

Backers of the Chicago, Anamosa & Northern sought several objectives. They wanted to provide Anamosa with a third railroad outlet; the North Western and Milwaukee served this Jones County seat with only branches. Then there was the “inland” town of Quasqueton that had long sought the iron horse. In order to make this project more useful and profitable, the CAN aimed for Waterloo. Possibilities also existed for townsite creation; after all, before motor vehicles and all-weather roads became common closely spaced villages made sense.

Local historian Gary Holzinger has painstakingly explored the history of the CAN. He traces this thirty-five-mile shortline from its inception in 1903 when a Dubuque real estate business spearheaded the project. Two years later its construction firm completed a twenty-mile line from Anamosa to Coggon and an interchange with the Illinois Central. After considerable struggling the CAN reached Quasqueton in 1912. But it never built beyond that Buchanan County town, and three years later it suspended operations. Rails and other salvageable metals,

which commanded strong scrap prices during World War I, modestly mitigated the money lost in its construction and for operational debts.

Notwithstanding its brief life, the CAN had a positive developmental impact on its service areas in Jones, Linn, Delaware, and Buchanan Counties. Shipping costs for livestock, grain, coal, and other bulk commodities were significantly reduced; speed increased for less-than-carload freight and U.S. mail; and personal travel options improved. The arrival of the iron horse gave rise to several new settlements: Jackson, Praireburg, Robinson, and Kiene. When the railroad shutdown, they faded away.

The Wapsie Valley Route contributes to Iowa railroad history. It is attractively produced and includes extensive illustrations, including rare construction photographs. Holzinger has done his research. Undeniably, he encountered a limited range of source materials with newspapers being the most useful. Residents with family stories about the railroad were also tapped. What is disappointing is that the CAN has not been placed into the larger context of late-day Iowa railroads. After 1900 the state saw multiple new steam shortlines and electric interurbans. In fact, the Manchester & Oneida, which lasted an amazing 50 years, opened nearby in 1901. Still the author and the Quasqueton Area Historical Society can take pride with this publication.

Religion and Politics Beyond the Culture Wars: New Directions in a Divided America, edited by Darren Dochuk. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2021. ix, 359 pp. Notes, index. \$55.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Rachel E. C. Beckley is a lecturer in the department of History and the department of Religious Studies at the University of Kansas. Her research focuses on American evangelicalism and scriptural interpretation in U.S. history.

Darren Dochuk's edited volume *Religion and Politics Beyond the Culture Wars* challenges the binary expressed in the phrase "culture wars." Scholars of American politics and religion, Dochuk admits, have inadvertently fueled the flames of this presumed polarization. Hoping to "stretch [scholars'] narratives and analysis beyond overly static tropes" (5), Dochuk and the 13 contributors provide a breath of fresh air for those interested in muddying the proverbial waters of the left-right dichotomy. The volume does this first by bringing in new methodologies; second, by eschewing the study of elite subjects; third, by examining other "polarities of tension" (8) that erupted in political and religious debates; and fourth, by questioning the perceived unity of religious