

cance of the court's influence on the conduct of the war, particularly in discussing the 5-4 ruling in the *Prize Cases* (1863) in favor of the administration's blockade of the southern states. Ross suggests that "had the dissenters carried the day, the Union war effort might have been badly undermined" (87). Yet he admits that Lincoln and the Republican Congress would most likely have simply ignored an unfavorable decision as they did in *Ex Parte Merryman* (1862). One might also reasonably wonder why Ross persists in characterizing Miller as a moderate in terms of Reconstruction policies. As Ross himself explains, Miller quickly embraced Radical Republican plans for exiling and executing Confederate leaders, prohibiting Confederate officers from holding political office, and granting freedmen the right to vote. Furthermore, Miller's opinions in *Mississippi v. Johnson*, *Ex Parte McCordell*, and even the *Slaughter-House Cases* all upheld the principles of the military reconstruction program advocated by the Radicals in Congress.

This well-written book will be of value to both academic specialists and history aficionados. Its accessibility makes it potentially excellent for classroom use. Its extended narrative of nineteenth-century Keokuk will interest those fascinated with Iowa history. Most significantly, however, Ross makes an important scholarly contribution by illuminating the central role of the U.S. Supreme Court justices in fashioning the new American nation in the years following the Civil War.

Edmund Booth: Deaf Pioneer, by Harry G. Lang. Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press, 2004. x, 213 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 paper.

Reviewer John Williams-Searle teaches American history at the College of St. Rose. His research examines Gilded Age and Progressive Era workplace accidents and work-related disabilities.

Harry G. Lang's biography of the educator, farmer, argonaut, newspaper editor, and deaf activist Edmund Booth is fascinating, moving, and occasionally frustrating. After childhood meningitis rendered Booth blind in one eye and almost completely deaf, he attended the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut. Under the tutelage of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Laurent Clerc, Booth quickly developed sign language, reading, and writing skills. Within three years, Booth became an instructor at the school. Dissatisfied by pay discrepancies between hearing and deaf teachers, he resigned in 1839.

Booth then pursued one of his former students and future wife, Mary Ann Walworth, to the Iowa frontier. Together, they settled on land that would become the town of Anamosa. By 1849, however, he

had become completely disenchanted with farming and eagerly joined the Gold Rush, traveling west with Benjamin Clough, a fellow deaf resident of Anamosa. Historians of Iowa will be interested in the strategies that Mary Ann used—such as purchasing land, renting the farm, and moving in with relatives—to live and raise a family during Edmund's absence. Lang's account of Booth's trip along the California trail to Sacramento will help historians describe and assess deaf communities in the West.

When Booth returned to Anamosa in 1854, he soon became the manager for the abolitionist John E. Lovejoy's weekly broadsheet, *Eureka*. As editor, and later owner, he endorsed abolition and demanded civil rights for African Americans. Booth also supported woman suffrage and temperance. Lang argues that Booth's deafness made him less tolerant of the discrimination suffered by African Americans and women. Yet Booth seems to have rarely encountered discrimination himself. In fact, this biography demonstrates that deafness was hardly a disability for Booth. In the clatter of a printer's composition room, deafness was probably an advantage. Although deafness did not pose a liability for Booth, he was cognizant of the potential discrimination suffered by others. His empathy may have been fueled by the experiences of his wife, who was also deaf. She certainly sharpened his ideas about the relationship between deaf people and other marginalized groups. Mary Ann, for instance, saw a link between deafness and race when she bitterly complained about a financial injustice suffered while Edmund was in California: "Why are they cruel to me, because I am deaf. alike [*sic*] why the Masters are cruel to the slaves because they are black" (83).

This biography makes for compelling reading, but it has some frustrating flaws. It fails to engage recent historiography and often neglects historical context. For example, Lang notes that Booth remained a lifelong supporter of manualism (the use of sign language to communicate). His son, Frank Booth, was a nationally prominent advocate of oralism (the use of lip-reading and speaking). Lang could find no evidence that Edmund discussed the conflict with his son, though disputes between manualists and oralists fractured the deaf community in the late nineteenth century. It may be true that father and son never discussed this vexing issue, but greater attention to context would have helped readers understand how unusual it was for the family to agree to disagree on the central issue in deaf education.

Moreover, historian Douglas Baynton suggests that the rise of oralism was linked to nativism. To combat the perceived threat of an immigrant "other," nativists insisted that a unitary U.S. culture could only

survive with a common spoken language. By more closely examining Edmund Booth's editorials, Lang might have established his position on immigration and, by extension, tested Baynton's hypothesis. These are some of the larger questions that Lang's work points toward that would help to situate his work in the larger context of the history of deafness.

Orphan Trains: The Story of Charles Loring Brace and the Children He Saved and Failed, by Stephen O'Connor. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004. xxi, 362 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$16.00 paper.

Reviewer Joan Gittens is professor of history at Southwest Minnesota State University. She is the author of *Poor Relations: The Children of the State in Illinois, 1818-1990* (1994).

Stephen O'Connor's *Orphan Trains* is a judicious assessment of nineteenth-century child saver Charles Loring Brace, whose controversial Emigration Plan relocated a quarter of a million city children to rural America between 1854 and 1929. At a time when most agencies advocated institutionalizing children in order to reform them, Brace insisted that the only thing wrong with most children was the dreadful environment in which they lived. His equation was simple. These children needed to get out of New York. Farmers in the West needed workers. Link the two, and it would improve the prospects for both. For 75 years, children made the long journey from New York to western towns, accompanied by workers from Brace's Children's Aid Society (CAS). When they arrived at their destination, they were put on display in a local church, where the population could view them and choose a child to take home. Some children were adopted, but the CAS did not require that or consider a placement a failure if the child was treated more like a worker than a family member. There was no legal contract and no follow-up. What became of children once they were placed was not the CAS's responsibility. The CAS was pleased to hear from children and always made extravagant claims about how they fared, but for many years, until outside pressure forced a reassessment, the organization made no effort to supervise the children's situations. From the first trip west, when a CAS worker put nine small leftover children on a train from Dowagiac, Michigan, to Iowa City 200 miles away and then returned to New York, it was clear that the CAS considered its work accomplished when the children were relocated.

Charles Loring Brace was lauded in his day, but a wide range of observers also ferociously criticized the CAS. Catholics complained that their children were pirated away and turned into Protestants. Western critics accused Brace of dumping New York's problem chil-

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