Especially interesting evidence of this communal attachment was the symbolic importance of the company flag. Sewn with care by women from the community, every stitch represented a physical bond between soldiers and the folks back home. Elaborate flag presentation ceremonies ritually solidified the link between soldiers and the townspeople, creating what the authors call a "social contract." In return for supporting their families during their absence, volunteers were expected to sustain and defend the town's good reputation on the battlefield. This contract compelled soldiers to act honorably and courageously, not just for themselves but also for the sake of their families and neighbors at home. Shameful behavior broke the pact because it reflected badly on the homefolk. The description of a church congregation weeping as the Second Kansas carried its battle-scarred banner down the aisle, still fastened to the pole stained with the blood of its fallen bearers, underscores the importance of this common bond. Similarly, the notice placed in the *Atchison Champion* in 1881 listing the names of deserters from the First Kansas reveals that the deep wounds caused by those who violated that sacred trust still festered years later.

According to Piston and Hatcher, the conflict in Missouri in 1861 was not so much a "war between the states" as it was a "war between communities," where both sides fought to uphold the good name of their home towns as well as for abstract ideals of liberty and justice. By weaving together military, political, and social history, the authors of *Wilson's Creek* have produced more than just another "battle book"; they have created a rich tapestry of insights into the mindset of nineteenth-century Americans who, when they marched off to war in 1861, fought for cause, comrades, and community—but not necessarily in that order. *Wilson's Creek* is a model for future scholarship and a must-read for Civil War scholars and enthusiasts.

Southern Seed, Northern Soil: African-American Farm Communities in the Midwest, 1765–1900, by Stephen A. Vincent. Midwestern History and Culture Series. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999. xvii, 224 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. $35.00 cloth.

Reviewer Leslie A. Schwalm is associate professor of history at the University of Iowa. The author of *A Hard Fight for We: Women's Transition from Slavery to Freedom in South Carolina* (1997), she is researching the wartime meaning of emancipation in the upper Midwest.

In *Southern Seed, Northern Soil*, Stephen Vincent reconsiders the process of midwestern settlement from the perspective of African Americans and free people of color. In telling the story of the origins and evolu-

tion of two frontier communities founded by free people of color in Indiana in the 1830s, he illuminates a migration stream that led to the creation of 30 African American settlements in the Midwest by 1850, and that drew nearly one-eighth of the nation's free black population by 1860 (xiii, 45). This history challenges a historiographical tradition that has long excluded the story of black pioneers and their descendants. The book's other significant accomplishments include Vincent's extensive research into the origins and evolution of these two unique settlements, but also his effective choices about how and when to contextualize local history in larger patterns of white and black midwestern life and rural experience. The result is a thoughtful, thorough assessment of the circumstances prompting free black migration out of the upper South, and of the experience of racial minority settlers as they created settled communities in frontier neighborhoods over the course of the nineteenth century and as black rural life ultimately gave way to urban migration by the early twentieth century.

During the 1830s more than 400 free people of color left their homes in Virginia and North Carolina to create Roberts and Beech settlements in central Indiana. Their goal was to protect privileges and resources that were threatened by intensifying racism in the slave South. Considering that many in this group had been free for several generations and owned land and even slaves, they had advantages over most other African Americans who fled the slave South. Between the 1830s and the 1850s, many black and mixed-race pioneers in Beech and Roberts settlements improved their circumstances significantly. Economic security relied in part on the success of a small number of large landowners, but also on carefully knit relationships with the more tolerant of their white neighbors. Commerce, improvised networks that financed loans and credit, and the employment of settlement laborers by surrounding white farmers all helped create delicate but beneficial ties with more hospitably inclined whites.

Midwestern racism was a constant if fluctuating backdrop to the opportunities that the settlers found and created in these frontier settlements. As opportunity translated into greater economic stability by the 1840s and 1850s, intensifying racism and the growing frequency of assaults on free people of color encouraged the residents of Roberts and Beech settlements to turn inward, using rural isolation to their advantage as a barrier against the intrusion of racist violence. During an energetic era of community building, the settlers created autonomous churches, schools, and fraternal associations, so that even in the context of racial hostility, the pioneers and their communities thrived.

Literacy rates soared, and the communities extended their connections with other midwestern African Americans.

But the economic and social tensions of the Civil War era slowed the pace of accomplishment and gradually eroded much of the success experienced in the two settlements. During the war midwestern racism intensified, and in Indiana white critiques of emancipation and black migration were especially vicious. Even longtime allies among nearby Quakers turned away from their black neighbors and focused instead on assisting the slaves and freedpeople in the South.

The postwar trend towards increasingly commercialized agriculture combined with seriously deteriorating race relations at the end of the nineteenth century to take a great toll on the two communities. In Beech settlement, the most vulnerable, smallest black landowners steadily lost their farms to outside, white buyers. Rising land prices presented insurmountable barriers to new black settlers, and new generations were increasingly likely to choose urban life over an uncertain future in farming. Those who remained saw their families' large landholdings broken up. By the turn of the twentieth century, only six residents remained with farms of at least 40 acres.

Roberts settlement fared much better, attracting new residents and new landowners immediately after the war, so it was not until 1880 that the settlement's population began to decline. The community, Vincent points out, still remained intact at the turn of the century, but fewer than a dozen farming families continued to work their own land by the 1930s. While the exodus to the urban Midwest forced most of the community's hard-won institutions to close their doors in the early twentieth century, it also inspired a greater appreciation for the uniqueness of the settlements' history and a renewed dedication to preserving the social and familiar networks that the founders and their descendants had created.

Southern Seed, Northern Soil recalls a unique heritage that in some important ways parallels what we already know about the history of rural midwestern life. At the same time it illustrates important moments of departure. If we might wish for a fuller consideration of gender relations within the settlements or a closer exploration of the changing meaning of racial privilege for the descendants of the founding families, Vincent has nonetheless produced a fine study. The book is valuable not only for providing an impressive overview of frontier black settlement but also for placing that story in the mainstream of midwestern history.

Copyright of *Annals of Iowa* is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.