

New lands were acquired aggressively, through the Spanish-American War, for example, and these actions encouraged imperialistic designs. The section on external solutions is not a new topic, but Wrobel weaves it skillfully into the narrative, and he offers new insights by juxtaposing it with internal responses.

The final section, five of the ten chapters, explains chronologically from 1900 to the 1930s the postfrontier anxiety that came to dominate historical, literary, and political commentary. These chapters are filled with interesting examples from many diverse sources, from Willa Cather and Jack London to Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. Iowans will find Herbert Hoover's ideas on frontier anxiety revealing.

The end of the frontier meant different things to different people: it destroyed the myth of the garden; it led to the rise of corporate power and monopolies; it compressed and disorganized the labor market; it caused Americans to be less creative; it placed greater stress on the economy; and it allowed the North as a region to dominate the South and the West financially and culturally. These are worrisome considerations. By the time of the Great Depression, conservative commentators recognized some of these problems and tried to find solace in the individualism and idealism that they saw inherent in the American frontier experience. They wanted to encourage a return to those ideals. Liberal thinkers agreed with the values conservatives found in the frontier, but they saw government intervention as necessary to address those lost social and economic traits. The New Deal won out, and postfrontier anxiety was over, only to be replaced by other anxieties.

This book is a thoughtful summary of nearly a century of the history of ideas that attempted to place the meaning of frontier Iowa and the American West into the American psyche.

Cargill: Trading the World's Grain, by Wayne G. Broehl Jr. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1992. xx, 1007 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, graphs, notes, bibliography, index. \$35.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY ALEX F. MCCALLA, WORLD BANK

This long and complex book chronicles the evolution of Cargill, Incorporated from its humble beginnings in Conover, Iowa, in 1865 to its emergence as the world's largest commodity trading firm in the 1960s. It is the story of three generations of Cargills and MacMillans and the roles they played, over a century of time, in leading the modern Cargill, Inc. to become a corporate giant still focused on commodity trading but doing many other things as well.

The book begins with W. W. Cargill's arrival in Conover, Iowa, in 1865, and focuses over the next almost nine hundred pages on the three men who guided the company over the next one hundred years: the founder W. W. Cargill, his son-in-law John H. MacMillan Sr., and his grandson John H. MacMillan Jr. W. W. Cargill began his career as a grain trader and a general entrepreneur. In addition to trading grain, he was engaged, at various times between 1865 and his death in 1909, in railroads, barge transport, logging in Mexico, Arkansas, and British Columbia, retail lumber stores, and a major land development project in Montana. He was constantly buying and sometimes selling grain elevators and other business ventures. At the time of his death his empire was a crazy quilt of enterprises which was at least \$3.9 million in debt and potentially insolvent.

W. W.'s son Will was the heir apparent, but he was judged to be insufficiently mature to take over, so the task of preventing total collapse fell to John H. MacMillan Sr. MacMillan was married to Edna Cargill, W. W.'s eldest daughter, and was then running Cargill Elevator Company in Minneapolis. Whereas W. W. was a risk taker, MacMillan was a careful manager who always wanted the facts. He picked up the pieces of W. W.'s empire and created a stable and profitable enterprise rooted in the grain trade and commodity transportation. MacMillan was honest, direct, and "cautious to a fault" (847), yet Cargill, Inc. grew on his watch—1909 to the late 1920s—into a strong regional grain firm.

By that time his son, John H. MacMillan Jr., was increasingly active. In 1932 he took over as general manager. In contrast to John Sr., John Jr. was an idea man with a clear vision for the firm as a national and then international force. He was a risk taker, an amateur designer, and a power player. He talked of the grain trade as an endless belt where the company needed to control all parts. John Jr.'s enthusiasm, particularly for international shipping and trading, was tempered during his years by the more traditional skills of Austen Cargill (W. W.'s youngest son) and Cargill MacMillan (John Jr.'s younger brother). The period 1930 to 1960 saw Cargill grow from a regional grain company to a global giant. Austen Cargill died in 1957, Cargill MacMillan suffered a debilitating stroke in March 1960, and John Jr. died in December 1960. Thus, according to the author, ended an era. He treats the years since 1960 in less than four pages.

The author did the research for the book on a grant from Cargill to Dartmouth College. Clearly he had access to an enormous volume of family archives. He often quotes at length from personal letters between family members, in particular John H. MacMillan Sr. and John H. MacMillan Jr., who were apparently gifted and prolific letter writers. He also interviewed extensively many family members and

at least eighty-five retired Cargill executives. Professor Broehl presents a fascinating, in-depth story of the trials, tribulations, and successes of a complex family and the growth of a modern, and still privately held, global corporation.

The completion of a book of this magnitude and detail was a major accomplishment; the task of reading it was similarly challenging. The book has 877 pages of small-print text plus 65 pages of endnotes. In some places it is so detailed and copiously documented that one loses the broader threads of the argument. The author's meticulous care in documenting his work is laudable, but surely this fascinating story could have been told in fewer pages. The author properly sets the story in the context of rapid changes in agriculture and in the economy of the upper Midwest. He also attempts to chronicle the evolution of U.S. agricultural policy, but here he is clearly in less familiar territory, often appearing to confuse Cargill's stand on policy with what was actually going on. In the end, though, this is a book well worth reading. Anyone with an interest in midwestern agriculture, the grain trade, or commodity transportation must read it. The best part of the book is a superb concluding chapter called "Cargill's Culture." It pulls together the strengths and weaknesses of the three principal characters—W. W., John Sr., and John Jr.—and shows their clear but different imprints on the corporate giant.

Man and Mission: E. B. Gaston and the Origins of the Fairhope Single Tax Colony, by Paul M. Gaston. Montgomery, AL: Black Belt Press, 1993. xiv, 161 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, appendixes, bibliography, index. \$20.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY H. ROGER GRANT, UNIVERSITY OF AKRON

Paul M. Gaston, a professor of history at the University of Virginia, has written a modest study of his grandfather, Ernest Berry Gaston (1862–1937), who helped to launch and to guide one of the most durable utopian experiments in the country, the Fairhope Single Tax Colony. The focus of this work is not on this successful settlement, which took shape after 1894 on the eastern shores of Mobile Bay in Alabama, but rather on E. B. Gaston's pre-Fairhope years, which were spent in Des Moines, Iowa. Gaston graduated from Drake University in 1886, then followed a variety of pursuits as a young adult, including work on the *Iowa Tribune*, a local reform organ. He was a person of good hope, a seeker after a better way of life.

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