

vignettes of those classrooms and communities, all told in a highly readable, lively manner. Within the stories, she touches on some of the national and local problems that faced the schools where she taught.

The book's value as a historical document is somewhat diminished by the use of fictional names for the communities in which the author lived and worked, a device that seems unnecessary, especially when photographic reproductions of several teaching contracts display the name or number of the school district. One of those contracts provides for the dismissal of the teacher upon marriage, and another requires a loyalty oath, two important and interesting issues the author does not touch on in the text itself. However, readers, especially teachers, will find much to relate to and enjoy in this memoir.

*"This Is Herb" with The Way It Was*, by Herb Plambeck. Ames: Sigler Printing and Publishing, 1993. xv, 312 pp. Illustrations. \$12.95 paper.

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Herb Plambeck's career as an agricultural journalist covers nearly six decades. *"This Is Herb" with The Way It Was* is a compilation of columns Plambeck wrote from 1978 through 1993 for the farm journal *Wallaces' Farmer*. The wealth of people Plambeck met during his career provided him with a plethora of material for his columns. The results of interviews with many of Iowa's senior citizens, the book is a who's who of Iowa agriculture over the past century. Plambeck covers everything from Iowa's seed corn trains in 1905 to 107-year-old Edith Smith's remembrances of Christmases in the 1880s to recent Farm Progress shows. The articles appear chronologically in the book as they appeared in the magazine. Just about anything connected with Iowa agriculture—from the different types and breeds of livestock to crops to farm safety and education—is included, as well as the fun and games and heartaches of farm life. Columns on politicians, farm organizations and businesses, farm women, and major agricultural events are all included in Plambeck's book.

The book gives a sampling of the changes that have occurred in Iowa agriculture. It offers brief anecdotes of both major events and minor incidents in Iowa agriculture. Some of those interviewed by Plambeck are well known in agricultural circles, while others perhaps had only an interesting story to tell. Whatever the case, the book provides a glimpse of Iowa's rich agricultural history. For historians, the book provides a starting place for finding out little nuggets of information on Iowans.

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