

The Development of American Agriculture: A Historical Analysis, by Willard W. Cochrane. 2d ed. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993. xiii, 501 pp. Tables, graphs, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY DONALD B. MARTI, INDIANA UNIVERSITY, SOUTH BEND

This book's first edition appeared in 1979, after the author had devised and taught a course at the University of Minnesota on American agriculture's economic development. The book focused on that subject and still does. Now it also offers information about economic development since 1979 and a new chapter on environmental policy that will reward a fresh reading. Much of the book is still narrative history: the first section tells agriculture's story since Europe's American colonies were settled, and the second provides topical analysis of the forces that drove and organized development. Closing sections then offer a quantitative model of agricultural development (which may be a little challenging to noneconomists but is hardly opaque), and comments about agriculture's current developments and the climatic dangers that we now face.

This book has a unique place in agricultural scholarship. Few others survey the entirety of American agriculture's story, and none of them have Professor Cochrane's economic focus. In R. Douglas Hurt's new survey (see the review on pp. 263–65 above), economic development must share space with a wide range of other agricultural subjects; Walter Ebeling's *The Fruited Plain* (1979) hardly neglects economic development, but is especially valuable for its information on agricultural products and technologies. Cochrane offers a special focus. He also provides bibliographical suggestions, particularly of venerable classics, in his footnotes and reading lists, and an inclusive view of the whole country, including the Midwest. Iowans will find only a few specific references to their state, but Cochrane's economic story and analysis will surely advance understanding of their agriculture.

From Prairie to Corn Belt: Farming on the Illinois and Iowa Prairies in the Nineteenth Century, by Allan G. Bogue. 1963. Reprint. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1994. xxvi, 309 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, tables, bibliography, index. \$27.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY R. DOUGLAS HURT, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Little more than thirty years ago Allan Bogue published an important agricultural history of the Illinois and Iowa prairies from approximately 1840 to 1880. Today, it remains an essential study for anyone

interested in the history of American agriculture and the Midwest. Few historians have the good fortune to look back on a book after several decades, and even fewer can do so without regret, if not an occasional wince. Bogue can do both. This book has stood the test of time.

Bogue left a Canadian farm for the study of agricultural history, and he learned his lessons well under the direction of Paul Wallace Gates and James Malin. Like a good farmer, Bogue adapted to meet changing conditions. As the field evolved, he learned statistics and plunged into the manuscript census schedules to look at farmers and agriculture in a different context. Long before historians began to talk about social history, Bogue did it. Despite the use of quantification as a methodology, he kept the personal nature of farming forefront in his work.

With this reprint, Bogue has added a delightful introduction in which he relishes the favorable treatment of this work by historians, settles old scores, and candidly reflects on the things that he would do differently if he were to write the book today. Importantly, he would change little. Bogue stressed the significance of production and economics in farm life, while incorporating individual experiences to prove his points. In 1963 he got it right. Despite the passage of time, his interpretation still stands today. This is an important book as well as a good read for anyone interested in the history of agriculture, Iowa, and the Midwest. It has been called a classic, and indeed it is.

Hoboes: Wandering in America, 1870-1940, by Richard Wormser. New York: Walker and Company, 1994. 136 pp. Illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. \$17.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY TODD DEPASTINO, YALE UNIVERSITY

Late nineteenth-century Americans changed residences with remarkable frequency. Many moved annually, sometimes only down the block or across town, but often to another city or region entirely in search of work and affordable housing. The most footloose among this highly transient population were called hoboes. They were predominantly young white men who pursued the demand for wage labor wherever it took them. Richard Wormser's entertaining and richly illustrated book for young adults offers a fine introduction to the work and subculture of this group that once numbered almost a million.

Drawing heavily on firsthand accounts, Wormser reconstructs a life of back-breaking labor, constant travel, frequent persecution, and

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.