

## Book Reviews

Red River people between 1855 and 1863 brought \$1,466,766 worth of furs and robes into St. Paul, making it the second largest fur market in America. Due to already established lines of trade, grain from the Red River Valley, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan was marketed in St. Paul and Minneapolis, bypassing available water-transportation on the Great Lakes.

Primary resource material cited by the authors includes original U.S. land survey records of Minnesota and North Dakota, archives of early railroads, reports of military expeditions, records of U.S. Topographical Engineers, papers of early traders and settlers, county maps and manuscript collections. Leaving no stone unturned, the researchers consulted local historians in the more than thirty-five counties crossed by the Red River Trails.

Lengthy footnotes are deliberately included to preserve a complete record of the sources consulted, "for the benefit of subsequent researchers." The failure of earlier scholars to do so hampered the present authors' work on the project. Reference notes are located unobtrusively at the end of the text.

Lacking a concluding chapter, the text ends abruptly. The insightful preface, which draws loose ends together and provides unification, replaces a formal conclusion.

Set forth in clear, concise writing, the book is easily read and entertains as well as informs. Map sources, picture credits, and a comprehensive index fulfill the requisites for a sound historical publication.

**Teresa Rees**  
**Des Moines, IA**

*Cabin on the Second Ridge*, by Ralph L. Longley. New York: Vantage Press, Inc., 1976. pp. 166. \$6.95.

Historical fiction is often difficult to create. The author must navigate a fine line between historical accuracy and the theme of the story. In *Cabin on the Second Ridge*, Ralph Longley succeeds in blending these two factors effectively. He explains that he worked from a diary, a rather terse account left to him by his grandmother, Eliza Ann Bartlett. From some of the additional family details and events described in the book, it appears that he also used another more complete family document, the memoir left by Eliza Ann's brother Emery for his children and grandchildren. In combination, the two sources provided the

## THE ANNALS OF IOWA

outline of a tale which Longley fleshes out with dialogue, accurately detailed descriptions of daily life in early Grinnell, and interpretations of events which one suspects were part of his family's oral heritage.

The resulting novel spans the years 1855 to 1864 in Grinnell, Poweshiek County, or of Goodell, Powhatan County, as it is called in the narrative. It deals with the settlement of the Bartlett (Barrett) family in Grinnell, the marriage of Eliza Ann (Ann) to Benoni Howard (Ben Howe), and of Eliza Ann's joyless life which abruptly ends with her death at age 36. Longley wisely resists the temptation to blame the family's problems on the harsh environment of frontier Iowa, but instead shows how the personality and decisions of each person affected the outcome of his or her own life. Eliza Ann, for example, is a calm, loyal, hard-working person who shortcuts her own happiness through the choice of an unsuitable marriage partner. Her younger sister, on the other hand, was totally negative about the family's migration to Iowa yet ultimately adjusts herself to conditions, and flourishes as a result. Similarly, Eliza Ann's brother Emery and his wife Hannah come to terms with each other and with life on the prairie thus producing a workable marriage as well as an economically solid life-style.

Longley, an Iowa farmer before his retirement to Florida, researched this account of the Bartlett's fortunes in the Grinnell College Library and the State of Iowa Archives in Des Moines during the 1950s. When he lost his eyesight in 1963 he abandoned the project, letting the unfinished manuscript sit untouched in his agent's New York office for years. In 1974, his wife, Julie L. Longley, decided to finish the book for him. The manuscript, subsequently published in 1976, was first marketed by the Grange in Iowa as a Bicentennial project. The Longleys, now in their eighties, have also aided the publication of Emery Bartlett's memoirs (*The Annals of Iowa*, Fall, 1978) and the eventual publication of Eliza Ann's diary. They are to be commended for their efforts to preserve one small portion of Iowa's history.

Glenda Riley

University of Northern Iowa  
Cedar Falls, IA

*The Cherokee Indian Nation: A Troubled History.* Edited by Duane H. King. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1979. pp. xx, 256. \$12.50.

Occasionally a collection appears in which the individual selections exhibit a uniform high quality of scholarship. Such is the case with

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.