Farmers Without Farms: Agricultural Tenancy in Nineteenth-Century Iowa, by Donald L. Winters. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978. pp. xvi, 145. Maps, tables, appendices, notes, index. $15.95.

Winters, associate professor of history at Vanderbilt and author of a work on Henry C. Wallace as Secretary of Agriculture, joins a growing group studying land tenure in Iowa. (See, for example, Robert P. Swierenga, *Pioneers and Profits: Land Speculation on the Iowa Frontier* and Seddie Cogswell, Jr., *Tenure, Nativity and Age as Factors in Iowa Agriculture, 1850-1880.*) Winters tackles the question of the evils of tenantry as preached in the past by Paul Gates and Fred Shannon: "Too often scholars have studied agricultural tenancy in the Middle West with the purpose of discovering what went wrong" (p. 106). According to Winters nothing went wrong; rather, tenancy was a perfectly rational and normal part of the nineteenth century agricultural scene, at least in Iowa. He bases his argument on an analysis of the published census of agriculture and two types of samples: 1) a ten per cent sample of five townships in each of twelve counties drawn from the manuscript census of agriculture 1850-1880, which provides tenancy rates, measures of mobility of tenants to owners, and measures of the economic efficiency of agriculture by tenants and owners; and 2) an unscientific ten-county sample consisting of 2,064 farm lease contracts registered with County Recorders. All of this is undergirded by a good knowledge and discussion of economic theory as it applies to land values, mortgage rates, risk, productivity, and tenancy. Thus he focuses upon "tenancy as an economic institution" and makes no attempt to discuss social, political, or moral questions.

His five major chapters argue that tenancy was not an outgrowth of a malfunction of federal land policy, but a rational choice by pioneer farmers who might be evaluating an area, who did not want to start farming on virgin land, and who did not have sufficient funds to buy and equip a farm at the same time. Tenancy rates were higher in the pioneer period than in the 1860s, but rose again by 1900 to a state average of thirty-five per cent. By the later period, rates of return on land were lower than mortgage interest rates so that it made more economic sense to some to rent larger farms than could be bought and in turn to use their limited capital in production of crops. The rational economic choice argument is also bolstered by a geographic shift in rates of tenancy over time so that by 1900, the cash grain regions generally had the highest tenancy rates. (There is a disagreement between the text and map 1-2 on this.)

Winters also examines the differing farm specialization of share and cash tenants and owner-operators and concludes that here too the differences were economically rational, and that the rental arrangement was the most important influence upon production decisions. By 1900 the per cent of cash rentals had increased while share renting had declined from its formerly dominant position. This made sense because share renting dispersed risks and was preferred during the pioneer period when the risks and specializations were not well defined through experience.

He also concludes that tenants did climb the agricultural ladder in many cases, as the economy of the state matured, the age of tenants declined. There was very little evidence on the other side that foreclosures forced sometime owners to become tenants. He also found no significant differences in the type of farming enterprise employed by tenants who climbed the ladder and tenants as a whole in the same region. Finally he examines the question of efficiency of agriculture by various measures and concludes that contrary to the "traditional" view of tenancy it had no adverse effect on farming efficiency.

Thus Winters comes down on the side of the dispassionate economists and sees tenantry as a rational economic choice that allowed land owners to get income without being farmers and allowed would-be farmers to overcome high entrance costs of farming, disperse risk, and have enough operating capital to be efficient. It was an economic choice and "speculators, moneylenders, and large landholders had little if anything to do with the incidence of farm renting in Iowa" (pp. 106-7). His work clearly sheds considerable welcome light on the subject.

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The End of Indian Kansas: A Study of Cultural Revolution, 1854-1871, by H. Craig Miner and William E. Unrau. Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1978. pp. xiii, 179. $12.50.

For Mid-western readers interested in nineteenth century Indian questions, this slender, scholarly book offers plenty of food for