

*"Hurrah for My New Free Country!"* by Leon Charles Fouquet, edited and compiled by Rosalie Fouquet Davis and Mathilde Fouquet Ruggles, with a foreword by Daniel D. Holt. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990. xxiv, 212 pp. Illustrations, map, appendixes, notes, index. \$24.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY KEVIN NEUBERGER, UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

In 1868 eighteen-year-old Leon Charles Fouquet left his native France and settled near Wichita on the Kansas frontier. *"Hurrah For My New Free Country!"* is Fouquet's narrative of his life on the Great Plains as edited and compiled by his granddaughters and accompanied by a foreword by historian Daniel D. Holt. The account offers a rare first-hand description of French immigrant life in the Midwest.

Fouquet's work in Kansas as a military freighter and buffalo skinner brought him into frequent contact with Native American groups. He also worked as a ferryman, postmaster, shopkeeper, and farmer. In 1875 Leon married another French immigrant; together they had twelve children—five of whom died in infancy. After his marriage, Leon moved his family to Oklahoma Territory and ran a tent store during the Cherokee Strip land rush. Later in his life he operated a nationally recognized fruit farm near Chandler, Oklahoma.

Fouquet's narrative will appeal to western history enthusiasts captivated by the stereotypical "cowboys and Indians" frontier story. On a deeper level his story offers an excellent first-person account of various aspects of life in midwestern frontier and "settled" rural communities. The importance of freighting in the rural economy is well illustrated. Readers will see the "composite" nature of large portions of rural economic life as they follow Leon from job to job. His narrative also suggests the need for further research on the midwestern frontier. Is his depiction of the tensions and open hostilities between married and single homesteaders accurate? If so, did such tensions spatially segregate homesteaders according to marital status, and what did this mean for rural society? Scholars interested in midwestern rural life will find this book a useful primary source.

*Looking in Windows: Surprising Stories of Old Des Moines*, by George Mills. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1991. viii, 272 pp. Illustrations, index. \$24.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY BARBARA BEVING LONG, FOUR MILE RESEARCH COMPANY

George Mills's book consists of a collection of stories about Des Moines. They are grouped chronologically, beginning with Indian

occupation and removal and continuing through four more sections covering the nineteenth century, early twentieth century, pre-World War II, and the recent past. Early selections cover such key topics as the Civil War, the arrival of the railroad, and woman suffrage. Many other entries are devoted to curiosities, the sensational, and events from the police blotter—stories intended to enrich and enliven our awareness of the past. The stories, which range from approximately one-half to five pages, are told in a breezy, readable style, and the interested reader can dip into the pages at will and come up with a story. There are no footnotes, and the discussion of sources is limited.

The stories dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth century will generally be familiar to students of Des Moines and Iowa history. The stories of more recent vintage are typically less well known. With the relative paucity of historical accounts after the last comprehensive Polk County history was published in 1911, these stories are a welcome addition. It is therefore all the more disappointing that specific sources for specific stories are lacking. Although many were likely products of oral histories, Mills also clearly used newspaper accounts; even the year when some of the stories took place would have helped those interested in knowing more. A particularly fine feature of the book is the use of drawings by *Des Moines Register* cartoonist Frank Miller as well as historic photographs. Unlike all too many books dealing with history, this one makes judicious use of the illustrations. They actually illustrate the topics under discussion, rather than having been included as an afterthought. It is surprising that sources are not given for all of the photographs and that their captions are often less than enlightening. Although some might quibble about the number of stories related to prostitution, breast size, and nude dancing, the casual reader will find much that is entertaining and generally informative.

*Political Science at the University of Iowa (1859-1986): Its Association with the State Historical Society of Iowa*, by Russell M. Ross. Iowa City: State Historical Society, Inc., 1990. 84 pp.

REVIEWED BY ALAN M. SCHRODER, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA PRESS

The history of the University of Iowa's department of political science as it is described in this work might best be summarized as two eras sandwiched between two periods. In its first, preprofessional period, in the years before 1900, it was shepherded by J. L. Pickard and Isaac A. Loos as part of a very small department that encompassed all the

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