

area that links academic and public history. Tyrrell expertly weaves “threads of continuity” from Progressive historians to the 1970s and beyond. He demonstrates that Progressive historians, operating on the margins of the profession, instilled a tradition of activism among American historians that continues to the present, citing in particular the “formation of the Conference of Historical Societies within the AHA in 1904, the applied history initiatives of Benjamin Shambaugh, and the myriad of projects sponsored by the Department of Agriculture and by the New Deal . . . [t]he National Park Service, the Department of Defense, and other federal agencies” (250). That same activist strain led historians to experiment with various mass media formats to communicate with broad audiences and to wade fearlessly into the discourse on K–12 history education. These indeed are important historical ties that bind academic and public historians, and they continue to shape scholarly discourse as well as professional practice.

John Caspar Wild: Painter and Printmaker of Nineteenth-Century Urban America, by John W. Reps. St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society; distributed by University of Missouri Press, 2006. xx, 164 pp. Illustrations, appendixes, catalogue raisonné, bibliography, notes, index. \$51.95 cloth.

Reviewer Charles K. Piehl is professor of history at Minnesota State University, Mankato. He has written many articles about the relationship between art and society in the works of Robert Gwathmey.

This profusely illustrated volume is the first attempt to account for all of the American work of the Swiss-born artist John Caspar Wild (ca. 1804–1846), whose paintings and prints from the 1830s and 1840s provided a visual sense of the architecture and views of the growing cities from Philadelphia to Cincinnati, St. Louis, and the Iowa and Illinois towns of the upper Mississippi River. John W. Reps, the author of many studies of nineteenth-century urban planning and development, has published widely on the importance of views and view makers in urban development. Hence Wild, who produced important views of the changing urban surroundings, is a logical subject of this beautiful volume.

The artist arrived in Philadelphia in 1832, where he attempted to gain the patronage necessary to survive in the port city. Wild gained a general reputation and showed promise, particularly through his depiction of the Fairmount Water Works near the city, but he did not find long-term financial success, so, like so many others at the time, he left for what he hoped would be better opportunities elsewhere.

In Cincinnati in 1835 he apparently sought patrons among the commercial leaders who were flocking to the emerging city along the banks

of the Ohio River. Reps discusses Wild's many gouache paintings of the city that included views from afar, of its streets and buildings, and of its busy river landing. There the artist documented life near the river interacting with the built environment.

In 1837 Wild returned to Philadelphia, where he entered into an artistic partnership that offered him greater financial security. As Reps demonstrates, that period also proved extraordinarily fruitful for Wild's art and for those who later studied his work for its fine lithographic depictions of buildings and city views. His subjects included many of the major public structures of Philadelphia, including the U.S. Bank, the Merchants' Exchange, the State House, the University of Pennsylvania, the U.S. Mint, and several large churches. Wild's four-sheet panorama of the city (1838), done from the steeple of the State House, provides the best aerial impression of the city's street grid at the time.

Reps follows Wild's career from Philadelphia back to the nation's interior, where the artist depicted the changing life in the rapidly growing towns and cities along the Mississippi River. His many images of St. Louis, his next stop, "are by far the most important graphic record of an urban world that was even then being remade almost daily" (55). From views looking across the water from Illinois to lithographs of major city buildings, such as the cathedral and courthouse, he captured the flavor of the buildings. He produced lithographs of Front Street, mansions, and steamboats, and watercolors of surrounding communities, from St. Charles, Missouri, to Cairo, Illinois. Wild's lithographic panorama of St. Louis, while not as spectacular or as detailed as that of Philadelphia, provides a sense of how that city, not too distant from the frontier, was developing its own urban pattern.

Wild ended his artistic pilgrimage with prints and paintings of the nascent cities, towns, and forts of the upper Mississippi valley, in places such as Bloomington (now Muscatine), Moline, Davenport, Galena, Dubuque, Fort Snelling, and other river locations that quickly were becoming important to the region. His death in 1846 was little noted at the time, and his art was overshadowed by his contemporaries. However, as Reps calls attention to Wild's work through the many plates and other reproductions in this volume, the artist stands out today for his depictions of the buildings, streets, and views of the process of becoming an urban nation. Some towns never became cities and some became great metropolises. Most enlightening are the inclusion of reproductions of prisons, an asylum, and an almshouse among his lithographs of the great edifices of Philadelphia. Certainly these were institutions of a new age in America.