

under the North American Free Trade Agreement. The Great Lakes region is key to the North American economy, and a superhighway connecting the three NAFTA participants would likely enhance Detroit's importance in international trade. At the same time, such developments, according to Smith, have meant that the border has become a less significant factor in terms of Canadian nationalism.

Perhaps the most interesting chapter is authored by the only Canadian. Randy Widdis, professor of geography at the University of Regina, examines some opposing views of "borderlands" and applies them to the Great Lakes region. Widdis is concerned with the various ways inhabitants view the border: psychologically, economically, and culturally. Widdis also provides a five-page appendix that outlines the sources for his research and their availability, and briefly sketches the important demographic differences among the migrants according to direction and region.

The Great Lakes borderland's relative invisibility compared to, say, the American Southwest or the Golan Heights, is an important reason for it to be better recognized and understood. This volume is valuable to readers interested in North American trade, history, or the relationship between the United States and Canada.

British Buckeyes: The English, Scots, and Welsh in Ohio, 1700–1900, by William E. Van Vugt. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2006. xiii, 295 pp. Illustrations, tables, maps, notes, appendix, bibliography, index. \$55.00 cloth.

Reviewer Monica Rico is assistant professor of history at Lawrence University. She has written about British settlers in the Midwest and West.

In *British Buckeyes*, William E. Van Vugt returns to the subject of British emigration to the United States, a topic he ably explored in *Britain to America: Mid-Nineteenth-Century Immigrants to the United States* (1999). In the acknowledgments of the current volume, Van Vugt warmly thanks Charlotte Erickson, the reigning expert on British emigration to the United States, and her influence is clear in this detailed and comprehensive study of the contributions made by British emigrants to Ohio. Drawing extensively on sources in both the United States and Great Britain, Van Vugt demonstrates the important role that the British played in developing Ohio's agriculture, industry, religious life, and educational institutions. These "invisible immigrants" (to use Erickson's classic phrase) blended in easily with native-born white Americans due to their linguistic, religious, and cultural similarities, and for that reason, their place in American history is often disregarded.

Van Vugt begins his study in the eighteenth century, when what would become the state of Ohio was a contested border zone between the British and French empires. He shows how even after American independence, Britons remained interested in the region for its commercial and agricultural opportunities. Van Vugt effectively weaves British history and local Ohio history together to explain the “push” and “pull” factors that brought English, Welsh, and Scottish men and women to new lives in America. Like nearly all immigrants, the British Buckeyes confronted terrible hardships, but they also demonstrated remarkable resilience. One great strength of Van Vugt’s analysis lies in the way he describes ethnic differences among the British rather than overgeneralizing about the diverse people and cultures of the British Isles; his discussions of emigrants from Guernsey and the Isle of Man are especially intriguing.

Van Vugt unquestionably proves his main argument, namely that “Ohio’s long and rich history cannot be fully understood and appreciated without knowing the British Buckeyes” (ix). To support that claim, he particularly relies on the capsule biographies in the turn-of-the-century county histories familiar to many researchers of midwestern communities. At times, *British Buckeyes* seems to falter and lose momentum under the burden of including so many individual stories, interesting though they are. Some additional context and analysis might have strengthened some of these more lengthy sections of biographical summary.

Readers interested in comparing the experiences of the British in Ohio to those of other parts of the Midwest will receive little assistance from Van Vugt, who keeps his focus determinedly on Ohio alone. However, in his recovery of these long-overlooked stories, Van Vugt shows us that the “invisible immigrants” should be revealed anew to contemporary researchers in local history.

Jewish Life in Small-Town America: A History, by Lee Shai Weissbach. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005. x, 436 pp. Illustrations, tables, notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$45.00 cloth.

Reviewer Nora Faires is professor of history at Western Michigan University. Her many published works include *Jewish Life in the Industrial Promised Land, 1855–2005* (2005).

Lee Shai Weissbach’s thoughtful history contributes substantially to two historiographies rarely joined — the study of American small-town life and the evolution of Jewish experience in the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. *Jewish Life in Small-*