

the key issue was “how westerners perceived themselves in relation to the East” (4–5). Unfortunately, her grounding in the historiography of women’s and higher education is less thorough; she overlooks recent works on the history of normal schools, academies, and colleges that contradict her claims that western land-grant institutions were unique in allowing women to pursue military training and to engage in physical activity under “the gaze of male or mixed-gender audiences” (203), and in offering fine arts along with practical courses, including domestic science. She seems puzzled that the curriculum offered “rugged farm daughters” elements of “genteel finishing” (153), but historians of education understand that students from lower-class and farming backgrounds were commonly interested in classical education for social class mobility. Their desire to gain cultural capital shaped the curriculum and culture of land-grant and other institutions. It is surprising that Radke-Moss largely overlooks student agency in relation to social class because students’ roles in shaping gender practices are so central to her account. She may go a little too far in suggesting that their land-grant experiences *caused* women graduates to be activists later in life, but *Bright Epoch* leaves no doubt that women students successfully negotiated new gender roles. As Radke-Moss hopes, her “framework of examining gender relations” may indeed “serve as a model for understanding gender negotiations in higher education and other historical contexts” (303).

Follow the Flag”: A History of the Wabash Railroad Company, by H. Roger Grant. Railroads in America Series. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004. xii, 292 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, index. \$49.95 cloth.

The Hook and Eye: A History of the Iowa Central Railway, by Don L. Hofsommer. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005. x, 154 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 cloth.

Reviewer William Friedrichs is professor of history and director of the Iowa History Center at Simpson College. He is the first recipient of the Iowa History Prize.

Roger Grant and Don Hofsommer are among our leading railroad historians. For nearly four decades, these two prolific scholars have been producing solidly researched, well-written, lavishly illustrated books about a number of the nation’s railroads. These two studies are no exception. Grant writes of the regional Wabash, while Hofsommer examines the small Iowa Central Railway.

The Wabash's origins date back to 1838, when its earliest predecessor, the Northern Cross Railroad, operated its inaugural train across eight miles of track in central Illinois. From those small beginnings, and after bankruptcies, buyouts, reorganizations, and mergers, the 522-mile Toledo, Wabash & Western Railway was created in 1865 with a direct line from Toledo, Ohio, to the Mississippi River. Ferry service and then a bridge opened a link to Keokuk, Iowa. From there, the Des Moines Valley Railroad ran 162 miles northwest to Des Moines, connecting the capital city in August 1866 to the nation's growing rail network.

The next real growth spurt for the railroad took place under seasoned businessman Cornelius Garrison, who saw considerable promise in both the St. Louis, Kansas City & Northern Railroad (StLKC&N) and the Wabash Railway. Garrison purchased control of both and built extensions to Omaha on the former and Chicago on the latter. In 1879 Jay Gould entered the picture, gaining control of the Wabash and getting usage rights over the StLKC&N. Later that year, Gould and others merged the two midwestern lines, creating the 1,400-mile Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific.

That was only the beginning of Gould's Wabash plans, and Grant correctly characterizes the much maligned business figure as "more of a builder than a wrecker" of railroads (52). Through purchase, lease, and construction, Gould more than doubled the system so that by 1883 the Wabash consisted of 3,500 miles of track with mainlines reaching into Chicago, Council Bluffs, Des Moines, Detroit, Kansas City, St. Louis, and Toledo. Except for an extension into Buffalo, New York, Gould had laid out the basic contours of what would be the Wabash for the rest of its history. Although bankruptcy followed in 1884, the Wabash emerged poised for success at the end of the decade. By that time, Gould's son George was representing the family's interest on the company's board. George was easygoing and well intentioned, but he was also impulsive and lacked his father's business skills and strategic vision. Under his leadership, the company expanded but ended up in bankruptcy and a long period of reorganization.

A smaller Wabash resulted in 1915, but it remained an important interregional railroad. Grant describes the ups and downs of the Wabash until it ultimately became part of the giant Norfolk Southern Railway in 1982.

Packed with information, Grant's account provides details of the popular railroad, including the origins of its unique flag symbol and background of the famous "Wabash Cannonball" ballad. Such tales and a large number of equipment photographs will please railroad

enthusiasts, but Grant also tells the more complex story of the Wabash in relation to other railroads and American economic development. These angles make the book important for scholars as well.

Don Hofsommer's is a smaller book about a much smaller railroad. By the 1860s, Iowa had become the focus of significant railroad building out of Chicago. The state was soon dominated by four major railroads running across it horizontally. Chicago ended up controlling much of Iowa's trade moving eastward, and a number of local merchants were interested in creating another transportation option by connecting two other major cities in the region, St. Louis and Minneapolis–St. Paul, with a north-south railroad running through Iowa.

A first effort at the grand scheme failed in 1869, but then a coal mining company in Eldora, Iowa, with a much smaller vision built a 27-mile railroad north to Ackley to market its coal to the Illinois Central. Before the line was completed, however, the Illinois Central backed out of the purchase agreement, and it had no interest in buying or leasing the tiny railway. That led supporters of the Eldora Railroad and Coal Company to rethink their strategy and adopt the earlier idea of a St. Louis to Minneapolis railroad through Iowa. From the very outset, the move pitted the upstart railroad against established rivals; its survival would require almost constant expansion.

Growth, bankruptcy, and restructuring followed until the early 1880s, when the company, now called the Central Iowa Railroad, operated from Ottumwa, with through service to St. Louis or Kansas City, north to Mason City, with through service to Minneapolis–St. Paul. Branches were built off the mainline to attract additional business. In 1883 Central Iowa completed a line east to Peoria, Illinois, in hopes of luring traffic away from Chicago because terminal interchanges were much less congested, saving shippers time and money.

Revenues rose, especially in its most important freight business, but high costs and stiff competition from larger, metropolitan-based carriers meant that the road struggled consistently. It was reorganized as the Iowa Central Railway in 1888, and 12 years later Edwin Hawley, who controlled the Minneapolis & St. Louis (M&StL), purchased a controlling interest in the Iowa Central as well. The railroads were operated closely together until 1912, when the Iowa Central became part of the M&StL. Fifty years later, the M&StL merged into the Chicago & North Western, which in turn ended up as part of the massive Union Pacific in the 1990s.

For its brief corporate existence, the Iowa Central was a small but significant railroad for many Iowans, providing a convenient route for both shippers and passengers. Hofsommer tells the story of the Iowa

Central well, and in so doing, he suggests the difficulties faced by countless other small railroads operating around the country at the same time.

Don't let the size and shape of these books fool you. Although they appear designed to grace coffee tables, they are comprehensive histories of two understudied midwestern railroads and will be worthwhile reading for those interested in transportation history, Iowa, or the Midwest generally.

Fire Light: The Life of Angel De Cora, Winnebago Artist, by Linda M. Waggoner. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008. xxviii, 355 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 cloth.

Reviewer Jacki Rand is associate professor of history at the University of Iowa. She is the author of *Kiowa Humanity and the Invasion of the State* (2008).

This biography of the famed late nineteenth-century artist Angel De Cora is a chronological narration from her childhood in Nebraska until her death from the Spanish flu in 1918. The author interprets De Cora as a vaguely defined "culture broker" whose life was dedicated to the pursuit and diffusion of native art and design. She intimates that De Cora inherited the tendency to cultural mediation from her maternal lineage, which included intermarried Winnebagos and French fur traders. De Cora's father, who returned to the Wisconsin Winnebagos permanently when she was quite young, was a grandson of a significant Winnebago leader. Given that the book begins with a rather confusing discussion of De Cora's maternal and paternal genealogy, readers would have benefited from a genealogical chart. Although contemporary Winnebagos surely will find the genealogy useful, it appears that it mainly serves the author's purpose of supporting the culture broker thesis.

De Cora's early years demonstrate a commitment to studies in drawing and painting. She studied with Dwight William Tryon at Smith College, Howard Pyle at the Drexel Institute of Art, Science, and Industry, and Joseph Rodefer DeCamp at the Cowles Art School. She subsequently studied for two years at the Museum of Fine Arts before leaving Boston for New York City, where she sought to support herself as an artist while combating various debilitating illnesses.

De Cora was a combination of reserved native woman, sophisticate in the worlds of art and federal Indian affairs, and public intellectual. Despite her talents and great influence in the world of design, in challenging conventional views of native people, in shaping Indian education, and in representing native people to white audiences, she seemed