

radical experiment that regimented farmers and endangered America's freedoms, cut off its funding. Wartime prosperity accelerated the mass exodus in the Great Plains from the farm to the city.

One of the most impressive features of the book is the depth of the author's research, which includes work at the National Archives, the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, the University of Kansas, Marquette University, and state historical societies in Kansas, Nebraska, and Wisconsin. His work is carefully documented, and the book includes a valuable comprehensive essay about sources. In addition to providing an account of the rehabilitation program at the state level, he also includes studies in microcosm of the results of the rehabilitation program in Barnes County, North Dakota, and Coffey County, Kansas. The writing is excellent, and the arguments are clearly stated and carefully reasoned. There are masterful discussions of the politics and culture of Great Plains farmers and of the complex programs and interrelationships that emerged from the bewildering array of government programs initiated during the New Deal. This book will be of particular interest to New Deal scholars and students of agricultural history and of general interest to readers who care about the history of the Great Plains.

*Disputed Ground: Farm Groups that Opposed the New Deal Agricultural Program*, by Jean Choate. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2002. v, 232 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$32.00 paper.

Reviewer Michael W. Schuyler is professor emeritus at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. He is the author of *The Dread of Plenty: New Deal Agricultural Policies in the Middle West, 1933-1939*.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt became president in 1933, one of his greatest challenges was to restore prosperity to the farm economy. The policy of controlled production that he ultimately embraced, combined with a host of other New Deal farm programs, proved to be a watershed in the U.S. agricultural history. Although many farm leaders and agricultural organizations, including the American Farm Bureau Federation, supported Roosevelt, many other farm groups, particularly in the Midwest, bitterly opposed the president, his secretary of agriculture, Henry A. Wallace, and the New Deal's overall approach to the farm crisis.

In *Disputed Ground*, Jean Choate provides a detailed account of seven organizations that opposed the government's efforts to control agricultural production: the Missouri Farmers Association, the Farmers Union, the Farmers' Holiday Association, the Farmers Independ-

ence Council, the National Farmers Process Tax Recovery Association, the Corn Belt Liberty League, and the Farmers Guild. She gives individual attention to opposition leaders such as William Hirth of Missouri, John Simpson of Oklahoma, Milo Reno and Edward Kennedy of Iowa, Dan Casement of Kansas, and D. B. Gurney of South Dakota. She gives some attention to the years immediately preceding World War II, but most of the chapters concentrate on the controversy that surrounded the New Deal and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration during Roosevelt's first two years in office. Choate focuses on the efforts of the New Deal's opponents to force the government to support "cost of production" legislation and to return to farmers the processing taxes that were used to finance the AAA's production control programs.

The major strength of the book is the depth of the author's research. Although many other historians have covered agrarian opposition, from both the left and the right, to New Deal farm programs, Choate makes a significant contribution to scholarship as she chronicles in great detail the careers and activities of midwestern farm leaders who opposed the New Deal. Although she cites a number of standard secondary sources, her research is original and her documentation is almost exclusively from archives at state and university libraries in Colorado, North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri, as well as the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and the Carl Albert Congressional Archives. She also conducted a number of interviews that enrich her study.

Choate does not attempt to evaluate the successes and failures of the New Deal, nor does she provide new explanations for why a number of midwestern farm leaders opposed the New Deal. In her conclusion, however, she does discuss why farm leaders and their organizations ultimately failed to force Roosevelt to abandon efforts to limit agricultural production. Although the New Deal's opponents were enthusiastic and had strong leaders, they did not have enough money to deliver their message, suffered from infighting, lacked a unified program, failed to win the consistent support of either the Republican or Democratic Parties, faced a vigorous propaganda campaign by the Department of Agriculture, and ultimately were silenced by the prosperity generated by the outbreak of World War II. The book would have been stronger if the author had also discussed opponents' reactions to other New Deal agencies such as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Resettlement Administration, Farm Security Administration, Farm Credit Administration, and Soil Conservation Service.

This book will be of interest to scholars of the New Deal, general readers who are interested in the history of the Midwest during the 1930s, and students of agricultural history. The book is well written, the scholarship is outstanding, and the study helps us to better understand the early years of the New Deal.

*Enemies Within: Iowa POWs in Nazi Germany*, edited by Michael Luick-Thrams. Mason City: Traces, 2002. Unpagged. Illustrations. \$20.00 paper.

*Signs of Life: The Correspondence of German POWs at Camp Algona, Iowa, 1943–46*, edited by Michael Luick-Thrams. Mason City: Traces, 2002. iv, 99 pp. Illustrations. \$20.00 paper.

Reviewer Edward J. Pluth is a retired professor of history at St. Cloud State University. His research interests include German prisoners of war, the Ho-Chunk, and rural history.

Michael Luick-Thrams, the editor of the two books under review, has as his major objective to "help both Americans and Germans critically examine [their] shared past" of World War II. To do this, he founded TRACES, a non-profit organization that collects, preserves, and publishes "stories of Upper Midwesterners and Germans as they came into contact" during that war, particularly as prisoners of war. The two books noted here focus on Iowa POWs in Germany and German POWs in Iowa.

*Enemies Within* includes the wartime journal of an Iowa soldier captured in North Africa in 1943, the narrative of an Iowan captured in the Battle of the Bulge in 1944, and brief secondary accounts of three other Iowa POWs. The editor contributes short descriptions of the two main infantry divisions in which the Iowa POWs served and an overview of the German POW camp system. The two lengthy accounts are the heart of the book. Both Iowans experienced hardships as POWs, including lack of adequate food, clothing, and shelter, long forced marches, and crowded closed boxcars as they were moved from one stalag to another. Their writings reveal, among other insights, morale problems, the mental, spiritual, and physical struggle to survive, thoughts of home, and anxieties about their life after the war.

*Signs of Life* is a compilation, in two parts, of some 282 letters from, to, and about German POWs interned at Camp Algona, Iowa, from 1943 through 1945. The letters in part one, written during the war, represent 29 different individuals. The German POW letters reveal a deep anxiety for the welfare of their families and a longing for home. Although subject to censorship by U.S. and German authorities, the letters refer to the POWs' health and good treatment in the camps, work routines,

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