

Russell's contemporaries and splendid characterizations of such cultural icons as Joseph Pulitzer, William Randolph Hearst, and W. E. B. DuBois. Unfortunately, the quality of the author's presentation is marred throughout the book by typographical errors, stylistic inconsistencies, and factual inaccuracies. For example, the year of Russell's death—given by the Library of Congress as 1941—is stated on page ix of Miraldi's book as 1940 and on page 268 as 1941; an endnote on page 314 even suggests that Russell died in 1901. Proofreading oversights such as these diminish reader confidence in an otherwise persuasive presentation of Charles Edward Russell's life and times.

The Romance of Small-Town Chautauquas, by James R. Schultz. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002. 185 pp. Illustrations, appendixes, bibliography, glossary, index. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Michael Kramme is professor of theater, emeritus at Culver-Stockton College. He is the author of 15 books for middle-school students. His articles have appeared in *The Palimpsest*, *Iowa Heritage Illustrated*, *Missouri Magazine*, *Theatre History Studies*, and *Old West*. He is currently the executive director of the Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance.

Chautauqua was a major source of education, cultural enlightenment, and entertainment that flourished in rural America from 1904 through 1932. James R. Schultz grew up hearing stories of chautauqua from his father, who served as a chautauqua superintendent. Schultz used his father's notes and materials as a basis for his research for *The Romance of Small-Town Chautauquas*, which gives an overview of that phenomenon.

In 1874, a group of teachers and ministers established the Chautauqua Institute near Lake Chautauqua, New York. A cross between a camp meeting and a lecture series, it proved so successful that several towns soon established their own gatherings patterned after the New York organization. One of the earliest independent chautauquas was held in Clear Lake, Iowa, in 1876.

In 1904, Keith Vawter of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, developed an efficient and economical circuit system that brought traveling chautauquas to thousands of communities throughout the country. Vawter assumed management of the Redpath Lecture Bureau to form the Redpath-Vawter Chautauqua organization. "Signs outside Cedar Rapids, Iowa where Vawter grew up, proclaimed the town as the 'home of Keith Vawter, founder of the circuit chautauqua'" (56).

A few communities, such as Red Oak and Fairfield, Iowa, built permanent chautauqua pavilions, but most towns held the presentations in a large tent. The tent outfit and a manager arrived by train.

Local workmen erected the tent, chairs or benches were set up, and the stage and lighting were set. The stage was a simple platform with a piano at one side and a speaker's stand with table and drinking water nearby.

Some chautauquas were three- or five-day affairs, but most lasted the entire week. Lectures, orations, musical presentations, and other entertainments were held in the big tent daily. A "morning girl" was provided to coordinate the children's program. The children were entertained by stories, games, and activities while their parents attended the program. Many times the children were also rehearsed in a pageant to be presented on the closing day.

Many leading politicians and other personalities of the time earned good money on the chautauqua circuit. The most noted of these was William Jennings Bryan, the three-time candidate for president. It is estimated that he gave his famous "Price of Peace" speech to more than three thousand Chautauqua audiences. Other notables were Governor Robert "Fighting Bob" La Follette of Wisconsin, Missouri Congressman and Speaker of the House Champ Clark, Booker T. Washington, Admiral Robert E. Peary, Julia Ward Howe, Susan B. Anthony, Socialist presidential candidate Eugene V. Debs, Al Smith, and Herbert Hoover (before his presidency).

Music was always the major entertainment, with a variety of bands, orchestras, and soloists. The presenters ranged from opera stars to yodelers, violinists, and bell choirs. The program provided a wide variety of additional offerings, including magicians, cartoonists, impersonators, and full-length plays.

The popularity of chautauqua continued to increase. By 1920, one source reported that 21 companies were operating 93 chautauqua circuits in 8,591 towns, with more than 35 million people in attendance. In September 1921 *Billboard* magazine reported that the number of towns visited had grown to 9,875, with attendance reaching 36.5 million. Gross receipts for that year were nearly ten million dollars (24). Schultz credits the founders of the tent chautauqua with its success. "They were sound businessmen, willing to take risks, and sensitive to the cultural needs and preferences of the communities in which they operated. Collectively, they changed the cultural map of America" (66).

Attendance began to decline in the late twenties. A combination of the Depression, the ability to travel greater distances on hard-surfaced roads, and competition from talking motion pictures and radio soon caused chautauqua's demise.

The book is not an in-depth scholarly study, nor was that Schultz's intention. Instead, he intended "to approach the subject from a personal

perspective, focusing on the human-interest side of the tent chautauqua story" (x). His story of chautauqua is concise and easy to read. First-hand reminiscences from attendees as well as others involved in the business enhance the narrative, and the book is better illustrated than previous ones on the subject. Many of the images, reproduced for the first time, not only help to tell the story, but also give a sense of the period. *The Romance of Small-Town Chautauquas* should appeal to those interested in the Midwest, entertainment history, or popular culture.

Hearts & Homes: How Creative Cooks Fed the Soul and Spirit of America's Heartland, 1895-1939, by Rae Katherine Eighmey. Carol Stream, IL: Farm Progress Companies, 2002. viii, 244 pp. Illustrations, index. \$14.95 paper.

Reviewer Virginia Wadsley is an independent scholar and freelance writer from Des Moines, who is researching a manuscript about Wallace women's work in *Wallaces' Farmer*.

Rae Katherine Eighmey has made a living connection with the past in *Hearts & Homes*, her third more-than-a-recipe book. In "finding new ways of doing things from old friends" (8), she has adapted early twentieth-century recipes to the kitchens of today. Although living history purists might claim that substituting butter for meat drippings changes the flavor and will surely find references to food processors and microwave ovens jarring, some great old recipes are now accessible to cooks used to precise measurements, regulated ovens, and present-day ingredients.

The ingredients of *Hearts & Homes* expand on Eighmey's earlier cookbooks—*Victorian Recipe Secrets* (1995), which includes historical notes, and *A Prairie Kitchen* (2001), which mixes recipes and notes with excerpts from *Prairie Farmer* magazine, 1841-1900. Eighmey's selections are highly personal, chosen from the "Hearts and Homes" department (called the "Homemaking Department" after October 1928) of *Wallaces' Farmer* magazine, 1895-1939. After culling recipes from crumbling magazine pages, Eighmey tested them on her husband and friends and added editorial notes about their context or cooking tips. She lets "voices of the past speak for themselves" (8); articles and recipes are dated and ascribed to the original magazine readers/contributors. Clipped illustrations spice up the flavor, and an index enables quick location of recipes.

The book is arranged by food categories—not always traditional, such as the chapters on "Threshers" or "Cornmeal, Pineapple and Prunes." Topical chapters that present *Woman's Life, Home Econom-*

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