

strengths and values—faith, family, and friends—in her Iowa community. “Characteristic of Midwest friendliness, Mary often looked up someone from home” (12). She wrote frequently about church services, as well as her jobs, new friends, fun times, and, with un-failing humor, of the vagaries of military life. “I was issued another pair of coverall trousers that would fit Dad. So I take a strap off a bag, draw it tight and get a gathered Dutchman breeches effect” (50).

Both academics and history buffs will find this book a useful and informative addition to World War II history. For readers who wonder why there has been such a spate of war stories recently, this volume provides answers. The war years left a lasting imprint on those who served, as well as on their families and friends; the legacy lives on. Many reasons for the current nostalgia emerge from the pages of Mary Elizabeth Osen’s writings. Her good humor, adaptability, and positive outlook in the face of hard times and difficult situations reflect the ethos of a different time and place.

Silent Friends: A Quaker Quilt, by Margaret Lacey. Urbana, IL: Storm-line Press, 1994. Reprint, Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1995. 108 pp. \$14.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY MARTHA PAXSON GRUNDY, CLEVELAND HEIGHTS, OHIO

These small fictional stories, like the patches of an heirloom quilt, stitch together the interlocking lives of three generations of the Carpenter family on their Iowa farm. The seemingly simple vignettes skillfully build a picture of rural Conservative Quakers. We first see the family’s farm and the Friends Meeting through the eyes of young Thomas, born in 1877. The stories are framed by the innocent ritual in which he and his brother bury a treasure to give something back to the land, and by his adult granddaughter’s ruminations on its meaning. In between we see William camping out in hopes of seeing a fox family and Caroline spending an idyllic summer with a baby raccoon. The stories lovingly tell of eccentric family and Friends. We glimpse Conservative Quaker culture in its reaction to a late nineteenth-century evangelist from the “other” branch of Friends, a revival meeting in the late 1930s, reactions to Quaker pacifism during World War II, and collegian Myra’s rebellion. Rachel, the wife and mother in the middle generation, expresses her pent-up anger as she lies dying, pointing to the psychological cost of Conservative Friends’ habitual silence.

Sometimes truth can be told most fully through fiction. Margaret Lacey grew up in this Iowa landscape among Conservative Friends, and she helps us understand the inner dynamics of the land and com-

munity. This small book is a gem, imparting deep insight into one strand of Iowa cultural history, that of rural Conservative/Wilburite Friends.

Opening a Window to the World: A History of Iowa Mennonite School, by Franklin L. Yoder. Kalona: Iowa Mennonite School, 1994. xvii, 319 pp. Illustrations, notes, appendixes, index.

REVIEWED BY JAMES S. HAMRE, WALDORF COLLEGE

This history of Iowa Mennonite School (IMS) was written to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the high school founded in 1945 by the Mennonite community in southeast Iowa. The author, a graduate of the school and a product of that community, discusses the people and perspectives that have shaped the institution and provides useful insights into the debates and changes that have taken place in the course of its history. He contends that although the school was founded as "an institution to shelter and protect Mennonite young people," it became "a vehicle of change, opening a window to the very world that many of the founders of IMS feared" (247). The metaphors of walls, windows, and doors are used to describe the school's history. The account, based on archival materials and personal interviews, is well documented.

An institutional history, by its very nature, is of most interest to persons with some connection to the institution under consideration. While that is no doubt true in this case, the book's appeal is not limited to Iowa Mennonites or to persons connected to IMS. The author's perceptive discussion enables readers of other backgrounds to gain greater understanding of the twentieth-century tensions and adjustments within the Mennonite version of the Anabaptist tradition as that group struggled with "the relentless forces of modernization" (x). The author's background in history and religion (B.A., University of Iowa) and graduate work in American rural history (Ph.D. candidate, University of Chicago) enable him to place the developments at IMS in the context of some of the broader cultural and religious developments in America during the period.

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.