

levels of prosperity, ingenuity, and government aid were important factors in surviving the Dust Bowl experience.

Assessing the lasting impact of the depression, Riney-Kehrberg points out that the area became prosperous again with the return of rain and the beginning of World War II. Determined not to repeat the past, farmers in southwestern Kansas increasingly relied on irrigation and tried to attract more manufacturing to diversify the economy of the area. Many of the counties she studied, however, never regained the populations they had prior to the depression decade. She concludes that the area will always be threatened by drought, that the environment is fragile, and that dust storms will periodically return to the region. At the same time, however, she argues that the area continues to have a viable economic future, particularly by raising cattle.

This is a first-rate work of scholarship. The book is well written, and the author's conclusions are carefully reasoned and well documented. The use of a questionnaire, in addition to standard manuscript and archival collections, makes the research both comprehensive and creative. The focus on the experiences of people in southwestern Kansas who persisted in the region adds to our understanding of the Dust Bowl during the 1930s. The book will be of general interest to students of the Great Plains.

Henry Wallace: His Search for a New World Order, by Graham White and John Maze. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995. xv, 347 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$34.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY MARK L. KLEINMAN, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-OSHKOSH

Historian Graham White and psychologist John Maze have written the first biography of Henry A. Wallace that fully addresses the most difficult and awkward questions about Iowa's most misunderstood favorite son. Their account of Wallace's life and career is framed by an understanding of the sources, nature, and extent of his much-rumored but little-examined spiritualism. Drawing predominantly on Wallace's reminiscences contained in his 1952 interview in the Columbia University Oral History Collection, as well as on the political diary he kept during his years in government (1933-1946), White and Maze examine Wallace's involvement with the spiritual amalgam of Theosophy and attempt to show how it and other of Wallace's "eclectic" spiritual beliefs informed his social and political philosophy and so "made an impact on his public career" (xiii).

White and Maze address the important episodes of Wallace's life, virtually all of which have been discussed elsewhere. But the portrait they create in the book's early chapters of Wallace's spiritualistic proclivities and awkward personality leads these authors to new insights into Wallace's career. They examine at great length, for example, the best-known of Wallace's spiritual relationships, that with emigré Russian artist and Theosophist Nicholas Roerich, the recipient of the so-called Guru letters that conservative columnist Westbrook Pegler used to pillory Wallace during the 1948 presidential campaign. White and Maze not only detail Wallace's relationship with Roerich from the late 1920s through the mid-1930s more thoroughly than has been done previously; they also explain why Wallace was inclined toward such relationships. And unlike many who have written about Wallace before, White and Maze—by interweaving their discussion of Wallace and Roerich with their consideration of other developments in Wallace's life—suggest how Wallace's relationship with Roerich affected his views on politics and foreign policy during the 1930s.

Despite its insights, however, there are problems with this book that preclude the possibility of characterizing it as a definitive study of Wallace. If White and Maze ask many of the right questions, they often answer them unconvincingly. This tendency stems from two sources. The first is the psychohistorical aspect of their treatment. At times their psychological interpretations seem entirely plausible. When they suggest early on that the suddenness of his father's death (while in office as secretary of agriculture in the Harding administration) "deepened" Wallace's already nascent "interest in Theosophy" (27), the conclusion seems reasonable if speculative. Yet at times the plausibility of the authors' "psychologizing" becomes strained. Later in the book White and Maze describe Wallace's shift in 1950, after the outbreak of the Korean War, back to a position of support for U.S. foreign policy (after his ardent opposition to U.S. Cold War foreign policy in the late 1940s). In explaining Wallace's apparent philosophical reversal, the authors assert that "the aggression that he tried determinedly to control within himself found legitimate vicarious expression when his country was at war" (289). It is a conclusion that is at best insubstantial and at worst a bit silly.

Its psychohistorical aspects notwithstanding, the book's greatest flaw stems from its overdependence on Wallace's oral history. As a result, many of the authors' conclusions are grounded on one of the riskiest of primary sources, after-the-fact individual memory of events that often took place in a highly emotional context and in some cases years or decades before the memories were set down. Although White and Maze do incorporate many other sources, the predominance of

the oral history is such that portions of the book seem to be little more than well-written recapitulations. Moreover, judging from the footnotes (there is no bibliography), it appears that White and Maze failed to examine in any depth many rich primary sources connected to Wallace, including the editorials Wallace wrote as editor of his family's farm newspaper, *Wallaces' Farmer*, during the 1920s. This particular lacuna is crucial, for much of Wallace's social, economic, and political thinking of the 1930s and 1940s developed directly out of the literally thousands of editorial columns he wrote (or closely supervised) at *Wallaces' Farmer* between 1921 and 1933. Thus the authors' assertion that the "expansiveness" (147) that characterized Wallace's liberalism by the time he entered government in 1933 was particularly grounded in his Theosophical studies, while not necessarily wrong, rings hollow.

White and Maze have brought to the forefront factors that were clearly of central importance in Wallace's life. They have asked many of the right questions and have given them for the most part appropriate priority. As a result, readers may be inclined to give their sometimes unsubstantiated insights the benefit of the doubt. If in the end they fail to convince readers fully of their explanation of Wallace's behavior and career, their effort compels future Wallace scholars to address these issues as unflinchingly as they have.

We Band of Brothers: The Sullivans and World War II, by John R. Satterfield. Parkersburg: Mid-Prairie Books, 1995. xiv, 237 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography. \$15.00 paper.

REVIEWED BY STEPHEN D. REGAN, ASSUMPTION HIGH SCHOOL, DAVENPORT

Prominent among the names capable of conjuring up feelings of horrible wartime tragedy and loss are the Sullivan brothers from Waterloo, Iowa. The five brothers volunteered for joint service in time of war. Their death together in the early phase of World War II awakened a soporific nation to the prospective human costs of the conflict. Chronicled in newsreels, the national press, and even movies, the deaths of these five men are familiar to many; but the specific details of their lives, the personal sufferings of their family, and the reaction of their hometown have been ignored or fictionalized until now.

John Satterfield cuts away the public relations cosmetics and mythical stories about the Sullivans and reveals the true lives of the five working-class men from Waterloo's rugged East Side. Citing noted naval historians and local acquaintances of the Sullivans, the author concisely meshes personal insights gained along the dusty streets of

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