

The Nature of the Place: A Study of Great Plains Fiction, by Diane Dufva Quantic. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995. xii, 203 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$25.00 cloth.

REVIEWED BY RODNEY L. SMITH, UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE

Taking her critical position from Wright Morris—"Many things would come to pass, but the nature of the place would remain a matter of opinion"—Diane Quantic focuses on the agrarian myths of the Great Plains and compares them to social and economic realities. In seven chapters, beginning with "Theories of Land and Society: Making the Myths," and ending with "The Unifying Thread: Connecting Place and Language," she explores four words: *land*, *society*, *myth*, and *reality*. Writers discussed include Bess Streeter Aldrich, Willa Cather, Louise Erdrich, Hamlin Garland, Margaret Laurence, Frederick Manfred, Wright Morris, Mari Sandoz, William Allen White, Laura Ingalls Wilder, and Larry Woiwode.

Quantic accepts geographical determinism, but also agrees that writers have been ambivalently placed between the appreciation of pristine wilderness and the competing myth that cultivation could create a new Eden. As this pursuit of pastoral perfection receded with the frontier's close, pastoral irony entered.

Sound Recall: One Midwestern Town Remembers the Events of World War II, by Bob D. Fahey. Garrison: Meyer Publishing, 1996. vi, 180 pp. Illustrations. \$18.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY JOY NEAL KIDNEY, WEST DES MOINES, IOWA

Bob Fahey's son once commented that he had never heard his father's World War II experiences. It was while writing his memoirs that Fahey began to realize the importance of the accounts of ordinary soldiers and sailors. A former English teacher, he began to collect the stories of other veterans in his hometown of Fort Madison, Iowa. After the *Fort Madison Daily Democrat* ran them as a weekly feature, these anecdotes of thirty-six men and women—volunteers and draftees; riflemen, nurses, and sailors; POWs; wounded and unscathed; veterans who served in North Africa, Normandy, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa—were gathered into Bob Fahey's *Sound Recall*, named for the old bugle call that assembled the troops. Photographs include those of the subjects in uniform plus general pictures from military and historical collections. The epilogue brings most of the veterans up to date.

Sound Recall does not represent all who served from Fort Madison; it is a rendezvous of recollections of those who "did their job and

came home" (vi). There is no index to quickly locate the accounts from Iowa's 113th Cavalry Group or the Iowa-Nebraska Red Bull Division. Researchers will also wish that several dramatic narratives be amplified into separate volumes.

The caption in the chapel window of Des Moines's Veterans Memorial Auditorium (by J. N. "Ding" Darling) ponders, "Shall they come back remembering while we alas forget?" Fahey's collection ensures that the service of these few from one Iowa town are not forgotten.

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