

pageants in which the author participated as a child. This material is well worth the time of any student or lover of American small-town life.

The overriding concern here is, of course, the disappearance of places such as McDonald, Kansas. The population is currently less than half of its 1935 high and falling rapidly. Most of the businesses that existed in the town's heyday are long since gone, as are the local schools, swallowed up by consolidation. Dickenson offers no pat solutions to the area's problems. He does note Frank and Deborah Popper's suggestion that the area become a "buffalo commons," and states that it is now a point of discussion throughout the region. He describes the success of Colby, Kansas, in capturing an outlet mall and business off Interstate 70, but notes that this is a solution for only a very few, well-located High Plains communities. He suggests that the hardy few remaining in the area's small towns will fight their own disappearance, but does not tell readers how they will do so.

*Home on the Range* is a good read, the kind of book to pick up when one is feeling reflective about the nation's past and future and what will become of rural and small-town America. There are no startling revelations here, just a thoughtful and engaging discussion of the value of small places that may soon cease to exist.

*Farm House: College Farm to University Museum*, by Mary E. Atherly. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1995. xii, 216 pp. Illustrations, maps, plans, appendixes, index. \$19.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY JOHN CHRISTIANSON, LUTHER COLLEGE

Once upon a time, what is now Iowa State University (ISU) was nothing but a brick farmhouse and a few outbuildings on the lone prairies of central Iowa. The house was crammed as full of people as an old-time country tavern: the manager and family, farmhands, boarders; trustees coming for meetings, or whoever needed shelter. Where else could they stay? The house is still there, pretty much as it was, on its original site in the middle of what is now the ISU campus. This lively little book tells the history of that old Farm House.

Six hundred acres of Story County land were purchased in 1859 to establish a state agricultural school and model farm. In 1860 plow teams of six or eight oxen broke the prairie soil, crops were planted, a barn was built, and a brick kiln was put to work on the site. That summer, a small story-and-a-half brick structure was built, and in 1861 a large two-story house was added at right angles, so that the original house became the kitchen wing in back. This Farm House

served as a residence until 1970, and is now a National Historic Landmark and museum.

In 1864 the Iowa legislature designated the school as a land-grant college under the Morrill Act of 1862. A railroad came through that same year, construction of Main began in 1864, the Civil War ended in 1865, and things began to grow. By 1869, when the Farm House was nearly a decade old, the college officially opened.

The Farm House remained a hub as the school grew. From 1868 to 1879, it was the home of President Adonijah Welch. Until 1884, students worked on the Model Farm five days a week in addition to taking classes. Until 1900, the school term ran from March to November in conformity with the farming season.

During the 1880s some Iowa farmers became upset over what they perceived as a drift towards a classical, nonagricultural curriculum at the college. A savvy group of activists led by "Tama Jim" Wilson and "Uncle Henry" Wallace staged a coup in 1890 to force out the college administration. The Farm House got new residents: "Tama Jim" moved in with his family and took over as professor of agriculture. When he left for Washington in 1897 to become Secretary of Agriculture, his protégé and successor, Charles F. Curtiss, moved in for a fifty-year stay (1897-1947) and helped the college gain an international reputation. The Farm House was modernized into its present form around 1910.

The book focuses on the people who inhabited the Farm House, as well as its changing appearance and role in the university. No fewer than 115 photographs, seven maps, six plans and drawings, three appendixes, and an extensive bibliography attest to solid scholarship, and the book clearly demonstrates the importance of thorough research as the foundation for historical restoration.

*Gender, Class, and Shelter: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture V*, edited by Elizabeth Collins Cromley and Carter L. Hudgins. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995. xv, 272 pp. Illustrations, maps, plans, notes, bibliography, index. \$25.00 paper.

REVIEWED BY FRED E. H. SCHROEDER, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA-DULUTH

Like its predecessors in the series to which it belongs, *Gender, Class, and Culture* offers the best papers presented at annual meetings of the Vernacular Architecture Forum. And, like its predecessors, this volume presents the latest in the rapidly emerging methodologies and expanding scope of research in vernacular architecture. The very fact that "gender" is not used synonymously for "feminism" is a departure

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