

*Native American Communities in Wisconsin, 1600–1960: A Study of Tradition and Change*, by Robert E. Bieder. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995. xiv, 288 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$37.50 cloth, \$17.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY RAYMOND E. HAUSER, WAUBONSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

As indicated in his title, Robert E. Bieder's history of Wisconsin's Indian peoples emphasizes the native "sense of community and how this sense was transmitted over time" (9). Bieder organizes his study chronologically instead of devoting a chapter to each of the many tribes. However, he does subdivide several chapters, with sections exploring the record of such peoples as the Menominee, Winnebago, Ojibwa (Chippewa), and Potawatomi. He presents his argument in chapters on the environment, precontact culture, the French, British, and American colonial periods, the statehood era, and twentieth-century problems, and in a brief epilogue. He chose to end the book at mid-century because of prohibitive research constraints.

The use of the Indian sense of community as a theme for the book is most successful and distinguishes this study from other publications. Bieder focuses on "how changes produced by either nature or humans affected Indian communities" (19). For example, he reviews interesting mechanisms such as the Midewiwin ceremony, sponsored by spiritual authorities and healers, which provided leaders who for a time slowed the destruction of Indian communities. It is also interesting to note that the fur trade, especially that involving alcohol, was even more destructive than war to the native sense of community. Wisconsin's Indian communities continued to struggle to maintain themselves despite complex challenges through the middle of the twentieth century.

Bieder goes considerably beyond the geographic boundaries of Wisconsin when he examines the interaction of Indian peoples and the Indian policies employed by various invading colonial powers. This broad view will attract Iowans and other midwestern readers. The author specifically refers to the activities of Iowa Indians in Wisconsin, Indian communities that relocated to Iowa, and the communal buffalo hunting expeditions into Iowa made by various native populations from Wisconsin.

This book is well conceived, organized, and executed. A veteran scholar, Bieder is thoroughly familiar with the primary sources, but the broad scope of his project required him to rely on the works of other authorities. For example, while preparing a number of useful maps, he makes extensive use of the *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History* (1987). Bieder is a dependency theorist, but Richard White's splendid *The Middle Ground* (1991), although cited, was published after he had

finished writing this book; as a result, readers will not discover his reaction to White's attack on dependency theory. Bieder has written *Native American Communities in Wisconsin* for the informed general public, but it is also particularly appropriate for college students because it offers such thoughtful overviews and conclusions about Indian and white relations in the upper Mississippi Valley.

*The 1849 California Trail Diaries of Elijah Preston Howell*, edited by Susan Badger Doyle and Donald E. Buck. Emigrant Trails Historical Studies Series, No. 1. Independence, MO: Oregon-California Trails Association, 1995. xxiii, 181 pp. Maps, notes, appendixes, indexes. \$24.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY J. THOMAS MURPHY, WACO, TEXAS

On Sunday, May 6, 1849, Elijah Preston Howell, along with his brother and seven male neighbors, left Gentry County, Missouri, and joined thousands of overland emigrants traveling to the gold fields of California. The same day, he began a diary of the trip and recorded daily entries until arriving at Lassen's Ranch in California on September 26. Writing to a brother who stayed in Missouri, Howell recounted events by using his diary. Family members copied his entries and subsequently deposited them in the Western Historical Manuscripts Collection at the University of Missouri, Columbia. The whereabouts of the original document is unknown, but beginning in 1872, Howell rewrote his diary and a typewritten copy was given to the California State Library, Sacramento. These versions of Howell's account are published in a parallel format in this volume, first of a series sponsored by the Oregon-California Trails Association that will make primary source material about the overland trail accessible to general readers.

Born in 1803, Howell was not a youthful adventurer, but a respected merchant and Democratic officeholder lured to a new territory as much by the prospects for economic opportunity as by excitement over gold fever. Never returning to Missouri, Howell married a widow and raised a family, began another business career, and lived an unassuming life. As a forty-niner on the Oregon-California Trail, however, Howell participated in an event ennobled for its drudgery and uncertainty, and his record evokes these characteristics very well.

Howell noted daily mileage and landmarks, observed the interaction of fellow emigrants, and voiced concern about dangers along the way. Indians, while rarely a threat, worried him, and he mentioned each encounter. The diaries portray Howell as a conscientious and level-headed traveler who fretted about every detail of trail life—the con-

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