

*Prisoners on the Plains: German POWs in America*, by Glenn Thompson. Third ed. Holdrege, NE: Phelps County Historical Society, 1993. v, 292 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$49.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY EDWARD J. PLUTH, ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

The fiftieth anniversary of World War II initiated many commemorative historical projects. *Prisoners on the Plains* is the result of one such effort. It is the story of Camp Atlanta, a German POW camp located near the town of Holdrege in Phelps County, one of five in Nebraska. Like many of the 155 main POW camps established during the war, including those at Algona, Iowa, and Concordia, Kanŕas, Camp Atlanta housed several thousand German POWs and opened branch camps to facilitate the employment of the POWs principally in agricultural work. The main feature and value of the book is the wealth of information provided about the varied facets of the camp's history, often told through the recollections of community residents and former American military personnel and POWs. Although stressing this local focus, Thompson connects these experiences to their larger national context.

As local history, the work is written for a general audience. It is ably researched and includes numerous photographs, but is primarily descriptive and lacks analysis. As evidenced by the misleading subtitle, assistance from an editor would have offered several benefits: better organization, reduction of repetitive information, and tempering the author's penchant to include all of his research data in the narrative. Apart from these problems, however, *Prisoners on the Plains* provides a readable and informative account of a unique and almost forgotten home front experience. The book should appeal to a broad regional audience, especially to those who remember such camps or who want to learn about them.

*Twin Cities: Then and Now*, by Larry Millett with new photography by Jerry Mathiason. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1996. x, 204 pp. Historic and contemporary photos, maps, notes, index. \$40.00 cloth, \$24.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY DON DRAKE, STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

Architectural critic/historian Larry Millett's *Twin Cities: Then and Now* places historic "street systems" in Minneapolis and St. Paul from the 1880s to the 1950s opposite 1995 photos by architectural photographer Jerry Mathiason from the same vantage point. Millett identifies streets as an "incomparable framework for looking at the urban past" (4). He

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