

change. For example, was Ulbe Eringa typical of other Dutch immigrants? If not, how do we interpret Eringa's observations? Did his biases undermine the integrity of his conclusions? These are questions each reader will need to answer. In my opinion, however, Ulbe Eringa's letters speak clearly and forcefully, and they present a personal portrait that reminds us that history is individual stories as much as it is social movements and systemic change. His story reveals how immigrant culture helped create, and continues to influence, the rural Midwest.

Ulbe Eringa's letters support recent arguments that immigrants negotiated a place in American culture. They accepted parts of their new surroundings, retained parts of their past, and created something unique and new in the process. Not only are the letters evidence that this happened, but they offer what historical evidence so often lacks—personal reflections on an immigrant's life in America. Eringa's sense of order, his devotion to church, family, and farm, and the frustrations, joys, and sorrows that he and his family experienced all find their place within this very readable, personable, and important book.

The Black Press in the Middle West, 1865–1985, edited by Henry Lewis Suggs. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996. vi, 410 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$69.50 cloth.

REVIEWED BY HAL S. CHASE, DES MOINES AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND SIMPSON COLLEGE

The Black Press in the Middle West, 1865–1985 is a sequel to *The Black Press in the South 1865–1985* (1983). Each volume consists of detailed, in-depth, individually authored, state-by-state histories of African-American newspapers, and each includes footnotes and a generous bibliography. Hence, they will be the standard sources for the black press for decades.

The Black Press in the Middle West, 1865–1985 contains chapters on Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Iowa. Because of their similarity and the readership of this journal, this review will focus on the Iowa chapter.

During Reconstruction, black papers were short-lived. Beginning in the 1880s, however, extraordinary men founded or gained control of papers that lived as long as they did. *The Iowa State Bystander* represented this national and regional trend of personal journalism from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. Established in 1894, it changed hands several times before 1922, when it came to rest in

those of J. B. Morris, where it stayed until his death in 1977. Morris and the *Bystander* "worked to stabilize the home, family, church, school, and business" (358–59). They also worked to increase political involvement and racial pride. Yet Morris and the *Bystander* were unusual in two respects: they remained steadfast in their loyalty to the Republican Party long after most blacks left it for the Democratic Party during the 1930s; and they did not adopt the strategy of "victimization" during the decade, 1954–1964.

These differences raise some questions about Suggs's assertion that "this book shows that the black experience is homogeneous" (352), as well as his claim that "the black press in the Middle West is different from the black press in the South" (358). There is no question, however, about Suggs's thesis that the black press helped "conquer the Great Plains as assuredly as the six-shooter and barbed wire" (349). It did so by promoting democracy, equality, Christianity, capitalism, family, education, and racial pride—in short, by promoting community. Nor is there any question that the black press in Iowa, and especially the *Iowa Bystander*, played as active and integral a role in this conquest as did the "Buffalo Soldiers."

The Centennial Anthology of North Dakota History, Journal of the Northern Plains, edited by Janet Daley Lysengen and Ann M. Rathke. Bismarck: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1996. xviii, 526 pp. Illustrations, figures, map, notes, index. \$24.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY JAMES MARTEN, MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

North Dakotans have no Alamo to remember and no great Civil War battles to endlessly re-fight. George Armstrong Custer passed through, to be sure, but his "last stand" took place elsewhere. North Dakota radicals started state-owned banks and flour mills rather than a revolution, and the ethnic groups who dominated the early history of the state—Scandinavians and Germans, mostly—were, as Garrison Keillor likes to point out, solid citizens, but hardly as colorful as the Italians and Jews clogging the cities of the eastern seaboard.

Yet the history of North Dakota contains plenty of grist for the historian's mill: the dramas of making a living in an unfriendly environment, of building communities in remote outposts, of demanding to be heard in a country that in real life all but ignores the heartland it so blithely claims to admire. *The Centennial Anthology of North Dakota History* showcases the richness of the state's past by reprinting twenty-eight articles from that respected state historical journal.

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.