

Lee starts to analyze Garst's views several times—we learn that Garst offered his support for larger farm units in 1941 because "greater efficiency must give the world greater plenty," for example—but in the end Lee leaves the reader wondering whether Garst recognized or cared about the social upheaval concurrent with the adoption of the methods he advocated. Moreover, it would be useful to know more about Garst's reaction to the critics of the new agriculture. The National Farmers Organization, founded at the peak of Garst's influence in 1955, often pointed out that almost everyone except farmers themselves benefited from the emergence of commercial agriculture. Others, with whom Garst seems to have strongly disagreed, criticized the use of chemicals, intensive farming methods, and petroleum-based products from an ecological perspective. Was Garst aware that there were voices directly challenging his views? Did he ever answer the critics in his correspondence and public pronouncements?

Despite this book's main flaw, it is one that is well worth reading. If the author's goal was to recapture all the energy and enthusiasm of Roswell Garst, then he was more than successful. Perhaps at a later date, Lee, or another similarly qualified scholar will take up where this book leaves off. Then the story of Roswell Garst will be complete.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

RICHARD BROADIE

Self-Help in the 1890s Depression, by H. Roger Grant. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1983. xii, 163 pp. Photographs, maps, notes, index. \$11.95 cloth.

Many of the responses Americans have made to recent economic difficulties are not new, nor did they originate during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Self-help programs, such as community gardens, cooperative businesses, and barter systems, can be traced to the period from 1893 to 1897, when the United States weathered its first major industrial depression. These and other programs represented consumer responses to problems of unemployment, food shortages, and lack of capital, and provided prototypes used during subsequent periods of hardship.

The object of this book, in part, is to give these self-help schemes more of the attention they deserve. In addition, Grant, a professor of history at the University of Akron and an editorial consultant for the *Annals of Iowa*, attempts to show how organized consumer actions helped provide a linkage between populism and progressivism.

The consumer aspect of progressivism is an idea which David Thelen advanced in *The New Citizenship: Origins of Progressivism in Wisconsin, 1885-1900*, and Grant acknowledges Thelen's influence.

Grant introduces his subject with an informative essay on the origins and history of the 1890s depression, a period when unemployment ranged from 25 to 50 percent in parts of America's industrial heartland. He reviews the effects of tariffs, monetary policy, and other government actions, and profiles leading political figures. Readers not familiar with the 1890s depression will find this a most helpful background. Five case studies, each one chapter in length, form the framework for Grant's discussion of self-help. While the studies focus largely on self-help in the Midwest, examples from throughout the country give the book a national scope.

The first case study concerns community gardens, an idea developed in Detroit by Mayor Hazen Pingree. Vacant lots were turned into "Pingree's Potato Patches," using seeds and tools provided by the city. Participants improved their diet while saving scarce cash. Being at work had important psychological value, too, for unemployed workers whose pride was as wounded as their pocket books. As with the other self-help programs, the "Detroit Plan" was adapted in other cities as a way of relieving food shortages while forestalling worker unrest.

Labor exchanges were a second widely adopted self-help measure. Members worked for credits they could use to buy goods and services from other members. Similarly, cooperative stores represented an effort to increase consumer power by removing the middleman. Through cooperative efforts, laborers became their own employers and merchants, reducing unemployment while also reducing living expenses.

Some went still further, attempting to form farmers' railroads that would reduce the monopolistic power of lines such as James Hill's Great Northern. These railroads were often capitalized by contributed labor, with workers becoming the shareholders. Most such schemes failed. Grant focuses on efforts in Minnesota and North Dakota, where the Devils Lake and Northern Railway Company was actually built and operated on a cooperative basis. The story of how this venture became a Great Northern satellite, as the Farmers Grain and Shipping Company, is an especially interesting part of this case study.

Finally, Grant discusses several of the "intentional communities" envisioned or established during the 1890s depression period. These utopias were influenced by such writers as Edward Bellamy, whose 1888 novel *Looking Backward* offered an inspiring glimpse of the

future. Grant examines working communities in Missouri and Colorado in detail, along with similar schemes that existed only in futurists' fertile imaginations. The nineteenth century's most successful intentional community, the Mormons of Utah, receives only passing reference. Grant might have related the Mormons' efforts to the overall idea of self-help. Grant concludes with a review of more recent self-help programs, including victory gardens, barter systems, crop gleaning, farmers' cooperatives, short line railroads on abandoned routes, and such communal projects as the Catholic Workers Movement's Tivoli Farm and Jim Jones's ill-fated People's Temple. The actual connections between the 1890s efforts and these later programs are not well-defined, however, and Grant concludes his work rather abruptly, with some loose ends remaining.

The self-help programs of the 1890s had much in common, especially the idea that hard work could solve the nation's problems. Also central was the idea that workers could not wait for government or large corporations to provide answers. A third common feature was the temporary nature of the schemes. Once prosperity returned, community gardens reverted to other uses and workers abandoned cooperative efforts for more rewarding jobs. Nonetheless, as Grant's informative work demonstrates, the idea of self-help has become a permanent feature of Americans' response to economic hard times in the twentieth century. This book serves as a good introduction to a topic that has received scant scholarly attention. It is too brief, however, to accomplish much more than that. Scholars of economic history or the Gilded Age, as well as the general public, will find a wealth of information and insight in this skillfully researched and highly readable monograph. Perhaps more extended studies of the subject will grow out of what Grant has begun.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

KEVIN BOATRIGHT

John Bell Hood and the War for Southern Independence, by Richard M. McMurry. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1982. xi, 239 pp. \$19.50 cloth.

This well-researched and equally well-written work, winner of the 1982 Mrs. Simon Baruch University Award of the Daughters of the Confederacy, seeks to show how the tragic career of John Bell Hood reflected the virtues and failures of the antebellum South and profoundly influenced the conduct and outcome of the Civil War. Born in Kentucky in 1831, Hood entered the United States Military Academy in 1849. He had both academic and disciplinary problems at West

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