

THE ANNALS OF IOWA

writing allowed women a certain amount of privacy in small homes filled with many family members and was, in fact, often the only activity that they could call their own. But it is rather surprising that she makes so much of the affectional ties between women which emerge from the letters, since scholars such as Carroll Smith-Rosenberg have already done extensive work on these close female relationships.

The book is disappointing in that it lacks scholarly apparatus such as an index. The endnotes are also extremely brief and reflect little familiarity with the secondary literature on western women. Perhaps more attention to the existing scholarship would have contributed a more coherent thread of analysis to this work. On the other hand, literary scholars like Hampsten may find it useful to pursue a different set of questions than historians would choose. In either case, this study is a welcome addition to the growing literature on western women.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

GLENDA RILEY

A Century on the Northern Plains: The University of North Dakota at 100, edited by Robert P. Wilkins. Grand Forks: University of North Dakota Press, 1983. v, 206 pp. Photographs. \$8.00 paper.

The centennial of the founding of the University of North Dakota occurred in 1983. For the past century, the university had fulfilled higher education needs on the northern plains and so the University Centennial Committee authorized the publication of a centennial history. *A Century on the Northern Plains* consists of six essays written by several university history professors and the sports information director. Presidents, professors, students, athletes, alumni, and the campus are the topics they give selective but comprehensive treatment. Excellent black and white photographs coordinated with the essays appear throughout the work.

Unlike many collections of essays, the articles are equal in quality and coverage of their subjects. D. Jerome Tweton examines the eight presidents and two acting presidents. Webster Merrifield, president from 1891 to 1909, dominated the first twenty-five years of the university. He established the institution on a permanent basis to serve the entire state. During his tenure the university hired better-qualified faculty, obtained more funding, and better prepared entering freshmen for college study. Strong presidential leadership characterized most of the first century, however the administration of Thomas F. Kane concluded in 1933 amidst rumors that the president would be fired. Kane had maintained very poor relations with the faculty. In recent years the university has had competent administration, and

Book Reviews

Thomas J. Clifford, the current chief executive, is the first native North Dakotan to serve as president.

Robert P. Wilkins reviews faculty development in one essay. North Dakota's harsh climate, low salaries, and remote location precluded the hiring and retention of qualified faculty. For many decades Grand Forks was only a stopover for many professors. However a core of faculty such as Orin G. Libby and John M. Gillette chose to spend most of their careers at North Dakota. These men and others exerted considerable influence on the development of the university. Recent years have seen a stable, qualified faculty due to increased salaries, an expanded campus, higher standards, and innovative policies.

Students are the topic of Thomas W. Howard's chapter. Most students maintained loyalty toward the university, as the school made a difference in their lives and permitted them to remain in North Dakota to undertake college work. The major change in student characteristics has been from close-knit campus activities to individualism; today most students pursue their own interests. Athletics have, however, always attracted a large number of participants and spectators. Organized athletics began with the establishment of a football team in 1894. Football, basketball, and ice hockey are the major sports at North Dakota, and all three teams have won a number of championships.

The book devotes attention to a subject seldom discussed in university histories, alumni. Dan F. Rylance characterizes most alumni as maintaining a strong sense of loyalty toward the university. A number of North Dakota alumni such as Maxwell Anderson, Carl Eielson, and Chester Fritz achieved regional or national prominence. Many such as Fritz contributed generously to the school by assisting in the construction of new buildings and various other needs.

The physical campus has changed and expanded dramatically in the past century—from one building on the bleak plains to a major campus with complete facilities and a mature state university. Most of the expansion occurred since World War II; currently it has slowed, and the emphasis shifted to renovation. James F. Vivian concludes that the University of North Dakota is physically well organized, well constructed, and practical.

The authors, the Office of University Relations, and the University of North Dakota Press have produced a quality publication. The only apparent shortcoming is its lack of an index. Anyone interested in the history of higher education in the Midwest will want to own a copy of this book.

CREVE COEUR, Mo.

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