

HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS

Books

Ottumwa: One Hundred Years a City. By James C. Taylor, Jr. (1948). This attractive book tells the story of the growth of an Iowa community from small beginnings in 1848 to one of the important commercial and manufacturing cities of the State in 1948. Illustrated with sketches, photographs, and newspaper clippings, the book covers the business and social development of Ottumwa.

Old Cahokia: A Narrative and Documents Illustrating the First Century of its History. Edited by John Francis McDermott, et al. (St. Louis, St. Louis Historical Documents Foundation, 1949. Paper, \$3.00; Cloth, \$4.50.) A chapter, "Cahokia and Its People," by John Francis McDermott, introduces this publication of the documents of the first 100 years of this famous Illinois town. Every phase of the life of Cahokia is illustrated in the documents reproduced: the founding of the Holy Family Mission; the life of the people as shown in letters, court records, and inventories of personal property; the business venture of Charles Gratiot, a trader; the military affairs of Fort Bowman; and a long list of burial records, dating from 1784 to 1794. Publication of these documents makes available to the student source material on the French period in Illinois.

Old Illinois Houses. By John Drury. (Occasional Publications of the Illinois State Historical Society, 1948.) John Drury, author of *Historic Midwest Houses*, has prepared an interesting book on the historic houses of Illinois. Beginning with the Saucier house in Cahokia, built in 1737, Mr. Drury carries the story of Illinois houses down to the 1891 Frank Lloyd Wright house in Oak Park which presaged the modern trend in architecture. Some 88 houses are illustrated and described, both architecturally and historically.

Articles

A new variation of the puzzling question, "What ten books would you take to a desert island?" is answered by the historian, Henry Steele Commager in the May, 1949, issue of *The Survey*. The article, "For the

Understanding of America," resulted from a survey recently made to suggest some reading for seven German women who are touring the United States. The question to be answered — "In what dozen books has been set down the most comprehensive and vital statement of the meaning of American democracy?" — brought forth many titles. Mr. Commager discusses the various selections, and then offers his own list of sixteen books. This article should be of interest to all readers of American history.

Thomas D. Clark, in "The Archives of Small Business," in the January, 1949, issue of *The American Archivist*, offers some challenging ideas for research, not in the history of "Big Business" but rather in the histories of the many small businesses of America. He points out that, "The blacksmith shop, the sawmill, the grist and flour mills, stave and cooperage factories, cotton and woolen mills, distilleries, tobacco factories, blast furnaces, country stores, farm implement, wagon and carriage factories, boat yards, grain elevators, paper mills, metal factories, clock and lock works, all of these and scores of others have contributed materially to American economic well-being." The article offers many ideas for new research in a field long neglected by local historians, and also suggestions for the preservation of the records of these small businesses.

The Granger movement of the seventies is usually thought of as almost entirely a Middle Western and Southern movement. However, it had antecedents in the East, according to an article by Frederick Merk in the January, 1949, issue of *Agricultural History* entitled "Eastern Antecedents of the Grangers." Other articles in the issue include "The Farmers' Alliance and the Farmers' Union: An American-Canadian Parallelism," by Donald F. Warner; "Agricultural Expansion into the Semiarid Lands of the West North Central States During the First World War," by Lloyd P. Jorgenson; and "The Tree Farm Movement: Its Origin and Development," by Paul F. Sharp.

Articles on two American "radicals" appear in the March, 1949, issue of *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review*. "John A. Simpson: The Southwest's Militant Farm Leader," by Gilbert C. Fite, is an account of what might be termed a "native American radical" — a Populist and farm leader of Oklahoma. For many years Simpson was president of the Oklahoma Farmers Union and an active voice in the farm protest of the early decades of the twentieth century. A more Marxian type of radical is the subject of

an article by Howard H. Quint — "Julius A. Wayland, Pioneer Socialist Propagandist." Also beginning as a Populist, Wayland later became an avowed socialist and for many years published, at Girard, Kansas, the socialist paper, *Appeal to Reason*.

William F. Zornow, in an article, "Indiana and the Election of 1864," in the March, 1949, issue of *Indiana Magazine of History*, discusses the importance of the crucial states of Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania in the critical presidential election of that year. The October state elections, which preceded the November presidential election, were crucial in determining the success of the Union (or Republican) party. Mr. Zornow concludes: "Lincoln was re-elected largely because of three factors: (1), the military victories at Atlanta and Mobile in September; (2), the Union party victories in the October state elections; and (3), the successful application of the charge of domestic treason to the Democratic party." Indiana was one of the most critical states in this year — her vote in the October elections for the Union party helped to assure the re-election of Lincoln in November.

Efforts to control the railroads by state legislation were prevalent throughout the Middle Western states in the 1870's and 1880's. Missouri's part in this struggle is told by Homer Clevenger in "Railroads in Missouri Politics, 1875-1887," in the April, 1949, issue of the *Missouri Historical Review*. In Missouri, a Democratic state, the Republican minority combined with the various forces of unrest represented by Grangers, Greenbackers, Populists, and others, to put through legislation regulating railroad freight rates. The railroad lobbies did everything in their power to stop such legislation. This story has its parallels in Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, and other Mississippi Valley states.

Iowa

Edwin T. Meredith is the subject of the "Eminent Iowans Series" in the April, 1949, issue of the *Annals of Iowa*. Two articles are devoted to Mr. Meredith — one is a tribute to him by the *Successful Farming* staff, and the other is a biographical sketch by Senator John T. Clarkson. In the same issue of the *Annals* Claude R. Cook discusses Iowa's "Territorial and State Organization."

The Iowa State College Research Bulletin 360, dated February, 1949, is by J. A. Starrak and J. B. McClelland, and is titled "The Expansion of Vocational Education in Agriculture in Iowa." The booklet covers the growth and expansion of the teaching of agriculture in the high schools of the State.

Newspapers

A history of the lumbering industry of Guttenberg, which dates back to 1833, is told in the March 31, 1949, issue of the *Guttenberg Press*. Names of the various lumber men who have served Clayton County for over 100 years are given in the article.

The early days of McGregor are recalled in a letter by Dr. H. D. Brown to Mrs. Lena D. Myers printed in the April 21, 1949, *McGregor Times*. Dr. Brown was born in McGregor "almost 88 years ago," and he can remember much of the history of the town. He recalls when choice steaks were fifteen cents a pound and butter sold for twelve cents a pound and eggs were five cents per dozen; he remembers seeing Union soldiers at the hotel in 1864; he saw the first railroad engine come into McGregor in 1871; and as a boy he visited the ruins of old Fort Crawford.

The wrecking of the Ellsworth mansion at Iowa Falls is the occasion for a story in the *Hardin County Times* for March 22, 1949, of the famous old house and its builder. E. S. ("Gene") Ellsworth came to Iowa Falls when a boy. His father owned a livery stable, and it was part of the boy's duties to drive land buyers about the county. He liked their way of making a living and became a speculator in land himself; by the time he was 30, in 1875, he had built the famous house which has been an Iowa Falls landmark ever since. The story of Gene Ellsworth and his house, as told in the *Times*, is an interesting and significant segment of Iowa history, in the days when fortunes were made from land speculation.

The *Graettinger Times* for March 31, 1949, reprints an article by B. O. Wolden which originally appeared in the *Estherville Daily News* on September 28, 1936. This story is a history of the Norwegian settlers of Emmet County and of the Lutheran church there. The first Norwegian settlers came to Emmet County from Wisconsin in 1860. The following year the first Lutheran service in the County was held in the new schoolhouse at Estherville, conducted by the Rev. C. L. Clausen of St. Ansgar.

Mr. Wolden's account of the growth of the Lutheran congregations in Emmet County contains the names of many pioneers and of the various Lutheran ministers down to 1929.

The tale of a modern ghost town is told in the April 10, 1949, issue of the *Des Moines Sunday Register*. Haydock, in Monroe County, was born in 1917; by 1927 it was a flourishing community with a population of 6,000; six years later the population had dropped to about 100; and today nothing is left to mark the site except the foundations of abandoned houses. Built up by the coal industry during World War I, Haydock, or Buchnell as it was also called, began to decline as soon as the coal mines of the area were closed down. Louis Cook, Jr., tells a graphic story of this modern ghost town.

Prairie fires were constant threats to the early Iowa pioneers. An account of one such fire in Pocahontas County is given by Miss Anna Pollock of Fort Dodge who, as a child, experienced the terror and destruction of a fire which swept her father's farm. Her story appears in the April 12, 1949, issue of the *Emmetsburg Reporter*.

The story of the beginnings of the 4-H Club idea by Oscar H. Benson, Wright County superintendent of schools, was published in the May 12, 1949, issue of the *Clarion Monitor*. "Benson came upon the idea of 4-H club work while county superintendent of schools here," runs the article. "It was then that he began to search for answers to such questions as 'Why are farm young people so keen to leave the farm for life in the towns and cities?'; 'Why the decadent country life?'; and 'Why is tenant farming increasing so rapidly?'" Mr. Benson, inspired by a group of school children picking four-leaf clovers, designed the emblem of the 4-H clubs, an emblem which is shown on the memorial boulder dedicated in Clarion in 1939. Encouraged by such prominent Iowans as "Uncle" Henry Wallace, Professor Perry Holden, Herbert Quick, and Otis E. Hall, Mr. Benson continued his work after 1911 as national leader of boys and girls club work for the Federal Department of Agriculture.

The *Hawarden Independent* for May 12, 1949, reprints an editorial on "Ghost Towns" from the *Sioux County Capital*. The editorial discusses the rise and decline of such abandoned towns as Calliope (now part of

Hawarden) and Elm Springs, across the Missouri from Fairview, South Dakota.

Hopkinton claims to have celebrated the first "Memorial Day" in November of 1865. On November 17 of that year, Hopkinton dedicated its soldier's monument, three years before the formal proclamation of a Decoration Day by General John A. Logan. This ceremony is described in the May 26, 1949, issue of the *Hopkinton Leader*.

Many church histories continue to appear in Iowa newspapers. Following is a list of those recently printed:

Leon Journal-Reporter, March 31, 1949 — High Point Methodist Church, founded in 1859.

Waverly Democrat, May 6, 1949 — Warren Evangelical United Brethren Church, founded in 1859.

Des Moines Register, April 3, 1949 — Congregation B'nai Jeshurun, founded in 1870.

Grundy Register, May 5, 1949 — Parkersburg Reformed Church, founded in 1874.

Waverly Democrat, April 8, 1949 — Readlyn St. Paul's Lutheran Church, founded in 1908.

Waverly Democrat, April 1, 1949 — Clarksville St. John's Lutheran Church, founded in 1919.

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