Portage into the Past: By Canoe along the Minnesota-Ontario Boundary Waters. By J. ARNOLD BOLZ. Chapter drawings by FRANCIS LEE JAQUES. (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1960. 181 p. Illustrations, $4.50.)

Reviewed by Sigurd F. Olson

FOR A LONG TIME the wilderness lake country of the Quetico-Superior area has been known as the "Land of the Voyageurs." As canoeists have paddled down its beautiful waterways and portaged between them or around the rapids of connecting rivers, they have been aware that here also fur traders and explorers once traveled. However, they knew little about this historic and colorful era until twenty years ago when Grace Lee Nute wrote her book *The Voyageur's Highway* and not only gave a name to the boundary route but laid down a solid background for further research.

No one, however, has before attempted within the framework of a personal canoe-trip diary from Grand Portage on Lake Superior to Crane Lake — a total distance of some two hundred miles — to give each lake and stream, each portage and camp site, its own particular significance and story. This Dr. J. Arnold Bolz has done in his recent book *Portage into the Past.*

As one follows the day-by-day adventures of the author's party, interspersed with historical references gleaned from the records of practically every major explorer and fur trader who passed over the route, the romance of the earlier era comes to life.

As Dr. Bolz says in his prologue, the modern voyageur "in reading these accounts ... will gain a feeling of intimacy with the past. He will learn of the mystery in the names Basswood and Lac la Croix and the meaning of Saganaga and Gunflint. He will glimpse the country as man first knew it. In the process he will develop a greater appreciation of the wilderness area."

An important part of travel, no matter where it may be, is to know something of the human history of the area traversed. To drive over a countryside or to paddle down its waterways without such preparation is to lose much pleasure and meaning. No matter how beautiful the scene, it is doubly significant if one knows its historical background. To do as Dr. Bolz, his wife, and guide did on their canoe trip, reading as they went what the explorers had recorded, is a rich experience indeed and the ideal way to travel. Future canoeists are fortunate, for now much of the research has been done, and they too can travel the border with new understanding and enjoyment. This exceedingly well-documented and intimate book is a valuable addition to the growing library on the Quetico-Superior country.

Illustrated with magnificent black and white sketches by Francis Lee Jaques, as well as with famous paintings and maps from the voyageur days, *Portage into the Past* fills a long-felt need.

HISTORIC ISLAND


Reviewed by Rhoda R. Gilman

FEW SPOTS in the upper Midwest have a longer or more significant history than the village of La Pointe on Madeline Island, just off the south shore of Lake Superior. Explorers from Radisson and Groseilliers to Schoolcraft used it as a base of operations and a jumping-off point for the penetration of northern Minnesota. While as a center for fur-trading and missionary activities — both Catholic and Protestant — it was for many years an outpost of...
civflization in the western Lake Superior region. Its story is studded with names which also loom large in Minnesota history—among them the traders Ramsay Crooks, Charles W. W. Borup, and Charles H. Oakes, and missionaries like William Boutwell and Frederick Ayer.

La Pointe has been included in works dealing with the Lake Superior area, but never before have the various strands of its history been brought together in a study concentrating on the settlement itself. This task was undertaken by Hamilton Ross a number of years ago and painstakingly pursued until his death in 1958. The present book is the result, and it well repays his efforts.

Though not a professional historian, the author dedicated himself to accuracy and careful research. Many primary sources are cited in footnotes, and a bibliography includes these and lists secondary materials as well. Although the book has flaws in organization and style, its value lies in the wealth of accurate, well-documented information it brings together.

Beginning with the geology of the region and its earliest Indian traditions, the author pursues a steady chronological course through three centuries. The story inevitably takes him beyond the confines of the island and neighboring Chequamegon Bay to touch on important developments along most of Lake Superior's southern shore.

With the decline of the fur trade in the 1840s, the relocation of the island's Indian community following the treaty of 1854, and competition from mainland settlements in the 1860s, the historic outpost lost its prominence. Its insular position, once a notable advantage, contributed to its isolation, and by the 1890s La Pointe had become a sleepy, nearly deserted backwash of advancing civilization.

It was thus that the author first knew it, and from this point in the story to its close, his narrative consists principally of reminiscences. Though of a far more local nature than the earlier parts of the book, these chapters hold a particular charm for those familiar with the island and its community. In a rambling style, spiced with humor, the author tells of the coming, about the turn of the century, of the earliest group of summer residents. These people built modest cottages, some of which have grown into substantial homes and nearly all of which are still owned by descendants of the original builders.

Numerous photographs and maps illustrate the volume. The latter are highly informative, though one wishes that they had been better reproduced. Also included are a glossary of Ojibway names, a chronology, and an index. Without question, this book will be welcomed by historians as well as by those readers who share the author's affection for Madeline Island.

MRS. GILMAN is the editor of this magazine and a vacation-time resident of Madeline Island.

COMPANY HISTORY


Reviewed by Alvin C. Gluek, Jr.

THIS IS the second and last volume in Professor Rich's history of the Hudson's Bay Company. Lavishly, and in full detail, it reveals the company's growth and development from 1760 until 1870, from the fall of New France until the company's own demise as an imperial agent of Canada and the Crown. The book—or tome, for its pages number nearly a thousand—is superb history, intelligently conceived and well written. Moreover, it is good, solid history, resting upon manuscript sources and composed by one who has been long and enthusiastically intrigued with his subject.

In certain ways the second volume differs markedly from its predecessor. It is still a "company" history—that is, history written from a company instead of a national or a regional point of view—but it is no longer a "business" history. The first volume was, in large part, the story of a business, the best told story of its kind this reviewer has ever read; but the second volume pays little attention to the company's problems of capitalization, marketing, management, and the like. It is more sprightly reading than the first, has a less formal style, and provides more light or "human" touches. It is more generously endowed in other ways, too. Its bibliographical references are more numerous and more complete, and its maps, though still inadequate, are of greater help to the reader.
In a work of such massive proportions, it is difficult to single out anything for particular praise, yet the reviewer must remark upon Professor Rich's descriptions of such familiar historical figures as David Thompson. These men have been made to step forth from the frieze and stand before us in the full round. The portrait of Thompson is very well done. He is revealed as a man somewhat more human and much less heroic than the image usually projected. Indeed he appears as a moralistic, self-righteous soul who would intentionally put whiskey barrels on a pack horse renowned for its kicking qualities. It is he who is held responsible for Britain’s failure to beat Lewis and Clark in the race overland to the mouth of the Columbia River. The best of the author's portraits, however, is that of George Simpson. Arthur S. Morton's book-length biography, *Sir George Simpson* (1944), cannot, measured by any index, compare with Professor Rich's single chapter entitled "The Governor." Here Simpson exists in the flesh and bone. We see him as the spectacular businessman; the politician manipulating his chief traders and factors; the warm-blooded man in the company of "his bit of brown," Margaret Taylor; the heroic traveler whose amazing deeds must be almost unrivaled in history; the grandstander who loved dash, pomp, and circumstance; the "Little Emperor" of all the British Northwest. This was a man — and at last he has been given a portrait worthy of him.

So exhaustive has been the author's research in the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, which are immense in themselves, that criticism of his work seems captious. Nonetheless, some comment is demanded, for the study is so often confined to the company's affairs that it is apt to misconstrue or overlook events in Canada and the United States. Though perhaps of peripheral interest, accounts of these events published in such journals as the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review, The Beaver, the Canadian Historical Review,* and *Minnesota History* could, if investigated, have prevented several errors of fact or judgment. Professor Rich's assertion (p. 561) that the company had, because of its better prices and broader selection of merchandise, driven Norman W. Kittson out of the fur trade by 1854 is simply untrue. That year was a most successful one for the American trader, and two years later he was still boldly peddling goods for furs in the shadow of Fort Garry. He did not permanently abandon his Minnesota fur-trading ventures until the Hudson's Bay Company hired him for its own in 1862. The author's portrayal (p. 903) of the American consul in Winnipeg during the Riel rebellion as one whose "conduct was correct" is also false. Few consuls have interfered more zealously in the internal affairs of another country than Oscar Malmros. Other examples could easily be given to illustrate the author's curious indifference to the company's relations with the United States, but one more observation will suffice to bear out the reviewer's case: the author's bibliographies include Washington Irving's *Astoria* and Bernard De Voto's *The Course of Empire* but neither Kenneth Porter's *John Jacob Astor nor Hiram Chittenden's The American Fur Trade of the Far West* appear.

Thus, Professor Rich's second volume has certain limitations. It is a "company" history; its judgments are somewhat partisan; and its grasp of Canadian and American events is not too complete. Fortunately, these limitations are few in number and never mar the whole. The book is and will long remain the definitive work upon the subject.

**MIDWEST ANTHOLOGY**


Reviewed by John T. Flanagan

Of THE making of anthologies, even anthologies of Middle Western writing, there seems to be no end. At least four have preceded Walter Havighurst's collection, and if his *Land of the Long Horizons* is the most pretentious and the most handsome in format, it is not the most interesting.

In his introduction Mr. Havighurst emphasizes that his book is chiefly a collection of personal experiences. This editorial policy immediately eliminates poetry and fiction and ex-

MR. GLUEK, a member of the history faculty in Michigan State University at East Lansing, has written numerous articles on Canadian history.
cludes many of the great names in Middle Western writing. There is nothing in the volume by James Farrell, Floyd Dell, Ring Lardner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, or Ernest Hemingway. Lincoln is omitted and also, singularly enough, Mark Twain. Other Middle Western writers of distinction, such as Sherwood Anderson and Edgar Lee Masters, are represented by mediocre work.

Moreover, Mr. Havighurst’s policy of selection is rather inconsistent, since he not only gives considerable space to Francis Parkman and several other historians, but also includes editorials from newspapers.

It should be observed also that the editor’s Midwest is more exactly the Old Northwest, the five states east of the Mississippi and a sliver of Minnesota. There is nothing here about Iowa or Missouri, not even about St. Louis. Of the eighty-two selections in the anthology more than a third relate to Ohio, and unfortunately some of these are dully factual extracts from gazetteers or accounts of travel.

The book has nine divisions, ranging from “discoverers” like Marquette and Jolliet to “interpreters” like Sandburg, Dreiser, and Glenway Wescott. In between are sections devoted to Indian and frontier material, the migration of land seekers, the tales of travelers, the dawn of representative cities (six of the thirteen items here deal with Ohio communities and only one with Chicago), and the urban transformation.

Mr. Havighurst chooses vivid passages from Alexander Henry, Morris Birkbeck, Peter Cartwright, and John James Audubon, as well as from foreign visitors like Charles Dickens and Mrs. Trollope, but curiously he omits Henry Schoolcraft. The final division is the richest and the most interesting. Here are John Dos Passos on Henry Ford; Carl Sandburg on his home town of Galesburg, Illinois; Sinclair Lewis on Minnesota, “the Norse state”; and William Ellery Leonard describing Wisconsin in an erudite and distinguished style. The last item of the book comes appropriately from the Englishman Graham Hutton’s brilliant assessment of Middle Western culture, Midwest at Noon.

Mr. Havighurst has supplied introductory material for each of his sections and well-written headnotes for each selection. But there are unfortunate errors in the editorial apparatus. In the table of contents, Zadok Cramer’s name is mispelled; the discovery of the Mississippi by Marquette and Jolliet is dated 1763 (p. 15); Galena, Illinois, becomes Galina in a picture caption (p. 243); two parts of the name Daniel Greysolon, Sieur Dulhut (DuLuth), are misspelled (p. 34); and surely it is absurd to call St. Anthony a mill town in the 1830s (p. 295), when it was neither surveyed nor platted until 1849. Strictly Minnesota material is scanty in the book, although photographs of the Falls of St. Anthony and of Sauk Centre accompany selections by Lawrence Oliphant and Sinclair Lewis. Land of the Long Horizons is apparently the first of a new series of regional collections. One hopes that subsequent volumes reveal a broader editorial policy and stricter accuracy in commentary.

HANDLING MANUSCRIPTS


Reviewed by David C. Mearns

WHAT Doctors Luther Emmett Holt and Benjamin McLane Spock have accomplished for the care and treatment of the very young, Lucile M. Kane, of the Minnesota Historical Society, has performed for those other predictable but often wayward and anarchic phenomena: manuscripts. She has, in other words, produced a manual, free from professional jargon and always intelligible to a layman, but which is at the same time, in the very strictest sense, authoritative. No one, to the best of this reviewer’s knowledge, could have done this half so well, for she is not only qualified by training and experience, but her knowledge of the state of the art is profound, and her mastery of the subject firm and steadfast.

There has long been a need for such a work as this. Earlier guides were written before modern collections, with their massive propor-

MR. FLANAGAN, who is professor of American literature in the University of Illinois, has written extensively on Midwestern authors and their works.

March 1961

219

MR. MEARNS is chief of the division of manuscripts in the Library of Congress.
tions, had brought into practice new techniques and new requirements. Concisely, compactly, reasonably, Miss Kane presents the processing procedures which should be applied in preparing manuscript collections for service. She begins with accession records, the compilation of case files, the care to be exercised in unpacking, and the occasional necessity for fumigation; she then goes on to the organization of manuscript collections, the respect which must be given to their origins, the various kinds of collections with which a curator may be confronted, and the various methods of arrangement open to him (“chronological ... is simple for processors to execute and for scholars to use”). Next come discussions of sorting methods, furniture and equipment, restoration and repair, and suggestions for the allocation of enclosures. These are followed by observations on winnowing — the need for eliminating useless or low-quality items, the exercise of value judgments, and a classification of types of materials that might be rejected. A list of steps that should be taken to ensure preservation, a full and brilliant essay on the construction and variety of catalogues, and an admirable bibliography conclude the Guide.

Miss Kane writes: “The cataloging process is necessarily one of reconciling what should be done with what can be done”; and again: “The time necessary to trace obscure people and organizations can be used better in other aspects of cataloging.” The distinctions between the ideal or preferred and the attainable or feasible are scrupulously maintained throughout the study and add greatly to its soundness. Old hands and eager apprentices alike have much to learn from it. May it never go out of print!

ANTE-BELLUM AGRICULTURE


Reviewed by Merrill E. Jarchow

IN 1945 Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., published Fred Shannon's The Farmer's Last Frontier: Agriculture, 1860-1897, as volume five of a projected nine-volume, co-operative economic history of the United States. During the intervening fifteen years, six other works in the series have been issued, the latest being the study under review. While fifteen years is a fairly long time to await the appearance of a book, Professor Gates's contribution to the Rinehart series has, by its excellence, amply justified the time it has taken.

In all respects, this book reflects the work of a mature, gifted, and scholarly writer. With a format similar to that of Mr. Shannon's book, which was attractive but which suffered somewhat because of the wartime paper shortage, Professor Gates's book possesses all the considerable virtues of the earlier volume together with a few plusses of its own.

Beginning with a description of agricultural conditions in the South and in the North in 1815, Professor Gates traces, in a balanced and judicious manner, the economic history of agriculture during the ensuing forty-five years — years filled with periods of growth and depression, but withal an era of tremendous significance in shaping the character of farming in the United States. Another generation at least will pass before there will be any need to retrace Professor Gates's steps, and even then this reviewer thinks his interpretation will remain sound.

The organization of the work combines topical, geographical, and chronological approaches into a logical and understandable whole. After setting the stage, the author devotes two chapters to various facets of the public land policies. Next he deals with major and minor crops — tobacco, flax, hemp, rice, sugar, cotton, wheat, corn, oats, barley, rye — their production and marketing. Then come accounts of prairie farming, livestock raising, and dairying, followed by a chapter on hay, fruit, and vegetables, which should perhaps have been grouped with earlier chapters on crops. Labor and farm machinery and the search for new species constitute chapters 13 and 14. The former follows well-beaten paths, but the latter introduces some significant recent materials. The final five chapters are concerned with the role of government, agricultural periodicals and journalists, agricultural education, the Far West — Utah, Minnesota.
Oregon, and California — and a general summation. Adding to the value as well as to the attractiveness of the volume are an excellent bibliography, illustrations, and charts, while maps inside the front and back covers depict agriculture in 1860.

Minnesotans, if they read with care, will discover some thirteen references to their state in text and notes, but they will find only one reference to Minnesota in the index. This neglect is not unreasonable, I suppose, if we take into consideration the perspective of the period treated in the book.

The virtue of Mr. Gates's volume is not that it has plowed new land — this was not its intention — but rather that by blending the results of older scholarship — that of Gray and Bidwell and Falconer, for example — with the recent monographic literature, it has given us a readable, up-to-date survey of the ante-bellum period, which is a model of its kind. I was particularly impressed as I read the footnotes — located at the bottom of each page where they should be — by the many citations to items published since the end of World War II. Professor Gates, as readers familiar with his previous publications would expect, has produced another fine piece of work.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

The County Agent Story: The Impact of Extension Work on Farming and County Life in Minnesota. By C. L. McNELLY. (Berryville, Arkansas, 1960. 191 p. Illustrations. $2.85.)

Reviewed by Wilbur H. Glover

THE AUTHOR of this little book relies on hard facts and cold figures to tell the story of the county agents of Minnesota from 1912 to about 1950, and he sticks close to the agricultural extension organization in his perspective. He thus achieves a useful chronicle and establishes his point; perhaps he even labors it. That agriculture has been remade into an industrialized business to a remarkable degree is plain, and it is doubtful whether anyone would dispute Mr. McNelly's assumption that educational work of the direct and personal nature carried on by county agents has been one of the most important factors in making the change. Instead of giving figures and reciting old meeting programs, one might wish that he had let us into the secrets of the minds that devoted themselves to this work. He tells just enough anecdotes about the struggles and aspirations of his fellow workers to whet our appetites for more.

We are also allowed to glimpse some of the problems of organizing the job of taking scientific results and business procedures to the farmers. The conflict aroused by allowing a private group, the Farm Bureau, to dominate the work of the agents is alluded to, but no clear picture of the present situation is left with the reader. This policy led to friction with other farm associations, such as the Farmers Union. To an old Wisconsin hand, who has seen this arrangement considered and rejected, it seems most unwise, and its outcome in Minnesota would be of interest, as would the views of such a judicious participant as Mr. McNelly. A similar sin of omission might be noted with respect to the relationship of the Minnesota extension story to the work of its neighbors. In view of the several existing histories of agricultural colleges, it might have been possible for the author to include some comparative background material. Mr. McNelly, however, chose to limit himself to the basic elements of his subject, so it should merely be noted that he did not attempt the broader job.

The book will serve a good purpose in making available facts and figures on extension work in Minnesota for local and state students of agriculture. It is neatly bound, but the proofreading was carelessly done. There is no index.

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

THE FIFTIETH anniversary of the coming of the Crosier Order to Onamia, Minnesota, in 1910 is commemorated by the publication of The Crosier Story: A History of the Crosier Fathers in the United States (Onamia, Crosier Press, 1960. 384 p. Illustrations. $6.50.). Written by Father Jerome Rausch, O.S.C., with assistance in some chapters from community members, the volume concerns the growth on American soil of this thirteenth-century Catholic
religious order of canons. Its medieval back­
ground is traced, as well as its attempt at a
Wisconsin foundation in the 1850s. Student
and community life at Onamia's minor semin­
ary, and the order's further foundations in
Nebraska and Indiana are also detailed. In this
volume students of Minnesota history will find
new research materials on a Catholic coloniza-

tion effort of the early twentieth century in the
vicinities of Butler in Otter Tail County and
Onamia. In fact, its main historical contribu­tion
is the presentation of new information on this
previously unstudied and relatively recent
Dutch colony, thus expanding the immigrant
dimensions of Minnesota's history.
Colman J. Barry, O.S.B.

... on the HISTORICAL HORIZON

TWO GREAT Minnesota collectors — Herschel
V. Jones and James Ford Bell — are among the
clients of A. S. W. Rosenbach mentioned fre­
quently in the recent work by Edwin Wolf 2nd
and John F. Fleming entitled Rosenbach: A
Biography (Cleveland, 1960. 616 p.). The
relations of these Minnesotans with the "greatest
antiquarian bookseller the world has seen"
are set forth in some detail by Dr. Rosen­
bach's biographers, who recall many an inter­
esting tale of their meetings and their purchases.
Jones, for example, is described as one of the
doctor's "closest book friends," and the authors
give a touching recital of the manner in which
the news of the Minneapolis newspaper pub­
lisher's death reached Rosenbach. Not only did
the Philadelphia bibliophile guide Jones in the
building of his great Americana library, but he
purchased and disposed of it after the latter's
death. In that sale, the role of the late Carl W.
Jones, a former president of the Minnesota His­
torical Society, is prominently mentioned. The
authors describe Carl Jones as "one of the coun­
try's outstanding amateur magicians," and they
might have added that he was a distinguished
collector of books relating to magic. Mr. Bell,
the authors relate, met Rosenbach on board
ship during an Atlantic crossing, and arranged
for his first purchase in the smoking room. "A
new collector in a big sense" was made on that
occasion, according to the writers, and a major
rare book library, now the pride of the Univer­
sity of Minnesota, resulted." They note that on
one occasion Rosenbach persuaded "the Minne­
apolis miller to pay $18,500 for thirty-seven of
his now famous collection of Jesuit Relations,"
which are among the greatest rarities in his
unique Americana library.

A COLORFUL DOCUMENT has been pub­
lished in pamphlet form by the Illinois State
Historical Society under the title An Illinois
Gold Hunter in the Black Hills (Springfield,
1960. 40 p.). It is the diary of one Jerry
Bryan, kept from March 13 to August 20, 1876,
on a gold-seeking trip from Rock Island County,
Illinois, to what was then Sioux territory in
western South Dakota. An introduction and
footnotes by Clyde C. Walton add to the interest
and value of the narrative, as do several maps
and a striking selection of early photographs
showing Deadwood and other mining towns
visited and described by the diarist.

AN INTIMATE, personal recollection of Sin­
clair Lewis by Budd Schulberg can be found in
the December issue of Esquire under the title
"Lewis: Big Wind from Sauk Centre." In it,
Mr. Schulberg relives his first meeting with
Lewis in 1935 when, as a student at Dartmouth
College, he spent a long weekend with the
famous author. Mr. Schulberg reports the liter­
ary advice Lewis gave him on this visit, recaUls
Lewis' ignorance — or defiance — of the then-
current economic theories, and records his
observations on Lewis' relations with his trav­
erer-wife, Dorothy Thompson.

WRITING in the Iowa Journal of History for
October, 1960, William J. Petersen calls atten­
tion to "Rafting on the Mississippi," — a nearly
forgotten industry, which he claims is "for sheer
magnitude . . . without a parallel in early
Upper Mississippi Valley transportation his­
tory." It was in the 1830s, according to Mr.
Petersen, that the first profits were made by
floating down from the pineries of northwestern
Wisconsin the coveted timber for construction
in the rapidly settling prairie states to the south.
By late spring of 1865 the Mississippi was
"covered for miles" with vast rafts of logs and
lumber "from the Wisconsin, the Black, the
Chippewa, the St. Croix, and even the Missis­
sippi above the Falls of St. Anthony." In this
well-documented article, Mr. Petersen describes
the problems involved in getting the unwieldy
craft down the frequently treacherous channels, both in the era of free-floating rafts and during the later period when they were pushed or towed by raftboats. With a keen eye for color, he also includes many examples from the body of lore and legend that grew up about this romantic and danger-filled business.

THE MINNESOTA SCENE

THE MINNESOTA legislature commemorated the hundredth anniversary of the Civil War with an unusual joint evening session, held in the chamber of the House of Representatives on March 2. The session, which was open to the public, was addressed by the Right Reverend Monsignor James P. Shannon, president of the College of St. Thomas and a vice-president of the society. Father Shannon reviewed Minnesota’s contributions to the Union cause on its own frontier, concluding that “an insight into the war which took more American lives than any other in our national history . . . should help us in some small way to understand and appreciate more deeply the value of our national union and our tradition of freedom.”

A DRIVE to secure the establishment of a new state park at the junction of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers opened with a meeting on January 19 in the Historical Building. The nucleus of the proposed development would be Fort Snelling, which, on December 19 was declared by the national park service to be eligible for “registered national historic landmark status.” Associated with the fort in the new park would be numerous other sites of significance for Minnesota’s earliest settlement, as well as large tracts of unspoiled woodlands, lakes, and islands along the Minnesota River. The plan has the support of the Historical Society, the division of state parks, the Metropolitan Planning Commission, the Minneapolis park board, the Audubon Society, and numerous conservationists throughout the state. A bill calling for the establishment of the park has been introduced in the legislature by Senator Leslie E. Westin of St. Paul. Supporters of the idea have organized as the Fort Snelling State Park Association, which claimed by March 1 some three hundred members and the endorsement of many Twin Cities community groups.

MEN AND EVENTS surrounding the establishment of the Minnesota forest service in 1911 and its development to about 1922 provide the material for Elizabeth Bachmann’s article on “Early Days of the Forest Service,” which appears in the Conservation Volunteer for November–December. The author outlines the work of William T. Cox, first director of the service, lists other personnel in the infant organization, notes various acts of the legislature important to its development over the years, and touches briefly on the beginnings of the tree-planting program in 1914. Miss Bachmann describes in some detail the devastating Cloquet-Moose Lake fire of October, 1918, which offered tragic proof of the need for more adequate protection of Minnesota’s forests.

THE MANNER in which Thanksgiving Day was celebrated during Minnesota’s territorial years is described by Hal Quarfoth in the Minneapolis Sunday Tribune for December 20. The holiday was first observed in Minnesota on December 26, 1850, according to Mr. Quarfoth, and the date, set by proclamation of the governor, varied each year until 1858, when the last Thursday in November was settled upon. Quotations from contemporary letters and newspapers describing the customs and foods of the day reveal that though “sometimes it was difficult to find a reason to be thankful,” Minnesota pioneers nevertheless enjoyed themselves.

A BOOKLET by Hilma Pearson entitled Early Walnut Grove and Plum Creek Neighbors and Friends contains numerous pictures and brief stories which originally appeared in the fiftieth anniversary edition of the Walnut Grove Tribune in 1941 (1960. 14 p.). Activities in the area portrayed by Laura Ingalls Wilder in her book On The Banks of Plum Creek have been captured in illustrations dating from 1890 through 1938. Scenes of threshing time, Walnut Grove’s main street, its buildings, early autos, and pioneer settlers combine to acquaint the reader more fully with the area of the black walnut trees in Redwood County.

TWO PAMPHLETS dealing with phases of Winona County history have recently appeared. In an illustrated booklet published by the Winona County Historical Society, Victor Gilbertsen recounts the Early Postal History of Winona County, Minnesota (Winona, 1960. 19 p.). A veteran of almost fifty years with the postal service in Winona, Mr. Gilbertsen describes the development of the post office there from its informal beginnings, when “it was usual for the Postmaster at La Crosse, Wis. to deliver to some settler, all the mail matter of the settlement,” to the erection in 1891 of the present impressive stone building of Gothic design. He also records the beginnings of postal service in other townships and villages of the
Winona County’s Attitude Toward Lincoln. As Shown in the elections of 1860 and 1864 is traced through a study of contemporary newspapers by J. Robert, F.S.C. (Winona, St. Mary’s College Press, 1960  25 p.). Relying on files of the Winona Republican, the author follows the development of the area’s attitude toward Lincoln from its first cautious endorsement of his nomination through the two elections, in which Winona County gave him support well above the national average, to the eulogies which appeared after his assassination.

NEWS OF THE SOCIETY

“A WAR to Remember” will be the subject of Professor Bell I. Wiley’s address before the society’s hundred-and-twelfth annual meeting at the University of Minnesota’s Coffman Memorial Union on April 14, 1961. Professor Wiley’s talk will be preceded by a dinner honoring Alexander Ramsey, governor of the state during the early years of the Civil War. The day will also be marked by a conference for county historical societies on the Civil War and its centennial observance sponsored by the Twin Cities Civil War Roundtable and the Minnesota Historical Society.

AN ALEXANDER Ramsey Scholarship of six hundred dollars has been established by the Minnesota Historical Society. It was made possible through a grant from Miss Anna E. Ramsey Furness in memory of her grandfather, Minnesota’s first territorial governor. The scholarship will be awarded annually for three years, beginning in 1961, and may go to any graduate of Alexander Ramsey High School in Roseville, Minnesota, majoring in history, or who either is attending or will attend Carleton College or the University of Minnesota. A student is eligible to receive the award during any year of his undergraduate work. Applications should be sent to the Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul 1, Minnesota. For the current year they are due on April 17, 1961. The recipient of the scholarship will be announced in May.

A DISPLAY calling attention to “The Civil War and the Minnesota Press,” prepared originally for exhibit at the annual meeting of the Minnesota Newspaper Association in February, is now on view in the Historical Building. Drawn from the society’s newspaper collection, it includes a state-wide selection of news stories and editorials printed in Minnesota papers during the years from 1860 to 1865. These reflect vividly the emotion, the patriotism, and the anxiety prevalent in Minnesota communities at the time and illustrate how widely Minnesotans differed in their opinions concerning the war and its aims.

A CONTRIBUTION toward the future restoration of old Fort Snelling has been received by the society from the Daughters of the Founders and Patriots of America. The sum of three hundred dollars was presented to Mr. Fridley, the society’s director, by Mrs. Erling Sorbo, state president of the group, which has as one of its chief purposes the preservation of historic sites. Partial restoration of the old fort has been suggested as a possible project of the Minnesota Civil War and Sioux Uprising Centennial Commission.

SEVERAL RARE and important volumes have been acquired by the society’s library during the past year. Outstanding among them is an immaculate copy of Three Years Among the Indians in Dakota by J. H. Drips (Kimball, South Dakota, 1894). The author was a sergeant in Company L of the Sixth Iowa Cavalry, and the book deals with the Indian campaigns of 1863–65 under General Alfred Sully, many of whose soldiers were Minnesotans. Of particular interest is Drips’s description of the battle of White Stone Hill. Two rare editions of a book concerning the Earl of Selkirk’s colony in the Red River Valley were also added to the library’s shelves during 1960. Its author is John Halkett, and the English edition, published in London in 1817, is entitled Statements Respecting the Earl of Selkirk’s Settlement of Kildonan. Also acquired by the society is a French translation, Fragments Touchant la Colonie du Lord Selkirk, which appeared in Montreal the following year. The three acquisitions were made possible by the Library Book Fund, and the generosity of the McKnight Foundation, and Robert E. Slaughter of Stillwater.

WITH this issue, responsibility for the editing of Minnesota History is assumed by Rhoda Raaasch Gilman, who was appointed on January 1 to the position so long and competently filled by Miss Bertha Heilbron. Mrs. Gilman, a native of Seattle, is a graduate of the University of Washington, where she majored in economics and earned a minor in English. In 1950 she received a master’s degree in economics from Bryn Mawr College, and during the two following years she and her husband were associated in various capacities with the American Friends Service Committee, both in Philadelphia and Mexico. A resident of Minnesota for the past nine years, she joined the society’s staff in 1958 as a research assistant.