The 21st Ballot: A Political Party Struggle in Minnesota. By DAVRO LEBEDOFF. (Minne­
apolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1969. ix, 218 p., Illustrations. $5.95.)

Reviewed by James Pederson

"I THINK of my book as simply a story," says David Lebedoff in his preface. He also claims there that all reports used are factual, that "This is an account of what did take place," and "That which could not be verified was ex­cluded." The result of this incongruity is neither a novel nor a historical record, although the author's effort to make his version of the 1966 upheaval in the Democratic-Farmer-Labor party readable brings the book close to the novel form.

The volume chronicles the turbulent events at the late summer conference in 1965 when the DFL executive committee concluded almost unanimously that incumbent Governor Karl F. Rolvaag was in critical po­litical difficulty, with slim chance for re-election in 1966. The author continues with the formal challenge of the governor by the then lieutenant governor, A. M. "Sandy" Keith, at the June, 1966, convention; the struggle for endorse­ment from that eleven-hundred-delegate gathering; the seemingly hopeless impasse and Mr. Keith's determination — as well as that of the majority of the delegates — to break the deadlock. The drama of what the participants — a governor, a challenger, two senators, congressmen, representatives of the vice-president, and countless party officers — were doing and saying comprises perhaps the most fasci­nating part of the work.

The lieutenant governor's wresting of the endorsement from Karl Rolvaag on the twentieth ballot, followed by the post-conven­tion period with its divisive primary campaign, the Republican success in capitalizing on the DFL bloodletting, and the fluctuating mood of the voters (indicated by both the Minnesota Poll and the increase of visible support for the incumbent after the televised convention proceedings) are vividly recounted. According to Mr. Lebedoff, "fiasco" might best sum­marize Mr. Keith's primary efforts. Retro­spectively, at least, mistake after mistake made the lieutenant governor's abortive attempt look almost comical.

The book ends rather abruptly with an ac­count of the election eve mood in the Rolvaag headquarters as returns began to indicate the totality of the DFL defeat.

It may seem unfair nit-picking for this re­viewer (who also participated in and observed most of these events) to point out the author's errors, omissions, and overgeneralized judg­ments, but they should be noted lest this book be regarded as an accurate source for future historians. While space limitations, an imperfect memory, and differing interpretation make it impossible to list all — or even many — of these defects, a few are cited as examples.

In the first chapter, the role ascribed to David Graven on the Friday afternoon of the so-called Sugar Hills conference could not have occurred as Mr. Lebedoff states, for the simple reason that Mr. Graven arrived late. At the last minute he had to drive the roughly 120 miles because bad weather prevented his planned flight. Contrary to the author's asser­tion that only the Saturday evening session was

Mr. Pederson, assistant to the society's director, is the former executive secretary of the state Democratic-Farmer-Labor central committee.
held in a building away from the main lodge, the first meeting convened on Friday was in the separate cottage called the “meetin’ house.” But more serious is the over-all impression given the casual reader that the compelling reason for the conference was the question of Mr. Rolvaag’s popularity. Such is not the truth. The need for a leadership retreat to discuss the party’s long-range plans had been felt by many officers even before the governor was first elected.

Mr. Lebedoff categorically states in the third chapter that through the presidential primary in 1956 the voters “directed that every delegate to the [national Democratic] convention be a Kefauver supporter.” The fact is that two congressional districts elected delegates committed to Adlai Stevenson so that four delegates to the national convention were not backers of the Tennessee senator.

The author’s failure to interview certain key people must be mentioned. Richard Moe, Keith’s campaign aide who was perhaps more than anyone but the candidate himself privy to the delegate assessments and moods, will serve as an example of omission. Similarly, two gatherings to decide on Keith’s running mates—one held the night before the convention was reconvened in July, the other on the following day at the Waverly home of Hubert H. Humphrey—are neglected. These meetings are vital to understanding the reasons for the development of the “Rolvaag Team” and the resulting polarization of the DFL into two camps.

The use of footnotes or a bibliography would obviously have strengthened the work. In chapter two, particularly, a quick biographical sketch of Rolvaag, a refresher course in state political history, an account of the genesis of the DFL, and the 1962 campaign and recount are covered in a scant twenty-five pages. For this background the author has relied on both published and unpublished writings but cites no sources. He contributes to the growing tendency to brand all radicals and protesters of the 1930s and 1940s as Communists or fellow travelers, ascribing some blame for the demise of the Farmer-Labor party “to that unlikely peril, Communist subversion. In this case, the threat was genuine. While it may be difficult to think of rural Minnesota as a center of Communist intrigue, such was precisely the state of affairs in the late 1930’s... card-carrying members of the Communist party... very nearly succeeded in gaining control of the largest political party in the state.”

This reviewer is familiar with existing, detailed documents on the subject and has heard the story told countless times. A serious injustice is done the genuine liberals and non-communist radicals of Democratic, Farmer-Labor, and even Republican bent who saw in the Farmer-Labor movement a legitimate way to correct and overcome inequities in a depression-ridden economic system. This is not to say there were no Communists in the old Farmer-Labor group. Indeed, its staunchest defenders admit there were some. What is objectionable is the sweeping generalizations that imply most of the party to be either Communists or dupes. Such patent nonsense does disservice both to the persons involved and to the cause of history. This criticism could have been minimized had the author cited his sources, allowing the reader to reach his own conclusions.

These flaws, while serious, do not discredit The 21st Ballot as a well-written work with some positive uses. This reviewer, aware of his parochial prejudices, would compare the book favorably with Convention (1964) by Fletcher Knebel and Charles W. Bailey. Mr. Lebedoff skillfully captures the emotion, excitement, and drama that the political events of 1966 held for most Minnesotans.

FATHER OF WATERS

Before Mark Twain: A Sampler of Old, Old Times on the Mississippi. Edited by John Francis McDermott. (Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1968. xxxiii, 298 p. Illustrations. $15.00)

Reviewed by Martha C. Bray

THIS VOLUME, according to its distinguished editor, is “not a source book but a reader for those who love the river.” As such, a reviewer cannot do more than introduce it to its rightful audience who, as scholars or “buffs,”

Mrs. Bray, who summers on the banks of the Mississippi, is at work on a full-length biography of Joseph N. Nicollet.
will judge it according to their pleasure in it. Here it is—a collection of thirty-seven unannotated sketches chosen from the great variety of descriptions of the throbbing life of the river published before Mark Twain’s “Old Times on the Mississippi” appeared in 1874 in Harper's Magazine. (The Mississippi, the editor emphasizes, is not Mark Twain’s literary property.) This “sampler” sets the stage for the forthcoming series of documentary volumes, “Travelers on the Western Waters,” to be published under Mr. McDermott’s general editorship. The project will make available to the reader many works which are now more or less inaccessible to him.

In his lively introduction, Mr. McDermott does not interpret any of the sketches which follow. Rather, leaving the authors to speak for themselves, he draws on other sources—newspapers, periodicals, diaries, and journals—which suggest the great conglomeration of river scenes, events, pleasures, trials, and tragedies which could not be crowded into this volume. In the 1840s from the levee in St. Louis to the waterfront of New Orleans “anything may happen” and, says the editor, it may be “horrifying or exciting depending upon your temperament.” As for himself, he has simply joined the throng of travelers which includes many more than his selected group of reporters, tellers of tall tales, and sophisticated European and eastern writers, each of whom he introduces with a paragraph. Like any traveler, he concerns himself with accommodations and entertaining possibilities as well as with gloomy prognostications and potential danger. He is knowledgeable enough to note such things as a deck hand with a “lard trier in one hand and a proof glass in another.”

A recent review of this volume (Minneapolis Tribune, January 19, 1969) was critical of Mr. McDermott’s lack of personal involvement in the “underlying horror of life” when there was slavery, lynching, malaria, loneliness, boredom, and murder gangs—all of which evils are brought out in one or another of the sketches. Mr. McDermott, however, says nothing more than that a good sightseer, today as yesterday, is rarely a moralist or prophet. We are reminded only that for a brief period in history the Mississippi was a waterway of enormous human interest. Any book which captures a little of this variety can be enjoyable to produce as well as to read. Its editor unpretentiously makes no other claim for it.

Sixteen full pages of contemporary sketches and cartoons add to the attractiveness of the volume, and an index makes it valuable to the researcher.

INDIAN PANORAMA

The Indian Heritage of America. By Alvin M. Josephy, Jr. (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1968. xiii, xiv, 384 p. Illustrations, maps. $10.00.)

Reviewed by James C. Olson

INDIAN STUDIES have become so specialized that most people working in the field confine themselves to a fairly limited topic. In this ambitious book, Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., well known for The Patriot Chiefs (1961) and The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest (1965), attempts to encompass in fewer than four hundred pages the whole range of Indian life in North, Central, and South America from prehistoric times to the present. Such an effort could have resulted in a dry-as-dust catalog or a blatantly superficial story of value to no one, but Mr. Josephy has turned out a highly satisfactory summary account of the archaeology, ethnology, and history of the tribes of the Americas.

He recognizes the great diversities among the Indians, but he also sees certain unifying themes both in their indigenous cultures and in their relationships with their European conquerors which make it possible to generalize about many different groups and to think in terms of the “Indian heritage.” He warns, however, that a “kaleidoscope of different—and often altering—native ways of life makes little more than a figure of speech the term ‘Indianness,’ which, more aptly, is a modern-day reference to traits by which Indians today retain recognition for themselves as Indians.”

In presenting his panoramic view of the Indians of the Americas, Mr. Josephy necessarily has had to use a fairly broad brush. Rather than considering individual tribes as such, he has

Mr. Olson, author of Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem (1965), is chancellor of the University of Missouri—Kansas City.
chosen to develop his presentation around the anthropological cultural areas which really are geographical divisions containing tribes that displayed numerous similarities in their ways of living. He devotes one chapter to each of seventeen cultural areas, and in each he provides a good summary view of the various Indian societies as they functioned before the period of white contact and they were modified by that contact. The discussions of the individual cultural areas are preceded by six chapters on the Indians in general — including good, brief treatments of European stereotypes, "Indianness," early man in the Americas, and agriculture and the rise of population — and followed by chapters on the impact of the white man on the Indians, the white man's conquest of the Indians, and the fight for survival in today's world.

Although the book is not documented, it is obviously based upon a thorough study of the standard sources. There is a sound bibliography "of works that are most likely to be of major assistance and interest to the nonspecialist." In addition, there is a useful list of museums, libraries, historical societies (including the Minnesota Historical Society), and other institutions with important materials pertaining to the Indians. The book is well illustrated and there are a number of good maps.

The Indian Heritage of America is well conceived, well researched, and extremely well written. If one wishes to know something of the Indians, this is a fine book with which to begin.

RESEARCH AID


Reviewed by Millard L. Gieske

THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS research scholar is an obligated man. He is indebted to those persons and organizations which have a sense of history and the presence of mind to preserve documents and manuscripts that permit us better to judge the present by the past. He owes special gratitude to the archivist and manuscript curator who organizes, catalogues, and inventories collections in order to make them more readily accessible for research. And he ought to have a sense of duty toward those institutions that attempt to make more manageable the sometimes herculean task of information retrieval.

Public affairs research can be a mixed bag. That is why it is to the credit and good judgment of the State of Minnesota that it has the wisdom to preserve and make readily available a wide variety of public affairs collections. Foremost among the manuscript collectors in the state is the Minnesota Historical Society. With its international reputation, the "MHS" provides the essentials for scholarly research on far-ranging subjects in public affairs. General topics include mid-America isolation, agrarian reform, conservation, third-party splinter movements, radicalism, presidential campaigns, labor politics, peace movements, the two-party system. These would include such specifics as the Nonpartisan League, Farmer-Labor party, Republican and Democratic parties, Farmer Labor Political Federation, Communist party, Progressive party, Democratic-Farmer-Labor party, Floyd B. Olson, Harold E. Stassen, Frank B. Kellogg, Henrik Shipstead, Eugene McCarthy, Hubert H. Humphrey, and hosts of others past and present. Their trails crisscross the state and the Midwest, leading to Washington, D.C., and to the corners of the world.

Nearly always the amateur, the student, and the scholarly researcher is moved to ask, "What's available?" Fortunately, the MHS has now a quick answer. Aided by funds from the Oscar F. and Madge Hawkins Foundation, the society has printed a guide to its public affairs collections. Compiled by Lucile M. Kane, curator of manuscripts, the present volume briefly describes some 158 groups of papers and twenty-five tape-recorded items that have been culled from the seven million manuscripts housed by the society. With fingertip reference available, the amateur and professional will be saved much of the agony of cross-referencing card catalogs and all-inclusive collections guides.
What more can be hoped for? Only that the guide be periodically revised to include acquisitions as they become available. It remains for the researcher to mine the gold.

**SIOUX STUDY**

The Mystic Lake Sioux: Sociology of the Mdewakantonwan Santee. By **Ruth Landes**.

(Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1968. x, 224 p. $7.50.)

Reviewed by **Roy W. Meyer**

In 1935 a young anthropologist named Ruth Landes spent several months with the Indians at Prairie Island, on the Mississippi above Red Wing, gathering information on the traditions and former customs of the eastern Sioux. Mrs. Landes enjoyed an opportunity, soon to vanish, to collect the materials for authentic culture reconstruction, for people were still living then who had been born before the Sioux Uprising of 1862 and who remembered what their parents and grandparents had told them about life in tribal days. On the whole, she made good use of the opportunity, and the results of her research, now belatedly published, constitute a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the Santee Sioux.

Mrs. Landes' short book contains four chapters: the first, a brief history of the eastern Sioux bands; the other three, ethnographic treatments of their traditional culture, dealing respectively with political organization, kinship and marriage, and occupations. The first chapter is by far the weakest and illustrates half of what has come to be a truism: that the ethnologist and the historian fail to make proper use of each other's methods and findings. Based heavily on secondary sources, it contains an unusual proportion of erroneous information. Two sentences in a single paragraph display four major errors of fact. All, or nearly all, of the facts that Mrs. Landes failed to get straight are to be found in the Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and the Statutes at Large — sources which do not appear in her bibliography.

When the author moves into the body of her book, the culture reconstruction proper, she is on more familiar ground and does a better job. Her method throughout these chapters is to report what her modern informants told her and then compare this information with the recorded observations of early visitors to the Santee Sioux, such as the Reverend Samuel W. Pond and Indian Agent Lawrence Taliaferro. She finds a high degree of congruence between the two sources — a testimonial to the persistency of oral tradition among a people long subjected to pressures for assimilation.

A question of professional ethics might be raised in reference to Mrs. Landes' very frank characterization of the people she met and her recording of community gossip, some of it malicious, usually accompanied by the names of the individuals concerned. The Prairie Island Indians are not primitives from the interior of New Guinea; they are literate Americans, aware of what is written about them and, like other minority groups, acutely sensitive to anything they consider derogatory. If the educated son of a former community leader reads The Mystic Lake Sioux, which is obviously not intended for private circulation among anthropologists, he will not be pleased to see his father characterized as a drunken buffoon who attempted what the author regarded as an indecent assault on her person — particularly since non-Indians long resident in the community consider the characterization grossly inaccurate.

This objection aside, the ethnographic portions of the book do warrant their long-delayed publication. It is regrettable that Mrs. Landes' manuscript was not published thirty years ago, when her comments on the contemporary situation at Prairie Island had more relevance than they do today. Her efforts to update the research seem to have been limited to a few footnotes, one including a series of somewhat misleading extracts from a letter by an official of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Nevertheless, those interested in Indian subjects can be grateful to the University of Wisconsin Press for finally publishing this well-written, attractively designed book. We need all the light we can get on the American Indian, and The Mystic Lake Sioux sheds more than a glimmer on a group that has not received the attention it deserves.

Mr. Meyer, author of History of the Santee Sioux (1967), is currently lecturing on American literature in Australia under a Fulbright-Hays grant.

**Summer 1969**
AN ADDITION to the Localized History Series, published by the Teachers College Press of Columbia University, is John I. Kolehmainen's *The Finns in America* (New York, 1968. 42 p.). The book describes the conditions that caused emigration, emphasizing the economic reasons for the heavy concentration of this people in the upper Midwest. In discussing the culture of Finnish-Americans, the author draws attention to the churches, temperance and radical movements, consumers' co-operatives, and the press. He sees American influences most strikingly changing eating habits, encouraging social equalitarianism, emancipating women, and producing the "Finglish" dialect. A bibliography lists most of the more important published works in English and some doctoral dissertations. The Swedish-speaking Finns are not discussed: perhaps they will figure in Franklin Scott's forthcoming pamphlet on the Swedes.

HISTORIANS with a yen to travel the waterways of the state and see firsthand some canoe routes of the past will welcome the handsome new guide recently published by the Department of Conservation. Compiled by the division of parks and recreation, *Minnesota Voyageur Trails* (St. Paul, 1969. $2.00) provides forty-eight pages of detailed information on seventeen of the state's best water trails. There is a map of each route showing campsites, portages, bridges, rapids, and mile markers. In addition, places of interest and historical sites are located along each river. Useful information on weather, wildlife, canoeing techniques, and helpful "trip tips" are incorporated in the book, as well as names of persons in each area who may be contacted for additional data. The routes are listed alphabetically rather than geographically and include: Big Fork River, Boundary Waters Canoe Area, the Cannon, Cloquet, Crow Wing, Crow, Des Moines, Kettle, Little Fork, Minnesota, Mississippi, Red Lake, Root, Rum, Snake, St. Croix and St. Louis rivers.

THE RECORD of the German-Americans "as builders of the nation, as well as one of its most troublesome elements, is inextricably woven into the American fabric" says Richard O'Connor in *The German-Americans: An Informal History* (Boston, 1968. 484 p.). With considerable flair, Mr. O'Connor recounts the saga of the German-American community, its migrations, aspirations, cultural role, and assimilation. Of particular interest to Minnesota readers is a section devoted to the experiences of the German-American settlers in New Ulm during the Sioux Uprising of 1862. The author notes their refusal to abandon the Minnesota River Valley in spite of that horrible event. The volume is annotated and has an index and a bibliography.

NEWS OF THE SOCIETY

WINNER of the Solon J. Buck award for the best article published in *Minnesota History* during 1968 is Raymond L. Koch, whose "Politics and Relief in Minneapolis During the 1930s," appeared in the Winter issue. Mr. Koch is assistant professor of history at Eastern Illinois University. Born in Mankato, he holds degrees from Northwestern College and the University of Minnesota. The award money was increased to $250 this year, and Mr. Koch was given $175 of this amount.

The remaining $75 went to the honorable mention winner, Roy W. Meyer, for his "The Canadian Sioux: Refugees from Minnesota," which appeared in the Spring issue. Mr. Meyer is on leave from Mankato State College this year to lecture on American literature at the Flinders University of South Australia. The award committee consisted of Professor John C. Massmann of St. Cloud State College, Kenneth Carley, and Professor Walker D. Wyman of the University of Wisconsin at River Falls, who announced the winners on May 22 at the society's annual meeting in St. Paul.

A REVISED EDITION of the picture packet of *Military Posts of Pioneer Minnesota* (St. Paul, 1969. 12 p. $.50) is now being offered by the Minnesota Historical Society. Nineteen black-and-white pictures of Forts Snelling, Ridgely, Ripley, and Abercrombie, as well as some of the men who built them, have been printed on loose sheets of paper, suitable for classroom study, display, or scrapbooks. Background material on the role each of the forts played in transforming the wilderness that was Minnesota into a state is included. Each packet is enclosed in an envelope for storing or mailing.