BOOK REVIEWS

The Eagle Aloft: Two Centuries of the Balloon in America. By Tom D. Crouch.
(Washington, D.C., Smithsonian Institution Press, 1983. Illustrations. 770 p. $49.50.)

LAST YEAR’S bicentennial of human flight would have gratified Ben Franklin’s soul. Not only did it justify his prompt prediction that the balloon would prove to be more than a toy; it was observed with an abundance of thoughtful study and comment on the history of flight, embodied in books, lectures, and exhibitions. Possibly the most valuable work of all is this first comprehensive history of ballooning in America. Scholarly, but at the same time readable and entertaining, it is a very good book — all 770 pages of it.

For those who have delved into balloon history, it is easy to see why no such book was undertaken before. American interest in human flight was keen from the very first moment, but this country did not achieve leadership in the field until well into the 20th century. For more than 100 years, official interest and financial backing were stronger in Europe, and it was there — mainly in France — that the major technical breakthroughs and the history-making flights were achieved.

In America ballooning was left to the ingenuity of small-time inventors and tinkerers and the daring of individual aeronauts, most of whom constructed their own craft and supported their efforts by public demonstrations. The record of their activities is scattered among thousands of local sources. Simply to find the material was a major task, not to mention sifting from it the important trends and meanings. Except for a few chapters, therefore — notably the story of military ballooning in the Civil War — historians have understandably avoided the whole thing.

Tom Crouch has accepted the full challenge of the subject. A much easier (and shorter) book might have been written by concentrating on balloon technology and the better-known names in the field, dismissing the backward experimenters and the county fair circuit as unworthy of historical notice. To have done so, however, would have been to miss the broad picture of America’s intense popular involvement with the balloon and the idea of flying.

That involvement began with the captivation of Franklin and the other American leaders who were gathered at the Paris treaty table when the first flights occurred. It continued little more than a year later when Dr. John Jeffries, a Boston loyalist and expatriate, financed and accompanied the French aeronaut Jean Pierre Blanchard in the first flight across the English Channel. Blanchard and other traveling Frenchmen made the earliest flights in America itself, but by the 1830s local aeronauts were beginning to thrill crowds in cities along the eastern seaboard and as far west as Cincinnati. From the famous to the most obscure, Crouch traces an incredible number of them as their ranks and their exploits increased until the “golden decade” of the 1850s, when “a legion of itinerant aeronauts crisscrossed the nation. [and] were featured on the front pages of great newspapers and the new illustrated magazines such as Harper’s and Leslie’s.”

He deserves particular credit for his even-handed treatment of the female members of this intrepid crew. Among those he chronicles are “Mrs. Johnson,” who flew from New York as early as 1825 and was probably the first American aeronaut. (Unfortunately, both her nationality and her full name are uncertain.) Others include Jane Warren of Baltimore in 1837, Lucretia Bradley of Easton, Pennsylvania, in 1855; and Mary Hawley Myers, of Mohawk, New York, who, under the stage name “Carlotta,” had a productive ten-year career as an aeronaut in the 1880s. In a later chapter Crouch gives Jeannette Piccard full credit for her contributions to high-altitude ballooning and notes the shabby treatment she received from government agencies like the United States Navy.

While aeronauts challenged the skies, and incidentally added much to the understanding of atmospheric phenomena and weather, others pursued the elusive goal of powered and guided flight. Their names are a litany of Yankee genius and eccentricity: John Pennington, Solomon Andrews, Frederick Marriott, Rufus Porter, Carl Myers (husband of Carlotta), Charles Ritchell, and many others. Crouch does full justice to Rufus Porter and also to the inventor’s Minnesota associate, William Markoe, whom he credits with being the financial mainstay of Porter’s airship project.

In this area as in others, Crouch has made extensive use of the research that has appeared over the years in local and regional publications, including Minnesota History. Minnesota readers will find his accounts of Markoe and of Count von Zeppelin’s adventures in the state to be complete and accurate. One minor geographical error mars the Zeppelin story: the young count and his friends traveled down the Mississippi, not the St. Croix River, to the settlement of Crow Wing.

Of more importance to Minnesotans and others is the book’s groundbreaking account of the state’s own golden era as ballooning capital of the world between 1945 and 1965. This was the time of the giant Skyhooks, the Moby Dick spy balloons, and world altitude records set by the Manhigh and Stratolab flights — a monumental prelude to orbital flight and man’s journeys to the moon. The key roles played in this story...
by members of the Piccard family and by Otto C. Winzen are briefly sketched, along with the activities of upper Midwest firms like General Mills, C. T. Schjeldahl Company, and Raven Industries. One unmentioned aspect is the University of Minnesota's balloon project of the early 1950s. Funded by military contracts and directed by Drs. Edward Ney and John Winkler, it studied the construction, instrumentation, and tracking of high-altitude balloons, while at the same time carrying payloads of cosmic ray equipment. Much of this era has until recently been blanketed in government secrecy, and a far more complete study of it is needed.

Crouch's book will undoubtedly become the standard source for the history of American ballooning. While he has refrained from broad speculations on the meaning of that story, he has clearly not been blind to the fact that it probably has more implications for American cultural and intellectual history than for the study of technology.

Reviewed by Rhoda R. Gilman, assistant director for education at the MHS and the author of several articles on ballooning, including "Pioneer Aeronaut: William Markoe and His Balloon" (Minnesota History, December, 1962).


Few peoples of the world have been written about more than the American Indians, and what seems most attractive to writers is the bitter fighting that occurred after the Civil War as the Indians fought desperately to hold onto their traditional way of life. One of the best historians working in this field is Robert M. Utley, former historian of the National Park Service and the author of several major works on the topic, including this one, which may be the best. It is also the latest contribution to the Histories of the Frontier Series edited by Howard R. Lamar, Martin Ridge, and David J. Weber.

Rather than the rehash one might expect, this is a skillfully crafted review of the dramatic events in the American West that dominated the closing decades of the 19th century. Reflecting the author's extensive knowledge of the subject and its literature, The Indian Frontier of the American West combines good writing, solid research, and penetrating interpretations. The result is a fresh and welcome study that departs from the soldier-chases-Indian approach that is all too typical of other books on the topic. Although Utley is at his best when detailing the trials and tribulations of the soldiers on the frontier, he leaves his account with enough Indian testimony to give his narrative balance and perspective.

Simply stated, the theme is white greed for Indian lands and resources, a greed so overpowering that it could not be blunted. Most Indians would have echoed the remarks of a Dakota leader quoted in 1891: "The white man made us many promises, more than I can remember, but they never kept but one; they promised to take our land and they took it." But even if the policy makers had done their best to protect Indian rights, as the war was seldom the best friends of the Indians. Utley believes they would have been unable to change the course of events. Senator John Sherman recognized that fact as early as 1867. "If the whole Army of the United States stood in the way," he declared on the Senate floor, "the wave of emigration would pass over it to seek the valley where gold was to be found."

The white man did not get those lands without a fight. Ironically, this period, which was marked by President Ulysses S. Grant's vaunted peace policy and which saw many humanitarians and Indian benefactors step forward, also witnessed some of the most widespread and brutal warfare in the history of the American West. This fighting, Utley points out, was not directed so much against whites as against reservation life. Nevertheless, it has left a legacy of bitterness and mistrust that colors relations between the two races to this day.

This book is much more than a litany of conflicts. In fact, it contains very little description of the fights themselves. Utley assumes that the reader already is well acquainted with such incidents as the Fetterman Fight, the Dull Knife Outbreak, and the Battle of the Little Big Horn. This may be expecting too much of his intended audience which, he says, is "beginning students and interested lay people." Certainly, few such readers are acquainted with the circumstances of Crow Dog's murder of Spotted Tail and the killing of Lieutenant Casey by Plenty Horses, the Carlisle student caught between two cultures.

The book is well illustrated and includes excellent maps. There are a few typographical errors and there is a caption for a nonexistent picture. Personally perplexing to me is the fact that the Red Horse drawings of the Battle of the Little Big Horn used as illustrations (one is on the dust jacket) are credited to the National Park Service when they are, in fact, in the National Anthropological Archives of the Smithsonian Institution. Although the bibliography is quite extensive, it does not appear to be as up to date as it could be.

No matter. The volume is an excellent introduction to this troubled period in the history of Indian-white relations, and it is a worthy addition to the Histories of the American Frontier Series.

Reviewed by Herman J. Viola, director of the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, and the author of several books on the history of the American Indian, including Diplomats in Buckskins: A History of Indian Delegations to Washington City (1982).


As THE Northern Pacific Railway Company (NP) pushed westward from Minnesota toward the Pacific Ocean in the 1870s, an uprooted Michigander, F. Jay Haynes (1853-1921), began a remarkable career as a professional photographer. He captured on wet-plate negatives the NP and its impact on the largely empty prairies, virgin forests, and rugged mountains of
the vast territory. While Haynes's works commonly lack the artistic qualities of a William H. Jackson or a Jack Hillers, they show a consistent craftsmanship.

Soon after Haynes opened photographic studios in Moorhead and in Fargo, Dakota Territory (he later consolidated his activities in St. Paul), this hard-driving entrepreneur used his friendship with the railroad's general passenger agent, Charles S. Fee, to win appointment as the company's "Official Photographer." Haynes sold his work not only to the railroad but to anyone willing to pay his price. Yet, it was the NP connection that established a profitable business. Employment by the railroad's affiliate, the Yellowstone Park Improvement Company, launched his lucrative sales of the national park's scenic views, and this later helped him win an exclusive government concession to offer photographs to tourists. This closeness with the NP likewise made it possible for Haynes to buy an inexpensive, yet suitable piece of rolling stock from the road that became his "Palace Studio Car." The NP hauled it at cost throughout its system, allowing Haynes easy engagement in commercial photography. Shortly after Fee left the NP for a similar position on the Southern Pacific early in the century, Haynes sold the car back to the NP and terminated his "official" connection with the company. By that time he no longer needed the railroad for his financial well-being.

Edward W. Nolan's book is divided into several parts. He recounts the professional career of F. Jay Haynes, describes the history of the Northern Pacific during its formative years, and displays scores of Haynes's photographic works. Special sections feature the "last spike" celebration of 1883; steam locomotives; rolling stock; depots and structures; as well as scenes along the line, including group portraits, agricultural operations, and those ubiquitous frontier towns.

"Northern Pacific Views" is a most attractive volume. Nolan has chosen marvelous photographs—both in terms of content and quality—and his narrative is crisp and complete. He might perhaps have structured the book differently by first providing the reader with an overview of the NP and then an account of how Haynes's career fit into the railroad's early history. Nevertheless, the Haynes collection, housed in the Montana Historical Society, is a unique group of historic images, and this is a sensible and useful work based upon them.


Koochiching: Pioneering Along the Rainy River Frontier. By Hiram M. Drache.

THE FOOTPRINTS of the pioneers are still visible in Koochiching County, that last frontier that attracted homesteader and speculator alike to the bleak granite-and-swampland of the Minnesota-Ontario border country.

Here awaited a land of cruel surprise: a homesteader from Iowa put up the same amount of hay that he'd put up in Iowa for the same number of cows and saw them all starve to death in the Minnesota winter. Here was a land where gold teased but didn't pay the cost of getting it out of the voluptuous host quartz veins.

But like most American frontiers it offered that new beginning, a welcome opportunity for those discouraged by the droughts, floods, and subsequent famines of Europe. Here was land being offered, almost for the taking — forested land, of course. But the forest was a bonus: the first — and sometimes the only — cash crop. In this, his fifth published book of grassroots Midwest history, Professor Hiram M. Drache of Concordia College at Moorhead spells out the years of despair that awaited those who came so eagerly to this northern frontier. Minnesota's statesmen oversold the goods in their impatience to fill the vast empty space with taxpayers, the author suggests.

Professor Drache introduces the reader quickly to the glacier that shoved most of our good Rainy River topsoil down to the Twin Cities area, and he introduces the fur traders who found the border lakes a fine highway for their business. He introduces the Indians who buried each other in the mounds along the Rainy River, and he introduces the timber cruisers and the gold-seekers and then settles in for a leisurely visit to Rainy Lake City, which in its four-year sprint from boom to bust gave us one of our best Rainy Lake legends.

The past century was just shutting up shop when the homesteaders began arriving along the Rainy River, where Professor Drache focuses his main story. Some came by foot from the south, earning their spurs in the forest and bogs, meeting the mosquitoes and no-see-ums and deer flies that the promoters hadn't mentioned. Some came by railroad to Winnipeg, then by freight boat across Lake of the Woods and up the Rainy River. Later, some came by railroad all the way to Fort Frances, just across the Rainy River from the town of Koochiching, now International Falls.

They quickly discovered that they were sharing this new frontier not only with the mosquitoes, no-see-ums, and deer flies, but with the lumbermen and with the dream of one of them to harness the mighty falls of the Koochiching to a paper mill and a flour mill. And there, in a sense, went that "frontier." Settlers who'd come to farm became the farmer-loggers of today. Others went to work in the paper mill when it materialized. Some went to work in the service industries generated by the mill.

But it is the two decades that ended the last century and began this century that Professor Drache attempts to recall, an era best designated as B.B. — Before Backus — for it was lumberman-promoter Edward Wellington Backus who knew from the starting whistle what Minnesota's new frontier was good for.

So we accompany Professor Drache back to those lonely, drafty cabins sheltering disillusioned newcomers against unduly long and harsh winters. Some of the cabins were soon left to crumble back into the dream that wasn't there. Professor Drache figures that eight out of ten homesteaders failed at that venture.

The historian's research is brightened by the diaries of homesteader-schoolteacher-carpenter Samuel Plummer, who addressed a good mind and a remarkably durable sense of humor to the survival of the Plummer family near Loman. He taught in the schoolhouse he built himself, he raised rabbits.
along the trail to the schoolhouse, and he carried his rifle to
deal with larger edibles. He farmed and he cut logs and he
hired out as a carpenter. He kept meticulous record of his
activities — and on New Year’s Day he totted the old year up
and usually concluded that it had been a good year, but the
new one would be better.

Emma Watson’s taped message to her children is another
upbeat source for the historian probing the last frontier. She
was the first woman to ride a train across the Ranier lift bridge,
and that was just by chance. She was on her way to the dentist
in Fort Frances and was prepared to detrain at Ranier, the
normal end of the train ride from Ericsburg, and complete her
trip by ferry boat down the Rainy River to the Fort Frances
docks. Most everyone else got off the train, but her friend the
conductor whispered to her to stay aboard — they were going
to test-run the new bridge. Thus is history spiced.

Overall, this is a gloomy report of a gloomy era on the
Koochiching County frontier, but we are invited by Professor
Drache to like the book and told that he will then pick up the
tale where he left off, at mid-1910, and produce another
volume. We’re promised the rest of the story.

Let’s hope that next volume restores the three miles of
Rainy River above the dam that Drache gives to Rainy Lake,
that Lake Kabetogama stops flowing into Rainy Lake at Brole
Narrows, a bother for the mapmakers; and that our Ojibway
greeting “B’jou” is restored to our northland culture.

Meanwhile, it should be remembered that these home-
steaders may not have gotten a bargain in their land, but they
did get a bargain. They got freedom. Sam Plummer seemed to
realize that’s what pioneering was all about.

Reviewed by TED HALL, who writes from his island home on
Rainy Lake in Koochiching County where he has been an
observer of its last half-century of history. For nine recent
years he was Editor et Cetera of The Rainy Lake Chronicle.

Ordinary People and Everyday Life: Perspectives
on the New Social History. Edited by James B.
Gardner and George Rollie Adams.
(Nashville, American Association for State and Local His-
tory, 1983. viii, 215 p. Cloth, $17.95; $16.00 for
AASLH members.)

WHAT is the “new” social history? What are its implications
for the public presentation of history? What new possibilities
and new problems does the history of “ordinary people and
everyday life” pose for those who present and interpret history
through film and drama and at museums and historical sites?
This volume brings together nine essays that were first pre-
sented as papers to a series of seminars in 1980 and 1981
sponsored by the American Association for State and Local
History. The purpose was to explore “current historical scholar-
ship and its implications for interpretive activities in
museums and historical agencies.”

These essays discuss the various subfields of the new his-
tory: race and ethnicity, women and gender, urban and
rural life, family, labor, and politics. The authors are among the
most respected authorities in their fields. Together, their work
reflects the current fragmentation of the new social history,
and yet they also bear witness to the shared features of all these
fields: their emergence in the later 1960s and 1970s; their
conflictual relationship with the traditional scholarship of their
field; and the new ground that they have plowed in terms of
subject matter, sources, and methodology.

Unfortunately, most of these essays fall short of their pur-
posed mark, to be “helpful” to “museum and historical agency
professionals who are responsible for conducting research and
for designing and implementing interpretive programs.” Seven
of the nine seem directed toward full-time researchers, a
graduate student in search of a dissertation topic being the
imagined reader. Two, however, are gems, one of which spar-
kle so brightly as to illuminate the entire undertaking.

David Brody’s “Workers and Work in America: The New
Labor History” and Barbara and Cary Carson’s “Things Un-
spoken. Learning Social History from Artifacts” make this col-
lection worth obtaining. Brody’s is the best of the topical
essays, while the Carsons’ stands in a class by itself. These two
contributions alone make the reader’s head swim with new
ideas about public historical projects.

Brody goes beyond situating the new labor history in its
historical and analytical context to consider the public pre-
sentation of its findings, particularly through film and neighbor-
hood or community historical projects. Through the discussion
of specific efforts (Daniel Walkowitz’s historical drama “The
Molders of Troy,” and the Baltimore Neighborhood History
Project, among others), Brody argues for the recognition of
certain “imperatives” at the heart of the new scholarship — for
the historian to take his or her research directly to the people
studied, for these people to reshape their own self-
understanding through a “symbiotic relationship” with the
historian, and for final products to take the form of public
presentations, serving the interests of both historian and com-

munity. Brody explains this “symbiotic relationship”: “For one
thing, the local focus of social history gives the findings a con-
crete and immediate meaning for local residents. For another,
the local residents are an essential source of information: oral
history is not only a research tool, but also a means of drawing
the informant into the process. Finally, many groups studied
by social historians — women, minorities, workers — are ins-
pelled by their own contemporary crises to seek out their past.”

While Brody therefore helps us to understand the poten-
tialities of the new social history and to appreciate the success-
es of some projects, the Carsons’ contribution offers many use-
ful, concrete ideas for how we might better present publicly
the new insights generated by the new social history. Their
essay is not simply informed by a practitioner’s comprehension
of the discipline, but by hands-on experience in the public
presentation and interpretation of history and by an under-
standing of the role of visual perceptions and associations in
how people learn.

The Carsons see particular promise in the creative interac-
tion of social history with public history. “Like the scene of a
crime meticulously recorded by police photographers before a
shred of evidence is disturbed, convincingly reconstructed his-
torical settings are charged with a kinetic energy of events
lately transpired and are replete with clues that skillful inter-
interpreters can use to conjure up the human dramas that appear to have just occurred.

The Carsons make a particularly strong case for the usefulness of "reconstructed historical settings" as a backdrop against which some of the more interesting questions of the new social history can be posed with popular audiences. "Artifacts," they contend, can "set a scene that puts viewers in a sufficiently believing state of mind." They then go on, at length and in concrete detail, to discuss both how to "reconstruct" a historical setting, and how to maximize the visual learning processes that go on within public audiences.

Much of the quality of this essay lies in its details, which this reviewer urges you to probe for yourself. The results are most exciting. "Where careful planning has gone into such demonstrations and reenactments, audiences are led by easy stages from what they can touch — the artifacts — to what they can see — the artifacts in use — to what they can only grasp intellectually — the reasons for doing whatever it was that men and women were doing at that particular time and place in history." Indeed, the Carsons offer a set of planning ideas and simple interpretive questions that have had a high degree of success. They conclude: "So museums can show the transformation of society and, by setting up comparisons, can encourage visitors to inquire after the reasons for the differences that they observe."

And, thus, an impressive agenda is set — to bring social and public history together in such a way as to change both, and to change our understanding of our past through the pursuit of public presentation and interpretation of historical scholarship in new, exciting, dramatic, and comprehensible forms. It can be done — and it is up to us to do it.


"O! Farewell, you dear old cabin. Where as a child I played in happiness and peace. Oh, your roof can no longer protect me Against adversity, conflict and strife."

These lines from a Swedish immigrant ballad printed in 1868 bear testimony to the symbolic power of the house, as protector and as reminder of a past separated by ocean and land from an uncertain present. For reasons mainly economic, Swedish emigration to the United States began in earnest in the late 1840s, and by 1890 the North Star State could claim the largest Swedish-born population in this country. Although most immigrants were able to bring only that physical baggage which they could carry, in their minds they brought memories of individual and collective pasts — all the stuff we call "culture." Injected with the experience of a totally new environment, that culture was re-created on the Minnesota frontier in many forms. Among the most obvious and persistent of these forms were the dwellings erected by the new Americans.

This report by the curator of the Emigrant Museum in Stockholm, Sweden, is a first attempt toward the systematic mapping and analysis of Swedish immigrant culture: as an example of how "cultural traditions were passed on from the mothercountry [sic]." Using geographic survey methods, A:son (Anderson)-Palmqvist compiled an inventory of buildings in Chisago and Kandiyohi counties, sites of large concentrations of rural Swedish settlement before the turn of the century. Although the primary focus is on buildings (houses, barns, and churches), the report includes some examples of smaller artifacts such as baskets, trunks, household implements, and tools. In large, 8½-by-11-inch, soft-cover format, the typewritten text is illustrated by nearly 100 drawings and photographs of generally high quality.

A:son-Palmqvist correctly traces the evolution of the Swedish-American frontier house through three stages of evolution: a) first-settlement dug-out, b) rectangular log cabin, and c) log cabin extensions and new houses. Buildings of the last phase typically were constructed on the basis of standard architectural plan books that became prevalent in the latter half of the 19th century. Throughout the evolution of house form, Swedish influences remained evident, particularly a symmetrical rectangular plan based on two-room (parstuga) and three-room (anderstuga) country houses in Sweden. Like house form, the characteristic North European method of horizontal log construction with interstice chinking (often called caara after the metal scriber used to measure log contours for the close-fitting groove joint) found its way to Minnesota. Even the comparatively rare south-Swedish method of half-timbering, called korvskark, was represented in early frame construction techniques. Barns and other outbuildings followed more or less the same evolutionary pattern as houses, where early Swedish forms were supplanted by standardized models made possible by the availability of machined lumber for large frame construction.

One striking difference between Old and New World patterns was in the configuration of farmsteads, which in Sweden were often determined by the close clustering of farms in old rural villages of irregular layout. In Minnesota, unbroken land was surveyed on a rectangular grid system, resulting in a rectilinear arrangement of roads and fields. Confronted by this unusual regularity, and by the lack of existing villages, Swedish immigrants in Minnesota did not repeat the old patterns of farmstead layouts. Rather, environmental and ecological considerations, such as water source, timber, and terrain, seemed to be the determining factors, resulting in the lack of any distinct plan for the location of farmstead buildings.

Although sometimes plagued by unnecessary repetitions, the author's descriptions of building forms and construction techniques are a competent and useful addition to the growing body of literature on rural vernacular architecture in the United States. Throughout, A:son-Palmqvist enlivens her technical analysis with informants' comments on early settlement life and building craft techniques.

My only serious reservation concerns the author's field methods. Geographer John Fraser Hart and others have cautioned against "naive" fieldwork of specific group traits that
The material culture of 19th-century Swedish immigrants was formed through centuries of cultural cross-fertilization throughout the Fennoscandian peninsula and in many respects is shared by other national groups. For example, Finnish frontier houses in Minnesota often share identical characteristics of form and construction techniques with the Swedish houses described by A:son-Palmqvist. In this vein, A:son-Palmqvist's analysis would benefit by a comparison of related artifacts manufactured by other Scandinavian groups that settled Minnesota and the upper Great Lakes region.

As the author cautions us about the preliminary status of her findings, noting in several places that her survey is the first part of a long-term project by the Nordiska Museet, any one reservation may be open to charges of cultural chauvinism. Those artifacts belonging to one ethnic group (of many) in a particular area may be open to charges of cultural chauvinism. The body of the book divides into two main parts, "History," and "Construction." Following those is a useful set of appendices, a small "Glossary of Ojibwa Terms," a thorough set of notes, and an unusual bibliography: that fails to include many key entries cited in the book. The history section reviews the Ojibwa and their music, the origin and early history of the Dance Drum, the Drum Dances, and the functions and decline of the Drum Dance; the section on construction describes the drum itself, its decorations, accessories, and variants. The book contains neither a concluding section nor an index. These are important omissions.

The author clearly writes at his best when discussing Ojibwa music, musical instruments, and the work of Baker. His reprinting of Robert E. Bitzenhuler's field notes is also useful. Unfortunately, Vennum's weakness in areas dealing with cultural comparison and the general social and cultural aspects of Ojibwa peoples tends to overshadow the contributions made in the more narrowly focused field of ethnomusicology. For example, he states in an explanatory note, "Red Lake, Minnesota, is one of the few Ojibwa reservations to have escaped this fate [of becoming a 'checkerboard' reservation]. Since they never signed a treaty, the Red Lake Ojibwa have managed to retain their lands in communal ownership." This statement is simply not true, but it does characterize the caliber of the historical and cultural research underlying the book. The text offers whimsical and capricious comparisons with the Dakota, Potawatomi, Menominee, Mexican Tzotzil, and others that fail to provide an adequate understanding of the rich cultural textures of which the compared features are a part.

Many Dakota peoples will be surprised to find that in 1982 the general editor of the Smithsonian Folklife Studies still insists on calling them the "Sioux." I was surprised that three of the four Paul Buffalo quotations used from my own research work appeared essentially out of context. J. Anthony Pareades, whose work Vennum cites, will be disheartened to see that Vennum has violated the Upper Mississippi Research Project's agreements with Ojibwa peoples to use pseudonyms in all publications. Such a breach demonstrates a serious insensitivity to the desires and feelings of the affected American Indian people.

Vennum's insistence on perpetuating the myth that an Ojibwa monoculture exists in a way that ethnographers and others can meaningfully scrutinize, analyze, and evaluate is annoying. He seems unaware of the important differences between major Anishinabe groups. And comments and ideas such as "the race itself was rapidly losing its purity," "the Ojibwa..."
were culturally impoverished," "they systematically drove out such peoples as the Huron," "while warfare continued unabated between the Ojibwa and the Sioux," and the term "medicine man" reflect a 19th-century frontier mentality innocently bent on perpetuating subtle but significant stereotypes of Ojibwa and other American Indian peoples.

Items from Vennem's own work with Baker need clarification. For example, Baker indicates that he does "it" all alone and builds the drum with no help from others in the community; elsewhere others are said to assist him. Baker indicates that he has authority to "make four [sacred] Drums". Vennem talks about "several," "some," "all" of his drums without distinguishing between the sacred and secular. His "speculations concerning the origin of certain items or practices" are likewise not identified in the text.

Both the book and the film emphasize Baker's abhorrence of the "chimookomaan [white man's] drum", of the school-band, bass-drum type. At the same time they talk about how important it is for him to have a "traditional" Indian drum and drumbeater made with an axe, a hammer, and pocket knife from a white man's wooden washtub or barrel, old window curtains and drapes, an old mink coat, carpet tacks, white man's ribbon, an old fiberglass fishing pole, black electrical tape, synthetic threads, and discarded plastic mouthpieces from Tiparillo cigars. Yet they do not talk much about the traditional offering of tobacco. Except for the apparent lack of concern for the most important ceremonial, tobacco, the paradox posed by the juxtaposition of the above items can be explained. It is too bad that it was not, for the author missed an excellent opportunity to provide some genuine understanding of an Ojibwa group. That missed opportunity is symptomatic of both the book and the film. For those already familiar with Anishinabe peoples Vennem's work will in part be useful. For others it is not recommended.

Reviewed by TIMOTHY G. ROUFS, professor of anthropology and former head of the sociology- anthropology department at the University of Minnesota, Duluth. He is author of The Anishinabe of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (1975) and several articles on Minnesota Anishinabe peoples, compiler of Working Bibliography of Chippewa/Ojibwa/Anishinabe and Selected Works (1982), and co-editor with Larry P. Atken of Information Relating to Chippewa Peoples from the Handbook of American Indians, North of Mexico (1984).

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NEWS & NOTES

IN Brooklyn Center a picturesque group of red and white farm buildings stand surrounded by highways and commercial development. They are one legacy of a man who founded the Minnesota Highway Patrol, twice served as Hennepin County sheriff, raised prize Belgian horses and livestock, and ran for governor of this state. History of the Earle Brown Farm (Brooklyn Historical Society, 1983, xi, 141 p., $14.00, plus $1.50 for handling) is an anecdotal account of that man and the model farm he called home. Authors Jane Hallberg, Leone Howe, and Mary Jane Gustafson trace the property from its first owners to the University of Minnesota and the resulting Continuing Education Center. The profusely illustrated book is available from the Brooklyn Historical Society, 3824-58th Ave. N., Brooklyn Center, Minn. 55429.

AUTHOR James Taylor Dunn has yet another fascinating local history work to his credit in Saint Paul's Schubert Club: A Century of Music 1882-1982 (St. Paul, The Schubert Club, 1983, 103 p., $5.00 plus $1.00 postage). Beginning with a poetic introduction by Patricia Hampl (who studied piano at the Visitation Convent in St. Paul and dreamed of becoming a concert performer), it deftly chronicles the club's century of service as musical mentor to the Northwest.

The Schubert Club was formed by a group of about 40 women on a summer afternoon in 1882, probably at the Summit Avenue home of Mrs. Charles McDrath, wife of the former state auditor, to promote musical study and recitals in St. Paul. Early concerts featuring both members and internationally known artists were held in a variety of rented auditoriums including Litt's Grand Opera House (now replaced by the Carrick Parking Ramp), Mozart Hall on Franklin Street, and Summit Hall at 512 Laurel Avenue.

But for 20 years the most popular location was the Ford Music Hall, built in 1892 at the intersection of Sixth, St. Peter, and Market streets for Nathan Ford, a dealer in musical instruments. Its numerous studios once housed most of St. Paul's best-known musicians and music teachers.

By the 1890s the club had formed a student section, reportedly the first of its kind in the country. Musically competent students were encouraged to become members and participate regularly in student recitals. Another Schubert Club program provided free weekly violin, piano, or guitar lessons for more than 100 students in the Summit-Hill area. In her president's report for 1895, Julia Dorr urged members to coax their husbands, sons, and brothers to attend Schubert Club concerts. Regardless of grumbles, she concluded, "the men would thereby become musically educated in spite of themselves." St. Paul's menfolk have obviously responded to this attention, the club has grown out of its early
THE BEAVER, the quarterly historical publication of the Hudson's Bay Company, has devoted its entire Autumn issue for 1983 to a history of that company. Author Glyndwr Williams of Queen Mary College, University of London, England, originally intended the 86-page issue as an updating of his 1970 piece, "Highlights of the First Two Hundred Years of the Hudson's Bay Company," also published in The Beaver. But the decade and a half since that first publication has seen some major changes in the field of fur trade research. Not only has the increased availability of the Hudson's Bay Company archives brought to light much new information, a generation of economic and social historians, hand-in-hand with the anthropologists, has recast the framework in which the fur trade is interpreted. Thus, Williams' essay is more than a rehash: it incorporates new interpretations of old data and introduces subjects scarcely imagined by historians of 15 years ago.

Williams tells the story of the "Company of Adventurers" in a chronological narrative style. Four sections on the first century of coastbound trade repeat the familiar story of the HBC's founding and rivalry with the French, but also summarize recently published information on the company's business operations in the sophisticated system of Cree and Assiniboine middlemen who carried the goods inland. Later sections document the HBC's move inland in response to competition from Montreal, the merger with the North West Company, the reign of Sir George Simpson, and the operations on the Pacific Coast. Perhaps the most interesting new addition is an entire section on "Family and Community in the Fur Trade," in which Williams portrays the marital arrangements of HBC officers, the economic and political roles of their Indian wives and daughters, and the eventual friction between aspiring "native-born" youths and the "parcel of upstart Scotchmen" who continued to rule the company. This section goes beyond traditional business history to acknowledge that the Hudson's Bay Company, like many others, was a community as well as a profit-making organization.

Readers will find this elegantly written piece a good summary of a well-trodden field of research. There are, of course, gaps — the most conspicuous being the lack of information on Indian business practices and objectives. Perhaps in another 15 years we will see The Beaver incorporate that as well. It would be nice if similarly up-to-date summaries existed for other aspects of the fur trade.

Carolyn Gilman

A CALL for papers has been issued by the National Park Service and Vincennes University for the second annual George Rogers Clark Trans-Appalachian Frontier History Conference, to be held October 20, 1984, at Vincennes University. Papers may deal with any aspect of frontier history from the Appalachians to the Mississippi and should not exceed 20 minutes. Interested scholars should submit by May 31, 1984, a 300-word summary of their proposal, along with a short resume, to Conference Committee, George Rogers Clark National Historical Park, 401 South Second Street, Vincennes, Indiana 47591.

ONE of the enduring images in Western stories is the New England schoolmarm determined to bring culture and a sense of right and wrong to the newly settled territories. Polly Welts Kaufman in Women Teachers on the Frontier (New Haven, Conn., Yale University Press, 1984, 270 p., $22.50) explores the basis for the stories. Working with the papers of the National Popular Education Board, she has traced, in part, the lives of nearly 250 of these women who were sent west to teach. In the first section of the book, she discusses who went, why, what problems the women encountered, and what their subsequent lives were like. The book's second part contains letters and a diary of a few of the teachers. Finally, in a series of appendixes, Kaufman presents her research findings in tabular form. Anyone interested in women of the 19th century or in early popular education in the United States will find this book fascinating reading.

THE VISUAL documents of history have received much scholarly attention in recent years. As illustrations of printed sources or as pieces of material culture, two-dimensional images can engender heated discussion of their trustworthiness and usefulness. A Boundless Horizon, the catalog of a 1983 exhibit at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, gathers together an interesting group of images on which a reader may test his or her preferred opinion. Author Virginia C. Berry takes a
A larger-than-life figure was actually the stuff of lumberjacks’ tall tales to children’s literature to a national hero, lionized by serious American poets.

A new introduction and photographic examples of Bunyan relics (including the famous statue at Bemidji) spruce up the 1983 edition, and, more importantly, attest to Americans’ ongoing fascination with the subject. This book is a must for anyone whose images of lumberjack life are based on the tales of Paul Bunyan.

A PUBLICATION that provides more than its title suggests is Washburn’s Century of Helping Children: from Orphanage to Child Guidance Center, 1883–1983 by Thomas W. Balcom (Minneapolis Washburn Child Guidance Center, 1983, 48 p. $3.95). In chronicling the history of this organization, from orphan asylum to its present status, Balcom brings in valuable contextual information: the place of the Washburn brothers (Cadwallader C. and William D.) in the early development of Minneapolis, the growth and development of Washburn Park, where the orphanage had its beginnings, and the changing philosophies of social work. Historical and contemporary photographs add to this handsomely produced little volume.

VIKINGS in the West (Chicago, Archaeological Institute of America and its Chicago Society, 1982, 93 p., $10.00) derives from the “Viking World” exhibition and symposium held under the joint sponsorship of the Archaeological Institute and the Museum of Science and Industry. Edited by Eleanor Giroulnick, the book covers Viking and Norsemen data going back to 700 A.D. Readers will discover much about Vikings in North America. Minnesotans will especially enjoy Brigitta Wallace’s article “Viking Hoaxes!” She deals with the well-known controversy that surrounded the 1998 “confirmation” by amateur historian and book salesman Hjalmar Holand of the Kensington rune stone’s authenticity. She concludes that “not even the best of Holand’s efforts could ever render the Kensington Stone inscription genuine.” Visions in the West also contains effective illustrations, maps, drawings, and photographs. There are helpful references to related subject material.

RESEARCHERS interested in the history of Swedish Americans will find the Guide to Swedish-American Archival and Manuscript Sources in the United States (Chicago, Swedish-American Historical Society, 1983, 624 p., $20.00, plus $2.00 handling fee) a welcome addition to their libraries. This guide lists 3,090 collections of personal papers, oral histories, business and organizational records, and especially church records relating to Swedes in the United States from the 17th to the 20th centuries. Minnesota is represented by over 500 entries, nearly 100 of which are housed in the Minnesota Historical Society’s division of archives and manuscripts. In addition, the guide lists the records of nearly 300 Swedish churches in Minnesota that are preserved on microfilm in Illinois repositories. For individuals seeking missing links in their genealogical charts or for historians doing biographical sketches, local histories, or ethnic studies, this guide will be invaluable in identifying source data.

Although purporting to be a nationwide guide to sources, nearly two thirds of the collections are found in Illinois repositories and over 50 per cent are in Minnesota and Illinois combined. California and New York, both states with significant Swedish-American populations, have one and seven entries, respectively; Delaware, site of the 17th-century Swedish settlements, has none. Many other states appear to be grossly underrepresented. While these omissions seriously hamper the total effectiveness of this work, they do not alter the usefulness of those collections listed. The Swedish-American Historical Society and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission that funded this project deserve credit for producing a work that will increase access to and use of these valuable archival collections. Duane P. Swanson

TRADITION Bearers, a new 45-minute film produced and directed by Michael Loukinen who earlier made Finnish-American Lives, combines footage of interviews with historical photographs to tell the stories of four Finnish-American artists. Two of the subjects—a woodworker and a woman who cards, spins, and weaves wool—are from northern Minnesota, while the accordion player and the storyteller are from Michigan. Rather than focusing specifically on the artists and their art, however, the film also takes viewers

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through the early years of each person's life, his or her early struggles and successes, and difficulties with the English language. Tradition Bearers sells for $8.95, but can be previewed free of charge. Interested teachers or institutions should contact Tradition Bearers, 331 Thomas Fine Arts Building, Northern Michigan University, Marquette, 49855.

FISH South Dakota: A Cartoon History of Our Times (Rochester, Rochester Post-Bulletin, 1983, 126 p., $4.95 plus 50c postage) is another vivid collection of barbs from the pen of Ed Fischer. The title of this humorous but pointed time capsule comes from the simmering controversy between the governors of Minnesota and South Dakota over the respective merits of their states. With irreverent ease, Fischer then tackles topics such as the state of the state, Perpich himself, Rochester politics, the Mayo Clinic, the Metrodome, environmental depredations, farm foreclosures, and national and international current events. It's a good thing someone can help us laugh at some of these issues.

Fish South Dakota may be ordered directly from Ed Fischer, in care of the Rochester Post-Bulletin, P.O. Box 6118, Rochester, Minn. 55901.

READERS interested in vernacular architecture and agricultural history will welcome the publication of Without Right Angles: The Round Barns of Iowa (Des Moines, Iowa State Historical Department, 1983, 103 p., $5.95 plus 50c postage and handling). Author Lowell J. Soike, assisted by a professional photographer and several researchers, has done an admirable job of starting from scratch and compiling precise information on a vanishing breed of building. Five chapters trace the origins, designs, construction, and rise and fall in popularity of this barn form (including octagonal barns as well) over a 40-year period. The final section is a catalog, as detailed as possible, of Iowa's round barns by county, township, and section. Handsome photographs do more than illustrate the book; they provide vital detail often difficult to render or comprehend through words alone. One hopes that the author's introductory promise of more brief histories of farm building types in Iowa is fulfilled. Without Round Angles may be ordered from the Office of Historic Preservation, E. 13th and Grand Avenue, Des Moines 50319.

HIPPIES, rednecks, and thoughtful student types populate Art Lee's Jackpine Savage. The Minnesota North Country (Staples, Adventure Publications, 1980, 344 p., $5.95), an unpredictable and entertaining novel that recounts the turbulent era of the late 1960s in Bemidji. Despite its light tone, the book should bring back uneasy memories and feelings to readers over the age of 20 who remember the difficult choices required of people who held opinions on Vietnam, draft resistance, and the future of the college educated in America. Jackpine Savage is available, prepaid, from the publisher at Box 96, 118 No. 5th St., Staples, Minn. 56479.

HUBERT H. Humphrey Papers: A Summary Guide. Including the Papers of Muriel Buck Humphrey Brown has recently been issued by the MHS division of archives and manuscripts (St. Paul, 1983, 35 p., $5.00). It contains summary descriptions and lists of the approximately 2,400 cubic feet of correspondence, memoranda, speeches, clippings, legislative materials, campaign files, and related papers that document Humphrey's career as mayor of Minneapolis and as United States senator and vice president. Family papers, Muriel Humphrey's personal and senatorial files, and a brief description of the society's audio-visual materials relating to Humphrey are also included. Copies of the guide may be ordered from the MHS business office at 1500 Mississippi St., St. Paul, Minn. 55101.

FRESH examples of American Indian eloquence appear in Annette Rosensteel's Red & White. Indian Views of the White Man, 1492-1982 (New York, Universe Books, 1983, 196 p., $14.95). The book is divided into five chapters, each covering a century (beginning with the 16th). For each chapter, the author provides not only a historical overview of the general period, but headnotes that set each selection in context.

But it is the comments, observations, and commentary of the affected Indian peoples that really carries the book, as the author intended. Anger, surprise, irony, disbelief, conciliation, and resignation all run through the various selections from the recorded speeches and writings of North and South American Indians. As an added bonus, each quotation is illustrated with an appropriate sketch, drawing, or photograph depicting either the speaker or some theme covered in his words. The artwork itself, some by whites and some by Indians, provides a striking perspective on the tragedy of intercultural miscommunication.

RECENT LOCAL HISTORY PUBLICATIONS


125th Anniversary ... Young America, Minn. 1856-1981. Norwood, Times Printing Co. [1981?]. 100 p.


Where Quality is a 100 Year Tradition: Abbott Northwestern Hospital. Minneapolis, The Hospital, 1982. 36 p. Includes corporate annual report.