

## Curator's Choice



*Anna Jenks Ramsey, one-sixth-plate daguerrotype (2¾ x 3¼ inches), photographer unknown, ca. 1850–55*

When Anna Ramsey moved from Pennsylvania with her husband, Alexander, and son in 1849, few Minnesotans had experimented with photography, and none had set up business in St. Paul. Within five years, however, half a dozen daguerreians were established in St. Anthony and St. Paul. The Ramseys and their children sat for several daguerrotypes before the photos on silver-plated copper, mounted in elaborate cases, went out of style in the early 1860s.

Most of the 200 daguerrotypes in the Minnesota Historical Society's collection were probably made in the East, where photographers had been working since 1840. It is difficult to be certain of this, because few Minnesota daguerrian artists signed their work. A companion to this daguerrotype of Anna is a portrait of Alexander, showing the same table and chair and inserted in an identical case. In contrast to his wife's graceful manner, Alexander sat rigidly, his hand tucked into his coat front. Clearly, Anna was more at ease before the camera, and the MHS collection has many other fine portraits of her made over the remaining 30 years of her life.

— BONNIE G. WILSON, curator of sound and visual collections



FRONT COVER: The rich-toned Victorian carpet that she chose for her home's library surrounds this studio photograph of Anna Ramsey, taken in Washington, D.C., in the 1880s. For a look at how Ramsey furnished her family's home, turn to the article beginning on page 194. Carpet photograph by Phillip Hutchens; Ramsey portrait in MHS collections.

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# Book Reviews

## **RADICALISM IN MINNESOTA, 1900–1960: A SURVEY OF SELECTED SOURCES.**

*By 20th-Century Radicalism in Minnesota Project,  
Carl Ross, director.*

(St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1994.  
109 p. Paper, \$17.95.)

Alabor of love from Carl Ross and his collaborators, this work is truly a masterpiece of its genre: highly comprehensive though modestly billed as a “survey of selected sources,” exceptionally well annotated, clear, and enlivened by well-chosen photographic illustrations. Perhaps most important, one can use it at several levels. It is accessible to a novice scholar interested in the subject. It is also chock full of descriptions of rare finds that will delight and intrigue the knowledgeable connoisseur.

What explains the extraordinary quality of this guide? One factor was ample funding. The Minnesota Historical Society evidently understood that Ross, the project director, was uniquely qualified to put together this guide and to demonstrate conclusively the unusual depth and richness of Minnesota’s history of radical politics. The society’s officers may also have understood that, in a sense, the project was their last chance to recover such a critically important part of Minnesota’s past so fully and completely.

Scholars working in this area have long been aware not only of the razor sharpness of Ross’s formidable intellect but also of his scholarly authority. His mastery of the sources, history, and historiographic issues is encyclopedic, detailed, and clear. This project posed a unique opportunity for countless other people to go about learning many of the things Ross knows.

A critical second factor was the sheer collective talent and knowledge of the many other gifted scholars and researchers with whom Ross worked. While it would be invidious to single out individuals, anyone acquainted with the historiography of labor and immigration will recognize many talented people in the guide’s acknowledgements. And anyone who has had the good fortune to work with the Minnesota Historical Society staff will know that the acknowledgement of their expert help is a modest understatement.

The result, to borrow a metaphor from software engineering, is a skillfully constructed and highly user-friendly interface to a rich, complicated, and fascinating past still far from fully explored. A user of this “interface” first finds a crisply professional introduction by Ross. Readers then learn about pamphlets and ephemera, newspapers, oral histories, archival

and manuscript collections, sound and visual collections, artifacts, periodicals, books, unpublished papers, and articles. Readers conclude their search with selected primary and secondary works on national and international radical activity found in Minnesota. The guide ends with an unusually thorough and well-constructed index.

Each section has a clear introduction that often supplies the names of more detailed guides generated by the project and their location. Every section offers clear advice about how to find each item listed. The sections on pamphlets and ephemera, newspapers, oral histories, archival and manuscript collections, and the Minnesota Historical Society’s sound and visual collection supply short but informative descriptions of each entry, allowing a user to gauge the relative importance of further research. A distinctive element is the attention to the actual or potential richness of “hostile” sources: detective agencies, businessmen’s organizations, and manuscript collections from major corporations.

In short, no one should begin research into the patterns of Minnesota radical politics between 1900 and 1960 without using this guide. It is simply indispensable. Its assembly also resulted in the acquisition of new and valuable manuscript collections and interviews, as well as an important conference on the role of newspapers in Minnesota radicalism.

Is this guide the last word? It isn’t, and it doesn’t pretend to be. There are probably many manuscript collections still in private hands, considering the number of Farmer-Laborites that served in the state legislature for more than two decades.

Perhaps this guide will also stimulate the development and publication of a guide to sources outside Minnesota. Included might be the Hoover Institution’s extremely rich manuscript collection of Ernest Lundeen, a Farmer-Labor politician in the U.S. House and Senate during the 1930s and early 1940s.

This guide is a grand monument in the historiography of Minnesota’s once numerous and powerful radical parties, trade unions, and farmers’ organizations. I earnestly hope that it will be a model for historical associations in other states with a similar history—California, New York, North Dakota, Washington, and Wisconsin among them—and for historical societies in another nation that experienced comparable politics in its prairie and western provinces: Canada.

*Reviewed by Richard M. Valelly, associate professor of political science at Swarthmore College and author of Radicalism in the States: The Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party and the American Political Economy (1989).*

## EGGS IN THE COFFEE, SHEEP IN THE CORN: MY 17 YEARS AS A FARMWIFE.

By Marjorie Myers Douglas.

(St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1994.  
247 p. Cloth, \$24.95; paper, \$15.95.)

This charming memoir recounts Marjorie Myers Douglas's experiences when a family emergency uprooted her, her husband, and their infant daughter from their St. Paul home to a 1,200-acre stock ranch near Appleton in western Minnesota. Although she had once joked about the possibility of signing a prenuptial agreement protecting her from life on a farm, after six years of marriage she found herself ensconced in the Douglas family farmhouse.

In 1943 Douglas had resigned from her job as a social worker to bear a daughter. When she and her husband Don learned of his father's severe heart attack, they left their "dream home" and took up residence in a six-room farmhouse without running water. Douglas had loved city life and knew little—and cared less—about rural living, yet she would see a projected two-year stint on the family farm turn into one lasting 17 years.

Douglas thus brings an unusual perspective to this farm memoir. Rather than describing her routine as a farm woman, she narrates the story of her ambivalence: misgivings and loneliness coupled with an increasing appreciation of farming and farm communities. But this is not a Pollyanna tale; Douglas writes of ravenous blackbirds who devoured the corn crop, a lack of farm labor due to World War II, gasoline thieves and sheep rustlers, and a recovered father-in-law who refused to release even a modicum of control to the son and daughter-in-law who had sacrificed their plans to save the family business.

Nor is this a tedious recital of farm chore after farm chore. Douglas, who chose the "practical" profession of social worker over writing, has finally become a writer—and an engaging one. After retirement from the farm, she and Don returned to town and their chosen professions, but after retirement, Marjorie began to write. One result is this memoir, which effectively uses flashbacks to relate bits of relevant family history and includes lyrical descriptions.

At one point, for example, Douglas writes of a hand-fed colt named Bumbley, who one day "clattered" into the summer kitchen as she washed clothes and mistook the foamy rinse water for a bucket of milk: "Surely he must have thought he had reached Horse Heaven where milk comes in bottomless tubs, and he could live in the house with his humans." At another, Douglas depicts 400 sheep huddled in a pasture: "Their backs made a lumpy wool carpet covering the center of the field."

This, then, is a literary manuscript, full of humor, tragedy, and one woman's adjustment to learning to bake her own bread, haul and heat water, make coffee with a raw egg, keep sheep out of the corn, and raise three children in a rudimentary house. Douglas does not, however, include any wider observations in her memoir. She explains that she "does not presume to provide a commentary on social and economic conditions in rural Minnesota, nor on the business end of farming." She adds that she "never stopped thinking of myself as the 'kitchen help.'"

As a student of rural women, this reviewer finds this stance regrettable. Surely an urban woman transplanted to a

farm would have a store of insights regarding women's crucial roles in a farm operation. In addition, Douglas must have observed her counterparts with a keen eye, yet the reader is left unaware of her reactions. And was her self-identification as kitchen help unique or typical?

Clearly, Douglas was happy to sell the farm in 1958 and return to the city and her former profession. She spent 17 productive years as a social worker and, after 1979, more yet learning to become a skilled writer. Perhaps her next effort will reveal the challenges and rewards facing a social worker and will include wider social and economic commentary.

*Reviewed by Glenda Riley, Alexander M. Bracken Professor of History at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. She is the author of numerous articles and books concerning women in the American West and Midwest, including A Place to Grow: Women in the American West (1992) and The Life and Legacy of Annie Oakley (1994).*

## MINNESOTA 1900: ART AND LIFE ON THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI, 1890–1915.

Edited by Michael Conforti.

(Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1994.  
333 p. Cloth, \$65.00.)

*Minnesota 1900* documents an exhibition of the same title held at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and explores how selected architects, decorators, and artisans interpreted the international artistic movements of their era in a Minnesota context. The volume represents a benchmark reference for future scholarship on the arts in the state. It is a major contribution to understanding the dynamics of cultural production during this era in American history.

Michael Conforti, exhibition organizer and chief curator at the arts institute, introduces the six essays by giving the reader a snapshot of Minnesota at the end of the nineteenth century. He accurately portrays a region exploding with industrial, agricultural, and population growth. Minnesota attracted entrepreneurs, many former Yankees, who capitalized on opportunities in railroads, milling, and mercantile trade, some to build veritable fortunes. The nouveau elite, in turn, attracted East Coast- and European-trained architects and decorative-arts retailers. Conforti emphasizes one notable Minnesota attribute documented early on: the sense of community engagement with and support for the process of art-making.

Alan K. Lathrop's essay is the first survey of Minnesota architecture from this 25-year period, a boom time for building. The architects and firms in the litany include Cass Gilbert, Harvey Ellis, and Purcell and Elmslie, whose Minnesota commissions led to national recognition. Also represented are Minnesota-based workers who, Lathrop argues, deserve greater recognition, including Emmanuel Louis Masqueray, assistant to Richard Morris Hunt; the firm of Charles Reed and Allen Stem, first architects of New York's Grand Central Station; and Prairie School architects Bentley and Hauser. Focusing on Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Duluth, where most architect-designed work was carried out, Lathrop treats styles ranging from Beaux Arts revival to progressive Prairie and highlights projects that run the gamut from residential to commercial, ecclesiastical, and academic. For illus-



trations, he draws heavily on the University of Minnesota Northwest Architectural Archives, where he is curator.

The role of merchants in taste-making is not as often studied by art historians as the role of patrons. Michael Conforti and Jennifer Komar's essay on John S. Bradstreet's Crafthouse furniture workshop and interior accessories shop in Minneapolis is a case study of one merchant's success at introducing new aesthetic approaches and goods to a midwestern urban elite clientele. At the turn of the century, when mass merchandising was on the rise, Bradstreet's firm provided a personalized, artistic experience for clients, offering styles characteristic of the times: Moorish, Oriental, European antique, Art Nouveau, and Arts and Crafts. The essay's illustrations are well chosen and the discussion articulates the wide scope of Bradstreet's output and his talent for giving consumers a singular experience merging local shopping with worldwide aesthetics.

Thomas O'Sullivan, curator of art at the Minnesota Historical Society, punctuates his survey of the state's painters with the biographical details of Munich-trained artist Robert Kohler (1850–1917), illuminating currents and issues in Minnesota's art history. Kohler, who became the head of the Minneapolis School of Art in 1893, was an active painter and teacher who "fused in his life and art those qualities of cosmopolite and good neighbor that Minnesotans sought to reconcile in their young state's art." This essay also outlines the development of art societies and institutions throughout Minnesota up to the beginning of the twentieth century and discusses prominent painters, featuring Nicholas R. Brewer, Grace McKinstry, Alexis Jean Fournier, Knute Heldner, Elsa Laubach, Homer Dodge Martin, and Max Weber. Finally, O'Sullivan argues that the state's painters were citizens in a wider world of art who kept up with international developments.

Women were at the center of the Handicraft Guild of Minneapolis, as Marcia G. Anderson, curator of collections at the Minnesota Historical Society, explains. Active between 1904 and 1918, the guild expressed the "gendering of craft" as a female pursuit. Minnesota's central expression of the international Arts and Crafts movement, the guild also articulated the values of patience, self-knowledge, and cooperation, espoused by the movement and supported by the upper Midwest's populist tendencies. Anderson profiles key guild officers and teachers, showing that women contributed significantly to the region's artistic development. She traces the history of the Twin Cities crafts movement through its various facets and organizations to the time in 1918 when the University of Minnesota absorbed the Handicraft Guild into its art-education department. Unlike the many American craft groups that drew inspiration from colonial roots, the Minneapolis guild relied on function to guide style and on Japanese models that approached nature through sparse design. Photographs of Handicraft Guild products, primarily ceramics and metalwork, illustrate these points.

The volume swings back to architecture with Mark Hammons's examination of the output of Purcell and Elmslie, the most widely commissioned Prairie School architectural firm after Frank Lloyd Wright. This groundbreaking essay provides the first lengthy monograph on the partnership and philosophical thinking of architects George Grant Elmslie and William Gray Purcell, discussing their biographies and relating their firm's work to the metaphysical discourse of an era

that looked to India and the Orient. Unlike the Arts and Crafts handicraft orientation, Purcell and Elmslie's Progressive philosophy promoted machines as useful tools through which artistic intent flowed. Hammons discusses many of the firm's commissions, largely residential but also commercial structures including banks that still stand in small, agricultural towns of the upper Midwest. An important aspect of Hammons's essay is his treatment of the firm's democratic, teamwork process.

In the book's final essay, Louise Lincoln and Paulette Fairbanks Molin treat the complex interplay between Euro-American and Native American art and culture. The authors sketch the history of Euro-American encroachment and conflicts with the Ojibway and Dakota tribes in Minnesota from the eighteenth century, when European settlement pushed the Ojibway into the region, to the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where some Dakota enacted mock battles of resistance. The essay then examines Ojibway and Dakota artifacts from the late nineteenth through the early twentieth century, including traditional forms and those derived from European culture. Lincoln and Molin set up a system for classifying the pieces depending on degree of Euro-American—Native American influence, based on function, materials, and design. A useful tool, their system reveals evidence of Euro-American domination of Native-American culture as well as native cultural persistence and resistance to the intruders. It is a complicated story filled with tragedy and heroism, cultural conflict, and some mutual sharing.

Overall, *Minnesota 1900* requires attentive reading, even by those with strong grounding in art and architectural history. The authors demonstrate intimate curatorial familiarity with the objects in the exhibit, and their essays show meticulous research, presented in exhaustive endnotes, appendixes, exhibition checklists, and bibliographies. Period photographs of artists, their works, and Minnesota scenes add the dimension of cultural context, lacking in many histories concerning style. This is a reference book, a critical resource for anyone serious about the region's cultural past and American art and architecture. It offers much new information that points to unexplored avenues and challenges future scholars to conduct their research thoroughly.

*Reviewed by Jean Spraker, a cultural historian and former Minnesotan now residing in Portland, Oregon. In addition to working with local nonprofits, she provides marketing consultation to Blue Heron Publishing Company, a small press specializing in writings by Pacific Northwest authors.*

## **THE WHITE EARTH TRAGEDY: ETHNICITY AND DISPOSSESSION AT A MINNESOTA ANISHINAABE RESERVATION, 1889–1920.**

*By Melissa L. Meyer.*

(Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994.  
333 p. Cloth, \$40.00.)

**W**ith the creation of the White Earth Reservation in 1867, reformers hoped to stage a showcase experiment in Indian assimilation. Because Minnesota's Anishinaabe (Ojibway) people were concentrated on a fertile piece of land

where prairie meets woods, reformers believed that missions, schools, and land policies could be coordinated to dissolve the communal structures of native life and to refashion a society based on individual responsibility, private property, and Christian faith.

But White Earth soon became a showcase for the failure of assimilation policies. In telling the complicated story of what went wrong between 1889 and 1920, Melissa Meyer shows the integral link between the fortune of the Ojibway and the fate of the land. Richly detailed with the fruits of careful research, this book offers a refreshing alternative to flatter, more simplistic studies of assimilation. Attuned to new questions about ethnicity, Meyer explores how material dispossession and social factionalism went hand in hand.

We learn that internal ethnic identifications at White Earth changed from local band allegiances to a reservation-wide political consciousness built around a distinction between full bloods and mixed bloods. Meyer explains that this had little to do with genetic makeup but instead reflected differing visions of economic ethics. Full bloods remained committed to sharing and subsistence in an economy based on need and bound by a spiritual relationship to the land. Mixed bloods, whose families had been the educated go-betweens of the fur trade, were largely of Ojibway and French heritage. The term, however, came to apply to anyone oriented to the values of the market, the accumulation of wealth, and the commodification of land.

Assimilation policy rested on the premise that dividing communal land into private family farms would open the door to civilization. In 1889 Congress allotted White Earth to native families in plots of up to 160 acres, to be held in trust until they became knowledgeable about land "ownership." Those in step with the possibilities of market-oriented prairie agriculture did well. Those who chose allotments to maintain the way of life based on the forest seasonal round did not.

After vocal pressure from mixed-blood allottees, Congress in 1906 removed restrictions on the sale of parcels held by adult mixed bloods and others deemed competent to manage their land. With timber barons eager to supply the massive construction boom in Chicago and the Twin Cities knocking on one door and hunger knocking on the other, most full-blood allottees were persuaded to part with their land for a song. Those whose allegiances—and, sometimes, blood—were mixed found themselves in the lucrative position of brokering the dispossession of White Earth. Within three years, 90 percent of land allotted to full bloods had been mortgaged or sold, despite the supposed trust relationship. When cries of land fraud were raised, anthropologists from the Smithsonian Institution arrived to determine who among the sellers were true mixed bloods. Using eugenic assumptions about race, the scientists sought and confirmed mixed-blood status based on examinations of hair samples and caliper readings of bone structure. Science pronounced most of the land sales legitimate. Ethnicity mattered.

The overall point of this fine book is ill served by the idea of "tragedy" that appears in the title. What went wrong at White Earth had less to do with the playing out of some inevitable tragic narrative of colliding cultures than with the concrete policies, conflicts of interest, and greed that underlay the making of the upper Midwest. Two centuries of fur trading had shown the Indians' remarkable capacity to adapt their way of life and survive among Europeans. It was only after the

Ojibway lost control of White Earth Reservation's land base that they were unable to set the terms of their own survival. Nor is this "tragedy" a closed case from a past century. Today's news about casino management, treaty settlements, and disputed tribal elections often presents a confusing picture of factionalism within native communities. Perhaps this book's most welcome contribution is the historical light it sheds on such tensions.

Bringing clarity to our understanding of contemporary issues facing native communities, this book will interest a wide variety of readers. Scholars will bathe in the wealth of historical material; others will find it takes energy to follow the narrative through the detail. Yet there is no easy way to sort out the history of White Earth. As reformers came to learn, the "Indian Question" was based on colonial and racial injustices far too complicated to be solved by acts of Congress or efforts of goodwill. Readers and researchers alike must roll up their sleeves to understand what happened at White Earth and what continues to happen throughout Indian country. Meyer offers a rich resource in attending to that task.

*Reviewed by Michael McNally, a Ph.D. candidate in the study of religion at Harvard University. His dissertation explores Ojibway hymn singing and the role such religious practices played in negotiating cultural change.*

## **AMERICAN INDIAN LACROSSE: LITTLE BROTHER OF WAR.**

*By Thomas Vennum Jr.*

(Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994.  
360 p. Cloth, \$44.95; paper, \$15.95.)

This is a "Gee whizz, I didn't know that!" kind of book. While North Americanists and sports fans may have a general knowledge of the game, including its origins among American Indians, there has been no systematic study of lacrosse. Even its characterization as "little brother of war" is likely to be added to introductory classes on the American Indian.

What is staggering about this book is how much we did not know until the author ferreted out surprising, unsuspected details and major blocks of data. Vennum frequently notes with regret that important information on the development and diffusion of lacrosse is no longer available. Even the seemingly simple question of whether players were barefoot or wore moccasins requires a qualified answer. The evidence suggests on-going changes in the shapes and materials used for sticks and balls, the nature of play and associated rituals, and personal adornment, but there is not enough evidence to work out chronologies of cultural change. Ethnographers who reported on lacrosse tended to gloss over details needed for comparative studies, and the chroniclers who first observed the game could find no analogies to European team sport to help them understand and provide meaningful descriptions. They drew comparisons to tennis, apparently because of the lacrosse sticks' webbed pockets. Despite the spotty records, Vennum does a masterful job, wringing every drop of data from a variety of sources and integrating them in a comprehensible whole: museum specimens and original and primary documentary materials; old drawings, paintings, and pho-

tographs; ethnographic reports and publications; and his own field research.

In addition, he gives a sense of life and vitality in a number of well-informed fictional vignettes that provide the cultural background to playing lacrosse in different places and eras. The subtitle of the book holds special interest in terms of the rituals, symbolism incorporated into lacrosse sticks and other paraphernalia, and the physical demands on the players related to warfare. It is a rough game!

Excellent maps show the distribution of the various types of lacrosse sticks and differences in playing styles, with cautionary words on the difficulty of categorizing the material, given the nature of the documentary record. Basically, there are three distinct types of sticks: In the Southeast, each player has two sticks with shallow, ovoid pockets and minimal netting. In the Northeast and western Great Lakes, each player uses only one stick. In the Northeast, the bent end of the stick does not reach the handle; instead, the elongated, netted pocket connects the curved end to the handle. In the western Great Lakes the pocket is round and completely framed in bent wood. The northeastern style was adopted when the modern game of lacrosse became a national sport in Canada and then diffused south of the border. An incredible irony is that the non-Indian promoters in the late nineteenth century imposed firm rules—lacking in the Indian game—and since Indian players continued to excel, they were barred from competing in non-Indian games for many years.

Native-style lacrosse continues to flourish in the Southeast; professional and semiprofessional teams and standardized equipment (plastic sticks!) dominate in the Northeast. For a long time, baseball appeared to be the sport of choice in the western Great Lakes, but there has been a stirring of renewed interest in lacrosse, with Vennum's research and book playing an active role in this revival. A few nights before submitting this review, I attended an Indian gathering in Milwaukee and noticed a young man with his arm in a cast. I asked what happened. "Broke my arm playing lacrosse." I said there was a fine new book on the game; he already owned a copy, his ardor for the game apparently undimmed despite his mishap.

*American Indian Lacrosse* belongs in the library of anthropologists, historians, and general readers—even nonathletic types—with an interest in American Indians. It is a tremendous source of information not available elsewhere, and Vennum's literary style, including subtle humor, makes it a pleasure to read. The book is further enhanced by many excellent illustrations.

*Reviewed by Nancy Oestreich Lurie, curator emeritus of anthropology at the Milwaukee Public Museum and past president of the American Anthropological Association.*

## **THE LA FOLLETES OF WISCONSIN: LOVE AND POLITICS IN PROGRESSIVE AMERICA.**

*by Bernard A. Weisberger.*

(Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994.

364 p. Cloth, \$29.95.)

“Family was one pillar of the La Follettes' existence. The other was old Bob's 'religion of democracy.'” This is

the thesis of Bernard Weisberger's latest book, which underwent a transformation of sorts between conception and completion. The author had planned a family history basically focusing on a father (Robert M. La Follette Sr.) and his sons (Robert M. Jr. and Philip F.). Immersion in the sources, particularly the enormous La Follette letter archive, persuaded the author that Belle Case La Follette, Old Bob's wife and the sons' mother, deserved a larger share of the focus than previously accorded her.

“Belle,” writes Weisberger, “was no ordinary spouse.” On one hand, she was a model wife and mother, a veritable embodiment of the “family values” cherished by conservatives in the 1990s. On the other, early in her marriage she earned a law degree at the University of Wisconsin and subsequently became involved in most of the causes linked to the women's movement of the early twentieth century, particularly voting rights. She also was in the forefront in the battle for racial justice, far in advance of most progressives. As Weisberger points out, she and the children “worshipped ‘Daddy’ like a patriarch but backed women's demands for equal professional and civic rights.”

For Weisberger, researching the La Follette story was an exhilarating experience. As he worked his way into the letter archive, he found himself “in the middle of a love story. It began with a man and a woman, then grew to include the family they raised. It radiated through their lives, their friendships, and their careers. It shaped the expression of their principles and explained why they clung to them with such resolve in the face of inner doubts and the world's discouragement.”

At a time when millions of Americans are mourning the apparent collapse of traditional values, the La Follette family model might seem compelling. Left-of-center folks may take special comfort from the demonstration that adhering to family values does not necessarily preclude commitment to social-justice goals. A more significant conclusion can be drawn from Old Bob's World War I experience. As is well known, he voted against American entry and in the months that followed refused to retreat from his conviction that the decision for war had been a tragic mistake. This stance subjected him to attacks of unbelievable ferocity. Weisberger suggests that the courage to survive this ordeal owed a great deal to the unstinting support of his family. For Belle, giving this support was more than backing “Daddy.” As a committed pacifist, she was perhaps more convinced than Bob that the country was on a mistaken course.

For all its positive aspects, the “circle of love” also had its downside, imposing on the children a burden of extraordinarily high expectations and the “seeds of wrenching personal problems.” For a time this darker side was hidden from view. By 1935, ten years after Old Bob's death and four years after Belle's, it appeared that their sons had enthroned a La Follette dynasty in Wisconsin. Robert represented the state in the U.S. Senate, an office he had won following the death of his father. Philip was serving his second term as governor, and one year earlier he and Robert had presided over the founding of the Wisconsin Progressive party, which had triumphed in the 1934 elections and would do so again decisively in 1936.

But this dominance turned out to be short lived. In 1938 Philip launched an ill-fated effort to establish a national third party, the National Progressives of America, in effect liquidating the La Follette alliance with Franklin Roosevelt's New

Deal. Philip was trounced in the 1938 gubernatorial election. Robert survived a bit longer; he barely won reelection to the Senate in 1940, but suffered defeat at the hands of Joseph McCarthy in 1946. Neither of the brothers managed to reestablish themselves politically in the years that followed.

Forced retirement from elective politics posed adjustment problems for both. As Philip's biographer John E. Miller notes, "Their lives out of politics carried a sense of deep tragedy." Following persistent bouts of depression and melancholy, Robert committed suicide in 1953. The last 25 years of Philip's life (he died in 1965) were marked by several frustrating efforts to find a suitable niche, complicated by a drinking problem. Meanwhile, public awareness of the family was fading, a trend that accelerated with the passing years.

While Weisberger's "love story" failed to achieve a happy ending, the author did produce a compelling interpretation of the La Follette story. He also pursued a goal transcending the desire to write a good story: "We should remember [Old Bob] La Follette because of his blazing courage and because he kept insisting and insisting that democracy was a life and involves continual struggle, and that we could do better." In the opinion of this reviewer, Weisberger achieves that goal in full measure.

*Reviewed by Carl H. Chrislock, professor emeritus of history at Augsburg College, Minneapolis. Among his many publications is Watchdog of Loyalty: The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety During World War I (1991).*

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## News & Notes

OUR READERS WRITE: *From Gretchen Kreuter of Madison, Wisconsin, in response to George H. Lobdell's article, "Minnesota's 1944 PW [sic] Escape: Down the Mississippi in the Lili Marlene #10, from the Fall 1994 issue:*

"Your article on the German POWs in Minnesota reminded me of the POW camp in Owatonna that we passed on our way to family vacations in Iowa when I was a girl. My father, Sigmund von Loeve, himself a German immigrant—voluntary—always waved to the prisoners we saw behind the fences or, if memory serves, occasionally walking along the road. He was NOT the sort of person who waved to passersby, and certainly not to prison inmates!

"The sight of these POWs always moved him in some way, and he would explain to my brother and me that they were not bad people. My father, incidentally, had fought on the German side during World War I—so there might have been an element of 'There but for the grace of God. . . .' Seeing the POWs, I always thought what a long way they'd have to go to get back home if they escaped."

RESEARCHERS in many fields will want to note the publication of *The Trans-Mississippi West, 1804–1912. Part I: A Guide to Records of the Department of State for the Territorial Period* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1994, paper, \$8.00 plus \$3.00 shipping). Archivist Robert M. Kvasnicka compiled

this first in a series of three guides to federal holdings from this period. The state department files include records relating to presidential appointments and pardons, documents from commissions that established the international boundaries of the United States, and correspondence and settlement claims involving the Republic of Texas, Mexico, and Great Britain. Copies of the guide may be ordered from the National Archives Trust Fund, P.O. Box 100793, Atlanta, Ga., 30384.

GENEALOGISTS will want to note several recent publications by Park Genealogical Books, 3601 78th Ave. N., Brooklyn Park, Minn., 55443-2826. To order, Minnesota residents please add appropriate sales tax; unless otherwise noted, postage and handling is \$1.50 for the first book and \$.50 for each additional volume.

Green, Stina B. *Adoptions and Name Changes, Minnesota Territory and State, 1855–1881*. 1994. 31 p., paper, \$8.00.

*Minnesota's World War II Army Dead*, including both army and air force casualties. 1994. 40 p., paper, \$9.50.

*Pensioners on the Roll as of January 1, 1883 (Living in Minnesota) with Every Name Index*, reprinted from issues 3–6 of the *Minnesota Genealogical Journal*; index added. 1994. 84 p., paper, \$12.50.

Edwards, Maurice D. *History of the Synod of Minnesota—Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.*, reissue of the 1927 work with a new introduction by Rev. Robert

W. Jeambey. 1993. Unpaginated, paper, \$12.50.

Anderson, George W., Jr., trans. *Early Records of the LeSueur River Church of Waseca and Steele Counties, Minnesota*, including ministerial records of membership and members attending the congregation, 1863–68, and confirmands, 1866–1961. 1993. 48 p., paper, \$7.50.

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IN A far-ranging work, Frances Karttunen examines the lives of 16 men and women in *Between Worlds: Interpreters, Guides, and Survivors* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1994, 364 p., cloth, \$24.95). Ranging from Doña Marina, who interpreted for Cortés in the conquest of Mexico, and the more familiar Sacajawea to Ishi, the last of the Yahi Indians of California, and Dayuma, a contemporary woman of the rainforest, Karttunen discusses the complex tensions that haunt cultural go-betweens. Minnesotans may be particularly inter-



ested to read the author's interpretation of the life of Charles Eastman, a Minnesota-born Dakota whose career took him "from deep woods to Dartmouth."

IN 122 pages, Capt. Ron Larson of Winona conveys part of the rich *Upper Mississippi River History: Fact—Fiction—Legend* (Winona: Steamboat Press, 1994, cloth, \$45.00). Beginning with a brief summary of early French exploration, the retired pilot looks at paddlewheel steamboats from about 1810 to the present, railroad bridges, the great race in 1870 between the *Natchez* and the *Robert E. Lee*, log rafts on the river, dams, navigation aids, and river towns from St. Louis to Minneapolis. Perhaps most enjoyable is the chapter of river-pilot's stories, which Larson collected from his comrades during his years on the Mississippi. With more than 150 illustrations and several indexes, an autographed copy of the book may be ordered from Larson, 1286 Lakeview Ave., Winona, Minn., 55987.

THE INNER MAN is the focus of T. Willard Hunter's biography, *The Spirit of Charles Lindbergh: Another Dimension* (Lanham, Md.: Madison Books, 1993, 174 p., cloth, \$19.95). While much has been written about Lindbergh's life and achievements, people close to the enigmatic aviator agreed that his spiritual side and philosophy deserved better attention. Thus Hunter, a personal acquaintance of Lindbergh, examines the "character element of the Lindbergh phenomenon," looking at his Swedish background, family, childhood, attitudes toward religion, and the evolution of his feelings toward the place of science in civilization. Five appendixes contain reflections on the man from those who knew him well, plus a selection of Lindbergh's own thoughts, culled from his seven books.

READERS interested in the Dakota War of 1862 will want to look at *The Sioux*

*Uprising in Minnesota, 1862: Jacob Nix's Eyewitness History*, edited by Don Heinrich Tolzmann (Indianapolis: Max Kade German-American Center and Indiana German Heritage Society, 1994, 192 p., paper, \$12.80). This edition is bilingual, reproducing the German text, written in 1887, and a new English translation. Nix was the German commander at the battle of New Ulm in August 1862. Tolzmann has written an introduction that fills in Nix's story and places his narrative in the context of other accounts of the war. Copies may be obtained from NCSA Literatur Distributor, 430 S. Kelp Grove Rd., Nashville, Ind., 47448; please include \$1.75 for postage.

AMONG the most useful publications for anyone working on Upper Midwest history are Herbert T. Hoover's and Karen P. Zimmerman's bibliographies of South Dakota history. The two volumes—*South Dakota History: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1993, 552 p., \$75.00) and *The Sioux and Other Native American Cultures of the Dakotas: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, Conn.: Westwood Press, 1993, 288 p., \$65.00)—are complementary and were designed to be used together. Each book has both an author and a subject index. Each index contains entries for both volumes; bold-face type indicates whether the entry is in the volume the reader is consulting or in the other. The annotation is truly helpful, providing such information as the topics of a book or the viewpoint of the author. The scope of items ranges beyond South Dakota's border and includes many listings from Minnesota and other states and some from Canada, showing that the compilers understand that history does not stop at state boundaries. Indeed, the general bibliography notes material in archives outside of South Dakota, and the Native American cultures volume includes works published in Europe. The chronology of South Dakota history is a thoughtful touch that users will appreciate.

SOME OF the complexities of Slavic ethnicity are discussed in a recent book by William Duly, *The Rusins of Minnesota: A Cultural History of an Ethnic Minority from the Carpathian Mountains of Europe*. The 135-page paperback examines Rusin roots in Europe, immigration to the U.S., and the Minnesota Rusin communities in rural Browerville (Todd County), the Mesabi Range town of Chisholm, and Minneapolis, where many immigrants worked for the railroads. Through interviews with second-generation Rusins, also called Ruthenians or Rusyns, Duly reports family stories and pieces together church controversies and community stories. Several appendixes include names of founders of two Minneapolis Greek Catholic churches and some estimated population figures. There is no index. Based on a master's thesis in anthropology at the University of Minnesota, the book was supported by the Rusin Association of Minnesota and published in 1993. It is available for use in the Minnesota Historical Society's research center.

*They Came to Teach: The Story of Sisters Who Taught in Parochial Schools and Their Contributions to Elementary Education in Minnesota*, by Annabelle Raiche, CSJ, and Ann Marie Biermaier, OSB, is the visible result of the Shared Story Project, a collaboration among orders of Roman Catholic sisters whose members taught in and administered the state's elementary parochial schools. Published by North Star Press of St. Cloud in 1994, the 271-page paperback begins by tracing the story of Catholic elementary education from 1851 to 1990. The next section includes biographical sketches of one sister from each of the nine orders represented in the book. Also useful for researchers are two sections giving the names, locations, dates, and status of Minnesota schools staffed by religious sisters and listing the sisters who taught in them. The volume, available for \$19.95, concludes with a bibliography and index.



## AROUND THE STATE

For almost a century, the tugboat *Edna G.* moved large steel freighters in and out of the Two Harbors ore docks on Lake Superior's Agate Bay. Commissioned by the Duluth and Iron Range Railroad in 1896, it was probably the last steam-powered tug operating on the Great Lakes when it retired from service in 1981. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Steel-hulled and 110 feet long, the *Edna G.* is a museum of ship-building crafts. Notable is the captain's cabin with its rich wood paneling, built-in bunks, light fixtures with opalescent globes, and head with ornate hardware and swing-out commode. The crew's quarters are spartan in comparison; bunks share space with the adjacent engine room and drive shaft. In the bowels of the vessel is an immense coal-fired boiler (reportedly hot enough when stoked to blister the skin of a shirtless man opening its door). Above deck, the tug's superstructure houses the engine room, upper boiler, pilothouse, forward cabin, and galley with its original coal-burning cookstove.

The *Edna G.*'s exterior restoration was financed by the Minnesota Historical Society's state grants programs, the city of Two Harbors, and the Iron Range Resource and Rehabilitation Board.

Striking in its setting of massive ore docks, lake vistas, and railroad structures, the brightly painted tug is open to the public on summer weekends. Contact the Lake County Historical Society, 218-834-4898, for information. For a look at some of *Edna G.*'s predecessors and contemporaries in nearby Duluth, see the article beginning on page 210.




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