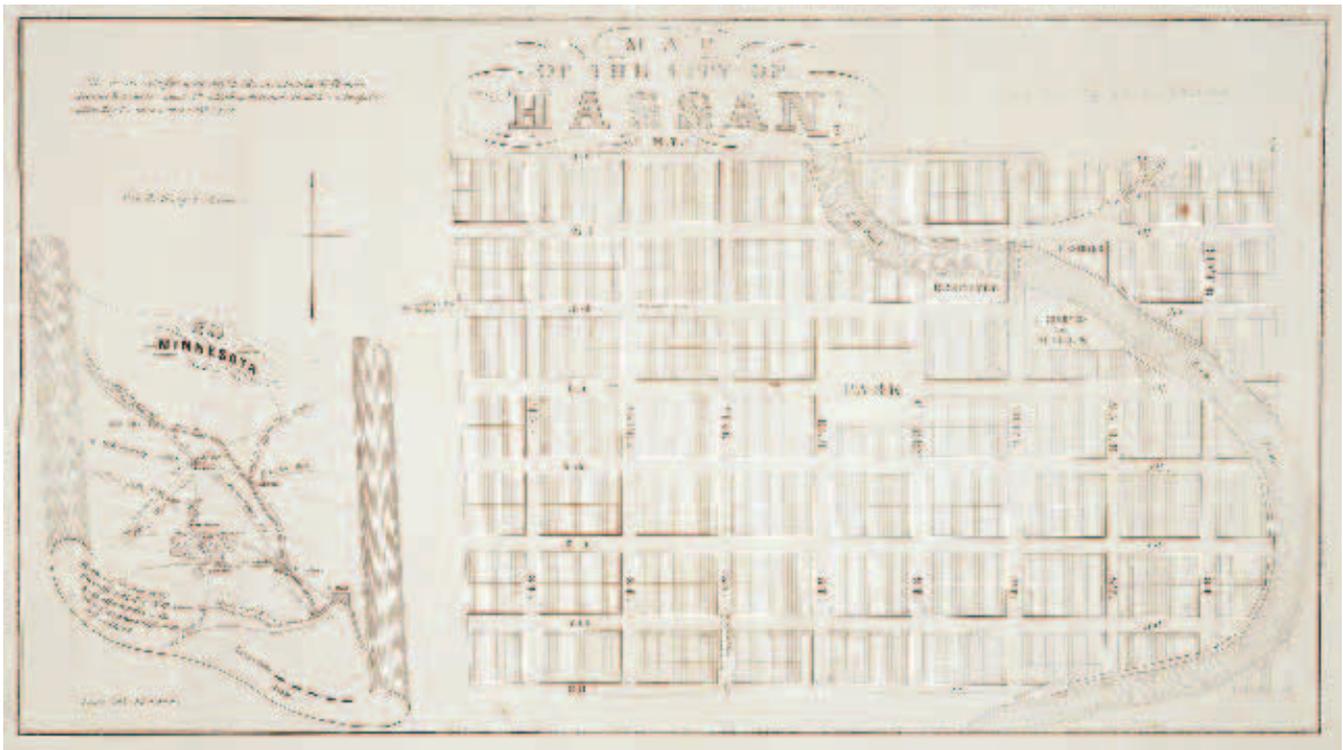


# Curator's Choice



In 1855 or 1856, Harvey S. Norton hired George B. Wright to survey a townsite on the Crow River in northwestern Hennepin County. Norton named the place Hassan, a shortening of the Dakota word *chanhasan*, or sugar-maple tree. The site was to capitalize on the water power of the river and the new Minneapolis-to-Monticello territorial road that passed through. In addition, the Hassan-to-St. Peter road, laid out in 1856, would enhance the town's importance. The next year a post office was established at Hassan Rapids, and the town's future seemed bright.

This was not to be. Like many other speculative "paper" towns, Hassan never flourished. The financial panic of August 1857 caused money and credit to dry up, and real-estate investment languished. The Hassan-to-St. Peter road proved nonessential and withered away. In 1859 the post office closed, and the Minneapolis-to-Monticello road eventually ceased crossing the river at the site. As a result, Hassan, now part of the Crow-Hassan Park Reserve near Rogers, exists only as a note in local history books and as a map celebrating the optimism of the times.

In an 1895 history of Hennepin County, Col. John H. Stevens summed up the story: "One feeble, flickering effort was made toward founding a village . . . when Harvey S. Norton undertook to utilize the water power . . . by building a saw mill. He gave his metropolis the name—Hassan—and then the scheme flickered faintly and died out, not even a saw mill or hotel materializing, and the undisturbed forest still covers the domes, spires and minarets of what might have been a modern Babylon."

This rare copy of Norton's 14 x 25½-inch map documenting the town and the era of real-estate speculation was donated to the Minnesota Historical Society in 1995 by J. Kevin Graffagnino. Note that on the inset of Minnesota, north is at the top, while on the map of Hassan itself, north is to the right. —JON L. WALSTROM, *map curator*



FRONT COVER: *Indian Village on the Mississippi near Fort Snelling* is one of Capt. Seth Eastman's many detailed watercolors portraying Dakota life. Stationed at the fort in 1830 and 1831 and again from 1841 to 1848, Eastman produced more than 400 works in oil and watercolor. This small view, measuring 4¾ x 7⅞ inches, was painted between 1846 and 1848. To learn how Minnesota's criminal-justice system treated Indian people during this era, please see the article beginning on page 46.

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# Book Reviews

## **EDUCATION FOR EXTINCTION: AMERICAN INDIANS AND THE BOARDING SCHOOL EXPERIENCE, 1875–1928.**

By David Wallace Adams.

(Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995.

274 p. Cloth, \$34.95.)

Between 1875 and 1928, United States policy toward American Indians focused as never before on absorbing them into the general society. Claiming to operate from the most idealistic assumptions, this assimilationist goal resulted in dispossession and dependency. While Richard Henry Pratt, leading educator of Indians in this era, proclaimed the equality of native people and argued that education was the tool to bring them into the full blessings of American civilization, the deadly tone of his slogan, “Kill the Indian and save the man” should have given “friends of the Indian” pause. How did this altruistic movement come to cause so much grief to native people and how did they react to it? In *Education for Extinction*, David Wallace Adams goes a long way toward answering the first question and offers a good beginning on the second. Students of the era, of public-policy formation, of American Indians, and of American society will find this study of value. Citizens wondering about the role of education in confronting issues of pluralism and opportunity will also learn from this book.

Adams demonstrates that schooling was the central instrument of the assimilationist program. This in itself is not surprising; the author recognizes the seemingly instinctive inclination of policymakers in the U.S. to see the schools as the solution to any problem. Yet never has education been applied with such aggressiveness as in this episode. The boarding school became the instrument of choice in a system that intended much more than literacy. By the early 1890s Thomas Jefferson Morgan, commissioner of Indian affairs, had designed the means to extinguish American Indian cultures by going after the children, pulling them from their homes and indoctrinating them with “American civilization.”

The tragedy of this schooling system was its failure to respond to the needs of Indian people, alienating those it claimed to serve. Not their intransigence but its aggressive nature was at fault. Adams imaginatively portrays the boarding school as a “total institution.” A curriculum that combined the three “Rs” with instruction in the practical arts—farming, manual labor, domestic arts—was not the half of the program. Drawing upon school records and memories of students, Adams uncovers the hidden cur-

riculum: practices ranging from haircuts and school uniforms to the changing of names, prohibition of native language use, and the imposition of rituals of sport, gender, and calendar all aimed at making patriotic and acquisitive American individuals of native children. Far from building on the teachings of parents, family, and home, this system saw those influences as forces to be eradicated. No wonder that many parents and children resisted boarding schools with all their will and that the topic elicits exceedingly negative memories from most Native Americans.

Much to his credit, Adams demonstrates that the reaction of Indian people to the new schooling system was complex. Forms of resistance ranged from total rejection, as in hiding children from school officials, to repudiating a particular practice. The latter form of resistance allowed some accommodation with the schools. Indeed, as Adams shows, many—probably most—Indian communities recognized that they needed to accommodate to the enveloping U.S. presence. The school seemed to offer two important tools—literacy and insight into the behavior of their conquerors. It also promised access to the technological advantages of the new society. The system as it developed, however, exacted too high a price and offered much less than it promised. Too few of the lessons were empowering; too many were destructive. Death and disease visited a high proportion of students. Many of those who survived and accommodated enough to advance through the system returned to their reservations as leaders in the fight to maintain the tribal homeland. They criticized the schooling system for its failure to provide adequate and responsive instruction, not for its existence.

Their criticism points to a pattern that the author neglects—the erosion of educational services. Adams emphasizes the continuity of governmental policy in these years. The one change he notes, approvingly, is a shift toward day and public schools as a corrective to the coercive boarding schools. Other historians, most notably Frederick Hoxie, argue persuasively that this shift led to a decline in resources available for education, not to an increase in responsiveness. Certainly the eroding expenditure per pupil in the Bureau of Indian Affairs schools exacerbated reliance on inferior staff and student labor and inadequate student living conditions. The local public schools, to which 53% of Indian children went in 1925, were even less responsive to Indian communities than the BIA schools. Destructive as the schooling system was, its erosion should not necessarily be celebrated. At

its best, students were able to use the system for their own purposes. Its erosion signified a reduction in the services the United States provided Indian people rather than a liberation of their children.

Education did not lead to extinction. For this, reformers deserve no credit; they do carry some responsibility for the system's failure to educate. The narrowness and rigidity of their goals, together with their failure to press for adequate resources, limited the potential for empowerment through literacy and new technologies that the schools might have offered. Adams's analysis should lead us to question the extent to which the "savage inequalities" in contemporary U.S. education reflect a continuing inclination of elites toward using schools as a form of control rather than empowerment. More broadly, his insights about the way in which good intentions can pave the road to hell for other peoples continue to be a valuable caution as we shape this nation's policies in a pluralistic world.

*Reviewed by Wilbert H. Ahern, who holds a Ph.D. from Northwestern University. A professor of history at the University of Minnesota, Morris, he is currently engaged in a study of the alumni of nonreservation Indian schools from 1880 to 1920.*

### **THE POWER OF PLACE: URBAN LANDSCAPES AS PUBLIC HISTORY.**

*By Dolores Hayden.*

(Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995.

296 p. Cloth, \$30.00.)

The title doesn't give it away, but pretty soon after picking up *The Power of Place* you realize that it's about Los Angeles. Everybody knows Los Angeles, right? It's that place with smog, palm trees, freeways, beaches, beautiful people, movie studios, scary earthquakes, and mudslides. Everyone has visited Los Angeles, at least vicariously, through mass-entertainment images that have rolled continuously out of southern California's "dream factories" since the 1910s. In *The Power of Place*, Dolores Hayden, a professor of architecture, urbanism, and American studies at Yale University, sets aside this "pop culture view of the urban landscape where Disneyland, swimming pools, and freeways are icons and people of color are invisible." Instead, she explores the ways that "locating ethnic and women's history in urban space can contribute to what might be called a politics of place construction, redefining the mainstream experience, and making visible some of its forgotten parts."

Frank Lloyd Wright is famously, if apocryphally, known for commenting that if you tilted America on its side, everything that wasn't tied down would end up in Los Angeles. But this kind of reading of the place as fleeting chaos or as the accretive expression of wacky hedonism smacks of exceptionalism—Los Angeles is *sui generis* and can teach us nothing. Hayden rejects this notion, too. All places, even those as fragmented and "postmodern" as Los Angeles, have histories, stories of people interacting with the natural environment and with each other. Landscapes are "storehouses of culture and histo-

ry," and it takes effort to unlock them, to go beyond superficial or clichéd observation and mainstream accounts of what constitutes "significant" history.

*The Power of Place* has its origins in a small, nonprofit company of the same name that began in 1984 under the auspices of the Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of California at Los Angeles. The project brought together teams of historians, artists, architects, planners, and community organizations to find ways to rebuild public memory in the city around sites and buildings that figured in the lives of working people, especially women and minorities. Three of these projects are discussed in detail in the second (and largest) part of *The Power of Place*. One project focused on the life of Bidley Mason, an African-American midwife who worked in the city in the last half of the nineteenth century. This complex effort resulted in the creation of a small park, several artworks, and an outdoor exhibit commemorating Mason's life. Another project found its place in the Embassy Auditorium, a grand Beaux-Arts structure that was the center of union organizing in the 1930s and 1940s, especially among Mexican-American and Russian-Jewish garment workers. The third *Power of Place* project described here led to the creation of a historic district in Little Tokyo, a Japanese-American commercial area of the 1920s and 1930s.

These fresh approaches to historic preservation are wonderfully practical and read almost as a guide to community organizing. Heartening as they are, however, the project descriptions would not be nearly as meaningful without the sturdy intellectual substructure provided by Part I of *The Power of Place*, titled "Claiming Urban Landscapes as Public History." Hayden's first three chapters—"Contested Terrain," "Urban Landscape History: The Sense of Place and the Politics of Space," and "Place Memory and Urban Preservation"—total a mere 76 pages, but these are some of the most intelligent and stimulating pages I have read in a long time. Ranging widely over a scholarly terrain that includes the fields of public history, multicultural studies, politics, historic preservation, architectural history, and studies of landscape and memory, Hayden succeeds in opening our eyes to the power of place, defined—in a typically spare, graceful phrase—as "the power of ordinary urban landscapes to nurture citizens' public memory, to encompass shared time in the form of shared territory."

*Reviewed by Brian Horrigan, an exhibit curator at the Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul.*

### **MINNESOTA GARDENS: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY.**

*By Susan Davis Price.*

(Afton, Minn.: Afton Historical Society Press, 1995.

167 p. Cloth, \$49.00.)

Few things are as transient as gardens, hence the challenge of telling their history. So substantial when we saunter through them, inhaling their essence, gardens can be eradicated by nature in only a matter of months

or a few cycles of the seasons. Susan Davis Price begins her saga in the midnineteenth century and wends her way through topics including settlers and early statehood (1840s–1870), the Victorian era (1870–1910), grand private and public gardens of the early-twentieth century, and the origins and influence of Minnesota’s plant organizations. She concludes with a look at the gardening renaissance of the last 25 years. *Minnesota Gardens* overflows with beautiful images. Hand-colored slides from the Smithsonian Institution Archives of American Gardens lend a romantic, period air that helps readers recreate those outdoor settings no matter what the season.

A topic of this size is a daunting assignment, at best. As an avid gardener, I know how overwhelming it is to make sense of the pile of catalogs that accumulates every spring. Minnesota gardeners know how few of the swell plants pictured in vivid color will be winter hardy. The odd elation the catalogs offer is the low-stress zone where Minnesota gardeners drift once they have passed the agonizing milestone of imagining, plotting out, digging, and planting a creative and successful garden in the “great northwest.” Price had the courage to take on this monumental task and received support from Sally and Duncan McMillan and the Afton Historical Society Press. For this she deserves our congratulations and thanks. Her extensive bibliography is evidence of the challenging range of materials that must be considered and reviewed. Much of the early and published sources related to plants in Minnesota focus on fruit-bearing trees and plants. To unearth the origins and evolution of gardening or floriculture from a great deal of technical literature requires the skill of an investigator and the persistence of a garden weed. Apparently Price has both.

The majority of the book relates the typical stories one would uncover in any state’s history of gardening: early settlers’ desperate need for the comfort that even the barest plantings could provide; the development of public parks, cemeteries, and arboretums, as well as civic-beautification projects and gardening societies; and the expansive gardens created by the wealthy. The topical organization, while somewhat disjointed, is representative of the main trends and primary sources available. But in the section “The Trade: A Footnote to History 1850s–1990s,” Price makes a real contribution to scholarship, beginning to explain what I most wanted to learn from this book—what, if anything, is unique about Minnesota and where does the state fit into the world of gardening? This section shows that the development of seeds hardy for northern climes is an important part of what happened here. Northrup King seedsmen, for example, chose a “Polar Brand” concept to promote their “northern grown seeds . . . early, more hardy and more productive than any other.” Price also discusses Minnesota seedswoman Carrie Lippincott, who in 1891 pioneered the sale of flower seeds by mail. These innovations by tradespeople and others had tremendous impact on gardening decisions thanks to the introduction of marketing techniques, the size of mailing lists, and the longevity and success of the businesses.

I recommend this book to anyone who enjoys flowers and gardens as well as to those with dirt under their nails and callouses on their knees. Although the book makes

many contributions, I was disappointed to see so few images of home gardens over time and so few personal recollections to document the small, imperfect garden plots that arouse a certain passion in the souls of everyday Minnesotans. I suspect this is not entirely a failure of the author but rather is due to scanty historical documentation in photographic and primary sources. Perhaps Price could have dug deeper in her own cited references to discover more glimpses of the romance Minnesotans have with nature, the seasons, and their gardens, such as this quote from Albert Lea’s 1898 Wedge Nursery sales catalog.

#### THE OLD GARDEN

I know of a dear old garden where the old-time  
flowers grow—  
There are hollyhocks and lilies in a long and  
stately row:  
There are lilac trees by the gate-way, and roses  
white and red,  
And the southernwoods’s spicy fragrance follows  
the careless tread.  
A quaint, old-fashioned garden out of Life’s busy  
way,  
Where the spell of vanished summers lingers the  
livelong day.

*Reviewed by Marcia G. Anderson, chief curator and head of museum collections at the Minnesota Historical Society. In the 15 years since she moved to Minnesota she has become a farmers’ market regular and focuses on drought-resistant perennial and shade plants in her own garden. A biannual plant exchange she initiated several years ago allows Society staff to expand their garden menu and glimpse the myriad types that comprise the Minnesota garden palette.*

#### WOMEN OF THE EARTH LODGES: TRIBAL LIFE ON THE PLAINS.

*By Virginia Bergman Peters.*

(North Haven, Conn.: Archon Books, 1995.

217 p. Cloth, \$39.50.)

**I**n this book, the author brings together a wealth of ethnographic and historical material on the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Indian tribes during the pre-reservation years of the nineteenth century. These were the years when these tribes, historic representatives of a Plains agricultural and bison-hunting tradition that spanned almost a thousand years, experienced their last breath of true tribal and cultural autonomy. It is within this historical and cultural context that Peters offers a perspective that has received far too little attention as a main theme: the position of women in, and their contributions to, this unique cultural tradition.

Peters does not mine any new sources of historical or ethnographic information. While most of her material is standard fare, it is organized and presented in a fresh way, bringing the place of women to center stage in a very readable, nontechnical style. She highlights the contributions of women to tribal life, discussing them as

earth-lodge architects and builders, gardeners, potters, central figures in the matrilineal kinship complex, and conductors of important tribal ceremonies in their female age societies. Much of the material for these discussions comes from the words of Buffalo Bird Woman, a Hidatsa who was born around 1840 and served as a major cultural informant for anthropologist Gilbert Wilson in the early 1900s.

The book's chapters are organized thematically, each devoted to a specific aspect of the blended cultures of the Three Affiliated Tribes, highlighting the contributions of women where possible. The introduction and chapters 1 through 3 are overviews of early nineteenth-century Middle Missouri cultures, particularly material goods and adornment, landscape, prehistory, and historic contacts with Europeans. All are reasonably good overviews with the exception of chapter 2, "The Land," which is oversimplified and generally vague. Chapters 4 through 6 attempt to get inside the cultural lodges of the three tribes through an examination of creation stories, religion, and features of social organization. Chapters 7 through 13 (with the exception of chapter 9, on male

fasting, prayer, and warfare) are devoted to women in terms of socialization from childhood through old age, farming, and their roles in hunting ceremonies and trade.

In sum, *Women of the Earth Lodges* is a concise, well-written, and informative work. It is also well indexed, footnoted, and referenced. I would strongly recommend it to a general reading audience and perhaps as a supplemental text for college courses on the American Indian. Specialists in Plains cultures will probably not find too much new, as much of the book is redundant with well-known materials such as the collections of Gilbert Wilson and the works of ethnographer Alfred Bowers. In this respect, *Women of the Earth Lodges* is a secondary source, albeit a very well-written one.

*Reviewed by Jeffery R. Hanson, associate professor of anthropology at the University of Texas at Arlington, who teaches courses on American Indian ethnohistory, ethnology, and prehistory. He has conducted archaeological and ethnographic studies on American Indian cultures, focusing on the human ecology of the Great Plains.*

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## News & Notes

THE SOLON J. BUCK AWARD for the best article published in *Minnesota History* during 1995 goes to Mary Logue for her article "'Motherhood Protection' and the Minnesota Birth Control League," which appeared in the magazine's Winter issue.

Co-authors Lucile M. Kane, former state archivist and senior research fellow, and John A. Dougherty, bibliographic manager, will share the Theodore C. Blegen Award for the best article by a Minnesota Historical Society staff member in 1995. Their article, "Movie Debut: Films in the Twin Cities, 1894–1909," also appeared in the Winter issue.

This year's judges were Brian Horrihan, museum exhibit curator at the Minnesota Historical Society, and Pamela Mittlefehldt, director of American Studies and the Center for Community Studies at St. Cloud State University. Each award includes a prize of \$600, which will be presented at the Society's annual meeting in the fall.

READERS of *Minnesota History* who would like a copy of the table of con-

tents for the eight issues comprising volume 54 (Spring 1994 through Winter 1995) may obtain one by writing the editor, 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul 55102-1906.

THE JAMES J. HILL Reference Library will award a number of grants of up to \$2,000 to support research in the James J. Hill and Louis W. Hill papers, a rich source for the study of railroad history, tourism, political and regional economic developments, and many other topics. The deadline for applications is November 1, 1996, and the awards will be announced in early 1997. For more information, contact W. Thomas White, curator, at the library: 80 West Fourth St., St. Paul 55102; fax (612)222-4139; e-mail [twhite@jjhill.org](mailto:twhite@jjhill.org).

THE VIDEO documentary *Bring Warm Clothes*, based on the book by the same name by *Star Tribune* reporter Peg Meier and aired in March by KTCA-TV, the Twin Cities public television station, is available for sale at the

Minnesota Historical Society museum store or through the order department for \$19.95. Both the video and the book make extensive use of letters, diaries, and photographs from the Minnesota Historical Society collections. Filming was done at various historic sites, including Historic Fort Snelling, the Alexander Ramsey House, and the Oliver H. Kelley Farm.

POLITICS on both state and federal levels is the backbone of Thomas R. Huffman's *Protectors of the Land and Water: Environmentalism in Wisconsin, 1961–1968* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994, 252 p., cloth, \$39.95, paper, \$14.95). Wisconsin provides an excellent example of the development of the "new conservation" or "reform environmentalism" because, according to the author, "In Wisconsin, a sense of place and a tradition of environmental sentiment provided precedent, continuity, and the driving force for political transformation." The book shows how Wisconsinites crafted a centrist movement, supported by members of both

political parties and working for change within the system.

IN *University in the Pines* (Bemidji, Minn.: Bemidji State University, 1994, 541 p., cloth, \$23.50), Arthur O. Lee recounts the history of Bemidji State University from its beginnings in 1919 through its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1994. The volume not only chronicles the story of the institution's evolution from a small normal school to a state teachers college, state college, and, finally, a university; the chapters also recreate the social milieu and characteristics of student life through each era. The first section of the book, covering the years to 1938, was issued in 1970 as *College in the Pines* to commemorate Bemidji State's fiftieth anniversary. The much larger, updated volume is available from the publisher for \$23.50.

A SECOND edition of Martha Coleman Bray's *Joseph Nicollet and His Map* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1994, 300 p., cloth, \$20.00) is now available from the Center for Western Studies, Box 727, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, S. Dak. 57197. Accompanying this well-researched and well-written biography are a map of Nicollet's expeditions from 1836 to 1839 and the explorer's famous "Map of the Hydrographic Basin of the Upper Mississippi River."

VOLUME III of J. Norman Heard's *Handbook of the American Frontier: Four Centuries of Indian-White Relationships* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1993, 265 p., cloth, \$32.50 plus \$2.50 handling) is devoted to the Great Plains. Short entries discuss individuals, tribes, places and events (such as the raid at Forest City, Minnesota, and the captivity of Lizzie Fletcher), and broad topics (such as ghost-dance religion and U.S. Grant's peace policy); the published source of information is noted after each entry. The alphabetical listing contains no index.

SUMMONED to visit a total stranger, Bemidji author Kent Nerburn was drawn into a personal, historical, and spiritual odyssey when he agreed to make a book from the old man's thoughts. *Neither Wolf Nor Dog: On Forgotten Roads with an Indian Elder* (San

Rafael, Calif.: New World Library, 1994, 291 p., paper, \$11.95) is the result. The elder, known simply as Dan, and his friend Grover set about trying to make Nerburn see the world through Indian eyes on their reservation and, later, as they drive through South Dakota to the Black Hills. Through a series of "little talks," which the author tape recorded, Dan expounded on the difference between leaders and rulers, land and property, honor and freedom, the tyranny of language and the power of silence. As instructive as the lectures, however, is the developing relationship between the men, which speaks volumes about cultural differences and the possibilities for change.

TRANSLATED into English as a gift from the Danes Worldwide Archives (to commemorate the opening of the Danish Immigrant Museum in Elk Horn, Iowa) is *A New Life: Danish Emigration to North America as Described by the Emigrants Themselves in Letters 1842-1946* (Aalborg, Denmark: Danes Worldwide Archives in collaboration with the Danish Society for Emigration History, 1994, 215 p., cloth, no price given) by Niels Peter Stilling and Anne Lisbeth Olsen. The text is based on passages from more than 1,000 letters sent to family and friends back home. The letters give eyewitness accounts of leaving, traveling, and adjusting to farms and cities in a new land. In editing the letters, the authors have preserved the emigrants' words on core issues and have interwoven in-depth commentary, giving readers important context for understanding the times. Because of the broad picture it paints, the book is several histories in one: of the emigrants, of the land they left behind, and of the land they adopted. Though specific to Danes, the volume gives a good overview of the European emigrant/immigrant experience in general. Originally published in 1985, *A New Life* was translated from the Danish by Karen Veien.—*Ginger Hamer*

A CONGREGATIONAL minister who rose to the ranks of U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs is the subject of William H. Armstrong's *A Friend to God's Poor: Edward Parmelee Smith* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994, 518 p., cloth, \$50.00). American

church history forms the backdrop for this biography of Smith, who began his career working with destitute children and went on to minister to Union soldiers and organize freedmen's schools after the Civil War. When President Ulysses S. Grant called on the churches to help reform the Office of Indian Affairs, Smith was appointed agent for the Ojibway in Minnesota, a position he held from 1871 until being appointed commissioner of the corrupt Indian affairs office in 1873. Several chapters detail his time in Minnesota and connections to men such as Amherst H. Wilder, Henry B. Whipple, Horace Austin, and Henry M. Rice.

THE COLLABORATION in Congress of Minnesota's Farmer-Laborites and Wisconsin's Progressives greatly influenced national political developments during the 1930s, argues James J. Lorence in *Gerald J. Boileau and the Progressive-Farmer-Labor Alliance: Politics of the New Deal* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1994, 324 p., cloth, \$44.95). Through his study of this Wisconsin Progressive who served in the House of Representatives from 1930 to 1938, Lorence takes a broad look at the promise and ultimate failure of the era's liberal third-party politics. Depicting the political climate during the Great Depression as shaping individualism and independent-bloc politics, the book delves into the variety of issues with which Congress grappled, including farm policy, military relations, foreign policy, inflation, and unemployment relief.

ARTIST Hazel Thorson Stoeckeler's fold-out booklet, "The Epic of Minnesota's Great Forests, The Making of a Mural Painting," marks the fiftieth anniversary of the completion of that artwork in Green Hall on the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus. Side one of the nine-fold pamphlet surveys the rise and fall of the timber empire and the birth of the conservation movement. Spanning the pages is a color reproduction of the mural. Side two, generously illustrated with black-and-white sketches and photographs, describes the research, design, and execution of the mural. Published in 1995, the \$6.95 booklet is available at the museum store at the Minnesota History Center.

# From the Collections

Railroad magnate James J. Hill’s country estate was new when it caught the eye of painter Fritiof Colling, a Swedish immigrant living in Minneapolis. His 1886 oil on board shows the family home with its stair-step roofline, a sizable greenhouse, and a glimmer of Pleasant Lake—just a fraction of the 5,000 acres that eventually made up North Oaks. A place of respite from summer in the city, the estate was also a working farm. Flowers and vegetables in season from the greenhouse and gardens graced the table at the Hills’ Summit Avenue mansion in St. Paul as well as at North Oaks.



Fritiof Colling, *The James J. Hill Home in North Oaks*, 1886

How Colling came to paint this scene is not known, although a poem he later wrote described his failed attempt to visit with a maid who worked in the area. He did have an affinity for painting buildings, however, specializing in making likenesses of the cottages his fellow immigrants had left behind in Sweden. Colling signed and dated the back of the 8¾ x 12¾-inch board, which also displays drawings of a child’s head and an artist sketching. To read more about Colling, please see the article on page 76.

## Minnesota Historical Society

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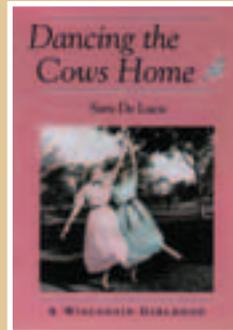


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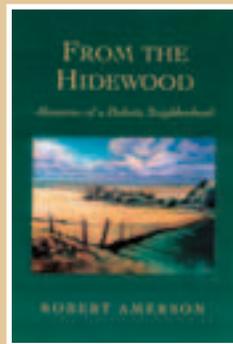


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