

Cass Gilbert: The Early Years

By Geoffrey Blodgett

(St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2001.

154 p. Cloth, \$24.95.)

Cass Gilbert Life and Work: Architect of the Public Domain

Edited by Barbara S. Christen and Steven Flanders

(New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001.

320 p. Cloth, \$60.00.)

THE LIST OF BUILDINGS DESIGNED by architect Cass Gilbert (1859–1934) is long and impressive and includes such important American landmarks as the Minnesota State Capitol (1895–1906) in St. Paul, the United States Custom House (1899), and the Woolworth Building (1911), both in New York City, and the U. S. Supreme Court Building (1928–35) in Washington, D. C. Yet Gilbert remains relatively unknown to the American public, and his work is rarely more than touched upon in architectural-history survey courses. One possible reason is that, architecturally speaking, Gilbert was a stylistic chameleon, never embracing a single design vocabulary or style. He was neither a colorful, quotable maverick nor a cutting edge, experimental architect who pushed formal or technological limits. Yet, every day, tens of thousands of Americans live and work in his residential, religious, civic, commercial, and governmental structures. As one critic noted, “Gilbert’s special genius lay in his capacity to identify and embody the dreams of clients.”

Gilbert’s buildings speak for themselves. They continue to serve their communities and inhabitants well—the most meaningful and lasting measure of an architect’s achievements. Fortunately, public and scholarly interest in Gilbert has increased recently. No fewer than five books on the architect have been published since 1999. Two, reviewed here, demonstrate that Gilbert is indeed a subject worthy of respectful reexamination.

Apart from subject matter, the two books are vastly different in size, scope, approach, and intent. However, they share one common thread: the late Geoffrey Blodgett wrote one and contributed “The Politics of Public Architecture” to the other. Blodgett’s slim *Cass Gilbert: The Early Years* brings the architect’s youthful career—including his education, European travels, work for McKim, Mead, and White in New York, and his St. Paul years—to life in a very personal way. The author paints a lively portrait of the young Gilbert, focusing particular attention on his family relationships, blossoming architectural talents, personality traits, and moral character. This focus provides the reader the necessary insight to understand the mature Gilbert, particularly the determined and skillful way in which he secured some of the twentieth century’s most important architectural commissions.

Gilbert established a practice in St. Paul in 1883, a prosperous time when the Twin Cities were growing rapidly, and new civic, commercial, and residential structures—and architects to design them—were in demand. During this period Gilbert, both alone and with partner James Knox Taylor, designed many impressive residences in a range of architectural styles along Summit Avenue in St. Paul, as well as a number of Shingle-style summer homes for well-to-do St. Paul families on White Bear Lake and Manitou Island. He also designed five St. Paul churches including the “picturesque miniature,” shingle-clad Virginia Street (Swedenborgian) Church (1886) and the German Bethlehem Presbyterian Church (1890), described by Blodgett as having “the fairy-tale look of a small castle.”

In text and image, Blodgett documents the early architectural influences on Gilbert’s work. The Boston-area “Richardsonian Romanesque” work of Henry Hobson Richardson, which Gilbert came to know during his student year at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, made a lasting impression, as did the magnificent Shingle-style work of McKim, Mead, and White on whose Newport, Rhode Island, Casino (1881) Gilbert worked while employed by the firm.

One criticism of the book is that, curiously, a scant ten pages are devoted to Gilbert’s most famous state commission—the Minnesota State Capitol. Although the interior spaces and details of the building are adequately presented, reader understanding suffers from the absence of an architectural plan of the complex building. Blodgett’s engaging text would have been better served by a more engaging layout; the inclusion of just a few of Gilbert’s beautiful watercolors leaves the reader yearning for more. However, on the whole *Cass Gilbert: The Early Years* provides a solid foundation for understanding young Cass Gilbert, the man and the architect.

Cass Gilbert Life and Work, a collection of essays, had its origins in a 1998 New York symposium that culminated a yearlong celebration of the architect's work. The strength of this fascinating book is that it places Gilbert's work in the larger contexts of planning, American civic architecture, and the public domain. The goal of the book, as Robert A. M. Stern makes unabashedly clear in his introduction, is to recognize the "inspired professionalism and artistry" of Cass Gilbert who, "among the many exceptionally accomplished architects of one hundred years ago, has been until recently, more egregiously overlooked than virtually any other." The richly illustrated and beautifully designed book does indeed succeed in making a strong case for righting that wrong.

The underlying concept of the book was to "offer views of the worlds Gilbert lived in, explored, and transformed through his art and through his highly practical determination that every building must serve not only his clients, but also its users." And Gilbert did not confuse the two. The fact that he succeeded is acknowledged by current users of his civic and federal structures who speak of a sense of working for the greater good and of deriving "psychic income" from working in his impressive spaces.

Eight book chapters focus on Gilbert's Minnesota life and career. Each has a thesis, clearly stated in an introductory paragraph, which drives the development of the argument and takes each essay above a mere recitation of chronological facts. The book's treatment of the Minnesota State Capitol benefits greatly from this approach, and the chapters build upon each other. In "Thinking Internationally, Designing Locally," Thomas O'Sullivan considers the political, professional, architectural, economic, and artistic challenges Gilbert negotiated and mastered in the creation of the building. Sally Webster's essay, "The Civilization of the West," considers the marriage of fine arts and architecture at the State Capitol, a building developed at a time when the state was economically rich but culturally raw. In the process she reveals Gilbert's key role in securing only the finest works of American art and sculpture for the building that became "the pride of the state and the talk of the nation."

The scope of the book is vast. This might have been a problem had the book not been so clearly organized, well edited, and skillfully designed. As it is, the handsome book is a compelling, highly informative read.

Reviewed by Jane King Hession, an architectural writer who holds a Master of Architecture degree from the University of Minnesota. She is a co-author of Ralph Rapson: Sixty Years of Modern Design (1999) and is currently researching a book on architect John Howe.



Views on the Mississippi: The Photographs of Henry Peter Bosse

By Mark Neuzil, foreword by Merry A. Foresta

(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.

253 p. Cloth, \$39.95; paper, \$29.95.)

HENRY PETER BOSSE'S PHOTOGRAPHS come to us with growing prestige and audience. He used a cyanotype printing process, similar to blueprinting, to document the changing of the Upper Mississippi River. The process, combined with his typical oval framing of the images, gives the photos a dreamlike quality—like seeing the river through blue glasses. The effect is heightened by the fact that the river has been so changed by engineering and later development that the scenes are familiar yet not quite recognizable.

Bosse photos are now selling for high prices to collectors of fine-art photography, and Bosse did try to make his pictures fine compositions, even to the point of cutting down trees and drawing in clouds. But he did not create them solely as art. Bosse had a trained eye because of his intimate involvement with the river, and he improved his compositions during his work with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers from the 1870s to 1890s. As both a mapmaker and photographer he was employed to document the Corps' heroic engineering projects being undertaken to improve navigation. By so skillfully capturing this record of the Mississippi at the point of its first domestication, Bosse's work gives us a glimpse at the wild river being tamed.

With *Views on the Mississippi*, the University of Minnesota Press has made it possible to better enjoy the photos as art but also to use them as a guide to the historic river. Bosse's maps help the reader interpret the images. The detailed identifications of the features in each picture and a well-written supporting history by Mark Neuzil will inspire some readers to take the book and try to find the places where Bosse set up his tripod.

The river prior to Bosse is best viewed through literature rather than images. Certainly Seth Eastman's paintings and even those of Henry Lewis captured engaging scenes of life on the Mississippi. But few images and fewer photographs captured the wild Mississippi itself. While Mark Twain documented the challenges facing a river pilot on the larger river at Hannibal, the Upper Mississippi had even more sand bars, snags—and colorful characters. Finding even a three-and-one-half-foot channel above Hastings was difficult, and four-foot-draught steamboats often had to plow their way through six inches of river bottom.

With all of the challenges and, of course, seasonal restrictions on water transportation, it is little wonder that most passenger and freight traffic shifted to the railroads in the 1870s and 1880s. New truss bridges and pontoons carried the rails across the river. Some packet boats could still be found, but more likely were huge rafts of lumber, steered by special steamboats navigating their way through the maze to market.

While these new bridges and engineering feats are featured prominently in the Bosse images, his main focus is the river itself. Even what looks like a simple landscape of a picturesque river bend is, on closer inspection, a documentation of work being undertaken by the Corps. Wing dams and closing dams were constructed by the thousands out of hand-woven willow mats anchored with limestone in an attempt to steer, not corral, the river and make the water's flow scour out a deeper bottom in the main channel. The program was so huge that it nearly exhausted the Mississippi's vast quantities of willow. The scale of the project today, rather than quaint, looks daunting and nearly impossible. To the engineers of the time, however, it may have looked no more difficult than recent undertakings such as spanning the continent with rails.

Author Mark Neuzil and the editors took pains to get the package right. In addition to well-documented text, images are included from several sources, including the Mayo Foundation and a remarkable album recently discovered in the pilothouse of a working Corps of Engineers dredge. The book's large format is ideal and necessary; both the maps and photos are finely detailed. At this scale viewers can understand the meanders and even get some sense of the power eroding the river's banks and bends.

From its first taming, the Mississippi has become the most engineered river in the world. The 29 locks and dams of the Upper Mississippi's 9-foot channel have now mostly submerged the wing dams of the 1880s, but the river itself is still mostly directed into the main channel these engineers intended. As efforts are underway to understand the original river and even restore some of its natural ecosystem, these photographs and maps provide valuable documentation.

Like the river, this book takes some time to appreciate, but it is well worth the effort.

Reviewed by David Wiggins, manager of the Mississippi River National Center, which opens in St. Paul in summer 2003. The center is part of the National Park Service's Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

Ojibwe Singers: Hymns, Grief and a Native Culture in Motion

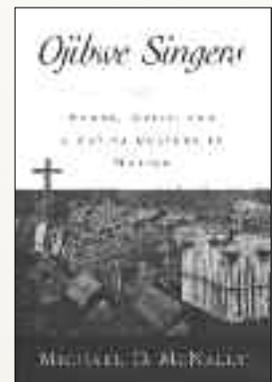
By Michael D. McNally

(New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. 248 p. Cloth, \$47.50.)

INTRODUCED BY MISSIONARIES, Christian hymn singing was part of an attempt to transform the Ojibwe of the Great Lakes, to "civilize" them. This rich historical and ethnographic study, however, focuses not on the missionaries' intentions but rather on how the Ojibwe remade Christianity in their own image.

Christianity gained most success among the Ojibwe in the nineteenth century when communities faced the onslaughts of disease and white settlement, a declining land base, and displacement to unfamiliar surroundings such as the White Earth reservation. Missionaries provided vulnerable people with one means of dealing with what was happening to them. The churchmen may have wanted the total transformation of Ojibwe culture, but, paradoxically, they provided the means for Ojibwe people to conform to the trappings of Christianity without abandoning their culture.

In order to make the Christian message comprehensible to the Ojibwe, translators—including prominent Native Christians and singers, who had a role in shaping the words—made use of the rich, allusive Ojibwe language of spirituality. Historian McNally demonstrates this by retranslating Ojibwe hymns back into English to show the shifted nuances of meaning. An example is the Ojibwe word used to render the Christian term "grace"—*zhawenjiigewin*. The term refers to the relationship of pity that Ojibwe people sought from powerful spirits when fasting for a vision. Thus, even though Ojibwe translations shared the Christian idea that salvation from sin requires grace, the message was placed firmly in the context of non-Christian spiritual relationships that missionaries sought to eradicate.



While Christianity came with a specific set of meanings, it could only succeed at places such as White Earth through social and cultural relationships that made sense among the Ojibwe. Hymn singing was associated with danger, sickness, death, and grieving—many of the same contexts in which the Midewiwin came to be so important. On such occasions, singing was framed within the Ojibwe “protocols of mourning” at wakes that took place outside of churches or missions. In another adaptation, Ojibwe Christians sought to break down the divisions and factionalism that plagued White Earth, upholding an ethic of peace making, self-sacrifice, generosity, and mutual nurture rather than insisting on the priority of conversion.

Much of the nineteenth-century part of this story is told from archival and published sources, though the evidence, especially the hymns, is illuminated with the aid of recent White Earth hymn singers including Erma Vizenor and the late Larry Cloud Morgan. Their story is told in the last half of the book. They began singing weekly at White Earth community sings in the 1980s, became more political in response to issues of secrecy, corruption, and accountability in the former tribal government, and were part of a group that occupied the tribal headquarters in 1991. Since then, these singers have become respected elders who have traveled widely, sharing their songs throughout Minnesota and elsewhere.

For the singers and many other Ojibwe people, Christian hymn singing has become traditional by playing a role in Ojibwe life, sharing cultural space with the Midewiwin and drum dancing. The hymns are sung in a stylized manner that resembles Ojibwe singing in other contexts and provides the consolation that comes from something firmly embedded in cherished beliefs.

In presenting this compelling story, McNally grapples with some fundamental issues about the interpretation of Native cultures and traditions. Many people, white and Native alike, would define the essence of Ojibwe culture as knowing the entire cycle of trickster stories, mastering a repertory of dance steps and dream songs, and speaking the language fluently. The White Earth singers who informed this study, however, would “justly focus on an economic ethic that places the needs of the many before the desires of the few, and which affirms simple, subsistence living in respectful balance with the land.”

From this point of view, the common definition of Ojibwe tradition seems, as McNally puts it, “brittle” and “crystallized.” Confining Ojibwe culture to such boundaries might be seen as the final step in colonial domination, the intellectualized equivalent of stereotyping. Instead, McNally, influenced by the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Michel de Certeau, suggests the importance of viewing cultures not as defined

in the abstract but rather as people actually live them. In the messy reality of daily life, people have to make choices, not between abstract realities such as “assimilation” or “tradition” but between alternatives that are not so clear-cut. McNally’s approach could prove fruitful if applied to the broad sweep of Native histories and cultures.

Reviewed by Bruce M. White, an historical anthropologist who lives in St. Paul. He is one of the authors of Fish in the Lakes, Wild Rice, and Game in Abundance: Testimony on Behalf of Mille Lacs Ojibwe Hunting and Fishing Rights (2000).

Rethinking Home: A Case for Writing Local History

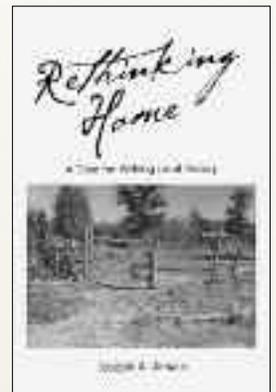
By Joseph A. Amato

(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002. 245 p. Cloth, \$48.00; paper, \$18.95.)

LOCAL HISTORY has long been regarded as the poor stepchild of “serious” academic research. Deemed parochial and of limited analytical usefulness, the histories of individual places have seldom sustained the interest of scholars occupied with the Big Questions of historical change. (Notable exceptions, of course, have been the countless studies of New York, Chicago, and other major metropolises—which somehow escape the label of localism.)

For a time in the 1970s and 1980s, place-based studies achieved a more elevated status. A new generation of social historians, seeking the historical agency of ordinary people, employed the community study to great effect. Curiously, however, though a flood of commendable community studies appeared, only rarely did one capture a sense of place—the social and cultural understandings embedded in the local terrain. “Place” was most often simply the geography where events happened rather than a world of meaning that influenced people and events as fully as did class, race, gender, or other sanctioned categories of analysis.

In the last ten years even this pale acknowledgment of the importance of place has given way to a preference for more global perspectives as historians struggle to make sense of economic and political processes that transcend national—let alone local—boundaries. As a result, local



history has once again lost ground on the scale of historical significance.

In *Rethinking Home*, Joseph A. Amato sets out to revise this assessment. Drawing on his more than two decades of research and scholarship on southwestern Minnesota, Amato crafts a research model that should challenge any serious historian to reevaluate the potential of place-based studies. He explores a stunning range of topics from the vantage of a few small farming communities and regional centers. The connections radiate like spokes of a wheel from this local hub to issues of global significance. For example, an exceptionally nuanced approach to environmental history situates the transformation of farming techniques, evolution of market crops, and changes in the wildlife and the land itself as social processes. Local priorities and choices reflect distant relationships with national and international markets. Thus, forces far beyond local control participate as invisible yet intimate actors in community and environmental dynamics.

Though Amato consistently directs attention to the growing power of global capitalism, he never loses sight of the human element, the particularity of place and relationships—the stuff of local history. What emerges from this dialectic is not a narrow commemoration of an individual locality but rather an understanding that the impact of global phenomena is *always* local. History—in its broadest scope—is about the lives of individual people and communities, and political choices are always filtered through a lens of local meaning. Chapters devoted to sounds, smells, emotions, secrets, and even definitions of insanity reveal a landscape infused with the emotional and sensory meanings of home. In Amato's eloquent telling, the transformation of such deeply personal markers cannot be separated from the larger forces of capital that bombard the familiar world of everyday life. Such changes carry enormous cultural weight that alters communities, regions, and ultimately society writ large.

Professional historians may have missed the riches in the soil of local history, but Amato also urges chroniclers of the local—most working without institutional support—to expand their range of vision. Preserving a community's unique history has a value in itself, but providing context for the story enlarges its importance in the historical panorama. As Amato advises, "Telling stories requires acknowledging distant forces." Local historians must "inquire into the practice of power."

Rethinking Home is a singularly important book. Within its pages are topics enough to exhaust a lifetime of intellectual inquiry. As the founder and director of the Society for the Study of Local and Regional History at Southwest State University in Marshall, Joseph Amato has nurtured countless students engaged in mining the historical abundance of

that particular corner of rural Minnesota. The publication of *Rethinking Home* should inspire historians everywhere to investigate the Big Questions in their own backyard.

Reviewed by Mary Lethert Wingerd, *visiting assistant professor of history at Macalester College. Wingerd is the author of Claiming the City: Politics, Faith, and the Power of Place in St. Paul, reviewed in the Fall 2002 issue of this magazine.*

The Walleye War: The Struggle for Ojibwe Spearfishing and Treaty Rights

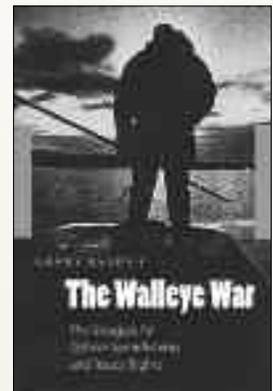
By Larry Nesper

(Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002.

234 p. Cloth, \$60.00; paper, \$19.95.)

THE OJIBWE OF WISCONSIN AND Minnesota ceded title to the greatest portion of their tribal homeland to the United States via treaties in 1837, 1842, and 1854. They specifically reserved the right to hunt, fish, and gather on and off their nineteenth- and twentieth-century reservations. The United States failed to protect this treaty-preserved right for most of 100 years, allowing state officials in Wisconsin and Minnesota gradually to usurp jurisdiction that the Ojibwe had preserved for themselves. Meanwhile, the Ojibwe economy changed from one based entirely on hunting, fishing, and gathering to one that rested primarily upon wage labor. By the midtwentieth century, a minority of Ojibwe hunted and fished, let alone made their living by these endeavors. Yet, individual Ojibwe continued to assert their treaty right to access natural resources in their historic homeland, a right reaffirmed by federal courts in a 1983 ruling known as the Voight Decision. The Ojibwe exercise of their court-recognized right to fish in off-reservation waters of the treaty cessions triggered a series of widely documented confrontations between Ojibwe and non-Indians at lake landings throughout northern Wisconsin.

Larry Nesper's *The Walleye War* attempts to show why the Ojibwe held tenaciously to their treaty-based hunting and fishing rights even when doing so was no longer an economic necessity. Nesper examines the cultural roots of the values expressed by the act of spearfishing walleyes in the lakes of northern Wisconsin. He outlines and analyzes nineteenth-century accounts to identify and define the



ontological and cultural concepts by which Ojibwe people understood their relationships with the animal world and with one another. He examines how modern Ojibwe have drawn upon these nineteenth-century concepts and symbols, revising and updating them to mobilize people to exercise treaty rights as a symbol of their tribal sovereignty.

The Walleye War is an ethnography, a work based on anthropological techniques of documentary research, interviews with participants, and the author's own participation in the events he describes. Grounded in nineteenth-century Ojibwe history and culture, the book is a document that preserves late-twentieth-century history. Nesper introduces a broad cast of characters who participated in the unfolding drama that surrounded the exercise of Ojibwe fishing rights during the 1980s—the court and its officers, Wisconsin state officials, anti-treaty-rights antagonists, and Ojibwe protagonists.

The story that Nesper tells can be briefly summarized. Throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth century, a small but persistent number of Ojibwe, “violators,” continued to exercise hunting and fishing rights despite the efforts of Wisconsin officials to enforce the full extent of state natural-resource laws. When the courts validated the continuing right to hunt, fish, and gather throughout the treaty cession, Ojibwe fishermen who publicly attempted to exercise the right faced escalating non-Indian protests and opposition at the boat landings and on the waters. The Ojibwe were themselves divided about how best to resolve the con-

flicts while at the same time maintain their treaty rights. Neo-traditionalists wished to exercise the right to the fullest extent of the court's ruling, fishing throughout the ceded territory and taking the maximum number of fish. Tribal governments wished to negotiate a compromise with Wisconsin officials by which the Ojibwe would receive cash in exchange for agreeing not to exercise the full extent of the right. The conflicts that Nesper describes were waged between and within Ojibwe and non-Indian communities.

Nesper's account of the events and personalities involved is fresh with the detail that only an on-the-ground observer can provide. The book's focus on Ojibwe understandings of the Walleye War shortchanges the ideas of those who protested Indian treaty fishing. Still, the book gives the readers a strong sense of place and an intimate knowledge of the Ojibwe communities where treaty-preserved fishing rights could motivate people to undertake dangerous actions to protect and preserve their own culture and identity. *The Walleye War* is a well-told and highly informative account of events from a perspective that most non-Ojibwe readers rarely observe, further increasing the value of this work.

Reviewed by James McClurken, an ethnohistorian specializing in Great Lakes Native Americans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, who is the compiler and a principal author of Fish in the Lakes, Wild Rice, and Game in Abundance: Testimony on Behalf of Mille Lacs Ojibwe Hunting and Fishing Rights (2000).

■ As its title suggests, *Our Common Country: Family Farming, Culture, and Community in the Nineteenth-Century Midwest* contains much to interest Minnesotans, even though the book focuses on Fountain Green, Illinois. Author Susan Sessions Rugh explores three intertwining forces that shaped the transformation of the Midwest in the 1800s: changing cultural identities, the expansion of the market economy, and the decline of agrarian patriarchy. By looking carefully at the stories of individual farm families as well as the larger community, this book explains the making of a family-farming culture that continues to influence thinking about rural life in the twenty-first century. Published by Indiana University Press in 2001, the 285-page hardcover book costs \$45.

■ Amply illustrated with maps, photographs, paintings, and monuments, Jean Morrison's *Superior Rendezvous-Place: Fort William in the Canadian Fur Trade* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2001, 164 p., paper, \$18.95 U.S.) is a primer on the fur post just north of the international border. Beginning with the French, the book traces the evolution of the fur trade with an emphasis on the North West Company era. Also included is information on the reconstruction of Fort William and its development as an historic site.

■ In *Creating Abundance: Visionary Entrepreneurs of Agriculture* (Danville, IL: Interstate Publishers, 2001, 388 p., hardcover, \$29.95), prolific author Hiram M. Drache profiles 14 "homesteaders of the post-industrial global frontier." Each chapter details the hard work, innovation, and risks involved in industrializing agriculture. To capture the diversity of American agribusiness, the book ranges across the country, examining the successes of, for example, vegetable, fruit, and nut growers; turkey, swine, and cattle raisers; feedlot operators; and Minnesota's own Bailey Nurseries, which supplies the nation with flowers, shrubs, and trees. Contrary to the popular perception that large farms must be "Wall Street-type corporate firms," all but one

of the businesses included in the book (the Navajo Agricultural Products Industry) belongs to an individual or a family.

■ Four new books discuss the lives and careers of ever-popular outlaws Jesse James et al. Most comprehensive is Robert Barr Smith's *The Last Hurrah of the James-Younger Gang* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2001, 252 p., hardcover, \$27.95). While focusing on the infamous raid on the Northfield bank, Smith debunks the apparently irrepressible Robin Hood myth that persists about the robbers, detailing their Civil War violence, criminal careers after Appomattox, and the later lives of the raid's surviving outlaws, including Cole Younger's and Frank James's Historical Wild West Show. The book also follows the subsequent careers of the Northfield bank defenders, who somehow have never received the national attention or glory of the desperadoes.

Faithful Unto Death: The James-Younger Raid on the First National Bank (Northfield Historical Society Press, 2001, 207 p., hardcover, \$29.95) is the first in a trilogy by Minnesota author John Koblas. Emphasizing the key roles of the Northfield defenders (the "faithful" of the title is slain bookkeeper Joseph Lee Heywood), Koblas reconstructs the robbery almost minute-by-minute, relying on eyewitness accounts and other primary materials. His next two books, published in 2002 by North Star Press of St. Cloud, examine the outlaws after the robbery. *When the Heavens Fell: The Youngers in Stillwater Prison* (284 p., hardcover, \$26.95, paper, \$16.95) concludes with Cole and Jim Younger's 1901 release from prison; *The Great Cole Younger and Frank James Historical Wild West Show* (260 p., hardcover, \$26.95, paper, \$16.95) follows the fortunes of the two former outlaws, their business, and their integration into society until their deaths. Both books are annotated and contain bibliographies.

■ After examining a plethora of celebrations, historian Ellen M. Litwici concludes that various American groups

invented civic holidays in order to recast the story of the United States with themselves in pivotal roles. *America's Public Holidays, 1865-1920* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000, 293 p., hardcover, \$39.95) considers secular celebrations invented between the close of the Civil War and the end of World War I, analyzing the failures (Bird Day, for example) as well as the successes. Race, ethnicity, class, and patriotism, she argues, are among the forces that drove voluntary associations to launch national festivities in hopes of creating a unified civic culture for a diverse and sometimes divided nation.

■ Regional, local, and personal history inspired artist Howard Sivertson to compile his paintings and companion stories in *Schooners, Skiffs, and Steamships: Stories along Lake Superior's Water Trails* (Duluth: Lake Superior Port Cities Inc., 2001, 81 p., hardcover, \$24.95). Color reproductions of Sivertson's paintings face his one-page vignettes of life along (and on) the big lake. Indians, fur traders, missionaries, fishermen, freighters, storm victims, and a goat in a boat full of oats are among the Isle Royale native's subjects.

■ In 2002 the Minnesota Historical Society Press inaugurated its new series, The People of Minnesota, with the publication of four paperback books: *African Americans in Minnesota*, by David Vassar Taylor (100 p.); *Irish in Minnesota*, by Ann Regan (89 p.); *Jews in Minnesota*, by Hyman Berman and Linda Mack Schloff (90 p.); and *Norwegians in Minnesota*, by Jon Gjerde and Carlton C. Qualey. Each book updates an original chapter from the 1981 publication *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups* with new information and copious pictures. In his foreword to the series, Bill Holm muses on the nature and meaning of ethnicity in 21st-century Minnesota. Each book is available for \$13.95.

■ Planned by Archbishop John Ireland, funded by James J. Hill, and designed by Cass Gilbert, the Saint Paul Seminary is a local landmark with a rich history. Its

MINNESOTA HISTORY

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story is ably told in *“To Work for the Whole People”*: *John Ireland’s Seminary in St. Paul* by Mary Christine Athans (New York: Paulist Press, 2002, 543 p., hardcover, \$39.95). Beginning with the vision of Joseph Cretin, Minnesota Territory’s first bishop, and progressing through Ireland’s pivotal role to the present, the book charts an institution that, in the words of Archbishop Harry J. Flynn, “functioned as a mirror for the life of this local church and for the greater universal Church.” This well researched, engagingly written volume shows how the seminary evolved over more than 100 years, meeting challenges and adapting to changing times while keeping its educational mission constant.

■ *Black La Crosse, Wisconsin, 1850–1906: Settlers, Entrepreneurs, and Exodusters* by Bruce L. Mouser (La Crosse County Historical Society, 2002, 164 p., paper, \$14.95) details and examines in scholarly fashion the surviving traces of the Mississippi River town’s nineteenth-century black settlers. Gathering and cataloging snippets of information teased from newspapers, census and cemetery records, tax lists, birth, marriage, and death records, court lists, church records, unpublished manuscripts, and many other documentary sources, Mouser, an emeritus University of Wisconsin professor, draws careful, fully documented conclusions on topics as diverse as place of birth, age upon arrival, linkage to family members already in the area, former slave status, family size, religious affiliations, financial conditions, migration patterns, occupations, population size, homeownership, and social ranking. Family historians will find the detailed lists of names and personal information drawn from a myriad of sources especially useful. This book provides a fine model of how to analyze local minutia to draw broader conclusions. Order from the historical society at 608-782-1980. □



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