

■ An extensive collection of family documents forms the backbone of Nancy Bunge's *Woman in the Wilderness: Letters of Harriet Wood Wheeler, Missionary Wife, 1832-1892* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010, 255 p., paper, \$24.95). After a brief time at a female seminary in her native Massachusetts, young Harriet married Leonard Wheeler, and under the auspices of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions the two set out for La Pointe, Wisconsin, as missionaries to the Ojibwe. Letters among Harriet, her husband, family, and friends vividly portray the rigors of missionary life, the female sphere in which Harriet operated, the couple's different temperaments, and their efforts to aid the Ojibwe threatened with removal from their land.



■ Beyond Ole and Lena and lutefisk: While Eric Dregni's *Vikings in the Attic: In Search of Nordic America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011, 289 p., paper, \$22.95) contains a fair share of jokes about Vikings and hot dish, the book pushes through these easy clichés to pursue the political legacies of Scandinavian Americans, the traditions of Nordic culture that remain, and the facts behind a variety of legends and myths. Sections of the book trace the history of Scandinavians in the Midwest, provide biographical sketches of "Notable Nordics," and point readers to Scandinavian heritage sites and festivals across the region. As in past books, Dregni provides relaxed, humorous, and expert guidance as he reveals new and unexpected truths about familiar terrain.

■ A topic of enduring interest, the Civil War will undoubtedly receive much new scrutiny as the four years of its sesquicentennial unfold. For now, two new publications demonstrate the scope of approaches and subject matter that the conflict encompasses. Michael E. Peake, a student of German American participation on both sides of the war, offers art and information in *Blood Shed in the War: Civil War Illustrations by Captain*

*Adolph Metzner, 32nd Indiana* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 2011, 142 p., cloth, \$34.94). An introductory chapter profiles the career and work of Metzner, a German immigrant druggist in Kentucky who traveled to Indianapolis to help organize a German regiment four months after the start of the war. A second chapter provides a brief history of the resulting regiment, and then the book reproduces the sketches, drawings, and watercolors in which Metzner chronicled his three years of service, moving from early humorous sketches to the increasingly grim realities of battle.

In *Decisions at Gettysburg: The Nineteen Critical Decisions that Defined the Campaign* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2011, 198 p., paper, \$24.95) author Matt Spruill focuses on strategic, operational, tactical, and organizational choices, North and South—all based on intelligence, not all of it good—that he believes shaped the outcome of this crucial battle. The author of five previous battlefield guide books, Spruill surely knows the territory. The resulting scene-setting and play-by-play narrative produces an account that can be read closely by those interested in tactical and operational points yet still understood by readers who prefer an overview. Fully half of the book is, in fact, a battlefield guide for the less initiated, who can tour the spots and read the reports related to critical decisions tied to those very locations. The volume also includes a few photographs, maps, and sketches as well as listings of the Union and Confederate orders of battle.

■ A teenager's record of hijinks and the high life among St. Paul's elite, *Through No Fault of My Own: A Girl's Diary of Life on Summit Avenue in the Jazz Age* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011, 84 p., paper, \$12.95), reproduces the 1927 diary of Clotilde "Coco" Irvine with context—and important narrative resolution!—provided by Minneapolis journalist and author Peg Meier. Growing up in the home that is now the Minnesota governor's mansion, Coco and her siblings enjoy immense privilege but

also suffer the indignities of school lunch, early bedtimes, and being too young for Cuban heels. This delightful diary recounts both love letters and paper doll games; in so doing, it evokes not only nostalgia for the glamorous Jazz Age but also the more immediate transition between childhood and adolescence.

■ The art scene in nineteenth-century Minneapolis weaves through art historian James M. Dennis's *The Strike: The Improbable Story of an Iconic 1886 Painting of Labor Protest* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011, 235 p., paper, \$24.95; e-book, \$14.95). This "biography of a painting" also traces the career arc and other works of its creator, German immigrant Robert Koehler, who in 1893 became the second director of the Minneapolis School of Fine Arts. A dramatic wide-angle depiction of an imagined labor confrontation, *The Strike* was painted in an era of labor ferment and was first exhibited just days before the Chicago Haymarket riot. Over the next century, the painting remained an inspiration to the labor movement while its more public fortunes seasawed: it gained international attention, fell into obscurity, was "rediscovered" in the 1970s, and once again rose to fame. It is now in the collections of the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin.

■ *Memory of Trees: A Daughter's Story of a Family Farm* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010, 237 p., cloth, \$24.95) begins with an accident that seems to promise certain death and ends with a resurrection of sorts. Shot through with spirituality, Gayla Marty's memoir encompasses interludes honoring trees that took root on her family's property near Rush City or that grow in the far-flung places of her travels and in her memories of the Baptist and Lutheran communities that sustained—and separated—her family. Marty and her siblings eventually settled far from their Pine County home; this exodus and the book's story of transitioning from dairy to beef farming, and then out of farming altogether, will be familiar to many

readers. Her elegiac perspective on these events and her articulation of a fierce attachment to the land (she is active in land stewardship programs) and to her extended, estranged family make this book stand out.

■ Assembled by the Twin Cities GLBT Oral History Project, an editorial collective of students, professors, and activists who compiled an archive of oral histories drawn primarily from long-time (30-plus years) area residents, *Queer Twin Cities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010, 332 p., paper, \$25.00) provides a critical history of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender visibility and presence in Minnesota. The volume moves from nineteenth-century lumberjacks to contemporary gentrifiers, encompassing indigenous Two-Spirit people, antipornography activists, bar owners, and farm boys along the way. It avoids easy conclusions and emphasizes the racial, gender, and class identities that intersect with and inform sexual identity. Alongside academic ruminations on homonormativity and the ways

in which scientific categories become written on the body, the book features many strong narratives; all are firmly rooted in a sense of Minnesota—and the Twin Cities specifically—as a place with a lengthy history of GLBT people and movements. Foregrounding “queer” identities, the project questions the narrative of forward progress that so often adheres to GLBT history, committing itself to a diverse array of voices and understandings of queer Twin Cities—past, present, and future.

■ A new book from South Dakota Historical Society Press describes a lesser-known period of Sitting Bull’s life: his 22-month captivity at Fort Randall, just south of the Missouri River in present-day South Dakota. Dennis C. Pope’s *Sitting Bull: Prisoner of War* (Pierre, 2010, 187 p., paper, \$16.95) recounts this interim between the leader’s surrender with his followers to the U.S. in 1881 and their later release to live on the Standing Rock Agency. During these months, Sitting Bull conducted tribal business, met with dignitaries and visitors, and

interacted with his captors. Primary sources and extensive quotes from a *St. Paul Pioneer Press* reporter who followed the story capture the day-to-day details and flesh out this time in the Hunkpapa leader’s life.

■ Before there were borders, the Indian people of the Upper Great Lakes region lived for millennia in the vast region now split between the United States and Canada. Phil Bellfy’s *Three Fires Unity: The Anishnaabeg of the Lake Huron Borderlands* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011, 203 p., cloth, \$35.00) chronicles the history up to the present of the people that explorers and colonizers have called by many names (including Ojibway). From first contact with Europeans in the 1600s, the Anishnaabeg have negotiated with and struggled against a series of empires and emerging nation-states, surviving and thriving over four centuries in a contested area. Informed by borderland theory and drawing on cultural, social, and political aspects of their transnational existence, Bellfy’s work shows how shifting European politics and the creation of the international border affected and continues to affect these native people into the twenty-first century.

■ Back in print as a paperback, Mark Wyman’s *The Wisconsin Frontier* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011, 336 p., paper, \$21.95) relates the history of the Badger State from Nicolet’s landing at Green Bay in 1634 through the end of the nineteenth century, when native son Frederick Jackson Turner proclaimed the end of the frontier. A readable popular history, the book lacks annotation but supplies a chapter-by-chapter list of sources, grouped thematically. Not surprisingly, regional readers will find many of the subjects of Minnesota history—first contact with Europeans, voyageurs, lumberjacks, settler-Indian relations, ethnic diversity—in the earlier settlement and development of Wisconsin. *The Wisconsin Frontier* provides an accessible overview of its period.

## MINNESOTA HISTORY

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