

manufacturing groups like metalwork. The contribution of the agricultural sector also receives well-deserved attention. Political events in this populous heartland region have followed a complex course. Progressive and liberal tendencies were and are offset by an underlying conservatism, and economic upturns and downswings have competed with ethnocultural ties in election issues at both the local and state level. Information on twentieth-century Marathon County is certainly abundant, but its presentation could be improved. It is difficult to understand why more attention has been directed to the economy and to the earlier years of this century. But more disturbing than the lopsided treatment is the dense style. The authors seem reluctant to depart far from their primary and secondary sources. Further refinement of evidence would make for easier reading, especially for a general audience. The book is more likely aimed at eager Marathon residents. Doubtless that small band of academics who seem to make a career out of knowing all about Wisconsin will also peruse this and the Racine volume, but few others will take the time to delve into the nitty-gritty of local history. These bicentennial books are certainly worthy of note, but they will have limited impact.

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*A Kentucky Sampler: Essays from The Filson Club History Quarterly, 1926-1976.* Edited by Lowell Harrison and Nelson L. Dawson. (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1977. Pp. 446. Notes, map, illustrations. \$12.50.)

A private society in Louisville dedicated to the collection of Kentucky history, the Filson Club has been in existence for nearly one hundred years and its journal, the *Filson Club History Quarterly*, for slightly more than fifty years. To commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the *Quarterly*, Lowell Harrison, professor of history at Western Kentucky University, and Nelson L. Dawson, editor of the *Quarterly*, present twenty-eight articles from the approximately eight hundred published since 1926. Striving for chronological balance and topical diversity, the editors have divided Kentucky's history into five periods: the pioneer era, the antebellum years, the Civil War, the late nineteenth century, and the twentieth century. From four to seven essays comprise each period.

Predictably some articles are better than others. Particularly impressive are Thomas D. Clark's "The Slavery Back-

ground of Foster's *My Old Kentucky Home*," which not only puts the famous song into its historical context, but also speculates about specific influences on the songwriter himself; Nancy D. Baird's scholarly analysis of the impact of cholera on antebellum Kentucky; Nicholas C. Burckel's summary of William Goebel and railroad regulation; and Robert J. Leupold's study of the impact of the Works Progress Administration on the gubernatorial campaign of 1935. Likewise of special note are Charles G. Talbert's account of the British and Indian War of 1781-1783; Lowell Harrison's summary of Cassius Clay and the *True American*; Louis Hartz' study of John Mashall Harlan's pre-Supreme Court years; and Joseph F. Wall's revisionist interpretation of Henry Watterson and the presidential election of 1876.

Other articles concern Indian place names, an early history of Bullitt's Lick, the notorious Harpes, the code duello, antebellum milksickness, General James Taylor and the beginnings of Newport, the Indiana-Ohio raid of John Hunt Morgan, Quantrill's bushwhackers, Louisville during the first year of the Civil War, Civil War Shakers, Frank Wolford, the Louisville and Nashville Railroad during the Civil War, some background of constitutional revision in 1890-1891, Louisville's labor disturbance of 1877, Stoney Point, the BancoKentucky story, the night riders of 1907, best selling women authors, Paul Sawyer, and folklore.

Mostly anecdotal rather than broadly interpretative in nature, these essays will appeal more to historical buffs than scholars—eleven of the articles were initially presented as after-dinner papers to the Filson Club. In their introduction the editors note that for the first three years of its existence the *Quarterly* enjoyed an editorial board, an institution inexplicably abandoned in 1929. Since most academic institutions only reward faculty for articles published in refereed journals, the *Quarterly* would be well-advised to revive its editorial board. So doing, its centennial anthology will be of even higher quality.

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*An Emerging Entertainment: The Drama of the American People to 1828.* By Walter J. Meserve. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977. Pp. x, 342. Notes, selected bibliography, indexes. \$17.50.)

Unfortunately, few scholars have shown much interest in American drama prior to World War I. For all too many stu-