

commitment only to themselves and their drive to create" (p. 27). Postle has, in this work, clearly placed the Overbecks in the company of legendary American art potters.

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This Land of Ours: The Acquisition and Disposition of the Public Domain. Papers presented at an Indiana American Revolution Bicentennial Symposium, April 29, 30, 1978. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1978. Pp. vii, 126. Notes, illustrations. Paperbound, \$3.00.)

Compared to most American bicentennial symposia, the 1978 Indiana Symposium was outstanding. It attracted a distinguished slate of scholars who offered fresh insights and interpretations on the prosaic subject of public land history in the new nation. The result is this slim but valuable addition to the literature of midwestern frontier history. The five panelists were Hildegard Binder Johnson, the leading landscape geographer in America; Paul W. Gates, the nestor of land historians; frontier specialist and ethnohistorian, Dwight C. Smith; and two younger institutional scholars of the Old Northwest, Malcolm Rohrbough, an expert on the General Land Office, and Reginald Horsman, a long-time student of Indian-white relations. Although the presentations were prepared for a general audience, frontier and land specialists will also find the book valuable.

The essays are arranged from the general to the specific—from the land itself to the political impact of land policy. In the opening essay, "Perceptions and Illustrations of the American Landscape in the Ohio Valley and the Midwest," Johnson expands on a theme developed in her recent book, *Order Upon the Land* (1976), that modern students of the frontier can employ the technique of "visual thinking" to study pictures, maps, and even the rectangular land survey patterns in order to learn how early Americans perceived their environment. To buttress her thesis that pictorial evidence is a valuable complement to oral history, Johnson offers some twenty-nine illustrations, including a land survey map, a county atlas, and paintings and prints by George Caleb Bingham, Carl Bodmer, John James Audubon, George Henry Durrie and others. Farmstead sketches in county atlases, for example, are described as "the Middle West's peculiar pictorial contribution to the documentation of rural settlement, line-mindedness, and pride of property" (p.33).

How the farmers obtained their prideful property is Rohrbough's theme in "The Land Office Business in Indiana, 1800-1840." Indiana was the laboratory for testing early public land policy, Rohrbough explains, and William Henry Harrison was the chief designer. Readers acquainted with the author's *Land Office Business* (1968) will find the Indiana story familiar, but the retelling is deft and concise, and Rohrbough's knack for turning an apt phrase is evident. There are indications that Rohrbough had softened his critical 1968 assessment of government land policy and the adverse impact of land speculation. Here readers are told, in reference to the credit system of 1800-1820, that the government was an "understanding, generous and sympathetic landlord," "loose and tolerant" of Indiana's "incipient capitalists" who "flouted" basic honesty to obtain land and gain "economic independence and a world generally free from want and care for the future" (pp. 47, 55, 56).

Horsman's highly interpretive historiographical essay, "Changing Images of the Public Domain," is alone worth the price of the book. Gates' work is discussed with particular subtlety and insight. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for Horsman's interpretation of Frederick Jackson Turner, who is portrayed—solely on the basis of the 1893 frontier essay—as an apologist of the government's democratic, free land policy. In fact Turner's subsequent writings and those of his students, notably Benjamin H. Hibbard, condemned federal land policies for fostering large-scale speculation rather than small-scale farming. Even less satisfactory is Horsman's impassioned and polemical (one is tempted to say irrational) outburst against the new economic land historians, a response that resembles the reaction of some to Robert Fogel's and Stanley Engerman's *Time on the Cross*. Specifically, Horsman cites Donald Winters' and this reviewer's work on Iowa farm tenancy and large-scale speculation, respectively, as prime examples of the "dehumanizing" effects of quantitative methods and growth-oriented, neoclassical economics. "One has the feeling," the author opines in commenting on Winters' study of farm tenancy and my public approbation of it, "that if in late nineteenth-century America a good market had developed for the sale of children, and if in order to raise capital to develop their farms Iowa farmers found it necessary to sell their children, an economic historian would be found who would consider that the practice of selling children was for 'rational economic reasons'" (p. 77). Some may wonder why rather mundane analyses of land, tax titles, and mortgage instruments should elicit such an *ad hominem* re-

sponse. "If the time has come to revise the revisers" (p. 80), as Horsman contends, then by all means get on with the research task.

Equally puzzling is Dwight Smith's brief essay on the history of Indian-white land tenureship in which the author offers a startling reinterpretation of the legal charades that are euphemistically called "Indian land cession treaties." According to Smith, such arrangements were "valid instruments" to transfer Indian rights to the land, because such treaties were rooted in Anglo-Saxon law and because they were an "effective" transfer vehicle that "bridged the legal gap between the two diverse cultures and it transferred title to the land" (p. 99). Such pragmatic and circular logic is not altogether satisfying.

In the book's final contribution, Gates convincingly proves that the national government's continued ownership of extensive underdeveloped lands in Indiana and other early public land states was both unpopular and detrimental economically and especially politically. Controlling large land holdings provided the central government with a strong instrument by which to influence and even dominate the economic development policies of the states, as is the case in Alaska at the present time. Students of nineteenth-century land history can only applaud the publication of this book and lament that most bicentennial efforts did not yield such rich results.

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Indiana Historical Society Lectures, 1976-1977: The History of Education in the Middle West. By Timothy L. Smith and Donald E. Pitzer. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1978. Pp. 101. Notes. Paperbound, \$1.50.)

The History of Education in the Middle West contains two extended essays which were presented in 1976 and 1977 as part of a lecture series sponsored by the Indiana Historical Society. Although the Society should be commended for making these excellent papers available to the public, the title is inappropriate and misleading. The first essay, by Timothy L. Smith, is entitled "Uncommon Schools: Christian Colleges and Social Idealism in Midwestern America, 1820-1950"; the second, "Education in Utopia: The New Harmony Experience," was written by Donald E. Pitzer. Smith, claiming that "the religious and educational history" of Indiana and Illinois "was a microcosm of both regional and national experience" (p. 3), limits his