

A fundamental requirement of an illustrated history is quality production. *Indianapolis* meets the test. The illustrations are clearly reproduced and are well placed. The core narrative is supplemented by short, independent photo-essays, boxed quotes, and excerpted sidelights on local events.

The last section of the book revives an old tradition in local history by providing six-hundred-word sketches of thirty-eight business firms and nonprofit institutions that assisted the project as "corporate sponsors." There is no evidence that the corporate contributors influenced the body of the book, and the sketches recognize the role of private business as the major determinant of Indianapolis's growth.

Portland State University,
Portland, Oregon

Carl Abbott

Middletown Families: Fifty Years of Change and Continuity. By Theodore Caplow. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982. Pp. ix, 436. Tables, illustrations, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$16.95.)

In 1924 Muncie, Indiana, became the site for an extraordinary sociological research project. Robert and Helen Lynd undertook the first comprehensive description of the life of a contemporary American community, later published as *Middletown*. In the midst of the Great Depression the Lynds took a second look at Muncie in *Middletown in Transition*, a pioneering measurement of social change. Since the mid-1970s scholars from the University of Virginia, Brigham Young University, and elsewhere, calling their project Middletown III, have reexamined Muncie using their own questions as well as the Lynds's to assess continuity and change after a half century. No other American community has been so carefully scrutinized over so long a time as Muncie, and none has contributed more to an understanding of how ordinary people live.

Middletown Families, the first of several planned Middletown III volumes, presents a picture of general social stability and progress. Since 1924 Muncie has doubled in size, acquiring more young people (due to its growing state university) and blacks, but, the authors conclude, it has remained recognizably the same community. Working class-business class distinctions, which the Lynds found pronounced, are reported to have largely disappeared as economic conditions improved. The federal government's expanding presence since the 1930s assisted efforts by all groups to achieve traditional family goals

such as home ownership, higher education, and care for the aged. Sex role distinctions have softened, affecting adults and the treatment of children. The percentage of women employed outside the home has doubled, although they still bear the principal burden of housework. Parent-child conflict appears no greater and kinship ties seem stronger than in the Lynds's time. Despite talk of sexual revolution, Middletown III questions its extent. Premarital sexual experience is common but limited and unconventional relationships rare. The quality of marriage has improved substantially in Muncie during the past half century, Middletown III concludes. Family life is happy and fulfilling for most, while the acceptability of divorce and remarriage offers hope to the exceptions.

This return to Middletown may disappoint some readers. Middletown III lacks the Lynds's rich descriptive detail and their tight focus on Muncie. It attempts to answer several questions with information from other communities rather than obtaining fresh data about Muncie. At least one chapter, a discussion of holidays, relates to neither Muncie nor any other specific community. The Lynds's great achievement was to present a full, rounded portrait of one community, eschewing national generalizations. The Middletown III project will enhance its already considerable contribution if its remaining volumes more closely follow their remarkable example.

University of Akron,
Akron, Ohio

David E. Kyvig

On the Illinois Frontier: Dr. Hiram Rutherford, 1840-1848.

Edited by Willene Hendrick and George Hendrick. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981. Pp. xxv, 155. Notes, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$19.95.)

Hiram Rutherford, a mid-nineteenth-century Illinois physician, gained prominence as an abolitionist rather than as a doctor. He is best remembered as a participant in the Matson slave case, a controversial trial in which Abraham Lincoln defended a slaveowner. Editors Willene Hendrick and George Hendrick present in this slender volume Rutherford's letters and writings as well as their own interpretation of his role in the Matson slave case. The editors' intention is not to present a complete biography of Rutherford, but to illustrate "vivid and illuminating fragments of his life and times in Illinois" (p. 143).

On the Illinois Frontier is divided into three sections. The first contains all of Rutherford's extant correspondence from