

errors, the index is sufficient, the binding and typography are handsome, and the footnotes and bibliographic essays are a guided tour through the current source materials of Indiana political history.

Aficionados of Indiana history or political biography will devour this book from cover to cover; for others it will serve as reserved reading to supplement textbooks in Indiana history courses or as a useful library reference work.

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Water Runs Downhill: A History of the Indianapolis Water Company and Other Centenarians. By Marjie Gates Giffin. (Indianapolis: Privately printed, 1981. Pp. 251. Illustrations, bibliography, index. Clothbound, \$9.95; paperbound, \$5.95.)

A good history of the Indianapolis Water Company would be extremely valuable to students of the city's past. Little now exists on the subject, and what does is scattered, fragmentary, and dated. Such a pioneering work would require the labor of several years. *Water Runs Downhill* is not that work. Most of the familiar histories of Indianapolis appear in the bibliography, along with newspaper items, magazine articles, a few company pamphlets, and numerous interviews with past and present employees. Research for this book thus entailed no small effort, but the result, nonetheless, is not serious history. There are no maps or charts or footnotes. The photographs are often pointless. The number of employees at any time in the company's history is never stated, nor is the company the true spine of the book. Rather, the narrative follows the lives of the managers and owners with the emphasis as much on their careers outside as within the firm.

The writer, the wife of the company's director of governmental affairs, was assured that the project was "not intended as a routine exercise in corporate goodwill," and she asserts that the book stands as a "candid account" (p. 5). In the Preface, the chairman of the board expresses the hope that although "judgments tend to be less critical of the living," the reader "will not misinterpret . . . favorable comments" about company officials (p. 3). Here the board chairman is the better guide, for the work is a litany of all that is of good report of company officials since its founding. This is not always easy:

strenuous effort and psychological obtuseness are required to conclude that Clarence Geist, owner of the water company from 1912 to 1938, a boorish, unlovable rogue, was down deep an engaging softy.

Apparently the author was under serious time constraints, which would explain certain problems of style. There is persistent resort to cliché: noses are put to grindstones, occasions are momentous, fate smiles, ears are bent, pride is pointed to, minds are boggled, laurels are rested on, and, inevitably, waters are muddied and go over dams. Locutions of uncertainty alternate with locutions of emphatic assertion; that is, too often things are "reputedly," "reportedly," "must have been," "maybe," "perhaps," "apparently," or they are "truly," "in truth," "indeed," "in fact," "certainly," "even," "undoubtedly," and "needless to say." Moreover, a breezy style and efforts at fine writing produce some peculiarities: Crown Hill Cemetery, once a popular picnic spot accessible by trolley and canal boat, is the "tombstone terminal" (p. 42). Describing the city's celebration of the new century, the author allows that "those were fun times, for sure" (p. 48). Thomas A. Morris, a civil engineer with a lifelong interest in railroads (the "iron horse," p. 34), is a man who "ultimately carved his name along the most progressive tracks of the times" (p. 35).

While the primary audience for this work is neither the serious student nor the general reader but the relatives, friends, and employees of the management, the book is often interesting. A story involving a Geist or the Murchison brothers of Texas has its fascination. More important, at times the book suggests one of the realities of a privately owned public utility—or of any big business—the necessarily close relationships between private and public loci of power and influence. The text contains hints of the network of elite leadership in the city and the realization that political ability in a manager is as useful to a firm as business acumen. Finally, the book tells more than was previously known about an important Indianapolis institution.

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Town on the Ridge: A History of Munster, Indiana. By Lance Trusty. (Hammond: Regional Studies Institute, Purdue University Calumet, 1982. Pp. 71. Illustrations, maps, appendix, bibliography, index. \$5.00.)

In anticipation of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the town of Munster's incorporation (1907), Lance Trusty has written a