

town-boy-made-good. To suggest that Fournier's accomplishments are singular achievements does the artist a disservice and raises him to a position that he cannot maintain. In fact, his experiences are not terribly different from those of his two friends from Paris days, Adolph Shulz and Adam Emory Albright, with whom he entered the Indiana scene of the 1920s.

Not only was Fournier not an isolated phenomenon, in many ways he was the stereotypical midwestern artist of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. His remarkable metamorphosis from advertising drudge to brilliant painter was repeated by many regional artists. Although this pattern of success satisfies a nostalgic notion of a rustic, isolated, unsophisticated Midwest, it is proving to be a myth. In Minneapolis, Indianapolis, and every other city and sizeable town, there appears in the 1880s a core group of art enthusiasts whose zealous purpose was to bring culture to the prairie. Their art societies led to art exhibitions, art schools, art collecting, and art museums in short order. Local artists were the direct beneficiaries of this new interest. Fournier, like T. C. Steele and William Merritt Chase before him, counted on this local patronage to finance their study abroad, and many artists returned home to its reembrace. As a result of such patronage the possibility of remaining close to home and painting familiar scenes was open to the midwestern artists for the first time.

Coen's study of Fournier adds an intriguing chapter to the story of this midwestern artistic context. For the artist himself, it is the first rather than the last word.

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Great River: An Environmental History of the Upper Mississippi, 1890-1950. By Philip V. Scarpino. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1985. Pp. viii, 219. Notes, map, table, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$24.00.)

In this fine work on the environmental history of the upper Mississippi River from 1890 to 1950, Philip V. Scarpino clearly dispels the widely held opinion that environmental issues are post-World War II phenomena. The author describes in detail in this volume how man-made changes prior to the war radically altered the environment of the area and produced articulate spokespersons and groups who advocated policies and programs that affected their interests.

The rapid urbanization and industrialization of the upper Mississippi River valley created the need to adapt the river to the changing needs of the inhabitants of the area. The decline of the white pine industry cleared the way for the development of electric power through the construction of a hydroelectric plant at Keokuk, Iowa. This project, which provided electric power for a broad area

including St. Louis, Missouri, also backed the river up nearly sixty-five miles and resulted in a number of unanticipated consequences. These consequences led to public controversies over the failure of the dam to provide power at cheaper rates, the interpretation of the meaning of conservation, and the growing concern of scientists over the impact of the dam on the river's aquatic habitat. Scarpino also describes the formation of the button industry, which led to studies by the Bureau of Fisheries that identified the impact of modernization on the river.

The degradation of the environment of the upper Mississippi River led to the founding of the Izaak Walton League, which was the leading force in establishing the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge and the major proponent of legislation to protect the river environment. The rapid expansion of this organization and its widespread influence was due to the dynamic leadership of Will Dilg whose public relations campaigns resulted in improving water quality and an expanding membership. The Izaak Walton League and the Bureau of Fisheries became the major proponents of preserving the water quality and aquatic habitat of the river in the face of extensive drainage of land and increasing pollution of the river.

By 1930 twenty-six locks had been constructed on the river to improve navigation. An unanticipated consequence of these locks was the formation of pools which became collectors of sewage and erosion from upriver. The response of the cities that produced the pollution depended on their proximity to the stench of the pools.

Scarpino's thoroughly researched volume is a welcome addition to the slim list of books on the upper Mississippi River region in the period after the Civil War. It is especially valuable because its insights from the past will help readers both to understand current environmental issues more clearly and to identify issues that are of significant importance to the quality of life on the upper Mississippi.

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American Choices: Social Dilemmas and Public Policy since 1960.

Edited by Robert H. Bremner, Gary W. Reichard, and Richard J. Hopkins. (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1986. Pp. xiv, 272. Notes, tables, illustration, index. \$30.00.)

Collections of essays typically face four potential problems: lack of originality, lack of focus, unevenness, and confusion over audience. Too many of these compendia include essays that have been "published elsewhere"; given modern copying techniques, such works are essentially redundant no matter how creatively edited. *Festschriften* in particular share the second problem; they are held