

now would appear to be a time when immigration historians could offer guidance or at least perspective on a current problem of major importance. *The Transplanted* reflects the fact that we historians fix our eyes firmly on the past, glorying in the accuracy of our hindsight and avoiding involvement in the problems of the present.

Bodnar has done an effective job in dealing with the problems that he has identified and therefore accomplishes what he set out to do. *The Transplanted* is not, however, a comprehensive history of immigration to the United States; the title is misleading. It is a history of European immigration up to the 1920s, and as such, it is effective and thorough.

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Humbert S. Nelli

Plains Woman: The Diary of Martha Farnsworth, 1882–1922. Edited by Marlene Springer and Haskell Springer. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986. Pp. xxv, 322. Illustrations, notes, map, index. \$27.50.)

If Martha Farnsworth was typical of the women living on the Kansas prairie in the latter part of the nineteenth century, then there were a lot of very spirited women in mid-America. The fact that she kept such an informative and literate diary for forty years, however, makes Farnsworth atypical.

Farnsworth was born in Iowa, but moved to Kansas at age five. She began her diary in 1882 at age fifteen and continued it until two years before her death in 1924. We follow her through her disastrous first marriage, the death of her only child at age five months, and the death of her abusive, consumptive husband. Blessed with a firm religious background that gave her the inner strength to cope with her afflictions, Martha entered a second marriage with Fred Farnsworth that lasted twenty-nine years. During these happy years she was active in women's clubs, politics, and the long struggle for women's suffrage. Never able to have more children, Martha acted as a surrogate mother for years, and conducted a Sunday School class for boys that was especially rewarding for both her and her husband.

The diary provides a chronology of events, including the coming of the telephone, the electric light, indoor plumbing, the talking motion picture, the airplane, and the automobile, along with the San Francisco earthquake and her association with many political and social figures of the day.

Editors Marlene Springer and Haskell Springer are to be commended for their selection of entries from the four thousand pages of Martha Farnsworth's original sixteen handwritten volumes. Only when events were repetitious or fragmentary do they give a brief summary. The Springers' introduction to the diary is a superb explanatory essay that complements Martha's writing. At the end of

the diary is an epilogue explaining briefly the last two years of Martha's life, which, as the editors so poignantly say, "leaves one with a regrettable sense of incompleteness." Although that is true, this reader felt a great sense of pride in sharing the delightful first-person account of the life of one remarkable woman.

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Shirley S. McCord

Those Days: An American Album. By Richard Critchfield. (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1986. Pp. x, 419. Illustrations. \$19.95.)

This extremely well-written book describes the history of the author's family in Iowa and North Dakota from 1880 to 1940. It is a captivating blend of historical documents and a novelist's vision. The dust jacket blurbs by Morley Safer—"a jewel of a book"—and William Bundy—"a marvelous family epic"—seem incongruous due to their careers in television and foreign affairs, but this reviewer must repeat their high praise. Few words can express the powerful feelings that spring forth from the flat pages of print. The joys and sorrow, the tears and laughter, all these emotions entangle the reader in a story that begins with a wedding in 1913.

The author, a successful journalist and novelist, decided to compose his family history despite sibling assurances that the family was not significant. Rather, Critchfield wrote, "it was their ordinariness that made them matter" (p. 413). This is not to say that two generations of country and small-town doctors represent the typical Iowan or North Dakotan. Instead, the author depicts his family as an organic structure that grew and withered depending on the prompts and pressures; weddings, children, dreams, tragedies, success, failure, rapid changes in knowledge and technology, and the strengths and weaknesses of saints and sinners. While their occupations may have made the main characters out of the ordinary, their experiences encompassed the ordinary.

The story is a great success, and the author's technique of interspersing historical sources—diaries, letters, photographs, and interviews (taped and stenographic)—with "you are there" dialogues and vivid descriptions make this a powerful book. The reader rejoices with the characters when they celebrate and cry as the author details his father's unsuccessful battle with alcohol and heartbreaking affair with a young girl. Life was not easy in a small North Dakota town during the Depression, and for this family the results were painful but remembered.

The Indiana connections are few; a long Quaker tradition, the move from Indiana to Iowa in 1858, an automobile accident in Muncie in 1935, and the popular book *Alice of Old Vincennes*. It is possible, however, to make many comparisons to the rural way of life in Indiana during the late nineteenth and early twentieth cen-