family-oriented history make it possible for people throughout Indiana to study their own counties' early period in Knox County history and decide how to celebrate the bicentennial. *Knox County History* is available from the Vincennes Historical and Antiquarian Society, P.O. Box 487, Vincennes, Ind. 47591.

ROYAL PURCELL reviewed *Vincennes: A Pictorial History* in the September, 1989, issue of the *Indiana Magazine of History*.

*Socialism in the Heartland: The Midwestern Experience, 1900–1925.*


This fine collection of essays analyzes the growth and ultimate failure of the socialist movement in one state (Indiana), five cities (Milwaukee; Marion, Indiana; Flint, Michigan; Dayton, Ohio; and Minneapolis), and one union (District 12, Illinois United Mine Workers of America). The editor's introduction is a valuable summary of the historiography of the subject and guide to the significance of each of the essays.

In “The Socialist Party in Indiana, 1900–1925,” James R. Simmons notes the Socialist party's electoral successes in a score of Hoosier small and midsize towns and cities and its critical failure to attract support in the rural areas and larger cities of the state. In those cities where the party had a brief tenure of power, the limitations on home rule, noted in several of the essays, narrowly defined the areas in which socialist reforms might be carried out. Simmons recounts the impact of World War I's “loyalty” frenzy and the postwar reactionary cycle on the Indiana Socialist party and raises the provocative possibility, also raised in other essays, that during the 1920s the enfeebled party lost members to the rising Ku Klux Klan, which was nowhere stronger than in Indiana with its own agenda of “reform.”

The essays on specific midwestern cities reveal certain common denominators, among them the home rule problem, the impact of World War I, and the postwar splintering of the party, but each city had its peculiar socialist experience. In “Casting a Wide Net: The Milwaukee Movement to 1920,” Sally Miller attributes the growth of the party in the Cream City to the “twin pillars” of organized labor and the large German community. The crumbling of those pillars, resulting from labor's growing disaffection during the war and changes in the city's demography, tore irreparable holes in the party's “wide net,” but its continuing vitality was seen in the elections and re-elections of Daniel Hoan and Frank Zeidler. Socialist strength among workers was not translated into success-
ful reform in Marion, Indiana, but Errol Wayne Stevens ("The Socialist Party in Marion, Indiana") argues persuasively that the party survived the disastrous impact of World War I, entered the postwar period as strong as it had been before the war, and then withered in the shifting atmosphere of "Normalcy," in which the "110% Americanism" of the American Legion combined with the appeal of the Ku Klux Klan to destroy the party.

In "Restoring Consensus in Flint, Michigan: The Socialist Party in Municipal Politics, 1910–1912," Richard W. Judd credits the Socialist party mayor and two city councilmen with introducing a few of the party's "immediate reforms" following its electoral successes in 1910. Those successes only hardened the determination of Flint's power structure to restore the community's "consensus" by, among other tactics, threatening the job security of workers who voted the Socialist ticket and by raising the specter of industrial relocation. The variety of Socialist party experiences at the local level is underscored in John T. Walker's essay, "The Dayton Socialists and World War I: Surviving the White Terror," in which Walker describes the ways Dayton Socialists carefully phrased their antiwar sentiments and goals without violating the savage federal Espionage and Sedition Acts (and their state and local complements), which spelled ruin for the party and its leaders elsewhere. (Walker mistakenly declares that Eugene V. Debs was convicted of "treason.") Having weathered the storm of the "White Terror" of wartime suppression and the postwar Red Scare, the party failed during the 1920s to respond effectively to the sometimes brutal attacks of the American Legion and the inroads of the Ku Klux Klan. The success of the Socialist party in identifying itself with the mainstream reform impulses of the Progressive era is the theme of David Paul Nord's "Hothouse Socialism: Minneapolis, 1910–1925." The "hothouse" for socialism in Minneapolis was the political environment created by the city's long and bitter struggles over utilities regulation or ownership and management's drive for the open shop, the latter of which pitted the Minneapolis Citizen's Alliance against organized labor, led by the International Association of Machinists. For a time the Socialist party forged a successful alliance with reform and organized labor forces, capable of electing Thomas Van Lear as the Socialist mayor in 1916. As elsewhere, however, World War I damaged the alliance, but the socialists in Minneapolis retained sufficient vitality in the postwar years to join with other liberal and reform forces to help shape the city's solutions to its changing urban problems.

John H. M. Laslett's study of the Illinois mine workers ("Swan Song or New Social Movement? Socialism and Illinois District 12, United Mine Workers of America, 1919–1926") concludes that the decline of the Socialist party and radicalism in the state were not coterminous and that the vitality of radicalism could be found
well into the 1920s in movements such as the cooperative movement.

Taken altogether, these essays demonstrate that the socialist experience in America in the first quarter of the century was a complex and varied one and that further studies of the kind will no doubt prove the inadequacy of any single, overarching explana-
tion for the decline of the Socialist party.

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_Threshing in the Midwest, 1820–1940: A Study of Traditional Cultu-
re and Technological Change._ By J. Sanford Rikoon. (Bloom-

Technological change in American agriculture has long been the domain of economic historians who have sought to understand patterns of diffusion and adoption of innovations and to explain the effect of the adoption of a new technology on agricultural productivity. Complementing these studies have been works by historians of technology that have examined the internal development of particular technological systems.

J. Sanford Rikoon’s _Threshing in the Midwest, 1820–1940_ offers a different portrait of technological change in the rural Midwest. Approaching his topic from the perspectives of folklife and rural sociology, Rikoon studies how rural midwestern society and culture responded to changing technologies. As he states:

> Actual on-farm practices are emphasized over mechanical details and technological designs because of an assumption that the evolution of any new technology, whether hand-tool or machine, is not necessarily synonymous with either its use or its method of employment. . . . But people adapt as well as adopt. They alter their lifestyles before, during, and after adoption of a new device (p. xi).

Parenthetically, the only factual errors which were noted in the book were in rather minor details of technical description.

More than many occupational practices on the farm, threshing was charged with sociocultural meaning to rural midwesterners. “People don’t farm like they used to,” Rikoon quotes an Ohio farmer (p. x), and “they don’t thresh together anymore.” _Threshing in the Midwest_, however, refutes the popularly held belief that it was mechanization _per se_ that transformed traditional, cooperative farm communities into individualistic agribusiness enterprises. Manual threshing techniques—flailing or horse treading—practiced by individual farm families during the first half of the nineteenth century required little inter-farm cooperation. The increasingly complex mechanization of the threshing process, the cost of equipment, and