

The technological history that is at the core of this book is enriched by the author's work with artifactual evidence, including the pair's primitive wind tunnel, flying reproductions of their early gliders and first airplane, and careful study of Orville Wright's own recreations of his early airplanes. Crouch, affiliated with the National Museum of American History, provides a fascinating aside on the provenance of an American icon, the Wright airplane exhibited at the Smithsonian Institution.

The Bishop's Boys is most successful when looking at Orville and Wilbur not just as aviation pioneers but also as people. Crouch productively mines their personal papers, as well as an unpublished study by a clinical psychologist on the Wright family. Milton Wright, the patriarch of the family and a United Brethren bishop, provided a powerful influence on his children. For instance, Milton's experiences in schismatic church politics were reflected in the extended patent litigation that interrupted the Wright brothers' flying careers. Crouch also provides new insight into how the sibling relationship between Wilbur and Orville molded their working relationship.

The Wright family home in Dayton, Ohio, provided a haven for the brothers throughout their lives. *The Bishop's Boys* presents the Wright brothers in the context of their family and the West Dayton neighborhood in which they grew up. Although other writers have puzzled over these enigmatic figures, Crouch tells a much simpler but richer story of the two ordinary, unassuming midwesterners who taught human beings to fly.

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The Middle West: Its Meaning in American Culture. By James R. Shortridge. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989. Pp. xiv, 201. Maps, illustrations, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$25.00.)

Using images of the Midwest from popular magazines from 1820 to the present, James R. Shortridge explains not only where the Midwest is but also what composes it. Shortridge surprisingly discovered that originally the concept Midwest was not a mediation between East and West, but between Northwest and Southwest. The term originated in the 1880s and at first included only Kansas and Nebraska. By 1912, however, the term had shifted to the more common definition of the states of the Northwest Territory (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota) and states more westward, including Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, and, finally, the original Midwest states of Nebraska and Kansas. Booth Tarkington of Indianapolis was crit-

ical in enlarging the locational definition of the Midwest, arguing that this twelve-state area mediated between the old industrial East and the youthful West. The Midwest, he maintained, was pastoral, mature, and the quintessence of things American because its people were more native-born and egalitarian than in eastern cities.

The apogee of the positive image of the Midwest occurred by 1920, but thereafter it quickly declined and reached its nadir by 1950. According to Shortridge, two events caused the decline of the image of the Midwest: the publication of *Main Street* by Sinclair Lewis and the agricultural depression of the 1920s. Lewis depicted the Midwest as conformist and materialistic, while the depression revealed the economic weakness of farmers. These attitudes were not overcome until the 1960s, when negative views of American cities (associated more with the East and West despite the large Midwest cities of the Great Lakes) made the Midwest (rural in image if not in fact) more attractive. Interestingly, the nostalgia for the Midwest shifted its geographical center back to Kansas and Nebraska because they were mostly rural. In addition, many added Oklahoma to the Midwest and excluded Ohio, at least as based on Shortridge's study of the mental maps of American college students. Indiana remained part of the Midwest, although its southern half was considered to be on the fringe because of its Upland South culture. College students imagined the Midwest to be rooted in place and genuine rather than superficial in personality, both part of the pastoral tradition.

Shortridge has created an intriguing overview of the history of the idea of the Midwest in American culture. Perhaps he will stimulate more regional (rather than only state) study of the American heartland. There is still need for a general history or historical geography of the Midwest that is as broadly conceived as Shortridge's definition.

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The Genesis of Missouri: From Wilderness Outpost to Statehood.

By William E. Foley. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989. Pp. x, 367. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Clothbound, \$32.00; paperbound, \$17.95.)

William E. Foley's work on the early history of Missouri is an expanded version of the volume he wrote in 1971 for the multi-volume *Missouri Sesquicentennial History*. As the subtitle indicates, the book covers the period from the earliest French explora-