

molding and shaping German-American life in Indianapolis, all of which culminated in the building of Das Deutsche Haus. He focuses on what he labels "the best element" (p. 3)—the idealists or freethinkers of 1848—and excludes from his account any coverage of the lower social classes and the vibrant religious life of the Indianapolis German community.

The *Festschrift* is extremely valuable to anyone interested in the history of late nineteenth-century Indianapolis. The text provides descriptions of "lost Indianapolis," lists of members and officers of local *vereins*, and an "historical advertising section" profiling the German-American business sector of the city for 1898. The volume is illustrated with wonderful photographs of Das Deutsche Haus and other key German cultural structures. This new edition could have been enhanced, however, by a photographic reproduction of the original text.

The sponsors of this reprint are to be commended for preserving this valuable historical record of Indianapolis and its people. When used in conjunction with Jacob Piatt Dunn's *Greater Indianapolis* (1910) and George Probst's more recent *Germans in Indianapolis* (1951; reprinted 1989), the reader can obtain a comprehensive view of the city's German-American community in the late nineteenth century. It is hoped that as we approach the 175th anniversary of the city's founding other organizations will follow this example and make additional out-of-print historical materials available to the public.

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*For Defense of Our Country: Echoes of Jefferson Proving Ground.*

By Sue Baker. (Greenfield, Ind.: the author, 1990. Pp. xvi, 139. Maps, illustrations, bibliography. \$14.95. Order from Triad, 730 Oak Boulevard, Greenfield, IN 46140.)

On December 6, 1940, the United States War Department announced its selection for the site of a 55,000-acre army ordnance testing facility. The new base's southern boundary was to be four miles north of Madison, Indiana, with the rest of the facility stretching north through portions of Jefferson, Jennings, and Ripley counties. As many as 5,000 construction workers built 120 buildings, miles of roads and rail lines, observation bunkers, and four runways. As construction continued, initial munitions testing began only 155 days after the site selection was disclosed.

Sue Baker, a longtime professional genealogist, not only chronicles the history of Jefferson Proving Ground but also provides a substantial amount of information about the people who lived on the land absorbed by the facility. The base area had been

a place of farms and crossroad villages, where churches, schools, and general stores had served as the focal points of community interaction. By 1940 many families had been established on the land for a century. The new facility abruptly forced some 2,000 people off their ancestral lands and caused some 3,500 of the residents' forebears in local cemeteries to be disinterred and moved.

The strength of the book is in its meticulous collection of data on the people and institutions of the area: hundreds of individuals are mentioned by name; numerous pioneer, family, and Civil War anecdotes are related; and several churches and schools are described.

The three major weaknesses of the work are the author's failure to provide adequate broader contexts for her data, to draw generalizations from her facts that would make them more useful and informative, and to provide enough information about Jefferson Proving Grounds. Despite pages of detail on churches, schools, and individuals the reader does not get a good sense of what life was like in the 1930s or why the forced exodus was so traumatic. Other Hoosier civilian displacements are mentioned, but no comparisons or other historical contexts are provided. The World War II experience of the base is covered in barely six pages, fewer pages than are spent on local Civil War anecdotes. Very basic information, such as how many civilian and military personnel worked at the base, is omitted. No references to any primary or secondary military sources are found in the bibliography.

Readers interested in Jefferson Proving Ground or the World War II domestic history of Indiana will be disappointed by this book. Those with local or genealogical interests in Jefferson, Jennings, or Ripley counties will find interesting information.

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*Interstate: A History of Interstate Public Service Rail Operations.*

By Jerry Marlette. (Polo, Ill.: Transportation Trails, 1990. Pp. 272. Maps, illustrations, appendix, tables, bibliography, index. \$48.00; \$50.00 [includes postage] if ordered directly from Jerry Marlette, 6821 Whisper Oaks Court, Indianapolis, Indiana 46214.)

During the first quarter of this century, one of the nation's most innovative interurban companies was Interstate Public Service, whose 117-mile line connected Indianapolis and Louisville, Kentucky. Jerry Marlette examines with thoroughness and insight Indiana's last traditional interurban. His narrative carries the reader through the company's trials by flood, tornado, and finan-