title implies, the authors are sympathetic to Crane, but they examine controversial matters. For instance, the book presents the contrasting views of government officials and local people concerning land acquisition by the government during the 1930s and 1940s. The account of Crane history since World War II is uncritical.

The book contains interesting primary source material and illustrations. Each chapter offers a selection of memoirs of persons associated with the depot or the center. The “Memories” sections do not provide introductory comments placing the reminiscences in their historical contexts. The memoirs and much of the text’s primary source material are derived from oral interviews conducted by the authors. Endnotes reveal that other primary sources used in the text include government documents and contemporary newspapers. The book presents a large number of appropriately illustrative, well-identified, glossy black and white photographs, but those in the final chapters are undated. The volume has a straightforward style, but it is flawed by many errors caused by inadequate editing. Nevertheless, A Good Neighbor will be welcomed by persons interested in Indiana history and in military history as well as by general readers.

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In 1850 Germans accounted for over half of the foreign-born population in Indiana. Since German Americans have had a significant impact on Hoosier history and culture, the publication of this collection of Hoosier German-American texts for the general reader fits in well with the Indiana Historical Society’s current Ethnic History Project. The 337 texts, mainly short narratives, were assembled from oral interviews, written accounts of around seventy contributors, and printed sources, including German- and English-language newspapers and local and family histories. The source of each item is identified in brief endnotes to the collection. Most of the texts are in English, though some are reported in German-American dialect, and a few are reported in both German and English versions.

In his introductory note to the reader, Eberhard Reichmann points out that “the criteria for inclusion of texts were fairly logical: There had to be a Hoosier German-American connection in
the plot, the character(s), and/or the narrator. Items had to reflect—and with a certain charm or punch—how life was experienced and perceived . . . It stands to reason that many items, especially those dealing with language, are closely tied to the German-American experience; others, less parochial, are simply all-Hoosier, all-American, all-human" (p. vii). It is true that many of these texts are shared by other ethnic groups throughout the United States, but as they are presented here, most have a Hoosier German flavor.

Arranged under twenty-seven headings, the selections include, among other things, tales of coming to Indiana, of place and personal naming, of pioneer preachers and priests, of witches and the devil, of other folk beliefs and customs, of children and school days, of Civil War days, and of accidents and tragedies, including "The German-American Tragedy: World War I." Along with the folk's own account of their experiences in arriving and living in Indiana, there is rich humor in these tales. For example, readers learn that one "philosopher" used to say that "his was the kind of luck that when soup was served, all he had was a fork" (p. 230) and that Franklin Vonnegut, well in his nineties, remained seated in an Indianapolis funeral home after attending services for one of his few remaining friends. When asked if he were feeling well, Vonnegut replied, "Oh, yes, I was just wondering whether it's worth the trouble to go home or not" (p. 226). Readers also learn that an Indiana University German professor never drank liquor before 5:00 p.m. When colleagues visiting his home requested drinks before that time, he looked at his pocket watch and observed that "it iz actually a bit too early for dat," but added, "What de heck, it iz alreddy pasht five o'clock in Scotland, we might as well" (p. 189).

With a too brief general introduction and without headnotes to the sections and texts, the editor allows the texts to speak for themselves. While it is not necessary to tax theory in a collection of texts intended for the general reader, brief historical and comparative headnotes to the sections and/or texts would have made the collection more meaningful and useful.


Eliza Julia (Andrews) Flower is perhaps known best as the probable agent of the estrangement between George Flower and