

The strengths of the book's essays are those characteristic of Civil War scholars who work outside of the academy, as do the authors represented in this volume: an extensive familiarity with primary sources and strong narrative writing. Despite these strengths, even the Civil War buffs who seem to be the book's intended audience may be disappointed because there is little that is new in most of these essays. And Hoosier readers may be especially disconcerted by the book's heavy emphasis on Wisconsin materials: many of the articles use few or no primary sources from the men of the 19th Indiana, and the bibliography cites few Indiana secondary or governmental sources. The authors virtually ignore the literature on common soldiers by James M. McPherson, Reid Mitchell, Earl J. Hess, Joseph T. Glatthaar, and Gerald Linderman.

There is new material in the first and last essays: Alan T. Nolan's "John Brawner's Damage Claim" and Richard H. Zeitlin's "In Peace and War." Both of these articles have tantalizing possibilities, but neither author fully develops them.

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*The Country Contributor: The Life and Times of Juliet V. Strauss.*  
By Ray E. Boomhower. (Carmel: Guild Press of Indiana, Inc., 1998. Pp. xxiv, 160. Notes, illustrations, appendices, select bibliography. \$24.95.)

When author Juliet Strauss died at her home in Rockville, Indiana, in 1918, she was well known, both in Indiana and in the nation; her "Country Contributor" column was regularly published in the Indianapolis *News*, and her column in the *Ladies Homes Journal*, "The Ideas of a Plain Country Woman," was read by approximately one million readers each month. Today she is scarcely remembered: her only book is out of print, and her role in saving the woodlands that became Turkey Run State Park is largely unknown.

Ray Boomhower, in writing a well-researched and very readable biography of this woman, rescues her memory, and the excerpts from Strauss's writings in the book's appendices give a feel for both her style and her basic convictions.

In 1863 Juliet Humphries was born in Rockville, where she lived her entire life. After her father's death when she was four, Juliet and her three siblings were reared by their mother, who provided books and a happy home, though they were poor.

At the age of seventeen Juliet married a local boy who later became the editor of the Rockville *Tribune*, and she became a full-time homemaker and mother of two daughters. In 1893, the first of the weekly columns she was to write for twenty-five years appeared in

her husband's newspaper. She discussed local events, but she also reflected on the meaning of her life, offering the viewpoint of a plain country woman who enjoyed being a homemaker and rearing her family. This continued to be her theme throughout her writing career.

In 1903 the "Country Contributor" column began to appear in the Indianapolis *News* and was immediately successful. In 1905, Edward Bok, editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*, asked her to write a regular column. A little over a year later he declared hers to be one of the most successful features the *Journal* had published. In 1908 her columns from the *Journal* appeared as a book.

In 1915, when she was at the height of her powers as a popular lecturer, author, and columnist, she became passionately interested in saving a large tract of virgin woodland where she had played as a child. Strauss contacted many people to try to avert the sale of the land to timber buyers. She was able to interest Indiana Governor Samuel Ralston, Richard Lieber, and many others, and together they persuaded the state to conserve the acreage as the Turkey Run State Park, as part of Indiana's centennial celebration.

After Strauss's death in 1918, the Women's Press Club coordinated donations for a memorial in Turkey Run State Park, and in 1922 a statue by Indianapolis sculptor Myra Richards was dedicated to Strauss's memory.

Juliet Strauss's writings were enormously popular in her time. To modern ears, her exhortations on the duty of a woman to serve her family's needs in the home and to sacrifice any ambitions of her own may seem outdated, but her appreciation of the value of the simple life, devoid of artifice, rings as true as ever. Raised in a small Hoosier community she never left, she preached to a national audience the values she had learned there. Hard work, self-sufficiency, kindness, love of family, and acceptance of one's lot in life were the virtues she recommended to others and practiced in her own life.

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*Atlas of Kentucky*. Edited by Richard Ulack, Karl Raitz, and Gyula Pauer. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998. Pp. xii, 316. Illustrations, maps, figures, tables, selected bibliography, index. \$39.95.)

All citizens in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois—especially those who are geographers, historians, state officials, and philanthropists—should note that their Ohio River neighbor, Kentucky, has produced a splendid prototype for a state reference book. This new *Atlas of Kentucky*, like its predecessor in 1977, is published in a reader-friendly rectangular shape (10 inches "north-south" by 14 inches "east-