

of late eighteenth-century Tennessee, and the key events of colonial and early national Tennessee are highlighted. Topics appearing in prominent roles include treaty negotiations between Indians and Euro-Americans, land cessions by Indians, the American Revolution, violent conflicts between Indians and settlers, land speculation and political intrigue, the development of a market economy, the transition to statehood, settlement of the western district bordering the Mississippi River, and American hegemony created by Indian removal in the 1830s. The expected characters of early Tennessee history make frequent appearances, and Finger is to be commended for bringing these people to life and demonstrating how the choices they made affected the eventual outcome and development of the region.

Although the book does not include endnotes and is meant primarily for a general and undergraduate audience, there is a helpful essay on sources at the end of each chapter. Numerous illustrations and maps add to the work's usefulness as a reference. Readers will find *Tennessee Frontiers* to be free of academic jargon yet analytically sophisticated. Students of the Tennessee region or the Old Southwest will do well to start their research with this book.

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Changing Works: Visions of a Lost Agriculture. By Douglas Harper. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001. Pp. xi, 302. Illustrations, tables, notes, references, index. \$35.00.)

Sociologist Douglas Harper has created a sensitive portrait of what he calls a "lost agriculture," a cooperative, animal-powered, craft-based mode of farming that flourished in the middle decades of the twentieth century and that has now been eclipsed by an individualistic, industrialized farming. Echoing many critics of contemporary agriculture, he finds the "changing works" culture superior to modern farming in many respects, especially environmentally and socially. His is one more voice in a growing chorus of critics who call for a reassessment of the direction being taken by today's corporate, increasingly large-scale agriculture.

Harper's methodology stems from the discipline of sociology, not history, so for historians (this reviewer included) it is difficult to evaluate. Using such concepts as "photo elicitation," he constructs "visual narratives" using the rich archive of the Standard Oil of New Jersey (SONJ) photo collection. (Though it is clear that the SONJ archive is superb, it is not clear why only this collection was used.) The geographic focus is on the dairying country of northern New York State. Harper showed the SONJ photos to about a dozen people who began farming in the 1930s and subsequently lived through the transition, and asked them how the old system worked.

The result is captivating. The photos themselves are evocative pieces of art, and the old-timers' explanations of the pictures make for fascinating reading. The give-and-take between interviewees, often husband and wife, is also revealing. The combination of images, transcribed interviews, and Harper's commentary shows how the "changing works" system relied on cooperative labor. Small-scale dairying was diversified, and the farm produced both animal feed and manure for the fields in a self-renewing cycle. The "craft" system encompassed a universe of nuanced, detailed knowledge, from the quirks of individual animals to a carefully gauged use of individual fields. While Harper clearly admires the old system more than the new, he acknowledges the pitfalls of romanticizing the past, so he does not gloss over his subjects' ambivalence about the hard work, the lack of gender parity, and the economic struggle.

He raises compelling questions about the cost of agricultural modernization. Innovations such as bulk milk tanks, self-propelled corn choppers, free stall barns, and milking parlors eliminated limits on herd size and reduced labor requirements. Dairy herds are bigger and more productive now (even as consumption of dairy products has stagnated). Modern dairies are messier and smellier. Harper also argues that modernization has been a factor in the rupture of neighborly social ties, the divorce of food production from consumption, and a rise in pollution. It has intensified the accelerating treadmill of deepening financial and time commitments for the farmers who remain. These are not new observations, but they are stated here with special clarity.

More attention to the impact of the New Deal would have been welcome; since many of these farmers started out in the 1930s, it seems strange that New Deal programs do not enter into the discussion at all. It would also have been instructive to examine more closely the impact of consumer culture, as Hal Barron did in *Mixed Harvest* (1997). The book is marred throughout by grammatical and spelling errors—a pity since otherwise it is beautifully produced. Overall, though, this is a valuable work that explains much to a curious traveler passing through any American dairying country. The landscape is changing fast, and this book helps explain why.

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German Pioneers on the American Frontier: The Wagners in Texas and Illinois. By Andreas V. Reichstein. (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2001. Pp. xii, 303. Maps, illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. \$32.95.)

Julius Wagner left Baden, Germany, in 1847 as part of a group known as the "Darmstädters," or "The Forty," that established the utopian community of Bettina in Texas based on communistic principles.