

history that precedes Euro-American settlement and that demonstrates the multiple influences asserted by Native Americans, the French, and the British. Histories of farming in the early Midwest need to address the complexities and consequences surrounding native-white relations, including evolving federal Indian and land policies, as they most certainly figured prominently in the pioneering experiences. The model for this type of scholarship is R. Douglas Hurt's *The Ohio Frontier* (1996). Salstrom also provides a very useful bibliography of both early Indiana and

the emerging Midwest. Essentially, those generally interested in Indiana history may be satisfied here; those seeking a more complicated or detailed history of the state's early agriculture will not.

GINETTE ALEY is assistant professor of history, University of Southern Indiana, Evansville. Her most recent publication is "A Republic of Farm People: Women, Families, and Market-Minded Agrarianism in Ohio, 1820s-1830s," *Ohio History* (Spring 2007).



Triumph at the Falls The Louisville and Portland Canal

By Leland R. Johnson and Charles E. Parrish

(Louisville, Ky.: Department of the Army Corps of Engineers, 2007. Pp. viii, 340. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Free.)

Leland R. Johnson and Charles E. Parrish have succeeded in capturing the story of designing and building the two-mile Louisville and Portland Canal passage around the Falls of the Ohio. Examining the canal's history in fifty-year segments beginning in the early nineteenth century, they present the positive side of the planned obsolescence of these canal structures, built and maintained to ensure safe travel over dangerous rapids and falls that have challenged Indian and pioneer canoes, flatboats and steamboats, and today's improved inland river craft.

The chapters trace the challenges and advancements of five engineer-

ing phases, beginning with Kentucky's victory over Indiana when both were vying to build a canal around the Falls. The authors recount the successive structures on the site, from a series of three locks completed in 1830 to aid in the safe navigation of inland river commerce to the present-day twin locks, measuring 1,200 feet in length, that accommodate towboats maneuvering massive, multiple barges through the canal.

The authors also examine the ideas and leadership which led to the success of the project. Topics include: the work of dedicated citizens; the transfer of responsibility to the U.S.

government and to the Corps of Engineers; advancements in larger and more powerful boat design; the effects of wars, floods, and financial failures; engineering improvements; federal policy shifts; the canalization of the Ohio River; cooperative efforts of public-private water power development; and the concern of environmental changes caused by dam and lock improvements. The authors demonstrate why periods of change and growth of inland river commerce, occurring approximately every fifty years, necessitated the enlargement of locks and navigation facilities at the Falls.

Readers interested in Indiana canals will appreciate Josiah White's 1818 "bear trap" dam invention: "two long panels or leaves that collapsed one atop the other—opening valves to admit river water beneath the panels caused them to rise and dam the river; closing the valves allowed the panels to fall to the bottom" (p. 158). Other figures profiled in the canal's history include contractor Robert English, whose 1841 patent for a floodgate based on a "trapdoor" design resembled the operational design of the Wabash & Erie Canal Clear Creek Floodgate, removed in 1999 by the Indiana Department of Transportation. Major Stephen H. Long's contributions to the Louisville and Portland Canal are detailed and mention is made of his work on Wabash & Erie dams, possibly referring to his patent for a Carroll County towing path bridge which crossed

the canal over the Wabash River. The authors write about Sylvanus Lothrop, who, after selling his interest in the Louisville and Portland Canal, left to design a "Wabash River lock and dam," (p. 37) probably at Pittsburg, Indiana. The book also details the failure of the Fort Wayne and Southern Railroad's 1852 plan—supported by Indiana Governor Joseph Wright and the Louisville, Kentucky, City Council—for a marine line extending to Jeffersonville and then tunneling under the Falls to connect with the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. Indiana history buffs may reconsider one possibility for their state's nickname: the authors could find no existing record of Samuel Hoosier, sometimes credited for the moniker.

Additional maps would have aided in following the progress of the canal through its several expansions and proposed improvements both on Kentucky and Indiana shores. *Triumph at the Falls* is readable, informative, and well-researched, and the authors have contributed significantly to the body of work on American canals. An 1867 report on the condition of the Louisville and Portland Canal by auditor James Guthrie could also describe the efforts of Johnson and Parrish: "It affords me pleasure to report the existence of important and decided evidences of plans well matured[,] material selected with judgment, and work executed in the most substantial manner."

THOMAS E. CASTALDI lives in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he is Allen County Historian. He is the author of three books about the Wabash & Erie Canal, the host of northeast Indiana public radio's "On the Heritage Trail,"

a historian for the Wabash & Erie Canal Interpretative Center at Delphi, Indiana, and the moderator of the Wabash & Erie Canal Towpath Trail project.



Jewish Communities on the Ohio River A History

By Amy Hill Shevitz

(Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2007. Pp. xi, 266. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$50.00.)

Amy Hill Shevitz takes as her subject Jewish life in twenty-four towns lying along the Ohio River between Pittsburgh and Cairo, Illinois, including Madison, Evansville, and Mount Vernon in Indiana. Quintessentially urban people, Jewish immigrants and their descendants tended to make their new American homes in large cities. Accordingly, both scholarly and popular interpretations of the Jewish experience are conditioned by its predominantly urban character. Until recently, Jewish communities outside of large population centers attracted little scholarly concern. Except for Cincinnati, Louisville, Pittsburgh, Evansville, and Wheeling, the communities in Shevitz's study were small to midsized towns that presented unique challenges to their Jewish citizenry. Lee Shai Weisbach addressed these issues in his definitive *Jewish Life in Small-Town America* (2005), published shortly before Shevitz completed her manuscript. Shevitz's book thus plows through some freshly cul-

tivated territory. Still, the reader interested particularly in Jewish life in any of these twenty-four Ohio River communities will find informative accounts of local history, lay and religious personalities, economic strategies, religious observance, communal organizations, anti-Semitism, and the social and economic linkages between the communities.

Ten relatively brief chapters discuss the evolution and decline of Jewish life along the Ohio River from the earliest settlement of German and Alsatian Jews in the nineteenth century to the present. The post-World War II period, Shevitz contends, set in motion irreversible social and economic changes to which Jews outside of metropolitan centers could not adapt in the long term. Outmigration from town to city, declining Jewish birth rates, a corresponding atrophy in synagogue membership in small and midsized towns, the changing farm economy, and the inability of merchants and commercial establish-