

## Book Reviews

*Architecture of the Old Northwest Territory.* By Rexford Newcomb. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950, pp. xvii, 176. 49 figures and 96 plates, and index. \$20.00.)

This work is the result of some thirty years of study and observation on the architectural expression of the people who settled and built the Middle West. It is a connected story of architectural development in the Old Northwest to approximately the period of the Civil War. Professor Newcomb of the College of Fine and Applied Arts of the University of Illinois and Fellow of the American Institute of Architects has studied the records well, both the material records—that is, the buildings which remain—and the documentary material on the subject.

Early chapters deal with the geographic setting and the people from Indian days to the end of the pioneer period. A brief chapter is devoted to French colonial architecture manifested largely in stockades, forts, residences, and churches. There is a chapter on American architectural precedents—Colonial, Federal, Classical Revival, and on pioneer architectural types—forts, log houses, schools, churches. The Southern influence—bricks, wide central halls, classical frontal porticoes, often two-story galleries—is illustrated by many examples in the southern tier of states in the Old Northwest. The Georgian and Federal types, brought in largely by the New England-New York people, and prevailing in the areas settled by them, are also treated. Five chapters are devoted to the Classic Revival as it came into the five states, and one chapter is devoted to the Gothic Revival and its spread westward. One chapter treats of the communal buildings of Shakers, Rappites, Zoarites, Mormons, etc. There is also a glossary of architectural terms used in the text.

Naturally the buildings discussed and illustrated are the residences of the pioneer aristocracy, churches, public buildings, and the like. The reviewer would have liked at least a brief treatment of the typical homes and business buildings of the people of the region—people who lived in neither log houses nor the more pretentious architectural forms. A few cuts or plates from the more than 300 color drawings of the draftsman-artist Lefevre Cranstone, who was interested in architecture above all things—everything from pigsties to

cathedrals and government buildings—certainly would not have detracted from the book. But perhaps the most typical of Midwest buildings were not worth consideration from an architectural viewpoint.

The chapters which deal primarily with historical backgrounds contain numerous minor errors as do several of the maps which delineate the evolution of the state boundaries, notably those on page 58. The Civil War was not "the War between the States," and historians of either the United States or the Old Northwest do not "usually indulge [in] long-drawn-out records of battles" (xvii). Typical of the errors is the statement, page 2, that the Old Northwest "was an unbroken sea of trees." Coming from a citizen of Illinois this statement sounds particularly interesting, for so scarce were building materials in northern Illinois in the pre-railroad era that pine lumber was even brought in from the East and sold at from \$60 to \$90 per thousand feet. The settlers were advised, if feasible, to bring glazed windowframes, doors, and interior finishing materials with them or purchase same at Pittsburgh or Cincinnati; a few houses were even prefabricated at these points and shipped around to Wisconsin Territory. The most glaring error is in the title of the book rather than the text; it is not proper to speak of the Northwest Territory in the French period before there was any Northwest Territory, or after 1803 when the Northwest Territory ceased to exist. In the text the region is properly referred to in most instances as the states "of the Old Northwest."

The chief value of this work, as the reviewer sees it, lies in the fact that the reader is introduced, type by type, state by state, to the architectural heritage of the region. Here are quickly available brief word sketches of the history and architecture of hundreds of buildings—and of the architects, if any; few of importance have been omitted. Numerous sketches and cuts illustrate the text and 96 full-page plates assembled in the rear supplement it. Not only should this book be available to the serious student of the history and culture of the region but it should be available to the unnumbered thousands of persons who have a love for and a general interest in some phase of the history of the Old Northwest—to antique collectors, to the short-trip tourist who likes to know something about what he sees—"There's an old timer; I wonder when it was built and who lived there"—and to high school students. Each and

every one would find something of interest—and close to home at that. (The reviewer, for instance, was interested to learn that a mausoleum-like Greek structure which he passed thousands of times as a schoolboy was an early showplace residence—none of his teachers ever mentioned that building—and that a farmhouse where his wife played as a girl was a typical Greek Revival of the 1840's. Would that there were some way of putting books such as this in the hands of those who need them most.

The University of Chicago Press has done a good job of bookmaking in these expensive times. The book is printed on a 9x11-inch page, double column text; paper, type, binding, end maps, and plates are all well handled.

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R. Carlyle Buley

*A Friendly Mission: John Candler's Letters from America, 1853-1854.* Edited by Gayle Thornbrough. Volume XVI, Number 1, *Indiana Historical Society Publications*. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1951, pp. 134. Index. \$1.00.)

"Having performed our duty . . . in this sad dark province, we now leave Louisiana with much relief of mind, and go on to encounter fresh trials in other quarters." With these words John Candler described the conclusion of the first phase of a remarkable abolitionist invasion of the Old South.

In September, 1853, Candler, Josiah and William Foster, and William Holmes brought to America from the London Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, a lengthy document urging the abolition of slavery wherever it might be found. The present volume recounts the trials and tribulations of the mission as it journeyed through twenty-six states and presented its memorial to twenty-three governors and to the President of the United States. At a time when abolitionists were anathema in the South, the four English Quakers called upon the Lord to "help and preserve us," and carried their message to the executive officers of all the southern states except Texas, Arkansas, and Florida.

From beginning to end John Candler faithfully wrote to his wife—"My Beloved Maria"—the series of letters which Miss Thornbrough has edited from a notebook owned by the