

ist," "Farmer," "Inventor," "Horseman," and "Agronomist." Emphasis is sought by such arbitrary capitalization as "Rush of Forty-nine." Outside of a frontier joke book there is no place for such a descriptive effort as "settlers in some Godforsaken place near the moon called the Oregon Country" (p. 4). The limit of metaphorical confusion would seem to be approached in the boast that "Case's Agitator ran away with the cream of the threshing-machine business" (p. 68).

The so-called bibliography, in form and selection, is wholly indifferent to elemental standards of research. Apparently the main source was the records of the company, but they are not described or specifically cited. Other entries show a lack of familiarity and discrimination in sources and special studies. Reynold M. Wik's key study of steam power, published in 1953, is listed and quoted only in the unrevised manuscript. Leading studies, such as that of Leo Rogin, are not included. Agricultural and trade journals are listed merely by title with no indication of the years which were covered.

In spite of the rambling organization and uncritical presentation, the book has much of interest in its flickering sidelights on the organization and policies of a great industrial enterprise. The founder and his company merited a serious and balanced study that would have been a distinct contribution both to agricultural and business history. Unfortunately the main contribution of the present exhibit is in showing how such a history should *not* be written.

Iowa State College

Earle D. Ross

The Memoirs of Will H. Hays. (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1955, pp. viii, 600. Portrait and index. \$7.50.)

In these *Memoirs*, the late Will H. Hays gives a generally detailed and a frequently repetitious account of his lengthy career first as a Republican leader and then as "czar" of the film producers. Born in the coal-mining community of Sullivan, Indiana, in 1879, the son of a prominent citizen who was a reasonably prosperous lawyer, his youth was much unlike that normally experienced by local boys.

Hays apparently became a lawyer, a Mason, a Presbyterian, and a Republican without the necessity for much reflection or deep soul-searching. His boyhood atmosphere engendered respect for and an appreciation of the "eternal

verities," supplying a firm and enduring conservative bent to his religious, economic, and political views. He also acquired a strong flavor of Hoosier provincialism and a vigorous spirit of nationalism or Americanism. In the main, Hays was a joiner, an organizer, a propagandist, an administrator, a politician, a harmonizer, and the like. His *Memoirs* indicate his faith in the necessity for persons who play such varied roles in a democracy.

In 1900, Hays was graduated from Wabash College, admitted to the bar, made a precinct committeeman, and cast his first vote. To quote him: "The pattern was definitely set" (p. 48). From then until near the end of World War I, he was principally engaged in practicing law with his father and in ascending the Republican political ladder within Indiana. In 1904, he became county chairman; in 1906, head of the state speakers bureau, a position he held until 1910; in the latter year, he became district chairman, a post to which he was re-elected in 1912; in 1914, he became state chairman and served until 1918 when he was elected national chairman.

Hays deprecated the split in the Republican party in 1912, but he gave his wholehearted support to Taft despite his personal fondness for T.R. He recounts with evident satisfaction his aid in helping to reunite the Hoosier GOP, but useful as his version is, it is not by any means the whole story. During part of World War I, he doubled as state chairman and as head of the state civilian defense committee.

Generally in these *Memoirs*, Hays assumes that political rivals, both factional and partisan, are as sincere, honest, and patriotic as those who agree with him, but this assumption is not inclusive enough to encompass President Wilson. According to Hays, this fellow Presbyterian doomed the League of Nations and multiplied partisan conflicts because of his stubbornness, inability or unwillingness to compromise, rank partisanship, and lack of political acumen, as well as by his unwise and unnecessary participation in the Paris Peace Conference. His heavy assaults against Wilson, even though they at times hit at vulnerable points, bear evidence of strong bias and an international mindedness perhaps more like Hays of the 1940's than of Hays, the Republican national chairman. On the other hand, though he was postmaster general under President Harding from 1919 until 1922, he

has relatively little to say of Harding as a man and almost nothing by way of evaluating Harding's administration. Such neglect is disturbing since Hays was the national chairman, and as a cabinet member doubtless could have added significant information and relevant evaluations concerning Harding and his record. The *Memoirs*, however, do recount with much satisfaction the reorganization of the postal department under Hays.

Among the comprehensive and revealing portions of this volume are the chapters regarding Hays' long service with the film producers which resulted in his being dubbed the "czar" of the movies for the years from 1922 until 1945. He admits that conditions in the industry were bad when he entered this field, but he often seems to be unduly optimistic about the amount of progress attained. The frustrating and continuing problems arising from efforts at industrial self-regulation are described in much detail, while the ease with which codes already formulated were easily adapted to the NRA in the early days of the New Deal has its ironic twist. His lobbying for free trade in films—even through conferences with F.D.R. and important British officials—is recounted with the not surprising comment that such efforts brought kidding from some of his Republican colleagues. The chapters about the film industry are replete with items regarding its business operations, struggles for self-regulation, efforts to avoid both private and governmental censorship, its personalities, its varied services and contributions during World War II as well as its roles with regard to both entertainment and education.

According to the publisher, this volume was completed shortly before Hays died in 1954. It bears evidence of composite authorship, a process suggested by the acknowledgements in the foreword. Unfortunately, sources, even those for the numerous quotations, are seldom indicated in such a manner as to make verification possible in the usual manner. Nevertheless, there is abundant evidence that Hays drew much from his diary and from an apparently voluminous collection of letters, addresses, and miscellaneous records. These *Memoirs* will certainly be useful in the writing of both state and national history, but perhaps the basic sources used in their composition would be even more useful to historians than are these recollections.

Indiana University

Donald F. Carmony