

tried to use it to displace the middlemen between the rural food producer and the urban consumer. As befits the son of a rural mail carrier, Fuller devotes considerable attention to the physical facts of mail carriage, to the passing of the horse and the coming of the tin lizzie, and to the progress and problems of the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association.

It is perhaps ungrateful to wish that a book which gives so much could have given somewhat more. Although the opponents of rural free delivery in the local communities were deftly identified, their spokesmen in Congress were much less clearly described; the book exhibits little evidence of systematic roll call analysis. In general, the narrative is extremely lucid, and Fuller merits praise for his attention to style. Sometimes, however, the story seems almost too folksy, too simple in its explanations of causes and motives, and too frequently sprinkled with superlatives. To one who has read midwestern farm diaries of the late nineteenth century, Fuller's picture of rural isolation seems overdrawn, although it may indeed be highly applicable to western regions and to portions of the South.

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*Lord Selkirk of Red River.* By John Morgan Gray. ([East Lansing]: Michigan State University Press, 1964. Pp. xvii, 388. Illustrations, maps, note on sources, notes, index. \$6.50.)

Thomas Douglas, seventh son of Dunbar Hamilton (Douglas), Fourth Earl of Selkirk, appears at least briefly in many books dealing with the Great Lakes and Upper Canada. He is portrayed as a Scottish nobleman who tries to colonize this region, and his colony becomes involved in the bitter struggle for control of the region on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company. Eventually there occurs the Battle of Seven Oaks, the seizure of Fort Williams by Lord Selkirk, and a variety of legal proceedings which are decided against Douglas. The trouble ends when the warring companies merge in 1821, Selkirk having died the preceding year.

John Morgan Gray, long associated with the Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, undertook the present book because of an interest in Lord Selkirk and because of a "wish to get at the truth of his motives in forwarding Highland emigration." He began with the impression that Selkirk "had had less than justice from the courts of Canada and perhaps from posterity" (Preface). This impression becomes a thesis which is presented most convincingly. Hence the emphasis is on the Canadian aspect of Douglas' life.

Lord Selkirk's humanitarianism was expressed in many interests, but particularly in connection with a variety of colonizing projects. At first he proposed to Lord Pelham in 1802 a scheme for Irish emigration. For the rest of his life, however, he was primarily concerned with founding colonies in America for Scottish Highlanders. He traveled extensively in Canada and the United States during his two trips to

America, 1803-1804 and 1815-1819. (In the winter of 1817-1818 he traveled overland from St. Louis to Pittsburgh, stopping overnight at Vincennes about the middle of November.) His colonies included a successful venture at Prince Edward's Island (1803), a failure at Baldoon on Lake St. Clair (1804), and Red River (1811), which in time became Winnipeg.

Lord Selkirk appears first to have heard of the Red River region about 1801. He explored unsuccessfully with the British Colonial Office the possibility of the government's setting aside the charter claims of the Hudson's Bay Company which limited access to Red River. Although he then turned his attention to the Prince Edward's Island and Baldoon colonies, he did not forget Red River.

Finally he conceived the idea of buying stock in the Hudson's Bay Company, securing a grant of land, and proceeding with a third colony. His temporary partner in the purchase of stock was Sir Alexander Mackenzie, acting in behalf of the Northwest Company. Possibly because of different objectives Selkirk and Mackenzie soon came to a parting. The former continued to purchase stock, however, as did his brother-in-law, Andrew Colvile, and John Halkett, who married Douglas' sister, Katherine, in 1815. By 1810 they owned stock valued at more than 12,000 pounds, far short of majority control of a company which had capital in excess of 100,000 pounds.

Selkirk's colonizing project was submitted to the Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company in February, 1811, including a request for a grant of land for a nominal price. Eventually the decision was favorable, and Selkirk received a grant of 116,000 acres in June, 1811. Henceforth the personal affairs of Selkirk and of the Hudson Company were so intermingled, that many persons assumed he exercised a controlling interest. It was on this basis that later difficulties could be explained by his enemies as rivalry between two fur trading companies, which often acted in extra-legal fashion.

Space does not permit even an outline of the travails of the Red River colony or its battles with the Northwest Company, which finally resulted in endless litigation. The author places some of the blame for the difficulties on Lord Selkirk. He notes that Selkirk should have realized that "he was confronting a dynamic trading organization placed in an intolerable situation." Gray remarks that Douglas' contemporaries were puzzled that "his affairs, the great venture of his life, should drift into an unmanageable chaos." He concludes that Selkirk's impulses "were linked with a lucid brain at once capable of directing intricate matters on a large scale and of making mistakes that lesser men would not have made" (p. 75). The author advances the theory that Douglas was guilty, for the most part, of misdemeanors; the Northwest Company of felonies. Unfortunately the Canadian courts, which are severely criticized, tended to assess almost equal blame and arrived at decisions (after interminable delays) from which Lord Selkirk finally appealed to Parliament. By the time he returned to Europe he was a dying man. At his death his estate had debts of 160,000 pounds and stock in the Hudson's Bay Company which was worth about 26,000 pounds. The author concludes that Lord Selkirk

has earned a "place among the great experiments in colonization; along side Raleigh and Hakluyk and Gibbon Wakefield . . ." (p. 342).

*Lord Selkirk of Red River* is well written and admirably documented. The maps and illustrations are valuable adjuncts. Many American readers, however, will still have difficulty with the geography of Upper Canada.

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*Regional Development and the Wabash Basin*. Edited by Ronald R. Boyce. Prepared in cooperation with the Wabash Valley Advisory Committee of the Council on Community Development, University of Illinois. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964. Pp. xi, 224. Notes, maps, tables, charts, appendixes, index. \$6.95.)

This book, as indicated in the Preface, is essentially a series of papers on various topics of regional development organized under the direction of the Wabash Valley Advisory Committee and presented at the University of Illinois during 1961-1962. The papers were discussed in seminars and revised for publication, and Wabash Valley Advisory Committee members then submitted other essays to augment those presented by persons outside the university. Fifteen authors, representing various fields, contributed the fourteen chapters of which the book is composed. Each chapter is well written, completely documented, and cartographically well illustrated. The final chapter is devoted in part to the application of the technique of linear programming.

Although this brief book consists of four parts, its contents divide in a more natural fashion into chapters on regional development and chapters on the Wabash Basin, as the title of the book implies. Some of the development chapters make no reference to the Wabash whatsoever, and even their applications to the Midwest do not seem to be appropriate. The conflicts in water use in the Pacific Northwest on the Columbia and the Snake rivers seem to be a far cry from the Wabash although water is, no doubt, the basic problem in both areas. Likewise Montana appears to be geographically out of phase with the Midwest.

The several chapters on the general economy, agriculture, industry, and recreation of the Wabash Basin are well written and developed in detail to the county level by several authors, all highly trained geographers. All of them, as well as other contributors, question the regionality of the Basin. "It is difficult to assess the economic merits of the Wabash Basin for yet another reason—the Basin is a poor geographic region for economic analysis" (p. 11). Various authors refer to the lack of either homogeneous or nodal characteristics, to the lack of a regional capital, and to the lack of rank-size gradation of cities and towns which would be expected if the Basin were a homogeneous region. It is also pointed out (pp. 34-35) that the railroads in the area are related to Detroit and St. Louis, Chicago and New Orleans, and Chicago and Louisville rather than to the Wabash Basin.

The one item of unity is water—the drainage basin of the Wabash River; and as such, the problem of flood control, especially in the lower