

railroads was so largely embodied within the confines of the period and the forces with which Martin deals. The seeds of difficulty may be located in an earlier period, and regulation does not appear primarily responsible for the railroads' demise, but elaboration of this position would entail a lengthy argument not advanced here. Certain imputations from the statistical material presented in the appendix also weaken the thesis rather than strengthen it. Finally, the author expresses the intention to concentrate on the Pennsylvania, the Illinois Central, and the Santa Fe to describe the physical and financial transformation of American railroads in the Progressive Era. This declaration of intention was hardly worthwhile since little is done along this line, particularly with regard to the Santa Fe.

Although one can quibble with the book because it is written in such a virile manner, it probably merits its first prize in relation to most of the books on this subject. It is provocative and informative. An enormous amount of scholarship has gone into its production with a result likely to please railroad buffs, historians, and critics of commission regulation and to nettle a few readers not otherwise classified.

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*Henry Ford and Grass-roots America.* By Reynold M. Wik. (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1972. Pp. viii, 266. Illustrations, notes, index. \$10.00.)

Henry Ford appears to have an unending attraction for biographers, both amateur and professional. Wik is a professional with a lifetime of research in farm technology to apply to his subject. He is undertaking here to explain Ford's relationship to rural America: on one side, why and how rural America regarded Ford as a folk hero; on the other, Ford's own attitudes toward farmers and farming. There is something ironic in the picture. In his youth Ford so thoroughly detested farm life that he left home as soon as he could to work with machinery in nearby Detroit. As a successful industrialist he considered himself as having a special mission to use mechanization for the benefit of the farmer, and rural America came to regard him as a miracle worker with a special understanding of farm problems.

Professor Wik has skillfully used newspapers and magazines, public relations and advertising statements, and much archival material to depict this phenomenon. He gives the reader detailed accounts of the impact of the Model T on rural life, Ford's efforts at tractor development, his experiments with soybeans, his plan for fertilizer production at Muscle Shoals, and above all, how farmers saw Henry Ford.

There may even be too much detail. At several points this reviewer found himself wishing for more of what Wik thinks and less of what the editor of a small town paper or a Ford public relations man had to say. Not that the unearthing of these opinions is to be denigrated; it is a valuable historical achievement—but then the reader, or at least this reviewer, would like to know how a mature scholar like Wik interprets it. For example, Chapter 5 is largely a compilation of contemporary opinions pro and con the Fordson tractor. Wik is correct in stating that “No account of the social impact of the farm tractor has ever been written” (p. 99), and to present such an account was not his purpose. But the author does discuss Ford’s contribution to farm mechanization in a way that avoids rather than faces the issue. It also seems odd to have Harry Ferguson mentioned only once (p. 97), and then with no reference to his relationship with Ford.

Wik offers his own evaluations of Ford in the context of this book. He agrees with practically everyone who has tried it that Ford is a difficult personality to interpret. Two points call for comment. Wik credits Ford with considerable scientific acumen, more so than Ford’s other biographers, in practical matters like plant chemistry and plastics. On the other hand he attempts, not too successfully, to dismiss Ford as an inventor or even an innovator in automotive matters. Is it really worth while belaboring the fact that Ford did not invent the automobile and was not the first to dream of the cheap car or to try to realize it? What matters historically is that none of Ford’s predecessors could make the dream come true and Henry Ford did.

Wik has made a major contribution to the literature on Ford, but even in his chosen field of Ford’s relationship with rural America he has not said the last word. He has, however, clearly established that he is the best qualified person to say it.

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*State and National Voting in Federal Elections, 1910-1970.* By Edward Franklin Cox. (Hamden, Conn.: The Shoe String Press, Inc., 1972. Pp. xv, 280. Notes, tables. \$15.00.)

The purpose of this book is to provide a compilation of voting statistics in tabular form for national offices during the recent period of American political history. The major portion of the volume is comprised of statistics concerning elections for President, senator, and representative by state and for the United States. The author also presents the sum of partisan votes for representative and the mean partisan vote as measures of partisanship. Finally, a relatively com-