

cusses Owen's approach to the problems of his time, with emphasis on the origins and significance of the concepts of community and education through which he sought to bring about his envisioned new state of society. The other papers—"Robert Owen and the Millennialist Tradition" by Robert G. Clouse of Indiana State University, "Robert Owen in American Thought" by Merle Curti of the University of Wisconsin, and "Robert Owen and Philosophy" by Robert Ginsberg of the Delaware County campus of Pennsylvania State University—focus on other important aspects of Owen's thought and take Owen himself very seriously indeed.

Uncontaminated by irrelevant anecdotes of misfits in the wilderness or the sly intimations of sexual misconduct which characterize so much of the writing on the Owenite movement, these papers are not light reading, nor could their content have been easily absorbed aurally. That the conferees were equal to the task is demonstrated in the panel discussion which is produced *almost* verbatim in this volume. The papers are real contributions to Owenite scholarship. Those who arranged their presentation and now their preservation in published form are to be commended.

Indiana University, Bloomington

Donald E. Baker

Indiana Canals. By Paul Fatout. (West Lafayette: Purdue University Studies, 1972. Pp. ix, 216. Map, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$10.50.)

Paul Fatout's book on Hoosier canals is the first modern work dealing with the subject at length, and it will be welcomed by students of Indiana history and transportation. The author provides a narrative account of Indiana's canal era, beginning with the agitation for a canal around the falls of the Ohio River at Jeffersonville in the early nineteenth century and continuing through the efforts to construct the mammoth internal improvements system of the 1830s, the actual completion of the Wabash and Erie Canal and parts of the Central and Whitewater canals, and, finally, the abandonment of the remnants of the system by about the 1870s.

The author's forte is his writing style. Fatout is an ex-

cellent storyteller with a remarkable talent for involving the reader in his subject and recapturing the spirit of the past. His obvious fascination with and love for Indiana and its great canal adventures shine through every page. However, the book has weaknesses which will frustrate the serious student. The footnoting style, while perhaps fashionable, is extremely irritating. There is absolutely nothing in the text to indicate when, where, or if a statement is footnoted. All of the notes are included in a section at the end of the book and are not numbered in any way. Instead, they are listed under page references and identified through inclusion of fragments of the sentences they are supposed to document or explain. This format does nothing to ease the task of the reader.

Beyond the peculiar style of footnoting, the documentation itself is exasperating. Explanatory footnotes and documentation of small matters abound, but sweeping statements and specific statistical information with absolutely no reference to the materials consulted are omnipresent. There are many statements in this book which are certainly open to question, and the author would have better served both himself and his readers by providing adequate evidence of the sources behind his reasoning.

Fatout's bibliography and footnotes indicate that he apparently did consult a large and varied body of material. However, he depended most heavily upon contemporary newspapers and state legislative journals. He lists a number of primary sources in the Indiana State Library and other collections, but his narrative and citations do not indicate that he has done an exhaustive job of research in many of them, particularly the records of the Wabash and Erie Canal in the Archives Division of the Indiana State Library.

Finally, the author does not seriously attempt to fit the Indiana internal improvements picture into the national or regional scene or to assess fully its economic impact on the state. *Indiana Canals* is a readable book, handsomely designed and produced, and it provides a pleasant introduction into the Indiana canal era. It cannot, however, be regarded as the definitive work on the subject.

Memphis State University, Memphis

James E. Fickle