

Germans in Wisconsin

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The elusive line between northerners and southerners, traditionally drawn in Illinois along the old St. Louis-Vincennes Trace, turns out to be much farther north. Kentuckians, including Abraham Lincoln, pushed deep into the Sangamon Country and the Military Tract south of Quincy. New Yorkers, the other major contributors to Illinois's settlement, entered at Chicago and spread in a compact block south to a line approximated by Kankakee, Peoria, and Monmouth. Because of these two pincer movements, Ohioans and other Midland peoples were able to dominate a much smaller portion of central Illinois than commonly thought and, even there, faced competition from other groups. Finally, foreign-born peoples, about 13 percent of the total in 1850, formed the largest group in 11 counties, including the Irish in the lead-mining Jo Daviess County and the Germans in Cook and Adams Counties and a cluster near St. Louis. For Iowans who wonder about extensions of the Illinois patterns on to the west, Meyer's findings do not change the expectations much. The Yankee-Midland divide would cross the Mississippi near the border between Louisa and Des Moines Counties.

Meyer is a dogged scholar. His bibliography is exhaustive and his knowledge detailed. Readers should be aware of three limitations of his work, however. First, as the title implies, the treatment ignores Indian settlement and covers the early French colonies only in passing. Second, and less explicably, he offers few examples of how the old migration patterns affect current life. Finally, Professor Meyer is not a gifted writer. His text, although logically organized, is extremely mechanical.

Germans in Wisconsin, by Richard H. Zeitlin. Revised and expanded edition. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 2000. 72 pp. Illustrations, map, graph, document, index. \$5.95 paper.

Reviewer John D. Bunker is professor of history and ethnic studies at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. He is the author or editor of a dozen books, including *Multiculturalism in the United States*; *Wisconsin: The Progressive Era*; and *Immigration and Ethnicity: A Guide to Information Sources*.

What is the major ethnocultural characteristic that Wisconsin, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa all have in common? They are the only states in the Union where more than one out of every three residents claim German ancestry. Moreover, the German-American communities of Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota are generally of the same vintage: they were established originally by the immigrant wave of the 1840s and 1850s and evolved along similar lines over the past century and a half. For many Iowans, therefore, the

temptation to compare and contrast the German-American experience of the Badger State with that on their own side of the Mississippi will doubtless prove irresistible.

Although billing a volume of fewer than 75 pages a "revised and expanded edition" might seem extravagant, the author manages to pack an impressive amount of information, as well as several trenchant insights, into these few pages. After describing the various waves of immigration from Germany to the Badger State, Richard Zeitlin concludes that "in almost all cases, their awareness as 'Germans' developed only after they had reached America" (17). Summing up the complex process of adaptation and preservation, the author asserts that it ultimately produced a new identity of "pan-Germanism, a unique result that is neither German nor American" (42). Wrestling with the knotty problem of "just how German is Wisconsin," Zeitlin contends that it is "the most Germanic state in the Union," but also acknowledges that it is only the first among equals in comparison to many other northern and midwestern states. Moreover, he concedes that "Germans have succeeded more at assimilation and Americanization than have most other nineteenth-century, non-English-speaking groups in Wisconsin," and that "by the early twenty-first century, the state's German majority population is far more American than German" (56-57).

The human interest value of the book is significantly enhanced by two supplements to the text: 16 pages of photographs illustrating the history of Germans in the state from the 1870s through the 1980s; and a document—part letter, part journal—titled "The Long Journey of the Diederichs Family, 1847-1848," originally published in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History* in 1924.

Army of Israel: Mormon Battalion Narratives, edited by David L. Bigler and Will Bagley. Logan: Utah State University Press, 2000. 492 pp. Illustrations, maps, notes, appendix, bibliography, index. \$24.95 paper.

Reviewer Richard E. Bennett is professor of church history and doctrine at Brigham Young University. He is the author of *Mormons at the Missouri, 1846-1852: "And Should We Die"* (1987) and *"We'll Find the Place": The Mormon Exodus, 1846-1848* (1997).

Recent winner of the Mormon History Association's prestigious award for the best documentary edition in Mormon history published in 2000, *Army of Israel* is a welcome companion to Norma B. Ricketts's recent compelling narrative, *The Mormon Battalion: U.S. Army of the West, 1846-1848* (1996). Far more than just another look at the 2,000-

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