

## The Underworld Sewer: a Prostitute Reflects An Life in the Trade, 1871-1909

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*"Fear God and Walk Humbly": The Agricultural Journal of James Mallory, 1843-1877*, edited by Grady McWhiney, Warner O. Moore Jr., and Robert F. Pace. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997. xxi, 687 pp. Illustrations, map, notes, index. \$49.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY GILBERT C. FITE, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, EMERITUS

Not many farmers, either in the past or the present, have kept detailed diaries of their life and farm activities over a long time span. James Mallory, who farmed in Talladego County, Alabama, was an exception. He kept a remarkable and detailed diary for most days in the thirty-four years from 1843 to 1877.

This wonderful documentary of farm life covers a wide range of activities and opinions. Mallory was a diversified farmer; although cotton was his main cash crop, he also raised corn, wheat, oats, rye, vegetables, and livestock. The diary reveals some of the frequent and difficult problems faced by farmers, including plant diseases, drought, floods, and low prices. It also provides insights into Mallory's progressive farm practices, such as fertilization, crop rotation, and others. Mallory was a deeply religious man, and he made numerous entries about the state of religion in his community. There are also occasional comments on national and even international affairs. In short, Mallory's diary opens up for readers a clear view of farming and farm life on a moderate-size family farm in the South over a long and important period in American history.

Those who want to gain a better understanding of the rural heritage of the South and the nation will find this book of great value. It is splendidly edited and published in an attractive form. There are abundant footnotes that clarify terms used by Mallory that may not be familiar to an urban generation. An understanding of midwestern farm life could be enhanced by the publication of similar diaries kept by farmers in Iowa or other midwestern states. Every effort should be made to preserve those still extant and publicize their contents.

*The Underworld Sewer: A Prostitute Reflects on Life in the Trade, 1871-1909*, by Josie Washburn. Introduction to the Bison Books Edition by Sharon E. Wood. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997. xix, 342 pp. Illustrations, notes. \$15.00 paper.

REVIEWED BY THERESA KAMINSKI, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-STEVENS POINT

*The Underworld Sewer* is a reprint of former prostitute and ex-madam Josie Washburn's 1909 exposé of prostitution in Nebraska, her personal attempt to purge "social evil" from society and denounce the

treatment of disadvantaged women. Given the dearth of firsthand primary sources on prostitutes, one cannot help wondering what Washburn herself experienced and wishing she had written her own story. Instead, Washburn wrote an impassioned plea for people to see the reality of prostitution. Her book is a marvelous example of the argument that prostitution could be eliminated if men in power really chose to do so. Historian Sharon E. Wood provides a brief, useful introduction, blending available background on Washburn with a bit of historiography.

Washburn's book functions as a complement to related works on prostitution, including Maimie Pinzer, *The Maimie Papers* (1977) and Ruth Rosen, *The Lost Sisterhood: Prostitution in America, 1900-1918* (1982). It does require those books to provide necessary context, and it highlights the fact that little scholarly work exists on prostitution, either national or local studies. Yet the book is a sharp reminder that prostitution is a volatile issue that Americans everywhere have had to deal with, even in the Midwest.

*Pilgrims on the Ohio: The River Journey and Photographs of Reuben Gold Thwaites, 1894*, with essays by Robert L. Reid and Dan Hughes Fuller. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1997. 105 pp. Illustrations, notes. \$29.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY RON DEISS, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

*Pilgrims on the Ohio* contains a perceptive essay by Robert L. Reid on the background of Reuben Gold Thwaites and his excursion down the Ohio River in May and June 1894. The second essay by Dan Hughes Fuller adeptly explains the history and significance of Thwaites's snapshots of the river's buoyant and riparian culture. Seventy of Thwaites's best images, along with excerpts from his daily notes, chronicle the event.

Employed as a historian by the state of Wisconsin, Thwaites often used direct experience, supplemented by trips, daily notes, and photographs. While conducting research on the Ohio River, he wrote, "I wished to know the great waterway intimately in its various places,—to see with my own eyes what the border saw; in imagination, to re-dress the pioneer stage, and repeople it" (1-2). The historian and his family of three considered travel an enriching educational experience. Paddling and sailing their fifteen-foot skiff *Pilgrim* down the Monongahela and Ohio Rivers, they skirted the borders of seven states on their eleven-hundred-mile water-born journey. Thwaites took daily notes and employed a hand-held Kodak camera to gather, in his words, "local color."

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