

The Making of Pioneer Wisconsin: Voices of Early Settlers

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this account but instead sold his two journals to a Philadelphia publisher. During the early 1820s, Professor Benjamin Silliman acquired one volume, which remained in his papers at Yale. The second volume came to light in 2012 and is now held by the DeGolyer Library at Southern Methodist University. Some misgivings about its authenticity exist because of Maley's frequent errors concerning distances and travel times. The editor suggests that these mistakes occurred because, unlike government explorers, he had only incomplete travel notes. He praises the author for giving "a rare blue-collar view of the frontier," something others rarely did (xvi).

The book is well done, but its excellent maps would have been more useful if they had marked Maley's travels more clearly. Also, the table of contents needs some identifying terms, not just dates for each section.

The Making of Pioneer Wisconsin: Voices of Early Settlers, by Michael E. Stevens. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2018. xviii, 173 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$18.95 paperback.

Reviewer Wayne Duerkes is a Ph.D. candidate in history at Iowa State University. He is working on a dissertation on community and market creation in the antebellum rural Midwest.

In his latest publication, Michael E. Stevens, Wisconsin State Historian Emeritus, provides "an opportunity to meet, if only briefly, people from the past" (163). To accomplish that, Stevens compiles an assortment of primary source documents written by early Wisconsin pioneers up to the 1850s. The diversity of the 52 introduced sources is represented by excerpts from travel guides, personal correspondence, letters printed in newspapers, petitions, and memorials. He categorizes the documents into three main thematic groupings: migration, adaptation, and community creation. These groupings chronologically follow the general emigration pattern of new settlers to the region, although there is slight, unavoidable overlap. In the end, he seeks to demonstrate the resolve and mettle most of these pioneers displayed, laying the foundation for the Wisconsin character.

Stevens highlights a cross section of Wisconsin pioneers both demographically and thematically. There are sources written by a member of the Ho-Chunk tribe, free blacks, and white men and women, with a special focus on German and Norwegian immigrants. In the documents, the authors describe travel to their new homeland, environmental conditions, sickness, loneliness, assimilation, temperance, abolitionism, and the western stereotype of lawlessness. But the stalwart pioneers also allude to visions of the potential and opportunity of settling in

pioneer Wisconsin. By bringing the settlers' own words into print, Stevens offers readers a glimpse of the trials and tribulations as well as the hopes and dreams of early settlers in the nineteenth-century Midwest. In doing so, he addresses a much broader audience than just those interested in the Badger State. Very few of the documents should be viewed as unique to events in Wisconsin. In fact, without the author's brief commentary to guide the reader, most documents echo emotions, sentiments, and experiences common to pioneers across the Midwest during the era.

The representativeness is one of the book's two main strengths. The second is the bringing of these documents to a broader audience. Any exposure given to pioneers' voices to commemorate their achievements and to help readers develop a clearer picture of who they were and what stock they came from is welcome. This also highlights a potential pitfall for historians who publish such works— letting the documents tell too much of the story without the guidance of a specialist. Stevens offers very brief introductory statements that are more biographical than analytical. Some of the documents needed a bit more editing to keep them focused on the thematic point the editor is trying to highlight, and most lack any analysis to develop the editor's intended goal of identifying early Wisconsin identity. An expanded bibliography, beyond the 16 mentions of the state historical magazine, would have helped readers delve deeper into this useful and insightful contribution to midwestern history.

Lincoln and the Natural Environment, by James Tackach. Concise Lincoln Library. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2019. vii, 149 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Patricia Ann Owens is an independent scholar in Lawrenceville, Illinois. Her research and writing have focused on Abraham Lincoln.

Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois once urged his colleagues "to get right with Lincoln." It seems that this has become a mantra not only for politicians of both political parties but also for historians and other scholars. Lincoln left no diary and few personal letters, but that has not stopped the endless research into every aspect of his life and times. There has even been a book published about Lincoln and his dog, Fido.

Southern Illinois University Press's Concise Lincoln Library series offers an array of topics that reflect the interest in everything about Lincoln, including Lincoln and the military, Lincoln and the Thirteenth Amendment, Lincoln and the immigrant, and Lincoln as hero. This volume in the series is presented as a groundbreaking environmental