The Quad Cities: An American Mosaic

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REVIEWED BY NICOLE ETCHESON, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

Thomas Goodrich surveys the guerrilla warfare on the Kansas-Missouri border during the national Civil War. Although he opens the book with an account of the Pottawatomie killings of 1856, he passes over Kansas's territorial period quickly. The book's true opening is the 1861 Missouri attack on a train carrying federal troops. Goodrich reviews the activities of Jayhawkers such as Charles Jennison, James Lane, and James Montgomery and bushwhackers such as William Quantrill, Bill Anderson, and George Todd. He includes such well-known events as Quantrill's raid on Lawrence, General Order No. 11, and the Marais des Cygnes massacre, but also lesser-known topics such as the sense of fear that permeated the border and caused the village of Lecompton to panic when a group of boys playing a prank convinced the town that it was set upon by bushwhackers. True to his subject, Goodrich's account contains more than its fair share of clubbings, shootings, blood, mayhem, pathos, and miraculous escapes.

Goodrich clearly aims at a popular rather than a scholarly audience. The book lacks footnotes and consists largely of long extracts from newspapers and eyewitness accounts. Goodrich accepts all accounts at face value, even the obviously self-serving ones of former guerrillas who always claimed to have been good boys driven to violence by the actions of others. This is an enjoyable, but not analytical, account of the Kansas-Missouri border warfare from 1861 to 1865.


REVIEWED BY LOREN N. HORTON, IOWA CITY

This history of the Quad Cities follows a strict chronological sequence, with the blocks of time falling evenly within years ending in zero or five. The author offers a nicely balanced presentation, with attention to political, economic, and social factors. The illustrations are chosen to enhance the text, and are placed properly in relation to the information to which each is connected. Chapters are short, hold the interest of the reader, and give equal attention to the cities involved. But the everlasting question remains, when the expression "Quad Cities" is used. Davenport, Rock Island, and Moline are the regulars. Then we
have a choice. Is the fourth element of the “Quad” Bettendorf or East Moline? This problem is addressed in the foreword (sic), but never settled in the book.

The book is written with the enthusiasm of a resident. At times the attention to details of economic development gives one the impression of a Chamber of Commerce “booster” production. There is also a rather disturbing lack of maps. If the intended audience is only local, maybe the thought was that all readers would know where everything is located. For the rest of us, a general map of the entire area, plus maps of each individual city in the complex would help.

This book is a welcome summary history of a significant metropolitan area, an area that has played a major role in shaping the development of eastern Iowa. I recommend it to all Iowa libraries.


REVIEWED BY JOSEPH W. WALT, SIMPSON COLLEGE

Like the state in which it is located, Grinnell College, Iowa’s most distinguished institution of liberal arts and sciences, celebrated its sesquicentennial in 1996. Planned as an important part of their commemoration was the publication of a detailed history of the college by Grinnell professor emeritus Joseph F. Wall, together with a complementary volume of photographic and documentary materials selected by veteran history professor Alan Jones. Unfortunately, the death of Professor Wall in 1995 prevented the completion of his account of the college’s past. But we do have Alan Jones’s volume, which contains a remarkable series of photographs and documents, the purpose of which, according to the author, is “to communicate a sense of immediacy about the college’s past.” [The nineteenth-century portion of Professor Wall’s history, which he had largely completed, has been published this year.—Ed.]

Professor Jones allows the documents to tell the story of the college’s founding by the Iowa Band in 1846 in Davenport, its move to Grinnell, its growth in quality and numbers in spite of natural disasters such as the tornado of 1882, and intellectual infighting such as the Gates-Herron controversy, not to mention recurrent financial crises that plagued Grinnell just as they did so many other Iowa colleges. What stands out in the college’s history is the dedication of its faculty, administration, and students to the social and intellectual betterment of humankind. Never really parochial, the college has attracted an