Artifacts and the American Past

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work as a companion volume to the earlier book. Like the first book, this one is illustrated by Lennis Moore, a well-known Iowa artist. The author provides excellent courses for the layperson interested in archaeology—lists of filmstrips, educational leaflets, correspondence courses, and fieldwork opportunities. He shows how scientific archaeology has replaced the early fad of “treasure hunters and curiosity seekers” and how exploration has expanded to include the study of trails, stone quarries, fish traps, and spirit places. The technical literature has been sifted and put into terms the layperson can comprehend in an attempt to let the reader become involved in archaeology in a constructive and intimate way. A book which Iowans should read and enjoy.


The author presents a “sampler” of investigative techniques to explore and teach history outside the traditional classroom. He brings an important new dimension to such study through the on-site research and analysis of material and cultural artifacts—photographs, cartographs, historic house museums, centennial celebrations, plants and natural materials, and regional studies. The book illustrates how research on artifacts moves beyond the mere descriptive stage to actual historical analysis and interpretation. Everything around us becomes a “learning laboratory” and we gain new insights and appreciation of our material culture through reading this book. Once again, AASLH is to be commended for its publication of such a worthy book.


The University of Iowa is noted for its NCAA wrestling championships and its nationally known medical school; but it achieves world renown with its Iowa Writers’ Workshop. The author, a graduate of the English department at the University of Iowa, traces the origins and growth of the Writers’ Workshop from the days of Edwin Ford Piper to the present. A thorough sifting of sources and interviews with former Workshop faculty and students, this book fills a long unfilled need. Reading it is like getting to know the authors of a Who’s Who in
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