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Designers Stickley and Stevens
The Tank Family of Tank Cottage

Wisconsin Academy Review

A JOURNAL OF WISCONSIN CULTURE



Wisconsin Academy Review

Fall 1993



The Petipoint iron (1939) designed by Brooks Stevens. Courtesy Brooks Stevens Archives.

Front Cover: Looking through glass-paned doors into the dining room at the Lawrence Jacobsen home. The sideboard in the background, dining table, and chairs are Gustav Stickley pieces.

Back Cover: Detail from the Jacobsen guest room. Desk and chair are by Limbert, side chair by Roycroft. Photos by Joseph W. Jackson III, courtesy the Wisconsin State Journal.

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Gustav Stickley: The Creation of Art Through Machine Production 4
by Virginia T. Boyd and Lawrence J. Jacobsen

Industrial Designer Brooks Stevens: Businessman, Engineer, and Stylist 10
by Anne Woodhouse

Memoirs of a Bronco-busted Geologist 15
by Reid Bryson

Digging to China (and poems) 19
by Sara Rath

WISCONSIN PHOTOGRAPHER'S SHOWCASE 24
Backroads, Backcountry, and Backlots:
The Inquiring Camera of Jerry Dell

Nils Otto Tank: All in All, A Man of Good Will 27
by Harald S. Naess

The Tank Library: Caroline Tank's Memorial to Her Husband 32
by Jill Rosenshield

Stream Echoes (fiction) 38
by John G. Motoviloff

POETRY
Migration 41
by Michael Ryan

Grapes 41
by Robin S. Chapman

November 42
by Sarah Fox

1985, 1992
Deer Crossing 42
by Arthur Sacks

Galileo Takes His Pulse
Flat Earth Society 43
by Brent Goodman

REVIEWS 44

INSIDE THE ACADEMY
Probing the Mysteries of Milkweed 49
by Gary G. Lake

LETTERS 52



Some of us who occasionally roam through antique stores consider ourselves fortunate when we spot the unmistakable characteristics of a survivor from the Arts and Crafts Movement: the dark, satiny beauty of Stickley's fumed oak and the practical design which states, "No unnecessary ornamentation here," or the rich, golden patina of a Limbert chair, or the pure lines of a Rookwood vase, or the warm, hammered tones of Roycroft copper. The opportunities are limited, because these pieces are sought after and valued not only as functional and decorative artifacts, but as reminders of a movement which encompassed philosophy and social concerns as well as craftsmanship. You might say the Arts and Crafts Movement was a style with an attitude.

Gustav Stickley, born in rural Wisconsin, is revered as one of the Arts and Crafts Movement's most dedicated proponents. In this issue of the *Review* we explore some of the principles on which the movement was based as well as the prominent role Stickley played through manufacturing and publishing. In addition, an Arts and Crafts collector writes of his personal response to the integrity of this movement—a movement which affected the lives of thousands of Americans in the late 1800s and the early 1900s and which continues to intrigue us today.

Times change, and trends come and go. In the 1930s, when Art Deco was in vogue, consumers came to appreciate appliances and machines that were functional but at the same time streamlined and futuristic in their design. An effective proponent of this style was Brooks Stevens, another Wisconsin designer and an Academy fellow. Stevens's imagination and vision have touched us all in ways we may not realize because the Stevens innovations have become so much a part of our daily lives. As our author points out, Brooks Stevens has been influencing the world of industrial design for more than half a century, and he continues to inspire students of design with his enthusiasm and ingenuity.

Some of Wisconsin's most remarkable early treasures can be found in the humble little house in Green Bay known as Tank Cottage, home of the Tank family during the nineteenth century. Otto and Caroline Tank have long been acknowledged as interesting though enigmatic participants in our state's early history. Our two companion articles don't clear up all the ques-

tions, but nonetheless they provide answers which enable us to better understand these two people and perhaps better appreciate their legacy: their historically important home and their valuable collection of books.

While I was planning this issue, I also was planning a trip to the West Coast, my first by auto rather than by plane. What fun, then, to contemplate Reid Bryson's experiences as a geology student in the ranch country of Wyoming, and what a pleasure to revisit Sara Rath's poems from her *Dancing With a Cowboy* collection. Also, it was inspiring to work with Jerry Dell's landscape studies, which you will find in the Wisconsin Photographer's Showcase department. I hope you as readers will appreciate these features and also find interesting the other poetry, the fiction, and the reviews included here.

In the Inside the Academy department, one of our resident scientists describes a research project in which new ways to use the milkweed plant for the benefit of humankind are considered. If the results are positive, the findings may help to save the monarch butterfly from possible extinction. The results of this research, therefore, could enhance not only our lives, but the lives of other creatures with whom we share Earth, not the least of which is the monarch, now fighting for survival.

Faith B. Miracle



*Brooks Stevens, age five, using a toy locomotive as a model for his drawing.
Courtesy Brooks Stevens Archives.*

WISCONSIN ACADEMY GALLERY FALL EXHIBITION SCHEDULE:

- September: Paulette J. Werger, jewelry
- October: Barry Roal Carlsen, paintings and drawings
- November: Wendy Mukluk, photography

ALSO WORTH NOTING:

- The Wisconsin Academy will participate in a special exhibition of the work of M. C. Escher at 2 East Mifflin Street in Madison, October 1 through 18. The exhibit, titled "Escher in Madison," will include original prints, watercolors, and cancelled woodblocks.
- The Elvehjem Museum of Art in Madison will be the sole Midwest site for a major African art exhibition titled "African Reflections: Art from Northeastern Zaire," on display from September 4 through January 2.

CONTRIBUTORS

- ▶ Virginia T. Boyd is a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and specializes in the history of American architectural interiors, particularly those of the early twentieth century. She spent many years restoring an early nineteenth-century frame house in Mineral Point, and she lives in an early twentieth-century house designed by the Madison architectural firm of Beatty and Strang. Future projects include a possible decorative arts exhibition on a Wisconsin theme at the Wisconsin Academy Gallery in June 1994.
- ▶ Reid Bryson holds degrees in geology and meteorology. He joined the faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1946 and in 1948 he founded its meteorology department. He is now emeritus after having served as director of the Institute for Environmental Studies on the Madison campus. He is a fellow and a past president of the Wisconsin Academy and has written numerous articles and books.
- ▶ Robin S. Chapman teaches courses in children's language development and disorders in the communicative disorders department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her poems have appeared recently in such journals as *Hudson Review* and *Nimrod*. She received a 1993-94 Individual Artists' Development Award from the Wisconsin Arts Board. Her most recent book of poetry, *Learning to Talk* (Fireweed Press), was named one of the *Small Press Review's* thirteen summer picks for 1992.
- ▶ Jerry Dell is professor of communication and the arts and chair of communication processes at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay where he initiated the photography and electronic media curricula and developed the photography program. He also taught at the State University of New York at Buffalo. He has worked independently as a photographer, news producer, editor, and reporter and has exhibited his work nationwide. His articles and essays have appeared in numerous journals and he has lectured at many professional and educational conferences.
- ▶ Sarah Fox is a student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where she hopes to end her ten-year stretch as an undergraduate in May 1994 by completing a B.A. in English. She is a single mother and a secretary.
- ▶ Brent W. Goodman was born in Milwaukee and is currently finishing his undergraduate degree in English at Ripon College. He received the 1992 Dorothea Wilgus Pickard Prize in Creative Writing and has recently been published in such journals as *Parallax* and *Midstream Magazine*.
- ▶ Joseph W. Jackson III is a fourth-generation Madisonian. He began working as a part-time photographer for the *Wisconsin State Journal* in 1969 and has worked for the paper full-time since 1974. He enjoys photographing architecture, particularly historic buildings.
- ▶ Lawrence J. Jacobsen, who taught at colleges in New York before coming to Wisconsin, has been head of the award-winning, internationally-recognized library at the Wisconsin Regional Primate Research Center in Madison since 1973. He has long been interested in the Arts and Crafts Movement, and furniture from his private collection can be seen at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Art History Gallery in Mitchell Hall as part of an exhibition titled "The Spirit of the Times: American Arts and Crafts Furniture" (September 15 through October 31).
- ▶ John G. Motoviloff is an assistant manager for the University of Wisconsin Press Journal Division and a freelance copy editor. He fishes in and writes about Wisconsin's hill country.
- ▶ Harald S. Naess retired in 1991 as professor of Scandinavian studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is the author or editor of several works on Scandinavian literature and Norwegian-American immigrant studies, including include three books on the Norwegian writer Knut Hamsun. His most recent book, *History of Norwegian Literature*, was published by the University of Nebraska Press in 1993.
- ▶ Sara Rath, Elm Grove, has published four volumes of poetry and three nonfiction books as well as feature articles, radio scripts, and screenplays for television and film. She is a freelance editor and recently was on the faculty of Goddard College in Plainfield, Vermont. She has taught at the Chautauqua Institute in New York for the past two summers. Her collection of poems, *Dancing With a Cowboy*, was published by the Wisconsin Academy.
- ▶ Jill Rosenshield is associate curator of the Department of Special Collections at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Memorial Library. She has worked on the preparation of exhibits on such diverse subjects as Nazi-occupied France, St. Augustine, socialists from the nineteenth century, and underground collections from Russia, Poland, Lithuania, and Germany. She has advanced degrees in library science, linguistics, and Slavic languages and literature.
- ▶ Michael Ryan has a master's degree in nursing, but after hitch hiking throughout Europe he decided he wanted to write. His writing includes technical material for textbooks and a regular humor column for a magazine. His poetry has appeared in such publications as *Lost Creek Letters* and *Pinehurst Journal*. He grew up on a farm in northern Wisconsin and now lives and writes in Eau Claire.
- ▶ Arthur B. Sacks is professor and director of the Division of Liberal Arts and International Studies at the Colorado School of Mines at Golden. From 1976 to July 1993 he was at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he administered academic programs, later was director of the Institute for Environmental Studies, and most recently was acting director of International Student and Scholar Services. He writes about human interaction with the environment and is interested in the role art plays in furthering understanding of this relationship. His poems have appeared in various journals.
- ▶ Anne Woodhouse is the former curator of domestic life at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, where she was curator for "Styled to Sell: The Industrial Designs of Brooks Stevens" in 1991. She is currently senior curator at the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis. Her projects and interests include an exhibit on St. Louis in the late nineteenth century, a survey of decorative arts and crafts made in Missouri before 1870, the women's movement and University City Pottery projects of Edward Lewis, and the cultural history of Route 66.

Gustav Stickley: The Creation of Art Through Machine Production

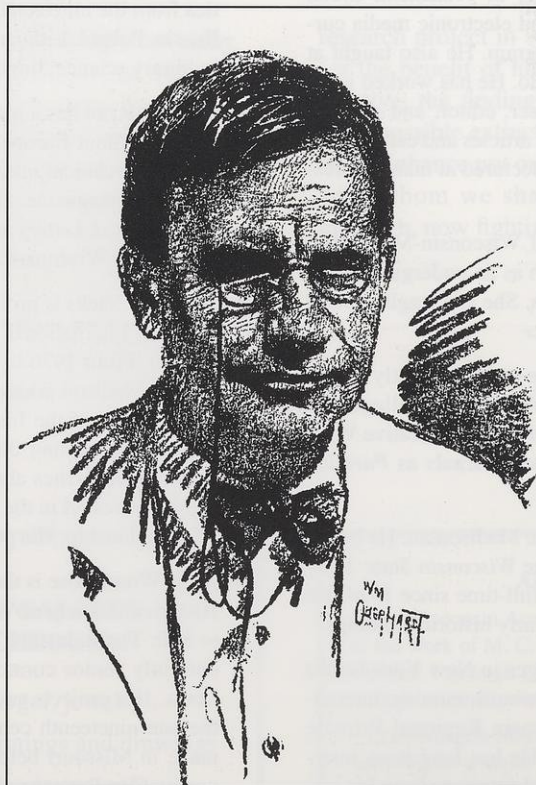
by Virginia T. Boyd and Lawrence J. Jacobsen

"To say in this day of well-nigh perfect machinery that anything to be good must be done entirely by hand is going rather far."
—Gustav Stickley, *Chips from the Craftsman Workshop*, 1906.

One measure of a society's progress throughout the centuries has been its ability to make objects of ever greater complexity in increasingly greater numbers. By applying this measure, the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century can be viewed as a time of great progress. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, England and America changed from agrarian societies into urbanized, industrial societies, and individuals became consumers of manufactured goods rather than producers of handmade goods. What became painfully clear, however, was the fact that the machine manufacture of goods did not necessarily improve the quality of life for either those consuming the goods or those producing the goods. A great challenge of the time was to recognize the importance and incorporate the benefits of industrialization while simultaneously maintaining the value of individual workers and their labor.

In England, two leaders of the Arts and Crafts Movement, John Ruskin and William Morris, believed the concerns of the industrial worker were related to aesthetic issues. Followers of the movement felt the process of industrialization dehumanized and, in a sense, anesthetized the worker. The Arts and Crafts Movement is often viewed as a group of individuals whose futile response to industrialization was an attempt to ignore the machine and revive the hand production processes of the Medieval craft guilds. In fact, the philosophy of the movement's proponents was significantly broader in scope.

For Morris the goal was to help the individual make a world in which work was the creative and joyful center of life rather than merely an activity engaged in to provide sustenance. Art was interpreted to be not simply the making by hand of aesthetically pleasing objects, but the creative act of daily life itself, with one's work contributing to the satisfaction of life



Gustav Stickley, circa 1909. Courtesy Craftsman Homes, Craftsman Publishing Company, New York.

rather than restricting it. This concept led the English reformers to see themselves as social reformers. They sought to re-establish the link between art and daily life, between the worker's satisfaction and the crafting of an object. They believed this link had been broken by the intrusion of the machine. To them the Industrial Revolution was a failure, not just because of cheap, shoddily made products, but because they viewed it as a destroyer of the human soul itself.

In America the Arts and Crafts Movement took a different path. Whereas in England the movement was initiated by members of the English intellectual elite in response to the problems of the working poor, in America the reformers were middle class, and the focus of their concern was the middle class. It was a broadly-based movement of architects, planners, housewives, educators, journalists, academics, and oth-

ers who responded to the dehumanizing effects of industrialization. The goal was to reform middle-class society through art—to create an aesthetic quality of life characterized by comfort, convenience, and simplicity. In America, this quality of life was to be realized by effectively utilizing the enormous capabilities of the machine, not by ignoring or rejecting it. The goal was to socialize industry rather than mechanize society.

American reformers, such as Gustav Stickley and Elbert Hubbard, recognized that industrialization was an important democratizer. They saw artistically created machine-made products for the home, or *household art*, as the way to connect art and industry and to democratize art in the process. The focus on products for domestic consumption appealed to the Arts and Crafts community because household objects satisfied real needs; and at the same time, when designed artistically, art could be made available to all Americans in a way the more elite arts—painting and sculpture—could not.

Gustav Stickley was among the most successful in applying this new American industrialism through the manufacture of products for the home which were well crafted, modestly priced, and thus available to the middle class. In Stickley's mind, household art was indeed "a national art, a universal art, adapted to the needs of the country. This was to be an art developed by the people, for the people, as a reciprocal joy for the artist and layman" (*Craftsman*, October 1901, p.i). The integration of these new manufacturing capabilities into a worker's daily life, in order to create aesthetic fulfillment, became the leitmotif of Stickley's career.

Gustav Stickley was of German immigrant background. He was born March 9, 1858, in Osceola, Wisconsin, in Polk county, to Leopold and Barbara Schlaeger Stoeckel (the family name was changed to Stickley) and was the eldest son of at least nine children. Gustave (he later dropped the *e*) worked for his father, a stonemason and farmer. He described his early life in Wisconsin:

Country-born on a small farm in the Middle West, where most of the land was yet heavily timbered, I found myself, at the age of twelve, called upon to do all kinds of farm work in the summer, and to chop wood and draw it to the nearest market in winter. With few aids other than natural resources we were obliged to depend upon ourselves for the commonest needs and comforts of life. (*Chips*, 1906, p.5)

Leopold abandoned his family in the early 1870s, and the Stickleys moved to Laynesboro, Pennsylvania, to live with Barbara's brother, Jacob Schlaeger. Gustav first worked with wood in a small chair factory in Brandt, Pennsylvania. Later, with two brothers, Charles and Albert, he moved to Binghamton, New York, to establish a wholesale and retail furniture business, and in the mid-1880s he married Eda Ann Simmons. The brothers' firm added a chair factory in 1886 and began producing furniture in styles based loosely on Colonial Revival, Windsor, and Shaker chairs. Following brief periods in several unrelated positions and businesses, he began a new furniture factory in 1892 with partner Elgin A. Simonds in Eastwood, a suburb of Syracuse. The company produced furniture in the eclectic Revival styles popular at the time.

In 1898 Stickley traveled to England and immersed himself in the Arts and Crafts Movement, an experience which had a profound effect on his future

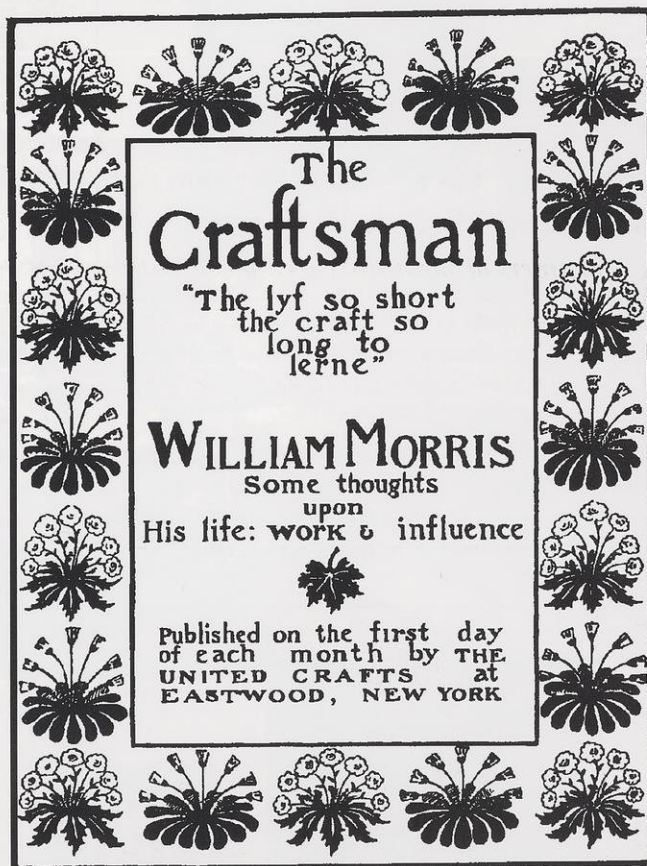
work and thinking. He had admired John Ruskin and Thomas Carlyle since childhood, particularly their common view that social reform was related to the design of the material environment.

While in England he examined the work of designers C.F.A. Voysey, Charles R. Ashbee, M.H. Baillie Scott, Arthur H. Mackmurdo, William Lethaby, and Ambrose Heal. It was their furniture designs as much as the ideology of the movement itself that would have a significant influence on Stickley's developing Craftsman style. From these designers Stickley derived a sense for simplicity of form, ornamentation through visible

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The Craftsman magazine was published by Stickley from October 1901 to December 1916.

structural details (such as dovetails and mortise and tenon joints), an emphasis on the use of wood in its natural state with a minimum of finish, and an overriding concern with the importance of good craftsmanship and high quality materials. He also adopted a concern for the unity of the total design, including not only the furnishings but the house itself and the garden in which it stood.



Following Stickley's return from England, his work and thinking became more focused and assumed a sense of urgency. His motto became "The lyf (sic) so short the craft so long to lerne (sic)." The relatively brief period between 1899 and 1916 was his most prolific, and during this time he gave the Arts and Crafts Movement a distinctly American interpretation, one that would effectively position American design for the industrial design movement of the twentieth century.

After experimenting with his new ideas for furniture, he sold pieces briefly to the Tobey Furniture Company of Chicago, one of the largest retail furniture stores in the Midwest and one quick to accept the new Arts and Crafts influence coming from Europe. By the end of 1900 he had left Tobey and struck out on his own to produce and market the early version of Craftsman furniture under his own name, the Gustav Stickley Company.

For most of this period his firm was located in the John Crouse Stables in Syracuse, which he eventually remodeled into the Craftsman Building. From there he supervised the furniture factory, offices for his several publications, the craft shops, a library, and a lecture hall. Stickley's productive years as head of his own company can be divided roughly into three major stylistic periods.

The pieces produced during the first few years of the Gustav Stickley Company de-emphasized the superficial medievalism of the English approach and introduced a progressive air. As shown in the photo of the early desk, the pieces have a simplicity of form, physi-



Desk from Stickley's early period. Collection of Lawrence Jacobsen. Photo by Ron Anderson, Anderson Photographic Studio.

cal solidity, and frankly stated functionality which change only in degree in the later versions of the style. Construction of the pieces generally were either "post and beam" as in this desk, employing heavy, visually dominant posts with wide beams such as top rails or stretchers, or wide horizontal panels on case-pieces, or "slab sided," constructed with large flat panels on the ends. Details in this period included an inverted V arch on aprons and stretchers, pyramidal wooden pulls, and corbels at points of transition such as stretcher to post.

Furniture produced during the second period, about 1904–1910, is described as Stickley's mature style and is a refinement of the early style. The line was pared down, keeping only the strongest selling pieces in production. Forms were simplified and parts standardized in order to obtain maximum benefit from the large quantity production processes which were being per-

fectured. Unnecessary joints were eliminated, and most ornamental details were removed in order to concentrate on the straight structural lines and plain surfaces which set off the rich color and texture of the quartersawn oak grain. However, the high

standards for construction and finish were never compromised, even when other manufacturers (including his brothers) began cutting into Stickley's market by copying the simple forms using less expensive woods and inferior manufacturing processes. During this second period, hardware was changed to hand-wrought iron and copper plates. In addition, a new stylistic detail was introduced: the use of slender spindles placed closely together to create a paneled effect. This probably was the influence of Harvey Ellis who worked briefly for Stickley and whose influence can be seen in the photo of the desk and chair from this period.



Desk from Stickley's mature period. Collection of Lawrence Jacobsen. Photo by Ron Anderson, Anderson Photographic Studio.

In the third period, 1912–1916, pieces became more starkly rectilinear and the structural details of the earlier styles were eliminated. The designs reflected even more directly their

NOTES FROM AN ARTS AND CRAFTS COLLECTOR

by Lawrence J. Jacobsen

I can remember the first mission oak chair I found back in 1962 at a local salvage store. It was in the basement and priced at \$4. I hesitated, because I was a student then with little money and a big appetite. But I sensed that this chair was special because it was so well proportioned with an excellent oak finish and leather seat. Amazingly the leather was still in good condition. Add to this the way the parts were joined with tenons and pegs and its general bearing and, yes, it was worth a little sacrifice to own this chair. When I got it home I looked up what I discovered to be a joiner's compass and the words in Flemish, *Als ik kan*—"the best I can" or "as well as I can"—on a paper glued to the bottom of the seat. Beneath a long explanation describing the workmanship and quality materials which had gone into the chair's manufacture, the label also bore a signature which I struggled to make out—Gustav Stickley.

A few weeks later I had to dig deeper in my pocket because I found a settle which I have only recently discovered was made by Gustav's brother, Albert, who made mission furniture under the Quaint label in Grand Rapids. It had no mark on it, but it was clearly related in both materials and design to the first chair. I seemed to be onto something, and so from there I started looking for other pieces, floundering around, knowing very little since the Arts and Crafts Movement in the early 1960s was largely neglected and little if anything had been written. But the simple, solid and forthright style of this furniture had great appeal to me, and I have never wavered in preferring its company to all others.

As the years passed I learned there were more Stickley brothers, all Wisconsin born, making this kind of furniture: Leopold and John George in Fayetteville and Charles in Binghamton, New York. Along with Elbert Hubbard (Roycroft Shops) and Charles Limbert (Limbert Arts and Crafts), they were among the premier makers of Arts and Crafts furnishings. I found that hammered copper wares, pottery such as Rookwood, and Navajo Indian carpets all seem to fit nicely with the furniture. One day I came upon a bound set of *The Craftsman*, Stickley's monthly magazine, in a small Michigan town,

and combing through these I discovered what is so well understood now—that indeed this was a movement far exceeding the manufacture of furniture, lamps, textiles, and other objects for the home. Gustav Stickley had intended to communicate a message both through his furniture and his magazine about the importance of art in our daily lives. The things with which we surround ourselves—if honestly, simply, and beautifully made, he believed—could have an enriching value and bind us together as family. Important in the

Craftsman home designs which he published regularly in his magazine were fireplaces and porches, places where the family would gather for social communication and bonding. Along with its simplicity, there is about his furniture a rich warm glow, a steady influence, a sense of calm. Instinctively, I think that these are the qualities I reacted to in his work and what caused me, like so many others now, to collect mission oak. (I might add, however, that the upright structure and inherent morality of some

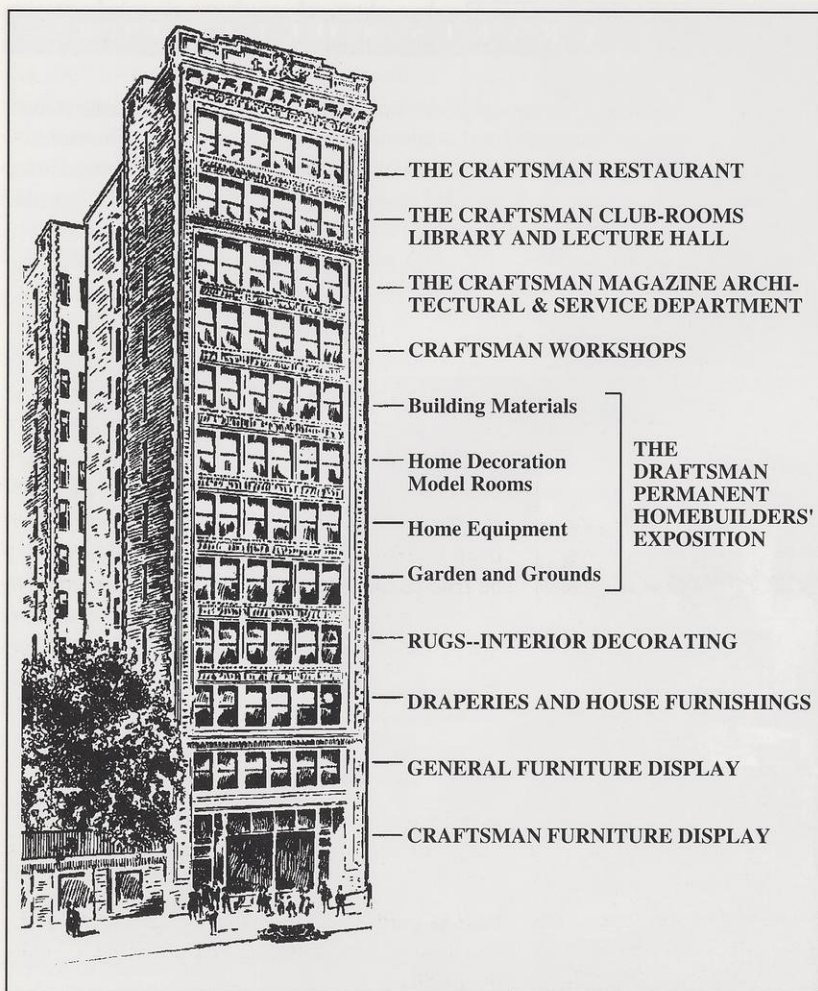
pieces make them singularly uninhabitable for any extended period.)

Unlike the small collectible which fits nicely into a china cabinet, mission oak furniture collecting requires space. For twenty years I lived in a Queen Anne house where the mission pieces looked hopelessly cramped and out of place. The garage and attic were full. Along the way I had been influenced strongly in my thinking by another Wisconsin native son, Frank Lloyd Wright, particularly by his notion that the house, its furnishings, and the land upon which it stood should be in harmony. I also had learned that Wright knew Gustav Stickley and twice had lectured at Stickley's showrooms in the Craftsman Building in Syracuse. They shared this integrative philosophy, and I hoped in a small way that I could too. When I found my present Prairie-style house—oak woodwork, leaded windows, a fireplace in the living room, and two porches—I knew I had the rare opportunity to create a harmonious environment. Over the last five years, this is what I have set out to do.

As I think back on this, it was that first chair that got me started and, to my delight, has let me share so fully in a movement which has roots in Wisconsin and which has profoundly influenced how we think about the home and its importance in our lives.



Living room in the home of Lawrence Jacobsen features the work of various Arts and Crafts manufacturers. Courtesy Wisconsin State Journal, October 11, 1992. Photo by Joseph W. Jackson III.



Exterior of the Craftsman Building, New York, 1913. Courtesy The Craftsman magazine, January 1914.

debt to machine production and foretold the Modern Movement and the work of such designers as Marcel Breuer, Eileen Gray, and Charles Eames. The designs of the late style used the strengths of the machine to advantage. There was none of the structural detailing of the earlier periods, such as the exposed mortise and tenon joints which required hand finishing. Stickley was now creating within the language of the machine rather than the language of hand production.

This apparently subtle difference anticipates a profound change to the Modern Movement in which designers think exclusively in terms of the machine's capabilities and create designs which amplify those strengths. For example, while Stickley used only solid wood during the earlier periods, laminated wood and veneer for panels were used for late-style furniture, involving techniques which required machinery to accomplish skillfully and efficiently in large production.

Like Morris before him, Stickley used the written word as one of his most important instruments for conveying and promoting

his idea of a new industrialism. In 1901 he began publication of *The Craftsman* magazine which "furnishes a means of expression for the ethical and philosophical side of the Craftsman ideal" (*Catalogue*, 1901). *The Craftsman* is the best evidence that Stickley viewed himself not just as a craftsman or businessman manufacturing products, but as an articulator of an Arts and Crafts philosophy appropriate for a democratic American society. Articles in *The Craftsman* reflected the wide breadth of topics which characterized his interests, including decorative arts, political reform, health, literature, music, interior design, education, poetry, economics, politics, gardening, art movements (including Japanese and Native American), and house design, among many others. Stickley himself contributed many articles; but writers as diverse as poet Amy Lowell, botanist Nathaniel Britton, educator Arthur Davis Dean, social reformers Jane Addams and Jacob Riis, financier Joseph French Johnson, poultry expert Harry Miles Lamon, and authority on Asian culture Berthold Laufer also expressed elements of Stickley's unique vision. The success of the journal is evident by the fact that *The Craftsman* became the principal journal for the dissemination of the Arts and Crafts Movement in America.

In November 1906, Stickley wrote an article for *The Craftsman* titled "The Use and Abuse of Machinery, and Its Relation to the Arts and Crafts." In it he argued that the solution to the problem of the machine required re-establishment of the spirit which animated traditional craftsmen, not their traditional techniques of production, as they responded to the "common needs of common people."

"The principle to be established appears to me to be, not the supremacy of the hand over the machine, but the supremacy of the thing that is needed over that which is made more or less as a pastime," Stickley stated in the article. His principal concern was that objects produced be useful, perfectly fitted to the purpose they were intended to serve. This concern probably reflected his familiarity with and respect for American Shaker ideals and design acquired from frequent visits to the Shaker community in New Lebanon, New York, near his home. In this commitment Stickley turned resolutely away from the past and set his course toward modernism and a pragmatic, functionalist approach to design which he described in an article in the December 1903 issue of *House Beautiful* magazine as a "structural style," and which he later called the Craftsman style.

This approach liberated Stickley to explore the new capabilities presented by machine production. He came to realize that the machine could become as effective a tool for the modern craftsman as saws, planes, and chisels were for the traditional craftsman. "To use a good machine that runs well and

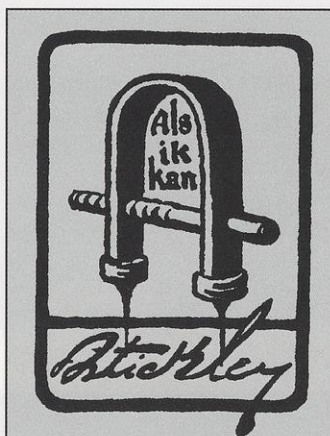
does its work as if by magic affords fully as much pleasure to the worker as the most interesting hand work," he wrote. Its primary benefit was that it relieved the craftsman from the tedium and fatigue of purely mechanical toil, which in turn gained for him time for the thought necessary to work out the design and the finer touches that only hand work could achieve. "So long as he remains master of the machinery it will serve him well, and his power of artistic expression will be freed rather than stifled by turning over to it work it is meant to do."

As the title of his article suggested, Stickley had come to realize that the difficulty rested not with the use of machinery, but with the abuse of it. Modern society had let the machine become the master. The result was excessively ornamented designs, such as can be seen in the Revival styles, in an unending search for novel yet purposeless forms. In his mind, although not machine produced, Art Nouveau and even some Arts and Crafts objects succumbed to excessive ornamentation. Stickley concluded, "If people would reject all machine-made ornamentation as false to the fundamental principles of decoration and therefore inherently bad, they would go far toward limiting the machine to its legitimate uses, and the best and most vital forms of handicraft would spring up spontaneously and flourish under modern conditions as lustily as they did of old."

With national exposure from *The Craftsman* journal, and increasingly wider distribution of his furniture and other household art products, Stickley's influence grew substantially. It was enhanced with development of a line of Craftsman houses through the Craftsman Home Builders Club which provided readers with house plans detailed enough to be built by local contractors. The houses were successful, with Stickley claiming in 1915 that \$20 million had been spent in that year alone to build Craftsman houses. The development of house designs completed the unified Craftsman environment Stickley envisioned for his furniture and decorative arts. The houses were intended to be set in naturalistically designed Craftsman gardens (the instructions for which were given in the journal) and filled with the furniture and household art objects available through the Craftsman catalogs.

With the success of his house designs and other related projects, Stickley's operations rapidly expanded. In 1913 he opened a twelve-story building as headquarters for Craftsman enterprises just off Fifth Avenue in New York City. He expanded the retail outlets for his furniture and planned to develop a school for boys as part of Craftsman Farms in Morris Plains, New Jersey. However, a combination of too rapid growth and a change in

the market away from the modest, solid Craftsman style in favor of the new lighter Colonial Revival style caused a reversal in Stickley's fortunes. With little forewarning the company declared bankruptcy in 1916. Although Stickley tried to recoup in various ways he never recovered. He lived with his children and grandchildren in Syracuse in a house he had lived in early in his career. He died there in 1942.



This mark was used by Stickley in various versions through the years. Previously used by William Morris in England and by the Flemish painter Jan van Eyck, the motto translated means "if I can" or "as well as I can" and was interpreted by Stickley as an inspiration to achieve excellence. He combined it with a joiner's compass, a basic and essential tool of a wood craftsman.

Although Gustav Stickley's career of roughly two decades was short compared to the careers of many of his contemporaries, in retrospect his contributions were enormous. He was able to reconcile the highest standards of craftsmanship with the vast new potentials of the machine. He made it possible to think in terms of mass production, but with each object bearing the mark of an excellent craftsman who had been involved in its design. Each object would be true to the Arts and Crafts commitment—in meeting a need, in the artistry of the form, and in the flawless manufacture of the product. Designers of the Modern Movement would be the beneficiaries of Gustav Stickley.

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Industrial Designer Brooks Stevens: Businessman, Engineer, and Stylist

by Anne Woodhouse

The career of Brooks Stevens spans an interesting period in the history of design: the heyday of the independent industrial designer. The term industrial designer came into use after World War I to describe those who created the distinctive appearance for a manufactured product. The earliest designers usually were employees of the firm which made the product, and by the 1980s most manufacturers had permanent in-house design departments. But for the period in between, the design was often created or influenced by outside design firms. One of the most important of these was Brooks Stevens Associates.

Brooks Stevens was born in Milwaukee in 1911, and even as a boy he enjoyed sketching and was interested in automobiles. At Cornell University in the early 1930s he studied architecture, but the Great Depression was not an auspicious time to begin practicing architecture. Instead, after a brief period spent designing packaging for a food products company, he established his own design firm. The firm grew to employ other designers, to attract hundreds of clients, and to design thousands of products.

Stevens is remarkable not only for the length of his career, but also for the wide range of products he and his firm designed. He always considered his Milwaukee base of operations to be a strength, for he was closer than his New York rivals to the sites of manufacturing plants in the Midwest. Perhaps because of the variety of products of these companies, he attracted an impressive number of clients and designed a wide array of products for them. Of the hundreds of firms which retained Brooks Stevens Associates, many are well known, and the Stevens-designed products are legion: Evinrude boats and outboard motors, Allis-Chalmers tractors, Willys Jeepsters, Hamilton clothes dryers, Mirro colored cookware, the Milwaukee Road Olympian Hiawatha train, Lawn Boy power mowers,



Brooks Stevens in his office in 1988. Photo by J. Shimon and J. Lindemann.

Wagner carpet sweepers and vacuum cleaners, Studebaker automobiles, Roadmaster bicycles, Miller beer packaging and a logo, even one version of the Wienermobile for Oscar Mayer—the list goes on and on.

Stevens became an able spokesman for industrial design, both within the field and as a popular speaker before general audiences. He was able to condense the important points about his profession into a single heavily-packed sentence—industrial design involved “the application of basic design principles, plus knowledge of engineering and materials, plus understanding of manufacturer’s problems and function of product, in order to reduce production costs, increase sales, satisfy the consumer, and improve the product by improving its performance and appearance.” All these elements were desirable for success.

But it was not enough to create a new design for a company; it was also essential to consider the human element involved. First, the professional designer had to work smoothly with the firm’s employees, who may have created the product’s former appearance. The designer also had to build a consensus about the final design using all the perspectives to create an end product better than either the employee or the designer could



have created alone. The designer also had to persuade management to support the new design, or it stood no chance of being produced. Finally, it was necessary to be able to gauge popular taste to determine whether the product with the new look was likely to sell well. The industrial designer, Stevens believed, must be “businessman, engineer, and stylist, in that order.”

In designing a new product, Stevens had to consider all the parameters involved. What was the product? If it already existed, what was the technology and tooling involved in making a change? If a new shape required re-tooling dies, how much would it cost, and would the cost be acceptable to the company owner? What design concessions were necessary to insure proper function of the product?

Stevens defined three basic stages in the development of a new design. The first, or preliminary design phase, involved the creation of dozens or hundreds of rough sketches, many of which were shown to the firm’s engineers. After much discussion, criticism, and modification, a single approach was agreed upon. During the second stage, the designer refined the idea and prepared color renderings which were more highly detailed. Sometimes the designer made three-dimensional models in wood, plaster, or fiberglass. Additional details were discussed, such as color, finish, and company identification nameplates. In the third stage, the designer prepared working drawings showing all parts of the product and their measurements. The designer also was available to discuss problems as the product was set up for manufacture.



TOP LEFT: Brooks Stevens meeting with the Edmilton Corporation on the final design of the Petipoint Iron. TOP RIGHT: Hamilton automatic clothes dryer. 1938. ABOVE: Miller packaging including the new “Select” clear bottle with “soft cross” on the neck. 1942.

Two themes which underlie much of Stevens’s work are his lifelong fascination with the potential implied by mass manufacture and his personal love for automobiles and other vehicles. Although he designed several custom vehicles—including a motor home for William Woods Plankinton of Milwaukee, cars for movie stars, and a golf cart for Jackie Gleason—and his personal collection of antique automobiles grew into a private museum, it was as a designer of items intended to be produced in quantity that Stevens really made his mark in American society. The Willys Jeepster, a redesign of a World War II jeep for postwar civilian use, showed his ability to adapt existing technology for a future consumer in a vastly different society.

Career Chronology

- 1911 Brooks Stevens (full name Clifford Brooks Stevens) born in Milwaukee to William Clifford Stevens and Sally Stevens.
- 1918 Stricken with polio. Parents support his rehabilitation efforts and his interest in drawing and design.
- 1929 Enters Cornell University to study architecture.
- 1933 Returns to Milwaukee; works for Jewett & Sherman Company in package design. Father, an engineer with Cutler-Hammer, encourages a career in the new field of industrial design.
- 1935 Sets up own design firm. Earliest work is with Milwaukee companies.
- 1937 Clients from outside Milwaukee, a few outside Wisconsin. Name of firm becomes Brooks Stevens Associates. Anthony Reed joins the firm as design engineer.
- 1939 Thirty-three accounts described as "automotive, commercial equipment, household equipment, industrial equipment, toys, agricultural, marine, machine tools, and labeling and packaging." Firm designs Children's World for New York World's Fair.
- 1940 Fifty client firms.
- 1942-3 Spends years of World War II doing design work for war effort and planning for the postwar future. Writes articles and makes presentations to business and professional groups on postwar design possibilities.
- 1944 Recognized by his peers as one of fifteen founding members of Society of Industrial Designers (He is the only surviving founding member).
- 1945 John Hughes, James Floria, and Anthony Reed become Stevens's partners.
- 1952 Annual retail sales of Stevens-influenced products estimated at one billion dollars.
- 1950s-90s Continuing long-term working relationships with several clients.
- 1965 Excalibur car production begun; continued under sons David Stevens and William (Steve) Stevens.
- 1981 Youngest son, Kipp K. Stevens, becomes president of Brooks Stevens Associates.
- 1983 Brooks Stevens Chair of Industrial Design established at Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design.
- 1993 Stevens continues to consult and teach at Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design. Firm continues under Kipp Stevens.



Willys Jeep station wagon. 1948.

Stevens's work for Studebaker, a company under financial pressure from the Big Three auto makers, included a restyling of an existing car to create an appealing new look for the 1962 Hawk while retaining existing mechanical systems to avoid expensive re-tooling. The Excalibur, which incorporated style elements of 1920s classic cars, was meant to appeal to drivers of the 1960s and later who wanted vintage style combined with modern mechanical systems.

While automobile styling continued to influence the firm's output, it was only a part of the work. Outboard motors and motorboats were an important part of its business almost from the beginning, and designs by Brooks Stevens Associates have influenced the field of marine products for decades. Stevens occasionally borrowed design details from automobiles for his boat designs, including a wraparound windshield, fins, and bucket seats. One 1958 model was even dubbed the "Station Wagon of the Sea."

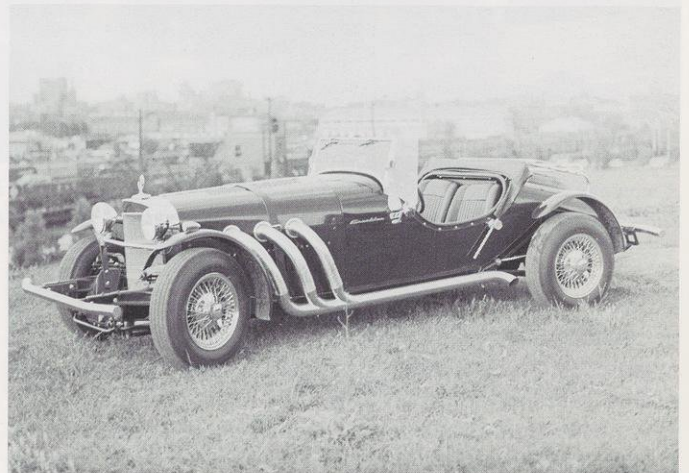
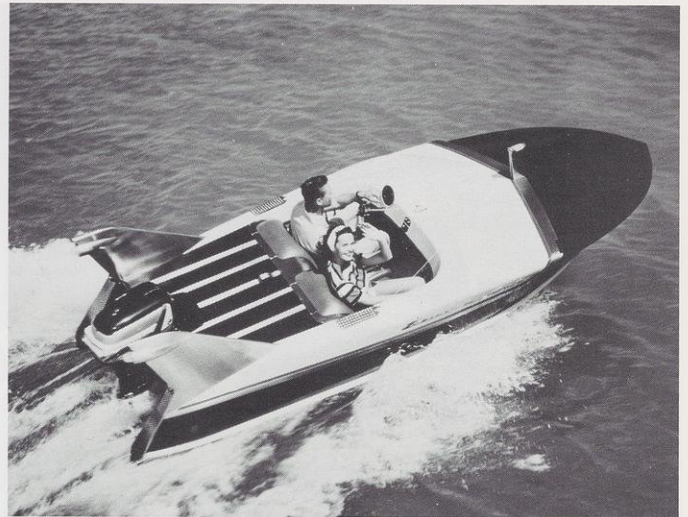
He also was interested in the creative use of materials in design, such as the potential of the light but strong aluminum in the Scimitar automobile. His work for the Milwaukee Road included the use of Formica panels in the interior of the railway cars instead of the traditional wood, which allowed for easier cleaning and for the introduction of pattern and color. Other early plastic designs included a line of kitchenware. Stevens realized the potential of plastics for freeing the designer from the limitations of traditional technology and showed this by creating a design for a set of plastic dinnerware with one flat edge on the plates. Because plastic was molded rather than thrown on a potter's wheel, a circular shape was no longer necessary for a plate.

Stevens was well aware of the importance of flair and excitement in designing or restyling a product. His early work in the 1930s and 1940s reflected the prevailing "streamlined" style, which featured parallel lines creating the appearance of speed, even in household appliances. The air-cooled Petipoint iron with its flashy fins and the Steam-o-Matic steam iron with contour lines visually lightening its bulk each had an aerodynamic quality which could make a mundane item seem glam-

orous. Both the Wagner carpet sweeper and the Hamilton clothes dryer featured a clear “window” to pique customers’ interest by allowing visual access to the inside of the machine, revealing movement inside.

Sometimes appealing to the customer’s eye involves the addition of color to products usually considered bland, such as cookware, household appliances, or small motorized vehicles. The power of suggestion can lend a psychological advantage in the creation of a popular product. “Lawn Boy green” and “Evinrude blue” are examples meant to suggest natural colors—the green of grass or the blue of water—and intended to make the public *want* to mow the grass or take the boat out on the water. Even Stevens’s work on children’s play equipment shows awareness of the importance of details to fuel the imagination—for example: tricycles shaped like rockets and bicycles styled like motorcycles.

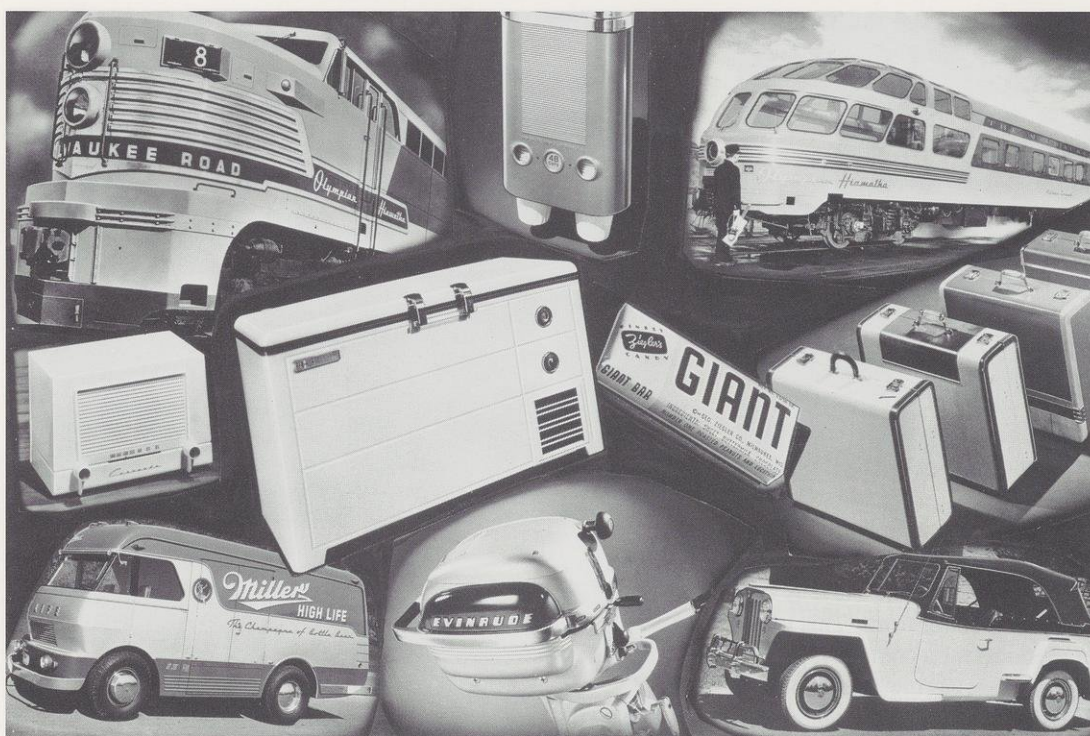
Designers must be aware of the image a product projects. On a corporate level, businesses often wish to maintain a consistency in how their products are perceived. The Stevens firm was often called on to create a *unified look* for firms. This might mean designing many different products for a company, including stationery and business forms, packaging, the products themselves, and sometimes delivery vehicles and even corporate logos. For Gamble-Skogmo, Stevens’s work involved the creation of a name and identity for each of the company’s major product divisions, as well as product design and packaging. For Miller beer, Stevens’s commissions ranged from early delivery trucks to packaging (which, when stacked, formed its own advertising display) to the soft cross X-shaped red logo. For the Milwaukee Road, Stevens designed a multitude of products from the train cars themselves (including a panoramic observation car) to uniforms, ticket envelopes, and cocktail napkins.



TOP: Evinrude Lark, the first complete styling of a boat and motor together. Tail fins housed ski tow-rope and running lights. 1956.

ABOVE: Excalibur SS. 1964.

LEFT: Die Valkyrie, built for a syndicate from Ohio who desired a unique car with a removable hard top. Shown here on the way to the 1954 Paris Auto Salon.



A montage view of some of Brooks Stevens's designs in the mid to late 1940s including the Milwaukee Road Hiawatha train, Willys Jeepster, Wheary Luggage, Evinrude outboard motor, and Ben-Hur chest freezer.

Brooks Stevens enthusiastically believed in the importance of design and image in selling products. Occasionally his picture appeared in product advertising and his own image was considered to be a glamorous aid to product sales. His strong advocacy of "planned obsolescence," including a mention in Vance Packard's *The Waste Makers*, has been misinterpreted to mean that he advocated deliberate waste. He is careful to explain that by planned obsolescence he means creating the desire to own a product "a little newer, a little better, a little sooner than is otherwise necessary." The replaced products can then be resold or recycled. In public speeches and in printed debate with another well-known designer, Walter Dorwin Teague, he has argued for the idea of regular redesign of products to stimulate sales and the manufacturing economy. Regular restyling can give additional opportunities for improved function and technology as well as appearance. Planned obsolescence, Stevens believes, really means "planned product improvement."

Stevens is a strong advocate of design education, and he has been a lecturer and consultant, first at Milwaukee's Layton School of Art and later at the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design (MIAD). The Brooks Stevens Chair of Industrial Design was established at MIAD in 1983, and Stevens continues to consult there and teach tomorrow's designers.

He has always been interested in the future. Part of a designer's job involves thinking about and planning for change. Sometimes this is done in a realistic way, and sometimes in a prophetic or futuristic, imaginative mode. Dreaming up a design which is *too* futuristic may help to define what is and

what is not possible. One of the potential designs for the Hamilton dryer redesign shows a futuristic, bubble-topped model, which was not pursued because of a decision to utilize existing tooling.

Stevens was able to predict future directions for design and lifestyle. In 1963, he projected an automobile called the Autofamilia, which incorporated climate control, folding tables for reading or card playing, a hair dryer, refreshment center, and rear-seat television—a veritable "living room on wheels" powered by fuel cells. For years, his work for Evinrude involved the creation of a fantasy boat to draw attention at boat shows.

One of these creations,

the Helibout, featured a helicopter propeller atop a runabout boat; another was a circular boat inspired by the 1957 interest in flying saucers. His design for a Milwaukee civic center, though never built, prefigures the modern convention center complex.

But Stevens's speculation about the future has always been tempered with practicality. Although he was among those who spent the years of World War II thinking about products to be made of plastic, his enthusiasm was balanced by skepticism. He believed that designers must be careful in projecting the use of materials such as plastics, known to be appropriate for small objects, into the design of large vehicles, which must withstand the stresses of transportation. He also cautioned that a car with a plastic bubble dome, however attractive, could cause over exposure to the sun! His practicality is also evident in his attitude toward the evaluation of a design. Stevens realizes that the customer will ultimately decide the success or failure of a design or a product and has said that he would rather receive notice of good product sales than win design awards from art museums for his work.

Businessman, engineer, stylist. The career of Brooks Stevens has spanned more than half a century, and it has allowed him to utilize these talents and more—he has been spokesman, salesman, consensus builder, showman, analyzer of public taste, image creator, educator, visionary. Now in his ninth decade, Stevens lets others contemplate the past while he looks to the future. ■

Photos courtesy Brooks Stevens Archives.

Memoirs of a Bronco-busted Geologist

by Reid Bryson

There is a Lakotah expression, *akita mani yo*, which means “observe everything as you walk.” I learned the wisdom of this advice early in my career as a geologist.

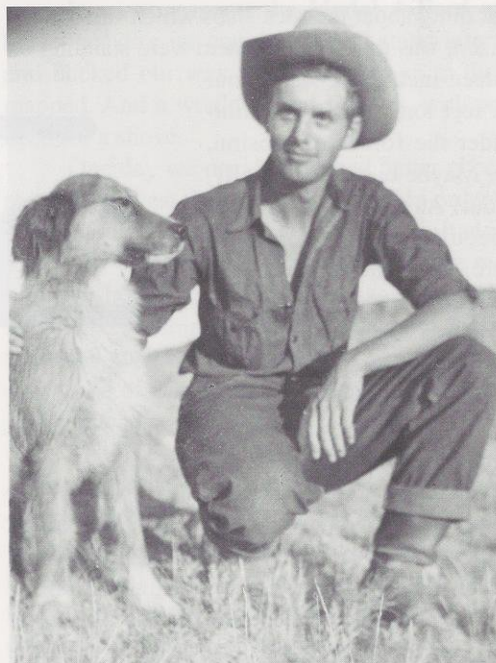
It was in 1939 to be exact, during my real introduction to the West. Oh yes, I had made a grand tour with a college group the year before, but, like Teddy Roosevelt, I confronted reality as a true greenhorn, and for me it happened during that summer of 1939. My experience began at the University of Wyoming geology camp in the Snowy Range west of Laramie and ended in the Freezeout Hills where I did some surveying for the Wyoming Geological Survey.

Where are the Freezeout Hills? Why, in Carbon County, near Medicine Bow, the town in which Owen Wister’s classical western novel *The Virginian* opens. Medicine Bow is seventy-five miles or so northwest of Laramie and about fifteen miles south of the Freezeout Hills. Actually I had never heard of the place when I first went there in the company of my field partner, Mike Maravich. Mike was the son of a coal miner from Gebo, Wyoming.

I would guess Medicine Bow hadn’t changed much in the years since *The Virginian*’s visit, except for the addition of a gas station to the sparse collection of houses, general store, and small hoosegow. I believe there was some kind of small, ramshackle hotel associated with the saloon, if my memory doesn’t fail me. ‘Course one’s memory tends to get a little colored when events are relived and retold dozens of times over the years.

The Freezeout Shootout

One event that I remember very clearly involved some big, flat slabs of rock—Dakota sandstone, the rock was called back then. The Freezeout Hills are rimmed with two concentric ridges, or “hogbacks.” The outer ridge, the Dakota hogback,



Reid Bryson
and friend,
1939.

sloped rather gently from the surrounding plains, the slope being more or less the exposed hard upper surface of the Dakota, which was overlaid with softer shale, more easily removed by eons of erosion.

The Freezeout Hills appear as a sort of double elongated dome, the upper part of which has been eroded away. The remainder of the Dakota sandstone layer forms the rather high outer rim which hides the more rugged central area from the traveler who does not pass through one of the gaps in the Dakota hogback to where he can see the second encircling rampart of abrasive Alcova limestone, the central brown sugarloaf domes of East and West Freezeout Mountains, and the high table land we called Wild Horse Mesa.

To the south, the opening through the hogbacks is Pete’s Gap, hard to get to and narrow. To the east is the broader T-Lazy B gap, in which Denver Miller’s T-Lazy B Ranch lay, and through which a road of sorts ran. Between these two gaps, at the southeast corner of the hills, is a low place in both the Dakota and Alcova hogbacks, approached from the southeast over the gentle ramp made by the backside of the Dakota sandstone. It was in this “wind gap” that I found some slabs of rock which excited my curiosity.

Mike and I had been surveying that part of the hills, mapping the geological formations and structures. I ran the alidade and made the map while he carried the stadia rod and decided which points should be located on the map. The wind gap made a good spot for me to set up the alidade, because from there I could see a large area of important rock-type boundaries that had to be mapped. The terrain was not easy to walk over, so I had lots of time to study the scenery and wildlife while I waited for Mike to move to the next spot.

The peculiar thing about the rock slabs which surrounded me, I finally realized, was that some of them were standing on edge. Now, eighteen-inch-thick slabs, four feet wide and six feet long, don't just *naturally* end up, under the forces of erosion, standing on edge. Maybe one, occasionally, but not three or four! As time wore on and I studied those peculiar rocks, I noticed another odd feature. The standing slabs were pock-marked as though someone had been shooting at them with a high-powered rifle, but so were the upper surfaces of those that were nearby, lying flat. They must have been standing when shot at, also. However, other slabs lying a dozen yards away were not pocked.

That night I mentioned the rocks to Denver Miller, the rancher in whose homestead cabin we were staying. He told me the tale of why they were there. As I remember it, he said that back in the 1860s or 1870s a wagon train of emigrants on the Oregon Trail just to the southeast had been killed by a group of Indians. The U.S. Cavalry had arrived just at the end of the unfortunate affair, but in time to chase the attackers. The Indians headed for their homeland in the Shirley Mountains beyond the Freezeouts, but, as Denver explained, their horses were not the equal of those ridden by the cavalry, who were closing in fast. The Indians rode into the wind gap at the southeast corner of the Freezeouts and turned up the sandstone slabs as a crude fortification while they made a stand to rest their horses.

Apparently the cavalry had a guide who knew the terrain. The cavalry forces split into three parts: One part remained to keep the Indians occupied and tied down, one part headed for Pete's Gap to the west, and one part went north to the T-Lazy B Gap. From these gaps the two flanking forces advanced up through the trough between the two hogbacks and onto the high parts of the Dakota ridge which overlooked the wind gap from either side. Thus pinned down, the Indians were lost. The troopers simply kept firing at the rocks on the far side of the fortification until the ricochets had done their deadly work.

I don't know whether this unhappy event is recorded in the annals of the U.S. Cavalry or not, but I do know that when I was working in the same area a few days later I found the ground on the high points to be littered with .44 caliber cartridges. I later learned that the cavalry had used that caliber of rifle. Considering the evidence, it seems entirely possible that Denver Miller's tale was the logical explanation for the pock marks in the rocks.

T-Lazy B Ranch

One of the first questions I had for Denver Miller when we started surveying from his ranch was why he called it the T-Lazy B. He laughed and said that while he had homesteaded it ten or fifteen years previously, it had actually been occupied much earlier by the Trabing brothers. T-lazy B had been their brand. The Trabing Brothers had sold out under peculiar circumstances, he said.

The Freezeouts aren't very good as range land goes. Denver was running about 220 to 230 head of cattle on his twenty-three square miles of land. Either the rains had been better back then or the Trabing boys were using more range land, for they had perhaps 500 head. I suspect the rains were better, because a wealthy Englishman on a buffalo hunting expedition was impressed by the place and offered to buy if the price were right.

The Trabing brothers allowed as how they'd sell but didn't rightly know how many head they had. However they would make a fair deal—they would sell the cattle at a fixed price per head and go by the Englishman's own count of how many there were. To make it easier they would round up the cattle and drive them through T-Lazy B Gap where the buyer could count them as they went by. What the Trabings didn't tell him was that as he counted the strung-out herd, they would drive those already counted to the north, around Wild Horse Mesa, into the hills, and through the gap again.

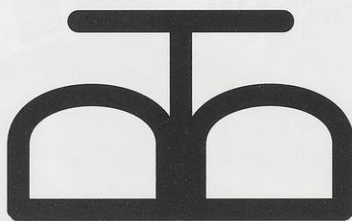
The Englishman counted three thousand cattle and paid for them, and the Trabing brothers were never heard of again. The new management didn't last long, perhaps because of the very high initial loss of the enterprise.

Matched Kitchenware

In the late 1930s there was a little water flowing in the stream through T-Lazy B Gap, enough to support a fair-sized hay field and Frances Miller's kitchen garden. There was no other flowing water, or even boggy spring area in the hills. Only a dry wash occupied Pete's Gap. Over most of the area there was knee-high sagebrush, and a few scrubby junipers or pines grew in especially favored sites on the hills. In fact the sage was so scrawny that we often just drove our Model A Ford through it to get to our surveying site.

Walking through the sage towards Pete's Gap, I noticed that the sage was getting taller, and as I went along a trail it was first waist high, then shoulder high, then well over my head. I recollect it as being perhaps twelve feet tall. I stopped under the shade of the sage grove in wonder at why it should be so tall here and nowhere else. There did not seem to be a better water supply.

Then I spotted an arrowhead lying on the ground. I've rarely found two points near each other, but I looked around



T-Lazy B brand

just the same. What I found, near the dry stream bed, were what we called “tepee circles”—stone arrangements that looked like they had held down the edges of skin tepees. There was no water, though there may have been water in the creek when the Indians lived there. Still, the sage wasn’t as tall even near T-Lazy B Creek, which was still flowing some. Then an answer to the mystery suggested itself. Since I had to relieve myself just then, and the Indians appeared to have occupied the site for some time, I thought that perhaps centuries of additional nitrogen fertilization in the sage around the campsite might have made the difference!

There turned out to be a few other places where the sage had been fertilized. As we built our map into the interior of the hills, we found a number of other occupation sites along the base of the elongated brown dome of Tensleep sandstone called East Freezeout Mountain. These places were all near the heads of ravines leading away from the mountain and apparently once had held springs. On the nearest flat spot outside the ravine, there was in every case evidence of Indian stone work.

The Freezeout Hills aren’t a good source of the materials normally used for making stone tools—hard, uniformly fine-textured, rock-like flint; agate; jasper; or even fine quartzite. We found some quartzite artifacts, apparently made from rock brought in from outside the hills, and we even found a fifteen-pound granite boulder with a chipped groove around the middle that was surely brought from forty to fifty miles away. The best local material, however, was dinosaur bone.

Wyoming is famous for dinosaur fossils. The bone beds of Como Bluff are only a few dozen miles east of the Freezeouts, and the same rock layers are found at Dinosaur National Park off to the southwest in Utah. However, the abundance of dinosaur bone embedded in the shale below the Dakota sandstone in the Freezeouts seemed exceptional to me. The bone itself had been replaced over the ages with silica and was chocolate brown in color. But the hollow spaces of the bone had been filled with the pale blue, translucent form of silica called chalcedony. Broken across, fragments of the bone interiors were beautiful—chocolate with translucent, pale blue polka dots.

Apparently the Indians appreciated the beauty of the fossilized bone. Many such pieces had been used for knives and points, but to me most remarkable was a set of scrapers—five as I recall—ranging from three to four inches across, down to less than an inch. They were very similar in shape and all made transverse to the chalcedony tubes. They constituted a matched set obviously made with an eye for beauty as well as utility.

The Sage Buggy

By modern standards our technical kit wasn’t very advanced. We had our plane table, stadia rod and alidade, a Model A Ford, rock picks, notebooks, some blankets, and a minimum of field clothes. No refrigeration, no freeze-dried foods, no fancy backpacks for us, even if they had been available.

For meat we had a heavily smoked, very salty ham. Each morning we would open the trap door in the floor of the log cabin, take the ham from the pit beneath it, and shake off the mouse droppings. We would then unwrap it, cut off a slice, and scrape away the mold. After simmering it in water for ten minutes to remove a little more mold and some of the salt, we would fry the ham for breakfast. The same process was repeated each evening for almost every one of thirty consecutive days.

In some respects the Model A Ford was better than a horse, because we could just let it stand after we had bumped and bucked our way through the sage to the next area to be mapped. And it would go most places, with only an occasional need for a shove.

One day we decided we had better check the rock structure farther west than we had mapped in order to unravel a geological problem on that side of our area. It also gave us a good excuse to visit the Beer Mug Ranch a few miles farther west. After an hour or so of bucking sage and alkali dust, dodging rocks, and avoiding impossible gullies a foot wide and twenty feet deep, we had traversed ten or twelve miles. There, within a mile or so of Beer Mug Ranch, we were confronted by an irrigation ditch.

There seemed no solution but to drive across it, so finding a likely spot we tried, and got stuck. Another hour of racing the engine, pushing, prying with fence rails, and moving rocks and we were on our way to the ranch. After a cold drink and a great lunch with the rancher and his wife, we decided to travel the forty miles by road back to the T-Lazy B rather than go cross country and face the ditch and sage again.

Leaving the Beer Mug Ranch the road headed up a long hill. As we climbed the hill, the Sage Buggy sounded and smelled a little odd. A quick check revealed there was no oil in the crankcase because the drain plug was missing! We coasted back to the ranch, I whittled a new plug from some sage (naturally!), we “borrowed” some oil, and were on our way.

The next day, seven miles from the Beer Mug Ranch, I spotted a long streak of oil. We stopped, and sure enough the drain plug was at the end where it had dropped after being rubbed loose by the sage. I’m sure no modern automobile, jeep, or off-the-road vehicle would still be operable after the kind of workout our Model A had without oil!

Freezeout

The bucking of the Model A through the sage was so erratic that it was noticeable one day when the bumps became quite regular while crossing a grassy flat. A little poking about in the grass showed that the area had once been plowed and we were crossing the still evident furrows. Then we found, at the base of a nearby hill, the remains of a rock and sod hut and a few bits of iron harness fittings.

The explanation that we got from Denver Miller was that one family moving west on the Oregon Trail had been unable to

go on, and tried to wait for the following year's wagon trains. They built a sod house in the hills about fifteen miles north of the trail near a grassy meadow. Apparently they plowed, intending to plant a winter grain crop—but the winter was severe, and now all that survived intact to mark their passing was the name Freezeout Hills.

Wild Horse Mesa

One place the Model A couldn't go was Wild Horse Mesa, unofficially named because of the herd of mustangs that could usually be seen there. I got my first glimpse of them as I was about to climb up over the cap rock after edging my way up a steep shale slope with the surveying equipment.

It was quite a sight. On the mesa top I could see a dozen cows, half a dozen pronghorn, and two coyotes. But what really excited me was a herd of thirty shaggy horses led by a beautiful red-gold stallion. The stallion was the first to see me coming over the edge of the rock. It was enough to make me forget, briefly, the pain in my knuckles.

Inching up the steep shale slope to the mesa rim, I had been carrying the plane table and tripod over my right shoulder and had the alidade in its case slung under my left arm and held close by my left hand. Of course I slipped and slid down some distance, balanced on my feet but with my left hand sliding on the rocks. First the rough shale sanded holes in my gloves, then through the skin of my knuckles, and it was about to start on the bones when I finally stopped sliding.

The stallion had set me to wondering about what unlikely combination of genes from the shaggy pony herd could recreate what was probably a finer specimen of horse than those that had gone feral from the imported European stock. Had Coronado ridden such a fine mount?

At Beer Mug Ranch they laughed at my speculation, yet there was a sort of sadness in the laugh. Yes, they had seen the stallion—and had often tried to catch him, but to no avail. The rancher explained that some time back, after a few wet years, he had saved up enough money to indulge his long-time dream of owning an Arabian stallion. Shortly after bringing it to the ranch, a herd of mustangs with mares in heat had come close—upwind. The stallion went over the corral fence and off into the hills. His was the seed of the red-gold beauty who had spotted me and whose rearing had bugled the warning that led the herd away.

My only other injury of the summer also occurred on Wild Horse Mesa. We had returned to check on a technical point, this time riding cow ponies borrowed from Denver Miller. My mount was a sturdy pinto (called Paint, of course). The last time I had ridden was perhaps five years earlier on my

grandfather's gentle plow horse, and that made me think I could ride! So going ahead of Mike I turned in the saddle, holding the reins very lightly, to chat with him. That was when Paint put his foot in a badger hole. Down he went on his chin with his hind quarters still in the air. Up I went, off the saddle, dropping the reins. Up came Paint, startled. Down came I, behind the saddle, to grab the pommel. Still more startled, Paint bolted. With each gallop the high saddle back smashed into my gut. Something had to give.

My solution was to get off—but how? I decided to slide off the side, but just then Paint bucked, the stirrup caught my foot, and I was up and away in a double somersault. I came down in a classic one-point landing on my backside—and, believe it or not, in a cactus patch. One buttock caught the brunt of the cactus spines; the other was only bruised, because I had a folding camera in one hip pocket. The camera was more folded than operability allowed after that!

Paint immediately stopped and turned to laugh, or so it seemed. I had to ride back to the cabin, more embarrassed and uncomfortable than hurt. I haven't ridden since that summer, except on a placid donkey in Greece.

Postscript

I returned to college in the fall, about the time Hitler's Wehrmacht swept into Poland. The papers were full of the war news, and even the college students were vaguely aware of it despite the football season. My mind was filled for months with the incredible array of new experiences that had filled my summer, and the memory of the fine people who ran the T-Lazy B.

In mid-winter I had a letter from Frances Miller telling, quite casually, that while she and Denver had been some fifteen or twenty miles from the ranch doing the fall roundup, Denver somehow lost his seating and was dragged a hundred yards by his horse. Frances had to get him back to the ranch despite several broken ribs, a broken collar bone and leg, and a completely raw back. Then she had to take him seventy-five miles to the hospital. She nursed him for several months while doing all the chores herself. No complaints, no laments—simply newsworthy facts.

Then came the part of the letter that was full of feeling. I remember one sentence—verbatim I think: "When I read about the terrible things the people in Europe are enduring, I can't help thinking how very lucky we are." Those were her words, in spite of her own hardship. How could I ever forget people with that kind of spirit? ♣

The translation of akita mani yo is taken from Hanta Yo by Ruth Beebe Hill. Doubleday and Company, 1979.



Digging to China

by Sara Rath

The other day I brought an old patchwork quilt down from the attic. In my memory this was a crazy quilt made of dark, random remnants that had no intention of design, so I was surprised to unfold it and discover it was organized in three cleverly haphazard yet distinct sections of equal size. And it had a rich, almost exotic beauty.

By stitching a triangular patch of dark olive fabric next to a narrow strip of burgundy velvet, for example, and by juxtaposing an almost-round scrap of glossy black velveteen over a square of mahogany serge, then extending it to reach a rectangle of purple twill and another of rough gray worsted, my Grandma Kasper (my mother's mother) created a work of art that still resonates with singular artistry. Even the L-shaped patch of wooly green and black plaid seems comfortable in the corner.

Who wore a skirt in this stormy shade of blue? And what alternative identity did this piece of dusty rose velvet once possess? When I close my eyes and caress the surface I can imagine the joy these textures elicited once upon a time. In my own private darkness the satiny stitches evoke the sensory stimuli of a story; new images evolve out of discarded fragments that probably stuffed the family rag bag.

Although I hadn't removed this quilt from the depths of my mother's old hope chest for at least a dozen years, it came to mind while pondering ways to describe the way I work. Surely my poems, my fiction, and, to a certain degree, my other writing also utilize a similar technique in their construction—a kind of stitching together of various patterns and colors of emotion, recycled qualities of experience, and occasionally mended memories—juxtaposing, arranging information to explore subtle relationships and/or identify similar ironies.

In a strange way the discovery of this crazy patchwork quilt's unexpected beauty was reassuring, because my life has not followed a predictable pattern, either. Thus far, at least, my



Sara Rath

path has been rather unconventional—with wildly erratic turns very much like the tracks of embroidery floss that change from a golden yellow feather stitch to a lipstick pink button-hole stitch in an instant; the way an impulse of spontaneous joy zigs around a corner to incite an introspective moment, whether I've wanted it to or not.

Because I am by nature an organized and orderly person, I have a strong need to make some sense out of these unexpected and often peculiar twists and turns. Just as dreams may do while I'm asleep (organizing disparate elements and

coagulating daily events into a surreal landscape of meaning), writing poems and composing stories helps to create an (awakened) sense of order and meaning and sometimes unexpected beauty out of an otherwise chaotic assemblage.

Although I like to play with that dreamlike quality, I always depend on basic truths to carry the thrust of my childhood memory poems. I might reframe these memories from a new point of reference, glancing back with the insight of an adult who can unveil new shades of meaning in old snapshots and watch tangled relationships unravel. Certain images persist that I am driven to develop, dissect, dissemble, deconstruct. I enjoy searching for cynical stories that lurk around old, familiar corners, constructing a multi-layered narrative from the clues. I like to find a new definition of events which may have, at the time, been experienced as curious, sad, or (God forbid) just plain ordinary.



Very early in my writing career I was approached by a woman at an autograph party in a bookstore who said that she had tacked my poem "Down to Earth" (from *The Cosmic Virgin*, Wisconsin House 1973) above her kitchen sink where she drew strength and encouragement from its words. "This is the secret of my organic success," I had written, "I have made / a compost heap of my / sorrows." Her revelation caused me to realize the consequences of my words and the gravity of my responsibility as a writer. I was pleased that a stranger might find solace in a poem I had created from the precarious odds and ends of my own life, yet I was vaguely uneasy that my words held the power to so deeply influence another woman's determination to surmount personal obstacles.

I've kept an almost daily journal since high school, tracking the crossroads I've approached and the dead ends I've smashed up against. Noting the marginalia of my days and the remnants of my thoughts is not too far removed from shoving scraps into a ragbag or tossing leftovers into a compost heap. This is the genesis of my poems and stories; they germinate in these journals and are paired up with flashes of inspiration filed as *Poem Ideas* jotted on slips of paper that I find stuffed in my handbag or the glove compartment of my car. Many of these scribbles languish, wither, and die. It depends on whether or not the images they call to mind excite me when I review them later on.

Today, for instance, I opened a book, and a parking ticket from Meriter Hospital/Madison General fell on the floor. It was validated November 16, 1990, and in the corner I'd noted, "If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there," which I'd attributed to the Cheshire cat in *Alice in Wonderland*.

In a notebook that I carry is a brief description of a machine called "Vend-a-Bait" in front of a Mini Mart in Nau-

voo, Illinois, which on June 16, 1987, offered three selections of night crawlers, one of red worms, and one of chicken livers—at \$1.25. I haven't used that information yet, but I know where I will, very soon. The same goes for a notation made a month later: "It's Pie-a-rama Day at the Tomahawk IGA." (It even rhymes!)

On the other hand, immediately following the pie-a-rama I wrote, two years later: "Here I am, a long way from Tomahawk, on the commuter train from Boston to Ipswich, 9:30 a.m. Seven stops on the T to get to this station; I sat backwards and felt queasy to begin with. Ipswich is my destination but I don't know where I'm really going, these days. The anxiety is beginning to wake me in the middle of the night in a cold sweat."

Hmmm. "*If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there . . .*"

For some reason this also calls to mind the mention I made while on a North Carolina beach last spring of an ad in a catalog for a battery-operated drill a child could use in the sand for "digging to China." I recalled how I used to dig enormous, enthusiastic holes in Mother's garden, saying I was digging to China, imagining the bottom of the deepening hole turning warm beneath my bare feet as I neared the molten core of the earth, my head surely below the curve of the horizon already.



The extent of my writing career is not really represented by my published work, though it's always fun to check the card catalog in a new library to see how many of my books they have on their shelves. (I think only my home town library in Manawa has the entire collection of books: four collections of poetry and three non-fiction titles.)

I began writing, *really writing*, in 1963 when my children were still babies. I was only twenty-two, and we were living in Gays Mills where my husband was starting a law practice. He said it wouldn't look good if the village lawyer's wife went out and got a job; it might seem as if his fledgling practice weren't successful. I convinced him that writing could be done relatively invisibly, in secret, sort of under cover.

My first poem was published that fall, in August Derleth's literary magazine *Hawk & Whippoorwill*. Around the same time, because I felt rather isolated way out in the Kickapoo Valley, I sent membership dues to the Wisconsin Regional Writers Association. My first short story was published shortly after that, and in 1966 I risked even more public exposure with my own weekly column in *The Boscobel Dial* and *The Crawford County Independent*. This was good practice in meeting deadlines and coming up with provocative, engaging material. I also learned to





face criticism and complaints from newspaper readers who didn't always agree with my increasingly liberal point of view.

Nevertheless, the Wisconsin Regional Writers Association and later the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets continued to be influential in my development. For seven consecutive summers I drove north with the children to attend the Rhinelander School of the Arts. In the meantime my work was maturing, I began to win prizes, and I developed a better knowledge of this complex craft of writing. I'm still learning.

Writing is a lonely, laborious task. Sensitivities that enhance the creative process can hinder one's daily routine. Writers are addicted to the "What if. . ." game, projecting visions of disaster that become an anxious burden in real life but prove an absolute boon when it comes to creating fiction. *What if my heroine gets caught skinny-dipping? What if this pimple is really cancer? What if that cloud becomes a tornado?*

An additional challenge arises when those of us who choose to write do so because we love solitude. We feel we might have something to say but are too shy to do it in public so we hide behind our pens or computer screens.

It takes self-will and self-discipline to succeed as a writer. Yet there are times when the urge to write something, anything, becomes almost an addiction. I reach for my pen like a talisman against harm, or for the protection of a special charm when the flight gets bumpy or a stressful situation looms. I find comfort in the soothing welcome of the blank page.

In my favorite of all books, Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, the main character is advised, "You must leave something behind when you die . . . a child or a book or a painting or a house or a wall built or a pair of shoes made. Or a garden planted. Something your hand touched some way so your soul has somewhere to go when you die, and when people look at that tree or that flower you planted, you're there . . ."

Heeding this advice, I like to track the hazardous and the happier moments of my life, leaving some trace of where I am in this world, where I've been, and where I'm going. And, if I can, I will try to figure out why. I hope my written work will be like a legacy, something to leave behind, like a poem written or a novel. And I hope it will give others pleasure, like the story my grandmother stitched with her crazy patchwork quilt.

POEMS

Dear Jack I'm in Wyoming

I'm surprised, after all these years
to look out my bedroom window and think of you
while I awake to the Big Horn Mountains
snow drifted down the north slopes

early morning sun sparkling on Cloud Peak.

After breakfast

I walk across the pasture
scuffing sagebrush, heavy dew,

and send a flock of wild turkeys scurrying
into the willow trees near Coal Creek.

I imagine you walking beside me
sizing up those quarter horses

grazing over there and shaking your head
at the lazy tending of this sagging wire fence.

I want to write and tell you
the Crow held these foothills

until the Shoshone and Arapaho moved west.

It seems strange to hear names and places
you used to repeat with reverence
when the West was your religion.

I'm wearing an old shirt of yours today,
a castoff you threw aside long ago
for one of our children. It's blue and faded
and soft as chamois now.

Artifacts

My body has become part of the landscape,
echoing the anatomy of mountains on the horizon
while I lie here in the grass observing
shoulder and arm, thigh and leg against

the red foothills we climbed yesterday,
hiking over the pasture, across Piney Creek and up
to the highest point where he tossed stones
into a rattlesnake den so I could hear their dry

chatter. Then, as a surprise, he
took me to a plateau that faced southeast,
an Indian ceremonial site, a cluster of teepee rings,
circles of bleached stones half-buried

in windblown dust and sage. He left me there,
left me to contemplate surrendering boots
sweater and jeans to lie in the center
of the largest ring, my head, arms and legs

a pentagram of spokes within the wheel of
magical rocks. Instead, I placed a chunk of quartz
in the middle—it had veins like rust—and made
a wish that came true last night. He gave me

an Indian knife he found while camping in
the Big Horns, a flint thumbscraper flaked
to a fine and lethal edge. He knew
how I'd searched and tried to find one,

showed me how well it fit in my hand,
how to cut with it,
how sharp it was,
how easily it could draw my blood.

Porcupine With Magpie

At The Mint Bar in Sheridan you show me
how the wildcat's eyes light up yellow
every time the barmaid rings up a sale.
And you explain how the point count on antlers
of an elk or deer out here is only half

the number hunters use back home
where midwesterners have to brag.
On the jukebox the same song
you've played for me before, saying
it's from our era, your mother's

and mine, and I remember the night
you pulled me toward you, our bodies
fitting closely as we danced in that
dark and smoky roadhouse. I felt
as foolish then in my desire as now

and I ask you to decipher the brands
carved into the wall but I'm not even
listening, knowing only that you're touching
my arm and the smile I'll throw back at you
later when I read my poems or the easy laughter

we'll share while you drive me back
through the mountains will not come
from a wish to cradle you to my breast
like a son, or the funny name you'll give
to the dead animals in the middle of the road.

Dancing with a Cowboy

We waltz around in circles at Buzzy's roadhouse
welcoming the miserable mountain lion
who cowers in his lair above the beer cooler
next to the buffalo head, the antelope

and the Wyoming bumper sticker, "*where
men are men and the sheep are nervous.*"

I watched a sheep herder ask Luann
to dance one day when no one else

was in the bar, when windows shook
in dusty wind and his pickup stood
at the gas pump out in front. Tonight
snow is on the way, why not celebrate

this half-starved, toothless trophy.
"Buzzy never would 'a shot the thing
if it'd been healthy," the cowboy shouts
in my ear. I barely feel his touch;

he holds me stiff-armed, shyly trying
not to move against me until someone's fist
drops a good ol' boy at our feet
where the pooltable usually stands.

"Paint Me Back in Wyoming," the jukebox wails
and I think about painting myself out here
forever instead of east of the Big Horns
where the steady glow of Jupiter

is rising now, closer to the earth
than it has been or will be for thirty years.
The cowboy says he'll buy me a beer. I could
fill those sharp-toed boots of Luann's,

zip her tight Lee jeans in the shadows
of these foothills, be a barmaid of mystery,
shake dice, shoot pool, have
my very own double-wide, a color TV

for the Rapid City station, a big old dog,
maybe a four-wheel-drive with a little
bit of gumption. You get six songs
for a dollar on the jukebox

here at Buzzy's. You can waltz
with cowboys every night, you can
sing along with Patsy Cline. You can
lose your teeth, get lean, and smile.

I Find Myself Vanishing in the City

I must be nearly invisible now.
Here in the library to sidestep the wind
I greet an old man at the foot of the stairs
his face in a book. He does not respond
or even look up. "I've got it under control,"
you told me on the phone an hour ago. There's
a silvery blink of streetlights as I start

into the intersection and am nearly struck
by a passing car. At home you are
burning everything that bears a trace
of me or our marriage. I can imagine
your ritual pyromania on the floor
before the fireplace where we've made love.
Seated on the porch of our cabin we smile

at the camera until we go up in smoke
and settle, a sad lick of ash along with
Valentines, birthday cards, shards and shreds
of evidence caught in dissembling combustion.
Empty storewindows, dark reflections of wet
sidewalks shimmer, mirror my glance,
surprising the woman there. She has more fire

in her eyes than I remember in that photograph
you snapped in the Badlands, my hair whipped
aside by chill Dakota winds, striated moonscape
at my back layered in sallow, deathly shades.
Now the rocks begin to curl, turn black
and flick with flame.

My outstretched hand is charred;

my brown eyes blaze, refuse to disappear.

Backroads, Backcountry, and Backlots: The Inquiring Camera of Jerry Dell

Jerry Dell received the David T. Dresen award in 1993, presented by the Wisconsin Academy for creativity and excellence in the art of photography. The award also recognizes individuals who give freely of their time to help the artistic growth of others.

I find my interests most revealed on backroads, in backcountry, and on backlots. I find excitement there. These are action zones, analogous to edges where natural forces meet—land and sea, forest and grassland, and, in this instance, humans and the rest of nature.

My inquiry examines human attitudes toward the land and human impressions upon the land through landforms and artifacts, prehistoric to contemporary. I rarely photograph phenomena that are widely remarked upon or widely recorded as marvelous or terrible. Others capture the obvious well enough. The images I produce acknowledge that photography reorders

information, especially time/space relationships. I seek both ironic imagery and positive interests in change and succession.

Although I no longer recognize geographic limits to the *Field Notes* portfolio, recent work focuses on North America, especially the American West, in such series as *Natural Acts*, begun in the 1988 fire areas of Montana and Wyoming and extended to burns throughout the country and to “badlands” in general; and *Manifest Destiny*, the idea of which appears to have justified the European-Americans’ drive to occupy and exploit the continent from the eastern coast to the western ocean, regardless of native lands, wildlife, and people. This drive provoked high expectations in the face of great natural odds and seems to remain a central feature of American character. The term *manifest destiny* may invoke the heroic, the brutally exploitive, or, to contemporary sensibilities, the remarkably ironic.

Jerry Dell



North Woods: Coastal Fog Forest, Stonington, Maine. 1988.



Natural Acts: 1988 Galena Burn, South Dakota. 1990.



Natural Acts: Pelicans, Malheur Lake, Oregon. 1990.

All photos are original toned silver gelatin prints, framed 20 x 24 inches. Copyright Jerry Dell.



Manifest Destiny: Sand Hills, Nebraska. 1990.



Manifest Destiny: Jenny's Garden in the High Desert, Happy Valley, Oregon, 1991

Nils Otto Tank: All in All, a Man of Good Will

by Harald S. Naess

The legendary Tank Cottage (correctly pronounced Tonk) is one of the most interesting and unusual historic sites in the region. Now part of Heritage Hill State Park at Green Bay, its existence spanned the years of French and British rule in the New World before what we call Wisconsin became part of America. It is a small museum housing treasures, some of which Otto Tank brought with him from Norway, some of which belonged to his wife Caroline Tank's families, the van den Boetzelaers and the van der Meulens of Holland. Caroline was the last descendent in her family line, and during the nineteenth century crates were shipped to America containing furniture, jewelry, porcelains, fine metals—many of the artifacts collected by the old Dutch burghers through trade with the Orient, "all the choicest and most unusual of its kind." These elegant items graced the rooms of the modest Tank home.

The little house and many of the original furnishings remain for today's interested visitor to see, but what of the people who once called the cottage home—Otto and his wife, Caroline, and their daughter, Mary? Who were the Tanks of Tank Cottage?

In a newspaper article dated 1909, Hjalmar Ruud Holand called Otto Tank "Wisconsin's most romantic pioneer" and told a story of how, after the Napoleonic Wars, the young man had been close to becoming king of Norway. There is no basis for Holand's claim, and the idea, if it existed, most likely was based on the conceit of Otto Tank's father, Carsten Tank (1766–1832). The Tank family had no Norwegian royal background, but Carsten Tank, who owned large tracts of land near the Swedish border, was said to have been the country's richest ship owner and industrialist. He was also a member of the king's cabinet, and his home, Rød, near Halden—known for its magnificent gardens and splendid hunting grounds—was often visited by kings, princes, and foreign dignitaries.

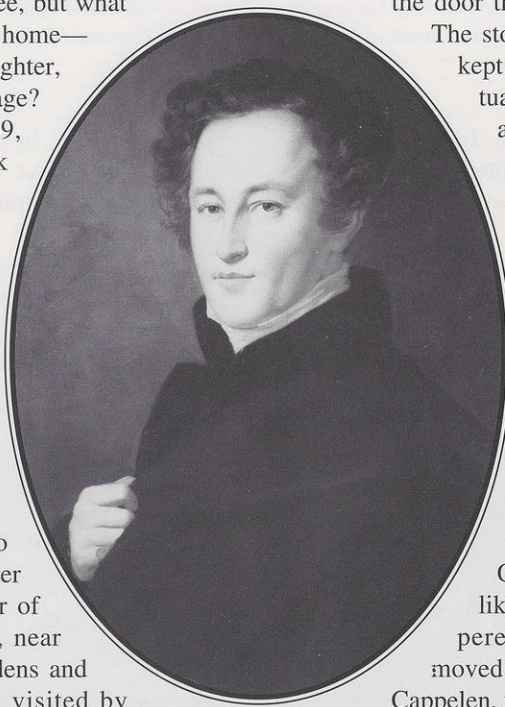
Young Otto Tank was tutored by the Rev. Jacob Neuman, who had to punish the twelve-year-old boy for answering the pastor's wife in a haughty manner. But whatever Otto had inherited of his father's pride was soon to

be shattered. Upstairs at Rød there was a dark room, and in the door there was a small window with iron bars.

The story was told that a mad woman had been kept there for years. This woman, as Otto eventually discovered, was his aunt who had run away with a lover, but Carsten Tank—sent out to retrieve his wayward sister—found her in Amsterdam and brought her home, where the unrelenting father (Otto's grandfather) kept his daughter locked up for as long as he lived.

Gradually Otto learned about his father's double standards. His best childhood friends had been two orphans brought up at Rød, Kaja Jorgensen and Carl Wulff. However, when Otto later fell in love with Kaja and wanted to marry her, he learned that she was his father's illegitimate daughter. Otto also was told that Carl Wulff most likely was his half brother. This news tempered Otto's admiration for his father and moved him closer to his mother, Catherine von Cappelen, who was deeply religious and a member of the pietistic sect known as Moravians.

Between his twentieth and his thirtieth year Otto was influenced by the charismatic leader of the Moravian Church in Kristiania (now Oslo) and was eventually adopted as a member of the church. Before that time,



Nils Otto Tank (1800–1864), probably painted by J. C. Dahl at Dresden. Courtesy State Historical Society of Wisconsin.



Rød, boyhood home of Nils Otto Tank in Norway. Courtesy University of Wisconsin–Madison Memorial Library.

BELOW: Tank Cottage on its original site on the west bank of the Fox River at Fort Howard (Green Bay). Courtesy Heritage Hill State Park.

however, he had traveled widely in Europe. In London, where he stayed in 1819 with one of his father's business partners, he was introduced to the methods of international trade.

He also was interested in science, particularly geology, and in the mid 1820s undertook a continental journey with a group of promising young Norwegian scientists, among them the great mathematician Nils Henrik Abel. Tank visited the Norwegian-born philosopher Henrik Steffens at Breslau, and at Dresden he spent time with the great Norwegian painter J. C. Dahl (who may have done his portrait which now hangs in Tank Cottage). Even Tank's interest in geology was colored by his mother's religion or,

more particularly, by the mystical nature philosophy of his mentor, Henrik Steffens. However, when he later used his knowledge of geology to prospect for gold in Suriname (known for a time as Dutch Guiana) he was equally under the influence of his father's entrepreneurial spirit.



At the end of the difficult 1820s, Carsten Tank was forced to declare bankruptcy. He died in 1832, and most of the estate, including Rød, was taken over by his son-in-law, Peter Anker. In the meantime, Otto Tank had become a member of the Moravian Church, and in 1834 he moved to its Scandinavian headquarters, the little town of Christiansfeld in southern Jutland, where he was in



Tank Cottage Today

Tank Cottage, which was originally built on the banks of the Fox River and later moved to Tank Park on the west side of Green Bay, is now a part of Heritage Hill State Park, 2640 South Webster Avenue, Green Bay. Extensive restoration of the building was undertaken in 1989, and the cottage was again opened to visitors in December 1991.

Further remodeling was done, and in the spring of 1993 a refurbished Tank Cottage exhibit wing was opened to the public with track lighting to enhance the displays, repainted walls, and refinished floors. Educational exhibits now include a hands-on table for children and four story boards complete with photos and information about the residents of Tank Cottage and the worlds in which they lived.

The 1871 era during which Caroline Tank was in residence was chosen to represent the cottage as a home. Antiques of that period, including a great many of Caroline

Tank's possessions, have been used as furnishings and decorations. The rooms are wall papered with reproductions of authentic nineteenth-century American designs. A sample of original wall paper, which will be reproduced in the future, was found in the dining room. From Caroline Tank's letters it was determined that her bedroom was located downstairs, and this has been changed from the previous room arrangement. In Mary Tank's room a tack pattern around the edges of the floor indicated that the floor was covered. The color used for the woodwork in all the rooms was based on paint analyses.

As a result of this restoration, many questions surrounding the history of Tank Cottage and the people who lived there have been answered. For information on hours during which the park can be visited, call (414) 435-2244.

Steven Stearns, Director.

charge of the center's trading activities—including its stores and workshops—and where he proved to be an enterprising and skilful businessman.

In 1838 the daughter of a Moravian minister, Mariane Frühauf, was selected—Moravian-style, by lottery—to become Otto's wife. She was a well-educated young woman, who had spent several years in England and most recently had served as principal of a girl's school at Montmirail in Switzerland. Nevertheless, she happily accepted the humble circumstances at Christiansfeld. In the fall of 1842, after Otto Tank had been ordained as a missionary, the couple set out for South America, destined for Paramaribo in Suriname.

The five years Tank spent in Paramaribo marked an exciting period in his life, and also a time of difficulty and great personal loss. He was intensely active, both as a missionary and as an explorer in the jungles of the back country, and his many colorful descriptions appeared in the Moravian mission's *Periodical Accounts*. His only child, Mary, was born there in January 1843. Tragically, six months later, his wife Mariane was stricken with tropical fever and died. During her illness he stayed home with her for the first time since their marriage, and he later confessed that his restless activity had taken too much

of the time they should have spent together. He was never to overcome the loss of Mariane.

There also appears to have been a rift between him and his fellow missionaries. They reacted against his plans to increase the mission's business enterprise, but more particularly they feared that his efforts to free the slaves would antagonize the slave owners, who would close their plantations to missionary activity.

In 1847 Tank set out on a study tour of the West Indies and the United States for the purpose of collecting information on educational levels and social conditions among former slaves. He was encouraged by what he saw, particularly by the free institutions of the northern United States. Later, in Amsterdam, he published a brochure which condemned the treatment of slaves on the Suriname plantations. The information was well received by the Dutch authorities, but the plantation owners were able to put pressure on members of the Moravian mission in Suriname, and they in turn portrayed Tank as a disgruntled individual whose complaints had been totally exaggerated.

Two years later, Tank came to the United States and was to spend the rest of his life here. At the time, it was rumored that he had found gold in Suriname and was a millionaire.



*Mary Tank, daughter of Nils Otto Tank. Courtesy
Heritage Hill State Park.*

The source of his wealth was more prosaic. In Amsterdam, looking for a mother for his seven-year-old daughter, he met and later married Caroline van der Meulen, a former friend of his first wife, Mariane. Caroline was very wealthy, and Tank was suddenly in a position to set up his own "Christiansfeld" in whatever country proved to be most suitable for the challenge.

During his last visit to Rød in 1849, he had met old friends and described to them his dream of a Norwegian community in America, combining religious service with agricultural activity and higher education. Following the Suriname controversy, Tank for some time had found people at the Moravian church headquarters to be less than friendly. However, with his new wealth and colonization plans, he was once more a person of consequence and thus his relationship with the church was mended.



After hearing of a Norwegian Moravian congregation in Milwaukee, Tank decided to investigate conditions in Wisconsin, and in the summer of 1850 the Tanks bought 900 acres of land on the west side of the Fox River in what is now Green Bay. That same year the Reverend Andreas Michael Iversen (1823–1907), leader of the Milwaukee Moravian congregation, came to Green Bay with his little flock. Tank had rented a large house belonging to the Indian mission of the Episcopal Church, and the newcomers set out to clear the land and build homes. They called the new colony Ephraim. On November 21, 1850, Tank and his wife and daughter moved into an old house—the Porlier cottage, now known as the Tank Cottage—situated on the shore of the Fox River.

Less than a year later, Tank's colony was dissolved. He blamed a German missionary, Friedrich Fett, for unfavorably influencing Pastor Iversen and his Norwegian followers. Fett did not support the old Moravian idea of a commune, and his objections were listened to by the Norwegians who had come to this country eager to acquire private property. Like Friedrich Fett, they, too, did not favor Tank's idea of communal ownership. In his history of the Scandinavian Moravian Church in Wisconsin (unpublished), Iversen recalled how Tank had finally relented and asked the elders to come back in four days to receive individual titles to their land. However, when they did return he lost his temper completely

and declared "in a thunderous voice that he would never give anyone a written contract for land or lots."

In April 1851 the colonists moved out and settled temporarily at Fort Howard. In the spring of 1853 the break-away group moved north to a harbor near Horseshoe Island, where, with a loan from the Moravian home mission in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, they bought 500 acres of land and founded the present-day town of Ephraim in Door County.

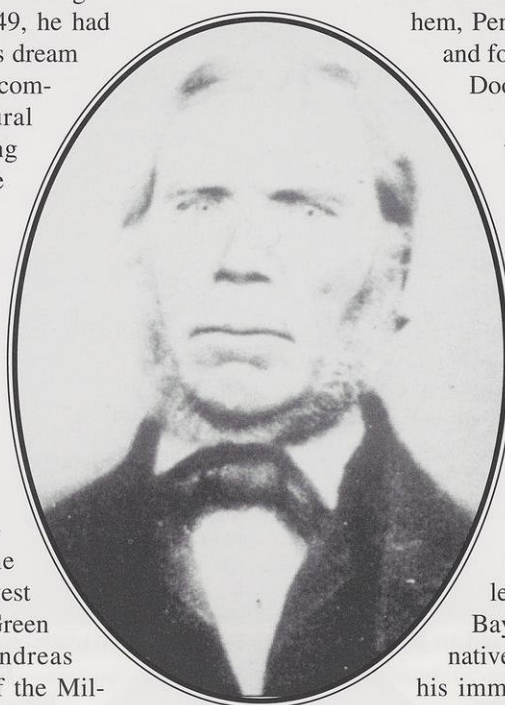
Christian Linke, a German Moravian whom Tank had put in charge of his store, defended Tank's actions. Linke observed that many of the Norwegian immigrants lacked ambition and were incompetent. He found Tank to be intensely active but also understanding and forgiving of those who tried seriously to improve their condition. Linke also looked upon his own countryman Fett as a manipulator who helped to turn the Norwegians against the founder of their colony. It should be pointed out that Tank's family and educational background set him apart from his colleagues—in Paramaribo and also in Green Bay. He was a friend of the black slaves and native Indians of Suriname as well as of most of his immigrant countrymen in Wisconsin, but he had little patience with the many Norwegian-American theologians who engaged in religious politics in order to satisfy their personal ambitions.



After his communal experiment collapsed, Tank lost the confidence of his colleagues in the Moravian headquarters in Bethlehem. "Am I, an ordained Brother, now supposed to be removed?" he asked Bishop Jacobsen, and continued, "Tell me the truth, and I shall not cause any more trouble. In the land of the free, the world is large enough that we don't need to tread on each other's toes." He invested money in the development of the Fox River

and in railroad construction. He owned several farms and a large foundry. But his heart was not in these enterprises, and he became more and more a recluse who spent his time with his books and with Caroline and Mary rather than with business companions and townspeople, who found him arrogant.

In his final years—as we can see from his letters written in English to his brother-in-law Peter Anker in Norway—he thought more and more often of his years in Suriname. "I lived to my 50th year before I



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Tank decided to investigate conditions in Wisconsin, and in the summer of 1850 the Tanks bought 900 acres of land on the west side of the Fox River in what is now Green Bay.

Andreas Michael Iversen (1823–1907).
 Courtesy the author.

owned more land than the Patriarch (Gen 23 v 4) and was much more happy than since we got farms and lands and houses. . . . Oh, if I had returned to my negroes and Indians of South America I would long ago have been in that deadly climate—but the Directory of the Church wished it not—and so the care of my only child became my nearest duty.”

Mary was indeed his major source of joy, but he also worried about her future. She spent a year studying in Europe, and he had often promised to take her to Norway, but the American Civil War intervened. Before the war was over, Otto Tank had died (May 5, 1864). Mary wrote to a friend, “I thought I could not live without him, he who was the light and joy of my life and who alone made my home what it was.”

Mary had inherited her father’s combination of business acumen and missionary spirit. She managed the family estate very successfully, but she also was involved in community work. It appears that caring for the sick and needy after the Peshtigo fire of 1871 undermined her health and led to her death in March 1872.

Mary’s stepmother, Caroline Tank, lived on in the cottage alone among her family treasures until her death in 1891. Unfortunately, in her will Caroline requested that her friend Mrs. Porter “burn all the manuscript papers, letters, sermons etc. that may be found in my house,” with the result that much material which would have helped us gain greater insight into the life and character of her husband is now lost.

Nils Otto Tank, though he was born long after the French revolution, was in many ways a member of the *ancien régime*, with a sense of *noblesse oblige* and with little understanding of the democratic currents of his age. In other ways he was a man of the future—of the twentieth century—as exemplified by his fight to free the slaves of Suriname and by his support of religious tolerance in America.

Tank was a tragic figure. In his letters he often spoke enigmatically about “a higher calling”—instilled in him perhaps by an ambitious father or else by the religious fervor of his long-suffering mother—and though he never revealed the nature of this calling, he claimed it had kept him from recognizing his need for everyday contact with others: his family, his friends, his wife. Tank lacked political and psychological insight—the talent to detect and deal with ulterior motives in the actions of his colleagues and the ability to recognize and respect everyday human needs. For these and other reasons, his idealism was bound to fail.

Though, I suspect, Tank was not gifted with either humor or oratorical skills, he must have had interesting stories to tell. During his teens, King Christian Frederik of Norway and Jean Bernadotte—later King Carl Johan of Sweden—had stayed at Rød. In his twenties Tank had been a student of Henrik Steffens, whose nature philosophy twenty years earlier had inspired the romantic movement in Danish literature. And in his forties he had crossed the rapids and impenetrable jungles of Suriname to explore nature and preach the gospel to the Indians there.

He also must have been a man of striking appearance. He was tall: six foot, four inches. In his younger years he was quite handsome, as we can see from the Dresden portrait. In later life he probably was somewhat intimidating, with his tall frame and a powerful chin inherited from his father. He seems to have been a person who would stand for no nonsense, and yet—so the warm glint in his eyes seems to tell us—he was, deep down, friendly and, all in all, a man of good will. ♣

Nils Otto Tank, his wife Caroline and daughter Mary are buried at the Nisky Cemetery in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.



Sources:

Literature on Nils Otto Tank is available in several languages. His childhood home, Rød, is now a museum which includes an archive containing documents and letters relating to the Tank and Anker families. As early as 1861, J. Wolbers, a Dutchman, wrote about Tank in Suriname. After Caroline Tank’s death in 1891, she often was mentioned in the local Wisconsin press; and on August 29, 1909, Hjalmar Ruud Holand published a full, if not very reliable, account of Otto Tank’s life in the *Milwaukee Free Press*.

In 1924 a German missionary, Siegfried Beck, provided a hand-written biography of Tank, particularly valuable for its assessment of Tank’s activities in South America. In 1949 a Norwegian missionary, Erling Danbolt, presented a full overview, with new and interesting material on Tank’s younger years supplied by the Moravian Archives in Herrnhut, Germany. Øystein Ore’s biography of Nils Henrik Abel (1954) includes letters describing Tank’s continental journey (1825–26), and Øyvind Gjessvåg in 1968 transcribed Tank’s correspondence (1824–32) with his friend Theodor Kjelland.

Important information about Tank and the first Ephraim colony in Green Bay is contained in documents now to be found in the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, including Andreas Michael Iversen’s 435-page history of the Scandinavian Moravian Church in Wisconsin and letters from Christian Linke and others.

Nils Otto Tank in his later years, taken from a daguerreotype. Courtesy State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

The Tank Library: Caroline Tank's Memorial to Her Husband

by Jill Rosenshiel

In October 1867 twenty-one boxes of books arrived in Madison, shipped from Amsterdam, Holland, at the request of Caroline Tank of Fort Howard (now known as Green Bay). The crates must have been extremely large. The collection comprised 4,812 volumes and 374 pamphlets (approximately 2,000 titles), primarily in Dutch, French, and Latin. Compare this number, for example, to the University Library at the time, which was estimated to possess 2,600 volumes in 1858 and 4,000 volumes in 1871. The library at Beloit College, the oldest private college in the state, is reported to have possessed 4,000 volumes in 1860, a large proportion consisting of government reports. Therefore, the fact that the Tank collection included nearly 5,000 volumes in 1867 is particularly impressive.

The library itself is extremely interesting, but so are the details—and even mysteries—surrounding the lives of Otto Tank and his wife Caroline, who was the generous donor of the Tank Library to the state of Wisconsin. In the interest of historical perspective, let us begin by considering this document in the archives at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin:

Mrs. C.L.A. Tank, born in Holland in 1803, was the daughter of R.J. Van der Meulen of Amsterdam. On her mother's side she was descended from a distinguished general in the Dutch army, through whom a large fortune came to the family. This lady with her mother and another sister, lived at Oberlin, O. The two sisters were carefully trained and both were great lovers of music and presumably gave instructions in various branches in the Oberlin School. The building called "Tank Home" [at Oberlin], completed in 1897, was the gift of Mrs. Tank as a home for missionary children. In addition to the gift Mrs. Tank placed in the building several valuable and ancient pieces of furniture, among which a desk, inlaid with tulip wood, given by the reigning King of Holland to Mrs. Tank's mother when she was lady in waiting at the Dutch Court. Another piece of historic interest is an oaken toilet stand, once the property of Gen. von Boetzelaer, Mrs. Tank's grandfather,

and used by him as a part of his camp outfit in the campaign in which he led the Dutch Forces to repel the invasion [sic] of Holland by Napoleon I. After the death of her mother, she had charge of the establishment, and remained in the stately home until she became the wife of the Rev. Otto Tank, a Norwegian

gentleman and Moravian missionary. Mrs. Tank died in April, 1891 at Fort Howard, Wisconsin where she lived a number of years. She had a well selected and valuable Dutch library, which she donated to the State of Wisconsin, and which is now at the State House in Madison, Wisconsin.

Copied from the *Christian Intelligencer of New York*, issue August 9th '99 by Peter Fagg, Aug. 15th '99, Madison Wisconsin to Hon. Reuben G. Thwaites, Secretary of the Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin.

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The Tank collection may shed light on the subsequent decline of the Netherlands and its domination by the (Austrian) House of Hapsburg, Spain, France, and England as well as the lessening of Dutch influence in the Western Hemisphere.
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Next, let's consider the bookplate which was created for the Tank Library at the time it was transferred from private hands in Fort Howard to public keeping in Madison, for there is a story in its brief lines:

These books actually belonged to Caroline Tank's father, so we might ask why the collection is called the Tank Library and not the van der Meulen or Meulen Library. After all, Otto Tank died in March 1864, three years before the collection was

presented to the state, and Caroline Tank could have named the library after her beloved father if she had wanted to. Moreover, Otto and Caroline Tank had a prenuptial agreement in which Caroline's property and considerable assets remained hers (though the agreement stipulated that Otto could manage her business affairs.) In other words, she could have seen the collection as essentially her own, or her father's, not her husband's.

Now let us briefly consider the way her name is presented on the bookplate. Caroline Tank always signed her name C.L.A. Tank, and all references to her in State Historical Society publications refer to C.L.A. Tank. It has never been customary for European women to call themselves Mrs. "man's-first-name." So why is Caroline Tank referred to as Mrs. Otto Tank?

Research has revealed some answers. C.L.A. Tank did in fact write a letter, in 1867, to Lyman C. Draper, head of the State Historical Society, requesting that the library be named for her husband, Otto Tank. This was her obvious decision, and we will look at possible reasons later. As for the wording on the bookplate, we can assume it was a compromise, revealing the name by which her husband was known, ignoring the preferred use of her own name, and permitting only initials for her father. (Incidentally, in researching this article, the problem of names was formidable. Inconsistencies abound. For example, we found Nils Otto, Niels Otto, Nels Otto, N. Otto and Otto Tank referred to. Also R.J., Reinhard van, and Rijnhard Jan van der Meulen, and Meulin for van der Meulen. Also C.L.A., Caroline, Caroline Louise Albertina, and Caroline Louise Augusta van der Meulen Tank. Dates are also inconsistent.)



Caroline Tank (1803–1891). Courtesy Heritage Hill State Park.

Caroline Tank's father, the Reverend van der Meulen, was well-educated (he had a law degree as well as a theology degree), sophisticated, and undeniably urbane. He served as a minister of a very important church in Amsterdam. No doubt, as even today, conservative city folk in Holland were considered to be liberal outside urban areas. Although the Tank Library has been described as typical for a Reformed nineteenth-century clergyman, it contains no apologetic works for slavery by Reformed churchmen. It does contain at least one title from 1841 dealing with slavery which coincides with the onset of the Dutch abolitionist movement. Perhaps Caroline purchased it, for even in old age, as a recluse in Fort Howard, she read exhaustively and subscribed to a wide number of religious and secular American and European journals.

Another liberal title is a novel by the first Dutch (women) novelists, Betje Wolf and Agatha Deken. (Incidentally, Betje Wolf's 1790 Dutch translation of an influential French abolitionist book marked a significant change in attitude and led to an increase in abolitionist writings in Dutch; moreover, it singled out the Moravian brethren as the laudable exception to Christian tolerance of slavery.) Van der Meulen's library also included several eighteenth-century descriptions of the Moravian Church.

In May 1848, Moravian Brother Otto Tank published a pamphlet against slavery. It was challenged by a tract in the same year by fifty-nine Suriname clergymen. Unfortunately no copies of Tank's tract are extant in America, although a copy exists in Holland and the British Library lists the rebuttal under Egbert van Emden. Since R.J. van der Meulen was healthy throughout 1848, it is possible that

THE TANK LIBRARY

Given in 1867, by Mrs. Otto Tank, of Fort Howard, Wis., to the
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

The books in this collection were formerly in the library of Rev. R.J. Van der Meulen, of Amsterdam, Holland, father of Mrs. Tank. Mr. Van der Meulen was born in 1768 and ordained in 1792.

For description of the Tank Library, see WISCONSIN HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS, vol. 5, pp. 162–164 and LIBRARY CATALOGUE, vol. 2, pp. 705–719.

he and Otto Tank may have met and discussed Tank's abolitionist tract.

So there is a strong anti-slavery interest evident in the backgrounds of both Otto and Caroline, which brings us to one of the mysteries previously mentioned. If the dates in the van der Meulen genealogy are correct, Caroline and her mother and sister would have lived in Ohio before 1822, before Caroline turned nineteen. Eight miles away in Elyria, Ohio, Reverend J. Shipherd, who had fallen out with the Presbyterian Society and school there, founded Oberlin College as a multi-racial and coeducational institution. Oberlin was a strong center of the abolitionist movement in the United States and a station on the Underground Railroad. It is likely that it was here Caroline first became conversant with and affected by abolitionist ideas which also were an important part of Otto Tank's philosophy. However, it was not until 1833, at least eleven years after Caroline is reported to have lived in Ohio, that Oberlin Colony and College were founded, and therein lies an unresolved question. The fact remains that in her will Caroline provided \$10,000 for the Tank Home for Missionary Children in Oberlin, Ohio. In 1922, Oberlin College acquired the home and used it as a women's dormitory. In 1963 it became a co-ed dorm.

Beloit College, like Oberlin, was founded as a Presbyterian College and educated missionaries and reformers. Wisconsin abolitionist the Reverend Jeremiah Porter, a close friend of both Caroline and Otto, had served as a minister in Beloit and is on record as having given the invocation at a number of public events. (It was Porter's wife who burned the Tank papers and documents, complying with Caroline's request at her death.) Today Caroline's own oil copies of her parents' portraits are part of the collection at the art museum at Beloit College, again pointing to Caroline's abolitionist interests and suggesting that possibly the college was one of Caroline's many charities.

Caroline married Otto Tank on August 22, 1849, exactly seven months after her father died. There are some interesting parallels and contrasts between Otto Tank and van der Meulen: Both had at first followed in the footsteps of their fathers and later



Wilhelmina van der Meulen (1773–1822), Caroline Tank's mother, painted by Charles Howard Hodges. Courtesy State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

abandoned their secular endeavors for lives in religion. Van der Meulen was rotund, accessible, kindly, and bookish. Otto Tank was tall, energetic, outspoken, and kindly. The van der Meulens lived in a milieu of fine furniture, culture, music, wealth—a milieu that contradicts stereotypes of Dutch frugality and abstinence. Otto likewise grew up with wealth, but he chose to follow the Moravians, who were considered excessively emotional by his fellow Norwegians.

The fact that Caroline also supported the Moravian faith is indicated by Tank's offer made in 1858 to the Wisconsin State Legislature of "his large and excellent theological library" (that is, Caroline's father's library) as well as considerable assets *if he were to be granted a charter to start a Moravian College*. The charter was not granted. Yet Otto's lobbying efforts paid off nine years later when the legislature agreed to provide money for shipment of the Tank Library from Amsterdam to Madison when Caroline

presented the gift to the state. Indicative of Caroline's continued support of the Moravians was her offer—during the severe depression of 1878—to the Reverend Andreas Michael Iversen's Moravian congregation of two choice plots of land to ease their financial difficulty, even though Iversen was the man who had replaced her husband as the head of the Moravians, an act that was a great blow to Otto.

The Tank Library has a rather exciting history of its own. First of all, it was reportedly accumulated mostly between 1786 and 1796 *before* van der Meulen married the wealthy Lady Wilhelmina van den Boetzelaer. The collection presumably moved with its owner from IJsselstein to Hoorn to Haarlem to Amsterdam. It was probably relatively easy to acquire the library because books and book dealers were numerous.

We do not know where the books were located between spring 1850 and July 26, 1867, before they were shipped to Madison. In 1900, the collection was moved to the present State Historical Society Library which housed the University Library in its other wing. In summer 1953, the Tank Library was relocated in the basement of Memorial Library at the University of Wisconsin. In 1984 the collection was moved to a secure area

attached to the Department of Special Collections on the fourth floor of Memorial Library; in spring 1991 it was transferred to vaults with temperature and humidity controls.

Though it was part of Memorial Library (albeit in the basement) from 1953 to the earlier 1980s, the Tank collection was mostly inaccessible. A user would have had to consult nine areas for materials in three classifications and three sizes plus an additional three shelving areas to find Tank books. Moreover, the cataloging of 1868 is minimal with many titles not represented. For example, one card includes only the brief title *Variae orationes*, but in fact it represents fifty-four separate publications! In general, the spelling of authors' names was inconsistent with the union card catalog and likely to cause problems for library users.

Now that the Tank Library is in the Department of Special Collections, the Tank catalog cards are prominent in the department's special catalog. The Tank shelf list (a card catalog in shelf order) is available and allows a user to search by subject classification. Nevertheless, it is extremely unfortunate that the Tank books have been relocated so often without the catalog having been improved. And, as mentioned, spelling inconsistencies remain.

There are some distinct advantages to the Tank Library having been kept together. An experienced historian can check the collection against what he already knows—no doubt there are some unknown historical works to be discovered in the shelf list. To the novice Dutch-American—or Dutch or Northern European or Calvinist—researcher, the classic works in Dutch history have been selected. Moreover, the collection as a whole seems to represent quite well Dutch eighteenth-century intellectual history.

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin archival division houses manuscripts from the van der Meulen and van den Boetzelaer estates. Among them are Grandmother Josina Anna Petronella van Aerssem Beyern van Voshol's pious *commonplace book* of about 400 pages begun in 1741. Two folio-size ledgers of about 800 leaves, covering 1782–1812, from Caroline's grandfather, Petrus van der Meulen (1729–1813), itemize great wealth and include many references to transactions with the United States.

During the period of these archives and the Tank Library, the Dutch became rich from Western Hemisphere wealth (and had repeated skirmishes with England). In fact, Caroline may well have learned her English in the United States, not in England as is commonly held. (Her letters in the Lyman C. Draper papers are in idiomatic English with perfect American spelling.) A notebook, *Über die Naturgeschichte von Caroline van der Meulen*, dated 1826, is testimony of her homeopathic skills and of the medical and scientific books in her father's library. It uses American-style handwriting in contrast to the European style of her grandfather and grandmother. These materials, from an

Genealogy

Petrus van der Meulen, b. 1 Jan. 1729, lawyer in Vianen and Ameiden, and burgermeister of IJsselstein, d. 14 Feb. 1815; married to: Clara Henrica Tra Kranen, 26 Dec. 1736–28 Apr. 1813.

First son:

Rijnhard Jan van der Meulen, b. IJsselstein 9 Dec. 1768, received law degree at the University of Utrecht, then studied theology and was ordained 1792 and served in IJsselstein; 1804 to Hoorn; 1806 to Haarlem; 1813 to Amsterdam where he died 22 Jan. 1849

Married in IJsselstein, 16 Feb. 1802 to:

Wilhelmina, baroness van Boetzelaer, 21 Oct. 1773–25 June 1822, daughter of Baron Karel van Boetzelaer (b. 1727), Lieutenant-General, Infantry, famous for his victory at Willemstad in Mar. 1793 and of Josina Anna Petronella van Aerssem Beyern van Voshol (whose *commonplace book* begins in 1741).

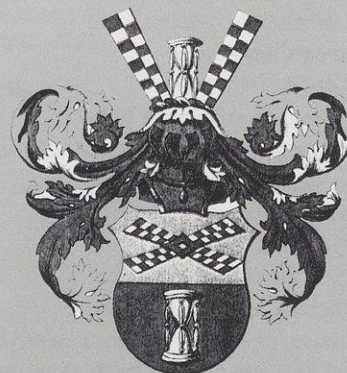
Children:

1) Caroline Louise Albertina van der Meulen, b. IJsselstein 29 Mar. 1803 d. Fort Howard, 1 Apr. 1891; married in Zeist 22 Aug. 1849 to:

Nils Otto Tank, b. Fredrickshold, Norway, 11 Mar. 1800; entered the Moravian Brotherhood in 1834; arrived in Surinam 27 Sept. 1842; father of Mary Fredericka Tank (1843–1872) b. in Paramaribo, Surinam; 6 or 18 months later her mother died; study tour of the West Indies and U.S. gathering information on the education and social conditions of slaves, 1847; d. 4 May 1864.

2) Clara Petronella Henrietta van der Meulen, 10 July 1804–3 Mar. 1832

3) Wilhelmina Johanna van der Meulen, 11 Jan. 1808–14 Jan. 1829



important period in our history, also coincide with the 1784 Treaty of Paris that effectively ended Dutch influence in the United States.

The collection comprises four sixteenth-century, some seventeenth-century, and a preponderance of eighteenth-century imprints. When Caroline Tank presented her father's collection to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Library, the society's fourteenth annual report dwelt on its outstanding sixteenth- and seventeenth-century illustrated editions, and in the society's 1873 catalog of collections, only these early, lavish titles are listed. This seriously misrepresents the scope of the Tank Library. In 1959 Professor George Mosse wrote that the *ordinary* books, the bulk of the Tank collection, were the most important items, because it is precisely these obscure works that have not been reprinted, translated, and made available.

In 1961, professor G.F.de Jonge, in a twenty-page article, described the Tank Library as a typical nineteenth-century wealthy clergyman's collection with strengths in theology, Bibles, Dutch church and secular history, biography, literature, and language. Attendees of the sixth Wisconsin Netherlands Society conference found significant titles for Dutch intellectual history in the collection. Its illustrated Bibles, fine maps, and Christian Judaica have been featured in exhibits.

To be sure, the heyday of Dutch publishing, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, has been studied, but Dutch printing in the eighteenth century remains unexplored. English printers until the middle of the seventeenth century imported their type fonts from the Netherlands. The seventeenth-century Elsevir format of small, compact, legible, uniform books clearly continued. Despite fre-

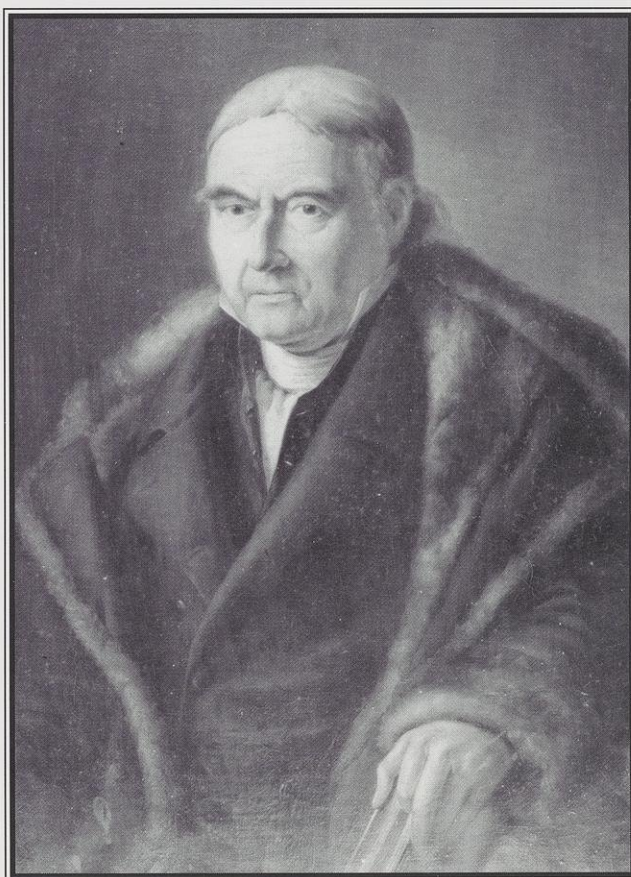
quent aesthetic criticism, the "dull format" also made books affordable.

Conservative sermons and other religious materials are much more likely to be in Dutch. Although Holland was a haven for French printers and ideas, the Dutch government was not nearly so tolerant with regard to materials published in Dutch. (From the Dutch, Peter the Great and subsequent tsars came to understand the importance of translation into one's native language.) The van der Meulens could, of course, read French, German, and Latin but on occasion may have chosen to read the translations into Dutch.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Netherlands were times of great intellectual and technical achievement as well as enormous wealth because of the vast Dutch colonial empire. The Tank collection may shed light on the subsequent decline of the Netherlands and its domination by the (Austrian) House of Hapsburg, Spain, France, and England as well as the lessening of Dutch influence in the Western Hemisphere. The Tank collection also reflects intense religious debates among Calvinist denominations as well as rebellion against the Catholic Church. The Tank Library

reflects well the tenor of its time, including widespread scientific curiosity and new theories of education. (These subjects, I might note, also are well represented in many other collections in the Department of Special Collections.)

Of the approximately 5,000 volumes in the collection, 779 are in fine old vellum binding: 111 folios, 264 quartos, and 404 smaller size. The total number of folio volumes, including vellum, sheep, or paper, is 269. The total number of quartos in various bindings is 737. As mentioned previously, many titles are richly illustrated. The books are



R.J. van der Meulen (1768–1849), painting copied by his daughter Caroline Tank. Courtesy State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

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The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Netherlands were times of great intellectual and technical achievement as well as enormous wealth because of the vast Dutch colonial empire.

stored on thirty-five-inch shelves. There are about 193 shelves of small and regular books, about 22 shelves of large books, and 25 huge volumes rest on flat shelves—in all, 650 feet of shelving.

In a letter, C.L.A. Tank wrote that her father was an old gentleman who belonged more to the past than the future. And what of her husband? Perhaps the joke is on us and Otto Tank's detractors. We now know that Nils Otto Tank, a colorful figure of Norwegian extraction, was not at all parochial. Acknowledged for his opposition to slavery in Suriname (and perhaps in total secrecy in Fort Howard) and his intense involvement with German settlers in Wisconsin and with the state legislature, perhaps Tank should be as well known for this collection of books which he valued and appreciated, a collection rich in intellectual history and cultural diversity. 🍷

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Stream Echoes

by John G. Motoviloff

A brittle ice lay over the Lake Delton slough, and a hoarfrost covered the fallen leaves. A tavern, a boat rental, and some cabins were built around the slough, creating a make-shift fishing and hunting camp. The air was sharp with wood smoke from the cabins, untempered by the sun that tried to spread its warmth over the frozen fields. Pine canopies trapped the cold of last night and held the echoes of a discontented springer spaniel that barked at its master's door. The camp was in some disrepair—an outboard abandoned on the boat dock, towing chains in the sandy road, a toolbox, prostrate on its hinges, near the tavern—but clearly still in use. Erik Seeman and I followed a sign for bait that led us from Highway 23, down a rough dirt path, into the fish camp.

We strode toward the door of a grey, no-nonsense ranch house, looking for worms to start our fishing, which we'd do west of Lake Delton. It had been months since we'd seen each other, and, as restless souls (graduate students in this case, and also high school friends) are known to do, we decided on a spontaneous fishing trip. Erik had driven from Ann Arbor to Madison, my home and our departure point. We lingered last night over stout Wisconsin beer and conversation, but Erik looked fresh, his eyes sharp, his skin ruddy. It seemed miraculous that we had gotten up. My head throbbing somewhat, it *all* seemed miraculous—Erik's jovial presence, the early frost, even the bait sign that stood out on the highway like some economic erratic—out of place, awkward red paint on white post.

Before we could get to the door, we were greeted by a short man, steady on his feet, grey hair combed back in one shock. He must have been hunting and fishing these sloughs for years, his face raw from the wind, fingers the color of the dark, piney soil. "What can I get for you fellas?" he asked. He looked ready to close a business deal or throw a hard right cross, if the need arose—one or both before breakfast.

We told him we just wanted some worms, and, pleased, he sauntered down to his garage for them. Off handedly, he asked something that sounded like *first cab*, which I took to mean first cabin, "Am I staying in the first cabin?"



Main Street, La Valle

"Nope. Just passin' through. Headed out to Vernon County to fish for trout," I said, trying to be taciturn but friendly, a line that Wisconsinites are always treading. I felt I had succeeded, had ceased to be an Easterner for a moment. (Easterners can be either rude—New Yorkers in traffic—or too friendly—"I'd love to live above your cheese shop. How quaint.") I felt good, perhaps a little older and wiser than my twenty-five years.

He was standing up from getting the worms, veins standing out in his head from the bending. He

was quieter than necessary, standoffish, yet civil. "Son," he began, "I'm askin' you if you was in the first horse. First Cavalry. The patch on your jacket." He had the worms, but wasn't ready to do business, an important matter yet to be resolved.

I was wearing my uncle's old fatigue jacket, the yellow patch on the sleeve showing his membership in the First Cavalry. "No," I said humbly, "the jacket's my uncle's." I had not only misheard him—and a man like him has got better things to do than repeat himself—but had worn false colors, and probably revealed myself as a peace freak, a pacifist, a nonfighter. He remained civil, perhaps a bit more reserved, as we paid for the worms, waving as we headed out. We laughed, leaving behind the slough, the old man, the camp that felt of motion and work, the frozen leaves we stirred up. It was getting brighter, warmer. The day was about to begin.

Our self-consciousness gave way to naturalness as Highway 33 zigzagged through quiet towns—La Valle, Hillsboro:

paint stores, old mills, dim Old Style signs—and steep bluffs that ended at valley farms. We were blowing through like the cold wind of last night, my rusted car blending into the hills. Freedom was the loose wheel between my hands, the sun warm on my face, the smell of a hard frost. It was downhill flying, free flying among the steep ridges, the yellowing corn, the rusty oaks.

We took Highway 82 from Hillsboro, now driving along Bear Creek, along farmland, bluffs, fallen oaks, steep clay banks. The windows down, we could hear its mineral-thick, limestone waters; Erik was enthralled by the bluff country, his senses keen to the creek. I told him about the big browns, and he was radiant. We had fished southern New Hampshire streams while at school in Boston, and he could sock it to them there. Luck? Chance? His worm would bounce along the dark shadow of a boulder, pine trees around us blocking the outer light, the outer world. His face would light up. His ancient rod bend double. And he'd be onto a leaping beauty, my years of toil, study, tantrums, incoherent soliloquies falling into irrelevance. He caught trout by intuition.

We turned left onto Highway D and took our first right, following the south branch of Bear Creek. The sun was rising just above the bluffs which were tinged with deep colors. Walking to the bridge, we jointed our rods in silence, listening to the swift creek, feeling the sun (the frost had melted away), smelling the tough fragrance of wild mint. A pair of browns finned in the pillars' shadows—poised, holding pot-bellied to the sandy bottom. I could practically count their red spots, as one lunged into the current, devouring a minnow or nymph. They were big fish—fine, thick German browns, about 15 inches each. I pulled the fly line through the guides, the reel clicking with oiled perfection. I shook the stiff appendage. It fit the grip of my hand like a natural limb. I grew up using worms on a fly rod and love the slow, silky drift of the line, incipient, as it sinks into a pocket. And today I'd fish thick crawlers that wriggle deep, turn like dancers, flutter a seductive tail to hungry browns.

Erik had gone upstream from the bridge. I could hear him working through the brambles along the bank—deliberate, careful, measured. He vanished behind an overhanging willow and I moved downstream. The stream narrowed, flowing as a long, shallow run for about fifty yards, and then into a deep, slow pool, the current fast only along an undercut bank. Leaves had fallen into the still water, reflecting up in a multitude of shades. I approached the deep pool, fly rod in hand, boots shuffling along the hard gravel bottom of the shallow run. I was

warm, sweater, turtleneck, canvas shirt penetrated by the sun. The colors around me, too, were warm—browns, yellows, rusts, in the weeds, the hills, the trees. The sun warmed my hip boots, generating a familiar smell of mud, water, plastic—a good smell fishermen learn to love.

I flipped the worm, extra line in hand, at the bank's start, letting it run deep underneath, paying out line. It zigzagged, like a rural road, beneath the brush, among the hanging branches—never catching, only drifting, slow, the worm fluttering in the

current, dancing before the nose of a fish. I thought of the big browns I'd seen in here, how they must have been on the prowl, the water colder, anglers less present. My line stopped, pulsated in my hand with a slow tap. I was all thumbs, waiting, wondering, my heart heaving beneath my heavy clothes. Anything seemed possible. Any trout, any size.

The line headed for the bank, fast and hard. I could practically hear it cutting through the water, some angry, thick body behind it. I pointed the tip at the moving line, which I tightened, gripped gently

in my left hand. The silver tip bounced, the vibrations spread to my arm, wrist, shoulder. I felt the fish's weight, and snapped the tip upward with a quick motion. I was fast to him, and he was moving into deeper water: a good thing, a blessing. Too many browns have run me beneath banks, never to come out by force of my hook. Thick, yellow-sided, he sloshed the top of the water, his tail splashing down hard, as he ran, faster, harder, toward the far end of the pool. I lifted the tip high, into the warm autumn sun—a wand, a call to the gods—and I stopped him, his body now snake-like, perpendicular to the current, showing its lineage to the salmon.

I stripped the line toward me, my heart even faster, seeing his full length—sixteen solid inches, a fine fish. I raised the rod and it bent to a hoop, completely in half, only the line between us. My hand was fast to the cork, and I drew him close to the net in the cold, sandy-colored water. But again he locked in, fighting vertical to the current. We were face to face, fast to one another. He was up again, head above the water, and with a last hard, full-body jerk he snapped the tippet, disappearing, without hesitation, toward the undercut bank. I stood there, shocked, I don't know for how long.

Erik approached from upstream. He was jaunty, whistling, jeans loose and rolled above a pair of duck shoes, briars clinging to his overshirt. I told him about the battle, and he was excited, though, of course, we rested the pool. We walked further downstream, flushing the odor of wild mint. It was all heady for me—the mint, the stream, this unglaciated valley (why was *it* left?), the lost fish, our reunion. It could have



Soltwedel's store, Cazenovia

been a thousand other ways, I was thinking, the feeling of contingency in the stream, the meadow, the anticipation of another bend. I was miles from home, but which one: New Jersey, Massachusetts, Wisconsin; child, student, adult? A legacy of secret holes, lives, flies, hooks, smells, tears. My mind was racing. But slowly, imperceptibly, it gave way, letting the stream sooth it, heal it, return it to a universal, if unspecific, home: water.

Before lunch, I returned to the deep hole. I stood again at its head, flipping the same cast, the same crap shoot, the same drift of possibilities. The line stopped, and I eventually managed to coax a truculent fish from the bank. It was no prize, only 12 inches, but a lovely yellow with red spots. It will be a good meal, dipped in cornmeal and fried in bacon fat. I cleaned him, dunked the creel, and met Erik at the car for lunch. He had watched me play the fish! enjoyed it, and had meanwhile cut some green apple and cheese: a fine lunch, to be washed down with apple cider. We had rye bread, its seeds wedging in our teeth, staying all day, sour and hard. I told Erik how my Ukrainian grandmother took a bus to church every Sunday, returning with the softest, most pungent rye, setting it out on a stone platter for dinner. And I think he understood: taste as a passage to memory. For a moment, sitting on the back of the car (Erik there, ancestral connection made) I felt less distant.

Conventional wisdom be damned, we continued to fish after lunch, the sun bright overhead, the hills aglow with color, the sky as blue as an upstate lake. Like driving in the Hill Country, fishing it would be free flying, stomachs high up in our chests. We followed Highway 82 into Viroqua, no more fish in the creel, nothing from the cool, watercress creeks. Viroqua seemed strange—the Wisconsin town. Reminiscent of the 1930s, the towns seemed much the same—La Valle to La Farge, Richland Center to Rhinelander. Bank. Hardware. Mercantile. Five and Ten. Again I was an Easterner, lost in the small ways, the order, the civility, the life in the coffee shops, the main street, the four-way stops.

Beyond Westby on Highway 14, Erik pointed to an outcrop of rock off to the right. He looked intent. “You’d swear it was a castle or a monastery, huh?” He was working a rye seed out from his teeth, looking out the window as the car climbed yet another steep bluff. Along the road there were workers dressed in orange vests, their skin chapped from the wind and the highway. I couldn’t keep my eyes on the road, though, because the rock, for the life of me, looked like a monastery.

We were like boys, at play in our minds, straddling the line of “as if” while talking of evening prayers, beer and wine cellars, cold musty smells. (I remembered staying in a cheap room in a monastery—I forget the name—in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, end of the pilgrims’ route.) And then, soon, we were upon the real thing: the Norwegian Lutheran church and graveyard on Highway P at Coon Valley. Why had they come here? Why this hill country? The church and the gravestones in the waning afternoon light had the look of viking ships, discover-

ers, voyagers to the unknown: the New World, promise, hope, fertility, death. The stones were crudely cut, inscribed with dragons, unreadable words, names like Olstad, Borgen, words that looked like the German “Tod” for death.

Erik took a nice brown from one of the coulee streams, but we were tired. The sun was setting, smoke breathing from house and cabin chimneys, an omen of the long winter ahead. The low sun behind us, we headed back for the car, marsh grass underfoot.

We made for the Mississippi along Highway 162, passing

through Chaseburg where screen doors listed on their hinges in the wind, and a final series of bluffs and hill farms. Clothes hung on lines in the cold wind; men worked the fields till dark, returning to lonely porch lights, cavernous hollows. We pulled off Highway 35 in Stoddard onto a side street, and there, glinting in the waning autumn light, was the River, homes clutching to its banks, possessions piled high in scrap heaps. Everything looked old and tired as we walked over unmarked land toward the River. The land looked neither private nor park-owned—public domain, River domain?

But the River moved profoundly, an exhausted fighter too old for the ring but too young to die, his veins polluted by years of neglect, chemicals. It flowed inexorably to the Gulf of Mexico, its trade currents having run amok years ago, but still a force to reckon with. The lights of Brownsville, over in Minnesota, looked as tired as road-weary eyes. But we were there on the banks. Journey’s End.

Driving, the day diffusing in my mind like the thousand water droplets of the thrashing brown, I checked to see why Erik was quiet. He was fast asleep. It was time to go home, and it was only me now. I was trying to stay awake, trying to keep from swerving. I was a hundred miles from home, and the day was splintering into droplets, headlights.

Photos by the author.



Mississippi River at Stoddard

Migration

Seduced by the call of geese,
driven by the whistle of wings,
she took to the clean, cold air.

Running, I struck out south
through fields,
through golden, splintered stalks,
until
I found her, feathers fluffed,
resting with the flock.

Like a vibrant aspen leaf
the bold green edge of summer
had grown waxy, yellowing and falling,
signalling time
for the ritual
of picking corn.

And so
I turned my back
on South Sheboygan sunsets
picking my way back through rows
of stalk and stubble
to join the deer
in the swamp
in November.

Michael Ryan

Grapes

Clustered
Like stars, large,
Ellipsoid
As olives or plums—

Skin on which dusk
Has settled deep
Purpling, black,
Blue blush,

Rush of sweet and sour
On the tongue,
Crunch
At the rayed heart—

How many hungers
Fed, glossy eggs
In the white bowl,
Weight of fruit

In the palm,
Light refracted,
Light within,
The taste sustaining

And self-contained
As love;
The means
To repeat itself.

Robin S. Chapman

1985, 1992

the picking left the smell of berries
in our hair
the warm juice
tasted in the field
lingering sweetly on our lips
stained red on our fingertips
the power of the sun
caught on the tongue
carried softly in the air
marching homeward
baskets full
and overflowing
berries tumbling everywhere.
a moment streaming back
resurrected suddenly
with closed eyes
face to the August sun
a yellow finch in the birch tree
a hawk above
circling the field
watchful of movement
in the berry patch
smelling the berries
on the breath of berrytakers.

Arthur Sacks

November

cracked leaf
pitched on
a gate

church bell's
bloomed song
folds to ash
in night's
casual basket

and even
the rain
paints frost
across
the pickets

Sarah Fox

Deer Crossing

the shears crack.
quickly
branches,
naked for seasons
cold below the heat
of new leaves
twisted and choked
with grape vines
as thin as a finger
as thick as a man's fist,
fall.
each snap of the jaws
devours the tangled skeleton
brittle along the fenceline
littering the floor
of this clotted hollow
shrouded by supple leaf and sweet berry,
designed by years of shadow
the fall of shattered light,
bent by snow weight and ice weight,
shaped by the storm fronts of spring,
by the patience of summer hawks
and the step of deer
stopping in shade under
the August heat.
the oaks, the hickories
the elders and the vines
are here because the fence is here,
and my sweat feeds the soil
because of it too.
this exercise of edges—
the dismembering of the dead
limbs that linger too long,
the murder of incompatible and insatiable vines
that bring down the tallest trees—
smells of man and animal
time and earth,
is the congruence of our breath,
the blood of our joining.

Arthur Sacks

Galileo Takes His Pulse

The chandelier is swaying, rocking itself to sleep.
Stained-glass light: Galileo passes time
by checking his pulse. A pendulum makes its sweep

like blood through our veins, our feet
on a cold wooden floor; when a bell tower chimes.
The chandelier is swaying, rocking itself to sleep.

His childhood music, his cradle's warm sheets;
on your back, all you can see is sky.
Like a shooting star, a pendulum makes its sweep.

Memory is the distance between two points.
Galileo worries often, opens his hands to the sky;
a mother is praying, rocking her son to sleep.

One hundred candles are swaying, their rhythm
the same as a heart, memory's clock. Time
flows in the blood. The pendulum makes its sweep,

candles burning in his eyes. Rising out of his seat
like a ghost, he basks his hands, his face in light.
The chandelier is swaying, rocking itself to sleep.
Galileo checks his pulse. A pendulum makes its sweep.

Brent Goodman

Flat Earth Society

Friends, our children have left us.
Ripping up our out-dated maps,
calling us Flatheads,
they've built boats out of their doubt
and sailed away.
They send us postcards from painted lands,
insist the horizon doesn't end—

When they left we huddled on the shore,
calling out for them,
out small words billowing in their sails.

Brent Goodman



AMERICAN COLOR WOODCUTS BOUNTY FROM THE BLOCK, 1890s–1990s by James Watrous and Andrew Stevens. Madison: Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1993. 135 pp.



by Thomas D. Lidtke

Profusely illustrated, lavish in color and succinctly written, the exhibition catalog, *American Color Woodcuts Bounty from the Block, 1890s–1990s*, is a worthy reference on a medium that is relatively new to American artists and seldom seen by the American public.

The concluded exhibition and corresponding publication owes a great deal to James

Watrous, University of Wisconsin–Madison emeritus professor of art history, who is the exhibition's co-curator and author of the catalog essay, "A Century of Color Woodcuts." Watrous's essay provides an informative and selective one hundred-year summary of the development of American color woodcuts.

The catalog essay reveals that the development was eclectic despite strong oriental influence during the turn of the century. More specifically, the early Japanese influence dealt with aesthetic concerns and precise production processes. Although Japanese influence on the printing process remains today for some contemporary artists, American printmakers are much less influenced by eastern aesthetics. Diversity during the evolution of this art form appears to stem from the experimental and inventive nature of American artists, including several from Wisconsin.

The essay's historical account of the evolution of this medium analyzes the use of color, form, and the inherent qualities of the woodblock. It cites examples of different artist's approach to the medium including those who choose to incorporate the grain quality of the wood and others who place more emphasis on chroma, line quality produced by incising, and other aesthetic or conceptual concerns.

Perhaps the most eclectic facet of the survey is in the area of imagery. Symbolistic silhouettes; intimate visions of nature; adaptations of painterly effects; and iconographic, narrative, or primitive imaging are but a few of the diverse forces that influence the look of American color woodcuts as portrayed by this publication.

Watrous gives a brief account of several interesting collaborative production and marketing efforts among artists, publishers, gallery owners, art colonies, and print workshops.

The account begins in 1916 with Provincetown printers and concludes with artist William Weege and his rural Wisconsin Jones Road Print Shop, where less traditional processes are utilized to successfully explore the outer reaches of the medium. For these artists, crush, tear and fold are terms that are as important as end grain, incising rice paper, and reduction print.

Commonly recognized names in printmaking, such as Leonard Baskin and Will Barnet, are included as are many artists whose first or primary medium does not include printmaking, such as Wayne Thiebaud, Helen Frankenthaler, Richard Diebeken, and Jim Dine. Alfred Sessler is the only early Wisconsin color block printer listed. Unfortunately, surveys cannot be all inclusive, and absent from this survey are the bold color block prints of late nineteenth-, early twentieth-century Wisconsin artist George Raab.

Represented in the contemporary section of reproductions is the skillful work of Madison satirist Raymond Gloeckler, whose work is far different from but equally impressive as that of his Wisconsin contemporary William Weege. Making full use of the grain of the block, Gloeckler's flowing lines and use of monochromatic ink places emphasis on line quality and personal commentary.

Each of the catalog's seventy-three images, all in color, have been paired with extensive commentary written by co-curator Andrew Stevens, who provides factual vitae for the artists' entries. His didactic writing style provides readers with information about the artists' training, major accomplishments, and creative and conceptual concerns as well as brief commentary on the technical printing process which appears to have significant impact on the overall composition and outcome of the artistic image.

As the title suggests, this publication provides readers with a bountiful overview of the past one hundred years of American color woodcuts. It is easy to read and is a handy, appealing reference for anyone interested in prints.

Thomas Lidtke has been executive director of the West Bend Gallery of Fine Arts since 1982.

DOGGEDNESS by David Graham. Aiken: University of South Carolina, The Devil's Millhopper Press, 1989. 26 pp. \$3.50.

SECOND WIND by David Graham. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 1990. 86 pp. \$15.00.

by Dion Kempthorne

In "Dust Events," the last of forty-six poems in *Second Wind*, David Graham declares, "So my theme is myself." The fourteen poems in *Doggedness* likewise show his gift for linking the personal and universal. Both volumes contain presumably autobio-

graphical details recreated in measured conversational tones, fixed in subtle images with ironic links between the familial and famous, the domestic and deistic, the cosmic and comic.

In *Doggedness*, memory becomes art and artist, and time the "Iron Crib" of infant ancestors and the adjustable lens for resonant portraits of friends and family. In "Menmosyne," the chapbook's lead poem, memory is the past scratching in the mind, like a kitten locked by a boy in the family freezer. In the title poem the grown son home for Christmas Eve coaxes his parents' reluctant terrier on a walk in the twenty-below night. With Orion shining "fiercely" above and "sheer doggedness" below, we feel the chilling truth that this event is "about time." Some of the sub-zero terror in this poem pervades other pieces like a child's fear through adulthood. In "Nothing," Graham delineates this fear "of the dark that passes all understanding" and concludes that one has "nothing to fear but nothing itself."

Seven of the poems in *Second Wind* are called Self-Portraits, and the poems here are less self-indulgent, more self-certain in their expression of difficult thoughts, and sparkling in their concretion of memory and emotion. Experiences are as metaphorically vivid as swimming in "Common Waters," where "Though swimming up / is easier than down, it's also harder." Nostalgic for his lost youth, Graham learns there is more life to live, and more to lose, and—with luck and courage—more to gain from the loss. He accepts this paradox with profound good humor, as in "Self-Portrait with Australia," where he rejects "boomerang wisdom" for the less facile topography of personal consciousness, "the underland of my own distress."

Graham's poems are strong ultimately because they transcend the personal. In "Near Misses," he depicts "one story / not just leading to another, like roads / from life to life, but *being* each other . . ." Along these roads, there is an ironic self-reliance on others, and the range of the traveller is considerable, with glimpses of eternity near and far through poetic bifocals.

The title poem, "Second Wind," shows how poetry preserves life and becomes art with its "second wind / of meaning . . . not just first speech anymore / but the shaded, intricate / second wind enduring." The phrase "second wind," as pun and homograph, suggests a unifying theme for the collection. In "The Attic Which Is Not Desire," the persona would escape nostalgia "given the second wind / like the winter fly battering" against the window. And in "Sure," a reflection on married sex and love, the husband looks ahead "to feel evening stir, / every breath now touched with second wind." Thus Graham, looking back to look ahead, brings himself to the world, his life to art, his art to life.

With degrees from Dartmouth College and the University of Massachusetts, David Graham is currently a professor of English at Ripon College. It is good to count him among Wisconsin poets.

Dion Kempthorne is a professor of English and dean of the University of Wisconsin Center-Richland in Richland Center.

THE TRAVELER'S GUIDE TO NATIVE AMERICA—THE GREAT LAKES REGION by Hayward Allen. Minocqua: NorthWord Press, 1992. 92 pp. \$16.95.

by George L. Cornell

Hayward Allen has undertaken and completed a large and very helpful project with the publication of *The Traveler's Guide to Native America—The Great Lakes Region*. The book is ambitious in scope, covering American Indian events, museums, and attractions which focus on Indian history or themes in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota and serves as a good resource for getting acquainted with Great Lakes Indian populations.

The Traveler's Guide contains a short and educational Foreword by Pemina Yellow Bird, who suggests that visitors to American Indian sites and events would do well to exhibit a bit of common sense. She urges readers to conduct themselves respectfully at historic sites and cultural events. This is sound and practical advice which should be followed by tourists and visitors to Indian reservations and pow wows. In addition, the Foreword briefly addresses the issue of the display of human remains and funerary objects. This issue, which was the focus of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990, is still a very sensitive topic and travelers should be aware of how strongly Native peoples feel about this practice.

One of the great difficulties with travel books is keeping them current. The author has included numerous phone numbers for the reader's use, and calling ahead to confirm dates and times of activities would be well worth the effort. Hayward Allen solicits reader comments, additions, and corrections in the Conclusion of the book, information which will prove helpful should future editions of the book be published.

The publication of *The Traveler's Guide* is indeed timely. National interest in American Indians appears to be increasing, and people are discovering the rich artistic and cultural traditions of Great Lakes Indians. As travel and tourism become more popular, the role of American Indian communities—replete with gaming halls, cultural events, and tribally-operated museums—will become ever more popular. The Indian heritage of the Great Lakes, along with historic attractions and beautiful scenery, will prove to be a vital economic asset for the region.

Allen's book contains some high-quality color photographs that provide a glimpse of what readers can expect to see as they travel throughout the Great Lakes. From dramas inspired by historic figures to archeological sites and events in tribal communities, the book offers much to travelers in the region who are interested in Indian history and culture.

George L. Cornell is an associate professor of English and history at Michigan State University. He has published articles and co-authored books on Great Lakes Indians.

FAVORITE RECIPES FROM THE OLD RITTENHOUSE INN. Bayfield: Inside Press, 1992. 198 pages.

by Marian Pehowski

A cookbook may be many things—a sober guide to safe and efficient food preparation, a breathless celebration of some trend in the nation's diet (heart-healthy, Cajun, fibrous), an earnest prop to the psychology of food (working moms show love in the kitchen), an economic challenge (feed the gang on pennies a day), or even a revealing social document. As the last, *Favorite Recipes from the Old Rittenhouse Inn* is both an anachronism and a here-and-now sampler of what for many still defines the good life, namely, rich food.

This collection, springing from a well-orchestrated business venture, which itself is only about twenty years old, has less to do with daily life than with occasions, those times on vacation at a place like Bayfield's popular inn or cooking up a storm for social events at home.

Regional elegance is the keynote. What else from a dining room that has a verbal menu? Perhaps because the Rittenhouse Inn on the south shore of Lake Superior is itself a Victorian landmark, its menu is also overwhelmingly Victorian. Even this collection's organization, like many contemporary cookbooks, is actually Victorian with recipes following the order of a multi-course meal, from appetizers and soups through desserts and beverages.

Beyond the recipes themselves, the very style of food presentation intends elegance. Almost everything possible is garnished, although creativity may be in the trim rather than in the hearty, basic recipes themselves. A terrine of chicken is still a nineteenth-century terrine of chicken even though its recipe now ends "garnish with cilantro leaves." If anything, Grandma might have used parsley.

Calorically this is a cookbook for the lean and hungry, though probably not for those who mean to stay that way. Cream, eggs, butter, sugar, and white flour appear in high proportions, all but overwhelming fish and meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, many from the region. One recipe camouflages four cups of squash with a cup each of maple syrup and nuts plus a half cup of butter.

The book appears padded by use of heavy paper, large type, a single recipe per page (including ones like forty-seven words on raspberry cordial), scenic photographs, and a modest if wordy history of how music teachers Mary and Jerry Phillips became three-site innkeepers. Sources of the recipes themselves are vague, although books and magazines in which one or more Old Rittenhouse recipes have been published between 1985 and 1992 are included. (This is somewhat gratuitous news, since the same recipes appear in this book.)

Even regionally, many readers will not have easy access to ingredients like whitefish livers and wild blueberries, or supplies of shiitake mushrooms and wild rice, or even seasonal favorites like fresh cranberries. With seven cranberry recipes

from chutney to salsa to pie, the Old Rittenhouse popularizes the holiday berry as Victorians did the prune.

Basically hearty mainstream American cooking from an earlier era, these recipes for pork chops and lamb stew (well, ragout), potato salads, hash with poached eggs (true, it is smoked trout hash) are in their own way comfort foods for the economically comfortable. Nicely packaged, the recipes opt for tradition over innovation.

Marian Pehowski is a writer and critic in Madison.

ENEMIES: A SAGA OF THE GREAT LAKES WILDERNESS by William Seno. Madison: Prairie Oak Press, \$12.95.

by Hayward Allen

By 1985, William Seno had intensified his quest for historical narrations of life in the early European days of Upper Midwest exploration to the point where he was compelled to edit and publish *Up Country: Voices from the Midwestern Wilderness*. Many historians might have stopped there, but Seno was apparently driven by his own experience and encounters with these long-ago voices to venture one step beyond, into fiction.

Enemies is a historical novel that embarks on much the same course as *Up Country*. Consider, though, this metaphor: the strength of the voices of Radisson, Allouez, Marquette, Hennepin, Cadillac, and Alexander Henry as being the powerful strokes that pull a canoe through the rough waters of those early European exploratory years. Handling the guiding paddle, though, and navigating the marvels and tempests is William Seno, novelist.

Admittedly, Seno is the first to confess that he has "shamelessly lifted details, passages, episodes, and a plot from old books by long-dead authors." Alexander Henry's own journals form the central focus, but Seno also has drawn upon many accounts of those above, plus Johann Kohl, Dablon, Catlin, and Pond. He is among the rare novelists who are quite open about their research, for not only is there a bibliography but also a suggested list of readings.

Seno's Alex Henry is an eighteen-year-old ex-soldier in 1750, one of the 1500 English conquerors of New France's bastion, Montreal. He is also a fledgling capitalist who decides "to journey to the far reaches of France's fallen empire, there to engage in the fur trade, a lucrative field of endeavor suddenly thrown open to British enterprise." He has a singular goal: "to seize upon a pivotal moment in history to build my fortune."

In *Up Country*, Seno describes Henry as being twenty-one years old, and Henry's own justification for his pursuit into the unknown wilds was that "the surrender of all Canada threw open a vast new market to British adventure." So there are some quibbles, historically speaking, but *Enemies* allows them to fit into an overall impressionistic painting of Canada and the upper Great Lakes covering approximately three centuries of reflections, shadows, and shadings.

Seno delves into Henry's naivete and driving ambition, as well as his adaptability and his conscious efforts to open his own mind to those enemies, French and Native Americans, his own people had dramatically described and stereotyped. Under Seno's brush, Henry does grow into a man worthy of the title "adventurer," but he also becomes an individual who recognizes his limits, his debts, and his affections, even as he embarks for "home" in England.

Seno does not improve upon Alexander Henry's lifestyle or perceptions except to expose in more contemporary terms the animosity toward those who might be different, or those who might have adjusted their lifestyles to adapt to a hostile environment. There is a great deal of praise for the voyageurs as well as respect for Indian and tribal cultures.

The Great Midwestern Novel—one which corrects all the errors of historical judgments, one which treats the geography as natural rather than alien, and one that objectifies European prejudices toward the original settlers, among other dimensions—has yet to be written. Still, William Seno's *Enemies* is a meaningful step in that direction.

Hayward Allen is a freelance writer and a previous editor of the review department of this publication. He recently moved from Madison to Arizona.

THE UNKNOWN SOUTH OF FRANCE: A History Buff's Guide by Henry and Margaret Reuss. Boston: Harvard Common Press, 1991. 220 pp. \$12.95.

by Mildred N. Larson

For the traveler intent on exploring the real France, *la France profonde*, Henry and Margaret Reuss's *The Unknown South of France* is a perfect guide. Concentrating particularly on the former provinces of Aquitaine, Provence, and Languedoc, this handbook includes short tours; suggestions for castles, churches, and caves to visit; and recommended restaurants and hotels.

The book's greatest value to the tourist, however, is contained in its subtitle. For the history buff, it provides a valuable summary and synthesis of the culture and stories of the region, from the cave dwellers of the Dordogne, through Roman Gaul, the troubadours and the Age of Faith, the Renaissance and the Wars of Religion, to the World War II Resistance and the present day. Each section links historical events to specific sites and monuments the traveler might visit and includes historical maps and photographs.

Because the South's golden age occurred during the Middle Ages and much of France's industry has developed elsewhere, the visitor to this neglected area will discover riches unspoiled by the encroachments of modern civilization. The sections on the Medieval pilgrimage routes and the Albigensian heresy are especially helpful in understanding the background of some of the religion's greatest treasures. For the tourist, the book also includes recommendations for practical guidebooks and detailed sectional maps.

Henry Reuss represented the fifth district of Wisconsin in the U. S. House of Representatives from 1955 until his retirement in 1983. Margaret Reuss retired at the same time as chair of the Department of Economics at the University of the District of Columbia. They now spend part of each year in a tower on the Lot River in the Midi. Their love of France and their extensive research and explorations are evident in this intimate guide to a beautiful and historic part of the world.

Mildred N. Larson, a Wisconsin Academy councilor, is associate director at the L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library in Eau Claire and has traveled extensively in France.

LETTERS FROM THE FRONT, 1898–1945, edited by Michael E. Stevens. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1992. 175 pp. \$7.95.

by Steven R. Milquet

History, we are assured by Ambrose Bierce, is "an account mostly false, of events mostly unimportant, which are brought about by rulers mostly knaves, and soldiers mostly fools." It is sadly true that most military memoirs, especially the long-after-the-fact type, are prone to sentimentality, exaggeration, wishful thinking, and sometimes outright prevarication. Further, such belated accounts are almost always lacking in those interesting details of everyday life that make a story real.

This book, the first volume of a new series from the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, happily contains none of these flaws. Instead, it offers a rare, unvarnished look at the realities of war—as real as the military censors of the time would allow—through the eyes and correspondence of Wisconsin servicemen and women during the Spanish-American War and the two World Wars. The book presents a judicious selection of about two hundred letters from among the several thousand in the society's collections.

The letters reveal Wisconsin's patriot sons and daughters to be observant, alternately cautious and courageous, and seldom if ever foolish. The excerpts range from the amusing to the appalling; the images that stick with you are the descriptions of the disease-decimated camps of the Spanish conflict, the trenches of the Western Front, and the horrors of Buchenwald. The face of war, seen close-up, is often extremely ugly.

While the book contains a few errors of fact in the introductory passages, both amateur and professional historians will be pleased by the excellent topical index and source listing, a good introduction to the entire wartime collection of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Because the letter selection depends solely upon the range of correspondence currently within the society's collections, the letters in this book are necessarily biased toward the attitudes of white males. One would hope that additional correspondence will eventually become available to readers and researchers which will reveal the thoughts and visions of Wisconsin's minorities, including blacks, American Indians, and the Nisei who trained at Camp McCoy during World War II, as well as women in the military.

Indeed, we might also hope that the “Voices of the Wisconsin Past” series launched by this book will include a volume entitled *Letters from the Home Front*—a volume that will offer the same first-hand account of life in the United States during wartime. This volume is clearly a book to be read and re-read, because contrary to Bierce’s assertion, some events are too important to be forgotten.

Steven R. Milquet, a planning and design consultant in Green Bay, has written several articles on military topics.

WHALESONG: A Novel About the Greatest and Deepest of Beings by Robert Siegel. HarperCollins, 1991, paperback. Originally published in 1981 by Crossway Books. 143 pp.

WHITE WHALE: A Novel by Robert Siegel. HarperCollins, 1991. 228 pp.

by Hugh N. Anderson

In *Whalesong*, Robert Siegel, a professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, introduced his readers to the world of humpback whales through the narration of Hruna, who recounts his youthful adventures and ascension, at a young age, to the post of leader of his pod (community). In *White Whale*, Professor Siegel continues the whales’ story through the voice of Hruna’s son, the white whale Hralekana. Hralekana is a whale of exceptional size and special powers. He has visions of the past and of distant events, and can communicate with humans.

Both books skillfully depict the beauty and wonder of humpback whales and their watery world. Hruna and Hralekana tell us of the warmth of the tropical seas, the joys of robust whale-play, the delights of feeding on krill (the tiny shrimp favored by humpbacks), and the awesome sounds of the “ice at the end of the world”—the groaning and singing of the Antarctic ice.

At the heart of *Whalesong* and *White Whale* is a powerful condemnation of mankind’s crimes and misdemeanors against the whales and the marine environment. Hruna and Hralekana give a whales-eye view of the savage cruelty of whaling, the daily fouling of coastal waters, the dangers of above-ground

nuclear testing, and the grievous ills of oil spills. The whales cannot understand why humans behave as they do.

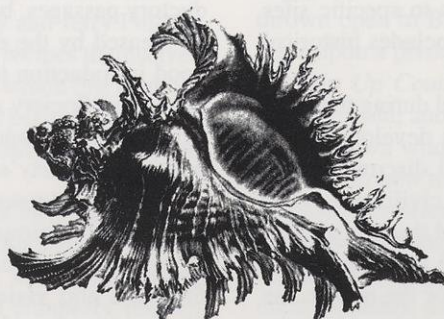
The books do a service by highlighting these important issues in novel form. Although no further debate seems necessary with regard to the merits of acts of environmental and resource degradation—world opinion overwhelmingly condemns whaling and oils spills, for example—the fact that such acts continue to occur demonstrates the need to keep them vividly in the public view. When this can be done in a fresh and exciting context, as Professor Siegel has done, so much the better.

Though not packaged for the youth market, these books would be ideal for junior high or high school readers. *White Whale* in particular is adventure-filled and fast paced. Episodes such as Hralekana’s ordeal when he is stranded in a coastal inlet at low tide, or the pod’s narrow escape from whalers, are intense and gripping. *White Whale* also features a close friendship that develops between Hralekana and a teenager, Mark. The two learn to speak with one another, “mind to mind,” and each rescues the other from danger.

Hralekana puzzles over how there could be good humans, like Mark, and bad humans, like whalers. The whales in these stories, by contrast, are almost uniformly noble, good-hearted, and beyond reproach. Though this characterization may well be accurate, it certainly makes Professor Siegel’s job as a novelist more difficult. The best stories are those with vivid characters, and the best characters are those with flaws: indecisiveness, greed, envy, pride. The whales are not troubled by any such failings, with the possible exception of excessive altruism. There are no mating disputes or quarrels over territory. The whales are even forgiving of their human tormentors, as when a whaling ship is capsized in a storm and Hruna rescues several sailors.

As *Whalesong*’s subtitle, “A Novel About the Greatest and Deepest of Beings,” portends, these books occasionally descend into psycho-spiritualism, with shimmering lights, mystical allusions, searches for self, and other New Age trappings. Readers who are not fond of such trappings can skip these passages and still thoroughly enjoy the books.

Hugh N. Anderson is an attorney at Wickwire, Gavin, P.C., in Madison.





Probing the Mysteries of Milkweed

by Gary G. Lake

In ditches and fields, waysides and pastures all over Wisconsin, common milkweed flourishes to the delight of some and the chagrin of others. This botanical paradox is more than a persistent weed and a boon for the monarch butterfly, and its use to man is limited neither to its natural beauty nor to the past. The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters is actively involved in studying a possible contemporary use of milkweed to monitor atmospheric pollution.

In collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the National Parks Service, the Academy is undertaking this study as a team project within Project FIRST (Field Involvement: Research by Science Teachers). Project FIRST is partially funded by the National Science Foundation as a program of the Wisconsin Academy and the Wisconsin Geologic and Natural History Survey. Now in its fourth year, Project FIRST currently has more than forty teachers participating around the state, about half of whom are part of the milkweed study team. (In addition, most teachers have individual research assignments, and many are participating in a second team study, using biotic indexing to evaluate water quality in several streams and rivers throughout Wisconsin.)

Twelve species of milkweed are reported to exist in Wisconsin. The most abundant is so widespread that it is called common milkweed, and it is this species that is the focus of the Academy's project. Like the others in the family, common milkweed produces a sticky, milky latex or sap when it is cut. Early in the season, it is easily confused with hemp dogbane which has thinner, shinier leaves of similar oval shape. Common milkweed, *Asclepias syriaca* L., has a cloudier green appearance, and the underside of the leaf looks almost furry as a result of multitudinous microscopic hairs.

Common milkweed overwinters as underground roots and rhizomes. A clump of stems may be all the same plant, since the rhizome may extend for a large distance underground. The stems grow upright, producing whorls of opposite leaves. These leaves are the sites for the oviposition of eggs by adult monarch butterflies when they return from their overwintering migration to the south.

Wisconsinites are now well aware of the annual migrations of the monarch butterflies to the southern United States and Central America. However, at one time, people thought the

monarch butterfly hibernated in Wisconsin, overwintering inside logs and hollow trees. In the fall, people in Wisconsin can see the monarch butterflies congregating, just as birds do, before their extraordinary flight to the south. This sight is common along the Lake Michigan shore, which constitutes one of the flight paths. Unfortunately, inclement weather and storms can force the butterflies out over the lake where hundreds, probably thousands, die.

Although the relationship between the milkweed and the monarch butterfly is well known, many other insects are associated with the milkweed. Several FIRST participants are studying these insects for their individual research projects.



Common milkweed in Wisconsin.

Common milkweed serves far more uses than as a benefit for insects. In colonial times the silky floss that enables the seeds to spend time airborne was used to stuff pillows and cushions. This part of the plant again became important during World War II when it was used to stuff the life preservers of American servicemen. Hundreds of Wisconsin schoolchildren collected the floss through local 4-H clubs. At that time, not only was the demand great, but also the sources of imported kapok, for which the floss was a substitute, were jeopardized by the war.

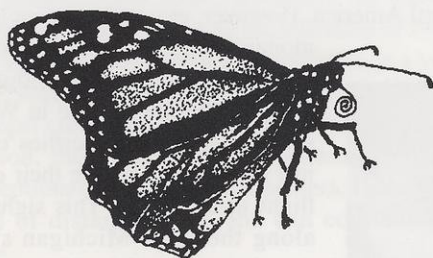
The floss is still the part of the plant that is most sought. Research is taking place to cultivate the milkweed as a row crop and to produce the floss as a substitute for expensive, imported goose down. The American Society of Engineers has recently

reported on the physical properties of milkweed pods in connection with the designing of harvesting and processing equipment.

The stem fibre, in addition to the floss, has been suggested as stock for papermaking. Before the advent of synthetic rubber, there was a substantial effort to use the latex of the milkweed for rubber production. The U.S. Department of Agriculture produced a monograph on this subject as early as 1935.

Although common milkweed is an American native plant, seeds were sent to England as early as 1670 by Governor John Winthrop. By the middle of the nineteenth century it is reported to have been cultivated freely throughout Europe. Since its control is not mentioned in the literature, it apparently did not become as important a weed as it is in many parts of the United States, including Wisconsin.

As a perennial, its importance as a weed in pasture is greatly exacerbated, however, by its poisonous character. It is this poison that endows the caterpillars of the monarch butterfly



with the toxin that protects them from predation by animals. The toxins are alkaloids that remain with the butterflies throughout their lives. The toxicity of milkweed to livestock is one of the attributes that has so far limited its commercialization as a cultivated crop.

The use of common milkweed to monitor atmospheric pollution is relatively new, and the National Parks Service has been involved in this use for less than a decade. This application of milkweed is possible because it has very specific and easily identifiable symptoms of ozone injury. Although it is important that the ozone layer high up in the atmosphere (nine to thirty miles) remains intact to screen much of the incoming ultra-violet radiation, ozone pollution at ground level and up to two miles into the atmosphere can have serious health consequences.

A result of our industrialized way of life, ozone pollution can reach critical levels in Wisconsin. This ozone is created when nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds react on hot, sunny days. Not only Wisconsin-generated ozone is of concern, but also large amounts that are produced in the Chicago-Gary conurbation drift into Wisconsin. Since common milkweed is widely spread, it can be used to monitor pollution levels throughout the state.

In addition to this baseline monitoring, the FIRST research team is looking at the effect of soil fertilization on the



Teacher-researcher Mark Totten of Stevens Point tends the milkweed he is propagating in the greenhouse from rhizomes.

amount of ozone injury. Teacher-researchers (and selected students who act as research assistants) have chosen sites on sandy soils and, according to a standardized research design, are collecting data to determine the effect of soil fertilization, and subsequent plant vigor, on perceived ozone injury. At this time, it is not known if plant vigor has an effect on perceived ozone injury. To help ensure standardization of subjective ratings, selected leaves will be sent to Madison.

In addition to the research impact of the study, the project will increase the interest of science educators and, eventually, students and other community members in the value of Wisconsin's treasury of native flora and in the vigilance necessary to avoid environmental degradation.

Gary G. Lake is director of Project FIRST at the Wisconsin Academy. He graduated from the University of Queensland in Australia and received his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Photos by the author.



FIRST participant Mary Weddig studies a milkweed plant at one of her six research sites around Merrill with student Tasha Wassink.

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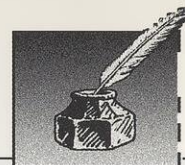
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I read with some interest the article by Richard Daniels titled "Another Golden Era" in the Summer 1993 issue of the *Wisconsin Academy Review*. I found the article informative, and I trust that it will prove to be an effective tool for the Academy Foundation in its fund-raising efforts.

However, I have one nit to pick. In discussing the gifts from Dr. Steenbock and Dr. McCoy, Daniels states that "both made generous provisions for the Academy in their wills." The truth of the matter is that as far as anyone can tell, Elizabeth McCoy never got around to executing a will. She made a number of generous lifetime gifts to the Academy, and she clearly intended the Academy to be a major beneficiary of her assets after her death. However, she never met with an attorney to make sure documents were in place to carry out her wishes.

As a result, after her death, there was extensive and costly litigation. The Academy ultimately prevailed, but this case stands as an example of how someone's charitable generosity was partially frustrated and certainly delayed.

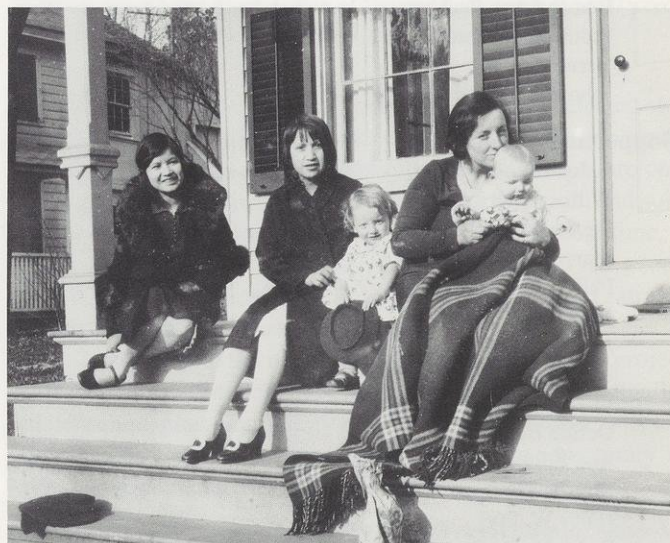
Howard A. Sweet, Attorney
La Follette & Sinykin
Madison

Richard Daniels comments:

I received a similar response from James Batt, former executive director of the Wisconsin Academy, indicating the inaccuracy of the statement attributing a will to Dr. McCoy. He also used the term *nit pick*, though I consider the point both have raised to be an important one and I appreciate having the matter clarified. Batt went on to say that prior to an Academy Council meeting a few months before her death, Dr. McCoy had spoken with attorney Trayton Lathrop of Madison about making an appointment to review the whole question of estate planning. She died before making the appointment.

I found the article on George Catlin (Winter 1992) delightful and rewarding. The Wilson Hall article ("Psychological Necessity for Wilderness in the Life of George Catlin") was interesting but I think it misses some fundamental truths about the wilderness experience and one's confrontation with nature. Man is essentially an esthetic creature, in my opinion. Rational? Hell no. But a lover of beauty? Above all.

I am currently editing a journal I kept about how Susie and I and the five kids survived in our fashion in the woods eighteen miles east of Wausau. The years covered were 1972 through 1981. It was a war, and I wanted to keep a record. I knew eventually the revisionists would move in and tell us all how it really happened. A third of the journal is about nature—storms and floods and the omnipresent beauty of Wisconsin.



When the Beach family moved East from Michigan—I was two years old—two Potawatomi women who worked for my mother for years came with us. The enclosed photo (my mother is in the foreground, the children are my sisters) was taken in 1929 in Lime Rock, Connecticut, where my father was co-owner of the last of America's handmade paper mills. The Depression eventually killed the mill and we moved to NYC where my mother became the national spokeswoman for General Foods by some crazy fluke, thereby saving the family until my father got on his feet.

Again, the Catlin issue was marvelous.

Peter Beach
Aniwa

(Excerpts from Peter Beach's play, *The Memoirs of Abraham Lincoln*, appeared in the Spring 1992 issue of the *Review*.)

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