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## Sunday Afternoon on the Porch: Reflections of a Small Town in Iowa, 1939–1942

Terrance J. Lindell  
*Wartburg College*

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a history of plant selection in landscape gardening in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; an exploration of Florida's horticultural construction, as a totalizing case study of all relevant topics (plant selection, pest control, restoration); and horticulture into the modern era, when pest control and ecological restoration dominate the profession, and gardening has become associated with amateurs.

This is a huge amount of information, bulging at the seams, perhaps too much so. Pauly manages it fairly well, although there are some minor quibbles. His analysis of Jefferson's attempts to disprove criticisms by Raynal and other European historians is promising, but his conclusions about Jefferson's motivations for the Sally Heming affair (as an example of naturalizing an exotic) work more at the level of insinuation and nuance than as deep cultural readings. His evaluation of regions and their peculiar issues, such as the prairie—its arborization and restoration—is insightful and sturdy. However, due to his overreliance on nineteenth-century Illinois horticultural records, he overlooks exceptions to his larger claims about the shift in attitudes from prairie arborization toward restoration that occurred by the early 1900s. For instance, during that period, Iowa horticulturists actually became *more* proactive in promoting tree-planting activities (especially via Arbor Day) because they had noticed in the 1890s that Iowa children and schools were not maintaining the trees they had planted. Many horticulturists reported seeing withered and dying trees in schoolyards, tempering Pauly's generalized assessment that Arbor Day played a significant role in arborizing the region's landscape. Horticulturists' increased involvement thus promoted arborization, rather than prairie restoration exclusively, in Iowa during the early twentieth century. But these are small criticisms. Pauly adeptly turns over new ground, hopefully inspiring more studies applying similar approaches to analyzing horticulture's transformation of the American landscape.

*Sunday Afternoon on the Porch: Reflections of a Small Town in Iowa, 1939–1942*, photographs by Everett W. Kuntz, text by Jim Heynen. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2008. x, 106 pp. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Terrence J. Lindell is professor of history at Wartburg College. He has investigated home-front activity during World War II in northeast Iowa.

In 1939 teenager Everett Kuntz invested his savings in a 35mm Argus AF camera and learned to roll film for it from surplus motion picture film stock. Over the next four years—during which he went from high school to the University of Iowa to the armed forces—he captured life in and around his hometown of Ridgeway in northeastern Iowa.

Kuntz could not afford to make prints from the negatives—numbering over 2,000—and so they languished until 2002. Then Kuntz, dying of prostate cancer, began digitizing the negatives. This book contains 76 of his photos. His subjects range from family portraits to people at work and play to streetscapes and nature scenes.

Jim Heynen, a noted author of poems, short stories, and novels, contributed the text accompanying the photos. Each photo has a brief title but little additional explanation. The text includes Heynen's musings on life in that era, lists of current events for each of the four years covered by the volume, speculation on what the subjects were thinking then or what they might think of people viewing their images today, quotations from an interview conducted by Rex Wood with Kuntz shortly before the photographer's death, and remembrances by Kuntz's wife and children.

This slender volume is wonderfully evocative of an era gone by. Kuntz was a fine photographer even as a novice. His subjects were the everyday, not the dramatic. His photos capture the mirth of children at play, neighbors coming to visit, farmers harvesting crops, railroad workers maintaining track, and people self-consciously going about their activity while having their pictures taken. Readers will find hints of the world war that erupted in this era—Kuntz in uniform and a few signs or posters on walls and windows—but the photos suggest that much of Americans' daily routine, especially in rural areas, was little changed by war. Heynen's text reminds readers of the global events that cast a shadow over that era, speculates on what Kuntz's subjects may have been thinking, and serves as a mirror in which we see concerns of our time.

One might ask for more. Historians would certainly like to know more of the context for the photos. The lover of literature would wish that more of the photos were accompanied by Heynen's insights. The photographer might want to see more of the world Kuntz captured with his Argus. Nevertheless, this book will delight and instruct those who want to remember or to learn about small-town Iowa in the era of World War II.

*The Great Plains during World War II*, by R. Douglas Hurt. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008. xiii, 507 pp. Illustrations, graphs, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 cloth.

Reviewer Michael W. Schuyler is professor emeritus at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. He is the author of *The Dread of Plenty: Agricultural Relief Activities of the Federal Government in the Middle West, 1933–1939* (1989) and "Great Plains Agriculture in the 1930s," in *The Great Plains Experience* (1978).