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Review of Sterling's Carrie: Mrs. J. Sterling Morton

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Duryea, Polly P., "Review of Sterling's Carrie: Mrs. J. Sterling Morton" (1992). *Great Plains Quarterly*. 664.
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was seldom home. But "work was Caroline's answer to a problem" (p. 31), and she and her four growing boys carried untold water buckets to thousands of trees in their fruit orchards. These plantations were prototypes for tree planting activities in J. Sterling Morton's concept of Arbor Day.

The best single episode occurs when competent Carrie and her hired girl lose Baby Joy on the St. Louis docks while rushing to catch the Missouri River steamboat for Nebraska—it all works out all right. The book's photographs are superb, and I recommend this pleasant porch-swing volume to Nebraska history buffs of all ages.

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Sterling's Carrie: Mrs. J. Sterling Morton. By Margaret V. Ott. Lincoln, Nebraska: Media Publishing, 1989. 275 pp. \$9.95.

Margaret V. Ott has given a valuable gift to the pioneer descendants living close to the banks of the Big Muddy. From detailed journals, letters, and diaries, she traces the lives of the J. Sterling Morton family as they construct their home, Arbor Lodge, on the Morton Ranch near Nebraska City. Many in my transitional generation will find elements of their own history in Mrs. Ott's fictionalized biography, *Sterling's Carrie*.

After some sticky beginning dialogue, Mrs. Ott holds a tight rein on submerged issues of slavery, women's suffrage, child labor, and opiates, while she deftly defines Caroline Morton as compassionate yet haughty, ordinary yet accomplished, a Victorian lady on the frontier.

In 1854, as a beautiful bride, Cara (as she wished to be known) left her privileged Detroit home for the new Nebraska Territory. There she carved out a profitable garden on the prairie grassland for her husband and her sons. Sterling