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Review of *Looking for History on Highway 14* By John E. Miller

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Looking for History on Highway 14. By John E. Miller. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1993. Introduction, black and white photographs, maps, notes, index. xix + 254 pp. \$15.95 paper.

John E. Miller, a history professor at South Dakota State University, employs a blend of history, journalism, and travelogue in this enlightening book. He takes the reader on a tour of discovery across South Dakota's historic Highway 14, visiting fifteen roadside towns before ending in the Black Hills at Mt. Rushmore. Included in the tour are trips to Brookings (home to South Dakota's land grant university), De Smet (the "little town on the prairie" made famous by Laura Ingalls Wilder's novels), and Ft. Pierre (originally home to many Native American groups). Other towns visited include Elkton, Arlington, Manchester, Iroquois, Huron, Miller, Highmore, Harrold, Pierre, Midland, Philip, and Wall.

Looking for History is neither a definitive study of Highway 14 and its adjoining towns nor a travel book. Although this might disappoint those who desire such a work, Miller's lively account offers valuable insights into uncovering and preserving local history. The study's aim is to demonstrate the many fascinating ways one can discover and enjoy the historical past. Local history, as Miller ably

shows, reveals itself in local museums, abandoned buildings, town celebrations, county courthouses, old pictures, tourist traps, and in the oral stories of town residents. He encourages the reader to turn off the highway, pull into town, stop for a cup of coffee, and discover history in its many forms and places. At each town visited, the author picks something unique about it and explores the ways in which history is revealed. In Iroquois, for example, Miller visits the local cafe where history comes alive through pictures on the wall, scrapbooks behind the counter, and the collective memories of the local populace. One of the most striking aspects of this book is the author's ability to gather delightful stories and information from "ordinary folks" along the route, a manner reminiscent of John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley*.

Looking for History On Highway 14 is a welcome addition to the growing number of local or regional studies. Miller supports his narrative with chapter maps and over fifty engaging black and white photographs. The volume will not only interest residents of South Dakota but any reader attracted to exploring and understanding local history.

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