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Review of *Kansas: A Pictorial History, revised ed.* by Robert W. Richmond

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Kansas: A Pictorial History. revised ed. Robert W. Richmond. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992. ix + 276 pp. Maps, photos, and references. \$35.00 Cloth.

Robert W. Richmond has orchestrated a filiopietistic paean to the citizens of Kansas the hardy souls who carried their "Beecher's Bibles," fought off the border ruffians, broke the sod, welcomed the Texas trail drivers, healed the mind and produced oil, wheat, and airplanes in staggering quantities. But the author's obvious love for Kansas and its people does not detract from the beauty or utility of this work.

Richmond, former state archivist and former assistant director of Kansas' splendid historical society, has produced a revised edition of a work which he, Nyle Miller, and Edgar Langsdorf authored in 1961 to celebrate the Kansas Centennial. This edition offers some new textual material and many new photographs, so that everything is up to date in Kansas City.

The strength and the charm of the book, however, lie in the magnificent collection of early-day photographs, which are all the demonstrative evidence one needs that the "good old days" were anything but. Kansas' territorial infancy, beginning in 1854, coincided with the development of photography in the field, and while the early shutter-bugs may have lacked the compositional insights of an Ansel Adams, they were as diligent as Mathew Brady in capturing on film anything that could possibly be of historical significance. And the historical society from whose files these photos come, must have kept every image.

Richmond leads the reader on a straight-forward chronological journey, commencing with an account of the early plains-dwelling Indians and concluding with the elections of 1990. As is usual in a pictorial history, the text plays second fiddle to the photographs, and Richmond makes little effort to analyze trends or to present the background of events occurring outside Kansas which shaped the way that Kansans perceived and reacted to issues. In this regard, a closer examination of the sectional conflict that burst into flame with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill would have been helpful in understanding the Missouri-Kansas antipathy that dictated territorial and early statehood development.

Other areas which would have benefitted from a more comprehensive textual discussion include the development of the University of Kansas as an outstanding educational institution; the political machinations which made Topeka the capital; the quiescent acceptance by Kansas City of its role as second banana to its sister city across the Kaw; and the bible-belt hypocrisy which kept

Kansas' cocktail lounges closed for most of the twentieth century while bottle clubs and speak-easies flourished. Nonetheless, Richmond does perform the historian's task of showing cultural changes over time, and his perception in selecting photos that portray powerful images far outweighs any deficiencies in the written text.

In addition, everyone who was anyone in Kansas is here, however briefly. "Goat-Gland" Brinkley, Karl Menninger, Wilt Chamberlain, William Allen White, William Inge those Kansans who held center stage are given at least a passing nod. By his judicious placement of the photographic images, and by the spare but adequate captions that accompany them, Richmond has created an image of his own of a people who are strong and sturdy and resolute, adaptable and optimistic.

From Mt. Oread to Burnett's Mound, from the Shunganunga to the Smoky Hill, this book will make Kansans proud. As Richmond conclusively demonstrates, if Dorothy really isn't in Kansas anymore, that is her loss. The thoughtful reader will agree. **James W. Hewitt**, *Lincoln, Nebraska*.