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Immigrants in the Valley: Irish, Germans, and Americans in the Upper Mississippi Country, 1830-1860

Mark Wyman

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Thousands of newcomers flocked into the Upper Mississippi country in the decades leading up to the Civil War. Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, and Minnesota received immigrants from most areas of Europe, as well as Americans from the Upper South, New England, and the Middle Atlantic states. They all carried with them religious beliefs, experiences, and expectations that differed widely, attitudes and opinions which often threw them into conflict with each other. Drawing extensively on family letters sent home to Europe, missionary reports, employment records, and other diverse materials from 1830 to 1860, Wyman shows the interplay between the major groups traveling the roads and waterways of the Upper Mississippi Valley during those crucial decades. The result is a lively, richly illustrated account that will help Americans everywhere better understand their diverse heritage and the environment in which their family trees took root. A new preface to this paperback edition helps to bring the scholarship up to date.

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