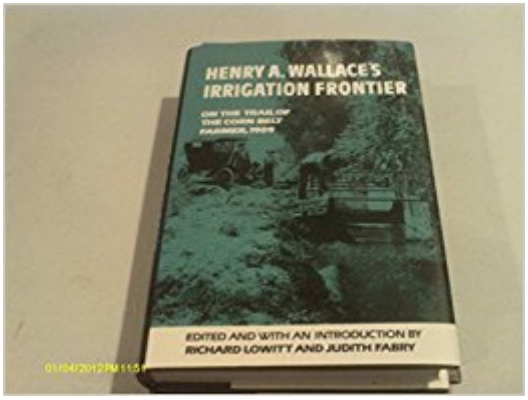
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Henry A. Wallace's Irrigation Frontier: On The Trail Of The Corn Belt Farmer, 1909 (Western Frontier Library)



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Synopsis

When Franklin D. RooseveltÃ¢â ¬â„¢s agriculture secretary and vice-president, Henry A. Wallace, had completed his junior year at Iowa State College in 1909, his family sent him on a western tour “in search of the Corn Belt farmer.Ã¢â ¬Â• Young Henry was to report to the family journal, WallaceÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Farmer, how former Corn Belt farmers were prospering in the districts newly irrigated under public or private auspices, such as ArizonaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Salt River, IdahoÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Boise-Payette and Twin Falls, and farms on the Arkansas River near Garden City, Kansas.WallaceÃ¢â ¬â„¢s articles, collected and reprinted here for the first time, are lively descriptions of up-and-coming western locales such as Amarillo, Texas; Phoenix, Arizona; the orange groves of southern California; the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys; and the Greeley District of Colorado. Along the way, the young reporter and agriculturist critiqued dry farming in Cheyenne, Wyoming, and wrestled calves on a Matador Land Company ranch in the Texas panhandle.Henry Wallace made a specialty of down-home conversation with farmers and their wives and of cross-examining the real-estate agents who profited from the governmentÃ¢â ¬â„¢s commitment to sell water rights to the new property owners. He wrote what today we call New History, concentrating on the impact of irrigation on individuals more than technology, law, or institutions.Modern-day readers will prize WallaceÃ¢â ¬â„¢s clear, expert analysis of the different environments that he visited and his farmer-conservationist ethic. Social historians will be interested as he explains how the closer proximity of irrigated farms and greater abundance of neighbors would produce prosperous communities with schools, roads, and social institutions better than most that then prevailed in AmericaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s rural regions. They will be fascinated to learn how the cooperative aspects of irrigation farming tempered the independence of the immigrants from the Corn Belt. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

Richard Lowitt is retired as Professor of History at the University of Oklahoma and is the author of numerous books, including a three-volume biography of George W. Norris, American Outback: The Oklahoma Panhandle in the Twentieth Century, and The New Deal and the West.Judith Fabry is a Ph.D. candidate and teaching assistant in the department of History at Iowa State University. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

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