

quences of neglect. Images offer a powerful portrait of cemeteries that were damaged and destroyed by neglect and vandalism. This chapter should have been followed by recommendations for the care of this important aspect of Philadelphian heritage. Nonetheless, this little book attests to the importance of cemeteries in chronicling the evolution of a city and provides readers with insights into how cemeteries' ethnic and cultural diversity can enrich their lives.

David G. Orr

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1. John L. Cotter, Daniel G. Roberts, and Michael Parrington, *The Buried Past: An Archaeological History of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 284-288.

2. Dudley Taylor Cornish, *The Sable Arm: Negro Troops in the Union Army, 1961-1865* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1966), 220-221 and 248, and James M. Paradis, *Strike the Blow for Freedom: The 6th United States Colored Infantry in the Civil War* (Shippensburg, PA: White Mane Books, 1998).

3. Agnes Addison Gilchrist, *William Strickland: Architect and Engineer, 1788-1854* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1950), 9 and Plate 28.

Drawing on America's Past: Folk Art, Modernism, and the Index of American Design

By Virginia Tuttle Clayton, Elizabeth Stillinger, Erika Doss, and Deborah Chotner. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003; 256 pp., illustrations, bibliography, appendices, index; cloth \$45.00.

Compare the simple, abstract forms of a rooster weather vane and a Shaker knitting needle case with the complex, detailed weaving of a Boston coverlet and the tiny stitches of an "Old Maid's Ramble" quilt. In this stunning compendium of Americana from the Index of American Design, one can do just that. Textile designer Ruth Reeves and Romana Javitz, head of the New York Public Library's Picture Collection from 1929 until her

retirement in 1968, developed the initial idea for the Index in the mid-1930s. By capturing images of American design, the Index would enlighten the public about the development of American culture.

After the pair proposed their idea to the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project, the Index became an official endeavor to provide a pictorial record of America's artistic heritage. Created between 1935 and 1942, the Index celebrates the quality and vitality of American design. Although the Index excluded architectural ornament and Native American artifacts because they were being recorded by other New Deal-era projects, it sought to include humble artifacts and fine examples of decorative art from public and private collections throughout the country.

Administered by folk art authority, Holger Cahill, the project employed approximately 1,000 artists to depict examples of American folk, popular, and decorative arts created from the time of the country's settlement to about 1900. Today, the Index is viewed as the most comprehensive survey of Americana, allowing researchers to compare objects from daily life and appreciate their unique character.

Although Cahill originally considered using photographs in the style of Walker Evans and Edward Steichen to document the objects, photographic processes available at the time were not cost-effective, permanent, or accurate enough to record object colors in a way that would meet Index goals. Instead, over 18,000 watercolor portraits of objects were created, all of which are now curated by the National Gallery of Art.

To generate goodwill throughout the project, Cahill, also a former journalist and publicist, organized exhibitions of the original renderings at libraries, department stores, hotels, and banks. Long after the project's conclusion, major shows of the Index's work continue. From November 2002 to March 2003, the National Gallery of Art exhibit-

ed 82 exemplary Index renderings. *Drawing on America's Past* is the catalog for the exhibition.

The book opens with essays on American folk art, cultural nationalism, and the background of the Index by Virginia Tuttle Clayton, associate curator of Old Master Prints at the National Gallery of Art, and Erika Doss, professor of art history at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Elizabeth Stillinger, a historian of American decorative arts, takes an insightful look at American folk art collecting and how influential individuals like Henry Francis Du Pont, Electra Havemeyer Webb, and Abby Aldrich Rockefeller proclaimed folk art as examples of fine American craftsmanship. Deborah Chotner, assistant curator of American and British paintings at the National Gallery of Art, contributed to catalogue entries and information on artists.

Following these introductory essays, the catalogue presents examples of carvings; domestic artifacts; furniture; textiles; toys; trade signs and figures; weather vanes and whirligigs; and one drum. Comprehensive descriptions of artistic techniques and decorative art forms enlighten readers about popular motifs found in redware and how "japaning"—a technique in which black enamel or varnish is first applied to wood, and then is painted, gilded, and polished to produce a durable, glossy finish—was used to imitate Oriental lacquer. Short discussions of the origin of ship figureheads and the types of wood used in their construction enhance the nostalgic appeal of nautical carvings.

Entries also place the objects recorded in the Index in historical context. Details about the Island Park Carousel in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, give meaning to the carousel goat depicted by Index artist Donald Donovan. Detailed notes on the data report sheets that accompanied each Index rendering provide additional information about objects, such as the type of game a decoy would have attracted. Compiled by a librarian and Index administrators, the data sheets are rich research

resources that include the artist's name for each rendering, the original object's maker and owner, and its classification number for the Index.

Careful historical research is evident throughout the book. Descriptions of newspaper articles and local histories provide information about the object's provenance, while oral histories with Index artists bolster to the book's sound research. As an example of the careful presentation of facts, Chotner's catalogue entry for a late-19th-century-toaster describes examining United States Patent Office records for the patent number burned into the toaster's handle. The text reveals that the patent indicated was assigned to an 1837 blast furnace, not a toaster. The book's illustrations are a dramatic complement to its sound textual construction. Photographs of Index artists at work bring the project to life, while watercolor illustrations are often paired with photographic images of original objects.

The catalogue reveals that the most skilled Index artists shared their methods of making renderings with other artists through demonstration drawings and the Index of American Design manual. From pencil outlines to color washes, the drawings demonstrate commonly employed artistic techniques. Consistent with the Index's commitment to detail and accuracy, the demonstration drawings show the kinds of brushes, colors, and boards that artists used.

Studying the demonstration drawings leads to a greater appreciation of the skill with which the watercolors were executed. The sheen of worn varnish, cracked paint surfaces, and even rust marks around nails on the original objects are captured in the renderings. For example, when depicting the Uree C. Fell Sampler, a piece of needlework that was completed by a woman named Fell from Buckingham, Pennsylvania, Index artist Elmer Anderson drew white lines on a dark background in order to provide the illusion of the woven cotton background of this 1846 sampler. After precisely

painting tiny cross-stitches on the intricate background, Anderson signed his work and provided notes on its scale in a hand reminiscent of 19th-century cross-stitch sampler verses.

Drawing on America's Past concludes with a bibliography of books, articles, exhibitions, and archival documents, and biographies of Index artists. The information that *Drawing on America's Past* provides about the works of folk, popular, and decorative arts depicted in the Index helps researchers understand artistic techniques and discover more about objects so prevalent in and meaningful to our past. The book also enlightens those seeking information about the Index and how it contributed to our present-day concept of American art.

The Index of American Design remains the most extensive pictorial representation of American folk, popular, and decorative arts. This attractive, well-researched and finely written publication perfectly complements the expressive content and valuable cultural meaning of the objects that the Index celebrates.

Betsy Butler

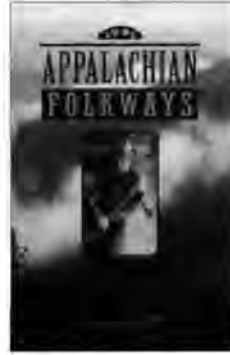
Ohio Historical Society

Appalachian Folkways

By John B. Rehder. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004; 353 pp., illustrations, notes, glossary, bibliography, index; cloth \$39.95.

John Rehder, a cultural geographer at the University of Tennessee, presents an informative and entertaining look into the "culture hearth" of the southern Appalachian Mountains, a region he defines as ranging from southern Pennsylvania to northern Alabama. The volume crosses the disciplines of cultural anthropology, social identity, and ethnography, but the author necessarily clarifies the cultural geography emphasis of his work. His

discussion of culture (the learned and shared life-ways of the cultural hearth of Appalachia) identifies southern Appalachia as a distinctive cultural center in America.



Important Appalachian cultural traits are presented in chapters on the history and composition of the region's ethnicity, architecture, economy, food and subsistence methods, folk medicine and religion, music and art, and language. Rehder provides an academically rigorous and entertainingly informative perspective on a "cultural milieu" that is uniquely American, but deeply rooted in a primarily Anglican ancestry of the Scottish, Irish, British, and German. Rehder takes particular issue with negative stereotyping of mountain people evident in earlier literature by environmental determinists and "color-writers"—the generation of post-Civil War writers who characterized the Appalachian region as backward and portrayed its inhabitants as "yesterday's people."

After a condensed discussion of the topography and geology of the Appalachian Mountain ranges, Rehder examines its population by ethnic group, including a thorough discussion of the Cherokee Indians and the enigmatic Melungeons. He does an excellent job of describing historic settlement routes and patterns of occupation. He identifies the most common surnames in specific locales creating associations of particular interest to genealogists.

Rehder provides a wonderful account of the origins and variations of the architecture and cultural landscape of Appalachia. Not only does he provide detailed descriptions of the many types of structures of the region, but he also gives the reader a visual understanding by including photographs and floor plans. The discussion of log cabins,

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