Return To Sumpter

by Erhart Mueller

This is the last in a series of five books by this author on the subject of the people, places and events in the Town of Sumpter, Sauk County, Wisconsin. To give you an idea of what is between the covers we include here a listing of the chapters of the book and poems.

When Erhart started the series of books on the people of the Town of Sumpter his plan was for four books. After completing the fourth book he recognized that he had enough material for a fifth book and being the wise man that he was began the process that would result in this book. When Erhart died on July 2, 1992 the book was not completed so according to plan his sister, Leta Mueller Ambler completed the book project.

People

The Waterbury Story
The Haskin Story
Transportation
Gate Ten
Staff Village
Schools
Skillet Creek
The Freethinkers
Soldiers of Sumpter
Sumpter Alumni Association
Recreation
Humor
Wildlife
East Sumpter
The Leiser Family
Weigand's Bay

Poems

"Spring" by Florence Waterbury Saxton
"Winter Sleigh Ride" from John Darm's diary
Robert Rood Buell...
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"School"
"An Early Morn. Ride to Baraboo" by Joseph Warren Wood
"To My Fatherland"
Wm. H. Leiser by Fred O. Leiser
"This Is My Father's World" by Maltbie D. Babcock
"Dance of the Prairie Chicken" by Dudley Fuller
"Erhart" by Doris Litscher Gasser

PREFACE

When Erhart Mueller was buried July 5, 1992, I was reminded of Frank Utpatel's "Rural Burial". This wood engraving depicts a minister reading the service before onlookers with bowed heads; their horse-drawn wagons are in the background. I could easily visualize Erhart in this setting, for he was, in certain respects, a person of an earlier age. How many people today, for example, use such expressions as "daresn't" or "I'll bet a cookie"?

Erhart's passion was local history, and his mother lode was his homeland - Sumpter Township, a predominately rural area of 38 square miles. Here for especially the last 30 years of his life he interviewed and read and studied, and, via his published writings, left an enduring legacy.

Previous books in Erhart's multi-volume history of Sumpter have been *"Only in Sumpter"* (1977), *"Also in Sumpter"* (1980), *"Always in Sumpter"* (1983), and *"Forever in Sumpter"* (1987); most of us remember them better as the green book, the blue book, the yellow book and the red book. The 65 stories total just over 1400 pages and form a collage of life and death virtually unmatched for the midwestern heartland of America.

My very special friend is gone now, and no longer can I quickly and painlessly obtain the answers to an array of vexing historical questions. However, thanks especially to Leta Ambler, a sister of Erhart's, some of them may be answered in this book, Erhart's fifth and final volume of Sumpter history.

Technology and changing trends often dictate who shall be remembered, and for what reasons. But certain verities remain, and I predict that Erhart will be long remembered, especially for his Sumpter history. In fact, I'll bet a cookie on it!

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