

New England in the West

"Wilderness for Sale," by **Walter Havighurst** (Hastings House. 372 pp. \$4.50), retells the story of the rush of settlement into Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois following the War of 1812. Our reviewer is Professor Philip D. Jordan, University of Minnesota, author of several books about the Midwest.

By Philip D. Jordan

WHAT'S the Ohio country like?" The wayfarer rubbed a stubbly chin. "Well, sir," he said, "the western country is woods an' misery, corn liker an' razorback hogs, growin' towns an' honeybee trees, an' more damned land than even a Yankee kin farm afore the Day of Judgment!"

Travelers, emigrants, and fever-shaking settlers, journeying through the back-of-beyond in those early decades of the nineteenth century when the nation was bursting its seams after the War of 1812 and was strutting westward arm-in-arm with Manifest Destiny, spoke and wrote and bragged and dreamed of land. There was lust in the eyes of movers who described the big woods of Ohio, the plains of Indiana, the rolling savannas of Illinois, the American Bottoms along the course of the Mississippi. Here, in the western country, lay the land of promise. This was destined as the heartland, a place securely rooted in the tenets of freedom, a haven where a man's cabin was his castle, a stronghold because commoners owned family-sized farms. Land was the goal, the mistress.

Throughout the Northwest Territory the rich, black earth lay in abundance, waiting for the plow edge to fold it back and for the seed that would come to autumn harvest. There was plenty of land, and it sold to plain men and women at bargain rates. The story of the land policy of the United States, with all its dramatic and colorful incidents and implications, has been unfolded repeatedly. Much of the history of Uncle Sam's nation was conditioned by the frontier, and the frontier was determined in part by the public domain. And it is this old, yet always new, tale of land and the frontier and the people on the land that Walter Havighurst spins in "Wilderness for Sale."

Here, once again, is charted the

westward flow of people anxious to claim their heritage under the monumental ordinances of 1785 and 1787—the first, as every school boy learns, a land law for the Northwest Territory, and the second, of course, a program of government. The land law provided for a system of surveys, and the act of 1787, in addition to political machinery, emphasized personal freedoms. It is sometimes forgotten that the surveyor's chain made significant by the act of 1785 conquered the wilderness quite as much as did the long rifle. Land hunger and the restless itch of a new nationalism proved too much for Indian tribes which sought to preserve ancient hunting grounds and keep sacred the burial places of their dead. Treaty after treaty ate away tribal lands. Perhaps it is symbolic that the chiefs received treaty medals in the shape of tear drops.

With the removal of the Indian menace the triumphal invasion of the emigrant began. These frontiersmen, determined to recreate the West in the image and likeness of New Eng-

land, swept over the Midwestern frontier. Their grit and energy and political know-how brought Ohio into the Union in 1803. They infused the spirit of Jacksonian democracy into Illinois and Hoosierland. They became builders of states and molders of opinion, Mr. Havighurst, with grace and penetration, shows the stalwart pioneers hammering together jerry-built towns on the Miami and Wabash, settling the Western Reserve, building Cincinnati, scheming treason on Blennerhassett Island, laying out the National Road, digging canals. And always and eternally these movers and settlers exerted pressure on the Government for cheaper land at easier terms. The purpose of the public lands, they argued, was to provide opportunity for the people and not to raise revenue for the Government. By 1840 the policy of lands for revenue was largely abandoned, and Mr. Havighurst says simply: "The spreading of settlement became more important than the raising of revenue, and the squatter changed from an outlaw to the American pioneer."

THIS explanation, although correct enough in a rough way, seems too simple and is tinged with the exasperating romanticism that has stigmatized so much writing about the frontier, whether it be Ohio or Iowa
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The Return of the Maidens

THIS is written the day before the departure for Japan of nine young ladies out of a group of twenty-five who came to the United States from Hiroshima for plastic and reconstructive surgery. The treatment for the remaining girls will not be completed for another two months, at the end of which time the second group will leave.

It was a year and two months ago that the Hiroshima Maidens arrived at Mitchell Field in Long Island, New York. The last part of the air voyage had been somewhat turbulent and the girls looked pale and shaky as they stepped out of the U.S. Air Force plane that had been placed at their disposal by General J. E. Hull. It was an unseasonably chilly day and the girls huddled together at the foot of the steps to the plane, uncertain and visibly scared. You couldn't blame them. For most of them it was their first time on foreign soil. Ahead of them was the great unknown—the surgeons and the hospital and the strange homes. They carried their wardrobes, most of them, on their backs.

The contrasting image was furnished last month when the girls appeared at nurse's-aide graduation exercises at the American Red Cross. They had completed a special survey course in nursing given them at the Manhattan Center of the Red Cross and were now to receive their diplomas. They sat with their American "parents," radiating well-being and a sense of inner ease. They were neatly and attractively dressed; their hair and make-up was American college-girl style. Each girl walked up to receive her diploma from J. Harrison Heck-

man, Executive Director of the New York Chapter of the Red Cross, and returned to her seat with that look so well known to parents at graduation exercises—an expression compounded both of individual achievement and satisfaction at discharging one's obligations as part of a group.

Four nights earlier the girls had come together at a farewell meeting given by the New York Friends Center at the Friends Meeting House on East 15th Street. Some 300 Friends and friends of Friends came to pay their respects to their girls. Among the Americans were the families with whom the girls had lived in the communities near New York. Though most of the girls had changed their homes four to six times during the year because of the insistence of many Friends that they be allowed to join in the program, the ties to the American families have grown strong and deep. Especially has this been true where there have been children in the home. Given their choice of things to do, most of the girls have preferred to stay home so long as the family was there too.

Here, at the Friends Meeting House, the girls heard Arnold Vaught, Executive Director, C. Frank Ortloff, Senior Vice President, and Ida Day, who has been hospitality coordinator for the Friends, speak of their feelings about the project. A single theme ran through their talks. The purpose of this meeting, they said, was to thank the Hiroshima Maidens for one of the richest and most meaningful experiences of their lives. Dr. Arthur J. Barsky, chief surgeon, spoke of his hope that surgical and medical help

could be provided to the people of all ages in Hiroshima and Nagasaki who are still suffering from the injuries caused by the atomic bombings eleven years ago. (Dr. Barsky and his associates, Dr. Bernard Simon and Dr. Sidney Kahn, have so far performed 125 separate operations on the Maidens.) Dr. William M. Hitzig, who has looked after the general health of the girls, reported that they were all in excellent condition and spirits. The doctor has a gift for vivid description and told of the girls' flying visit to Washington at cherry blossom time on a trip arranged by Mrs. Jack Howard of the project committee.

Downstairs, at the reception following the meeting, the "parents" exchanged notes with each other about their experiences during the year. One of them told of the time her girl returned from the hospital following a second operation that freed her fingers and hands from the contractions and deformation caused by the burns. The girl went upstairs, got a drawing pad and pencil, went outside and sketched the landscape in front of the house. In the days that followed her interest in art continued and her proficiency increased. A nationally-known artist who lived nearby said the girl showed considerable promise; a scholarship was arranged at one of the country's leading art schools.

ANOTHER Quaker could speak of a similar experience of her girl. The reconstructive surgery had been successful and the girl took up drawing and painting. A scholarship was provided at the local art association. After a few months the girl did a painting at the fall sidewalk show of the Friends. The painting was sold on its merits. The girl asked for the privilege of turning the money over to the Mt. Sinai Hospital, which has been the medical headquarters of the project and which has provided free beds, treatment, and facilities for the girls. The offer was gratefully accepted.

Then there was the story of another girl who was determined to learn Braille typewriting so that she might work with the blind after her return to Japan. Each of the Maidens is given a small monthly allowance for pin-money. This girl has saved every cent in order to make a gift of a Braille typewriter for a school for the blind in Hiroshima. She has also developed a remarkable proficiency with the English language, discussing with her parents matters such as religion in America, the structure of government in the United States, and the philosophy of a democratic society.

One of the Quakers has a friend who is a professional maker of jewelry.