

the literature of the iron and steel revolution, restoring that history to its proper importance.

Kobus approaches his subject from a perspective different from other authors. A third-generation steel worker, he worked his way through the ranks of Jones & Laughlin Steel Company and earned an engineering degree from the University of Pittsburgh. Later, he served in various managerial positions for a number of Pittsburgh steel plants. Kobus draws from this wealth of expertise and experience to discuss the revolution in steel.

He begins *City of Steel* with a remarkably clear description of techniques that preceded large-batch steelmaking. His discussion of the wrought iron puddling process and crucible steelmaking is clear and concise, accompanied by excellent photographs and illustrations. His treatment of blast furnace pig iron production and the development of fuels and transportation is also quite accessible.

However, the chapters on Bessemer and open hearth steelmaking—the heart of massive change in the iron and steel industries—are less straightforward. Here, Kobus's capacity to clearly relate complex processes for non-expert readers deserts him. Perhaps this is inevitable; these are complex and technically demanding methods. Nonetheless, following the development of Bessemer converters at the Edgar Thompson Works and the complicated metallurgical discussions of open hearth steelmaking at Homestead and Duquesne is difficult.

The author does an excellent job of tying the narrative together in his final chapter, demonstrating the scope and significance of the iron and steel industry's transformation. Kobus does not shy away from the criticisms that other writers have levied against Andrew Carnegie. However, the book concludes that Carnegie was nevertheless a visionary, despite being technologically unsophisticated, an absentee owner, and hypocritical with regards to labor policy.

Readers interested in Pittsburgh's industrial development during the late nineteenth century should be prepared for some dense reading. However, the experience is ultimately rewarding.

University of Toronto

JOHN N. INGHAM

Running the Rails: Capital and Labor in the Philadelphia Transit Industry. By JAMES WOLFINGER. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.)

James Wolfinger's *Running the Rails* is an insightful and engaging analysis of Philadelphia's mass transit system during its almost century-long period of private ownership. It nimbly shifts from national context to local example and raises interesting questions that should engage both labor and urban historians.

The first chapters detail the nature of transit work and the effective consolidation of Philadelphia transit into a monopolistic trolley company. Wolfinger then proceeds chronologically, documenting local management's methods to tame and subordinate labor and showing how they largely dovetailed with national trends. Workers' ambitions and strategies also evolved with the times, though the author only scratches the surface of this topic. In each era, workers and management offered different answers to "the labor question—who will work for whom and under what conditions" (7).

At the turn of the century, the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company routinely used private and state terror. Workers tapped into class solidarity and rider anger to mobilize community support. These efforts were facilitated by the almost unique way transit "production," and scabbing, took place on the city streets, accessible to strikers and supporters. The culmination was a weeks-long general strike in 1910, one of several little-known stories Wolfinger recounts. Subsequently, a new company CEO, Thomas Mitten, was hired to implement National Association of Manufacturers-style labor policies that emphasized welfare capitalist incentives over violence now seen as counterproductive. The central figure of the book and the cause of Philadelphia's underdeveloped mass transit system, Wolfinger's Mitten seems part charlatan and part flawed visionary. He encouraged workers to buy company stock, convincing them to work harder to support its value. Unfortunately, we only hear workers' voices through the pages of management's in-house newsletter.

Mitten's death, concurrent with the Great Depression, the National Labor Relations Act, and a long-running bankruptcy that brought ruination to the worker-owners, ultimately led workers to repudiate his company union. In a last-ditch effort to forestall recognition of the Congress of Industrial Organization's Transport Workers Union (TWU), the company whipped up racist sentiment among white bus and trolley operators and fomented Philadelphia's notorious 1944 "hate strike," only quelled when President Roosevelt sent in troops to run the system and threatened to draft strikers. Elsewhere, Wolfinger has noted that this was the first time since Reconstruction that the federal government mobilized troops in support of civil rights.

Wolfinger also ably links the postwar Philadelphia story to national ones: on the one hand, suburbanization, underfunding, and deferred maintenance; on the other, greater union power in alliance with Democratic Party politicians. If earlier financial tension counterposed the expansive needs of urban development against penny-pinching shareholders and bondholders, now the union increasingly found itself the scapegoat for the system's decline and higher fares. At this point, working-class producers became alienated from their working-class consumer brethren. After the system's conversion to public ownership, transit strikes became more common. Wolfinger treats this period almost as an epilogue, but

since his focus throughout is on “the labor question,” it would have been useful to discuss how these struggles unfolded for employees facing public rather than private owners.

Running the Rails chronicles the evolution of management strategies to dominate labor, framed by both local and national economic, political, and ideological developments. It is also a timely story about the struggle over who should bear the costs and reap the rewards of a public good: citizens and business denizens, workers, managers, or bond- and shareholders.

CUNY Graduate Center

MARC KAGAN