

Immigration at the Golden Gate: Passenger Ships, Exclusion, and Angel Island. By Robert Eric Barde. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008. Pp. xi, 283. \$45.95, cloth.

In *Immigration at the Golden Gate*, Robert Barde examines the history of Asian passenger steamship travel and Chinese and Japanese immigration through San Francisco and the federal immigration station on Angel Island. In operation for thirty years, from 1910 to 1940, the immigration station on Angel Island processed over a million people who passed through the island either as first-time applicants, returning residents and citizens, transients, or deportees and repatriates. Thousands of visitors, immigration officials, doctors, social workers, and station employees would also spend time at the station, facilitating the government's business of inspecting, treating, feeding, detaining, and processing new and returning arrivals into the country and deportees and repatriates out of the country.

Immigration at the Golden Gate offers wonderfully detailed portraits of some of the immigrants, immigration officials, and steamships that made Angel Island such a significant part of American immigration history. It joins a number of recent monographs that have paid increasing attention to the politics and logistics of immigration and immigration law enforcement at our nation's borders in the past and the present.

Barde, the Deputy Director and Academic Coordinator of the Institute of Business and Economic Research at the University of California at Berkeley, is a wonderful storyteller, and the book's research is impressive. The book is divided into three sections. The first, "Detention and Angel Island," gives a brief overview of the immigration station, explains the origins of immigrant detention in San Francisco before the immigration station was built on Angel Island in 1910, and introduces us to Quok Shee, a Chinese woman applying to enter the country to join her husband whose twenty-month detention on Angel Island is the longest in the station's history. Barde tells us that the story of immigration officials' tenacious efforts to exclude her and Quok Shee's persistent efforts to enter the country formed the genesis of the book many years ago. The story fascinated him so much that he sought to connect it to other significant trends, including Asian passenger steamship travel, immigration law, and immigrant detention in the early twentieth century.

The results of this research form the other two sections of the book. In "Transportation Across the Pacific," Barde examines the business of Asian passenger steamship travel in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, offering comprehensive histories of some of the major steamship lines and steamships, including the China Mail Steamship Company. In an innovative chapter charting the history of the steamship, the SS *Nippon Maru*, Barde examines how the big global business of immigrant travel conflicted with national public health regulations.

The last section of the book, "Enforcement," examines how immigration laws affecting Asians, especially Chinese immigrants, were enforced. He details an immigrant smuggling scandal in 1915 that rocked the immigration service after a federal investigation found corruption at all levels of the agency. He mines the little-used diaries and private papers of John Birge Sawyer, an immigrant inspector, to give us first-hand accounts of someone involved in enforcing the Chinese exclusion laws.

Immigration at the Golden Gate, is, as the author himself describes, a collection of essays rather than a single monograph. The essays do demonstrate "how natives and newcomers experienced the immigration process on the West Coast," as the book jacket describes. Written as separate essays, however, they do not work as well as a single monograph. They are certainly connected in their common focus on immigration through the West Coast in the early twentieth century. But the lack of an overarching

thesis detracts from the overall strength of the book. Still, there is much valuable new information in *Immigration at the Golden Gate*, and Barde does an excellent job of bringing long-forgotten people like Quok Shee and John Birge Sawyer to life in order to shed light on this important chapter in American immigration history.

ERIKA LEE, *University of Minnesota*

The Power Makers: Steam, Electricity, and the Men Who Invented America. By Maury Klein. New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008. Pp. xiii, 520. \$29.99, cloth.

Maury Klein is a book-writing machine, and he is good at it. In his fourteen previous books, four published in the last eight years, he has written about the Union Pacific railroad, railroad men such as Jay Gould and E. H. Harriman, entrepreneurs of various persuasions ("change makers"), the antebellum American South, the Crash of 1929, and American industrialization. He has an ability to take a subject, study it quickly but very thoroughly, and to write a book that, while not breaking any new ground in terms of methodology or interpretation, summarizes existing knowledge and organizes it into an accurate, compelling, and well-written tale. This is a service to the profession. One difficulty with this approach is that it sometimes is a bit difficult to determine exactly what audience (scholars, students, or the general public) is best suited for the book, which is true for *The Power Makers*.

The Power Makers is a history of steam power and electricity in the United States, from their scientific and technical inceptions through the fall of Samuel Insull's utility empire during the Great Depression. Methodologically, Klein certainly is no social constructionist; he appears to be a rather unabashed technological determinist: "Industrialization created the modern world. . . [and] . . . made the United States and the power revolution made industrialization. Similarly, technology made the electrical revolution and electricity made the technological revolution" (p. xi). Thus, technology created the modern world and made the United States. Klein recognizes the role of individuals in creating technology; a large number of individuals and their contributions are discussed in the book. Klein does not address the issue of whether things would have turned out differently, for example, if Thomas Edison had never existed, perhaps a fruitless endeavor. While I believe that causality actually flows in many different directions, it is certain that steam and electric power contributed substantially to the modern, developed world, and that is sufficient reason to study their histories.

There really are two or three books packaged into one here, a short one, comprising the first three of twenty chapters, on the steam engine; a much longer one, comprising the bulk of the book, on the history of electric power focusing on technology and the electrical manufacturers; and a final one, comprising two chapters, that perhaps could be considered part of the electric story, focusing on Samuel Insull, the electric utility magnate, a dominant but far from sole player in the dramatic events in the electric utility industry in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

Klein has framed the book very cleverly in a prologue, interior chapter, and epilogue. He has a fictional boy named Ned travel from his home in Iowa to visit the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876 (prior to electric lights, where a giant Corliss steam engine powered the Machinery Hall and was a big hit), then as a young man to visit the Columbian Exposition, or World's Fair, in Chicago in 1893 (which was powered and lighted spectacularly by a Westinghouse alternating current system), and finally later in life to visit the New York World's Fair in 1939 (where electricity