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The Carl L. Becker Memorial Lectures in History, Fourth Annual Lecture: Quest of the Historian

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THE CARL L. BECKER MEMORIAL LECTURES IN HISTORY

Fourth Annual Lecture

"QUEST OF THE HISTORIAN"

To Be Delivered By

Otto Pflanze
Professor of History, Indiana University
Editor, The American Historical Review

* * *

Wednesday, September 28, 1977

8:00 p.m.

North-South Room, Maucker Union

Presiding Professor
Donald E. Shepardson

SPONSORED BY

THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, PHI ALPHA THETA AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
The Lecturer

Otto Pflanze is Professor of History at Indiana University and Editor of the American Historical Review. Born in Maryville, Tennessee, he received his B.A. from Maryville College, and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Yale. Following service in the United States Army Air Force during World War II, Pflanze commenced his teaching career at New York University. From 1952 to 1958 he was an Assistant Professor at the University of Massachusetts, and he was on the faculty at the University of Illinois from 1958 to 1961. He joined the faculty at the University of Minnesota in that year. This fall he was appointed Professor of History at Indiana University. His honors include a Fulbright Grant and a Guggenheim Fellowship. In the past Pflanze was also a member of the Institute for Advanced Studies and Editor of the Journal of Modern History. Among his awards is included the Phi Alpha Theta Book Prize for 1964.

Professor Pflanze has authored and coauthored many books and articles. Among these are Bismarck and the Development of Germany: The Period of Unification, 1815-1871 which was published in 1963; “Characteristics of Nationalism in Europe, 1848-1871”; and “Toward a Psychoanalytical Interpretation of Bismarck” which was published in the American Historical Review in 1972. He has also co-edited “Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945” and edited a work in the Problems in European Civilization Series entitled “The Unification of Germany, 1848-1871.”

CARL L. BECKER
1873-1945

The Historical Association, Phi Alpha Theta, and the Department of History of the University of Northern Iowa welcome you to the Fourth Annual Carl L. Becker Lecture in History. The lecture has been named in honor of a man who perhaps is the most distinguished scholar and teacher to emerge from the State of Iowa.

Becker was born in 1873 on a farm near Reinbeck. His family moved to Waterloo where he was graduated from Old Central High School. He attended Cornell College and received his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin in 1907. From 1902-1941 he taught at various universities in the Midwest and East, the last being Cornell University in New York.

It was as a progressive thinker that Becker became an internationally recognized figure and helped to usher in the golden age of history writing that marked the first half of the 20th Century. He believed that the historian writes in the present, always with one eye on the past and the other on the future. Hence, history can be used to improve human relations. This type of historical thinking provided history with a purpose and was responsible for the still popular idea that the historian, armed with his knowledge of the past, can better respond to the problems of the present.
One of Becker's major concerns was whether man could control the weapons of mechanical power so as to ensure he would not become their slave and in the end destroy himself. His power of perception can be most appreciated when one realizes he expressed these thoughts in the decade before the atom bomb was dropped over Hiroshima. Finally, Becker's works dealing with academic freedom and responsibility are enough to make him long remembered in academic circles.

There is an exhibition of Carl Becker's works on display on the first floor of Sabin Hall.

STATE OF IOWA
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
In the Name and by the Authority of The State of Iowa

DAY OF RECOGNITION

WHEREAS, native Iowan Carl Becker's forty-five years of scholarly leadership should be recognized; and

WHEREAS, Carl Becker made significant contributions to historical knowledge and historiography; and

WHEREAS, Carl Becker was sensitive to the need for people living in a democracy to concern themselves with their responsibilities as well as their rights; and

WHEREAS, we seek to honor this courageous defense of academic freedom and responsibility and his devotion to the truth and humane dealing among men; and

WHEREAS, on September 19 the Carl L. Becker Memorial Lecture by the University of Northern Iowa Historical Association, Phi Alpha Theta, and the Department of History will be inaugurated in honor of this great teacher and scholar:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Robert D. Ray, Governor of the State of Iowa, do hereby designate September 19, 1974, as

Carl L. Becker Recognition Day

and call upon our Iowa citizens to honor the memory of this great Iowan.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused the Great Seal of the State of Iowa to be affixed. Done at Des Moines this 17th day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred seventy-four.

Robert D. Ray
(signed)
GOVERNOR
Previous Becker Lecturers

Michael G. Kammen, 1974-1975
R. Don Higginbotham, 1975-1976
Jack Greene, 1976-1977

Lecture Series, 1977-78

September 28 Carl Becker Memorial Lecture — Otto Pflanze, "Quest of the Historian."
October 19  David Whitsett, "Frederick Taylor: Good Guy or Bad Guy."
November 16 Howard Jones, "Climbing Your Family Tree: Genealogy and History."
December 7  Dwight Saunders, "The Voices of Madmen: Economic Thought at Work."
February 1  Gonny Schokkenbroek, "A History of Archaeology in America."
March 1  James Cobb, "From Ballads to Big Time: The Evolution of Country Music."
March 29  Annual Student Lectures — Alex Walker and David Conzett
April 19  John Eiklor, "Bismarck and Bavaria 1866: Power and Error."
May 3  Alvin R. Sunseri, "Louisiana Lagniappe."