



Prairie Visions

Writings by Hamlin Garland

Photography by Jon Morris

Edited by Keith Newlin

Foreword by Kurt Meyer

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From the Introduction:

Before he achieved fame as a writer of what he called the “middle border,” before he even attempted to write the stories that made him famous, he set down his memories of his boyhood on an Iowa farm in a series of six articles entitled “Boy Life on the Prairie,” which were published in *American Magazine* in 1888. In these sketches, which follow the seasonal activities of farm life over the course of a year, Garland sought to preserve his boyhood memories. These articles, which have not been reprinted since their first publication, are of value in their own right for their evocative depiction of prairie farm life, but they are also important for their place in Garland’s development as a writer. In them he first recorded the centrality of place, specifically northern Iowa, for his imagination; in them he discovered scenes, techniques, and themes he would later infuse in fiction; and in them he discovered his knack for autobiographical writing, perhaps his most accomplished genre.

In reprinting the “Boy Life” articles here, and accompanying them with Jon Morris’ splendid photography of scenes from rural Iowa, our hope has been to present two complementary visions of what drew Garland’s eye to the landscape. Our intention is to illuminate those distinctive features of rural Iowan life that engage the imagination.

Prairie Visions reprints the first prose writings of Hamlin Garland, six sketches he entitled “Boy Life on the Prairie,” and originally published in *American Magazine* in 1888. Accompanied by 40 striking black-and-white photographs by Jon Morris, the volume illustrates the significance of place to Garland's imagination.

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