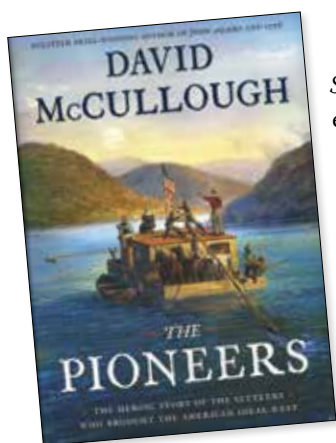


Book Review Editor: Theodore J. Weidner, Ph.D., P.E., AIA, CEF, DBIA

This column is a departure from the majority of topics I've typically covered, but it still has some relevance to facilities management (FM). I've read two histories lately, one from a favorite author. If you enjoy history as much as I do, primarily for a diversion from the pressures of FM, you should enjoy both of these books.

THE PIONEERS: THE HEROIC STORY OF THE SETTLERS WHO BROUGHT THE AMERICAN IDEAL WEST

David McCullough, Simon & Schuster, New York, 2019, 352 pp., hardcover (\$30.00), ebook (\$14.99), audiobook (\$14.95).



Ever since reading *The Great Bridge: The Epic Story of the Building of the Brooklyn Bridge*, I have enjoyed David McCullough's writing and his coverage of history. *The Pioneers* is no different. In the first chapter, McCullough explains why the Northwest Territories, which eventually became Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, were so important to education. The Ohio Company bought the land, which had been ceded to the newly formed United States from Great Britain in the Treaty of Paris (to end the Revolutionary War), resulting in a major reduction of U.S. war debt. The original charter required land set aside in perpetuity for primary education and a university. This clearly explains, from one perspective, why there are so many colleges in the MAPPA (Midwestern APPA) region.

Based on several diaries found in the Marietta College archives, *The Pioneers* weaves together an engaging and detailed history of how the nation expanded following its creation. Because the history is based on the writings of the settlers and colonial journalists, some historians will say it presents a Eurocentric perspective with little input from the indigenous people of the area. That could be true; however, this reader found that the gruesome atrocities committed on both sides were understandable, given the situation that both sides faced.

The Pioneers tells several stories of settlers moving

from New England and other parts of the original colonies as they searched for more fertile ground for crops, and for access to natural resources in the form of dense forests of massive hardwood trees and abundant fauna of all kinds, including buffaloes, beaver, bears, turkeys, wolves, and many other animals that provided food while settlers awaited the harvest.

The Ohio River was the superhighway of the time. It provided easy access to the continent's interior once the mountains of Pennsylvania had been crossed. Other rivers provided access to the north: The Muskingum, Scioto (sigh-oh-ta), Miami, and Wabash rivers provided access to good farmland. These were the lands of the Cherokee, Chippewa, Delaware, Miami, Mohawk, Ottawa, Seneca, Shawnee, Wabash, and Wyandot tribes, who responded to the settlers in varying ways—sometimes peacefully and sometimes not.

The Pioneers shows us how the states of the Northwest Territories came into being, by focusing on Ohio and examining a relatively narrow time frame from 1788 to 1848. As usual, McCullough brings what many might consider "dry" history to life. The personal accounts he includes, revealing the struggles and sufferings of the intrepid men and women who settled the American West, are worthwhile reading that helps us understand where we came from—and in the case of some Ohio colleges, why they exist. Reading this history gives the reader a better understanding of what made the country strong.

GRANT

Ron Chernow, Penguin Press, New York, 2017, 1,104 pp., hardcover (\$40.00), ebook (\$16.99), audiobook (\$14.95).

The myths that have often been taught in schools about Ulysses S. Grant are gradually dispelled and corrected in Ron Chernow's biography. This lengthy

volume covers Grant's life in great detail—some parts of which were indeed heroic, but some much less so.

Most school children know that Grant was the

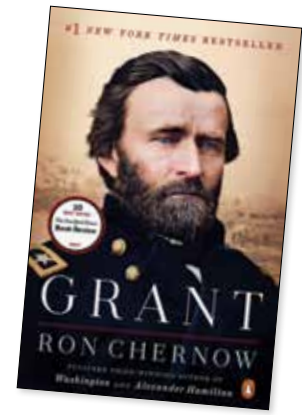
Union Army general who brought a conclusion to the Civil War at Appomattox Courthouse in 1865. But where he came from, what he did before and after the war, and what he struggled through during his two presidential terms and post-presidency are not as well known.

Grant had a powerful intellect. He might not have been as smart as other presidents, but he had a good understanding of right and wrong. He gave a great deal of authority to those who reported to him—sometimes too much. He trusted people and assumed they all had the same morals he did. Too many did not, and he was often unable to perceive their weaknesses—a serious deficit in an otherwise highly upstanding character.

Born into a humble, industrious family, Grant studied hard and entered West Point with some help from parental connections. His moral character (he was born in Ohio where slavery was prohibited) resulted in the implementation of the strongest protections for former slaves for a century after the Civil War. However, he utilized federal forces in a way that some would claim was an inappropriate

intrusion on state's rights. And his fear of dying in penury drove him to several unfortunate alliances during and after his presidency.

The political machinations of the post-Civil War era are somewhat reminiscent of our current political turmoil; Grant did a commendable job of getting opposing sides to work together through compromise. Chernow provides a compelling and complete picture of *Grant* as both a man and a President, chronicling his struggles against numerous challenges. Facility managers may find some valuable leadership lessons in this excellent biography. 



Ted Weidner is an associate professor at Purdue University and consults on facilities management issues primarily for educational organizations. He can be reached at tjweidne@purdue.edu. If you would like to write a book review, please contact Ted directly.



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

GALE

**ENGINEERS & DESIGN
PROFESSIONALS**

*Specializing in Educational Facilities
since 1964*

Gale Associates, Inc.

800-659-4753

jfl@gainc.com

www.galeassociates.com

Building Enclosure/Structural Services:

- Roof and building enclosure management programs
- Roof, wall, window/glazing, waterproofing, and structural evaluations and designs
- Forensic evaluations
- Construction phase assistance
- Enclosure design assistance and peer review for new construction, and historic, LEED-certified, and green roof facilities

Athletic and Recreation Facilities Design Services:

- Comprehensive athletic campus evaluation and master planning
- Athletic facilities planning, permitting, and programming
- High-efficiency lighting, minimizing off-site impacts
- New track facilities, track renovations, and conversions
- All types of synthetic and natural turf fields

BOSTON BALTIMORE ORLANDO BEDFORD, NH WASHINGTON, DC HARTFORD