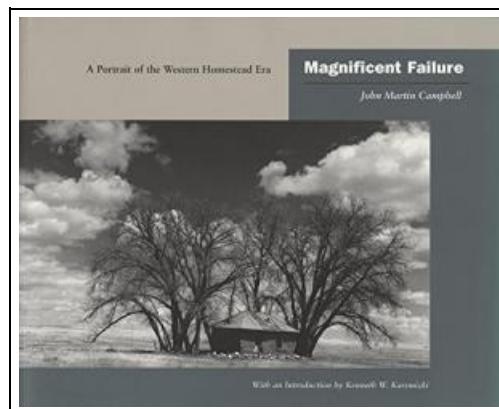


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University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2008. Softcover. Book Condition: New. 200 pages. Softcover. New book. AMERICAN WEST. Stunning photographic testimony to the hard realities of western farming. In words that are as clean and precise as his haunting, starkly beautiful photographs, John Martin Campbell vividly recreates the life and times of the western homestead era, the period from about 1885 when the prairie lands lying west of the longitude of the western Dakotas became available to pioneering farmers. More than 70 black-and-white duotone photographs, with detailed captions, record bleak landscapes and abandoned farms, outbuildings, farm implements, and hand tools—mute testimonies to the failed hopes of several million families who settled on these arid and semi-arid lands. Campbell explains how their failure resulted from a deadly combination of natural and economic causes. Historians of the western United States have largely ignored the homesteaders, despite the lessons their experiences teach about irrigation and dry farming on the northern plains and the impact of the Great Depression and Dust Bowl. There is little romance in farming, especially when compared with that attached to cowboys, Indians, and explorers. Still, the homesteaders were heroes in the opening of the West, and this book, with its moving text, historical introduction, and stunning photographs, tells their story. John Martin Campbell is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and Research Professor and Research Curator of the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico. He is the author of two other photographic works, *Few and Far Between: Moments on the North American Desert* and *The Prairie Schoolhouse*. Kenneth W. Karsmizki is Executive Director and Curator of History at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center, The Dalles, Oregon. "An evocative marriage of the visual and the verbal, *Magnificent Failure* stands as a poignant essay on the human condition that will..."

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