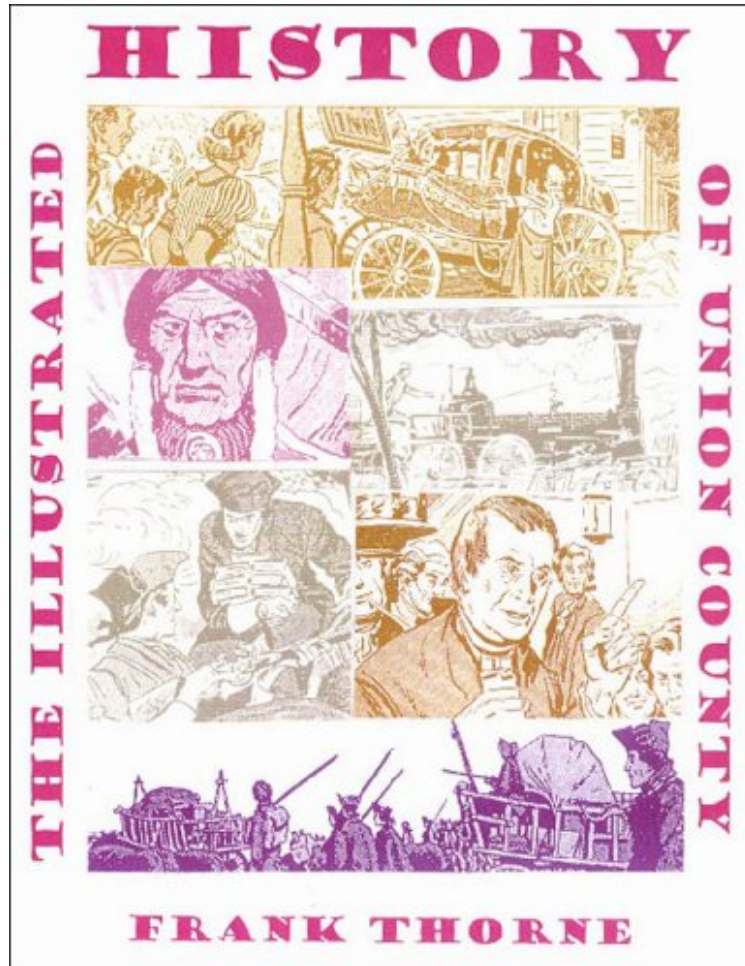


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Illustrated History of Union County

Frank Thorne

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Frank Thorne : Illustrated History of Union County before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Illustrated History of Union County:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Bob Mayers revolutionarydetective Interesting read and unique format but needs more reference/source data 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Surprising work from Frank Thorne By Babytoxiel I live 1500 miles from Union County, New Jersey. I've never been there and have not heard of its towns and townships. Regardless of this, I feel very familiar with it, thanks to this book. THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF UNION COUNTY collects writer/artist Frank Thorne's educational comic strips from the Elizabeth Daily Journal of the 1950's. At the time, Thorne was 19 and just finishing art school... well before his career-defining work on Red Sonja, Flash Gordon, and other fantastic characters. Still, this is some impressive work. Thorne indeed starts at the beginning - 60 million years ago to be exact - with the geological formation of the land that would become Union County. From there, we jump forward to settlement in the 1600s, through the Revolutionary

War, and just touching on the industrialization of the 1800s. Overall, it's representative of the development of many areas of early America, but the focus on the personalities and events of Union County add some real flavor: Reverend James Caldwell, the pastor who, when the revolutionary troops ran out of wadding, had them use pages torn from the church hymnals; the ghostly "Legend of Baltus Roll"; and the county's very own unknown soldier are just a few of the interesting stories told here. I'm a big fan of Thorne's work, but even I was amazed at the quality of the art in this book. For something produced so early in his career, it is surprisingly solid, containing well-blended influences from Hal Foster and Alex Raymond. Actually, if I didn't know better, I'd swear it was drawn by Alex Toth! Considering Thorne's age and the time period captured in these stories, there is understandably none of the buxom ladies for which he would later become famous, but that means you really get to see the man's basic artistic skills at work. In addition, since the originals were long-gone, Thorne personally restored the strips from archive copies of the paper, and it looks exceptional. The art is crisp and clear, and if there was any loss of detail, it must have been minimal. While the material in this book is somewhat repetitive, as well as being suited more for historians and those with a connection to Union County, the superb artwork will likely appeal to any fan of classic comics.

A newspaper series unseen for over half a century comes vibrantly alive again. Frank Thorne is one of the most respected and accomplished comic artists of his generation. He began drawing comic in the 1950s and quickly established himself as a supremely competent draftsman and storyteller. Before he made a name for himself drawing Red Sonja for Marvel Comics, before he appeared in Heavy Metal and Playboy, and even before he put in his time on Flash Gordon, Green Hornet, and Perry Mason, a fresh-out-of-Art-Career-School Frank Thorne worked on an historical strip called The Illustrated History of Union County. Spanning the entire history of a New Jersey county important to the formation of these United States, this book illustrates, with the influence of Harold Foster (Prince Valiant) and Alex Raymond (Flash Gordon), scholarly episodes with a strong youthful vigor. The proceeds from the sale of this book will go towards the restoration of an 18th century house in Union County, New Jersey.

From Publishers Weekly Serialized in the early 1950s, this account of New Jersey's Union County begins 60 million years in the past, complete with glaciers and dinosaurs, and proceeds to jump through history like a time traveler on hallucinogens. With a mostly nonlinear format, the series careens from Henry Hudson's meeting Algonquian Indian tribes while on a mission for the East India Company to the Dutch settling in the area decades prior to his arrival and so on. The tale includes massacres of the indigenous population; hardships endured by Christian puritans; an interminable recounting of the Revolutionary War; a look at the state's slave trade; the amusingly named Spanktown (so dubbed because a Quaker allegedly spanked his unruly wife in public); and stirring depictions of the "corn-huskin' bee," "apple-pickin' bee" and "thrashin' bee. Artist Thorne was later famous for Marvel Comics' saucy Red Sonja, but this volume wears its hard work and research on its sleeve. No amount of good intentions can save the piece from getting mired in its narrow focus, which will appeal primarily to New Jersey residents. (Oct.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. About the Author Frank Thorne has had an extensive career in comics including working on Red Sonja for Marvel Comics and creating Ghita of Alizar. Thorne's work has also appeared in Heavy Metal and Playboy. He lives in South Plains, New Jersey with his wife.