
Stephen Girard remained in comparative obscurity until the works of McMaster, Herrick, and now Wildes made their appearance. Believing that Philadelphia "utterly ignores its heroes," the present author has attempted to restore him "to his proper niche." In this effort he has been reasonably successful. Using a chronological approach, he painstakingly leads one through a maze of family relationships, commercial enterprises, financial adventures, and humanitarian acts with the result that his subject emerges as a stern, shrewd, avaricious, yet lonely individual with a thwarted family life, a genius for accumulating money, and a propensity for making public benefactions.

Born near Bordeaux, France, in 1750, Girard lived a busy life as cabin boy, mate, sea captain, privateer, trader, financier, farmer, and humanitarian. In 1776 he arrived by accident in Philadelphia, where he slowly amassed a fortune largely as a result of judicious commercial enterprises and unorthodox banking methods. Although frequently misunderstood by Philadelphians up to his death in 1831, Girard is remembered today primarily for his public service in the yellow-fever epidemic of 1793, his almost single-handed financing of the War of 1812, and his many philanthropies, most important of which is Girard College.

Lonely Midas is a candid, highly informative, generally sympathetic story. Most of the material was obtained from the extensive collection of documents at Girard College. The author shows imagination, keenness of analysis, and a flair for the sensational. Happily many misconceptions are corrected; it is now known, for instance, that Girard was not an atheist, that he was not a hard-hearted miser whose god was money, and that his fortune was not based on confiscated refugee wealth during the San Domingo slave rebellion of 1793. Reference in the title to the fabled King Midas is in general applicable, although many of the financier's ventures were failures. At the end of the book are copious supplementary notes. These, along with the four appendices concerning Girard's family, ships, graphology, and Girard College, are very helpful. An excellent critical bibliography and index complete the volume.

The careful reader will perceive some weaknesses in the book. Smuggling goods and bribing customs officials are readily dismissed on the grounds of expediency or habit, but Girard's extramarital relations, which are often conjectured on insufficient evidence and certainly are charac-
teristic of the period if not of France itself, are painstakingly repeated throughout the narrative. Indeed, two entire chapters are unjustifiably devoted to Girard’s housekeepers. Furthermore, forty per cent of the text concerns his family, his home life, and his relatives, whereas commerce, the main source of his wealth and benefactions, comprises but thirty-three per cent and his benefactions and public services only eighteen.

Occasionally facts are mixed with probabilities, and in the absence of actual information Girard’s reactions are often assumed. Regrettable are the frequent omissions of dates and references to events in contemporary Philadelphia and the lack of footnotes with which to check sweeping generalizations and controversial points. Several inaccuracies should be mentioned: the denial of “home” as the origin of the word “hum” (slang for Girard College) is contrary to common knowledge; the statement that the Girard College boy is dressed according to his “personal desire” is partially true of only a fifth of the student body; and the description of Girard as being “big-footed” could hardly be applied to a man who wore shoes of size seven and a half.

Lonely Midas, while it is undoubtedly the best biography of Girard yet published, is by no means definitive. Deserving of fuller development than that included are the financier’s commercial, banking, and Masonic activities, his Philadelphia properties, his male apprentices, and his less pretentious benevolences. His intricate family relationships and intimate home life, on the other hand, might well receive less emphasis than they are given. Girard will hardly be popularized by his work, but he will nevertheless be more generally appreciated, and his niche more clearly defined than ever before.

Girard College.


The history of the American mind in action is set forth with unflagging enthusiasm by Professor Curti in this pioneering survey. “It is,” says the author, “not a history of American thought but a social history of American thought, and to some extent a socio-economic history of American thought.” Beginning with the assertion that the newly established nation in 1789 possessed a distinctive intellectual life, he presents with admirable lucidity the inheritance from Europe and the modifications worked by new vitalizing religious, social, political, economic, and scientific concepts. Although full credit is given to the influence of Christianity, the Enlightenment is considered the legacy presenting the pattern of intellectual progress for the expanding empire of the western world. Shifting currents of protest and reform in the hundred and fifty-five years of our national history are shown to have echoed the basic doctrines of the eighteenth-century rationalists.

In its broad outlines as well as in many details this analysis has much to commend it. The idea of progress, the doctrine of the higher law, the philosophy of natural rights, and the humanitarian ideal have been restated.
again and again by numerous forceful American spokesmen. Yet that there was implicit in the Enlightenment a concept of class conflict is open to question, so that the recurring explanations of progress or retrogression on a class-struggle basis seem interesting rather than conclusive. Certainly Peale’s Museum in Philadelphia with its Barnum sideshow quality hardly illustrates “patrician direction of thought.”

The book briefly characterizes hundreds of little-known individuals and organizations pressing on toward social amelioration, religious freedom, educational democracy, scientific precision, technological improvement, and artistic excellence. In spite of the encyclopedic breadth of the survey, the author gives enough data to buttress his theme and to make many of these characterizations significant thumbnail sketches.

American intellectual history has been immensely enriched by this new chart of national progress. The Growth of American Thought belongs on the same shelf with the books by Parrington, Gabriel, and Beard. What is lacking in stylistic excellence and firmness of structure is amply balanced by freshness of viewpoint.

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This booklet of one hundred and sixty pages would appear to be a doctoral dissertation published as a propaganda brochure. A meticulous study of morale in a previous war, it has been issued by the American Council of Public Affairs as a morale builder in the present war; the introduction, written by Arthur Upham Pope, chairman of the Committee for National Morale, indicates that the publication has current propaganda value. The volume is bound in a cloth and in a paper edition, the latter of which has the appearance of a tract for the times. The author, who is professor of history at Marion College, Indiana, says in the brief preface that the research was inspired by the late Professor Van Tyne and was continued under the supervision of the history staff at the University of Michigan, especially Professors Crane and Boak.

The book, whose text covers fewer than a hundred pages and whose footnotes (printed at the end) add up to about forty-five pages, is obviously a thorough and scholarly piece of work. It is safe to say that practically every sentence is documented. The author divides his analysis of morale in the revolutionary army into four parts. First, he discusses the physical factors, such as the poor quality of many of the troops, the lack of supplies, the prevalence of sickness, and the nonpayment of wages. Second, he moves to the psychological factors that influenced morale, like the provincialism of the soldiers and the absence of discipline. In the third section he describes the tremendous problem of desertion and absenteeism. The fourth part covers the maintenance of morale by means of rewards, recreation, regalia, and propaganda; the author feels that not enough was done along these lines. There are a brief conclusion and a short index.
One gains from the volume the following impressions: first, that Washington faced a Herculean task in holding his army together; second, that Washington's greatness consists not so much in his having been a general in the ordinary sense of the word as in his being a symbol of the revolutionary cause which many times was salvaged only by his patience and persistence; third, that the cause was finally saved by the French, who, however, would have had no cause to save had Washington not kept the flickering light burning until that time; fourth, that state-rights attitudes, which have been a bane in the history of the nation, were perplexing to Washington as he tried to weld thirteen armies into one; and, fifth, that historians need not "slant" their teaching and writing to make it war propaganda. On the contrary, all that need be done is to tell the truth, and the truth speaks more loudly than deliberately conceived propaganda. The author simply relates historical fact in a scholarly, impartial way, and yet his words have infinitely more morale value than if they were written as propaganda. Every summer patriot who "beefs" about his inability to get gasoline and butter should read this book. He would learn that his privations do not compare in sacrifice to those of the revolutionary soldier who, half naked and half starved, left blood in his tracks as he slogged through the snow to fight the next engagement.

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_Delaware's Forgotten Folk_ is a story of a people. Its setting is in the heart of America's most populated area—a land rich in historical lore, often overlooked because the rush of twentieth-century life has made many of us blind to our very environment. Mr. Weslager has brought us down to earth. By carefully searching old state records and antiquated sources, by utilizing all possible anthropological findings, and by making close ethnological investigation among the people themselves, he has prepared a study of profound sociological significance. In a simple, straightforward style he presents a saga of the Nanticokes of Indian River and the so-called Cheswold Moors.

These two groups, small congregations with similarly complex origins, are amorphous social entities knit together with common traditions and common problems. Their early history forms the back drop of America's colonial life. When Indian tribes of the Delmarva peninsula were forced to move west, individuals and family groups who cherished the land of their fathers lingered behind here and there, carrying on their hunting and their farming and often intermarrying or otherwise merging with whites or Negroes. Some became slaves to Delaware planters, while others sought solitary refuge fishing and trapping in barren gum swamps. Throughout the nineteenth century they nurtured their Indian tradition and, as a kind of evidence of it, retained many of the artifacts, customs, and even bio-
logical characteristics of the Indians who had inhabited the banks of the Delaware and Chesapeake.

Today the casual observer sees these people living in much the same manner as do most rural Delawareans. Predominantly they are farmers. Some few cultivate trucking gardens for city markets or raise poultry for nation-wide packing houses. Others seek work in towns near by. Only on investigation does the subtle uniqueness of the groups become apparent. As communities they are particularly self-sufficient and self-respecting. They maintain their own schools and churches and rarely seek the assistance of outside agencies. Their self-sufficiency is forced upon them by their curious history. Comprising a tricolor mixture and living in an area of bicolor segregation, they neither accept the status of Negroes nor are accorded the status of whites. By remaining aloof to both they have found in their sense of pride a sort of social adjustment, a pattern typical of many American folk groups.

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