
Reviewers of this latest addition to this monumental series sponsored jointly by the American Philosophical Society and the Yale University Press can only echo the praise with which the two earlier volumes have been received. To edit and to print the complete papers of our most famous editor and printer is a responsibility under which any flaw may invite censure. Dr. Labaree and his staff stand here as the trustees of what is perhaps America’s greatest historical and literary legacy and are giving us in this capacity a proper model of sturdy, forthright thoroughness.

This third volume brings us Benjamin Franklin between the ages of 39 and 44, years rightly then accounted “the prime of life.” It covers the period of his retirement from active business, his first experiments in electricity, his widening recognition as a public figure of importance, and has thus a unity and a sense of climax. Actually, of course, these years represent only an essential part of the foundation of his great influence, and later volumes as the series move forward will also hold that same sense of climactic events. A chronology at the opening of the volume, as well as the index at the back, further unify the work.

This is the volume of “Plain Truth,” of the militia association and the defences of the Delaware, of correspondence with Peter Collinson, Cadwalader Colden, and George Whitefield, of the building of the Academy and of the Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania. In these years we see the Clerk of Assembly composing magic squares to keep his mind alert in the drone of business, and, of course, we see the editor of the Gazette still very much in evidence with his news and views and public notices, his verses on the Virginia capitol fire, and other evidences of the editorial snickering and bursts of laughter which make this paper still a pleasure to read. Here are Polly Baker’s address to the court, and the equally famous advice to a young man on his choice of a mistress, along with Poor Richard and Poor Richard Improved.

The diversity of the early volumes, the breadth and historical importance of those which follow, bring the editors an obligation and an opportunity far beyond a biographical scope. This work will always have basic reference value in the identification of individuals and the understanding of the activities of Franklin’s time. In this volume, for instance, both text and footnotes provide in substance an excellent treatise on the management of lotteries in those days and on the background of the militia service. It is the “meat”
of history throughout, and promises also a rich fulfillment of the historian's ultimate obligation, to bring from the lives and records of the past a surer understanding of humanity in the present and future.

Dickinson College

Charles Coleman Sellers


The career of Robert Livingston was one of the most remarkable in American history. From an obscure beginning as a Scottish immigrant from Holland he raised himself to become one of the richest and most powerful figures in colonial America. By a fortuitous marriage he linked himself with the Van Rensselaers and the rising Schuylers. He developed local offices in the frontier post of Albany into plums of imperial consequence. Beginning as a small trader, he became a great merchant. Entering politics he advised successive governors, survived the Leisler Rebellion, became speaker of the Assembly and the trusted adviser of governors Hunter and Burnet. But most significantly he manipulated two small land patents of 2,000 and 600 acres respectively into the vast Livingston Manor of 160,000 acres. "This," says the author, "was one of the grossest land frauds ever perpetrated in an age noted for unethical dealings." The biography of such a man is bound to be significant.

This volume appears with impressive credentials. It received the first Manuscript Award of the Institute of Early American History and Culture. For his study in the largely unexploited Livingston-Redmond Manuscripts of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, the author received a Penfield Fellowship from New York University and a Dixon Ryan Fox Fellowship of the New York State Historical Association. He also edited "The Livingston Indian Records, 1666-1723," printed in Pennsylvania History, XXIII, No. 1 (January 1956).

Yet the reader may be disappointed, as is this reviewer, by the fact that this is a study of politics rather than a biography. Dr. Leder has expressly limited his scope. "I have not explored certain phases of Livingston's life . . . there is a wealth of commercial material among his papers, but his account books have not survived, and there is no way of determining his annual income or his net worth at death. Also, very little attention has been devoted to the running of the Manor, for that was left to his capable wife, Alida. Descriptions of the duties of Livingston's many public offices have been purposely omitted; many of them were primarily clerical in nature rather than policy making. . . ." It is regrettable that a merchant's business interests cannot be treated in the absence of his final net worth, or that the vastly important domestic affairs of the Manor are excluded, because they were handled by his capable wife.

Within the sphere outlined the treatment is scholarly and detailed. Here is told his step-by-step involvement in public finance, and the equally tortuous
process by which he collected for his advances to government, including trips to "the seat of empire," and prolonged cultivation of persons of influence. Often this becomes as tedious for the reader as for the unlucky petitioner. Livingston's opposition to the Leisler Rebellion and his consequent exile are fully treated. Yet his backing of the voyage of Captain William Kidd, and the charges and suspicions aroused thereby, are not adequately explained. Likewise, while we get a great deal about his risks and expenses in the handling of the Palatines under Governor Hunter, there is no explanation of the naval stores project or its outcome. We are told, for example, about the charges of Jean Cast and of Livingston's refutation, but not what these were, or who this Jean Cast was. One gets the impression that the principal difficulty of the venture was the failure to meet bills, rather than the miscalculation on naval stores or the mismanagement of a mass migration.

In view of the importance of the Livingston Indian Records, and of the office of Secretary for Indian Affairs, there is relatively little attention to the Indian problem. What is said has to do chiefly with the Albany-Montreal trade and its prohibition or control under Burnet. There are two references to the French agent "Jean Coeur" (indexed as Coeur, Jean), but no recognition that this was only a phonetic rendering of the name of the elder Joncaire.

If one can cope with a rather involved style and an absorption with details which tends to obscure the main issues, he may conclude that this is an important work of scholarship and a work of reference for one phase of our colonial history.

New York State Division of Archives and History  Milton W. Hamilton


The student of American civilization will look far to find an issue that better illustrates the complexities in political change in this democracy than that presented by the issue of universal white manhood suffrage in the century from 1760-1860. Here is to be seen a federated nation arriving at what was almost common agreement among its parts by routes that were as uneven as it would seem possible to contrive. Chilton Williamson, associate professor of history at Barnard College, has written of a national movement that developed state by state and, often, section by section. He has demonstrated his convictions that both fundamental forces and the presence of the right people in the right situations made suffrage reform an issue. By briefly expressing an awareness of how opinions out of the past influenced democracy in the United States, and by recounting the contemporary views of suffrage in other areas of the world as time moved along, the author chronologically relates the story of universal white manhood suffrage in the colonies and states.

Drawing heavily from the archives of most of the seaboard states, from unpublished Ph.D. theses, as well as from the pertinent published collections and monographs, the author has produced a prodigious work. More than a recital of researched materials, the book provides the necessary
summaries and conclusions. One may dissent from some of the latter, as some people will with the discussion of Turner's view of suffrage reform, but this will demand caution for it is evident that Williamson has worked long and well. If any objection is to be raised, it will have to do with stylistic defects. The nature of the subject precludes cursory reading. A consequence of rather intense attention to the text exaggerates, unfortunately, the intrusion of words and phrases that mar the narrative. It is particularly unfortunate that the first chapter contains a number of such irritations. The excision of a few words and sentences editorially would have helped, though beyond this chapter the writing flows more smoothly. Equally unfortunate is the editorial decision to omit a bibliography. While adequately footnoted and indexed, the book would have been enhanced in value by a bibliography—something to be expected from a university press.

Pennsylvanians may find little new in the recounting of the suffrage story of this state, but they will appreciate seeing it told in relation to developments elsewhere. Also, those with partisan political leanings should appreciate the role of their favorite party in this democratic movement toward fuller suffrage. The author concludes that the Democrats were most often associated with election reform, but there were enough exceptions in various states and sections to show that reform depended more often on political advantage to be won than on abstract, democratic justice. This is not to say that the discussions on voting neglected philosophic foundations, for each side wheeled in the opinions of the proper ancient authorities to bolster their positions, but men and parties did change their minds and stands at expedient times. The struggles were real, however, and if at times overblown for the political purposes, the wide implications of the extension of the suffrage were understood perhaps more fully than they are today when the battles seem won.

The author has not neglected the evidence that shows the importance of proper voting procedures in making a granted suffrage right effective. It is shown that the interpretation of the law frequently was for political advantage, and no section, or state, or party had a monopoly on virtue in this regard. Though a party might well assert support for a wide suffrage, there was little aversion to setting times and places for elections that helped to assure the proper victory. Nor has the author ignored the designation "white" in the democratic drive for a broader electorate. There is a definite tying of democracy to voting rights; though the sanctioning of unqualified voters to vote was often a willingness "... to democratize the suffrage during elections. ..." But the disfranchisement of free Negroes in North Carolina in 1835 is noted, as well as the presence of undemocratic clauses excluding Negroes in the People's Charter of Rhode Island of 1841.

In this thorough work the retrogressions and the mixed motives of the participants as well as their advances are noted. The danger that the story of the struggle for universal white manhood suffrage might become a collection of statistics has been avoided by the inclusion of the major personalities of the period with views on the issue. Here are the opinions of such leaders as Adams, Jefferson, Gallatin, and Van Buren. Sometimes they too changed
BOOK REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTES


Published collections of immigrant letters have been relatively rare, and any additions to this literature are more than welcome. Alan Conway, lecturer in American history at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, Wales, has performed a genuine service in collecting, translating, and editing the letters appearing in this volume. For the most part they represent a judicious sampling from the numerous Welsh newspapers and periodicals of the nineteenth century, and from collections in the National Library of Wales.

The volume is doubly welcome since it deals with a group which, although relatively small in numbers, was widely dispersed in the United States, with experiences covering the full span of the nineteenth century. The importance of the letters as original materials transcends that of illustrating problems of a particular immigrant group, providing as they do additional insights into such matters as the westward movement, agricultural and labor history, and religious affairs. Some Welsh settlement took place from the late seventeenth century, but it was the "pull" provided by the emergence of an independent nation symbolic of political and religious liberty, as well as the material blessings of available land and plentiful jobs, along with the "push" of continual economic dislocations in Wales after the late eighteenth century, which provided the continuous stream of transatlantic migration. From the early communities of eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New York, the Welsh pushed into the interior, participating in the westward expansion of their newly-adopted nation. Miniature Welsh colonies appeared in the Mohawk Valley, western Pennsylvania, and eastern and central Ohio during the opening decades of the nineteenth century. By the 1830's, agricultural settlements had been established in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa, setting a pattern which continued in the farming frontiers of the plains states and the Columbia River basin. Equally significant are choice letters from the coal mining regions and industrial centers, the latter primarily confined to iron, steel, and tin-plate factories. Finally, there are sections of the book devoted to Welsh participation in the mining frontier of the western territories, the Civil War experience, and Mormonism.

The letters have been arranged topically, dealing with the experience of "uprooting" and crossing in the first group of selections, then the early settlements, several sections on farm settlements and industrial activity, each carried through the nineteenth century, and final sections on the Civil War.
and Mormon migration. Mr. Conway has offered a brief general introduction and a succinct, but enlightening, preface to each section. This arrangement has its hazards, however, which are intensified by the rich variety of experiences of Welshmen in this country. Many of the sections seem regretfully short, and although we are assured that they represent a fraction of the available material, only the broad outlines of each story are provided in the introductions. However, complaints that beg for more are probably the sincerest form of flattery, and reflect the inherent interest generated by the volume.

If extended commentary and analysis by the editor would have contributed more, he was undoubtedly wise in limiting the number of letters reproduced, and in pruning the inconsequential from individual pieces of correspondence. The result is a selection which is eminently readable, indeed often soaring in the poetical language characteristic of this people. Many other traits are vividly evident; the deep religiosity of an evangelical kind, the dedication to hard work and temperance, the scornful attitude towards Roman Catholicism (particularly the Irish brand), the deep attachment to their native language and culture, and the dedication to trade unionism of the industrial workers. The inclusion of several items by individuals disillusioned with the New World, sometimes bitterly so, and of such unsuccessful attempts at colonization as took place in Tennessee on the eve of the Civil War, adds a proper balance. Yet the Welsh seem to have been less inclined to produce an overly idealized picture of the United States for the countrymen they left behind than many other immigrant peoples.

There are several minor complaints that should be registered. A map showing the location of major Welsh settlements would have been extremely useful. A number of letters are undated, and require consultation with a cramped, almost cryptical set of references at the end of the volume. On the whole, however, they will be of immense interest to historians working in almost any field of nineteenth century American history. Mr. Conway is to be congratulated for opening this rich vein for inspection. It is to be hoped that other works of this kind, from the British Isles and the Continent, will soon be forthcoming, now that American Studies are winning their way to respectability in that part of the world.

University of Wisconsin

MORTON ROTHSTEIN

*Americans at War: The Development of the American Military System.*

By T. Harry Williams. (Louisiana State University Press, 1960. Pp. 139. $3.50.)

I have never read anything by T. Harry Williams which was not both well written and significant. No exception is this brief book now under review, composed of a series of three lectures delivered at Memphis State University in 1956. Within its 126 pages of text are many vital generalizations and at least one fresh interpretation. It is of course not necessary to agree with all of them to recognize that they are the products of a creative historical mind.
The first lecture deals with the American military system from the Revolution to 1860; the second with the Civil War; and the last with the century between that conflict and the global wars of the present. The three are of almost equal length. This fact, if any can, presents the only ground for quarrelling with the organization of the book. It is doubtful if either the first or the second lecture merits as much space as the era of the two world wars.

A qualification of the promise of the title may be found in the author's admission that his orientation is toward the history of the army inasmuch as his deepest research has been done there. But the other services, even if treated through the vehicle of army history, are not neglected.

The central theme is the development of a command and administrative organization (Williams makes it clear that there is a sharp difference) for the U. S. Army at the highest level. It reflects the interest the author has had in the command system ever since he wrote Lincoln and His Generals, published in 1952. In that pioneer work he extracted from the garble of facts about the Civil War very penetrating generalizations concerning the problem of command structure. Since this problem persists from war to war, it is more worthy of study than tactics and strategy which shift eternally. Yet most of the flood of ink expended on the Civil War has flowed toward the shifting rather than toward the permanent problems of conflict. As a result, the study of command organization which Williams entered as a pioneer, at least in the United States, is one of the neglected areas of American military history. Some very distinguished people have neglected it; for example, Woodrow Wilson, a historian and subsequently a commander-in-chief, of whom the author says that he "either did not understand the importance of command systems or was not interested in the subject."

Relevant to the major theme, the following episodes struck me as especially well done: 1. In the War of 1812 the Secretary of War, John Armstrong, proved to be the decisive member of the administration for a time. He made himself something the civil deputy of the President ought never to be, "a kind of combined chief of staff and general-in-chief." In addition, Williams emphasized the formation of a professional staff to handle supply and technical business. It was created, as was Armstrong's novel position, in the midst of a war which was otherwise a very model of poor management. 2. During the War with Mexico President Polk proved that a "President could run a war." This little known executive determined the general strategy of the United States forces, became in effect chief budget officer for the government, and supervised in detail the work of the heads of the supply bureaus. Here Williams followed Leonard D. White's theme expressed in The Jacksonians. 3. Both before and after the Civil War a bloodless struggle for control went on among the top elements of the army. The Commanding General strove against the Secretary of War and the bureau chiefs, and they against him; result, a muddied situation in which the lines of authority were not clear to anybody, and in which command and administration were confused with each other.

Not much need be said of the section entitled, "The Military System of
North and South," not because it is inferior, but because it is a neat forty-page summary of the theme previously developed more fully in *Lincoln and His Generals*, a theme already well known to students of the Civil War and of military history in general. Lest some readers of this review have not read that theme, restated in brief it is that the South looked backward, the North forward in military affairs. As a result, the latter section developed the first modern command system in the western world, while the Confederacy could only fumble toward one without achieving it. Incidentally, as in Williams' other writing, President Lincoln qualifies as a very able commander-in-chief.

The next item to be noticed is an interpretation completely new to me. Running counter to general opinion, author Williams finds fault with the reforms Elihu Root pushed through in the first decade of our century. Even though he concedes that the command system was better after these than ever before, the reforms were too foreign, too much distorted from the foreign system copied, indeed, all in all, too alien to the American historical pattern of improvisation to be efficient in this country. In his own words, the general staff which Root imposed on the army, "was an adaptation of European arrangements that did not incorporate the best European practices. Nor did it represent the best experience of the American military past. More of that experience would have to be infused into the system borrowed from Europe before the general staff would be able to cope with the problems of modern war." Inasmuch as most writing on Root's reforms has been laudatory, Williams' interpretation comes as a shock. But the shock is wholesome because it induces careful reappraisal of that which has been taken for granted heretofore. For that matter, most of the book has the same stimulating effect.

*University of Florida*  
JOHN K. MAHON

*Inferno at Petersburg*. By Dr. Henry Pleasants, Jr. and George H. Straley.  

The story of the explosion of a Federal mine under a section of the Confederate defenses of Petersburg, Va., on July 30, 1864, is a fascinating story. There is not enough there, however, to rate a book, even a volume of only 181 pages.

The authors of *Inferno at Petersburg* have tried to turn the story into a book by including a biography of Lt. Col. Henry Pleasants, the man who planned and supervised the digging of the mine. The biography, co-authored by a cousin of Pleasants, is laudatory *ad tedium*. Instead of giving us a straightforward account of who Pleasants was and what he did, the authors present him as a hero from the time of his first boyhood fight. The result is a pat and saccharine tract of which the digging of the mine and the ensuing Federal debacle is the centerpiece.

We are told on one page that Pleasants "was of English ancestry" and on the next that his mother was "the beautiful daughter of a Spanish noble-
man.” The book abounds with similar amateurish slip-ups and imprecise, clichéd descriptions of people and situations.

But poorly or well-written, the Petersburg mine story is exciting. *Inferno at Petersburg* becomes more interesting when it tells how the men of the 48th Pennsylvania Regiment dug the longest tunnel in military history and blew up a section of the Confederate defenses. Except for some unbelievable foul-ups in the massive Union assault that was to have followed. Petersburg would surely have fallen that day. It might have meant the end of the Civil War in 1864.

In general, the facts are set down accurately concerning the military phases of the story. There may be some who would quarrel with the characterization of General Meade as an obstructionist or of General Burnside as a hero. But Dr. Pleasants and Mr. Straley are entitled to their opinions.

*The Civil War Times*
*Mechanicsburg, Pa.*

R. H. Fowler


This blunt, ingenuous title covers five papers read at the Annual Civil War Conference at Gettysburg College in 1958. Addressed to an audience of varied background regarding the war, they are written with both clarity and lift. Also, they might have surprised any listeners who came mostly to learn how Hill County’s Company D made out at Seven Pines. The five university historians see the war whole—its politics, economics, social structure, and its battles.

In the preface David Donald reviews the conclusions of two dozen writers whose works pre-date this volume. The new study, he thinks, gains both from the earlier research and from today’s increased knowledge, especially of economic theory. Richard Current gives chief credit for the Union victory to the wealth and resources of the North. While business and industry boomed up North, they sagged in the South until morale broke down. Starting with little cash, with poor transportation, weak management, and choked by the growing blockade, the seceded states simply could not compete.

David Potter’s over-all conclusion is less conventional. Inept political leadership whipped the South. Unwillingness to tax; hoarding cotton as pressure on the North and on Europe; callous impressment of men and goods; bad military direction—Mr. Potter lays it all at the door of President Davis and his administration. Reverse the presidents North and South, he says, and the South might have won.

David Donald’s villain is too much southern democracy. The whole secession idea opposed centralist power. Submission came hard, whether to military authority or to economic requisition. The rich, heavy wine of independence fogged the will for conducting the war. Both Donald and Potter underscore the contrast between the way Lincoln exploited his power
to act—even exceeding it—while Davis shunned power or wasted it through departmentalized functions.

To Norman Graebner, the reluctance of Britain and France to throw in with the Confederacy assured its defeat. Until Antietam in September of 1862 the war was touch and go. Secretary of State Seward's shrewd European policy of alternating stick and carrot worked just long enough for the weight of Union strength to count. In the end foreign embassies read the realities of military power. Northern victories finally discouraged recognition from abroad, and at the same time, the more vital threat of intervention.

T. Harry Williams turns to the military itself. Not even deficient generals, of which the North had plenty (he singles out McClellan in particular), could keep it from winning. Why? Southern leadership remained cavalier, static, high on the 18th century principles of Jomini as distilled through Dennis Hart Mahan at West Point. Union generals also read Jomini on war, but two of them, Grant and Sherman, saw war in modern terms, as *total*. It included the destruction of all the enemy's means and will to resist—his armies, his countryside, his economy, his society.

These short papers are, by necessity, heavier on generalization than on evidence. Read together, their tone often sounds dogmatic. A reader questions Mr. Williams' stress on the influence of Jomini or his rating of Civil War generals. Mr. Potter's "reverse the presidents" theory raises an eyebrow. So does Mr. Donald when he says the South "died of democracy." But all these deductions mark the courage of five men, each wise and solid in his field. They make the book a useful counter to the centennial's natural preoccupation with the campaigns. Battles shape the news, but bigger forces shape the battles.

The *Pennsylvania State University*

E. J. Nichols


C. Vann Woodward is gradually emerging as one of the foremost American historians of our time. This book, which will add further to his stature, is a collection of interpretative essays on various aspects of southern history, all but one of which have previously appeared in periodicals. By commenting on such diverse but related aspects of the southern heritage as the John Brown raid, the political currents of Reconstruction and southern populism, Woodward provides penetrating insights into the complexities and ironies in the character and history of the South.

Woodward's main thesis is best developed in his chapter on "The Search for Southern Identity." He does not deny that there is a distinct southern character but he asserts that this identity should be examined with reference to the virtues of the South, not solely to its vices. He reveals no sorrow at the disappearance of "those old monuments of regional distinctiveness," and offers no apologies for segregation or racial prejudice. He believes that "the South was American a long time before it was southern in any self-conscious or distinctive way. It remains more American by far than anything else, and has all along."
Northern liberals and self-appointed reformers would do well to read Woodward's chapter on "Equality: The Deferred Commitment." In this essay he describes the changing war objectives of the North during the Civil War, the drive of the abolitionist minority not only to abolish the "sin" of slavery but also to expiate it and purify the sinner. He asserts that the revolutionary ideals of freedom and political equality for the Negro were supported by "limited moral resources," and that after Appomattox Americans sought to overlook their lofty war aims. It is Woodward's opinion that the Civil War was fought "on borrowed moral capital" and that the northern radicals "ran up a staggering war debt, a moral debt that was soon found to be beyond the country's capacity to pay, given the undeveloped state of its moral resources at the time." He adds that this moral debt, with its accumulated interest, has gone largely unpaid for eight decades and is one reason why there can be no simple solution to the problems of desegregation and the new sectional crisis in the 1960's.

Be that as it may, in seeking to explain why the South has had to shoulder most of the burden of a guilty national conscience, Woodward seems to dwell excessively on northern culpability. The moral war debt image is an appealing one but transcending it is another type of moral debt, rooted in the slave trade and the plantation system, which the South must bear along with the guilt of radical prejudice in which all sections of the country unfortunately share.

Woodward develops a number of other noteworthy themes. In his brilliant chapter on "A Southern Critique for the Gilded Age," the one essay which has not previously appeared in print, he analyzes the novels of Herman Melville, Henry Adams, and Henry James in which, ironically, idealized southerners perform the role of censor for Yankee morals. His chapter on "The Populist Heritage and the Intellectual" reviews the shifting interpretations in this century of populism and indicates the particular strengths of the southern populist heritage. The Johns Hopkins scholar is convinced that some northern intellectuals lack complete understanding of southern populists and that while populism has its defects and limitations, the intellectual cannot afford to alienate himself "from the sources of revolt" or to repudiate the populist tradition.

In his concluding chapter Woodward examines the irony of southern history and suggests that the southern experience may have some applicability to the nation's perils in this century. He asserts that because it has repeatedly experienced failure and frustration, has known continued poverty, and has not been caught up in the tradition of inevitable success, wealth, and superiority, characteristic of the rest of the nation, the South is eminently qualified to help provide leadership in the strife-torn world of today. This is an attractive idea but unfortunately, except for a few notable exceptions, southern political leaders in Washington and the state capitals have so far failed to follow the formula of response and responsibility which Woodward would like to assume is potentially the role of a section in which so much history has happened.

Woodward writes with clarity and precision. He is crisp in his inter-
pretations, objective in his criticisms. Understandably, there is not as much continuity from one chapter to another as one would prefer. Although the index is adequate, scholars will object to the absence of footnotes and bibliography. This is recommended reading for those interested in the Civil War, southern history, and the American character.

_Lafayette College_

_Charles C. Cole, Jr._


There is a deep-seated cleavage among historians about methodology. One large segment operates on the principle that the best way to proceed is to collect data in an open-minded fashion and then assemble it. From the mass of notes they believe there will emerge a story. Another group holds that there should be a scaffolding of hypothesis planned as a guide for the searching for data and formulating conclusions. Until the 1890's, most historians belonged to the first class and contented themselves primarily with discovering what happened, that is in telling a story. However, with the advent of Frederick Jackson Turner came a novel dedication to an hypothesis, to the Frontier Theory which was presented as an overall interpretation which added meaning to events. Some twenty years later, Charles A. Beard offered _An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States_. He did more than supply an hypothesis, he provided a method, namely induction based upon quantification.

Turner's contribution was acclaimed immediately and accepted almost without question for forty years. Beard's concept had a mixed reception based upon the political divisions of the Progressive Age. Certain conservatives attacked it, many liberals acclaimed it. As time when on Turner's lack of method and precision stirred up a growing questioning of his contribution, while at the same time Beard's methodological efforts and his attempt at precision gained him increasing support.

Within the last decades, there has been a change in climate in the universities due to the increase in efforts to produce a social science, or group of social sciences. Much attention has been paid to epistemology, research design, and the logic of proof. A very active member of this group, the author of these essays, has been indefatigable in his efforts to apply the principles of those working in this field to history.

He has studied the hypothesis of Turner and the methodology of Beard, applied the instruments in use by the behavioral scientists, and here presents some interesting results. He gives most comprehensive treatment to the complex forces which produced Turner's concept and gives his judgment, which is in essence that historians should spend less effort on arguing about Turner, but get to work with modern methods and "subject the frontier thesis to a thorough and most searching re-evaluation."

Likewise he considers Beard's work and those of his most active critics, Brown and McDonald, and goes through them with a fine tooth comb. He believes that he has shown their inadequacies and their lack of compre-
hension of Beard. At the same time he holds that though Beard was methodologically inadequate, as a pioneer he attempted to use method.

"After the appearance in 1913 of Beard's book, it was never so easy again for an American historian to ignore theory or hypothesis and proceed to pile up a mountain of 'facts,' in the hope that, somehow, the mountain itself would move and reveal the truth." He believes that "historians concerned with political realities should be grateful to [Beard] for insights that students of American political behavior have been documenting since 1913.

Benson is one of these historians who with great patience and superb industry are working towards a methodological break-through which will reveal more of the secrets of why men behave as they do "politically."

Benson seeks to advance from the simplicities of Turner and Beard to an intricate system of multivariate analysis based upon refined techniques of quantification. He constructs a scale of forces shaping human motivation in politics in which he places altruistic interest in the Good Society as more influential than the self-interest of the mythical economic man. He has set himself a difficult task which few would have the patience to perform, but probably historians have defined their functions too simply too long.

University of Pennsylvania

From Trail Dust to Star Dust: The Story of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, a City Resulting from Its Environment. By M. Margaret Greer. (Johnstown: William M. Greer, 1960. Pp. 120. $3.95.)

"The Story of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, a City Resulting from Its Environment" seems to be a more appropriate title for this book than "From Trail Dust to Star Dust." It is true that the Bedford and Frankstown trails became the first roads by which early settlers converged upon the bottom lands at the confluence of the Little Conemaugh River and the Stoney Creek River and over which the city, in its earlier years, carried on trade with the East. Within its first century, however, Johnstown became an important station on the Pennsylvania Canal, being at the western terminus of the Portage Railroad, and subsequently a stop on the Pennsylvania line. The canal and the railroad came to Johnstown concurrently with the rise of the iron and steel industry. During the second half of the nineteenth century Johnstown's trade flowed westward, its principal product being rails for the building of railroads across the nation.

Aspects of the early history of Johnstown, the first settlers, changes in land titles, and the beginning of trade and industry are treated in summary, if not sketchy form. A full and interesting account is given of the rise of the iron and steel industry. The important role played by George King in the discovery of iron ore in the Johnstown area and the founding of the Cambria Iron Company, the pioneer work of William Kelly in developing the processes of steel making, and the surprising volume of rails produced in the Johnstown Works provide interesting and provocative reading. The importance of Johnstown as a station on the Pennsylvania Canal is shown by vivid descriptions of the operation of the Portage Railway, the use of
canal basins for loading and unloading cargoes, and the building of locks including the weighlock for the weighing of cargo.

The Great Flood of 1889, an indescribable tragedy for the people of Johnstown, was one of a number of national disasters which demonstrated the speed and willingness with which the people of our nation would rise to help a community in distress, as well as the capacity of the community to recover from the disaster. While brief accounts are given of the religious, educational, cultural, and civic aspects of the Johnstown story, the story really ends with the eventful year of 1889. The untimely death of the author prevented a fuller treatment of the more recent history of this interesting city and its people.

Indiana State College
Indiana, Pa.

Ralph W. Cordier

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

23 September 1961

To the Editor:

An egregious error in my review of Edwin Wolf's Rosenbach [Pennsylvania History, XXVIII, 3 (July, 1961)] has been pointed out to me. I stated that the doctorate held by the founder of the House of Rosenbach was an honorary one, whereas, in fact, as the book makes clear it was one earned for a work of scholarship. I apologize unreservedly to Doctor Rosenbach, who must somewhere or other be chuckling gleefully at my confusion.

Ivan Roots

University College of South Wales
Cardiff, Wales