
The new volume of The Correspondence of Edmund Burke, covering as it does the beginning and early years of the War for American Independence, should be of particular interest to students of the Revolution, as well as to others. Burke’s memorable speeches during this period in the House of Commons on taxation and conciliation are well known and have long been the subject of study. But the correspondence—consisting of over three hundred letters, many of them published for the first time—cover four very critical years in the history of the Old British Empire and shed additional light on Burke and his political associates, thanks to the careful editing by Professor Guttridge.

As has been stressed in reviews of Volumes I and II of The Correspondence, Burke was the chief intellectual force among the Rockingham Whigs, just as the Marquess was the chief political and social force holding the group together. The years dealt with in the present volume were, all in all, years of discouragement for the great orator and his intimate friends. By the end of 1777 the Rockingham Whigs had been made to realize that they were so isolated in their views from the great body of British public opinion, that they themselves were uncertain as to what steps to take. Writing to Charles James Fox on October 8 of that year Burke was compelled to admit that the people of Great Britain were “very adverse to our politics and to the principles from whence they arise. . . . They no longer criticize the acts of Government; but they are silent under every evil, and hide and cover up every ministerial blunder and misfortune. . . .” This was particularly true of the reinvigorated Tories and the Church of England clergy, who were “astonishingly warm” in support of the ministerial American policy. Nor did Burke expect any better support for his strong pro-American policy from the Whigs in general; for, as he admitted, they “have not yet learned the application of their principles to the present state of things”—something he found especially characteristic of the dissenters, who though “the main effective part of the Whig strength . . . will do very little.”

The truth—despite the impression created by certain writers that the opposite was the case—was that most of the people of Great Britain were filled with a perfectly natural patriotic fervor, whether they were Whigs or Tories. As a consequence they hoped for a complete victory over the Americans, whom they regarded as both ungrateful and disloyal subjects of the King.
Therefore, to the utter dismay of Burke, they rejoiced at the news of every British military success. Writing to Rockingham in the summer of 1775, he called the armed struggle with the colonies "this impious war." To his friend in Ireland, Charles O'Hara, he declared in 1776, that the conduct of Great Britain toward America was "wicked and foolish" and decried the step of Ireland in taking her own soldiers "from defence to lend to oppression" of the colonials. In a letter to Rockingham, late in 1777, when referring to "the wild tumult of Joy" of the people of London over the news of General Howe's victory over Washington, he could not refrain from denigrating their action as indicating "nothing right in their Character and disposition." By the spring of 1778, he was advocating in the House of Commons that peace commissioners be granted the power to recognize the independence of the North American colonies. When the Earl of Chatham bitterly opposed this idea in his last, literally his dying, speech in the House of Lords, Burke felt impelled to remark in a letter to a friend: "Lord Chatham fell upon the bosom of the Duke of Portland, in an apoplectick fit, after he had spit his last Venom."

Elected in 1774 to the House of Commons by the second largest city in Great Britain, Bristol, Burke saw his influence with his constituents gradually diminish during the years under review as his views on great political issues moved ever farther apart from theirs. The differences that developed were not only over the issue of justifying the war between Great Britain and the North American colonies but also over the problem of the relaxation of certain trade restrictions that Ireland labored under in carrying on commerce with the United Kingdom. Burke strongly favored this relaxation, which the merchants of Bristol as strongly opposed.

All this is set forth amply in the Correspondence, as is the sharp division that existed between the Rockingham Whigs and Chatham and his followers despite their joint opposition to the North ministry. This division had been created in the winter of 1766 when Rockingham, the King's Chief Minister, and his followers pushed through Parliament the Declaratory Act at the time of the repeal of the Stamp Act. Although Chatham—still Pitt, the Great Commoner—favored repeal, he bitterly opposed the Declaratory Act with its provisions asserting the power of Parliament over the colonies even in such matters as taxation. Burke defended this Act, since he believed the power to tax was implicit in the sovereign powers of Parliament and therefore supported the declaration as it made its way through the House of Commons; yet he never favored any attempt by Parliament to tax America, such as that involved in the Townshend Acts of 1767. His thesis, as stated in his masterly speech on conciliation, was that Great Britain would never be able to secure a shilling of revenue from the North American colonies, and that to attempt to do so would be fatal to the old imperial relationship. As events were to prove, Burke was right.

After reading the third volume of The Correspondence of Edmund Burke one is left with the conviction that, however right Burke and his political associates may have been, and however wrong George III and the Ministry, the nation was as much behind the King in his efforts to preserve
the Old British Empire during the years 1774 to 1778, as the North was behind Abraham Lincoln in his efforts to preserve the Union between 1861 and 1865. The myth that a wilful George III, by corrupting a group of men called "the King's friends," proceeded to wage a war condemned by the people of Great Britain as a wicked one, can hardly survive in the face of the evidence here presented that those who voiced the dissenting view in 1778 were at best a comparatively small group of discouraged and subdued men.

Lehigh University

Lawrence Henry Gipson


No reader of Arthur M. Schlesinger's *Prelude to Independence: The Newspaper War on Britain, 1764-1776,* or of Philip Davidson's *Propaganda in the American Revolution, 1763-1783,* will be tempted to call Carl Berger's *Broadsides and Bayonets* a volume wholly new in subject matter or unique in character. But certainly Mr. Berger's book adds tremendously and brilliantly to the social and political story of the American War for Independence; and, in the present reviewer's opinion, it should find its way into every good library of American history and its title should go into every college or university reading list which presumes to advise students on what to read.

Mr. Berger frankly acknowledges that the article "Psychological Warfare in 1776: The Jefferson-Franklin Plan to Cause Hessian Desertions" (by Lyman H. Butterfield in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* June, 1950), was the inspiring force behind his work; and Mr. Berger, like the author of that article, believes that King George III's "decision to employ foreign mercenaries was a bad one" and that "Both the Germans who came and the Americans who received them capitalized on his error."

Those truths, however, do not gainsay the fact that *Broadsides and Bayonets* broadens and deepens the subject of the propaganda war of the American Revolution with a great variety of material and a keen historian's insight. The book very properly presents both sides of the story, handling with equal candor propaganda in England versus what England regarded as lawfully her colonies, and propaganda in the new United States versus the mother country. In it are rehearsed the skills and triumphs, the mawkish falsities, and the puerile blunders of both parties to the conflict.

Eight leisurely chapters, all fully documented, exhibit the double-faced progress of the struggle, alternating copious verbiage with military feat or victory in battle. In them we read of the effort to bring Canada to the American side, the campaign to alienate or to retain the Indians' allegiance, to incite or to allay Negro insurrection, to subvert or to preserve the aid of the Hessians. We see much of the interplay of psychological warfare and military operation—of brain-washing, as it were, of individual folk,
and on a larger scale of continental European opinion. Rumor speeds about tirelessly. Kidnapping and bribes fascinate us with their very grotesquerie.

George Washington and Thomas Jefferson both nod at times in their "broadside" endeavors. In theirs, Benjamin Franklin and John Adams open themselves to damaging charges from moral historians. John Laurens, Alexander Hamilton, and many another American patriot appear in an unlovely light. On the other hand Carleton, Howe, Clinton are equally as lurid in their manifestos. Mr. Berger steers his way adroitly and honestly through scenes almost phantasmagoric, checking for their several values the authentic truth and the malign practice.

Happily he in no sense undervalues the power of propaganda during the American War for Independence, and does nothing to mitigate the effect of his abundant illustrations. But he seems to this reviewer wise as he concludes that Britain's loss of the war was due most to the stubborn resistance of Washington (who never excelled in propaganda), and of Greene and others in the army, and to "the potent French alliance."

_Hubertis M. Cummings_  
_Camp Hill, Pennsylvania_


Although some historians might question that General Greene was the strategist of the Revolution, few would dispute his place as a foremost figure in the general planning of that conflict, and his important role in the ultimate outcome. In any military appraisal of the war, the name of Greene is unquestionably among the topmost.

Nathanael Greene was a young Quaker in Rhode Island during the preliminaries to the War for Independence, and as if this pacific situation were not enough, he had a crippled foot which caused such a limp the local militia were self-conscious when he hobbled in front of them as an officer. But as in other notable cases of physical handicaps, this only seemed to motivate Greene the more. Visiting his friend, Henry Knox, the robust Boston bookseller who became the artillery chief and in many ways the right-hand man of Washington, Greene learned, as Knox did, that books furnish much artillery training in themselves. So, by the time of the outbreak of hostilities, the now-erstwhile Quaker was ready to join with the irregular patriot forces who dared to oppose the dreaded redcoat regulars from Great Britain.

It did not take him long to attract the attention of the astute Washington. Here was a dedicated man who was needed. Nathanael Greene, in joining Washington at Cambridge, at a time when the commander-in-chief was disturbed by his own lack of understanding of the New England personalities who made up most of his motley armies, was a welcome exception. Thus, like Knox, Greene grew closer to Washington from the start, until in 1776 he was made one of the four new major generals of the new Continental Army.
Had Greene been in charge of the American forces in the battle for Long Island, it might have been a different story. Who knows? But illness prevented this, and he was inadvertently inactive, only to fight another day. As Professor Thayer points out, his exploits as commander of Forts Lee and Washington in New York did not embellish his military reputation, but the adverse circumstances surrounding the British capture of these forts were well understood by Washington, so that Greene was in line for new commands, much as if nothing disadvantageous had happened. Greene and Knox commiserated together after the fall of these forts, agreeing that if some of their earlier ideas for defending them had been put into effect, they might have survived the British onslaught, although this is doubtful.

According to Thayer, Greene did not relish the idea of accepting the job of Quartermaster General, while being simultaneously in command of troops. But he did accept and performed expertly in a difficult and non-rewarding assignment. Perhaps this was why Greene was willing to accept the thankless task of commanding the southern armies after the disastrous defeat of General Gates at Camden, South Carolina, in 1780. Evidently Greene did not expect to win battles, but hoped to help win the war. This is exactly what happened. With great sagacity, Greene divided his forces, sending the greatest field commander of the Revolution, Daniel Morgan, forward with a select corps of riflemen until they were overtaken by the dreaded British Banastre Tarleton at the Cowpens, where the most brilliantly conceived battle of the war was fought and won by Morgan. This started Cornwallis on the way to defeat at Yorktown.

Later at Guilford Courthouse, Greene, without the sorely needed services of Morgan, used the Cowpens tactics but only succeeded in fighting Cornwallis to a bloody stand-off—enough however, to send the wily British general reeling back toward the Carolina coast and ultimate defeat. Greene then lost to Lord Rawdon at Hobkirk’s Hill, and fought to a draw at Eutaw Springs, but he succeeded in tying the British up until other and less circumscribed American forces could finish the job at Yorktown. Greene’s southern campaign reminds the reader of the tactics of Turenne, the commander whom Greene had taken as his model while studying military history in the Knox bookshop in Boston. His success, as Thayer clearly shows, was in dividing, evading, and tiring his more experienced opponents, and forcing them to pay a price in losses which they could not afford.

Later, Nathanael Greene was charged with venality in the handling of military accounts in the Carolinas. Professor Thayer performs yeoman service in trying to justify the position of Greene in this regard. But the impression still remains, and much source material substantiates it, that Greene was, if not dishonest, at least involved in questionable financial dealings with the war contractors.

On the whole, this biography is a helpful contribution to the history of the American Revolution, and a welcome delineation of the character of one of its most important leaders.

New York University

North Callahan
The study of the historical development of law and legal institutions in the United States is sadly neglected. Too often, the federal constitution and judiciary are over-emphasized, thus ignoring the vital significance and workings of the colonial and state courts and judges. Without a firm scholarly construction of these foundations, the story of American law, constitutionalism, and judicial practice is distorted and devoid of historical meaning. In his biography of Chief Justice Shaw of Massachusetts, Leonard Levy has remarked that the documents and reports in these areas are "the wasteland of American legal history." Recently, however, several biographical and institutional studies on the colonial and state levels have been made to correct this situation. These volumes, which thoroughly chronicle the genesis of one of the oldest courts in the nation, have made a most commendable step in this direction.

The three volumes of this work contain respectively, an introduction, examining the background, structure, and operation of the court; the previously unpublished minutes of the court, with extensive and helpful notes (the minutes for the period 1693-1701 were published by the New-York Historical Society in 1912), and the rules of procedure; and finally, a biographical dictionary of the bench and bar, sources, a glossary, and various indexes.

The establishment of the Supreme Court of Judicature of New York in 1691 merged into one court a degree of jurisdictional concentration and supervisory control unknown to any of its predecessors either in England or the colonies. The new tribunal was granted jurisdiction commensurate with that exercised in the mother country by the courts of King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer, and in the colony by a half-dozen separate courts, including equity and admiralty. Although appeals from the court could be made to the governor and council, and further on to London, the act did instill the idea of a supreme court into our judicial scheme. In the thirteen-year period covered in these volumes, only two of the court's decisions were appealed to the king in council.

The extant minutes merely contain docket entries and by themselves provide only a fragmentary record of the court's activities. The editors, however, have utilized other documents and evidence to make them meaningful. In most instances, they have collected the relevant background, facts, and lawyers' briefs to the cases cited in the minutes. For example, their findings show that the New York Supreme Court, as well as the Vice-Admiralty courts took part in the enforcement of the trade laws. In the case of *Weaver v. Ship Elizabeth and Catherine* (1701), the Supreme Court issued a prohibition restraining the Vice-Admiralty court from acting on its decree and, in effect, invalidated that court's decision. Perhaps the Vice-Admiralty
courts were not always so omnipotent and dangerous as later revolutionary agitators claimed.

The Judiciary Act of 1691 affords an interesting commentary on the essentially conservative character of the colony in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution. The direct progenitor of the act was Edmund Andros' New England judiciary system, which he extended to New York in 1688 shortly before he was overthrown. That system included a Supreme Court of Judicature embodying the same jurisdiction as that singly adopted by New York three years later. James Graham, who was Andros' Attorney General, had become Speaker of the Assembly and was chiefly responsible for the drafting of the enabling legislation. The Assembly itself, purged of the Leislerian faction, remained staunchly pro-Andros. Moreover, four of the five judges originally appointed to the court were also members of the Governor's Council, and all but one of them had sat upon the special tribunal which sentenced Jacob Leisler to death. The fifth judge had prepared the evidence and as a Councilor, had voted to recommend the death sentence. The defeated, discredited, and dispersed Leislerians could reflect only wistfully upon the futility of their uprising.

Students of early Pennsylvania legal history especially would be interested in the career of John Guest. He was reputedly the first trained lawyer to sit on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, serving as its Chief Justice from 1701-ca. 1706. Earlier, however, he was active as one of the few trained barristers in New York and served one brief term in 1699 as an Associate Justice on that colony's supreme court. It was not unusual at that time for qualified judges to have their services engaged by different colonies. Joseph Dudley, first Chief Justice of the New York Supreme Court, previously had served as Chief Justice of the Superior Court of the Dominion of New England and later was to return to Boston as Governor from 1702-1715.

Happily combining the talents of a lawyer-political scientist and a historian, this work is imposing and, on the whole, extremely useful as an introduction to the subject. But while the editors have minutely detailed the structure and operation of the court, they have not directed their labors into parallel and more fruitful channels. The absence of a conclusion or an evaluation of the court and its work is an unfortunate omission. More specifically, they might have included an interpretation of how the court reflected and affected the colony's political, economic, and social conditions. The editors' intimacy with their subject, would, it seems, make them the logical choice for this task, and it may be hoped that such a commentary will be forthcoming.

The Pennsylvania State University

STANLEY I. KUTLER


Scholars in the field of American colonial history and discriminating laymen will welcome the appearance of Professor Morton's comprehensive, readable, and authoritative two-volume study of colonial Virginia—the fruit
of a lifetime's research. Mr. Morton has set for himself the task of producing
a new synthesis of the history of Virginia from Jamestown to the close of
the French and Indian War. Based upon original manuscript and printed
sources, as well as upon numerous histories, monographs, and biographies,
the book, from a bibliographical point of view, is well-nigh exhaustive.
Documentation, and selective bibliographies at the end of each volume are
helpful, and the reader is given a sense of the reality of colonial days
through photographs, maps, and reproductions of paintings.

The author, long Professor and head of the Department of History at
the College of William and Mary, presents his story in clear prose, some-
times garnished with humor, and organizes his complex materials in
masterly fashion. Without elaborate introduction, he plunges into the business
at hand, retelling in fresh detail the founding of Jamestown, the fearful
struggle of the first Virginians to maintain their hold through years of
starvation and Indian massacres, the contributions of Captain John Smith
(whom the author appraises favorably), the creation of an economic basis
through the John Rolfe blend of tobacco, the Pocahontas story (the out-
lines of which Morton finds plausible), the founding of representative
government in 1619—one of Virginia's imperishable firsts—which "with
brief interludes of suspended animation" has continued to the present, the
fall of the Virginia Company, and the transition into a royal colony. These
form some of the principal topics of the first half of Volume I, subtitled,
"The Tidewater Period, 1607-1710." With a sure hand he sketches other
major themes through the end of the century and into the next.

Of especial interest is Mr. Morton's full account of Governor William
Berkeley's two administrations in Virginia, bisected by Civil War and Com-
monwealth in England. A friendly picture is drawn of Berkeley's first
regime, "a successful and liberal one in spite of the King's tyranny in
England." Virginia remained relatively undisturbed during the Crom-
wellian years; but rejoicing in the Old Dominion "soon turned to bitter-
ess" with the restoration and the return of Sir William as Governor. The
latter became increasingly arbitrary with advancing years, and the period
1660-1677 was characterized by "a succession of calamities." Yet the author
calls attention to Berkeley's admirable first administration, as well as to
his "arduous labors in behalf of Virginia during his second term—often
heartbreaking with disappointments. . . ." These subjects are developed in
several chapters, climaxed by the stirring Bacon's Rebellion and its un-
fortunate aftermath.

Some years ago a younger scholar, Wilcomb E. Washburn, published a
"revisionist" study of Bacon's Rebellion, leading the unwary to hail that
work as the final word on the subject. Taking note of Washburn's The
Governor and the Rebel . . . (Chapel Hill, 1957), Morton observes that
this account has brought about a restudy of the rebellion, and continues:
"It is not a history of Bacon's Rebellion but a brief for the defendant,
Berkeley. Neither his study nor the Bath Papers at Longleat, which had
been cited by W. G. Stanard in 1908 . . . justify any material change in the
history of the rebellion, but may cause a more cautious appraisal of Bacon."
Both volumes deal generously with social and economic history, though these important phases are necessarily subordinated by the author to a central theme: the steady though slow growth of representative self-government. Through actual practice and "salutary neglect" Virginians had come to regard their House of Burgesses as "the Virginia House of Commons." Frequently the British government failed to realize that the North American colonies "had grown up"; and continued restraints upon the colonials, together with the British view of their assemblies "as having the status of English town councils," irritated Virginians passionately devoted to the developing concept of self-government.

Clashes between Royal Governors and the General Assembly (often the House of Burgesses only), frequent in the seventeenth century and not unknown in the next, gradually abated under the able administrations of Spotswood, Gooch, Dinwiddie, and Fauquier. Volume II, "Westward Expansion and Prelude to Revolution, 1710-1763," develops the policies and problems of these eighteenth century governors, with excellent vignettes of personalities of those years. Trans-Allegheny expansion brought Virginians into conflict with the French and Indians, leading to the final war of the colonial period, 1755-1763. A young and realistic George Washington appears in these pages as military leader and incipient burgess; and the controversial "Proclamation Line of 1763" is placed in its proper setting.

But it is to the theme of the place of Virginia in the British constitutional system that the author returns in several vivid concluding chapters dealing with Governor Dinwiddie and the "pistole fee controversy," the "Two-Penny Acts," and the celebrated "Parsons' Cause" which set Patrick Henry on the road to fame. Mr. Morton's treatment of these complex matters is balanced, and differs in tone from the sneering appraisal of Henry by the late American Revolutionary historian Claude H. Van Tyne. Here, also, is an exposition of the early Virginia "Committee of Correspondence" (perhaps not so well-known to the casual reader of American history), accompanied by an analysis of the political theory of Colonel Richard Bland, which would be useful in the coming American Revolution, then only a dozen years away.

Mr. Morton has contributed a major work to American historiography. He has followed Professor Andrews' injunction to avoid "unsupported legend and tradition." He has no startling theses to expound or hobbies to ride, and this is as it should be. The tone throughout is critical and realistic, tempered by sympathetic appreciation; and his judgments are made in the light of the period about which he is writing, rather than the standards of a later age. It is possible to offer minor criticisms, but these picayunes pale before a magisterial performance. The Virginia Historical Society is to be commended for its sponsorship of these volumes.

Ollinger Crenshaw


What has attracted scholars to this document are not the entries concerning Hamilton's New York Artillery Company, 1776-77 (rosters of recruits, issues
of breeches and shoes), but pages devoted to notes on his reading on commercial, historical, and political subjects. Professor Panagopoulos has printed and commented on the latter, identifying Hamilton's sources in Postlethwayt's *Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce* (2 vols., 1751-55), Plutarch's *Lives*, and other works less readily traced. Numbers of these memoranda reappeared in one form or another in Hamilton's famous state papers and in his correspondence, as the editor has carefully shown.

Since the Pay Book is dated and the notes of reading are in back pages it has been assumed that the little abstracts and quotations were set down after 1776. The entries may have been made over a period of several years. On the whole they suggest boyish industry and mental curiosity. Hamilton went through Postlethwayt's *Dictionary* more or less alphabetically, rather than selectively as a maturer reader, with a fixed purpose, would have done. The spelling and punctuation are faulty, which is distinctly not characteristic of Hamilton's other manuscripts. The books represented in the notes are few, which brings to mind the slender literary resources of the island of St. Croix where Alexander spent his boyhood, rather than the ampler library of King's College. Other evidence tempts the guess that his military company records were kept in his earlier-commenced or earlier-completed commonplace book, rather than the other way around. How reconcile this with physical features of the document this reviewer cannot say; perhaps the guess of earlier entry of the notes is untenable.

Dr. Panagopoulos has followed his editorial work with fifty pages devoted to "Philosophic Premises of Hamilton's Thought." This section appears to the present reviewer as unnecessarily labored. Painstaking listing of passages in Hamilton's published works prove that he judged by experience and practical test rather than by abstract reasoning. But any acquaintance with his contribution must produce the same conclusion. As first Secretary of the Treasury and as Federalist party leader Hamilton was concerned more with application than with theory; though he was by no means devoid of principle, he habitually adapted the ideal to confronting circumstances.

*University of Puerto Rico*  
Broadus Mitchell


Professor Lander of Clemson College aims in this volume to provide a "brief, up-to-date survey of South Carolina's political, economic, educational, and religious development" since the close of the Civil War. The main emphasis is on political history, though there are chapters devoted specifically to economic, educational, and religious developments.

Lander maintains that, except for the end of Reconstruction in 1877, no permanent or deep-seated change took place in South Carolina's one-party politics and cotton economy from the collapse of the Confederacy until after 1941. Since the latter date, however, the traditional patterns of agriculture, industry, education, race relations, and even one-party politics have been
greatly and sometimes severely altered. Writing in a somewhat pedestrian style, the author proceeds to support this thesis adequately. The text is largely based on a variety of secondary sources and it is supplemented by a number of useful maps and statistical tables. Occasionally footnote documentation is confusing or tantalizingly lacking, as, for instance, in the assertion that "the prohibition amendment seems to have reduced the consumption of alcohol in South Carolina except in the larger cities."

Despite these flaws, the book contains a wealth of information and some critical and penetrating evaluations of political and social developments. There is a frank analysis of the weaknesses of the educational system which reveals the emptiness of the claim that "separate but equal" schools have ever in fact been provided for South Carolina Negroes. Indeed it was not until after 1951 that the state’s political leaders began to take seriously the elimination of inequalities between white and Negro school facilities. Lander does not venture to predict whether white South Carolinians will attempt to abandon the public school system, rather than comply with federal court orders, but he observes that "continued segregation in South Carolina will be maintained, if at all, only through some form of intimidation of the Negroes or by some evasive legal trick."

While giving adequate attention to the hopeful evidences of economic and educational progress since 1941, the author does not hesitate to identify the less encouraging features of the contemporary scene in his native state. His evaluation of the higher educational institutions, for example, is devastatingly critical, as when he writes:

Probably the most severe indictment of South Carolina colleges is the lack of an atmosphere conducive to inquiry into and discussion of controversial issues. Generally speaking, academic freedom is altogether absent or greatly restricted in South Carolina institutions of higher learning.

Although much of this volume is not very lively reading, it is a useful compendium for those who are interested in attaining greater insight into the somewhat unique history of the Palmetto State as it has moved from the tragic era of Reconstruction to the new political and social tensions of the Atomic Age.

Florida Presbyterian College, St. Petersburg, Fla. William C. Wilbur

*Titian Ramsay Peale, 1799-1885, and His Journals of the Wilkes Expedition.*


It is difficult to understand the objectives of the Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum and the American Philosophical Society in financing the publication of this handsomely printed and illustrated study of a tertiary naturalist-artist, who never prepared a major work. Titian Ramsay Peale’s extant journals of the United States Exploring Expedition are of interest to
students of American overseas exploration and nineteenth century science, but he is hardly deserving of an extensive and expensive biography.

This son of Charles Willson Peale inherited his famous father's enthusiasm for natural history and drawing, and imbibed deeply of the conversations and discussions carried on by the many distinguished visitors to Peale's Museum in Philadelphia. Enthusiasm, in fact, served Titian Peale well, for it enabled him to achieve some stature among the taxonomists of youthful America. He was always a field observer, never a disciplined and learned scholar. Advances in science gradually passed him by, and brought bitterness and disillusionment in his late years.

Peale's classrooms were the woodlands, plains, swamps, and mountains of North America, the jungles and highlands of South America, the seas of the Antarctic, and the islands and coasts of the Pacific. His earliest studies were conducted in and around Philadelphia where he ultimately gained acceptance by George Ord, Thomas Nuttall, William P. C. Barton, and Thomas Say. His sketches for the latter's entomological prospectus brought election to the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences at age eighteen, and his participation in a collecting expedition to Georgia and Florida with Ord, Say, and William Maclure, the so-called "Father of American Geology," broadened his vistas considerably.

Titian Peale obtained his first important assignment through the intercession of his father with Secretary of War John C. Calhoun. He was invited to join the expedition of Major Stephen H. Long as an assistant naturalist. This exploring party traced the Platte River to its source and returned to the Mississippi via the Arkansas and Red Rivers in 1819. It is best remembered for its report of the existence of a great American desert west of the Mississippi, bitter news for a people dedicated to territorial expansion.

The years following this journey were among Peale's most productive ones. Besides sharing the management of the family Museum, he was asked to illustrate articles in the Journal of the Academy of Natural Sciences, exhibit water colors of his western travels, prepare drawings for Charles Lucien Bonaparte's expansion of Alexander Wilson's American Ornithology, assist Charles Waterton, the English naturalist, in improving the preparation and preservation of specimens, make a collecting trip to Colombia, Brazil, and Surinam, and join the prestigious American Philosophical Society. He also began a comprehensive study of American butterflies which never was published.

As a member of the Philosophical Society, Peale was chosen to serve on a committee given the responsibility of preparing recommendations concerning the corps of scientists and the scientific objectives for the proposed United States Exploring Expedition. Members of the Society and others recommended him for an appointment to the scientific corps, and when he took the committee's report to Washington and talked with President Jackson he was informed that he would be joining the expedition.

Participation in the surveys and explorations of the expedition, commanded by Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, was the apex of Peale's career. His
thereafter was filled with blighted hopes. The Museum, his place of employment, became bankrupt and both the building and the collection were sold. Many of the specimens he had assembled during his explorations were damaged or misplaced by unskilled and unconcerned government functionaries. He coveted, but failed to obtain, the position of Curator of the newly-established Smithsonian Institution, and finally, because of criticisms, Wilkes suppressed his volume in the scientific reports of the expedition and commissioned John Cassin to replace it with a more accurate study. His last years were spent in Philadelphia where he and his family existed largely through the generosity of relatives.

Five of Titian Peale's journals of the Wilkes Expedition (1838-1842) also are included in this volume. They add little to the total record, but his observations and descriptions of the explorers' visits to Madeira, South America, Pacific islands, Australia, New Zealand, Oregon and California, Singapore, and the Antarctic are interesting. Peale alone among the scientists participated in the expedition's invasions of the south polar frontier. He accompanied the explorers during their unsuccessful attempt in 1839 to reach the farthest southern point of Captain James Cook, Palmer Peninsula, and the islands discovered earlier by the Russian expedition under Captain Fabian von Bellingshausen.

Miss Poesch's biography is repetitious in places (there are seemingly endless discussions of Peale's museum activities and his quarrels with his father). Several chapters are replete with quotations. She displays a becoming modesty and taste, however, for she does not portray Peale as a leading scientist. The journals, which are somewhat vague and obscure, would be of greater value to scholars had they been edited. But she is fortunate in having her master's essay and related research published as her first book. The American Philosophical Society and the Winterthur Museum are devoted to the promotion of useful knowledge. Would not this objective be better served if they financed studies of William Maclure, Charles Pickering, or Benjamin Silliman, rather than this one?

Thiel College

Philip Ira Mitterling

The Liberty Line—The Legend of the Underground Railroad. By Larry Gara. (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1961. Pp. 201. $5.00.)

In The Liberty Line Professor Gara investigates the highly romanticized story of the underground railroad. In the popular legend we get the picture of dark-skinned fugitives, pursued by bloodhounds and villainous slave-catchers, making their perilous way northward, usually at night, through swamp and stream, up ravines and across mountains. Arriving at secret "depots" or "stations" with the help of "conductors," the "passengers" identified themselves to station "agents" by means of secret knocks and passwords, were sheltered, fed, and clothed. Then, oftentimes disguised or hidden in boxes or loads of hay, the "parcels" of "Black Wool" were shipped on to the next station. Each station, as the legend has it, was but part of
a vast and well-organized web of "railroad" lines carrying multitudes of slaves from the South across the border states and on into the Promised Land of Freedom. Courageous abolitionists, many of whom were Quakers, had organized a far-reaching conspiracy at peril of life and property; their activities in retail emancipation constituted a major factor in bringing on the Civil War and its wholesale emancipation of the slaves.

So goes the story—in folklore, as well as in some works of reference and in some textbooks. It is an image in that succession of images Americans have about their national heritage. Like most of the historical images people retain after school days are over, this one is compounded of facts, half-truths, and the wholly fictitious—plus a very heavy dash of dramatic extravagance. Folk memory recalls best the pursuit, the action, the crisis situations. And, as Professor Gara emphasizes, the legend is full of stereotypes. There is the stereotype of the "mean Southerner," living in "a dismal swamp of slavery—a cesspool of vice." The abolitionist, on the other hand, is stereotyped as the idealist, the "pure-hearted knight in shining armor." Implicit in the whole image is the idea that underground abolitionists were removing an impediment to the realization of the American Dream, the dream of equal freedom for the individual. Further, the image carries within it the transcendent glimmerings of an eternal and universal Higher Moral Law; enforced by abolitionists, this law was superior to all those other laws which men had made in moments of error.

How much truth is there in this image? While some historians (notably Channing and Nevins) have voiced doubt about the extent and efficiency of the underground railroad, Professor Gara is the first to attempt a systematic and critical examination of the origin, development, and significance of the legend as a whole. As has been suggested, he finds it to be a potpourri of fact and fancy; his object, of course, is to separate the two and give us the essential truth.

Beginning with the legendary character of the railroad, Professor Gara goes on to analyze the factors tending to hold Negroes on the old plantation, as well as those motives leading them to make a break for freedom. He carries the reader over the road to the North; he then tests the truth of the alleged conspiracy. The abolitionist friends of the fugitive are described in considerable detail; and the fugitive-slave issue, in its popular and in its legal aspects, is given careful attention. The roots of the legend are dug out, its proliferation traced, and the fruits of reminiscence and romance are sorted and graded.

Certain conclusions emerge from this study. The legend began before the Civil War when partisan propaganda magnified the number of escapees as well as the extent of the railroad's organization. While underground efforts were somewhat systematized here and there—in Boston, Philadelphia, Chester County (Pa.), and in the Wilmington (Del.) and Cincinnati areas—the fugitive was largely on his own. When help was given it was likely to be spontaneous, local, temporary and from Negroes, slave or free. There is little evidence of a widespread conspiracy. After the Civil War the legend grew in the memoirs of aging abolitionists of both races, increasingly seeing
their part in the adventure through larger, rose-tinted glasses. The statistics they gave were scanty and unreliable; they obscured specific facts with generalities. As time went on, memoirs were supplemented by oral tradition in families and communities, by the sincere but uncritical efforts of local historians, and by newspaper and magazine feature writers. Finally—and surprisingly—some trained historians with national reputations accepted the legend and wrote it into fairly recent textbooks. Small wonder that Professor Gara grows pessimistic; he doubts whether “any amount of critical scholarship will modify the legend in the popular mind. . . .”

All these conclusions, and others too, are the fruit of prodigious research. As Professor Gara's documentation attests, no important source of data has been neglected. Abolitionist memoirs have been supplemented and corrected with abolitionist letters, propaganda writings, the papers of people with a vested interest in slavery, and with newspapers. He has used the pioneer works of Wilbur H. Siebert a great deal, as anyone must who works on this subject; he has found much to re-evaluate there. While the book does not have a critical bibliography, the nature of the work turns much of the text into a critical essay on authorities. Professor Gara is always concerned with the validity of the legend and with the validity of the sources fostering the legend.

If the book has any faults, the reviewer had difficulty in finding them. The title, *The Liberty Line*, while forgivably eyecatching and alliterative, might evoke some connotations at variance with the author's conclusions. The “Preface” has two sentences which strike one as puzzling: “Though this story is compounded of both fact and fancy, its legendary character has not been recognized or investigated. Yet as a popular legend it certainly deserves serious study.” A “popular legend” which has not been recognized as a legend? Semantics? Logic? And, in pointing out the low degree of underground-railroad organization, Professor Gara might have emphasized more the fact that abolitionists (even such leaders as Thomas Garrett) were very frequently general reformers, giving much of their time and energy to many other projects; they were not inclined, in theory or in practice, to specialize in one type of reform.

But these are trifling criticisms. Tireless research has been combined with judicious interpretation; the results are reported in a felicitous style. One wonders what more could be done to make a book definitive for its subject. This reviewer believes that as the book's conclusions circulate among the community of scholars, teachers, and students, they will also eventually correct the legend in the popular mind.

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While not equal in size or content to its preceding volume, volume 23 of the *Proceedings of The Lehigh County Historical Society* is an interesting
compilation of articles and reports of events which chronicle the activities of that organization for the past two years. As such it should be welcomed to individuals interested in the history of the Lehigh County area.

Two letters, a genealogical chart, and brief editorial commentaries all dealing with the virtually unknown descendants of William Allen compose the lead article and provide a background for nine excellent reproductions of Allen family portraits now owned by Anthony Charles Barnes of Cobham, Surrey, England. It had long been assumed that William Allen, the founder of Allentown and a prominent colonial political figure, had no known descendants. In 1947, however, a letter from George P. Allen of Staten Island, a descendant of William Allen’s brother, initiated an informal search which culminated in 1958. At that time, Miss Margaret Barnes of Cobham, Surrey, visited Allentown, and it was learned that she was descended from William Allen through his son Andrew. Through Miss Barnes, the Society then received photographic copies of the Allen family portraits owned by her father, and a genealogical record of his family. The portraits are of additional interest in that they were done by three of the most famous painters of the period—Benjamin West, Gilbert Stuart, and Richard Brompton.

Of perhaps greater general interest are two articles which deal with two prominent Pennsylvanians, John Fries, and G. Adolph Sage. The trials of John Fries, leader of the so-called Fries Rebellion of 1798, come under the scrutiny of Henry Snyder in his article “Unique Aspects of the Trials of John Fries.” Basing his research on Lawson’s American State Trials, Mr. Snyder recounts with much interest the unusual judicial procedure used when Fries was convicted of treason.

That two Federal judges would be found presiding at the same time in one case; that Samuel Setgreaves, one of the prosecuting attorneys, was permitted to interpret the law involved in his opening speech; or that the court did not adhere to the rule prohibiting the admission of hearsay testimony, are legal practices quite foreign to modern courts. That such practices were foreign to the courts of that period is a point, however, which Mr. Snyder fails to make clear. This lack of explanation raises many questions in the mind of the reader, making him desire more research on the part of the author as well as an expanded article. The problem of treason, for example, to which both courts devoted much time, would become considerably clearer to the reader had Mr. Snyder pointed out that a working definition of treason was not yet available in the American judicial system until established by John Marshall in the Burr trial.

Frederic A. Godcharles’ statement that the political campaign in Pennsylvania in 1838 “was one of vituperation and personal abuse of the candidates unparalleled in the history of American politics” is well attested in Melville J. Boyer’s article, “Allentown Publisher Sued by Governor Porter.” Translating excerpts from the editorials of G. Adolph Sage, peripatetic German newspaper publisher of Der Patriot und Demokrat from 1837 to 1841, Mr. Boyer presents an interesting sidelight into the turbulent gubernatorial election of 1839.

Hurling invectives that would make most current politicians blush, Sage
championed the cause of the newly fused Whig-Anti-Masonic-Abolitionist party against Porter and his Democratic organization. Prior to the elections Sage, along with several other newspaper editors, accused Porter of taking advantage, when he ran into financial difficulty in 1819, of the debtors law, of taking a false oath, and of transferring property which he later recovered. Governor Porter ultimately brought suit against Sage and the latter took to his editorials for self-vindication. Describing the Governor and his witnesses in such terms as "miserable wights," Sage spared few words when unburdening himself to his readers. The editorials make delightful reading.

One point, however, remains unclear. Did Porter sue as an individual or as a representative of the Commonwealth? Mr. Boyer points out in his opening statements that this trial "reminds one of the political situation during the administration of John Adams, when the Sedition Law attempted to punish newspaper editors for printing articles criticizing the government." Boyer's subsequent remarks between his translated excerpts as well as the excerpts themselves, lead one to believe that the suit was a personal one between two individuals.

At a time when most county historical societies have retired from the publishing field it is pleasing to see such organizations as the Lehigh County Historical Society putting forth an effort to preserve local history in well-published form. Both the high cost of printing and the dearth of publishable material, the latter evident in this volume by the number of contributions from Mr. Boyer himself, make it extremely difficult to maintain the standards achieved in preceding decades. Editor Boyer should, therefore, be congratulated and encouraged for his effort.

_Books County Historical Society, Doylestown_  

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