One of the most striking shifts in American historiography during the past decade has been the radical revision of historical perspectives on the abolition movement. Although the defenders of the abolitionists were never totally silenced, the critics seemed to have carried the day. For the most part historians accepted the view of the abolitionists, particularly the followers of Garrison, as cranky, humorless eccentrics whose inflexible moralism reflected psychological instability. As such they bore primary responsibility for the climate of opinion which tolerated a "needless" Civil War.

This view of the abolitionists was brilliantly underscored in the 1950's by David Donald and Stanley Elkins. Donald attempted to explain the motivation of the abolitionists in terms of the psychological effects of social change. The abolitionists, he concluded, represented a displaced elite without a function who attacked slavery basically to gain self fulfillment by reasserting their moral leadership "at home." Elkins agreed but emphasized the relation between abolitionism and Transcendentalism, and chastized the abolitionists for their abstract moralism, excessive individualism, and hostility to all institutions. These traits prevented a realistic solution to the institutional problem presented by slavery and "blocked off all concrete approaches to the problems of society."

The emphasis on motivation, ideology, and tactics which marked the work of Donald and Elkins continued to provide the focus of studies of abolitionism in the 1960's, but a new and sympathetic mood was prevalent. In 1965 Martin Duberman was unable to find "any reputable scholar under forty who was willing to argue the traditional view. . . ." By the end of the decade both Donald and Elkins had come under withering attack and a totally altered view of the abolitionists and the
antislavery movement was emerging. The four books considered here both reflect the shift in attitude and provide clues for understanding that shift.

Probably the most influential single article to challenge Donald was Martin Duberman's, "The Abolitionists and Psychology," first published in 1962, and now reprinted in *The Uncompleted Past*, a collection of essays and reviews. Here he clearly reveals his own sympathy for the abolitionist cause and decries the tendency of his fellow historians to describe all abolitionists as "impractical" or "fanatical" on the basis of limited research and using "primitive" conceptual schemes. He makes three not altogether related points. In the first place he emphasizes the uniqueness of the individual personality and the multiplicity of psychological types in the abolition movement, suggesting the impossibility of any generalizations. Secondly he argues that psychologists are rejecting "neo-Freudian cynicism" underlying behaviorist theory and reconsidering "the role of reason and the possibilities of purposive deliberate behavior" supporting the validity of a more sympathetic reading of the reformer's idealism. In between these arguments, which seem to call for more sophisticated conceptualization and intensive research, Duberman raises doubts about the whole enterprise, noting that we "may never know enough about the human psyche to achieve a comprehensive analysis of motivation."

He attempted to clarify his views in a second important essay, "The Northern Response to Slavery" which is also reprinted. As he clearly states in the new introduction to this essay, he was most concerned at the time with discovering "whether the insights of psychology can be used to illuminate the study of history, and whether past experience can be used to illuminate our own." Yet, the essay examines neither question systematically and fails to go much beyond his earlier views.

Duberman's commitment to the abolitionists remained constant throughout the 1960's, but his uncertainties about the use of psychological analyses grew between 1962 and 1970. While in 1965 he still accepted the possibility of "a psychological or sociological explanation," the final essay in *The Uncompleted Past*, "On Becoming an Historian," rejects such explanations. He admits his frustration at having spent ten years not being able to explain why Charles Francis Adams became a Free Soiler and James Russell Lowell an abolitionist; and then makes clear his present belief that if he knew these answers they would tell us little about contemporary radicals. Duberman is refreshingly honest about his own self-doubts and frustrations. While he represents an extreme case, his feelings are shared to some degree by nearly all of his younger colleagues and for this reason deserve consideration.


2 His explicit use of Gordon Allport's *Becoming*, contrasts with Donald's implicit reliance upon Harold Lasswell's *Psychopathology and Politics*. 
These essays show the degree to which the shift of viewpoint toward the abolitionists is not simply the product of the rise of the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Revolution of our time. Duberman's interests move off into radical politics and educational reform as well. Clearly the revival of interest in anarchism, the rush to embrace "radicalism," and the "discovery" of racism have all led to new perspectives on all aspects of American history. *The Uncompleted Past* reveals that one must relate a variety of elements within the climate of opinion to explain the shift in historians' attitudes toward the abolitionists.

Duberman's own perspective is militantly impressionistic. His disillusionment is bound up in his almost total disregard for methodological problems. While temperamentally attached to history as a humanistic study, he is dissatisfied with the kind of understanding humanists have prided themselves upon. Rather he wishes to make history a policy science to provide "detailed blueprints" for future action. At the same time he eschews the formation of hypotheses, the development of designs of proof, and systematic and empirical methods of validation which such an endeavor would require. Duberman never faces the problem of relating data and theory in explanation. His whole approach emphasizes the "heart" over the "head" and militates against the methodological rigor required by his attempt to establish scientific statements about human motivation.

While most historians have resisted Duberman's disillusionment, they have generally followed basic outlines that can be traced in his work. Sympathetic towards the abolitionists and distrustful of easy psychological generalizations, they have shown a similar disdain for methodological matters and turned to either biography or the history of ideas—Duberman's own fields of interest.

Tilden Edelstein's life of Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Strange Enthusiasm*, typifies the trend toward biography. Edelstein like Duberman is interested in the effect of personality and agrees on the necessity of more subtle psychological accounts of individuals "to aid historians to generalize ultimately about the motives and behavior of members of a reform movement." He chose Higginson for two reasons. An abolitionist who lived well beyond the Civil War, Higginson became successively a radical Republican, Mugwump, Anti-imperialist, and Progressive. And "the nature and extent of the Higginson material" allowed "more than customary attention to parental influences, to essential biographical details of his youth, and to his emerging ideas, personal traits, and behavioral patterns." The result is both rewarding and frustrating.

The majority of the book is devoted to the ante-bellum years when the young minister gave his support to a variety of reforms. The most important chapters trace Higginson's movement from political abolition in the 1840's to the advocacy of violence in the 1850's and his support of John Brown's attempt at Harpers Ferry to initiate a general slave rebellion. Later portions of the book deal with Higginson's military career
as commander of a black regiment and his post-war years as literary critic and reformer.

Although committed to the view that only the interaction of personality and social context can explain motivation, Edelstein’s explanations are often unclear. Just why Higginson became an abolitionist, or why after the war he deserted the cause of the Negro and moderated his reformist sympathies, remain unclear. Edelstein considers his education and the influence of such men as Theodore Parker important in forming his romantic outlook and “anarchic individualism.” But he also argues that Higginson’s personal quest for manliness arising from his upbringing and nurtured by a sexless—not loveless—marriage played a dominant role in his life. Finally, Edelstein adds the effect of the social context. “Living in a country unwilling to support its writers, and in a time of moral crisis, these new aesthetic men [Higginson and his generation of ‘transcendental ministers’] turned their literary skills to sermon writing and reform.”

To explain Higginson’s postwar activities he returns to these themes. Demurring slightly from George H. Frederickson’s views, he insists the “anarchic” or “pluralistic” individualism which marked the ante-bellum radicals was essentially in opposition to the egalitarianism which characterized post-war reform. Edelstein particularly emphasizes Higginson’s paternalistic attitudes and his belief in innate differences between the races, ethnic groups, and the sexes. Higginson’s quest for manliness outside the bedroom was moderated by a new marriage which brought “an increased sense of personal fulfillment” and the sexual satisfaction his first marriage lacked. Finally, Edelstein emphasizes the shift in the historical situation. “Higginson acted in the tradition of the educated Puritan ministry. . . . For a reformer whose life spanned abolitionism and progressivism, Higginson was remarkably consistent—history less so.” Perhaps such vagueness is as far as the conscientious scholar can go even in the case of a man about whom he knows a great deal. Certainly this would reinforce Duberman’s pessimism, but the problem is more with Edelstein’s theoretical framework which remains hopelessly eclectic and imprecise.

While Higginson emerges as an admirable man, Edelstein is more critical of the abolitionists than Duberman. Aileen S. Kraditor stands somewhat between these two since she likes some abolitionists much better than others. Her vigorous defense of Garrison, Means and Ends in American Abolitionism, represents the trend toward ideological analysis. Although part of the intention of her book is to enable her fellow radicals of today to learn lessons from the past, Kraditor’s main emphasis is on “the philosophic assumptions behind the tactical differences” that plagued the abolitionists. Her object is thus similar to that of Elkins, but the whole thrust of the book is a refutation of his views.

An entire chapter is devoted to dissecting Elkins. She disputes the anti-institutionalism of the abolitionists, arguing quite convincingly that Elkins allowed a few Transcendentalists to represent the thought of all
abolitionists. Not only does the examination of real abolitionists reveal little general opposition to institutions, but also "the spirit of transcendentalism," she asserts, "was hostile to a movement for change." Secondly, she denies that the abolitionists can be judged by the criteria of politics. They were agitators practicing the "art of the desirable" and must be judged as such. Kraditor seems to be saying here that they should be judged solely by ethical criteria. "If Garrison helped to destroy the antebellum consensus . . . it was not because he made northern public opinion reject compromise . . ., but because he helped to make northern public opinion actively antislavery."

With Elkins out of the way, she proceeds to her own argument that the alternative strategies and tactics sponsored by the contesting factions within the movement grew out of a sharp ideological difference between the majority who "were in fact temperamentally and ideologically reformers" and the minority of radicals "who looked forward to a thoroughgoing change in [the North's] institutional structure and ideology." She postulates splits between Garrisonians and anti-Garrisonians, and between conservatives and radicals.

In a series of tightly argued chapters, Kraditor tries to show the continuing conflicts between the radicals and the reformers within the movement on a variety of major tactical issues. She defends the consistency of the Garrisonians and reveals how their seeming inconsistency on such matters as political action and disunionist agitation can be explained. In general her arguments are convincing. However, the chapter "Classes and Sections" is a rather unnecessary attempt to explain how the abolitionists could have been both anti-labor and "radical." The results are confused and, at the end, she even supports the questionable thesis presented in Charles Sellers' "The Travail of Slavery" to hold out the opportunity of conversion of the masses through agitation—surely a possibility equally chimerical as Elkins' piecemeal reform.

These are minor problems which hardly detract from an excellent book. More important are several others which throw major aspects of her thesis into doubt. She shares with Duberman a haughty disdain for method. Her main concepts are imprecisely defined and unsystematically applied. The meaning of "thoroughgoing change" is hardly clear. Certainly the changes brought by the Civil War reveal a rather limited meaning since these were embraced by many non-abolitionists as well. In particular she handles the question of race gingerly, asserting that all abolitionists stood for an end to race prejudice, but probing the meaning of this no further. Revising or testing her categories is impossible since she never makes it clear whether the groups remained constant on each issue. We never know the makeup of the factions, their relative strengths, or their cohesiveness over time. In fact she does not show that there were only two (or four) groups. One is left to wonder how her categories relate to those of students who have followed the careers of the abolitionists past 1850 and particularly through the war and Reconstruction, such as James McPherson, William McFeely, Patrick Riddleberger or Tilden Edelstein.
What happens when one attempts to fit Higginson—whom Kraditor does not mention—into her categories? He was a Transcendentalist and an abolitionist. In the 1840’s he was a political abolitionist, and in the 1850’s more radical than Garrison in his advocacy of both disunion and violent opposition to the law. The range of his ante-bellum reform activity was exceedingly broad, including support for temperance, women’s rights and labor, but his post war career reveals a limited meaning of “thorough-going change.”

One need not embrace the pessimism of Duberman to acknowledge that after a decade of unprecedented scholarly activity historians seem no closer to answering the “big” questions about the abolitionists—it is, after all, to the credit of both Donald and Elkins that they asked just such questions. It was inevitable that by 1970 an historian would return to the sociological approach to these problems while at the same time continuing to manifest a certain sympathy for the abolitionists and their works. Leonard Richards’ study of the makeup of the Utica and Cincinnati abolitionists and the mobs which they faced represents the only sociological examination of abolitionists published since Donald’s essay.3

Richards’ “Gentlemen of Property and Standing” is the most recent and by far the best study of the militant anti-abolitionists in the North. Richards attempts to explain the outburst of mob violence against the abolitionists in the mid-1830’s in terms of status anxiety aroused by social change. To the members of these mobs, whom Richards clearly shows were men of substance, the abolitionists and their techniques of propaganda represented a threat to the society from which these “gentlemen” gained “property and standing.” Declining in their own fortunes, the colonizationists formed a solid element in the anti-abolitionist movement of the thirties. They were joined in this endeavor by other Negrophobes who opposed the racial views of the abolitionists and threatened by the loss of identity which assimilation represented. The “heritage of racism” accounted for much of the conflict.

The anti-abolitionists perceived a conspiracy not so much because they were “political paranoids,” but because the abolitionists’ use of advanced publishing technology perpetuated “the vision of a highly efficient well-organized propaganda machine.” This machine was centralized, national, and addressed itself to all elements of the population respecting no social distinctions. “Underlying such notions was the fear that social control was shifting from local elites to organizations and metropolitan centers.”

In support of his thesis Richards shows that the abolitionists tended more toward foreign (English) birth, less orthodox religion, and involvement in the emerging industrial sector than either the general population or the mobs. Abolitionists appear to have been quite middle class, in-

involved predominantly in the new industrial society, "low" church (particularly New Light Presbyterianism), and either moderate Whigs or hostile to partisan affiliation of any variety. It was the anti-abolitionists who "faced the possibility of becoming an elite without a function."

Richards has given us a far clearer picture of the anti-abolitionists and has added to our understanding of the abolitionists. But problems still remain. Certainly his handling of the material is more sophisticated, but often his argumentation is fully as tenuous as that of Donald. One example will have to suffice. He argues that as the "symbol of concerted action, systematic agitation and centrally imposed conformity," the movement worried those who feared "becoming indistinguishable parts in a mass society." He refers to a recent article by Lynn Marshall for support. But there Marshall argues that the Jacksonians, and particularly Amos Kendall, were riding the wave of modernist innovation. As Richards' own evidence makes clear, they were terrified by abolitionist activities. His abolitionists square with neither Edelstein's "anarchic individualists" nor Kraditor's "radicals."

The whole matter of the abolitionists is confused and on major questions no clearer than it was a decade ago. The views of Donald and Elkins have been discredited, but a new consensus has not appeared. The main problem with nearly all these historians is their failure to solve the methodological problems raised by their questions about the abolition movement. More precise conceptualization, a clearer sense of the relation between social data and social theory, and a closer attention to the construction of more systematic research designs are all necessary before we can begin to understand the abolitionists.


This is an excellent book and deserves reading by anyone with an interest in this era. The sampling of the works of important figures appears to be catching on, and it is a trend in publishing which hopefully will continue. In my humble opinion it has much to offer as opposed to the full length publication of the writings and letters of anyone other than possibly a very few extremely distinguished persons. There are many persons with some reputation, both from the view of general history and of literature, who deserve a sampling such as is here provided. Those who wish to go beyond such a sampling are at liberty to do so, but those who go to the trough for a drink do not need to drink it dry.

A Hugh Henry Brackenridge Reader is something of a model for this type of book. It is edited by Daniel Marder, chairman of the Department of English at Slippery Rock State College who published a critical bibliography of Brackenridge in 1967. A perceptive introduction of forty-six pages precedes the reader section. It proves that historians are not always those who should write such pieces. I confess that it gave me an understanding of Brackenridge I had not gained in any previous reading.
Brackenridge is presented as "one of the most vigorous and stimulating Americans of his time." It is pointed out that he was a pioneer in trying to assert a sort of American literary independence. His "The Rising Glory" which forms the first unit of three in the collection is presented as an American epic. Writes Marder, "Brackenridge's lines are loaded with cultural rather than political idealism." His work with the United States Magazine is given attention as part of a new nationalism for which Brackenridge was a pioneer spokesman.

This most interesting and stimulating volume is divided into three sections. The first is the already mentioned "The Rising Glory" which includes his "Thoughts on the Enfranchisement of the Negroes." It is interesting to note that Brackenridge early was filled with disgust with slavery and wrote that it "casts a shade on the face of this country," but at the same time denied the American Indian any rights whatsoever because he did not make use of the land. The second unit in the book is "The Early Frontier." It includes several items from the Pittsburgh Gazette and excerpts from Modern Chivalry and Incidents of the Insurrection in Western Pennsylvania in the Year 1794. The third and final section is titled "Collection and Recollection" with more from the Gazette and Modern Chivalry. The jacket claims that the selection "captures the essence of the man and his time" and I find myself in agreement.

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

S. K. Stevens


For years the academic question has been raised as to who was the best or worst British general in America during the American Revolution and this query will probably continue to raise its nebulous head during the forthcoming Bicentennial observance. That the answer will be furnished is highly uncertain, but surely among the top candidates will be Lord Cornwallis, a worthy contender for either title.

In this volume a husband and wife team, who teach at the University of Massachusetts, have labored vigorously to establish Cornwallis as the most creditable leader of the redcoats during one of their most trying periods, but on the whole have not succeeded. Their mixed efforts do not detract from the realization by other military historians that without any doubt Cornwallis was outstanding in many conflicts on the field, that he at times showed quickness of judgment and resourcefulness as well as bravery not displayed by the other British generals, particularly Generals Howe and Clinton.

A study is still needed of the overall British military strategy in America from the beginning of the French and Indian War until the end of the Revolution. In this day of substantial aversion to the study of wars in general, historical associations seem to shy away from the idea in their meetings and instead tend toward more pacific subjects. An examination of the careers of such men as Cornwallis on the one hand, and
a re-examination of Washington on the other, especially of our own great leader as a soldier and man, might well throw much-needed light on some of the pressing problems of today.

Charles, the second Earl Cornwallis, was born in 1738 and according to his father was "a very military young man." This proved to be true not only in America but later in India where he distinguished himself even more. Schooled at Eton, he was commissioned in the Grenadier Guards and attended the military academy at Turin, afterward serving in Germany. Upon the death of his father in 1762, he came home to take his place in the House of Lords. There, ironically enough, he sided with the Whigs against the ministers of the king regarding the American colonies. But in 1775, he volunteered for service there and came to these shores the next year, under William Howe and later Henry Clinton. Given a free hand at last, he so soundly whipped the Americans under Horatio Gates at Camden that this defeat has been referred to as the worst in American military history. But then maneuvering in the South, Cornwallis found that the uneven terrain, lack of adequate supplies, the failure of the Tories to rally to the British standard as the desk generals in England had predicted, and the stubborn resistance of the Americans, wore him down. Such defeats of his subordinates as Ferguson and Tarleton at King's Mountain and at the Cowpens led the way to Yorktown, where Cornwallis was so ashamed of his decisive defeat that he had a subordinate hand his surrendering sword to the staff of Washington.

The authors state that the story of the life of Cornwallis is too much for one volume—a doubtful position—and therefore they intend to confine their study to his career in America. Then they proceed to spend some 78 pages on his early life, plus the general aspects of the British army, about which they make such misleading statements as "it presented a scene of chaos" and had an inordinate "inability to do without camp followers." As a matter of fact, the redcoats were so well trained and militarily capable that we still are trying to ascertain how they could lose the War for Independence.

There is no doubt that the authors have done extensive and commendable research, particularly in English records. But as is all too easily understandable, such does not always result in conclusive findings, and the chaff can be much more voluminous than the wheat. Which is often the case in this volume. Too often, there is apology for the mistakes of Cornwallis. If he had only been in overall command, and not been hindered by the intransigent Howe and the unpredictable Clinton, had he had better opportunity, he would have succeeded. With all due credit to the ability and achievements of Cornwallis, such an attitude is mostly Monday morning quarterbacking. For even when he did have full command in the South, he lost at King's Mountain, the Cowpens—a classic battle, the results of which throw no discredit on Cornwallis, and actually at Guilford Courthouse which was a "victory" for the British, but such a costly one, they did not recover. Cornwallis is pictured in this book as a humane man. This is probably true in general; but how could he turn his own
cannon to fire through his own men to win at Guilford? Charles James Fox typically remarked in Parliament, "Another such victory would ruin the British army."

Voluminous notes in the back of the book attest to the scholarly endeavors of the authors and often they bring the reader interesting and valuable insights into the personality of Lord Cornwallis. But the task of the biographer is to bring his subject to life and this never quite happens here. The volume contributes in a material way to the increasing literature of the American Revolution and helps to show the considerable ability and understanding which was on the other side. That it falls somewhat short of its objective may only furnish a challenge for someone else to complete the task.

New York University

NORTH CALLAHAN


The *terrae incognitae* on the bibliographical map of the United States are slowly being filled in. The 1960's saw Greenwood's California, Byrd's Illinois, Belknap's Oregon, and McCorison's Vermont, and, at the end of the decade, Rink's Delaware. It is a welcome addition to a goody company which, historians do not always realize, opens doors to a part of the nation's intellectual history. What was printed where provides clues to the social and cultural life of an area.

The author in his excellent preface, tracing the history of the press in 18th-century Delaware, states honestly that the state was not "a hub of active intellectual life." It was, of course, within the shadow of the cultural centers of Philadelphia, and later Baltimore, and firmly within the market area of the prolific publishers of those two cities. As a result, most of the products of the printing houses were of local, utilitarian interest. Of the 566 entries in Mr. Rink's check-list, 171 were official colony or state publications and 82 were almanacs.

Possibly, the Delaware books with the most prestige today are John Filson's *Kentucke*, 1784, and John Dickinson's *Letters of Fabius*. If *The child's new play-thing* was actually printed in 1761—no copy is known—it is strange that no successors of that genre appeared until so much later. The rather usual, heavier fare was relieved in 1796 when a number of printers began issuing children's books, inspired, no doubt, by Isaiah Thomas's success with many of the same titles. The first reprint of an English literary classic did not appear until 1789, when the busy James Adams issued an abbreviated edition of Lord Chesterfield's letters.

With the recent publication of Clifford K. Shipton and James E. Mooney's *National Index of American Imprints through 1800*, it is worth noting that a local project fills more gaps in Evans's bibliography than the general work does. For instance, Rink 5, *Votes and proceedings*, 1762, is not in Shipton-Mooney, although four copies are located; Rink 6, Dilworth's popular *New Guide*, 1762, is not there; nor are *Essays on marriage*,
1783, and The Christian oeconomy, 1785, and probably others which an item-by-item check might reveal. On the other hand, Shipton-Mooney cites a number of colonial session laws in the Library of Congress, which copies escaped Mr. Rink's census.

Delaware imprints are rare, but fortunately the author has investigated his own state's libraries to turn up many of them. Over ten percent, 65 entries, state, "No copy located," although some of these may be ghosts, and 144 are listed from single copies, although Mr. Rink's work may flush others from dusty shelves. The check-list is carefully compiled with no more and no less information given than is needed to know what books were printed and what they physically consist of. The entries do credit to Mr. Rink's diligence. Within the framework set for him there was no opportunity for bibliographical analysis; the work is a check-list, and a good one. It is handsomely printed. One hopes that the Eleutherian Mills Historical Library will be encouraged to sponsor other bibliographies. What about "Early American Science and Industry"?

The Library Company of Philadelphia


The publication of Volumes VII, VIII, and IX of The Susquehanna Company Papers by the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society under the editorship of Robert J. Taylor marks a more-than-doubling of the published record in the five years of his tenure. The results, as in the previous editions, are laudable. Furthermore, with the project now three-fourths completed, each publication tends to serve as an almost constant reminder of the courage and audacity of a local society to share its great collection with the general public. At this rate, the ambitious project of the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society to publish the full record of one of the classic boundary disputes, both in Pennsylvania and the nation, will be completed prior to the bicentenary of the Wyoming Massacre of 1778.

All three volumes with their lighter print and greater space between the lines, comparable to Volume VI, continue the readability which characterized the second of Professor Taylor's first two editions. Furthermore, the clear demarcation and additional introduction to the documents pertaining to the Trenton Proceedings in Volume VII, and the appended documents of the two protagonists, Timothy Pickering and John Franklin, in Volume IX, facilitate the work of researchers on those topics. Covering more than a decade (1776-1788), the three volumes provide a vital part of this growing collection.

Volume VII certainly will lay to rest those critical claims of collusion between Pennsylvania and Connecticut which some have found explana-
tory of the favorable decision for Pennsylvania in the dispute. Some thirty additional documents of correspondence and official communications preceding the commission clearly establish the validity of the court's decision and, as Dr. Taylor points out, "the considerable research that was done in legal treatises and historical works and a reading of the letters written by the principals just before and at the time of the trial would persuade anyone that an honest effort had been made on both sides."

In Volume VIII Dr. Taylor clearly delineates the antagonisms which succeeded the decision at Trenton. Interwoven in the wrangle was the vexatious issue of the cession of western lands which plagued the Second Continental Congress and delayed the ratification of the Articles of Confederation during the course of the American Revolution. Pennsylvania's hopes for peace were dependent upon the establishment of a separate county for the Wyoming area in which the settlers would be able to elect their own local officials. Regardless, "the Susquehanna Company devoted itself busily to the means for crowding in more settlers and creating new towns." By the end of 1786, as Professor Taylor so aptly puts it, "Reconciliation was still a long way off."

Volume IX is marked by a conflict between two strong personalities, Timothy Pickering and John Franklin. The former sought acceptance of Pennsylvania rule and confirmation of land titles, whereas the latter appears to have been bent upon the creation of a new state. Franklin's allegedly conspiratorial Westmoreland constitution appears somewhat like the Fair Play declaration of independence in the West Branch Valley, plausible but undocumented. It may have been merely the "Combination" formed by "half-share men" who, by going to Wyoming and settling for three years, could become half-share proprietors in the Company. Squatters' rights were apparently recognized on both branches of the Susquehanna.

Volume IX is the longest and most expensive of the nine volumes published thus far. It consists of some 328 documents, including the appendix with the Pickering and Franklin claims. The 262 documents of Volume VII place it third behind Volume VI in length. Cyrus Griffin's Notes on Counsel's Arguments at Trenton and the Debate in the Pennsylvania General Assembly on the Committee Report on the Conduct of Alexander Patterson are included in its eleven-page appendix. The 271 documents of Volume VIII include a brief appendix consisting of three letters to George Bryan of the Council of Censors.

Charles Willson Peale portraits of Joseph Reed and John Dickinson in Volume VII and John Bayard in Volume VIII, along with a fine portrait of Timothy Pickering in Volume IX are examples of the fine illustrations which continue to accompany each volume. All three volumes contain the excellent indexes which have characterized the series.

Documentary collections published in a series over a period of years present a problem to the reviewer, particularly when they are good, as these volumes are, because the praise seems too familiar. However, in this case it is deserved. The efforts of the Wyoming Valley Historical and
The Pennsylvania State University (Capitol)  

George D. Wolf


Contrasted with the voluminous historiography of Anglo-American relations during the American Civil War, little has been written concerning the relations between France and the United States during this same period. Aside from several chapter-length monographs (e.g., Chapter V in Blumenthal’s Reappraisal of Franco-American Relations), a scholarly full-length study of France and the American Civil War has been a noticeable omission from the vast historiography of American diplomacy and international relations. In an attempt to fill this gap, Professors Case and Spencer have written a superbly conceived and constructed book.

The United States and France: Civil War Diplomacy is a fully-documented study of the many complex international issues raised by the Civil War (e.g., recognition of belligerent status, neutral rights, blockade, embargo, privateering, intervention and mediation), as well as a detailed analysis of the diplomatic struggle between the United States and France occasioned by the precipitation of civil hostilities in America.

Utilizing recently opened or heretofore little used official and private papers, the authors have postulated a number of new interpretations which certainly will have a profound effect upon the study and teaching of American diplomatic history. Most significant, in this respect, is their fresh interpretation of the so-called Trent affair. On November 8, 1861, the USS San Jacinto, under the command of Captain Charles Wilkes, stopped the British mail steamer Trent, then passing through the Caribbean en route to Europe, and forcibly removed two Confederate agents—James M. Mason and John Slidell—who recently had been appointed by the Confederacy to diplomatic positions in England and France respectively. Mason and Slidell subsequently were taken to Boston where federal authorities imprisoned them. The upshot of the Trent affair was that Anglo-American relations were severely strained as the result of England’s valid claim that her neutral rights had been violated. With the subsequent release of the Confederate commissioners, however, these tensions tended to subside.

Unlike previous interpretations, Professors Case and Spencer persuasively maintain that the entire Trent affair had carefully been staged by the Confederacy in an attempt to precipitate a war between England and the United States—a war which probably would have resulted in the diplomatic recognition of the South by England and France and the concurrent destruction of the Union blockade of the southern coast.

Ohio Northern University  

Robert Ralph Davis, Jr.
With one eye on the past, the year 1876, and another on the future—when America celebrates her bicentennial—Professor Randel has drawn a long, copiously-detailed, and occasionally-spirited portrait of our one-hundredth birthday, in *Centennial: American Life in 1876*. Randel, already known as a scholar in that boggy territory of American Studies (his work includes biographical studies of Edward Eggleston and a popularized but serious study of the Ku Klux Klan) and established as a professor of English at the University of Maine, has manfully surveyed the kaleidoscopic spectrum of American society, the East, West, North and South of it, and focused on those ideas and happenings—particularly the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia—that seem to catch up the American “experience” in an important year.

What he concludes is this: that America in 1876 was dominated, in all the usual ways, by a forward-looking, optimistic, adventurous, ambitious, not very subtle or incorruptible white Anglo-Saxon Protestant middle class that was not always able to withstand the temptation of dipping its hand in the till (he has the Grant scandals in mind), or of ruthlessly taking advantage of the main chance (read the Robber Barons). The year started off gloriously enough, at least for the class in power, with ringing church bells and sermons and speeches that echoed the national euphoria, then failed to peak at the Philadelphia Exhibition, and thudded to an end of despair and grave uncertainty as the disputed Hayes-Tilden election, following on the heels of the disclosures of rampant fraud in Grant’s Cabinet, catastrophically portended, some thought, the collapse of the republic itself. At its best, Professor Randel’s book is a tour de force; to be kept, like 19th-century American Protestants kept their Bibles and farmers’ almanacs, nearby for handy reference.

Yet readers will discover before they have read very deeply into *Centennial* that for all of its chronicling of miscellaneous facts the book is restricted to the goings and comings, tribulations and fortunes of the WASP middle class. True, Randel acknowledges the presence of the poor, the blacks, the Indians, the immigrants—and admits early on that they probably felt little of the national pride or exuberance. But aside from the briefest mentions of what Michael Harrington has called the Other America, Randel ignores the less comfortable and keeps our eyes on the haves of the affluent society. When the poor or dispossessed are visible they are always seen against the aspirations or limitations of the white middle class. None of this is to suggest that Professor Randel is insensitive or mean in his own social sympathies—one has only to remember his book on the Klan. In *Centennial* he sharply criticizes the narrow social views of the Protestants; he urges us to remember the Negro cowboys; and he mentions the handful of men and women who cried out against our Indian policies and the middle class’s attitude toward the urban working-men. But his strictures are always incidental to his task—from his romantic portrayal of General Custer to his itemizing of the diet of the rich—“there
is no doubt that Centennial Americans were hearty eaters." What is most unsatisfying is not the insufficient attention to the non-Wasps, but the tacit assumption, doubtless an unconscious assumption, that Wasps and Americans are one and the same.

Less cosmic but important is the book's disjointed organization and the author's writing lapses. The book never makes clear the relationship between the people and the events of 1876 and the Exhibition itself. The Exhibition is prominently (and somewhat repetitiously) analyzed in several chapters, but the analysis is never integrated into the main body of material—which is, for the most part, a re-telling of familiar history. Perhaps the author saw no relationship: we are told that we should not suppose that "the Centennial Exhibition gave a valid total picture of Centennial America." Perhaps the lack of any interpretative connections springs from a Rankean desire to let the facts speak for themselves in this regard. But I suspect that Randel got side-tracked by his herculean effort to be as encyclopedic as possible. The reader, however, is likely to get bogged down in what at times feels like a quagmire of detail. In general, the book would have profited from a stringent editing. Then we would be spared such generalizations as: "There is such a thing as instinctive good taste, which too few people have." And: "Government of the people, by the people, and for the people can be subverted by determined special-interest minorities." Nor should we have to read about the several people who waited with "bated breath" or the ones, being from Missouri, who had to be shown. But such are examples of the book at its worst. One must not cavil unnecessarily at a clearly written book aimed at the general reader.

Allegheny College

Bruce Clayton


William R. Smith gained first hand experience in analyzing documents while writing his fascinating Three Patriot Historians of the American Revolution. His second book applies this experience to the whole field of American history. An introductory essay entitled "The Analysis of Documents" attempts to construct a general model intended to apply to analysis of any document. Smith then presents thirteen test cases ranging from John Winthrop's "Model for Christian Unity (1630)" to "Brown vs. Board of Education (1954)". Each document is followed by the author's commentary. The concluding chapter summarizes what Smith has learned about each of the documents.

The introductory essay raises many useful questions to be asked of a document. Among these are its purpose, its materials, and its impact on the intended audience. Smith applies his ideas of rhetorical analysis to the "Gettysburg Address" and provides the reader with many insights into how and why the speech was constructed as it was. Although Smith fails to construct the scientific model he claims to have (let alone attempt to
diagram it), the chapter merits the attention of the general audience for which it was intended. The remainder of the book is less satisfactory. Most of the author’s commentaries on the documents devote too much space to the historical context and not enough to an analysis of the rhetoric. The final chapter has little purpose other than to provide the book with a semblance of unity. Both the 450 pages and the $13.50 price are outrageously inflated. The message of the volume could have been transmitted much more satisfactorily as a journal article.

University of Wisconsin, Madison

Kenneth R. Bowling


This is a compilation of annual addresses delivered by historians and philosophers made possible by Dickinson College’s distinguished alumnus and benefactor, Boyd Lee Spahr. As the fourth compilation embracing the nine most recent lectures, the selections give a fascinating, if incomplete, view of social and intellectual currents surrounding Dickinson College, its alumni and patrons, liberal education in general, Pennsylvania history, and the world beyond. This is not a vanity commemoration of purely local interest. Indeed the scale, the theme, and the disposition of the offerings suggest heroic achievement, corroborating perhaps, Carlyle’s dictum that “history is the true epic poem.” Unfortunately, this lively and individualistic collection lacks a much-needed introduction which would provide the reader with at least a rudimentary preliminary synthesis.

While such a cooperative effort is frequently open to charges of scholarly inconsistency, one must exonerate this collection from such shortcomings. The contributors uphold the high standard of careful research set by previous Spahr lecturers including Roy F. Nichols, Lyman H. Butterfield, Philip S. Klein, and Frederick B. Tolles.

In the initial contribution, Saul Sack, Professor of the History of Education at the University of Pennsylvania, seeks to define the elusive concept of liberal education but is forced to generally conclude that the best prescription that he can construe is a collection of studies whose “pursuit frees the individual to develop as his inclinations and his capacities may direct.” Irving Brant, biographer of President James Madison, elucidates upon the vicissitudes of the “Free or Not So Free, Air of Pennsylvania,” and enlarges upon Madison’s relationship with founder John Dickinson and his endorsement of Dickinson College as the place for his nephew’s higher education.

Continuing the addresses, Donald J. D’Elia of the State University of New York College at New Paltz, finds that Revolutionary patriot, physician, and benefactor of Dickinson College, Benjamin Rush, espoused a “philosophy of revolutionary education,” which was indeed “a highly idealized and systematic version of his own religious and political education.” A self-conscious appraisal by Rush of the fortunes of Dickinson College’s first seventeen years, rendered when he righteously testified, “we
have aimed honestly at doing good by our attempts to establish a nursery for the church and state at Carlisle,” is adeptly examined by James A. Bonar of Manhattanville College. Bell Wiley is at his descriptive best in a vivid address on the common soldiers of the Civil War and the untimely visit of a Confederate column to Carlisle during Lee’s Gettysburg campaign.

The exciting escapades of former Dickinsonian and sometime Confederate spy, Captain Thomas N. Conrad, are convincingly divulged by historian and military writer, John Bakeless, who is adroitly followed by Nicholas B. Wainwright of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania on the fugacious topic, “The Loyal Opposition in Civil War Philadelphia.” The last two essays, devoted to another Dickinson alumnus, Moncure D. Conway, liberal theologian, preacher, philosopher and editor of Thomas Paine’s works, were delivered by Lloyd D. Easton of Ohio Wesleyan and Warren Sylvester Smith of The Pennsylvania State University. The former explores the connection between Conway and Hegelian philosophy, and the latter expounds on Conway’s intellectual journey back to earth.

In the main, the contributors avoid technical jargon so skillfully that lay readers, especially Dickinson College students, alumni and friends, should have no difficulty in understanding and enjoying the selections. All in all this lecture compilation provides a substantial, readable bloc of material from which one can obtain an accurate picture of some of the social and intellectual reverberations fomented by the personalities of and about a small but venerable Pennsylvania college.

University of Southern Mississippi


Fred W. Diehl’s account of the first two hundred years of Montour County history is encyclopedic in presentation and coverage. He divides the past into three epochs corresponding with the county’s pioneering era (to 1830), its industrial heyday (1830-1890), and its twentieth century diversification, and judging from population figures, stability. In each epoch he proceeds topically rather than chronologically, and with pertinent rather than slavish adherence to the sequence of events within each topic. The result is an extremely useful reference to the highlights and notable achievements of Montour County’s founders and builders, and something of a catalog of memorabilia.

For instance, in the segment “Early Danville,” he briefly mentions the key persons and events in the borough’s founding, then pauses to detail the distinctive place of orchards, cider presses, and taverns, and moves on to the first schools, church, post office, and Sunday School. In the second epoch, which he devotes primarily to the iron industry, there is an informative interlude on the Danville Opera House and another immediately following on the bogus visit by “Japanese ambassadors.” The third epoch bears a strong resemblance to a Chamber of Commerce publication devoid of color prints; however, the author concludes with a frank listing of the
fifteen persons whom he believes have been foremost in the making of
the county.

Although there are no footnotes, there are three splendid indexes (a
general index and indexes of personal names and illustrations) which
bring this book together, for it must be admitted that the History of
Montour County suffers as literature from its purpose and format. This is
a well-written book but encyclopedias become merely bearable with good
writing and it is difficult to sustain interest in Mr. Diehl's narration.
It is a volume to pick up, read an episode or two, and put down until
there is a desire soon again to glimpse another facet of Montour County's
past. But during the reading the reader enjoys the stolen moments.

To employ an oft-quoted expression, this "is the stuff of which history
is made." Despite the absence of scholarly aids and paraphernalia, because
it is accurate, well organized and indexed, and printed in twelve point
face for old and tired eyes, this is an admirable attempt to portray the
record of the county. More than seventy photographs add to the attractiveness
of the volume. When all of the other counties of Central and North-
eastern Pennsylvania can boast of equal studies the depth of understanding
of which history is capable will become possible for the region.

Bloomsburg State College

CRAIG A. NEWTON

Muncy Valley Lifeline. By Thomas T. Taber, III. Published by the Muncy
76. n.p.)

Ghost Lumber Towns of Central Pennsylvania. By Thomas T. Taber, III.
Book No. 3 in "Logging Railroad Era of Lumbering in Pennsylvania."
79. $2.95.)

Thomas Taber's examination of the Williamsport and North Branch
Railroad and its subsidiary Eagles Mere Line, provides a serviceable format
for the study of seventy-five years of the history of the Muncy Valley in
Lycoming County and Sullivan County. Cultural, economic, and recrea-
tional aspirations of Pennsylvanians living in this area were dramatically
entwined with the efforts of steel horses to conquer the treacherous terrain
which even today protects some of the Keystone State's most beautiful
country. As the author correctly indicates, the challenge of mastering
the mountains illustrated the resourcefulness, determination, and, most of
all, the confidence of railroadmen (and by extension the entire business
and labor community) in the economic potential of northeastern Penn-
sylvania.

The author's basically narrative text, complemented by numerous illus-
trations, provides a concise and interesting portrayal of the railroad's role
in the Muncy Valley. Train buffs will enjoy the precise description of the
various trains and tracks used in overcoming formidable barriers, and the
student of local history will appreciate the reconstruction of the W&NB's
history as recalled by many "old timers" who lived the excitement of those
events and years from 1860 to just before World War II. Indeed, for the social historian the strength of this monograph may well be the observations of those rapidly disappearing participants in this era of Muncy Valley history.

While the pattern of the W&NB's emergence and ultimate collapse is a familiar enough phenomenon in American railroad history, Pennsylvanians who know this area cannot help but feel a special pang of despair as the railroad continually sought freight revenues in a series of unsuccessful ventures aimed at tapping the lumber, industrial and mining areas along the line. Even the scenic beauty of Eagles Mere, Pennsylvania's second highest natural lake, was not capable of reversing the trend of declining revenues. Eventually, of course, the failure to produce freight and passenger revenues forced the W&NB to close in 1937.

Mr. Taber's second monograph narrates the sudden arrival, short life, and flickering end of four representative lumber towns in Bradford, Lycoming, and Sullivan counties. Each operation lingered for a decade or two, between 1890 and the 1920's, and followed similar patterns of development and demise. Independent entrepreneurs bid successfully for cutting and sawing contracts with the Union Tanning or Central Pennsylvania Lumber companies. They moved saws on to the most level area adjacent to their timber, built sheds, constructed or encouraged others to erect factories and mills, and secured rights to use railroad facilities (sometimes building their own lines). Lumbermen arrived, by far the larger number of English, Welsh and German extraction, although operators occasionally imported Eastern Europeans. Houses, shacks really, appeared as did a general store which served as the center for leisure. Men and some families settled down to a rough life, often stayed only briefly, and as the timber gave out they left with their belongings on their backs, and in their pockets whatever they could save from meagre wages. Nature recaptured the deserted towns, leaving a few persons with wealth and all with memories.

It is these memories of a fast dying generation, plus newspaper items, upon which Mr. Taber draws. It is his avowed design to preserve the materials of history rather than to rewrite it. Consequently the story, which proceeds town by town, is enumerative and anecdotal rather than analytical, and focuses upon incidents of daily life, the railroads' equipment, and the output of the mills. There is repetition despite a galaxy of different names, dates, figures, photographs and diagrams. But the facts are now available and accuracy is a hallmark of this study. The photographs are excellent and the concluding "Locomotive Roster and Mill Summary" is useful.

Muncy Valley Lifeline and Ghost Lumber Towns of Central Pennsylvania are essential first steps toward a full understanding of the three-county region. We welcome them and await promised additions.

Bloomsburg State College

JAMES R. SPERRY and CRAIG A. NEWTON

The nineteen major papers and six pieces of eulogy of Major General U. S. Grant, 3rd, late President of the Society, with eighty accompanying illustrations, were planned “as a modest (my italics) contribution to the celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Society.” The editor responsible for the publication of the proceedings of any historical society would be proud to hold such a modest cache of papers presented before his society. As noted by editor Rosenberger, the papers in the Records “. . . are an engaging evening’s entertainment.” They are carefully researched and footnoted. They are valuable local and national historical contributions. The authors, men and women, are historians, or in government service, musicians, several archivists, and a curator, all of national prominence.

Located in the national capital, the Columbia Historical Society is, and has been during its 75 years, fortunate to attract to its rostrum eminent speakers, and to its administration dedicated officials, as attested by the quality of these Records. To adequately review the papers, many of which have been extended beyond the time limits of public delivery, is impossible. A brief mention of the subject matter of some of them follows: the early tobacco trade along the Potomac; the development of Georgetown; the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal; the Washington newspaper, The National Intelligencer; women journalists; musicians; public transport; Willard Hotels; and White House first ladies. As a Pennsylvanian, this reviewer was especially impressed with Homer T. Rosenberger’s paper on President Buchanan’s niece, Harriet Lane, who served as her uncle’s First Lady, “Hostess Extraordinary in Difficult Times.”

Historical societies do not readily acquire headquarters for their operation and acquisitions. The paper of Meredith B. Colket, Jr., “General Grant and the Christian Heurich Memorial Mansion,” reflects this problem: “For well over a half century, it [the Society] had accumulated books, manuscripts, photographs, and artifacts, chiefly relating to the District of Columbia . . . housed in a rental storage room . . . and prospective donors were discouraged to give.” With the biographical sketches of the past Presidents of the Society from 1894-1968, and the lists of officers, managers, and members, 1966-1968, this book of Records, the 46th bound volume, is indeed more than a modest contribution to the celebration of the 75th anniversary of its founding.

Lehigh County Historical Society

Melville J. Boyer
The Negro in Pennsylvania History, No. 11 in the Pennsylvania Historical Association's Historical Studies series, has just been published. This 68-page booklet presents a comprehensive survey of the social, legal, political, and cultural progress of a people, starting with the settlement of the Delaware Valley. The author is Ira V. Brown, professor of history at Pennsylvania State University. Like the other Pennsylvania Historical Studies, it will serve as a useful course supplement for teacher and student (it contains a bibliography), and will be an enlightening experience for the general reader.

DR. PHILLIP E. STEBBINS
Secretary, The Pennsylvania Historical Association
Department of History
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, Pennsylvania

Enclosed please find a check payable to The Pennsylvania Historical Association in the amount of $________________ for the following numbers of the Pennsylvania History Studies:

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