BOOK REVIEWS

EDITED BY MICHAEL P. WEBER


Military and naval historians of the American Revolution have generally neglected the role of state navies during the conflict. Mr. Jackson's volume seeks to rectify the oversight by carefully studying Pennsylvania's fleet during the War of Independence. This intriguing story began with the outbreak of hostilities of 1775 and the subsequent moves by the state's Council of Safety to construct a naval force for the defense of the Delaware River. Jackson describes how such a mixed flotilla of frigates, galleys, floating batteries, and fire rafts was organized despite numerous obstacles including financing, supply, recruitment, discipline, and most especially, command rivalries. The Pennsylvania navy, which grew to fifty-six vessels, operated actively for three years following its organization in the summer of 1775. During this period it was involved in fighting along the Delaware. Its first significant engagement occurred against the British frigate Roebuck in May, 1776, and by the close of that year the fleet played "an important if not outstanding role" in the American victories at Trenton and Princeton.

It was in the autumn of 1777, during Admiral Lord Richard Howe's attempt to secure a water supply route to British-occupied Philadelphia, that the Pennsylvania navy, under Commodore John Hazelwood, played its most conspicuous part in the hostilities. Jackson describes several military and naval actions during the stubborn, resourceful, and courageous eight-week defense of Fort Mifflin and Fort Mercer on the Delaware defense line. Despite some marked initial successes and the personal heroism of Major Simeon Thayer and the French Marquis de Fleury, overwhelming British forces and firepower forced an evacuation of both forts and the retirement of the remaining Pennsylvania vessels. In March, 1778, General Washington recommended disbandment of the existing fleet, and shortly thereafter the dismantlement of the naval force commenced under the supervision of the state's Supreme Executive Council. The final chapters of the volume contain the particulars relative to the actual reduction of the Pennsylvania navy, and, on a somewhat associated topic, the author describes the rather successful adventures in 1779 of the American privateer, General Greene.

The book succeeds quite well in illuminating this little-known aspect of the Revolutionary War. Mr. Jackson, who was formerly director of the Philadelphia Maritime Museum, exhibits an extensive and comprehensive knowledge of his subject within the text itself and in the broad variety of original source documents which supplement the chapters. He presents in a matter-of-fact fashion many extremely precise descriptions and assessments.
of the men, equipment, and geographical features involved in the wartime episode. Besides several instructive maps, diagrams, and illustrations, the author provides seven pertinent appendices. Within these sections, he offers a listing of the general officers and all the ships comprising the Pennsylvania navy, a precise explanation of the defensive Cheveaux-de-frise, the types of ordnance discovered in the two Delaware River forts, notes on the alleged traitor, Captain Robert Whyte (White), and some supplemental administrative details relating to the operations of the state flotilla.

My criticisms of this work are very few. The maps provided in the volume show only a limited area along the Delaware River. An additional map or two displaying a broader area of the Middle Atlantic States would offer a greater insight into the over-all tactics and strategy of the contending British and American forces. Also, in Mr. Jackson's opening chapter, I find his explanations concerning the origins of the American Revolution somewhat generalized and incomplete. In this respect, I do not agree with the author's inference (p. 4) that there was an actual patriot party which existed throughout the thirteen colonies. Furthermore, despite the author's obvious partisanship toward his subject, it is my opinion that the story of the gallant, but unsuccessful stands at Bataan and Corregidor in early 1942 would contravene Mr. Jackson's assertion (p. 258) that the patriot defense of Forts Mifflin and Mercer, was "the most valiant in American Arms." Such exceptions or criticisms are quite minor, however, and I believe that scholars of the Revolutionary War hostilities will receive considerable enlightenment from this fine, painstaking study.

Loyola University of Chicago

SHELDON S. COHEN


Patrick Henry is not an easy man to write about. Prospective biographers face at least three major problems. To begin with, Henry left no substantial corpus of papers. Scholars, therefore, have had to rely on the recollections and accounts of others as well as contemporary newspapers and government documents, none of which are entirely satisfactory as substitutes for personal papers. Particularly suspect are the letters of Henry's numerous political enemies, among whom must be included Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. A second difficulty is William Wirt, Henry's first and worst biographer. Writing early in the nineteenth century, Wirt was firmly in the filiopietistic school of historical writing that also included Parson Weems, the imaginative Washington biographer. Like Weems, Wirt made his subject larger than life and free of blemish. Evidence was ignored, modified, or manufactured to conform with Wirt's preconceived notions of Henry's role and place in American history. Wirt's book on Henry is now only of antique value, but his cavalier attitude toward documentation has burdened later biographers with the task of correcting the untruths and eliminating the fab-
rifications that he fostered. The third and most difficult problem for a Henry biographer is to honestly confront and explain a career filled with contradiction and discontinuity. Fortunately, Richard Beeman has successfully hurdled all three of these barriers and provided us with a slender but excellent study of the great Virginia orator.

Henry's career with regard to the American Revolution is well-known. His triumph in the Parsons' Cause, his pivotal role in the Stamp Act controversy, his stirring speech on national unity before the First Continental Congress, and his career as the state of Virginia's first governor have been recounted many times. Beeman, of course, discusses these matters, but he is far more interested in attacking the traditional view of Henry as a nationalist and as a representative of western agrarian democratic aspirations during the revolutionary era.

The evidence for Henry's nationalism consists of his support for independence and his rhetorical advocacy of national union in several periods of the Revolutionary War. Beeman notes, however, that Henry's supposed nationalism was neither consistent nor substantial and is contradicted by his ferocious opposition to ratification of the Constitution. Far from seeing Henry as a nationalist, Beeman contends that he can only be understood as a champion of Virginia's interests in general and western Virginia's interests in particular. Thus Henry could support independence as necessary to continued local home rule by the Virginia gentry and advocate stronger national union when Virginia was threatened by British invaders. But in 1787 and 1788 he led the fight against ratifying the Constitution because it reduced the power of the state government. Moreover, Henry and his western constituents who had speculative land concerns in the trans-Appalachian area well remembered the Jay treaty with Spain in 1786. Although that treaty had never gone into effect, it would have abandoned American claims in the Mississippi River area for twenty years. Henry feared that the stronger constitutional government, under pressure from northern commercial interests, might once more attempt to exchange America's future western empire for short-run trade concessions.

While Beeman acknowledges the importance of Henry's western origins on his public conduct, he denies that Henry headed a movement for democratic reform. Rather, he describes Henry as a social conservative who opposed disestablishing the Anglican church because it would adversely affect the virtue of Virginians. Henry, says Beeman, must be viewed as a lesser member of the gentry class who struggled desperately and successfully to acquire the lands and slaves necessary for admittance into the upper ranks of the Virginia elite. He desired only to reach the top of the system, not to overturn it.

Beeman's Patrick Henry is both well written and mildly provocative. His view of Henry, one based on extensive research, is not that of a particularly attractive man. Gifted as an orator and factional leader, Henry was also vain, contentious, and petty. He appears all too often to have substituted rhetoric for thought and noise for statesmanship. Yet this essentially local politician occupied for a few fleeting moments center stage of the revolutionary drama and significantly contributed to the story of American independence.

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Frank A. Cassell


These two biographies of William Penn are totally different in purpose and accomplishment. Fantel’s volume simply illustrates that the life of a great historical actor can be presented in such a lackluster way that his accomplishments are trivialized and his personality not recognized. Endy’s study concerns Penn’s religious thought: its relationship to the ideas of early Quakers and their contemporaries as well as its influence on his own political and social thinking and action. It is intellectual history of the best sort, carefully researched, finely written, and argued with verve and interest. It is not faultless, but, unlike Fantel’s book, it merits our consideration.

In the persistent debate as to whether the origins of Quakerism lay in Puritanism or mysticism, Endy leans strongly to the latter, although he wisely observes that Puritanism, more Biblical than mystical, was always sensitive to spirituality through its concern with regeneration and the confrontation between God and man. Still, it was the non-Puritan spiritualists who had greater influence on the emergent Quakerism which William Penn first accepted and later nurtured.

Penn never deviated, however, from a conception of the world as divided into realms of light and darkness, an idea central to the thinking of George Fox. Penn’s first religious experience occurred in early adolescence, but he did not find his identity in Quakerism—which involved an abrupt turn from “the glory of the world” to the kingdom of the saints—until his early twenties. He was then so convinced of the dichotomy between the earthly and the spiritual that he even warned against the achievement of worldly success through honesty and thrift, though he always considered himself a firm Calvinist. Indeed, he called on his fellow Quakers to “be careful not to mingle with the Crowd, lest their Spirit enter us, instead of our Spirit entering them.” Endy suggests that Penn’s attitude during his early career hinged on “the eschatological, apocalyptic outlook [which] was very prominent at that time.”

Later, of course, Penn pitched into society, battling persecution as a lawyer rather than accepting it as a saint. Endy sees a change taking place in Penn when he was in his early forties, a response to “his growing realization that the world was more intractable than those who would turn it into the kingdom God has expected.” Why Penn came to terms with reality in this manner, rather than becoming even more spiritual, is suggested by Endy’s observation that his writings continued to reflect his times, which were becoming more worldly. However, Penn could never carry the implications of Enlightenment ideas beyond the boundaries of his Quaker orthodoxy; his thought did not always reflect the spirit of the age.

One wishes there were an Erik Erikson available to explain the workings of Penn’s mind from a psychological perspective, since between the intellectual historian and the psychohistorian there is a gulf as wide as that between the spiritual and material worlds, the former believing that ideas have a vitality of their own, an independent existence, the latter viewing
ideas as rationalizations of experience. Endy is of the former school, and he does a stunning job of relating Penn's theology to contemporaneous ideas. This is the body (or, more accurately, the spirit) of his book, although the final chapter, "The Kingdom Come: Pennsylvania," demonstrates a greater effort to unite experience with thought.

Endy's study complements Mary Maples Dunn's *William Penn: Politics and Conscience*, and it makes more meaningful David R. Kobrin's "The Saving Remnant: Intellectual Sources of Change and Decline in Colonial Quakerism, 1690-1810," a doctoral dissertation supervised by Richard S. Dunn at the University of Pennsylvania. Its contribution, however, is not only to students of Penn or early Quakerism but to all scholars interested in Anglo-American thought of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

San Francisco State University

JOSEPH E. ILLICK


The dust jacket on this book claims that "this is popular history at its best." This may be true, but it is also popular history at its worst. A former senior editor of *Time* and *Life* and currently a contributing editor for *Reader's Digest*, Busch has a superb writing style, although his habit of including long passages from primary sources sometimes breaks up his continuity. He is especially adept at providing capsule biographies of the major figures involved, such as Washington, Howe, LaFayette, and von Steuben (although he is inconsistent with the latter's name, changing from von Steuben to Von Steuben and sometimes simply Steuben). He also provides many amusing anecdotes which could be used to enliven lectures. Busch is also good at describing the physical conditions of the army at Valley Forge and the military strategy involved in the battles he mentions. For these reasons readers of popular history will find his book informative and entertaining.

For the professional historian (or even the sophisticated buff) there is little of value. One can overlook the lack of footnotes and the limited bibliography. And some anachronisms such as using the term Independence Hall in 1777, or referring to the future British commander as Sir William Howe seventeen years before he was actually knighted, while annoying, are harmless.

Some of Busch's interpretations, however, are more than merely annoying. His treatment of the so-called Conway Cabal is perhaps the worst example. It makes exciting reading but not very good history. Contrary to what most scholars have accepted for at least the last thirty-five years, Busch believes that there was an organized plot within Congress to replace Washington with Horatio Gates. The creation of the Board of War and Gates's appointment to it, the proposed invasion of Canada in 1778, and the promotion of Thomas Conway to the rank of major general are all accepted as different facets of a scheme to embarrass and discredit the American commander. Busch's interpretation is all the more surprising since his bibliography includes books which specifically deny the existence of any such plot.
Perhaps Busch accepts the story of the Conway Cabal because it enhances one of his main themes—the greatness of Washington despite almost insurmountable odds. In the fashion of the Monday morning quarterback, Busch refuses to concede that there could be any legitimate criticism leveled against Washington in 1777-1778. Jealousy alone led some military and civilian authorities to question the general. Washington, on the other hand, always rose above pettiness and overlooked personal insults. Busch does not tell us that Washington, who with reason disliked Conway, was the only person who claimed there was any real plot.

Other inaccuracies in the book are not quite so obvious, but they are troublesome nonetheless. Not many historians would agree that the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse "showed that the tide of war and of history had turned, finally and irrevocably, in favor of the colonies." Washington himself would have laughed at such a statement in the winter of 1780-1781. And many Pennsylvania Quakers would have been astonished to learn that "neutrality was not only a common but a thoroughly respectable position."

It is a shame, indeed, that Busch's history is not worthy of his style.


The editors of Newsweek Books have achieved an amazing consistency in their six-volume series, The Founding Fathers. The three gathered before me are uniform in size (each exactly 416 pages long!), layout, and, most important of all, old-fashioned patriotic spirit. John W. Huston's review of the Franklin volume (Pennsylvania History, July, 1974) would, with a few alterations of detail, apply equally to the others. Illustrations are profuse and splendid, the original writings themselves reasonably chosen, and the connective material nicely written. But apart from providing accurate texts, there is no pretense here of critical historical scholarship. Neither editorial comments nor end matter suggest that there has been much more to the story than offered here. The bibliography is a short list, occupying a single page. Like the others, Thomas Jefferson: A Biography in His Own Words is tailored for laypersons who can afford handsome fifteen-dollar books, and more particularly for public school libraries. In such places this may be the first detailed and extensive introduction young readers will have to Jefferson.

The Bicentennial calls forth many responses in us, both positive and negative. On the negative side is the suspicion, frankly advanced a hundred years ago and recurrent ever since, that the American Revolution was neither the central event of human history, nor even the moment when Providence finally revealed the whole sum of political wisdom to mankind. With debunkers this suspicion becomes iconoclastic cynicism. For more sober and serious students of the past, it leads to demythologizing the American Revolution and treating it as one of many important episodes in world history. Strictly speaking, it means writing of men and women as if they were human and not as if they were gods. And that means treating all
participants in the Revolution with sympathetic respect (which does not
mean that all were equally virtuous or correct). Perhaps the editors of
Newsweek thought they were treating the Founding Fathers as human be-
ings when they chose to include personal and domestic material along with
high matters of philosophy and politics. But it is precisely the homely and
personal details that make mythology as well as history delightful and
believable.

The excellence and centrality of the American Revolution are here
rehearsed as if no one, then or since, had ever put forward a legitimate ob-
jection. This circumstance bears with particular force on the Jefferson
edition, because of all heroes of the American Revolution, Thomas Jefferson
stood foremost in creating its myth. As early as July, 1774, he was writing in
his Vindication of the Rights of British North America:

> Shall these governments be dissolved, their property annihi-
> lated, and their people reduced to a state of nature, at the im-
> perious breath of a body of men whom they never saw, in whom
> they never confided, and over whom they have no powers of
> punishment or removal, let their crimes against the American
> public be ever so great? . . . To render these proceedings still
> more criminal against our laws, instead of subjecting the military
to the civil power, his majesty has expressly made the civil subor-
dinate to the military. But can his majesty thus put down all law
under his feet? Can he erect a power superior to that which erected
himself? He has done it indeed by force; but let him remember
that force cannot give right. (Pp. 49, 51)

Not even Thomas Paine took higher ground, except in urging the rejection
of the remaining symbols of allegiance. Jefferson had long since asserted
that the Americans were historically and naturally an independent people. It
was the peculiar genius of Jefferson that he could invent a whole new
political cosmology. It may be that every component of it had existed pre-
viously, especially in the political life of England, and that many other
Americans were moving in the same direction. But the Virginian from Albe-
marle County became and has since remained the outstanding philosopher
of the American Revolution.

Jefferson’s very weaknesses suited him to such a role. Accomplished,
talented, industrious, and self-controlled far beyond the ordinary run of
mankind, Jefferson rarely made mistakes in his private conduct and was the
sort of man that others turned to for advice. And yet, unlike Franklin, Wash-
ington, or Lincoln, Jefferson lacked the habit of carefully weighing his own
motives, and, even worse, he indulged in personal hatreds. He admitted
mistakes only to the extent of wishing, with hindsight, that he had acted dif-
ferently. A supremely gifted phrase-maker, and a charming writer of per-
sonal letters (which make up the greater part of his papers), Jefferson also
created the myth of his own greatness (A myth is not, as some suppose,
necessarily a falsehood, but a juncture between the earthly and the divine.).
Jefferson has captivated many biographers, who can hardly conceive that
things may have been objectively different from the way Jefferson saw
them. Certainly he has captivated the editors of this book. One example will
It bears on the controversial treaty with Great Britain negotiated by John Jay, which Jefferson opposed and Washington supported:

Although Jefferson himself would never have phrased the matter so harshly, Washington had outlined his usefulness to the Republic. An old man, in failing health, the President was surrounded by a cabinet of second-rate men who were unable to advise him well. (Pp. 267-8)

This is not the place to defend Washington's foreign policy, but it is proper to affirm here that he was healthy in his second presidency, and altogether free of senility until the moment of his death. The tale of his failing capacity was the invention of Jefferson and, like a number of other fabrications, has passed into history because, Milton to the contrary notwithstanding, clever fibs have a robust and long life in the free market place of ideas.

But having said this, I may be guilty of a widespread critical vice, namely, demanding a book different from the one the author, or in this case the editors, had in mind. They chose to give us Jefferson in his own words, and by extension, perhaps, an editorial apparatus which would show us Jefferson as he appeared to himself. In this they have succeeded remarkably well.

The University of Illinois,

Robert McColley


The Franklin Institute is situated today in a magnificent building along the Parkway in Philadelphia, one of a cluster of noble monuments to man's quest for knowledge. Its present permanence belies the often shaky and tentative existence of its formative years which are so graphically described by Bruce Sinclair in this study.

The idea for the establishment of the Franklin Institute emerged from the thinking of various individuals affected by ideas and intellectual currents flowing in American society during the early nineteenth century. To a certain extent the institute was a manifestation of the influence of the British mechanics' institute with its desire to familiarize the common workman with the latest scientific and technological trends of the age. American models of English mechanics' institutes sprang up all along the Atlantic seaboard during the 1820s, having the goal of broadening opportunities for their membership through what would be termed today as continuing education. Lectures, demonstrations, industrial and technical fairs, and exhibits were utilized in order to at one and the same time take advantage of the expertise of the membership and also provide the wherewithall by which members could better their social and economic condition.

The American mechanics' institutes were wholeheartedly devoted to the ideas of individual betterment and progress for society through scientific advance. Access to scientific knowledge by the masses represented a desirable American ideal; an ideal whose fulfillment would not only result in a general bettering of society through the facilitation of laborsaving devices and new
 techniques for attaining technological goals but would also enable the common man to participate in a tangible manner in the struggle for human progress. The European image of a scientific elite, subsidized by the ruling classes, was abhorrent to many of the founders of the mechanics' institutes. Ironically the Franklin Institute was to contribute in a significant manner to the creation of such a scientific elite in American society.

Professor Sinclair provides a multifaceted, engrossing study of the trials and vicissitudes of the early formative years of the Franklin Institute, from its inception as a rather unstructured adult education society with a scattergun approach to emphases in science and technology through a period of transition eventuating in an organization led by professional scientists specializing in specific, discrete areas of inquiry. The enlightened amateurs of the organization's early years gradually were forced to give way, albeit often only after a hard struggle, to the first generation of professional scientists in American intellectual life; a group dominated by the strong-willed Alexander Dallas Bache, a lineal descendant of Benjamin Franklin.

As the great grandson of Benjamin Franklin, Bache's Philadelphia credentials went unchallenged and his opinions carried a great deal of weight among potential local donors. Bache to a considerable degree succeeded, in combination with like-minded individuals such as Samuel V. Merrick, in an effort to convert the Franklin Institute into an agency for the furthering of science, technical research, and education. Such early innovations as the Journal of the institute and the periodic conversational meetings were transformed from outlets for amateur enthusiasm into vehicles for the exposition of new scientific and technical discoveries and the illumination of sophisticated research projects undertaken by the organization.

The foundation for the Franklin Institute as a workplace for professional scientists and technicians had been laid by the time of the Civil War and its modern history began to take shape. Sinclair's carefully and thoroughly researched volume not only illuminates the early history of one of America's most significant private scientific agencies but also makes a major contribution to the history of science and technology in the United States.

Camden County College

Norman Lederer


John Winebrenner (1797-1860) was a Harrisburg clergyman who founded a small American denomination known informally as Winebrennarians, more properly as the Churches of God in North America (General Eldership), in 1825. In 1972 it encompassed 369 congregations with a membership of 36,958; its headquarters is located at Natrona Heights, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh. It is one of a dozen different sects designating themselves as "the Church of God." The author of this biography, Richard Kern, holds a Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago. Formerly president of Winebrenner Theological Seminary, he is now professor of religion at Findlay College. Both of these institutions are supported by the Churches of God in North America and are located in
Winebrenner was of Pennsylvania German stock but was born of English-speaking parents on a farm in Frederick County, Maryland. He grew up in the German Reformed Church, from which his group is an offshoot. He was educated in local schools and at Dickinson College. In 1817, at the age of twenty, he went to Philadelphia to study theology with the Reverend Dr. Samuel Helffenstein, pastor of the Race Street Reformed Church. In 1820 he became pastor of the Salem Reformed Church in Harrisburg. He soon found himself in conflict with the church vestry over his adoption of the campmeeting style of revivalism associated primarily with Baptists and Methodists of the trans-Appalachian territory. In 1825 he was forced out of this pastorate and began the organization of a number of new congregations supporting his position. The most important of these was the Union Bethel Church in Harrisburg.

Like the Disciples of Christ and the Mormons, he claimed that he was not establishing a new denomination but only restoring New Testament Christianity. In 1829 he published *A Brief View of the Formation, Government, and Discipline of the Church of God*, and the following year a "general eldership" for the new denomination was formed. Winebrenner also compiled his own *Prayer Meeting and Revival Hymn Book*, founded and edited two church papers advocating his principles (the *Gospel Publisher* and the *Church Advocate*), and with I. D. Rupp wrote a *History of All the Religious Denominations in the United States* (1848).

Among the distinctive characteristics differentiating the Winebrennarians from their German Reformed roots were adult baptism, baptism by immersion, and foot washing. Winebrenner engaged in a long and bitter controversy with John W. Nevin, a distinguished professor at the German Reformed Seminary at Mercersburg, who accused Winebrenner and his followers of encouraging "all sorts of fanatical unscriptural disorder in their worship"—groaning, shouting, clapping, jumping, falling, and the like. Nevin disapproved of Winebrenner's use of the "anxious bench" and other "New Measures" popularized by Charles G. Finney, the greatest revivalist of the period.

Winebrenner also found time and energy to take part in several social reform movements of the pre-Civil War period. During the 1830s he was active in the anti-slavery crusade, but he qualified his support of this movement in later years in order to avoid splitting his denomination. He was also active in the peace movement, excoriating American policy in the Mexican War. Through his two church papers he followed the burgeoning temperance movement with great interest and enthusiasm. He attacked smoking tobacco as leading to "diseases of the lungs." He advocated some of the medical fads of the day and for a time operated a drugstore. He also supported the lyceum movement and the public school crusade. His career is a good illustration of the connection between revivalism and social reform which Gilbert Barnes and Timothy Smith have emphasized in their well-known books. However, neither of these books appears in Kern's extensive bibliography, nor is Winebrenner mentioned in the Barnes and Smith books.

Perhaps because of the relatively small quantity of manuscript material
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relating to Winebrenner, Kern has included very little information on his subject’s private life. The study is based on thorough research, is relatively impartial, and is competently written except for excessive use of long quotations, which make for difficult reading. Unfortunately the footnotes are placed at the back of the book, and there is no index. Winebrenner is not a major figure in American church history, but Kern has skillfully used his life story to illustrate a number of significant developments in the history of religion and reform in the United States.

The Pennsylvania State University

Ira V. Brown


A strong-willed, powerful president commits American troops to a foreign war, beats back the feeble criticisms of a divided Congress, and then suffers the shrill denunciations of an aroused intelligentsia. Washington 1966? No, Washington 1846! John Schroeder’s telling of the debate accompanying Mr. Polk’s War closely resembles the agony of American introspection during the Vietnam nightmare. There is one significant difference. In the 1840s the “antiwar movement had little effect on the war’s duration, outcome, or final terms.” (p. 162) Administration critics readily accepted Mr. Polk’s peace as the lesser of two evils, preferring a small dose of imperialist expansion to the frightening possibility of acquiring all of Mexico.

Influenced though he may have been by recent events, Schroeder provides an admirable survey of dissent during the Mexican War. He skillfully summarizes the rhetoric of congressional opposition, showing how the fumbling protests of 1846 gave way to the general disenchantment of 1847. Schroeder is equally effective in his presentation of nonpolitical dissent. Clearly, precisely, he sets forth the views of pacifists, abolitionists, and religious leaders. As a well-organized guide to antiwar thought and propaganda, this book fills a basic need.

Although attuned to the themes and variations of the antiwar chorus, Schroeder is forced to admit that all the sound and fury signified very little. “Most Americans did not understand, nor did they care about, the broad implications of an aggressive war.” (p. 162) This judgment is both harsh and unrealistic; it proceeds directly from Schroeder’s assumptions about the nature and practice of presidential power.

In the language of one of the book’s poorly-reproduced cartoons, Schroeder attacks the chief executive, “Polking It into Him.” Devious though Polk’s diplomacy may have been, the nineteenth-century president simply did not have the power to manufacture and wage war by himself. Schroeder seems to accept the conspiracy theory set forth in Glenn Price’s The Origins of the War with Mexico (Austin, 1969). Yet nowhere does he cite this work. In fact, his otherwise competent bibliographical essay avoids all comment on secondary sources. In conjunction with his brief summary of the causes of the war, Schroeder should have examined the basis for Polk’s power and popularity. Did the president in fact control the press? Was he able to mobilize public opinion behind his programs? Attention to these
questions would undoubtedly reveal a much more limited presidential presence than lurks in the pages of Schroeder's work.

So, too, Schroeder's analysis of congressional opposition and nonpolitical dissent assumes a direct correlation between propaganda and the formation of public opinion. He never fully explores the structure and operation of congressional parties; nor does he analyze voting behavior on war-related measures. He makes no attempt to gauge the impact of congressional debate on the state legislatures or on local political leaders. In fact, organized state response never figures in his assessment of dissent. Schroeder portrays New England as the bastion of antiwar sentiment, yet he bases his judgment on reading the works of Henry David Thoreau, William Lloyd Garrison, and Theodore Parker, rather than memorials from the Massachusetts legislature.

Even if these intellectuals represented an aroused populace, they still might not have been able to influence the Washington community. As James Sterling Young has shown, the "City of Magnificent Distances" was an isolated outpost during the antebellum period, a far cry from the feverish power center of today. In fact the very lack of centralized power gave rise to the diplomatic precursors of the Mexican War. Andrew Jackson's failure to control his friends and compatriots helped foment the Texas Revolution. Much as he might have welcomed the outbreak of hostilities, Polk, like Jackson, could only bluster. He could not manipulate. He had neither the political backing, the military might, nor the technological means to cultivate a national following. If we are to label the Mexican conflict, Mr. Polk's War, we should not forget the 1844 campaign question: "Who is James K. Polk?"

University of Delaware

James C. Curtis


Katz's book fills an important void in American historiography by providing the first reliable and comprehensive description of one of the significant episodes of black resistance and abolitionism in the ante-bellum period. It replaces the unreliable account of an amateur historian, W. U. Hensel, that appeared in 1911 as a sixty-year commemorative of the Christiana Riot. It also ventures far beyond the limited evaluation of press reaction to the event by Roderick Nash in 1961. Katz's documentary history traces the local and national background of the Christiana resistance, reports the actual battle, and chronicles its judicial, political, and personal aftermath. His viewpoint differs markedly from Hensel who made a "moral equation of the slave owner's desire for his slave property with the Christiana blacks' desire for freedom." Katz's book gains its inspiration from the sympathies of his generation and from the positive image of abolitionists and black resisters that have emerged in the past fifteen years. Resistance at Christiana, like the works of Eugene Genovese, Leon Litwack, Benjamin Quarles, and Martin Duberman that Katz quotes, portrays Northern black resistance as a moral right and necessity for survival. His assessment of the ideology, tactics, and motivation of the black resisters and white sympathizers at Christiana rein-
forces the continuing good standing of the Northern opponents of the slave system in recent black American history.

Christiana is the story of the violent meeting between Maryland slave owner Edward Gorsuch and a militant self-defense organization led by former slave William Parker. Gorsuch sought to recapture four of the slaves from his Maryland farm that crossed the border to freedom into Pennsylvania. Under the authority of the new Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, Gorsuch acquired the services of an inept federal marshal, Henry H. Kline, to attempt the legal seizure. When Gorsuch and his posse arrived at the home of Parker, the hideout of the slaves, the blacks refused to honor Gorsuch's surrender request. The blacks at Christiana, who had organized themselves to thwart the effectiveness of kidnappers in the neighborhood, increased their militance when others from the neighborhood arrived to offer encouragement. A white, pacifistic miller, Castner Hanway, appeared at this time but had nothing to do with the planning or execution of a resistance plot. Nevertheless, he later shouldered the blame for the bloody battle that ensued between the forces of Gorsuch and the black resisters. When the resistance ended, Gorsuch lay dead, and the other members of his party retreated.

In the aftermath, Parker fled to Canada through the underground railroad, but others, including Hanway, remained behind. Sensing the political fall out of the episode in Pennsylvania for the Whigs, the Fillmore administration chose to indict forty-one persons for treason. (Katz notes that this is the largest number of persons simultaneously charged of the crime in American history). After pretrial maneuvering, the government selected Hanway as a test case. His trial was specifically designed to placate the administration's Southern allies, to punish its political opponents, and to test the Fugitive Slave Law that had resulted from the Compromise of 1850. The government, however, presented a weak case against Hanway that was discredited by the defense led by abolitionist Congressman Thaddeus Stevens. The outcome, therefore, met the initial expectations of President Fillmore, Attorney General John Crittendon, and Secretary of State Daniel Webster, who predicted that "acquittal of the defendant would be the only outcome of the trial possible."

Resistance at Christiana provides a record of the Christiana resistance and the treason trial based upon a mass of obscure and forgotten materials. Katz has assembled his sources, enabling him to resurrect an important chapter in Pennsylvania history. In addition to the Hensel account of Christiana, Katz primarily uses official court records, contemporary accounts, newspapers, the census, and tax records. He relies upon the official Hanway trial record by James R. Robbins. He makes discriminating use of a controversial autobiography of Parker that appeared in The Atlantic Monthly. Katz's search of newspaper files has resulted in his revelation of the 1872 return of Parker from Canada to Pennsylvania. Although the author has integrated this disparate group of materials into a coherent story, he has allowed the sources to dominate his account. An abundance of lengthy quotations from Hensel, Parker, newspapers, and other sources flood the narrative, detracting from the readability of the book. Also, Katz's research, although thorough, appears long on primary materials, but short on secondary sources.
The reader must wait for the final chapter until Katz reveals his speculations on the meaning of Christiana. Katz views the meeting between Gorsuch and Parker as a classic confrontation. Gorsuch, a liberal slave owner, represented the paternalism of the Southern slave system. Faced with armed resistance that threatened his life, Gorsuch insisted upon reclaiming his property. For the slave owner, Katz argues, "dispossession was a death; ceasing to have he ceased to be." Parker, a former slave, organized with other Christiana blacks for the protection he lacked as a child under the slave system. As a free man, the need for protection became a motivating force in his life. At Christiana Parker and the other blacks "asserted their full humanity" in the struggle to keep their freedom. According to Katz, the Christiana resistance ranks with John Brown's raid and the Nat Turner uprising as a major episode of black resistance in American history.

The pictures and illustrations in the book are excellent, but one of the major figures, United States Supreme Court Justice Robert C. Grier, is conspicuously missing. In focusing his attention upon the significance of Christiana as an episode of black resistance, Katz has underemphasized the significance of the Christiana treason trial and the central role played by Grier in it. The Fillmore administration maneuvered to have the justice hear the case. Although he did not fulfill their expectations, Grier greatly influenced the result of the trial. The case served as a milestone in the career of the justice who later cast a well-known and controversial vote with the majority of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott Case. Grier also wrote the court's majority opinion in the Prize Cases which upheld Lincoln's blockade. As one of the national events that heightened sectional animosities, the trial became more important than the actual events of the resistance. Katz subordinates the national significance of the trial and Grier's role as judge in the events leading to the Civil War to the theme of black resistance. The emphasis might have been reversed.

Lehigh University

THOMAS R. KLINE


Winner of the Jules F. Landry Award for 1973, William C. Davis's Breckinridge: Statesman, Soldier, Symbol is a superbly written and judiciously documented account of one of America's most outstanding and least understood mid-nineteenth-century statesmen.

A Kentuckian by birth, John Cabell Breckinridge was an attorney and a veteran of the Mexican War prior to his election to the Kentucky state legislature in 1849. Two years later, he was elected to Congress, where he later fought for and was instrumental in the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. Often called the power behind the throne during the Pierce administration, Breckinridge was recognized as the leader of the Democratic party in Kentucky when he was tapped as James Buchanan's running mate in the election of 1856. Winning the election, Breckinridge became this country's youngest vice president, serving in that capacity for four years. In 1859 he became a United States senator-elect, taking his seat after an unsuccessful presidential campaign in the election of 1860. Breckinridge sup-
ported the Union during the congressional debates concerning the secession question. On most other matters, however, his views clashed with those of the Lincoln administration, and, on that account, he was considered a dangerous threat to the Union during the initial phases of the Civil War. Eluding an attempted arrest, Breckinridge fled to the South where he became a brigadier general in the Confederate army, subsequently being named as Confederate secretary of war in 1865. Following the war and three and one-half years of exile in Europe and Canada, Breckinridge was granted amnesty. He returned to Kentucky and his law practice, soon to become a symbol and advocate of peaceful reconciliation between the states.

Davis portrays Breckinridge as an atypical southerner in his defense of slavery, the core of the states' rights-secession controversy. Whereas most prominent southern politicians "cried states' rights as a cover, when their real concern was only one of those rights, slavery," Breckinridge "was truly concerned for the rights of the states in the full meaning of the term." In fact, according to Davis, Breckinridge's ideological sympathy for strict constructionism and genuine states' rights conservatism "was entirely out of touch with the needs and realities of an America that was going through the greatest period of industrial, economic, social, and political change in its history." This unyielding ideological stance, of course, convinced his northern colleagues and enemies that he was indeed an "ultra-nigger-driver" who could not be trusted. Hence, his escape into the South and subsequent alliance with the Confederacy are seen as logical consequences of an ideological dogmatism "that had been dated in the days of Jackson."

Following what Davis calls a military career of remarkable success in the Confederate army, Breckinridge went on to become an important symbolic force in the immediate post-war years. His dignified conduct in exile, for example, set an example for all other Confederates to emulate. During his exile and following his return to the United States, Breckinridge "acted with a dignity and reserve that won the respect of his enemies, and with an independence and courage that gave pride to his comrades in adversity. In this respect he was one of the few and significant links between the sections in the precarious years after Appomattox."

Ohio Northern University

ROBERT R. DAVIS, JR.


As the United States gradually changed from a rural nation with an economy based on agriculture into an urban nation with an economy based on industry, the federal government was slow to coordinate foreign trade with national policy. Foreign nations, notably Germany, were active in promoting trade abroad, but the United States lagged behind.

It is the thesis of this book, one of a series of monographs in American history published by Greenwood Press, that during the Wilson administration considerable effort was made to relate foreign trade to an over-all central government plan. The result was little short of revolutionary with a lasting impact upon American life. Rejecting arguments by other scholars that
American commercial policy at this time was characterized by a lack of coordination, Kaufman asserts that when Woodrow Wilson left office in 1921 a clearly defined policy had been created. Economic integration in the direction of centralization of policy was thus carried on during what seems to some people fifty years later the heyday of laissez faire.

World War I gave the United States a golden opportunity to enrich itself by increasing its trade not only with Europe but above all with Latin America, which for so long had been dominated commercially by Great Britain and Germany. The author asserts that "By spring 1915, the United States was displaying signs of the economic vitality that would soon make it the world's leading commercial and financial power." While financial institutions such as the stock market had trembled as the guns began to roar in Europe, within a short time this country was moving to capture England's role as the world's greatest commercial nation. Kaufman's claims that this development was not accidental but part of a deliberate government policy, and most of his book explains how the government organized foreign trade mechanisms as an aspect of over-all foreign policy. It was a partnership between government and big business; participation by small business was minimal and organized labor was unsympathetic.

One wishes that the author had made more clear the attitude of the three succeeding Republican administrations when, as Calvin Coolidge said, "The business of America is business." A longer concluding chapter would have been helpful. Indeed, it is this lack of a broader time perspective which is perhaps the most troublesome feature of this monograph. Still, the author does note by way of conclusion that "Without denying the serious problems that still remained when Wilson left office, the fact was that never before had business and government worked so closely in developing overseas markets; never before had an administration assumed such an active role in leading and directing the nation's foreign trade forces (even seeking to integrate economic and political policy) as business and government did in 1920. . . . Subsequent administrations merely expanded the legacy that they inherited from the Wilson administration."

The book has been well researched in published and unpublished sources; its conclusions are sound and sensible. Kaufman refrains from claiming too much. Instead he errs on the side of restraint. There is a tendency to treat economic developments in a kind of vacuum, and we miss an over-all analysis of government policy. Kaufman's book will be appreciated by the audience at which it is aimed—American economic and diplomatic historians—but will miss a wider readership.

*Rutgers University*  
John W. Osborne
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The Shippens of Pennsylvania across Five Generations

by Randolph Shipley Klein

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