
Scholars who have studied the history of the new nation have inevitably encountered the “enigmatic” and “paradoxical” Tench Coxe (1755–1824). He was a member of the Annapolis Convention (1786), delegate to the Continental Congress (1788), Assistant Secretary of the Treasury (1790–92), Commissioner of Revenue (1792–97), unofficial Assistant Secretary of State, United States Purveyor (1803–12), political economist, party polemicist, and importunate office-seeker. Coxe was one of those political figures who participated in or expressed views on the major events of his era, but never reached the top. A full-length biography of the Philadelphia merchant was made possible when the Coxe family heirs donated the voluminous Coxe papers, amounting to sixty thousand manuscripts, to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. However, one provision to the 1964 gift was that the opening of the collection should await the preparation of what constituted a “commissioned biography.” Respected scholar Jacob Cooke was selected for the assignment and given exclusive access to the collection for nearly a decade.

Thus, the resulting book has been long awaited. The size of the volume and the discovery of no new major findings might disappoint some readers, but on the whole Cooke has successfully woven his primary and secondary sources into a sound, readable, and fascinating study of politics, economics, and business (mercantile and land) from the Revolution to the 1820s. In his life and times biography the author claims that the emphasis is on Coxe’s public rather than his personal life, but Cooke engages in some fragile psychohistorical analysis and often relates more than is really necessary. Also, there is some convulsive writing because the Coxe papers are often richer in volume than content.

To explain Coxe’s response to men and events Cooke repeatedly falls back on the critical period of the Revolution when the youthful Coxe rescued himself from conviction of treason and attainder. “It reaffirmed his emphasis on the importance of ‘connections’ and influence,” argues Cooke, “a characteristic discernible throughout his long career and revealed particularly in the assiduity with which he later cultivated men of political prominence” (p. 43). It seemed Coxe was convinced that “highly
placed friends or patrons would rescue him from the effects of bitter political battles—even those of his own making” (p. 43). Having been an avid spectator of the Constitutionalist/Republican battles of the 1780s because of his Tory past, Coxe, according to Cooke, quickly learned that politics in Pennsylvania was “a game of attack and counterattack, innuendo and slander, to which the code of a Philadelphia gentleman was inapplicable” (p. 85). Distilling many details, Cooke skillfully traces Coxe’s opportunistic political career of shifting allegiances—from Tory merchant to Hamiltonian Federalist to urban-Jeffersonian. “As a Federalist apostate,” writes Cooke, “Coxe was typical of a small but historically significant wing of his party—found in commercial centers like Philadelphia—that enthusiastically endorsed the fiscal policies of Hamilton while championing the commercial policies of Thomas Jefferson” (p. x). Cooke correctly concludes that Coxe will be remembered best as an early prophet to industrialism and a balanced economy. For instance, Cooke proves that a great deal of Hamilton’s famous reports on the National Bank and in particular on Manufacturers was based on information supplied by Coxe.

Cooke’s treatment of Coxe is generally even-handed, and this admirable study is thoroughly researched and masterly written. Some of the correspondents actually give us a fresh view of the Loyalists in the Revolution, the dynamics of local politics, the role of country editors, and land speculation in Pennsylvania. When attributing certain pamphlets and circulars to Coxe, Cooke’s analysis is sometimes scanty or confusing. Ambiguity, for example, exists between the text (p. 354) and the index (p. 554) respecting the authorship of *A Serious Appeal (Ein Ernstlicher Ruf...)*. Some readers will disagree with the significance given to Coxe’s role in the intraparty conflict waged among Philadelphia’s Jeffersonians after 1800. Chapter 25, “The Defoe of America,” also calls for more treatment and intellectual analysis. An opportunity was missed to compare essayist Coxe to other second-rank figures such as George Logan, John Swanwick, and Mathew Carey.

But these are minor matters, and do not detract from Cooke’s insights into the Early National era. The book fills a need in Pennsylvania history and draws deserved attention to an extraordinary, if almost forgotten, national figure as well. The Coxe family’s confidence in Jacob Cooke to write a “definitive biography” has not been misplaced.

*Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission*  
ROLAND M. BAUMANN


Upon the completion of the project initiated with the appearance of this volume, few Pennsylvania counties will boast a published history more comprehensive than that of Indiana County. Clarence D. Stephenson’s *Indiana County: 175th Anniversary History* is planned for five volumes. This,
the first, carries the story to 1865 and a second will bring it to the present. The remaining three will contain documents and primary sources, a biographical directory, and a bibliography and index.

Stephenson's vision of history is truly panoramic. He defines his task as that of relating "what has happened in the local area over the years." This he has quite literally done. Although details concerning political and economic developments abound, what emerges is no narrowly conceived political-economic chronicle. Beginning with a discussion of the historical geology and prehistory of the Indiana County area, the author traces the increasingly complex development of civilization there in exquisite detail. He describes the resident Indians and their intertribal relationships, the coming of the Europeans, their struggles with the Indians and among themselves for control of the region, the ouster of the French, the movement for independence, the establishment of Indiana County in 1803 and every facet of its development to the end of the Civil War.

Stephenson's story involves a cast of thousands and the reader meets an astonishing number of them. Some pass fleetingly, concealed in long lists as, for example, an enumeration of the first jurors (fifty-six) selected by the county court. Others, however, proceed more leisurely and can be observed in a wide variety of activities—clearing fields, building cabins, raising families and divorcing wives, hunting, drinking and brawling, marching off to war, and more. Stephenson has an eye for the colorful detail and his narrative is filled with fascinating and intriguing information. Extensive quotations from contemporary sources add a further dimension of vividness to the story.

This is, however, purely descriptive history. Stephenson has recaptured "the 'who', the 'how', the 'when', and 'where' . . . the good, the bad, the indifferent, even the insignificant (author's italics)." But he explicitly eschews analysis. "I have deliberately chosen not to explain in any detail 'why' anything happened . . . I am convinced that attempts to explain why . . . are full of pitfalls and, in the end, subjective." Nonetheless, for historians the volume is a goldmine of information on the conduct and customs of a frontier people. For persons seeking their roots in Indiana County it is indispensable. Those looking for a clear and complete guide to Stephenson's hoard of primary sources will, hopefully, find the forthcoming bibliographic volume more helpful than the extensive, but often cryptic, footnotes contained in this one.

St. Francis College

JOHN F. COLEMAN


Anthony Wallace has written a book that will command wide attention among students of the industrial revolution in America. There are many excellent parts to the book and much that will inspire future scholars to emulate Wallace's combination of field work with archival research. The many excellent parts of the book add up to a somewhat less excellent whole.
While the appendix sets forth the intellectual framework for the book, "paradigmatic processes of culture change," the concept is frequently obscured by the mass of detail presented in the narrative. The book is as much a labor of love as it is a work of scholarship, and the impulses that flow from the first of these motivations—to include a wealth of detail, for example—are never fully harnessed to the demands of the second. The end product is a highly readable, at times moving, account of the industrial revolution along Chester Creek in Delaware County that fails, in the end, to pull together all of the rich insights it offers.

Any criticism of the way Wallace has chosen to present the results of his research must be tempered with great respect for what he has done. The book is the result of a great deal of research by a scholar with interesting and important insights into the nature of community and the dynamics of social change. The merger of field work and systematic analysis of surviving structures with exhaustive research in manuscript and printed sources has given Wallace a richly textured sense of what Rockdale was and how it "worked" as a network of communities. Too often scholars have been content to choose between field work and archival research passing up the advantages that the other offers. Wallace's book will make that choice less defensible. His strong sense of place—the physical setting of the mill hamlets along Chester Creek, the scale of the factory buildings and the communities around them, the size and style of housing for mill owner and mill worker—all provide a rich context within which to examine census schedules, business records, and correspondence. We learn as much about life along Chester Creek from Wallace's description of the workers' houses, the mills they worked in, and the physical setting of the seven small mill hamlets along Chester Creek, as we do from his analysis of the letters of the entrepreneurs and their daughters.

In the appendix Wallace states that "I realized that Rockdale was one of a number of similar villages where the Industrial Revolution began in the United States and that a standard process of cultural and social change was probably common to all of them" (p. 477). As Wallace presents the case, the rise of an evangelical Christian capitalism lies at the core of this process by which rural people became industrialists and industrial workers. In pointing to the close fit between religious ideals and the demands of an industrial order, Wallace argues that this theory of Christian capitalism grew out of a need to rationalize what was happening in Rockdale as well as providing an appropriate response to criticism of the emerging industrial order by Utopian socialists and free traders. The values of the new economic order were tied to the general good of all elements of society by the Christian values the mill owners espoused and propagated. The new order was not a disruption of the existing world but a way of preserving the values of traditional society. As Wallace's student David Kaserman has shown, the early industrialists of Delaware County were conservative men uninterested in changing society in any basic way. In Rockdale Wallace shows just how pervasive and controlling this essential conservatism was. Christian capitalism is one of the chief mechanisms for preserving the paternalistic and hierarchical world that was valued so highly.
BOOK REVIEWS

It is insights such as this that make Rockdale a very significant piece of work, one that anyone interested in the development of modern America will need to come to grips with.

Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation

WILLIAM H. MULLIGAN, JR.


The study of American decorative arts has been undergoing an important transformation as the tools of scholarship are being applied to what was heretofore the hobbyist's domain. Monroe Fabian is a promising younger member of the group which is most responsible for the change and which has its roots in the work pioneered at the Henry F. duPont Winterthur Museum.

While the author has spent considerable time studying documents which might provide insights into the Pennsylvania German decorated chests and their makers, i.e., wills, inventories, ship lists, the traditional historian's grist, he is essentially concerned with the objects themselves. Accordingly, the most valuable portions of the text are those where the artifacts are considered as a valid research alternate to manuscripts.

Fabian carefully compares and differentiates for the reader between the European and American Kischt. He significantly demonstrates that painted decoration in Germany was just coming into vogue in the eighteenth century, and, therefore, American painted chests were developed to full flower at the same time as their European counterparts. The chests are not copies of earlier prototypes but independent productions which draw on a common heritage.

With tape measure in hand, the author has discovered a dimensional aspect to the well-known Pennsylvania German conservatism. "The overall sizes of Pennsylvania-German chests," he observes, "stay within surprisingly fixed limits." He then provides a list of dimensions. A measuring device has also enabled him to put to rest a hoary bromide that the size of the dovetails used in a piece is a reliable date of age. The use of information drawn from laboratory analysis has also cleared up a mystery surrounding a group of inlaid walnut pieces found in Lancaster County. Traditionalists maintained the inlay to be a combination of white lead and wax. The laboratory has proved it to be sulphur. Unfortunately, funds were not available to undertake large scale chemical analyses of the paint used on Kischten which could have proved just what pigments were used and in what medium.

The book is lavishly illustrated with the plates separated from the text—this was obviously done for the sake of economy, but it detracts from the volume's unity. However, the quality and the selection of pictures are excellent. While there are several illustrations showing the interior ironwork found on the chests, it would have been very valuable if there had also been illustrations of the till types and construction details of the chests' lids, jointures, and feet. Perhaps these, too, were sacrificed because
of cost. Also missing in the study is any mention of child-sized and miniature chests, many of which are also known to exist. More important, however, is the lack of any illustrations showing ordinary painted and grained chests. In the elitist museum curator tradition only the finest specimens are shown. These are small criticisms. The work is a definitive study of a significant aspect of our material culture, and it can serve as a model for subsequent monographs.

Pennsylvania State University
CAPITAL CAMPUS

IRWIN RICHMAN


The Brethren in Christ, once popularly known as the River Brethren, are Protestants who emerged from German Anabaptist and Pietist origins in the late eighteenth century. From their initial location in the Susquehanna Valley of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, they have spread into the Middle West and Far West, as well as into the Canadian province of Ontario. The current membership is almost 12,500 (p. 557). Compared to approximately 12,500,000 Southern Baptists in the United States, the Brethren in Christ Church is small indeed.

Nevertheless, Carlton O. Wittlinger, long-time Professor of History at the Brethren's Messiah College in Grantham, Pennsylvania, wrote more than 580 pages about it. His is one of the most thorough accounts of a particular Protestant group to appear in recent years. Although Wittlinger provided more information than the average reader wants, he compiled for the Brethren a detailed account of how they came to be who they are.

Despite the length of Wittlinger's study, non-Brethren readers also will find it useful, for he did more than narrate the history of the Brethren. He interpreted their gradual and sometimes painful transition from a sect to a denomination. He described how the Brethren at first remained apart even from other German-speaking sects but in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries abandoned many of their distinctive features, including the use of the German language, plain dress, and unadorned meeting houses. They began to cooperate with other religious groups in such activities as publication of religious literature, youth work, and ministerial training. Recent generations of the Brethren have founded missions at home, not only in traditional rural areas but in city slums as well, and abroad in Africa and India. They developed also a professional bureaucracy to coordinate their work.

According to Wittlinger, the basis of the Brethren's activity was their theology which he treated in greater depth than have many denominational historians. Brethren doctrines sometimes appear in separate chapters, such as the first on "Theological Roots ..." (pp. 1-14), and are interspersed among other topics. Seldom, however, are they far beneath the surface. Wittlinger explained the development of theological tension among the Brethren, especially when the "holiness movement" became prominent. Eventually, the Brethren moved from their traditional
pietistic insistence on a single identifiable conversion experience “occurring prior to baptism and of which baptism was merely a symbol” (p. 23) to an acceptance of Wesleyan perfectionism which for them divided the experience of justification from the later experience of sanctification (see especially pp. 322–331).

Wittlinger’s discussion of this and other controversies among the Brethren seems to an outsider amazingly objective. Never is he an obvious partisan. His passages on divisive issues invariably contain descriptions of the Brethren’s historic beliefs and practices, followed by the reasons why changes emerged and the effects of the changes.

Contributing to Wittlinger’s objectivity was his consistent reliance on primary sources. Because Wittlinger was the first historian to treat comprehensively the history of the Brethren in Christ, he had to depend heavily on documents, including the minutes of administrative bodies, the denominational periodical, and correspondence. In order to gain added insight into the Brethren’s recent history, he wrote to leaders and interviewed them. For the Brethren’s early history, much of which cannot be documented, he relied on oral traditions, carefully labeling them as such. He identified his sources in numerous endnotes that follow each chapter.

In writing such a masterful history of the Brethren in Christ, Wittlinger served his church well, and the Brethren will stand in his debt for years to come. So also will students of American religious history, especially those who are interested in religious groups that developed among the Pennsylvania Germans.

*The Pennsylvania State University*  
*John B. Frantz*

---


For years Thomas McKean was neglected by historians. Until recently the only volume devoted to him was a brief but interesting filiopietistic biography by Roberdeau Buchanan, published in Lancaster in 1890. A scholarly study of McKean’s public life was completed by James H. Peeling at the University of Chicago in 1929. Peeling got sidetracked into a sociology professorship and never published his study, though he did write the sketch of McKean that appeared in 1933 in the *Dictionary of American Biography*. To supplement Peeling, scholars made do with the view of McKean presented in such excellent histories of Pennsylvania politics as Harry M. Tinkcom’s *Republicans and Federalists in Pennsylvania, 1790–1801* (1950) and Sanford W. Higginbotham’s *Keystone in the Democratic Arch: Pennsylvania Politics, 1800–1816* (1952). Together these two books covered McKean’s three terms as governor, from 1799 to 1808, and the last years of his long tenure as chief justice, from 1777 to 1799. Glimpses of McKean’s role in the Revolution and before appeared in a variety of books.
Now, however, within three years, McKean has come into his own, as the subject of two good books based on careful research in primary sources. John M. Coleman’s *Thomas McKean, Forgotten Leader of the Revolution* (1975) is a full biography, but carries McKean’s life only to 1780, when McKean was forty-six. G. S. Rowe’s book does not purport to be a “full-scale” biography; the author declares his aim is to explore McKean’s influence on American political institutions and “how, in turn, McKean was shaped by Republican values and assumptions” (p. xiii). Like Peeling, Rowe concentrates on the public man, but despite his disclaimer the book is a biography. Coleman’s book is richer and more detailed, but Rowe’s work is a good one, and because it is more concise—hardly short, however—it will remain useful even when Coleman publishes a second volume.

One of the problems of a McKean biographer is to fit together the Delaware and Pennsylvania periods of McKean’s career. McKean was born and reared only six miles from the circular boundary between the two states, in New London, Pennsylvania, in 1734. Incidentally, one of the very few statements by Rowe to which this reviewer could take any exception is his note that McKean was “born on the frontier” (p. 404); by 1734 the frontier had moved west of New London. Fortunately for the young McKean, his native community was the home of the Rev. Francis Alison, a gifted teacher who inspired McKean with a zeal for learning that stayed with him all his life.

From Alison’s academy McKean proceeded to New Castle to read law with an influential cousin. At the bar and in politics he rose to prominence rapidly, attaining the highest political post in the Lower Counties in 1772, when he was elected speaker of the assembly. Like most New Castle attorneys he practiced law in Pennsylvania as well as in Delaware, and soon his major business was in Philadelphia, which he made his home after 1774. In both states he was an active participant in the politics of the early Revolution. While serving Delaware in the Continental Congress (of which he became the president in 1781), he was also chief justice of Pennsylvania. Since Delaware rarely paid its delegates, it was handy to have one domiciled at the seat of Congress.

Distinguished as a supporter—and signer—of the Declaration of Independence and as an advocate of the federal Constitution of 1787, McKean was an elitist who became identified with the Pennsylvania Republicans because of his outspoken opposition to the Anglophile policies of the Washington and Adams administrations; as a result he was elected governor on the Republican ticket in 1799, when he was sixty-five. Before long he was embroiled in an intraparty quarrel as he resisted efforts of the Leib-Duane wing to weaken the executive and the judiciary. His practice of nepotism in appointments lent special venom to his enemies’ outcries; one who had not been intimidated “by the roaring of the British Lion,” McKean countered, was not to be frightened “by the braying of Asses” (p. 344).

Belligerent, haughty, energetic, self-assured, Thomas McKean made a solid impression on the politics of his day. The Scotch-Irish immigrant prejudices of his parents and grandparents and the Old Light Presbyterian dogmas of his teacher colored his attitude and his behavior, while
his rapid success persuaded him—perhaps as in the case of Hamilton—that high position was accessible to the worthy, that by their goods men might be known.

Rowe’s book is a first-rate study of one of the leading figures of the Revolutionary generation in the Middle States. And McKean, difficult and domineering as he could be, deserves this attention; as it is, few people even know how to pronounce his name.

University of Delaware

JOHN A. MUNROE


Students of Pennsylvania and American history generally will doubtless agree with Geoffrey Seed that James Wilson has failed “to achieve with posterity the fame he so much desired, and [that] others less deserving may continue to outshine him in the estimation of the people in whom he had put such great faith” (p. 183). The failure rests in part with Wilson himself, the dearth of extant sources on his personal life, and the consequent inability of his biographers to establish a vital relationship between the man and the ideas expressed in his public papers and actions on the state and national levels.

Professor Seed’s attempt to rescue Wilson has succeeded, but only to a degree. It is clear from Seed’s analysis of his role in the Constitutional Convention, the Pennsylvania Ratifying Convention, and the drafting and adoption of the 1790 Pennsylvania Constitution that Wilson was one of the intellectual giants of the late eighteenth century, that he was deeply committed to the principle of popular sovereignty, that he was an astute politician, and that he deserves more than history has been willing to give him. But, we already know that! Seed’s decision to concentrate almost exclusively on the ideas, the various constitutional documents and debates, and the written results of Wilson’s efforts in these areas tells us little about the man, the sources of his thought, and consequently their interrelationship. Two chapters, the second and the tenth, attempt to relate Wilson’s “thoughts on government and law” and his economic activities as a land speculator and developer to his more public career, but without real success. For example, in chapter 2, Seed suggests that the “broad philosophical background of Wilson’s thought was an amalgam of natural law concepts, of the Scottish common-sense philosophy, on a religious outlook based on his Presbyterian upbringing and his later close association with William White, who later became Episcopalian bishop of Pennsylvania. . . .” (p. 16). It is an excellent place to begin his analysis of Wilson as “Scottish Intellectual and American Statesman.” Yet, while Seed promises we “will see later how Wilson used these concepts in the Federal Convention” (p. 22), the chapters which follow are basically ideological narrative not analysis. How are “natural law concepts” woven into Wilson’s actions and arguments at the constitutional and ratifying conventions? Where, specifically, do the “Scottish common-sense” philosophers or “his Presbyterian upbringing” influence Wilson’s ideological, political, or economic actions? And, why do we never read of the relationship between Wilson and Bishop White again in the book?
Seed has greater success in attempting to establish a relationship between Wilson's own economic aspirations and his concern "about the territorial expansion of the United States as a means to the growth of its power and to the advancement of the welfare of its people" (p. 160). But, it is not clear that Seed has been able to determine to what degree Wilson was interested primarily in the people or in personal profit here. While such questions remain unanswered, C. Page Smith's *James Wilson* (1956), although much longer, will remain the best summary and analysis of James Wilson's place in American history.

*Saginaw Valley State College*  
*John V. Jezierski*


In this fascinating volume Garry Wills examines the context of the Declaration of Independence before revision by Congress. An extremely good writer, widely read, he has closely studied the Thomas Jefferson of 1776, his peers and exemplars. Three related but separate topics are considered. "Revolutionary Charter" (pp. 3-90) describes persons and arguments significant in Philadelphia in 1774-76. Wills correctly claims that "Freedom for whigs of the eighteenth century, always had a pedigree" (p. 38), and outlines the "ancient principles" put forward. He brilliantly delineates Virginians at the Congress, and explains Samuel Adams's traditional theories, modern political expedients, and perceptive grasp of inter-colonial relationships. These and some others play a more important role than that of the Philadelphia circle to which, Wills asserts, Daniel J. Boorstin has wrongly attached a consequence for Jefferson only in fact to develop in the nineties. After a glancing reference to the omission of grievances relating to slavery, left for expanded commentary in chapter 20, Wills analyzes statistically the Declaration itself.

"National Symbol" (pp. 323-362) notes the "sporadic, rather casual way the celebration of the Fourth began" (p. 377). Colonel John Trumbull's famous painting obscured the dilatory process of signature. Nearly a half century elapsed before the Declaration achieved the almost "accidental" character of a "loftier destiny." At the time of confirmation Congress was chiefly eager, Wills possibly over-emphasizes, to proclaim the thirteen states independent of old imperial authority, and thus qualified for foreign alliance and assistance. The Declaration was a logical sequence to the failure of earlier petitioning about rights and grievances, a procedure hallowed by the precedent of the "glorious Revolution" of 1689-89. On the other hand the constitution of 1787 sprang less from past tradition than from the exigencies of war fought over novel terrain, the difficult functioning of the Confederation, and the recognized emergence of a new nation in North America.

The central, most important and original section of *Inventing America* is contained in parts two, three, and four, the last concluding with an explanation of why Jefferson preferred his draft to that finally issued. The excision most regretted related to those "political bands," formerly existing.
between colonists and British people, which he wished to renounce emphatically as ties to "unfeeling brethren." Jefferson, unlike John Adams, remained antipathetic to Britain for the rest of his life.

While everyone may not endorse the conclusions drawn by Wills, most should profit greatly from a sensitive analysis of Jefferson's early interests—in scientists and their methods, in a constellation of Scottish thinkers and their continental disciples, in writers like Laurence Sterne. On the other hand reacting against Carl Becker's familiar interpretation, Wills perhaps forgets or slight the many echoes found everywhere in the eighteenth century of both political and epistemological pronouncements of John Locke. He exaggerates the connection of David Hume and Francis Hutcheson; the Glasgow professor had actually composed the greater part of his work before correspondence between the two began. His Moral Philosophy, not published until nine years after his death in 1746, had been drafted in the thirties for his students. But these are minor cavils compared to the gratitude owed for exposition of the influences leading to Jefferson's adoption of the moral sense theory, of the belief in man's essentially social nature, and in the empirical approach of Thomas Reid. Hutcheson was a major influence; to him as well as to Adam Smith, Jefferson owed views on property and the necessity of exchange in a free society.

Among other things Wills provides addenda to the well-known history of Utilitarian development, and it might have been interesting had he examined the views of Jeremy Bentham, both a supporter of the Americans and critic of their Declaration. But he devotes a good deal of space to commentary on Jefferson's position on slavery which he professes not to find as baffling as some have found it. Jefferson wanted a homogeneous community for white and black; for the latter, not enslaved, this could only be attained by departure to another land, and one wholly their own.

Creating America will be required reading for those who want to know the intellectual circumstance in which Jefferson drafted the Declaration. Perhaps the difference between his and the revised document will still strike many as comparatively unimportant, but scrutiny of the two versions under the able guidance of Garry Wills must certainly enhance understanding of a great American.

Rosemont, Pennsylvania


As contemporary America swings back towards more "traditional" and "conservative" values, no one should be too surprised by the appearance of old-fashioned biographies trumpeting the masculine virtues of ancient American heroes. This is not to say that Oliver Hazard Perry's character or career is uninteresting. His achievement on Lake Erie was truly remarkable and one of the few bright spots on the dismal American military record in the War of 1812.
Dillon's biography is a plodding, if readable, narrative. In brief, Perry was born in Rhode Island and entered the navy as a thirteen-year-old midshipman during the naval war with France. Despite seeing little action in that conflict or the subsequent engagement against the Barbary Powers, Perry rose through the ranks. Wisely he sought out patrons such as John Rodgers who promoted his ambitions. The beginning of the War of 1812 found Perry relegated to minor duties as a result of official displeasure over a mishap in which his ship had run aground and sunk. Not until the early months of 1813 were his influential friends able to gain him an appointment in Commodore Isaac Chauncey's Great Lakes command. Perry accepted the job reluctantly and only because he saw it as an opportunity to achieve his aim of capturing a frigate in the Atlantic.

Perry's entire claim to historical importance is based on his activities between February and September of 1813. Ordered by Chauncey to take charge of American naval operations in Lake Erie, Perry journeyed through the wilderness to Fort Erie, formerly known as Presque Isle. His task was to gain control of the inland sea and thereby assist American army operations in the western Great Lakes region. What he found at Fort Erie would have thoroughly discouraged a less ambitious man. While the British possessed a functioning fleet, Perry commanded an undefended ship yard. He was a naval commander without a single ship.

Perry's struggles to build a fleet rightfully receive a great deal of Dillon's attention. Almost single-handedly he assembled the laborers, sailors, equipment, and armaments to construct his armada. He received little help from Chauncey and even less from the government in Washington. Had it not been for the manufacturing resources of the booming new town of Pittsburgh and the support of key citizens in that community, it is doubtful that Perry's ships would ever have been launched.

On 10 September 1813, Perry led his force against the British near Put-in-Bay. Although his flagship, the Lawrence, was nearly blasted out of the water, Perry managed to transfer his flag to the Niagara whose commander had unaccountably kept the ship out of action. In eight bloody minutes Perry broke through the British line of battle and forced the surrender of the principal enemy vessels. By the end of the day the entire British fleet had been captured and Lake Erie was the property of the Americans. Moving swiftly, Perry coordinated his naval operations with General William Henry Harrison. Harrison's army, freed from the British naval threat, quickly captured the British posts at the western end of Lake Erie and crushed the British land forces at the Battle of the Thames. Before winter arrived American control of the northwest had been assured as British dreams of an Indian buffer state were extinguished. Perry himself was highly honored by the government and people of the United States. In 1818 he died of yellow fever while on diplomatic assignment in the Caribbean. He was only thirty-four.

Dillon portrays Perry as tough, ambitious, thoroughly patriotic, and a brilliant naval tactician. He believed in honor and observed a strict code of personal chivalry. Like most of the major military figures of the day, he engaged in trivial personal rivalries. At one point he even participated in a foolish duel with one of his subordinate marine corps officers whom he had struck in an argument.
This particular biography of Perry leaves much to be desired. While eliminating footnotes in a popular history is common, the absence of a bibliography is less justified. For the most part, Dillon appears to have drawn heavily on primary sources, particularly Perry's papers. He displays no particular knowledge of the British sources. What is more damaging, however, is Dillon's failure to project an understanding of the broader history of the period. There is no pertinent discussion of American foreign or military policy. Neither is there any coverage of the total military and naval situations on the Canadian frontier. In short, important pieces of the historical framework in which Perry operated are missing. Readers with a general interest in American history will find Dillon's volume well written, particularly those sections dealing with military activities.

*University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*  
FRANK A. CASSELL


This volume traces the hegira of 130,000 Indochinese from Asia to America. Due to a lack of contingency planning prior to the unexpected collapse of the Thieu regime in April 1975, "half the Vietnamese we intended to get out did not get out—and half who did get out should not have" (p. 22). Four reception centers, established in America, domiciled the refugees, who largely came from South Vietnam's socio-economic elite, until they received authorization to settle in the United States or some third country. According to Kelly, these camps transformed the Vietnamese from refugees, perceiving themselves as temporarily away from home for political reasons, into immigrants, envisioning permanent residency amidst a new culture. By late December 1975, the camps closed as remaining Vietnamese acquired sponsors, individuals or groups willing to assume responsibility for them. Kelly reports that many sponsors, however, confronting economic pressures, prodded the Indochinese to find employment quickly. As a result, most of the Vietnamese gravitated toward low-income jobs that provided little potential for advancement.

The major portion of Kelly's account, which relies extensively on evidence germane to Fort Indian Town Gap near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, deals with the refugee camps. Utilizing interviews with refugees and American personnel, unpublished orientation materials and memorandums, government documents, and journal literature, Kelly contends that within the camps, "Americans were actors and Vietnamese were acted upon" (p. 88). From the vantage point of one who worked at Indian Town Gap, this reviewer believes Kelly's generalization requires qualification. Although the outward contours of camp life reflected arrangements and decisions instituted by Americans, the sheer size of the camp, barracks settings during the sundown to sunrise interval, the participation of many young refugees in informal peer groups, and the varied way in which Americans at lower levels of the camp hierarchy created permeable boundaries for formal guidelines created some situations in which Vietnamese
found it possible to function as active agents. Despite this caveat, Kelly is unquestionably correct in asserting that Americans prevented Indian Town Gap from becoming a "little Vietnam." When I suggested that encouraging qualified Vietnamese to teach courses to their fellow refugees would alleviate anomie, a superior designated the proposal counterproductive on the grounds that it would foster a sense of community, making the Vietnamese reluctant to leave the camp. Indeed, most of the Vietnamese, as Kelly emphasizes, opposed the policy of diaspora, which dispersed them throughout the country, initially impeding the formation of Vietnamese-American communities.

Most of the limitations of Kelly's chronicle—little comment on the contrasts between the Vietnamese experience and that of other immigrant groups, slight attention to cultural adaptation, and confining discussion of economic adjustment to preliminary encounters—result from the close proximity between the appearance of this book and the events it analyzes. Perhaps the primary significance of this cogent and seminal work is that it may inspire and provide a foundation for more specialized studies of a fated people who appear in danger of becoming forgotten Americans.

SUNY at Oneonta


George Rapp's Harmony Society was but one of many such utopian ventures that appeared during the nineteenth century. Bound by a belief that harmony would prevail following the Second Coming of Christ, the society established itself in Butler County, Pennsylvania, in the early 1800s. A decade of prosperity and growth led Rapp to seek lands for expansion, and he looked to the West. Ten years later, in 1824, the Society again moved, this time back to Pennsylvania when it established a settlement at Economy.

These volumes tell the story of that ten-year hiatus near the banks of the Wabash River in Indiana. Both bulge with letters and documents, drawn from the Harmony Society Archives at the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, that provide insight into the external relations of the Society. They reveal a society concerned with economic and financial matters, the flow of immigrants from Germany to join the Society, land development in Indiana and the disposition of previous holdings in Pennsylvania, relations with various government bureaucracies, and religion. There is very little personal correspondence.

The Indiana years were generally prosperous ones for the Society, and the letters reveal constant exertions by members to maintain that posture. They remained wary of outsiders. "We have few friends and good neighbors are rare," wrote one member from Indiana in 1814 (p. 1: 43). But the Society persisted and expended considerable efforts to collect
Inheritances due Harmonists in Germany. By 1815 Frederick Rapp reported that “we are all well and greatly satisfied” (p. 1: 171). Hereafter discussions of business matters dominate this collection.

Occasionally other problems intrude. Former members of the Society issued denunciations of the group, attacking Rapp (“this concentrated monk”) for running a slave colony or questioning his motives. Religious separatism and communistic utopianism bred suspicion.

After 1821 Rapp began to plan another move, one that would relocate the Society in Economy, Pennsylvania. The Harmonists remained prosperous; in fact neighbors apparently complained that its communitarianism enabled the Society to dominate local capitalist markets. Harmonists could undersell local competitors, who had to pay their workmen. In 1823 the Society even loaned $5000 to rescue the State of Indiana from financial distress. But religion, not money, remained the vital force. The purpose of Harmony, wrote George Rapp in 1823, was unity. This “unites time and eternity, stills all need, on the purest path of the religion of Jesus” (p. 2:570).

No review of this length can do justice to the wealth of materials contained in these volumes. The editor has done a masterful job throughout. The headnotes and footnotes provide continuity to the collection and organize this material into something much more than a scattered collection of letters. The Indiana Historical Society is to be commended for its continuing effort to publish primary materials in a format at once useful to historians and inexpensive. These volumes are a “best buy” for persons interested in religion, Pennsylvania history, or early nineteenth-century reform and utopianism.

Franklin & Marshall College

John A. Andrew, III


Students of American railroad history will find relatively little to dispute in this book. A network of railroads had emerged east of the Mississippi prior to 1860. These lines required extensive financial support, employed many workers of different skills, and helped “the national economy achieve a new orientation and posture.” They supplemented and, in some cases, supplanted turnpikes, canals, and steamboats as the primary form of transportation, and their predominantly east-west axis helped to shape the direction of national expansion. Whether all readers will agree that “no decade was more important in the history of American railroads than the antebellum 1850s” will depend on one’s frame of reference and definition.

However, this book should not be judged only on its “well-known facts” or thesis. It is the wealth of information that Stover has collected, the excellent tables and maps that he has used to highlight his arguments that sets this book apart. These make Iron Road to the West an important addition to our literature of American transportation.
Stover’s primary sources of information were the *American Railroad Journal*, Poor’s *Manuals*, and the 1860 *Census*, but he did not neglect other important relevant materials. Two of his eight chapters (the first and the last) provide useful overviews of the railroads in 1850 and 1860, respectively. In the former, the author asserts that railroads “were the major ‘big business’ on the American scene,” and notes that passenger and freight revenues were about equal in importance. In the latter, he argues that the railroad axis promoted such a degree of economic interdependence between the northeastern states and the Old Northwest that a political alliance was forged between the two. This helped to shape the course and outcome of the Civil War.

The railroads in each of the three geographic sectors are carefully analyzed through the use of text, tables, and maps. Stover explores patterns of growth, reasons for costs of construction and operation, quality of management, dividends, and the political and business connections of the entrepreneurs. His chapter on government-railroad relations highlights land grants and the surveys for a transcontinental line, while in another chapter Stover identifies the many advantages that railroads had over other forms of transportation. Speed and regularity of service, certainty during all seasons and under variable weather conditions, ease of construction over different terrains, flexibility so as to modify service and facilities to meet changing demand, and competitive rates worked to the railroad’s advantage. A most useful chapter, because of its wealth of information and synthesis, deals with technical advances, labor, and capital. Diversity rather than uniformity prevailed in rail, gauge, and locomotive and car design, while funds, derived primarily from American sources, made possible a tripling of mileage in the decade.

Stover’s notes and bibliography indicate the breadth of his sources, although he does persist in misspelling Thomas Cochran’s name, and the Index is serviceable. Brief studies of Pennsylvania’s railroads and the impact of the Pennsy on western railroads are available, but how will anyone remember my beloved Johnstown when its name is misspelled at the only place it is mentioned in the text (p. 171), and it is not listed in the Index?

*West Chester State College*  
ROBERT E. CARLSON


The work ethic provided a common thread to seemingly disparate activities and writings in a variety of fields. Solidly anchored in the Protestant, property owning, middle class of the North which exercised wide influence in society, it spread to other groups including workers, women, and writers. Before 1850 the work ethic bore a significant correspondence to economic reality which helped to mask its dualities of asceticism and craftsmanship and honest toil and success. Between 1850 and 1920 mechanization and the factory system transformed the economy and threatened existing values. However, the vagueness, flexibility, and widespread
popularity of the work ethic led Americans to cling, sometimes with growing tenacity, to this increasingly unrealistic doctrine. Its appeal also led workers, writers, women, theologians, advocates, and the middle class to claim the ethic for their own and to use it as a weapon although its exact nature remained vague and baffling and other doctrines rose to challenge it.

The factory system which undermined crafts, unsettled the relationship between work and wealth, and produced a growing economic surplus challenged the existing form of the work ethic in the late nineteenth century. Wage workers responded to the resulting problems by seeking upward mobility, establishing cooperatives, and investigating industrial democracy with its promise of the reconstruction of factories along political and constitutional lines. However, these initiatives proved only slightly superior to the profit sharing and piecework systems advocated by the middle class. Therefore, after 1920 the impulse toward efficiency superseded the striving for freedom and independence so vital to earlier artisans. The factory and mechanization also changed the nature of work which became more specialized, simple, machine paced, and repetitious. Once again the response proved deficient as middle-class moralists, blinded by their faith in progress and their distance from the working class, responded tardily and the new social investigators, although perceiving the problem of industrial monotony, offered little beyond an awakened interest in crafts, the industrial museum at Hull House, and a renewed request for shorter hours. Advocates of the work ethic divided as changing social reality led the middle class to praise the bell towers of the factories, and the workers to condemn them. Many workers rejected this new work discipline by quitting their jobs, practicing informal production restriction, using irregular work patterns, and participating in the eight-hour day crusades of the 1860s and 1880s in protest against a system symbolized by the stop watches of the Taylorites. The work ethic remained strong among them, however, as they followed William Sylvis and Terence Powderly who proclaimed labor as noble and holy and praised the craftsmen and their works.

While workers and their spokesmen grappled with the implications of the work ethic in a changing social setting, Henry Ward Beecher and lesser-known churchmen counseled their fellow Americans. Beecher's early views extolled work, but as Americans responded to growing economic surplus by taking vacations, watching college football games, and enjoying Coney Island, he shifted to a position more favorable to repose and play. The writers of stories for boys also reflected and stimulated social change as the Optic stories of William T. Adams which focused on the heroic virtues of nerve and daring, Horatio Alger's paens to upward mobility by luck and patronage, and fairy tales which appealed to imagination rather than understanding superseded the sober, prudential virtues of work and duty highlighted in the pre-1850 stories of Maria Edgeworth and Jacob Abbott. These tales, which attempted to balance healthy moral lessons and excitement, illustrated the continuation of a modified form of the work ideal in an increasingly alien setting. The work ethic also provided a focus for the increasing discontent of middle-class women in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Harriet
B. Stowe and Charlotte P. Gilman both extolled the value of work although the former viewed the household as the proper arena for the display of duty and competence and the latter perceived the household as the setting for the economic dependence of women and saw the need for its reorganization and the movement of women into paying work outside the home which would provide them with the opportunity to be of public service without crushing the self. The continuing moral imperative of work and the imprecise definition of the work ethic found expression in the praise of work by women who identified it with meaningful activity but also celebrated growing female participation in the labor force and in the widespread capitalization on the work ethic by proponents on both sides of the political spectrum. Edwin Godkin, in behalf of the conservatives, pointed to laziness as the wellspring of radicalism and criticized the idler, while reformers and radicals condemned landlords, moneylenders, and capitalists for violating the work ethic.

Professor Rodgers' combining of intellectual and social history increases the perceptiveness of his study and allows him to discover unrecognized commonalities at the cost of confronting a slippery concept and handling the interaction of intellectual history and social history. These responsibilities remain partially unfulfilled as the author accords much more attention to the work ethic of the middle class than to their work experience, neglects to explore the relationship between the work ethic and the labor theory of value, and leaves the artisan concept of the work ethic underdeveloped. Alan Dawley's study of Lynn and Susan Hirsch's book on Newark now offer a solid underpinning for a description of this important and distinctive work ethic. Richard Hofstadter's The Age of Reform, uncited by the author, which focused on the persistence and transformation of the agrarian myth into soft and hard sides of agrarianism, deserved recognition. Both the Hofstadter book and the volume by Rodgers display the virtue of provocativeness and insightful generalization and suffer from the defect of an insufficient recognition of the distinctiveness of movements sharing common elements.

This is a valuable, complex, and well-documented book which would be enhanced by a synthetic concluding chapter. Hopefully, it will inspire similar studies such as an American counterpart to the study of “time” in European history by E. P. Thompson.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Irwin M. Marcus


This brief history of the life of Jacob Cist and the development of anthracite mining in northeastern Pennsylvania demonstrates once again how easily our present-mindedness makes it difficult for us to understand the thinking of people in earlier periods of history. Wouldn't everybody in the early 1800s realize that Pennsylvania's, and to a large extent the nation's, economic destiny would be shaped by exploiting the unmatchable
coal resources of this state? The author of this study, H. Benjamin Powell, portrays Jacob Cist, a Wilkes-Barre merchant, as a key historical agent with a vision of the future who tried to persuade businessmen to invest both in coal mining and in improving transportation from mines to markets, and to convince consumers, both domestic and industrial, to appreciate the superior virtues of anthracite. Additionally, Cist served as a publicist for the industry and lobbyist in the Pennsylvania legislature, explored and mapped coal deposits in the Luzerne formation, and even designed and marketed stoves which could burn anthracite. Despite the exhorting of Cist and others, Pennsylvanians were resistant to their destiny: a number of trades refused to budge from their traditional fuels, businessmen were reluctant to put the necessary amounts of money in anthracite mining or marketing, and the state government only backed into supporting a canal useful to coal interests while it was concentrating on an ill-considered East-West system.

Yet Jacob Cist was very much a man of his times. Despite the author's efforts to picture Cist as an “entrepreneur,” Cist is limited by the ideas and practices of his time. Though the development of the coal industry desperately needed large sums for investment in coal properties, mine building, transportation from mine head to river or canal and on to a market, stockpiling, and distribution in population centers, Cist railed against corporations as “many-headed monsters” (p. 15). Equally desperate for full-time competent managers, Cist and his associates, avoiding the corporate model, entered into loose, short-term partnerships in which a partner might or might not carry out his assigned responsibilities. Cist himself really was not that single-minded about a career in coal because he, too, spent most of his business life as a typical omniscient merchant of these times, buying and selling in a variety of lines. Upon marriage in 1807 he formed an enduring merchantile partnership with his father-in-law Matthias Hollenback of Wilkes-Barre who had large diversified interests in the East which included cattle droving, land speculation, and cannon manufacturing as well as wholesale trade in goods.

H. Benjamin Powell's research in business records has been extensive and establishes Cist's useful role as one of the innovators responsible for bringing into being Pennsylvania's important anthracite industry. Powell is well informed about the more general development of the hard coal industry and places Cist in a meaningful background. On the other hand the author chose an unusual topical organization which frequently doubles back in the account with inevitable repetition and, surprisingly, the death of the central figure at the end of the first chapter. Although the author makes a strong case for the importance of the war-induced "coal crisis" as a spur to the use of local anthracite, the book goes well beyond the period indicated by the title in describing Cist's part in developing this industry. Examples of Cist's drawings of furnaces and coal deposits enhance the value of this study; a map showing the eastern Pennsylvania river systems and mountains would have helped readers to understand the special transportation problems. A more fundamental reservation is whether this variously employed merchant truly comes under the definition of "entrepreneur" as used by the author. Cist's application to coal problems was sporadic and no single, lasting company. mining
or transportation, seems to have come into being because Cist played a central role in bringing it about during his short lifetime which ended in 1825.

As a study of Jacob Cist’s ventures in the coal industry, Powell’s book properly focuses on his central figure rather than on the industry itself. Readers will find a more comprehensive presentation of the exploitation of the more southerly anthracite deposits in C. K. Yearley Jr.’s Enterprise and Anthracite: Economics and Democracy in Schuylkill County. Two older titles, A Century of Progress: History of the Delaware and Hudson Company 1828–1923 and The Story of Anthracite, are still useful general accounts of the subject.

Hofstra University

Robert A. Davison


Colonel Henry Bouquet probably is the least known of the important British officers who made substantial contributions in America’s early wars. The subject of only occasional journal articles and of no biography, Bouquet nevertheless served in America from 1756 until he died of yellow fever in 1765 in Florida. He played significant roles in seizing Fort Duquesne and in suppressing Pontiac’s Rebellion.

This handsome edition of Bouquet’s papers, the fourth volume to appear since the project commenced nearly thirty years ago, spans the period from 1 September 1759 to 31 August 1760. During this period Bouquet darted from post to post in western Pennsylvania, supervising the establishment of fortifications and securing British control over the region. In July 1760 he commanded the expedition which established the British outpost at Presque Isle.

Unfortunately, this volume provides few insights into the Colonel’s temperament. Fewer than 5 percent of the approximately one thousand letters are personal in nature. These pieces give the reader a shadowy glimpse of a lonely, grasping man. Bouquet described himself as “constantly among a crowd, but without friends,” and he acknowledged that he lived “in a solitude . . . of the worst kind” (p. 115). In another letter he begged Richard Peters, the province’s secretary and the clerk of the Provincial Council, for favors. “I had sufficient reasons to expect some Preference,” the Colonel charged, although “I never could observe the least Distinction Shewn me in preference to the meanest settler . . .” (p. 465). Bouquet hated the native Americans, characterizing them as drunken devils. He was an officer who looked lovingly upon warfare. He believed “a long and uninterrupted peace corrupts the manners, and breeds all sorts of vices. . . .” War, he added, “gives a new spring to our souls.” In times of struggle “real merits and virtues are no longer trampled upon by the arrogant pride of wealth and Place. The prejudice in favour of Birth, Fortune, Rank vanishes” (p. 115).

This volume is a mine of information for those who wish to study the day-by-day operations of the British army’s attempt to secure western
Pennsylvania from French encroachment. It bulges with letters concerning Bouquet's search for workers and provisions, a frustrating experience that led him to label Pennsylvanians as "Stupid, Obstinate, narrow-Sighted People [who] do not deserve the favours of Providence. . . " (p. 80). In addition, this volume contains reports on troop strengths, recruiting practices, disciplinary problems, and intelligence-gathering activities.

The editors have made several important contributions in presenting their material. Letters are presented both in English and in their original language, each person mentioned in a letter is identified thoroughly, and portions deleted from the original letters are presented to the reader.

Scholars will find that this edition of the Bouquet papers is an attractive, helpful tool for understanding the Anglo-French struggle to control the Ohio Valley. They also undoubtedly will hope that the remaining volumes of this series will be produced more rapidly than were the initial volumes.

West Georgia College

John E. Ferling

SORRY, OUR MISTAKE

The following correspondence has been handed to us by the Mayor, with a request to give it a place in our columns:

Pittsburgh, Aug. 25, 1849

The undersigned declare that it was owing to ignorance of consular rights, and excitement only, (not knowing there was a Hanoverian consul in Pittsburgh,) which induced us to enter the consul's house and force him to take down the Hanoverian flag, hoisted in honor of the President of the United States, on his arrival in our city on Saturday last.

We hereby tender an apology to the Hanoverian consul, and through him to the Hanoverian Government for this disrespect of the law of Nations.

James Miles
D. E. Mitchell

It is due to Mr. Mitchell, one of the parties subscribing to the above to state that he denies having entered the premises of Mr. Bollman, with hostile feelings. He states his intention to have been to preserve the peace—but that he is perfectly willing to make an apology for any unintentional insult to the Consul.

Mr. Miles acknowledges that he did endeavor to persuade some persons to pull down the flag, believing it to be the Union Jack, but on discovery of his error desisted.

John Herron, Mayor

The Morning Post (Pittsburgh, Pa.), 30 August 1849.

贡献者：Schuyler C. Marshall，California State College.