BOOK REVIEWS

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This publication is the by-product of a series of archival techniques workshops presented by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in 1977-78. The workshops brought together local historical societies and other archival repositories concerned with the preservation of historical records in Pennsylvania. The workshop faculty was asked to address itself to the local historical society and to provide ground-level techniques and inexpensive solutions to the serious problems that beset the small repository.

Judged by this standard of utility, the fifteen articles that comprise the bulk of this volume succeed to varying degrees. The authors demonstrate an expertise in their subjects which reflects the professionalism of the major archival units at which they are employed. Not all of their presentations will be of great value to the paid or volunteer archivist who, confronted with the community attic, begins the process of arranging, describing, and properly caring for that collection. Surely an articulate individual could have been found who brought order and an adequate level of conservation to a local repository while working within the restrictions of a small budget and staff. The case history of that success might have served as a serious and fundamental place of beginning for many local repositories.

The book is divided into four major divisions which treat the subjects of archival arrangement; planning for users, security, and space; the conservation and preservation of historical materials; and funding sources for archival repositories.

Part II, “Archival Methodology: Arrangement of Archives and Manuscripts,” begins with an article by Frank Zabrosky which discusses appraisal of potential accessions on the basis of evidential and information content and arrangement according to the principles of provenance and original order. An injunction to small historical societies that they should not concentrate on collecting the records of the elite to the exclusion of the rest of society should have been included. Frank Suran ably sketches out a descriptive program that can be adapted to the collections, reference needs, and staff size of any repository. The special accessing and storage considerations regarding historic photographs are concretely discussed by Elisabeth Betz. Maps have been somewhat neglected as research sources, and Leon Stout presents a broad scheme for the management of cartographic records.
Part III, "Planning for Users, Security and Space," is introduced by George Chalon's description of the several functions comprising a general reference service. Edmund Berkeley, Jr., discusses the growing concern with archival security and a useful security checklist is included in Appendix IV. Berkeley's treatment of the topic is suggestive, although his admonition to avoid volunteer and student help is impractical. Samuel Mauray presents some tools that would be helpful in planning for an effective utilization of space.

Part IV, "The Conservation and Preservation of Historical Materials: Prevention and Preservation Techniques," is introduced by Willman Spawn with an essay in which he suggests a plan of action for dealing with the results of a disaster. Norvell Jones presents a common-sense approach to the overwhelming and costly consideration of conserving and preserving archival material, suggesting a simple and inexpensive program emphasizing the daily efforts and practices whereby preservation becomes a habit.

Part V, "Where To Go For Help: State and Federal Sources," discusses the roles played by the Public Committee for the Humanities in Pennsylvania, the National Endowment for the Humanities Research Collections Program, and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission in the preservation and accessing of historical materials. Harry Whipkey presents a sincere, if hedging, discussion of what help the State Archives offers.

If this short volume does not fully provide the ground-level and inexpensive solutions to archival problems that it promises, it does provide an introduction to an extensive body of literature. As such, the book is a useful point of departure for further study. The book is made more valuable by the inclusion of a thorough bibliography and several appendixes which include examples of a deed of gift, a deposit agreement, rules for use of a collection, a security checklist, and a lexicon of terms for common photographic and print processes.

Richard A. Burkert


The subject of leadership in pre-Civil War America is one that has received a good bit of attention recently. The once prevailing notion that the Jacksonian period was the Age of the Common Man has been disputed by historians who argue that the United States has always had a definite class structure and that the upper classes never relinquished power after the Revolution. Whitman Ridgway's book on Maryland community leadership between 1790 and 1840 is an important contribution to this debate. Unlike most earlier studies, Ridgway makes a direct comparison of leadership in different types of communities, and he finds significant variations. In rural and homogeneous St. Marys and Talbot counties the
colonial oligarchy of plantation owners continued its unbroken rule through the first and second American party systems. In Frederick County, which closely resembles many rural Pennsylvania counties, an ethnically diverse population, party competition, and conflicts between the county seat and country fostered challenges to the old rural oligarchy. By the 1830s Frederick's leadership was composed of a variety of men, less wealthy and more urban than previous leaders. Baltimore, the most diverse community in Maryland, had the least oligarchical control by the time of the second party system, with merchants and professionals sharing power with artisans and other groups. In all these communities, though, the oligarchy remained an important part of leadership into the 1830s, even when it had ceased to dominate. American politics, Ridgway concludes, had elements of both democracy and oligarchy with the latter becoming increasingly specialized and withdrawn from political activity in heterogeneous communities.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of this book is its careful attention to methodology. There are several ways to identify community leaders including formal office, reputation, wealth, social position, and the power to make decisions. Ridgway has opted for the decisional method which isolates those leaders who controlled the most important community decisions, in this case party nominations, internal improvements, and political reform. There are problems with the way this approach is worked out, however. An attempt to quantify the relative importance of different party positions in order to find the leaders results in such anomalies as ranking the chairmen of ward meetings higher than delegates to state and national conventions. Some high-scoring officers, such as the vice chairmen of conventions, may have been largely honorary. Surprisingly, government officials are not counted per se as decision makers. Still, the decisional elites chosen for each county are reasonably convincing and readers who prefer another approach will be glad to know that the author has also compiled lists of positional, propertied, and commercial elites which he uses to explore the distribution of power. This analysis would have been more complete if the wealth and occupations of elites had been compared with the population as a whole. There is much valuable material here on other subjects as well, notably local party politics and economic development, but an inadequate index makes it hard to find. In general, though, this is an extremely well-documented book, nearly half its length consisting of footnotes and biographical tables. It is a shame that the scope of Ridgway's argument is often obscured by a dry and repetitious style.

_Agricultural History Branch, U.S. Department of Agriculture_  

DOUGLAS E. BOWERS

Although bituminous coal mining was undoubtedly one of the nation's largest industries during the period from World War I through the New Deal, it lacked the structural unity that might have allowed it to fit conveniently into one or the other of the two most popular models of regulatory change. Soft coal producers were not sufficiently united to "capture" regulatory agencies and turn them to their own ends; and by the same token, although detractors were fond of labeling the industry as a trust, bituminous producers were not a powerful monolith that could easily be collared and manipulated by a few laws passed in the "public interest." Rather, soft coal mining was characterized by a peculiar structural fragmentation, or division into diverse and very competitive regional producer groups. Exploring the ramifications of this disunity, James P. Johnson argues convincingly in this valuable monograph that understanding the industry's structure is crucial to comprehending its political history.

The most important variant of soft coal's regional divisions pitted more thoroughly unionized and higher-wage Northern fields against less unionized and lower-wage Southern fields. This major split, in addition to other splinter tendencies, left a power vacuum in industry leadership that producers in a more tightly structured sector would have quickly filled. But ironically, competition and disagreement among producers allowed the United Mine Workers union to emerge as "the one national force in the industry" (p. 165). Indeed, according to Johnson, if any one soft coal group could be said to have "captured" lawmakers and bent the regulatory flow in its own chosen direction, it was this powerful union and not any group of producers. Divisions among soft coal producers also strictly limited the degree to which New Deal lawmakers could use World War I regulation as a model in time of depression. During the war, Johnson points out, "a booming economy papered over the structural fragmentation of the industry" (p. 8), permitting temporary unity; but economic depression accentuated competition and disunity, which in turn doomed attempts at industrial self-government under the NRA and the two Guffey acts; thus, "the war analogy proved false" (p. 9).

Whether by choice or necessity, Johnson has focused his research efforts almost entirely upon the actors on the Washington stage, primarily politicians, regulators, and union men. Coal companies and the businessmen who ran them remain shadowy images, usually mentioned simply as members of particular regional groups. While this treatment may be consistent with Johnson's thesis that producers were relatively powerless, his assertions to that effect might have been bolstered by more evidence of how individual businessmen viewed their predicament. Those whose interests lie in Pennsylvania history will find that Johnson's approach precludes much detailed discussion of particular events or individuals within the state; Pennsylvania coal companies are presented primarily as members of the so-called Central Competitive Field, a regional grouping that also included mines in Indiana,
Illinois, and Ohio. Despite these limitations, which should be expanded
to include a prose style that is less than exciting, Johnson has shown
meticulous care in handling a wide variety of original sources. His book
deserves the close attention of both political and business historians.

Newark, Delaware

THOMAS A. BOWDEN

Conscience in Crisis: Mennonites and Other Peace Churches in America, 1739-1789.

Conscience in Crisis describes, analyzes, and documents the evolving
response of the "Mennonites and other Peace Churches" primarily in
Pennsylvania to the series of military conflicts which began in the 1740s
and continued in one form or another into the 1780s. A thirty-five page
introduction provides background on the historic peace sects and defines
the central challenge they faced in America between 1740 and 1780 as
citizens of largely self-governing societies threatened by war. In these years
of crisis the traditional peace testimony provided inadequate guidance.
It clearly proscribed offensive warfare and the payment of taxes levied
explicitly for military purposes but remained ambiguous on a host of new
and complex war-related moral issues. The seven chapters which constitute
the bulk of the book trace both the peace sects' struggle to define a rational
and consistent response to these new circumstances and their gradual
transformation in membership and self-definition as they struggled with
these agonizing moral questions.

In the 1740s and 1750s the Quakers, Mennonites, Dunkers, and
Schwenkfelders united in opposition to compulsory military service and
in support of generous charity for war victims. However, they exhibited
much less unanimity on the questions of defensive action against marauding
Indians, hiring out wagons and teams for military expeditions, selling
fodder and provisions to men in arms, and paying general taxes to support
a government engaged in military action. Before the peace sects fully re-
solved the moral dilemmas of the 1740s and 1750s new ones crowded for-
ward in the 1760s and 1770s: self-defense against the Paxton Boys, the
validity and practicality of the movement for royal government, taxes in
lieu of military service, the enforcement of an economic boycott, participa-
tion in the Association, the payment of non-Association taxes, the manu-
facture of arms on military contracts, the use of paper currency issued to
finance the war, the legitimacy of extralegal committees and the new
Revolutionary government, and finally the question of allegiance to
George III and the new Pennsylvania loyalty oaths.

Partially obscured by these particular questions lay the broad and
fundamental issue of the moral validity of using politics and political action
as a means of advancing and defending their particular religious vision.

In working out concrete answers to the specific moral questions pressed
upon them by forty years of warfare, the peace sects redefined the central
core of their belief system and refined and honed their definition of them-
selves. This in turn involved a slow but inexorable winnowing of the ranks
of the true believers. At the end a purified remnant remained: politically isolated, psychologically separated, internally united, and intellectually and emotionally committed to a near perfect pacifism. With this, the fifty year drift from sect to church so evident in Pennsylvania in the early eighteenth century came to an end. In the era of the American Revolution the peace sects again became a people set apart.

This story is told with an unusual and highly successful mixture of narrative, analysis, and some three hundred documents ranging from public records to private correspondence and all illustrating and advancing and enriching the interpretation. The substance and the form are admirably blended to serve a variety of good purposes. For contemporary Mennonites and other peace sects, it provides a readable and valuable perspective on a critical phase in their historical development. For all Christians it illustrates once again a central dilemma of their faith: how to be in the world but not part of the world. For historians of the American Revolution it documents the degree to which a real internal political revolution in Pennsylvania accompanied the separation from Great Britain. For those interested in Pennsylvania politics it emphasizes the degree to which politics both before and after the Revolution reflected the clash of intensely held and religiously based cultural values and group loyalties. For the general reader as well as for the research specialist it is a treasure trove of valuable information.

A few caveats. First: the text fails to mention but the documents reveal just how infuriating, insensitive, insufferable, and insultingly righteous those who believe in their own moral superiority can, on occasion, be. Secondly, although the text argues that the peace sects were truly neutral during the Revolution, the documents suggest that many were Loyalists at heart, a perfectly understandable and justified position for those who perceived the Revolutionary movement in Pennsylvania as the handiwork of cultural groups they had traditionally taken as negative referents. Finally, although the title emphasizes "Mennonites and Other Peace Churches" the text and the documents draw more heavily on Quaker sources and supplement these with Mennonite materials where available. The assumption, and a valid one I believe, is that the common experience of all the peace sects in the crisis years 1740–1780 justifies using documents from one group or another as typical of all.

Conscience in Crisis is a nice piece of work: well researched, well written, effectively organized, readable, and useful. In addition it should be pointed out that although it is written by three men closely associated with the Mennonites, and published by the Mennonite Historical Society, it is a well balanced and scholarly study of the Mennonites and other peace sects, certainly a praiseworthy accomplishment and a testimony to their commitment to the canons of the history profession.

SUNY College, Brockport

Owen S. Ireland
In his history of early Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Jerome H. Wood has chosen to appeal primarily to a wide audience of general readers "interested in having a glimpse of life in an eighteenth-century community of the Middle Colonies." For this reason, perhaps, he has developed his material in a broadly narrative manner, focusing on a set of selected topics rather than on the larger theoretical concerns which provide the framework for much of the current work on colonial communities.

The book begins by describing the creation of Lancaster as a case study in eighteenth-century real estate speculation, with a site chosen largely because it was owned by friends of the Proprietors, rather than for its possession of those geographical advantages traditionally regarded as essential to the success of preindustrial settlement. Promotion by influential interests proved equally effective, however, and Lancaster rapidly became the chief administrative, economic, and social center of Pennsylvania's hinterland—for many decades the largest inland settlement in British North America. Planned and developed from its inception as an urban center, Lancaster is not unfamiliar to students of colonial Pennsylvania. It presents the picture of a town based on an English model but largely populated by Germans, with diversity of ethnic background and privatism in community outlook as the twin roots of its growth and direction. While Lancaster acquired, therefore, a good bit of economic vibrancy, it never expressed the sense of community which characterized town-building in New England.

After setting out this general framework, Wood divides his detailed description of Lancaster's history into three main parts. The first of these deals with the political and administrative development of Lancaster and the part it played in the Revolution. A strange mixture of political autonomy and economic dependency marked the governmental structure, which included a town meeting with almost universal adult male suffrage and an elected board of burgesses and assistants. While these local officials exercised executive and judicial functions, they lacked, through most of the period, any powers of taxation. This deficiency prevented the growth of local institutions and helped to cause a general apathy which marked Lancaster's public life, despite the theoretically broad opportunity for political participation.

The second part of *Conestoga Crossroads* describes Lancaster's economic development both as a center for trading within the rapidly growing settled agricultural region and as a "back-county Emporium" for the wilderness stretching westward. Wood carefully documents the central position of Lancaster shopkeepers, poised as they were between the Philadelphia merchants and the frontiersmen involved in the Indian trade. He also stresses the development of Lancaster as a nascent industrial center progressing from the essential processing of agricultural raw materials to the more sophisticated manufacture of shoes, guns, textiles, furniture, and
luxury items. All areas of Lancaster's economic development are further measured by the effects of crises brought on by the Revolution and changing relations with Britain.

In the final section of his book, the author turns to the social structure and life of early Lancaster, and it is here that those interested in the new social history are most apt to be disappointed. Only one chapter makes use of quantitative sources, and the data gathered are not exploited to analyze the more sensitive issues of Lancaster's unique structure, but rather to "corroborate the findings of other scholars" working on material germane to other places, other times. Since Lancaster is not fully explored, the comparisons seem incomplete and superficial. Other chapters, in the literary tradition of Bridenbaugh and Tolles, paint a picture of religious and ethnic diversity which leave their mark on all aspects of town culture. As Wood concludes, Lancaster in the eighteenth century emerges as a scaled-down version of Philadelphia, rejecting "holistic blueprints for society in favor of an unprecedented scope for private initiative," and announcing those "themes to be repeated in other American towns, in later days."

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