BOOK REVIEWS


A history should attempt to explain the present through an examination of the past. Through exposition and explanation it should explore and illuminate the past through the use of examples and illustrations, proceeding in at least a roughly chronological order. By analysis, it should entertain as well as inform to attract readers and, yes, buyers.

That said, one asks if Venango County Panorama meets these simple requirements. The answer must be both yes and no. The adroit use of photographs provide the explanations, captions the exposition. These provide the strengths and, unfortunately, the weaknesses of this work. For example, chronology has little place in this volume. The editors arranged it topically, the headings of the four main sections—Land, People, Progress, Partners in Growth—being self-explanatory. One would be hard pressed, for example, to research Venango County at the turn of the century. Further, one cannot find when the county was organized or what role native Americans played in that area.

The story of Venango County circulates around the Allegheny River, oil, timber, land, and transportation. The effect these features had on the progress of life in the county is shown through photographs of the activities of people: people drilling for oil, people cutting timber, people tilling the land, people bridging the rivers, people running trains and trolley cars. The editors chose their photographs well, and the printers met their obligations by reproducing them clearly and with good definition. Yet, they fail to convey the whole story. To cite just one example, they give no impression at all of the economic devastation caused by the closing and razing of the oil refineries that once stretched side-by-side between Oil City and Franklin on the people and their communities.

If the activities of its citizens have been so important to the county, how did the great events of the past two centuries affect their lives? A quick glimpse of the ever present Civil War memorial presents one answer; the photograph of air ace Francis S. Gabreski hints at World War II and Korea. The Great Depression apparently by-passed this area. If the two great wars inspired the expansion of old industries or the introduction of new ones, it is not noted here. Quotations from several diaries or journals do present solid impressions of individual lives.

All these comments point toward the question as to what audience the historical society hoped to attract to this book. Plainly it directed its attention to the residents of Venango County. Wherever possible, individuals in all photographs are identified. Also, the editors chose their photographs wisely, and they do provide a flavor of life in Venango County. The editors additionally provided an excellent map of the county in 1865. For an outsider, all this is simply not
enough to get a full feeling for the county. One of the great deficiencies in this work is the lack of modern county map, preferably one showing the current road network.

This book is more of an entertainment than a history. If that was the editors' objective, they succeeded in an admirable manner. All Pennsylvania should, moreover, be thankful for all the information they can get on the northwestern counties. For that reason alone, *Venango County Panorama* is a big step in the right direction.

*Kane, Pennsylvania*  

**JAMES D. ANDERSON**


The latest volume of the Franklin papers covers the spring and summer of 1777, as Franklin and fellow commissioners Silas Deane and Arthur Lee struggled to organize support for their country in Europe, especially at the French court. As the editors note, "They laid many plans, nourished many hopes, and nothing decisive happened." (p. 1).

Franklin had good reason for frustration. Distressed Americans in Europe besieged him with supplications. Clothing and munitions vendors floated schemes to supply the Continental forces. Dozens of noblemen from throughout Europe incessantly sought Continental commissions. Meanwhile, the relationship between Franklin and his colleagues and the French government deteriorated as privateering activities sponsored by the commissioners exceeded French toleration. The commissioners struggled unsuccessfully to resolve the conflict between their representative in Nantes, Franklin's nephew Jonathan Williams, and Thomas Morris, who felt he had direct authority from Congress. Lee did not send back encouraging reports from his missions to Madrid and Berlin. A scheme for a clandestine meeting in Paris between Franklin and an incognito Emperor Joseph II fell through. Then in the middle of September word reached Paris of Burgoyne's capture of Fort Ticonderoga. Their funds approaching exhaustion, on September 25 the commissioners addressed to Foreign Minister Vergennes an almost desperate appeal for more French assistance, hinting at American reconciliation with Britain as the alternative.

As the editors conclude, the correspondence in this volume does not show what Franklin thought about these developments. The only hint is one of discouragement, in a document whose authenticity the editors question (p. 413). In part this mystery is simply due to lost correspondence. For example, Franklin must have responded—probably very interestingly—to William's confession on June 7 that he had a illegitimate son. Furthermore, most negotiating, both among the commissioners, who we know were becoming fractious, and with the French, was face-to-face. There is only one letter in the volume, for example, from Vergennes. But Franklin is not candid even in his few surviving letters. He was busy, and wartime conditions delayed the mails. For instance, when he finally writes to his sister Jane Mecom on October 5, he had not received a letter from her since February. Similarly, except for a letter to his son-in-law Richard Bache, Franklin is not in touch with Pennsylvania. In this limited correspondence, Franklin is certainly inhibited by the possibility of interception. "I cannot
be more explicit at present,” he tells Samuel Cooper on May 1, in briefly describing the commissioners’ activities. Although seemingly not aware of how close to him they actually were, Franklin certainly knew that British spies had him targeted. He learned in July that, through espionage, British agents in Berlin had gained access to all of Lee’s papers. But there is also the impression that the always cagey Franklin is being especially wary at this time of crisis. If the commissioners failed, Franklin may not have wanted his reputation to be a casualty also.

There are some hints in the volume, however, about Franklin’s personal activities. Numerous dinner invitations suggest an expanding circle of acquaintances. Anne-Louise Brillon de Jouy sends her first direct letter to Franklin, developing what would soon become a deeply emotional relationship. By September 1 she is addressing him as “le bon papa.” These social activities overlap with Franklin’s public responsibilities: a dinner invitation comes from Turgot, the influential former minister whom Franklin had met in March. Franklin’s scientific interests worked similarly: on June 8 the chemist Lavoisier, who was to become director of the state gunpowder arsenal, invites Franklin to dine and observe some of his experiments.

The editors supply a thoughtful introduction, copious annotation, a full index, and a useful chronology. At the same time, they seem sensitive to the need to expedite their project. They do not lengthen the volume with translations from the French. Furthermore, they summarize about 30 percent of correspondence to Franklin. The criterion for full printing or summary is how important the material was to Franklin, not its accessibility. Hence, for example, applications for military commissions and government contracts (which Franklin did not usually answer) are summarized, while letters from Thomas Jefferson and members of Congress, available in recently published editions, are printed in full. Since there is no microfilm edition behind this project, and the future interests of scholars cannot be determined, the editors’ present policy on summarization may be approaching the limits of its usefulness.

Anyone with an interest in early American history awaits the next volumes of this series, when decisive events will happen, and Franklin will play a central role.

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

ROBERT J. GOUGH


As editors John Catanzariti and E. James Ferguson explain in their introduction to volume six of The Papers of Robert Morris, the Superintendent of Finance was beset by a number of financial problems. The small sums of revenue obtained from the states remained especially critical in 1782. The papers also reveal Morris’s views concerning taxation, funding the debt, popular governments, and a host of other difficulties.

A review of the correspondence regarding the Congressional requisition for 1782 discloses meager state collections and local viewpoints on the subject of taxation. As the editors note, by September 30 the requisition yielded a modest
$91,056.66 of the eight million dollars Congress had asked for. A partial explanation for this lag in the collection of revenue is provided in the correspondence of Alexander Hamilton of Morris. Hamilton explained to the superintendent, that in his state, the burden of taxation was considered quiet heavy and any new levies would have to take into consideration the feelings of the people on this matter.

Morris's failure to understand this attitude led him to dismiss local arguments that there were inadequate resources to pay taxes. In a letter to Matthew Ridley Morris exclaimed, "The expense of the War as now conducted is not very heavy to this Country...." Indeed, in numerous letters on this topic, Morris failed to fathom the sentiments of the people. In a letter to Benjamin Franklin, dated September 27, he expressed his conviction that the population can support the war by assuming a greater tax obligation and lamented that the people have convinced themselves that they are unable to assume a greater responsibility for the war effort.

Undeterred by outcries against more assessments, Morris proposed a series of taxes to the President of Congress, John Hanson. As Catanzariti and Ferguson point out, Morris's letter of July 29th was an important public paper on taxation. It also underscored the continuity of tax practices and theoretical justifications common in the colonial era. Morris asked for a number of levies that were utilized by colonial legislatures, including taxes on land, spiritous liquors, and a poll tax.

Along with new taxes, Morris insisted that the public debt be adequately funded and the continental union strengthened. This passion for funding the debt and political reform also revealed his dislike for popular governments which responded to what Morris considered local, rather than national interests. On July 29 Morris stated that the domestic debt "would greatly contribute to that Union which seems not to have been sufficiently attended to, or provided for, in forming the national Compact." His impatience with popular governments which impeded his financial plans was clearly suggested when he exclaimed that "the Necessity of drawing by degrees the Bands of Authority together, establishing the Power of Government over a People impatient of Control..." was essential.

Compounding the superintendent's problems were the difficulties of securing supplies for the army and the perennial issue of foreign loans. Morris's correspondence on these issues provides further understanding of the difficulties encountered by the superintendent about an often neglected year in the early life of the new nation. Finally, this volume sets the stage for the ensuing weeks of 1782, which in volume 7 will reveal the lengths to which Morris was prepared to go in the execution of his plans for the nation.

*Westmoreland County Community College*

*LEMUEL MOLOVINSKY*


Father Jon Alexander has combed almost four centuries of American history to gather one hundred testimonies of men and women who have had soul-
shattering, personal religious experiences. He then selects the passages from their autobiographies or diaries where they describe the event, although several confess that mere words were not adequate to do the experience justice. The cast of characters includes such diverse figures as John Winthrop, Anne Hutchinson, Jonathan Edwards, Ann Lee, Jemima Wilkinson, Handsome Lake, Elizabeth Seton, Charles G. Finney, Joseph Smith, Orestes Brownson, Ellen G. White, Mary Baker Eddy, William James, Billy Graham, Allen Ginsberg, Charles Colson, and Eldridge Cleaver.

Although the details of this "transit of consciousness" vary considerably, Alexander finds that they usually fall into a four-fold pattern. First came a shattering of complacency, often due to an illness or a sudden awareness of individual mortality. Then came the struggle between two worlds, which was cast as a battle of good and evil. This was followed by the "miraculous moment" of peace and, finally, a new consciousness. For the men and women involved, the experience was "awe-full". Life could never be the same again.

*Pennsylvania History* readers may be especially interested in the stories of Richard Allen, a Pennsylvania slave born in 1760 who rose to become the first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal church; Catherine Hummer, a contemporary of Ephrata; St. John Newman, a nineteenth-century Roman Catholic Bishop of Philadelphia; Hannah Whitall Smith and Rufus M. Jones, both Quaker authors; Andrew Carnegie, the famous industrialist; and Harvey Cox, a contemporary Harvard theologian.

Alexander suggests that this collection of personal religious accounts might serve as a resource for teachers and students of American religious and cultural history. Each selection is well documented and bolstered by an up-to-date listing of the major works on the subject. In addition, Alexander includes a lengthy annotated bibliography. This is a unique contribution. Surprisingly, a work of this type does not exist in all the copious literature on American religious history.

Alexander is scrupulously neutral in his observations. Most readers, however, would welcome some balanced assessments. By linking four hundred years of "peak experiences" in an ahistorical framework, Alexander may reach some misleading conclusions. This approach slight the social context surrounding the spiritual crisis of each individual included. Moreover, it leads to the dubious conclusion that all emotional experiences are of equal worth. But, one might ask, doesn't eighteenth-century Quaker John Woolman's decision to devote his life to combatting slavery differ considerably from the man who informs us that he was taken aboard a flying saucer? Doesn't slave Sojourner Truth's realization that "Lord, Lord, I can love even de white folks" carry more moral weight than the drug-induced visions of Virgil Thomson? And aren't the basically secular decisions by Andrew Carnegie to found libraries, Emma Goldman to embrace anarchism, and Jane Addams to enter social work in a completely different category altogether?

By failing to place these personal crises within the context of their times, Alexander has left some vital questions unanswered.

*University of New Mexico*  
FERENC M. SZASZ

This is not a book about people or events but about an industrial building, the machinery which was housed in it, the manufacturing processes which took place in it and the finished products which flowed from it. In a broader sense, it is a book which describes the transfer of manufacturing technology from Germany to Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century. It provides another insight into the religious idealism of first generation Moravians which led to the founding of Bethlehem and the rapid development there of a community characterized by a broad and deep cultural base, a flourishing agriculture, and a productive set of manufacturing industries.

This book was made possible by the extensive records which the Moravians kept of all their activities and which were placed in archives in Bethlehem and in Herrnhut, Germany. Fortunately for us, materials about this mill which were in the Herrnhut collection had been brought to Bethlehem about twenty years ago. Thus a complete file was available to the research and writing team when it began work on this project eight years ago.

The subject of this book was a multipurpose waterpowered mill which was built in the Monocacy Creek industrial area of Bethlehem in 1765–1766. It was the third mill of this type built in Bethlehem. The first, erected in 1745, produced only linseed oil. A second, built in 1752, produced linseed oil, tanbark, and hemp. When this was destroyed by fire in 1763, a new mill was built immediately thereafter which was designed to produce linseed and hempen oil, hemp, tanbark, groats (coarsely ground cereal grains), and snuff. The extensive and intricate set of wooden machinery built for this mill was driven by two water wheels.

Several valuable source materials, describing the two principal builders and the process and cost of construction and the machinery, are part of this book and add greatly to its interest for the perceptive reader. Hans-Joachim Finke has translated from German to English the construction diary, the construction account book, the calculation of the masonry requirements of the building and autobiographical sketches of Hans Christopher Christensen and John Arbo, the principal figures in the construction of the mill. In addition, reproductions of drawings of the machinery, from the Herrnhut archives, are included. Taken together, these materials make it possible for the reader to recreate for himself the construction process and the operation of the machinery. It must be noted that the authors have added another valuable section which describes the raw materials used in manufacture, the finished products, and the importance of those products to the colonial economy.

Hans Christopher Christensen was a millwright who planned and supervised the construction of the mill and its equipment. John Arbo was the business manager of the project. Although very different personalities, as revealed by their autobiographical sketches, they had much in common. Both were European born, both had searched unsuccessfully for religious certainty for many years and both finally had found inner peace in the Moravian community in
Herrnhut. Both had served that community for some years before being commissioned for service in Bethlehem where both worked for the remainder of their lives.

The authors conclude that Bethlehem was the place through which German technology was introduced to colonial Pennsylvania and British North America. Differences between this technology and that of Britain are noted in some detail. They conclude that other non-Moravian German immigrants may have built similar mills, but detailed information is not available about their construction or operation.

This book traces the history of this mill to the time of its demolition in 1934. It was transformed first into a grist mill and later into the municipal waterworks in the nineteenth century. Its original handmade wooden equipment was removed to provide space for nineteenth-century foundry-produced, steam-driven pumping equipment.

In this case, the team approach to the preparation of a book has worked well. Probably the major contributor was Carter Litchfield who conceived the book, wrote most of the text, and provided much of the knowledge about technical matters. But the others made important contributions—Finke as translator, Young from his knowledge of Moravian technology and Huetter, from her knowledge of Bethlehem history.

This is an important book which should prove useful to all who are interested in eighteenth century Pennsylvania history.

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

MAHLON H. HELLERICH


Since prophets can expect little recognition on their home soil, it is not surprising that the principles enunciated by Henry George were adopted by Alexander Kerensky and Sun Yat-sen at the same time they were languishing in the United States; or that Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada provided George with his most enthusiastic audiences. The theme of honor escaping a prophet coupled with the notion of the prophet's writings being misunderstood are at the heart of Steven Cord's analysis. (Henry George's connection to Pennsylvania resides in having been born in Philadelphia, and in the application of his land tax ideas to Pittsburgh and Scranton.)

Cord's first chapter explains George's alienation from the academic community that grew out of a strident belief that academic economists were simply apologists for vested interests. This outlook cost George a chair at Berkeley. The later emergence of the American Economic Association in 1885 with its emphasis on professional training sealed George's fate as an outsider.

A chapter on George and the Progressives claims that myriad reformers had not only read Progress and Poverty, but indeed drew their initial inspiration from the book. For example, sociologist Edwin A. Ross who attended a "small-town midwestern college" noted that, "Our text in political economy was beneath all contempt, but George's Progress and Poverty was bootlegged among us and swept me off my feet" (p. 38). A chapter covering the period 1917–1933
underscores the extent to which the intellectual climate shifted in the 1920s and was hostile to "that frail flower that was the single tax movement" (p. 119).

The coming of the great depression offered a truly opportune time for "a mild renaissance of interest in the movement." Yet, the theory failed to have great influence because it remained an abstraction in a textbook for most at a time when Americans sought "specific remedies that could promise immediate relief" (p. 145).

A chapter on "George and Modern Historians" analyzes interpretations rendered by Ralph Gabriel, Eric Goldman, Charles and Mary Beard, Merle Curti, Daniel Aaron, and even Perry Miller. A final chapter argues that George suffered from the same problem that plagued other nineteenth-century thinkers: he "believed too much in an economic interpretation of history" (p. 227).

Beyond the extensive analysis of scholarly reaction to Henry George and his ideas, Steven Cord asserts that the land tax concept, when applied today, contributes to urban renewal. This is, standard taxation practices penalize those who improve existing buildings whereas a land tax provides no such disincentive.

Professor Cord has rendered a valuable service in keeping the work of an important dissenter before us. The reviewer's complaints are few. First, readers should be reminded of George's financial struggles as they influenced his thinking. Second, as the number of scholars who misread George are legion, it is reasonable to suspect George of being opaque. Third, the title of the book is journalistic, and has little to do with the contents. Beyond these objections, this is a highly readable account of an American reformer that is unlikely to find the audience it deserves.

Elizabethtown College

THOMAS R. WINPENNY


Joseph Wharton (1826–1909) was a descendent of one of Philadelphia's oldest mercantile families. His great-great-grandfather came to Pennsylvania in 1685, and thereafter this Quaker family achieved considerable success and wealth in the New World. Joseph Wharton was educated in Philadelphia and then apprenticed with the commercial house of Waln and Leaming. He went on to a highly lucrative career in the white lead, zinc, nickel, and iron manufacturing industries. Convinced that the decline of such apprenticeships as his own at Waln and Leaming left open no proper means of giving able young men a broad education in the business world of the 1880s, he gave in 1881 $100,000 to the University of Pennsylvania to found what has generally come to be regarded as the first true modern business school—the Wharton School. His aim was to create an educational institution that could "prepare the nation's 'young men of inherited intellect, means, and refinement' to assume the leadership of America's industrial economy" (p. 293). This book is a fine, scholarly history of that institution's first century.

The Wharton School was a pioneer in professional training for managers. Its purpose was not to train the clerks produced by the existing commercial schools such as those of Bryant and Stratton but, as Joseph Wharton phrased it, "to fit a
young man for the struggle of commercial life, for wise management of a private estate, or for efficient public service" (p. 22). In some respects it was ahead of its time, for it had few analogues until a flurry of institution-building in the 1898–1908 period produced other modern business schools at the University of Chicago, the University of California, New York University, Illinois University, Wisconsin, and the first graduate business schools at Dartmouth and Harvard.

Steven Sass's able narrative traces the Wharton School's progression through the endless cycles of academic fashion and academic politics. The most fertile periods came at times when the school embraced social environment and original scholarship, and when it saw its mission in terms of broad humanistic training rather than conveying narrow, vocational, specialized knowledge. Always there were tensions produced by the competing pull of "the world of affairs and that of scholarship," each of which experienced its own fashions. This interplay produced the "chameleonlike change and adaptation" that Sass sees as Wharton's "central characteristic" (p. 337).

Many leading figures in social science played a role in Wharton's evolution. Edmund J. James shaped the school in its initial period, molding it into the pattern of the new German research universities and their pioneering American counterparts such as Johns Hopkins. Economist Simon N. Patten was "perhaps the greatest mind in the history of the institution" (p. 91). Patten led the school in the era when it simultaneously pioneered in instruction in a range of specialized fields of business administration while also involving itself extensively with the public life of America in the progressive era. In the time of the Great Depression Wharton took an active part in important research under the auspices of its Industrial Research Department and by associating itself with Simon Kuznets and other scholars at the National Bureau of Economic Research, as well as with the Social Science Research Council. In the 1960s Wharton's Lawrence Klein led the way in pathbreaking econometric modeling that gave the institution added luster. In the 1970s the importance of research at Wharton declined after many of the social science faculty were moved out of the school and into the new faculty of arts and sciences at the University of Pennsylvania. At the same time, new programs allowed Wharton at last to move away from its history of specialized education to the training of managerial generalists; the school finally "took up its founder's ambition that it prepare a class of national leaders" (p. 336).

This is a good book, one that makes effective use of oral history interviews and a wide range of written sources, published and unpublished. Its subject is often set in the broader context of business education and of academic life as a whole. Sass writes well, and only for the period of the recent past is there any indication in this work of the sorts of stresses that often attend commissioned histories. The book is honest and is often critical of its subject, the more so for readers attuned to irony. The Pragmatic Imagination is clearly a superior example of the genre of histories of institutions of higher education.

Although it was not Steven Sass's purpose to assess the historical and contemporary role of Wharton and other major business schools in the American business system, one wonders about that. Are they most important as selectors or anointers of the business elite? Do they improve management by improving the flow of information in the system? Have they truly been able to teach leadership or, even better, entrepreneurship? Is the gross national product higher than it
would have been without them? What differences, in short, have they made in American life? One of the virtues of this book is that it calls such questions to mind.

*Hagley Museum and Library*


This volume is an oral history of Cornwall, a mining area in the Lebanon Valley of Pennsylvania. Although some materials concern the locale’s earlier development, most of the chronicle pertains to the twentieth century. Despite its brevity, nine pages, the introduction provides an informative overview of Cornwall’s history. Seven chapters follow, each organized around one of the following topics: conditions prior to Bethlehem Steel’s purchase of the Cornwall mines, ethnic and class distinctions, village and family life, the social and economic impact of Bethlehem Steel on the area, consequences of the Great Depression, the nature of mine work, and the closing of Bethlehem Steel’s Cornwall operations in 1973. Observations from several interviewees, preceded by introductory editorial comments of one or two pages, provide a framework for the chapters.

A vivid portrait of Cornwall’s history emerges from the text. For several generations prior to the 1920s local elites owned the mines. Business paternalism—company houses available at low rents, doctor bills paid by employers, turkeys and children’s toys distributed during Christmas—loomed large in the memories of interviewees. A provincial grandeur, symbolized by a fifty-two room mansion contributed to the deference enjoyed by the early owners. When wealthy hunters inadvertently fired upon some laborers, no charges were filed: “It never entered our heads to complain about their endangering our lives. We were peasants. They were nobles” (p. 3). Following Bethlehem Steel Company’s final purchase in 1921 of local operations, paternalism continued to shape labor relations. From 1933 to 1936 the Great Depression stopped all work in the open pit. During this period Bethlehem Steel did not evict families from company homes for failure to meet rent payments. This paternalism contributed significantly to the failure of the then Committee for Industrial Organization to organize workers successfully, and a 1937 strike ended in failure. Despite forced overtime, low wages, and dangerous working conditions, local authority and familiarity counted for much. Laborers perceived union organizers as outsiders. Not until the mid-1940s was a United Steelworkers local established in Cornwall. After World War II Bethlehem Steel faced a more serious challenge. Foreign competition and industry-wide costs of labor encouraged Bethlehem to invest in less developed nations. In 1973 Bethlehem Steel permanently shut down its main Cornwall operations. The plant closing severely reduced the local tax base, meant the immediate loss of five hundred jobs, and lowered borough living standards.

The scenario above, derived from the text, is not fully persuasive. Methodology prompts the most serious caveat. Interviewing techniques are not explicitly explained. Some transcripts contain questions posed by the interviewer; others do not, raising questions about how materials were edited. Only fourteen
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interviewees are cited, and observations by the same people appear in chapter after chapter. Editor Carl Oblinger offers no convincing argument that this small group is even representative. Additional respondents may have softened the emphasis on company paternalism as a prophylactic to worker militancy. Perhaps, as John Bodnar found in Steelton, ethnic identity deterred class consciousness. Certainly a more theoretical discussion of the relationship between class and ethnicity would enhance Oblinger's introduction. On a more mundane level the book lacks such amenities as a table of contents, a bibliography, a map, statistical tables germane to economic mobility, or an index. In the introduction Oblinger briefly quotes from a local diarist and an area newspaper; the inclusion of such primary materials in the chapters that follow as well as excerpts from church registers, county records, and local directories might have provided a context against which to evaluate the interviews.

Clearly Cornwall is not academic history, but, given Oblinger's description of the book's purpose, such criticism is irrelevant: "... this book ... is not an academic study.... Academic history focuses on the concerns of specialists and, therefore, means very little to members of the larger society.... What we have produced, therefore, is a participating history." This volume is an energetic and honest foray into history of, by, and for the folk. Cornwall, whatever its limitations, is truly history from the bottom up. Hopefully this volume will encourage social historians to demystify their craft and engage in genuine collaborations with ordinary people. The observations recorded in this volume attest to the power of the people speaking in their own voice. Cornwall has two other important assets: a number of compelling photographs and an inviting purchase price of $3.50.

SUNY, Oneonta

WILLIAM SIMONS


In this interesting book W. Kyrel Meschter describes how the Schwenkfelders originated in Silesia when Caspar Schwenckfeld von Ossig (b. 1489) won converts to his doctrines of experiential Christianity and the "Middle Way." His success here led to Martin Luther's wrathful opposition and to intolerant actions by other leaders of church and state. About 1529 Schwenckfeld (the second "c" is omitted when the name is used generically) found it expedient to leave Silesia for southern Germany; he died at Ulm in 1561. While his adherents were able to keep their religious identity for a long time, they too suffered increasing persecution; by 1726 conditions were so bad that many of them fled to Saxony, and thence to Pennsylvania. Some two hundred migrated in 1731-1737, the principal band of forty families landing at Philadelphia on September 22, 1734.

Two days later they held a Gedächtnis Tag—a day of remembrance and thanksgiving—which is still celebrated annually by Schwenkfelders. Then came the business of finding places to live and work, and of devising ways of continuing their community. Earlier arrivals helped them settle in southeastern Pennsylvania—in such places as the Goshenhoppen area near East Greensville, at Hereford and Skippack, and in the Perkiomen Valley in general. In spite of
the express desire of their founder that they should not form a church, in 1782 they began to institutionalize themselves by adopting the *Constitution or Fundamental Principles of the Schwenkfelder Church*; they organized elementary schools, formed congregations, and built meeting houses. Having brought with them the tradition of Schwenckfeld's scholarship, in 1884 they launched the *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum*, a critical compilation of his writings destined to reach nineteen volumes. The collection and housing of *Corpus* materials stimulated the growth of the Carnegie Library on the campus of Perkiomen School; when this proved inadequate the larger and more efficient Schwenkfelder Library was erected in 1951 adjacent to the school campus. A Board of Missions had been incorporated in 1895; by 1899 the First Schwenkfelder Church of Philadelphia was in operation, to be followed by missions in China, in the southern Appalachians, and in many other places. Missions of a different kind were begun in 1962 with the formation of Advanced Living, Inc., which was to provide housing for senior citizens on a nonprofit and nonsectarian basis. Schwenkfeld Manor and Schwenkfeld Manor East, with 171 apartments, were in operation by 1979; Upper Perkiomen Manor and a total-life-care facility were to follow.

All of these events, and many more, are described in fourteen chapters; footnotes were omitted in the interest of readability—and, we hasten to add, these chapters are very readable. The book is addressed to three audiences: to general readers who want to know more about the Schwenkfelders; to the nondescendant church members, now a majority; and to the descendant members, less closely knit than in previous generations due to the conditions of life in modern America.

Using a topical approach rather than a strictly chronological one, chapter by chapter, the author still realizes the narrative ideal by dipping back into events before 1900 to help explain developments after the turn of the century in each topic. Thus, in tracing the growth of five congregations of Schwenkfelders—at Palm, Central, Philadelphia, Norristown, and Lansdale—he gives in rich detail the story of each congregation from its founding to its maturity, weaving in pertinent relationships to the growth of the entire body. While this method results in some overlapping and repetition, it can be excused as being in the nature of the case; certainly the reader is left with a sense of historical development, not only for given congregations but for the sect as a whole.

The concluding chapter, “Schwenkfelder Theology: A Twentieth Century Perspective,” illustrates two leading characteristics of the Meschter book: there is an understanding of historical forces and processes; and there is recognition of the paradoxes and dilemmas within the Schwenkfelder church society. The first sentence of this chapter states that “Theological traditions are not immutable bodies of belief and practice; they evolve over time, shaped by forces from within and from without.” Having said this, the author goes on to review the influences shaping Schwenkfeldian thought and practice from the time of the founder to the present. In the very early period Pietism had an impact; in 1782 the constitution of the society, really a “theological treatise,” explained worship as not only the customary Sunday meeting in a church, but also all the actions of the members throughout the week. In the nineteenth century revivalists made Schwenkfelders question their rituals and some members were lost to evangelistic groups. Whereas Schwenckfeld had urged the *Stillstand*, or cessation of the Lord’s
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Supper, now, as in other churches in America, this sacrament was observed. When volume one of the Corpus appeared in 1907 the introduction made much of Schwenckfeld's individualism, but in tones reminiscent of Progressivism and Horatio Alger. In the middle decades of the twentieth century, when Schwenckfelder pastors were drawn from many other Protestant faiths, there was some talk of a merger with the United Church of Christ; in 1959 the Palm church filled its pastoral needs with the dual ordination of a husband-and-wife team by these two denominations—which our author calls "a practical compromise, though hardly an attractive solution." The book ends with a quotation from a work by the Rev. Jack R. Rothenberger: "The basic task of the Schwenkfelder Church, as of all churches, is to seek for an experiential-spiritual religion which will enable its members to translate the Christian Faith from the first century through the mill of history, by way of the sixteenth century, to the present ecumenical movement in order to inspire the world to become the Household of God...."

No doubt considerations of cost caused some omissions from this otherwise complete and valuable book. While Howard W. Kriebel's The Schwenkfelders in Pennsylvania, A Historical Sketch (1904), has many illustrations, the present volume carries only the Schwenckfeld heraldic emblem on the outside of the front cover. There is no formal bibliography to help the eager student do a term paper in some aspect of the Schwenkfelder story, although many bibliographic items are woven into the text. And, most regrettably, there is no index to help the reader, although the three audiences to whom the author addressed the book would have welcomed it.

There are six appendixes consisting of chronologically arranged lists of names and statistics. Appendix D, giving church membership in the five congregations from 1905 through 1982, seems of special importance: in 1905 there were 688 members; in 1982 the total number was 2762. After reading the book and looking at these figures, the reviewer reflected, as he had several times earlier, that so few had done so much.

Fleetwood, Pennsylvania

ALBERT J. WAHL


For tourists, filmmakers, and serious historians, Mennonites and Amish remain a compelling enigma. Unlike the Amish, who remain steadfastly resistant to higher education, Mennonites in America have produced a number of trained and dedicated scholars who have probed the depths of their Mennonite past with penetrating insight and unusual objectivity. John L. Ruth, whose doctoral work at Harvard concentrated on American and English literature, has woven from a massive collection of source materials a full and detailed narrative history of the earliest Mennonite community in America, established in Southeastern Pennsylvania in the late seventeenth century. Ruth traces the ancestral roots of these immigrants to Switzerland and the Palatinate, where Anabaptists had been harassed, persecuted, and frequently martyred for more than a century. Carrying the protestant reformation to its logical conclusion, these forefathers had refused to accept the authority to
any state church, insisting that religious affiliation must always be purely voluntary.

Anabaptists also believed that commitment to the teachings of Christ required separation from the world of unbelievers, adherence to a plain and unpretentious lifestyle, and a commitment to return good for evil. Such folk, "preaching and baptizing without authority," and refusing military conscription, were seen by Catholic and Reformed authorities alike as an intolerable menace.

Responding to the urging of William Penn, whose Quaker beliefs were similar to their own, Mennonites found in Pennsylvania an environment in which they were almost completely free to carve out their vision of the Godly community. Here, through careful church discipline and mutual accountability, they could "maintain the right fellowship."

But as Ruth so vividly demonstrates, "maintaining the right fellowship" often proved a vexing problem. What, exactly, was required by the injunction to live simply? A Dearborn wagon with elliptical springs and covered top was determined in 1824 to be too ostentatious for Mennonites. Mennonites in Europe had shunned all participation in "worldly forms of government." Were American forms of civil government equally "worldly," or could faithful Mennonites also be active citizens, participating in local governance and determining public policy? Could a colonial Mennonite take his turn in the role of town constable, a situation in which he might be called upon to use life-threatening force to arrest a wrongdoer? There were few easy answers.

As an oppressed minority in Europe, maintaining a sense of uniqueness as "the people of God" had come naturally to Mennonites. In America, the tendency to meld into the larger Christian community became, and continues to be, a source of tension for Mennonites. Midway through the nineteenth century, the Mennonite community of Eastern Pennsylvania suffered a bitter, emotional split, one which represented the culmination of a series of conflicts within the body. The more conservative Mennonites felt threatened by the drift away from Mennonite exclusiveness. They feared the influence of higher education upon the fellowship, sensing that those who exposed themselves to non-Mennonite teaching were weakened in the faith. A debate on the importance of distinctive dress was allowed to deteriorate into a win-lose test of church discipline, and the losers formed a separate church organization.

In the first years of the twentieth century, the more conservative Franconia Conference actually succeeded in effecting a shift back toward the strict separatism, plain dress, and firm discipline of Mennonite forbearers. The more progressive Eastern District (General Conference), on the other hand, sought to retain the traditional commitment to a life of service, peace, and reconciliation, but with a diminishing emphasis on separatism and distinctive dress.

For Ruth, who is himself an associate minister in the conservative Franconia Conference, there is both joy and pain in telling this story. His is a history of the heart as well as the mind. As narrative history, the work succeeds because it offers readers a myriad of intimate glimpses into the lives of its subjects. There is the aged Yillisz Kassel, convinced that the suffering he and others were enduring during the Thirty Years War was God's punishment of Mennonites for becoming more concerned with "temporal goods" than salvation. We hear the early Mennonite settlers in Pennsylvania, asking that the neighbors accept them simply as people who believe "that without any worldly might or Fleshly
Defence or Weapons, the Lord Jesus must be preached and followed Revengeless" (p. 102). On a lighter note, we find Abraham Hunsicker, arguing in the 1830s against a trained clergy, on the theory that "if God willed, he could make a post preach" (p. 215).

Ruth does not try to disguise the failure of individual Mennonites, particularly those of the more liberal wing, to remain faithful to the church's nonresistant stance. In the Civil War, and again in World Wars I and II, church leaders agonized over the conduct of members who chose to bear arms. In the last two decades, however, there has emerged a renewed interest in the way of peace and also steady progress toward reunification of the major divisions of the faith.

If there is a flaw in this study, it lies in the fact that Ruth is writing for two distinct audiences. His Mennonite readership will be delighted by the detailed family and individual church histories. But this emphasis will prove burdensome to non-Mennonite students of American religion, who will be primarily interested in those sections in which Ruth analyzes the impact of broader fundamental, evangelical, and liberal protestant movements upon the Mennonite community.

Scholars will be pleased by the author's careful documentation and annotated endnotes, and by the bibliographical note which introduces researchers to the major sources of archival materials on Mennonite history.

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NEIL B. LEHMAN


E. Morris Sider, professor and archivist at Messiah College, has written its history on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the institution from which it developed. The originators of Messiah Bible School and Missionary Training Home were Brethren in Christ, members of a very small conservative denomination which had emerged in late eighteenth-century Pennsylvania. They were committed to a simple life guided by a literal interpretation of the Scriptures and removed, insofar as possible, from contact with the rest of the world.

The men who founded Messiah, which began by offering instruction to twelve students in Harrisburg in the fall of 1910, were devout Brethren in Christ who believed that their church needed some men and women having had more than the rudiments of elementary instruction, especially if it were successfully to carry on its work at home and abroad. Long after the school relocated at Grantham in 1911, its supporters had to answer charges that Messiah students were subjecting themselves to unnecessary temptations and possible loss of their faith. Patiently defending their position, they sought financial aid from those few fellow members who could be persuaded to agree with them.

Given its small constituency (although nonmember students were always welcome), as well as its ever-slender resources, it is remarkable that Messiah survived without interruption. Actually, the school more than survived. Slowly, additional buildings were constructed or purchased and the academic program was expanded. The first junior college class was graduated in 1921.

Some years after World War II, the trustees and faculty decided, slowly and
undoubtedly with some misgivings, to begin transforming Messiah (which became Messiah College in 1951) into a four-year liberal arts college, albeit one with a strong and conservative Christian orientation. In order to accomplish this, they began reaching beyond their Brethren in Christ base for endowment; funds for new buildings, laboratories, and the library; faculty; students; and even trustees. New features eventually included rank and tenure for faculty, bachelor of arts and of science degrees; neckties; and intercollegiate athletics. The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools granted Messiah provisional accreditation as a four-year college in 1963 and full accreditation three years later. In 1972, when the board of trustees became self-perpetuating, the college and church exchanged the legal relationship which had always existed between them for a "covenant" relationship intended to assure the continuation of meaningful ties between the two institutions.

Professor Sider has drawn upon a wide variety of college and church sources, including minutes, letters, reports, and student publications. The use of interviews with many associated in one way or another with Messiah since 1909 provides the book with its most distinctive feature. Here is an intensely personal account of teachers with a minimum of advanced training, but a maximum of religious commitment and energy, who carried heavy and often inappropriate teaching loads, accepted abysmally low salaries, related closely with their students, and enforced a discipline consistent with their faith. Here is an equally personal account of students who demonstrated over and over that, while willing and often eager to meet the many expectations placed before them, they were still subject to at least some of the same youthful impulses to be found in contemporary students at, say, Dickinson or Shippensburg. One might well call this too personal an account were it not for the conclusion that is accurately describes Messiah as it was, especially before 1960.

While Professor Sider properly focused his attention on his subject, Messiah College, equally properly he provides enough information about the Brethren in Christ Church so that the general reader can understand the religious ideas which gave rise to the college and so heavily influenced it for many years. At the same time, he endeavors to relate Messiah to the rest of American education. The numerous illustrations are especially helpful. This reviewer has found few mechanical or other errors. One of these (p. 273) calls an editor of *A Century of Higher Education* (1962) William W. Buckman; he was William W. Brickman.

This work is an excellent study of an educational institution which began as a secondary school under extremely conservative religious auspices, which for years continued functioning almost as a large impoverished family whose members later most vividly recalled many of the most ordinary (and nonacademic) aspects of their life together, and which after half a century of existence successfully transformed itself into an accredited liberal arts college.