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James Axtell plans three volumes under the general title "The Cultural Origins of North America." This first contribution treats French, English, and Indian efforts at mutual conversion. The second and third volumes will deal with the broader confluence of cultures, native American, French, and English, and the triumph of British cultural and political power on the northern continent. As the basis of his study, he argues that ethnohistory, "an imaginative but disciplined blend of anthropological and historical methods, concepts, and materials" (p. ix), rather than any of the conventional historical approaches will yield the deepest insight into the epic cultural struggle that occurred in colonial North America.

The plan is ambitious and impressive but one can wonder whether this first offering is an auspicious beginning. No doubt missionary activity does provide obvious advantages to a work bent on examining "The Invasion Within." The missionaries were conscious practitioners and observers of social change and their work is better documented than many other aspects of Indian-white relations. Thus formal proselytization of this kind offers Axtell an opportunity to penetrate the deeper recesses of cultural interaction through the use of ethnohistory, a course he has often recommended to the profession. All the greater disappointment, therefore, when the book contains so little ethnohistory and fails to penetrate very deeply. Although the work makes use of ethnohistorical materials, the Indian does not play a central role. The initiative in the story rests with the proselytizers, and though the Indians are not entirely passive they are not critical agents in the making of American culture. As a consequence the book offers no sustained analysis of the process of transformation—an essential ingredient of ethnohistory. Instead Axtell presents a quite conventional examination of missionary attitudes and practice.

The Indian's turn does come in the third section of the book which examines native proselytization of captives. When this material first appeared in published essays, it was a vigorous, if not entirely convincing, tribute to the inherent allurements of native culture and its success in transforming whites into Indians. Times have changed. The Indians are still aggressive proselytizers (for which they are praised) and their culture remains more attractive than the European way of life, but the scale of success is much diminished. It turns out that most captives were children. The vulnerable remained with the tribes: the young and impressionable (below the age of 15 or 16), a third of the female captives (who had presumably established a familial alliance). But only a tenth of the males stayed on as Indians. The whole number was no more than a few hundred captives, hardly sufficient for a substantive penetration of white man's well-guarded world. Moreover, one can only wonder how many learned to
"think as Indians, to share unconsciously the values, beliefs, and standards of Indian culture" (p. 325). Axtell does not say. He is content to observe that they often found the Indians more Christian than the Christians, which is not the same as saying that they believed native culture to be more attractive than their own.

That observation calls into question Axtell's conception of the Indian, in effect the very basis of his ethnohistory. Often enough he fails to draw a sharp distinction between native culture and what might be described as modern liberal idealism. As a consequence he does not at crucial moments do what an ethnohistorian should do: treat the native world on its own terms. Instead of an animistic existence fraught with the risk of pollution and taboo and vulnerable to the cultural aggression of the Europeans, he sees native life as characterized by "ineluctable pride, social warmth, and cultural integrity" (p. 5), and "social generosity and personal liberty" (p. 167). Indeed, these are virtues in most societies including the European. But how do they translate for the Indian? What, for example, is the meaning of personal liberty in a traditional, animistic culture? Axtell offers one pertinent example. Native youth, he claims, engaged in "sexual exploration" and found "nothing shameful about their bodies or their amorous potential" (p. 169). They were, in a phrase, "sexually liberated" (p. 79). All of this is in contrast to repressed European sexual habits (in contrast, that is, to New Englanders, though not curiously to French nuns). Besides the obvious problem of interpreting native sexual behavior as a harbinger of the "Blue Lagoon," there is the reality that Indians were no more "liberated" than anyone else. They simply engaged in a mode of life different from that pursued by whites. And some of their customs, for example their treatment of women during the menses, were as "repressed" as European sexual habits. Axtell adopts an olympian objectivity in describing the menstrual taboo. It is merely "woman's time-honored way of dealing with her natural processes." The missionaries opposition to it he labels "vaginal politics" (p. 170). The problem is not so much the lack of balance as the failure to adhere to the dictums of ethnohistory.

Axtell's eagerness to condemn European culture leads him to assert that after the middle of the eighteenth century whites held racist opinions about Indians. Perhaps some did. At least he has adduced some evidence concerning Eleazer Wheelock. But the point deserves a more careful and extensive exposition. As of now the contention must remain unproved.

On the missionaries themselves Axtell sides with the Jesuits, who sought religious conversion but not transculturation, against the Franciscans and the Puritans, who demanded not only a change in religion but "cultural suicide." He does concede at one point (p. 279) that the Jesuits intended to introduce the Indians to a new cosmology, which would, one supposes, have equally profound consequences for the integrity of native culture. Taken as an account of French and English missionary approaches to the Indians, Axtell has written a quite plausible study. But taken on his own terms, as ethnohistory, it falls considerably short.

Indiana University

BERNARD W. SHEEHAN

In the eighteenth century, Ephrata, Pennsylvania became the site of a remarkable mystical experience, as well as a center for intellectual activity and artistic accomplishment. Centered around a religious commune founded by Conrad Beissel, this community challenged the orthodox faiths and became a focal point for religious mavericks. In a study aimed at the general reader, E.G. Alderfer delineates the history of this experiment in an effort to dispel myths and celebrate its accomplishments.

Ephrata was primarily an eighteenth-century experiment. Its adherents were mystics in an age of rational enlightenment, and sought to avoid the contemporary swirls of political and social change that swept through Europe and America during those years. This retreat from worldly concerns has led Alderfer to compare Ephrata to the countercultural endeavors of later eras. Yet what is important about Ephrata, and made it unique in its time, was not so much an emphasis on communalism but the panoply of ideas and achievements that defined its existence. Its residents produced the first original body of music in America; resident German writers created volumes of mystical poetry; printing presses published works from within and beyond the Ephrata community; and its artists produced outstanding examples of illuminated manuscripts. In the political and social spheres, Ephrata embraced a Christian pacifism, refused governmental oaths of loyalty, restricted baptism to adults, suspended the normal arrangements of marriage, and residents looked upon themselves as stewards of the land—all of which placed them in opposition to dominant elements within the colony.

Within a rather strict chronological framework Alderfer traces these and other developments, highlighting the community's accomplishments and explaining its conflicts and tensions. The close adherence to small chronological units, however, fragments the story and occasionally blurs the larger perspective that Alderfer seeks. The reader literally has difficulty seeing the forest for the trees. This becomes particularly problematic when one seeks an explanation for Ephrata's decline in the nineteenth century. Alderfer argues that its communalism was too exotic for the day, yet the early nineteenth century was a time when a vast array of communes and experimental communities flourished. His own narrative suggests that, like many other communes, internal factors were at the center of the decay. In fact, with Conrad Beissel's physical decline in the late 1760s Ephrata communalism began to deteriorate. Beissel and his mystical philosophies had been the focal point of the endeavor, and both faded together. The concluding chapter, which attempts to place Ephrata in a wider context, not only fails to highlight this but contradicts what is a central theme for the rest of the volume—the uniqueness of Ephrata.

The Ephrata Commune is a workmanlike study of a unique religious and social experiment. Despite its faults, the book provides a window on another world, a world as alien to us today as Conrad Beissel's was to fellow Pennsylvanians in the eighteenth century.

Franklin and Marshall College

JOHN ANDREW
To many Americans, the Society of Friends and the anti-slavery movement are synonymous. Further, they believe that this inclination toward abolitionism existed from the time the first Quaker emigrated to English North America. It is this belief that Jean R. Soderlund set out either to confirm or deny. She discovered that the Quakers of the eighteenth century enjoyed a certain ambivalence about slavery; thus her subtitle, A Divided Spirit, is appropriate as well as descriptive.

She also has limited her study only to Friends and their meetings in the Delaware River valley and the colonies (states) of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. As a result, if one wishes to learn of the attitudes of Quakers in other colonies (states) such as Rhode Island or Virginia, one must search elsewhere.

In her introduction, a survey of the existing literature on the subject, she notes that scholars have on the whole concentrated on the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for their investigations of changes of attitude in the 1750s. It was in this decade, perhaps as a result of opposition to the Seven Years' War, that the congregations first became serious in opposition toward slavery. She believes that the monthly meetings outside of Philadelphia played important roles in the development of this anti-slavery thought. Further, she thinks that the participation of colonial Quakers in the abolition movement is directly comparable to the performance of liberals in later drives for reform, particularly the civil rights crusades of the 1960s. Readers will have to judge for themselves how successfully Soderlund makes this connection.

She states in addition that her analytical concept was borrowed from recent writings in sociology in that the term “conscience reformers” described the participation of colonial “outsider Quakers to end the subjugation of blacks” (p. 13). Here her comparison included the white abolitionists of 1840s such as Garrison and Tappen as well as later white idealistic college students of the twentieth century. Her point is certainly a valid one, if indeed she had written about the influence of anti-slavery Quakers on colonial society as a whole. The vast majority of her narrative, however, deals with the effect anti-slavery Quakers had on fellow Friends in and out of the meeting houses.

In this, her efforts have been eminently fruitful. Basing her study on the minutes of various monthly and quarterly meetings, she describes the progress from early indifference to black slavery to deep concern and discipline enforcement in the 1770s. Her pose is clear and easily read. It comes more alive, moreover, when she deals with individual cases as examples. She asks the right questions and acknowledges that complete or even satisfactory answers to them are difficult to discern. Her evidence generally supports her conclusions, but, as with all studies of colonial Americans, one wishes for additional proof or even more understanding.

Her studies of the monthly meetings do contribute to a more thorough comprehension of colonial Quakers. She explains the gradual acceptance of anti-slavery doctrine which led to severe disciplining of members in the Revolutionary years. In addition, she marks well the serious divisions within and among the various meetings. The Society of Friends in the Delaware Valley
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was far from a monolithic church with a clear consensus on this issue. One area perhaps cries for additional emphasis: the acceptance or rejection of black slavery by individual Quakers rested to a great extent on the immediate availability of labor, either skilled or unskilled. She indicates that many colonials preferred to use European indentured servants if obtainable.

This volume is attractively printed. Jean R. Soderlund has included several graphs and charts to support her narrative, and, going against an evil trend, she has incorporated three useful maps. One complaint is the lack of a bibliography. Her footnotes are complete but a compilation of her sources would have been helpful. This book is highly recommended to all students of Quakerism and to all those interested in the society of colonial Pennsylvania in particular and colonial America in general.

Kane, Pennsylvania

JAMES D. ANDERSON


Anthony Wayne was a vigorous, aggressive, sometimes ruthless commander who grew with experience but could be impulsive to the point of rashness. He also was vain, callous toward his family, and a philanderer. On balance, during the Revolution he was an effective if second-level general, at least by comparison with his peers. More distinctively, during the 1790s in the Old Northwest his achievements in the face of substantial difficulties were invaluable.

As a biographical study of a personality, of the evolution of its subject’s political thinking, and of his political and diplomatic activities, this book has some merit. As a treatment of the military service of an essentially military figure, however, it is seriously flawed. Although a lengthy bibliography is included, it is painfully evident that many of the entries were never consulted. The title itself is misleading. Of the text’s 295 pages, 158 are devoted to the Revolutionary War, but only 75 to Wayne’s service in the Northwest—ostensibly the book’s subject.

More significantly, this work epitomizes the pitfalls for a political historian addressing a predominantly military topic without acquiring a degree of familiarity with basic military details. For example, Wayne is described as urging, in 1774, formation of a militia “outside the structure of the regular Royal militia prevailing in the province at that time”; in fact, Pennsylvania—alone among the thirteen American colonies—had no militia, “Royal” or otherwise. Later, after Pennsylvania had created a militia, reference is made to a propensity of Pennsylvanians to “enlist” in the militia rather than the Continental Army. Actually, militia enrollment was mandatory; no one “enlisted,” as all were conscripted.

On a more elementary level, precise terms are used so loosely as to reveal complete lack of understanding of their meanings. The same unit is described, sometimes in a single sentence, both as a “battalion” and a “brigade.” “Reconnoiter” is treated as a noun. “Forlorn hope,” the standard eighteenth-century term for any advance element in assaults on fortified positions, is assumed to have been uniquely applied to the vanguard at Stony Point because of its desperate mission.

The situation maps for Wayne’s battles are good. The accounts, however,
focus so exclusively on Wayne's sometimes secondary role as to provide no perspective of the action as a whole, and are marred by numerous factual errors. Col. "William" (actually, James) Chambers did not command the Pennsylvania artillery at Brandywine; he commanded the 1st Pennsylvania Infantry. It was Washington himself who sent the reserve against Cliveden at Germantown; Maxwell merely tried to carry out the order. Col. Richard Humpton was not Wayne's "artillery officer" at Paoli but the commander of the 11th Pennsylvania Infantry. And so on.

Aside from errors of fact, occasions when Wayne's performance was culpable—the British surprise attack at Paoli, the "mutiny" at York in May, 1781, and the ambush at Green Spring, for example—are described with marked pro-Wayne bias. Wayne's trait of trying to pass the blame for his failures to his subordinates (especially at Paoli), which should have been explored in detail, is ignored. With particular reference to Paoli, modern research which puts the American fatalities at slightly over fifty has been disregarded and the gross exaggerations current at the time accepted at face value.

We are told repeatedly that, while some carping subordinates accused Wayne of being a martinet, he was merely a strict disciplinarian with a "natural flair" for inspirational leadership that produced high morale. Conceding the need for strong measures to instill essential military discipline in the prevalent context of egalitarian "levelling," it remains that Wayne was a martinet, even by the standards of the time. Why else did the Pennsylvania troops under Wayne consistently have significantly higher desertion rates than troops of other states in the same major command at the same time?

It would be possible to continue with almost page-by-page examples, but the point does not need to be belabored. Wayne has long deserved a modern, balanced, scholarly biography. Unfortunately, that need still exists.

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

John B. B. Trussell


As the first serious challenge to the new federal government, western Pennsylvania's Whiskey Rebellion of 1794 has been much studied since its origins. This volume edited by Steven Boyd briefly describes the chief primary sources, includes excerpts from some of them, summarizes the trend of scholarship to date, and suggests several new ways of viewing the rebellion.

The five scholarly essays here are certainly worth the attention of historians or well-prepared undergraduates, but the package in which they are presented is, unfortunately, likely to disappoint the intentions of the editor and authors.

First, however, the good news. The best piece in the book is Thomas P. Slaughter's analysis of nearly two centuries' historiography of the Whiskey Rebellion. He faults previous writers for casting the incident in moral terms of "who was right, who was wrong?" (p. 9). The "friends of liberty," from Hugh Henry Brackenridge and William Findley to modern historians such as Leland D. Baldwin, have favored the western rebels, while the "friends of order," from John Marshall through Richard Hildreth to Forrest McDonald and Jacob Cooke, have sided with the government. Calling for a new approach, Slaughter
asks for a reasoned attempt to understand, rather than to praise or condemn, the motives and the situations of both sides. His essay leads nicely into, and offers a justification for, the rest of the volume.

Next follow four primary sources—Alexander Hamilton’s report to President Washington of August, 1794; a letter from Alexander Addison to Virginia Governor Henry Lee in November, 1794; and portions of Hugh Henry Brackenridge’s Incidents of the Insurrection (1795) and William Findley’s History of the Insurrection (1796). These documents take up one third of the volume’s text pages. They are presumably included to allow students to compare the divergent views of contemporaries.

Two essays offer important reminders that anti-excise agitation was not confined to western Pennsylvania and did not end with the military expedition of 1794. Using federal court records, Mary K. Bonsteel Tachau discovers almost universal flouting of the excise law in Kentucky throughout the 1790s. The judicial system was seldom able to cope with such widespread disobedience, which ended only with the repeal of the law itself after 1800.

Roland M. Baumann finds urban manufacturers just as angry as backcountry farmers. Already resentful at receiving insufficient protection from foreign competition, Philadelphia’s manufacturers organized to protest the 1794 excise duties on snuff, sugar, and carriages. These former Federalists cooperated with the Democratic Societies to help a Republican unseat the city’s incumbent congressman and persistently lobbied against the taxes. Baumann’s argument is cogent but would be strengthened by evidence showing that those Philadelphia wards that swung to the Republicans did in fact have a larger than normal proportion of manufacturers.

Richard A. Ifft discusses the divergent attitudes of the Pennsylvania and United States governments toward the rebellion. Both had treated the earlier 1792 disturbances as ordinary riots prosecutable in either state or federal court. Pennsylvania still took this view in 1794, but the federal attitude had stiffened considerably. The national government proceeded against the Whiskey Rebellion as an act of treason, punishable only in federal court and by penalties as stern as death itself.

Finally, Roger Sharp takes us from the local to a very general perspective. He explains how the uprising gave poignancy to the nagging question of how public opinion was to be represented in a federal republic. Federalists saw voting as almost the only legitimate expression of popular will, but others considered that process too indirect, mild, and infrequent. The Whiskey Rebellion raised the issue of whether ad hoc mass meetings and even mobs might also be proper expressions of the people’s voice.

All these useful essays may not have the wide circulation they deserve. Cost is the problem. It is reasonable to price 91 pages of scholarship and 48 pages of original sources at the $35.00 level? In addition, it is not clear what audience the book is intended for. If for scholars, the excerpts from original sources are probably superfluous. If for students, the price is far too steep. Considering the high quality of the essays, a paper edition at a fraction of the price might sell well in both Pennsylvania and upper-level academic markets.
Louis Hunter’s death in 1984 has necessitated that this book on steam power be the concluding rather than the middle volume of a history of American industrial power. While the series as initially projected thus cannot be finished, each of the two published volumes—the other is on water power—easily stands alone as a definitive history of its subject.

Hunter approaches steam power in much the same thorough, matter-of-fact manner that he employed in his water power study. He notes that although steam possessed certain advantages over water power, such as all-season reliability and greater freedom of location, industrial power users were not quick to abandon their rugged waterwheels, which had long served them faithfully and at relatively little cost. This reluctance to cast aside proven technology was perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the case of Philadelphia’s Fairmount Waterworks, which, after twenty-three years of pumping water using various types of steam engines, returned to water-powered pumping in order to rid itself of the burdensome operating expenses (especially for fuel) associated with steam.

Nevertheless, the steam revolution (and it was nothing less than that) wore on inexorably. In spite of the Fairmount Waterworks experience, Pennsylvania in 1838 had more steam engines in stationary service (231) than any other state. The Commonwealth was also home to Oliver Evans, whose perfection of the high pressure engine Hunter rates as one of America’s greatest contributions to steam technology. Evans’s Mars Works in Philadelphia was the nation’s first fully equipped (in the modern sense) engineering plant and produced not only steam engines but a variety of heavy industrial machinery. His son George established a similar facility at Pittsburgh in 1812 that successfully promoted the widespread use of high pressure engines on inland river boats and later in railroad locomotives.

The steam engine was much more quickly adopted for transportation purposes than for stationary service, that is, for supplying power in mills and factories. In 1850, waterpower still accounted for more horsepower nationwide than did steam in such applications. An exception in stationary usage was in coal mining, where steam was welcomed enthusiastically in eastern Pennsylvania to pump water from the anthracite mines. As early as 1847, Schuylkill County was reported to have had more steam engines than the whole of France.

As the efficiency of the reciprocating steam engine improved—thanks to George Corliss’s automatic variable cutoff, the Babcock and Wilcox water tube boiler, and similar innovations—waterpower was almost literally blown aside as steam took hold nearly everywhere. With that transition in hardware came one that was profoundly social: waterpower was well suited technologically and economically to a rural environment, while steam demanded centralization of the workplace and thus intensified the nation’s urban growth.

Beyond Oliver Evans, Hunter portrays no Pennsylvanians as giants in the steam revolution. However, the Commonwealth in general continued its early lead as a center for the construction of engines. Among the myriad tables in this book are several showing that in 1880 Pennsylvania ranked first among the
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states in the number of engines constructed (89), number of workers employed in steam engine manufacture (4,640), and the dollar value of total steam engine sales ($7.3 million).

This is not to say that Hunter singles out the Commonwealth's role in the evolution of steam. Still, readers of this journal who have an inclination toward technological or economic history will find the book rewarding. They should be forewarned that Hunter does not discuss steam in railway service with the same degree of detail that he allot for, say, waterworks applications. Even in his chapter on boilers and fireboxes, where railroad influence was great, there is precious little about the iron horse. Nor does Hunter give much space to steam turbines, a curious circumstance, since in Volume One he made some of his most valuable historical contributions by surveying water turbine development. Steam turbines certainly fall within the chronological limits of this book as judged by its title, but in fact little is said even in regard to reciprocating steam after 1900 or so.

Pennsylvania State University

MICHAEL BEZILLA


Priscilla Ferguson Clement has written an interesting book that deserves a wide reading not only among a variety of historians and those interested in the development of American attitudes toward poverty and the social welfare system but those concerned with the current status of social welfare programs. While some may find Clement's application of her findings to the contemporary scene a bit too direct there is a compelling, and saddening, similarity between the attitudes of the antebellum Philadelphia Clement has studied in great detail and recent America.

The general thesis and overall theme of the book is clearly stated in the introduction: that welfare policy in the United States has always been the result of the relative strength at any particular time of three attitudes—a genuine concern for the welfare of the poor, prevention of abuse of the system by those it assisted, and a concern for economy in relief programs. Clement shows quite effectively how the fluctuations in Philadelphia's economy and events in the larger society combined with these three concerns to produce a shifting series of welfare policies that do not neatly fit any model either of progress or repression.

The book is based on extensive research in the very rich collections of the Philadelphia city archives. Clement's analysis builds a solid and convincing argument for her thesis, based on these records that have survived documenting Philadelphia's efforts, both public and private, to deal with the needs of its less fortunate citizens. The richness of this material allows a book that succeeds on the analytical level also to capture very movingly both the goals and values of those making and implementing policy and the often dire situations of those who sought assistance. The result is a fine book with a clear thesis ably argued and amply supported by extensive research. It is also a book that has a definite point of view that goes beyond the particular time and place it analyzes to deal directly with the larger issues involved.
Based on a brief look at American social welfare policy since the New Deal Clement argues that there has been a remarkable continuity of both the basic ideals and concerns underlying policy decisions regarding social welfare and the methods of delivering assistance to the needy. The broad outlines of Clement's argument are interesting and suggestive and I suspect that she is probably more right than wrong. The balance between benevolence and concerns for economy, between a genuine desire to assist those who are less fortunate and the desire to control their lives for their own good, and the other tensions Clement sets out emerge as clearly in the policies of the last half century and the attendant debates as they did during the half century Clement has studied in such detail.

That said, there remain some nagging doubts as to just how neatly the lessons of history can be packaged and applied. Would the picture be as clear and as compelling if we had a study of policy and programs of the last fifty years as richly textured and detailed as Clement's study of early nineteenth-century Philadelphia to serve as the basis for comparison? If Clement is correct in her assertion that there has been little change either in how society conceives of poverty and its responsibility and commitment to assist those in need or in the ways in which society assists the needy, the failure of antebellum Philadelphia's public and private efforts to relieve poverty and to solve the "problem of poverty" does not augur well for the potential success of our own generation's efforts.

This book, then, is far more than another well-researched scholarly monograph. Rather, it uses the historical record to reflect and analyze a problem of continuing importance to our society.

Central Michigan University

WILLIAM H. MULLIGAN, JR.


This intriguing study examines the difference between upper-class and elite leadership in Wilkes-Barre and Pottsville within the larger context of the northeastern Pennsylvania coal region. While producing no great surprises, the book provides some useful insights into the factors affecting success or failure among urban and regional leadership groups. The most fundamental difference between the Wilkes-Barre and Pottsville leaders was the degree of class cohesion exhibited by each.

In Wilkes-Barre, a true upper class was well established by the time industrialization began. Settled in 1769 by Connecticut Yankees, Wilkes-Barre had developed an upper class with common ethnic, religious, and club associations by mid-nineteenth century. This shared background was reenforced by and ultimately fostered cooperation in business, where the upper class pursued common economic interests. Committed to the growth of the anthracite coal industry in the Wyoming Valley, they developed economic institutions that spanned the entire region, thereby linking Wilkes-Barre's economy with that of other cities and towns on the northern rim of the valley and eventually
subordinating the latter to the former. Forming a sort of interlocking directorate, the upper class “established a vertically integrated system that supplied virtually everything from the raw materials and manufactured goods needed to extract coal to the final sales and distribution” (p. 24). Capital needed for such investment was either drawn from business associates within the upper class or its financial institutions. Because these men were more than business colleagues, they were able to exploit personal contacts among the upper class in the banking community when faced with financial hard times or challenges from New York or Philadelphia entrepreneurs. Elites in neighboring cities, sharing the same social and familial characteristics as the Wilkes-Barre upper crust, and aware of the primacy of that group in the economy, gradually were absorbed by the latter. All these factors gave the Wilkes-Barre upper class a considerable amount of local power well into the twentieth century, when leaders from New York and Philadelphia began to assert influence in the northern coal fields. Maintaining their power base in the Wyoming Valley, the upper class began to focus its attention on centers outside the region.

By comparison, Pottsville never developed a true upper class. The elite there grew with the industrialization of the city. New to the city and region, made up of families from varied social, ethnic, and economic backgrounds, this group shared little beyond their occupational experiences and entrepreneurial activities. Just developing as a regional leadership group in the 1870s, they could not hold their own against the economic hard times of the seventies and the challenge of entrepreneurs from outside the region.

Davies has done a good job of illustrating his thesis and making a convincing argument for the importance of class cohesion to an understanding of success or failure in regional and local markets. Indeed, one could argue that he makes his case too often. While generally well written, the narrative tends to bog down in spots with over illustration and redundancy. Case after case of upper class or elite families are dragged out to make simple points, and occasionally this leads to repetition. The other problem with the narrative stems from sloppy editing. In three places (pp. 111, 123-124, 155) the reader is treated to fragmentary or incomplete sentences.

Still in all, these criticisms are minor. Anthracite Aristocracy is a thorough study of leadership groups in northeastern Pennsylvania and has much to say about the factors shaping effective leadership among urban upper class and elites.

Lynchburg College

MICHAEL W. SANTOS


The stark and solemn face of a miner, blackened by coal dust, stares out of the cover at a potential reader of The Kingdom of Coal. Flipping to the first page the reader will find a poem that was inscribed on a miner’s tombstone in Hazelton, Pennsylvania:
"Fourty years I worked with pick and drill
Down in the mines against my will,
The Coal Kings slave, but now it's passed;
Thanks be to God I am free at last."

The book which follows is an admirable attempt to synthesize much of the scholarship on Pennsylvania's anthracite region and present that synthesis in a way which will be both useful to scholars and accessible to general readers. It is clearly written and beautifully produced, lavishly illustrated with photographs depicting the work, communities, and families of anthracite miners.

It is not, however, as the authors claim, a "comprehensive history of the industry and of the unique regional culture that grew up with it." Nearly all of the book focuses on three aspects of that history: the economic development of the industry between 1820 and 1880, the patterns of daily life among miners and their families during the industry's late nineteenth and early twentieth century peak, and the three most dramatic incidents of labor conflict—the Mollie Maguire trials of the late 1870s, the Lattimer Massacre of 1897, and the Great Strike of 1902. Except for the 1902 strike and occasional early twentieth-century examples in the discussion of daily life, the twentieth-century history of the industry and the region is confined to a brief final chapter.

The discussion is generally more descriptive than analytical. As a result, even the two best chapters—"Working in the Black Hell," a detailed description of work-life and work culture and "Solidarity: The Slavic Community in Anthracite," a description of cultural attitudes and ethnic community life among the Slavic immigrants who began arriving in large numbers during the 1880s—treat their subjects statically. We get little sense of how work-life changed or how the Slavic community changed over time. Such static portraits lend themselves to stereotypes and romanticization some of which the authors accept uncritically. Miners are described as "more extroverted, spontaneous, and independent than the average industrial worker" (p. 133), and as having a "devil-may-care attitude" (p. 130). Perhaps. This tendency is reflected in a misguided epilogue which defends local Congressman Daniel J. Flood, indicted for perjury, bribery, and conspiracy in 1978, as a product of local culture and traditions, an example of the local tradition of "we take care of our own" (p. 330). Flood, they claim, "remained rooted in the traditions of the region while also symbolizing and embodying its new spirit of revival" (p. 332).

It would have been a better book if the authors had more completely resisted this tendency toward romanticized regional boosterism, and if they had related their very fine descriptions of the early economic history of the region and the work and cultural lives of miners to arguments of social historians beyond the region. For example, such social attitudes of the miners' work culture as resistance to authority and insistence on self-paced and self-directed work rhythms may have had as much to do with the ideology of republicanism and individual rights as some psychological sense of independence peculiar to miners.

Yet, despite these quibbles, I liked the book very much. The authors have successfully bridged the wide gap between academic and popular history, something more of us should be taking seriously.

University of Pittsburgh

Richard Oestreicher
BOOK REVIEWS

The Correspondence of Mother Jones. Edited by Edward M. Steel. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985), Pp. xlix, 360. $34.95.)

This book reinforces the reputation of Mother Jones as a labor agitator. Her letters chronicle the sowing of the seeds of activism in the coal mining regions of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Colorado. The coal miners and their allies faced the wealth and power of the coal companies backed by their influential political supporters. In these labor wars Mother Jones displayed her courage as she confronted mine guards and militia and the threat of imprisonment. Imprisonment increased her sensitivity to civil liberties issues. She defended the right of dissidents to freedom of speech and aided labor agitators imprisoned for supporting the interests of the working class. Her life moved at a hectic pace with danger a constant companion and heightened emotions a frequent response. The nature of her letters convey these characteristics in their careless composition and strongly stated views about events and personalities.

The most publicized labor battles occurred in West Virginia and Colorado, but Mother Jones also participated in Pennsylvania struggles. She joined Greensburg coal miners who struck in 1910. The strikers and their families spent the winter in horrid conditions which she characterized as “Capitalist Brutality” of “the Class War in its reality.” By 1912 widespread coal strikes returned to West Virginia and Mother Jones joined the struggle in the Kanawha Valley with a series of speeches condemning mine guards and martial law and praising miner solidarity. These activities led to her arrest and imprisonment but her correspondence produced a flood of petitions which secured her release and an investigation of the conditions which triggered the strikes. Similar conditions faced miners in Colorado as coal operators exercised economic and political power and used detectives and the militia to retain control. Once again the authorities imprisoned Mother Jones but she condemned “the industrial slavery in Colorado” and requested shoes and clothing for the striking miners and their families. Her national speaking tour and several governmental reports favorable to the union exposed the violence of the guards and the militia, including the Ludlow Massacre, but the power of the coal operators precluded fundamental reforms.

These experiences brought national acclaim and requests for aid from the victimized, including prisoners. Mother Jones helped many prisoners, who defended the interests of workers, with letters, fund raisers, and rallies. She wrote to President Taft in behalf of imprisoned Mexican revolutionaries whose motives she paralleled with the fathers of the American Revolution. She raised much money for Tom Mooney, a labor leader arrested in connection with violence in a San Francisco Preparedness Day parade, and in her correspondence with him counseled against violence and affirmed her belief in his innocence. Colonel Edward House, an adviser to President Wilson, received an appeal in behalf of structural iron workers imprisoned in Leavenworth Prison. However, she became critical when the recipients of assistance seemed ungrateful. She criticized Ricardo Flores Magon, a Mexican revolutionary, for attacking the American Federation of Labor after accepting a $4,000 donation from the organization. She chided Tom Mooney for his unwillingness to accept a parole and his adamant demand for a full pardon. These responses saddened
her and she lamented the limited appreciation supporters received for exerting their best efforts in behalf of "political prisoners."

Personal elements as well as politics affected her responses to public figures. These criteria governed her assessment of leading figures of the United Mine Workers which ranged from abhorrence to deep affection. She respected John Mitchell but could not be as open as she wanted with him. She cherished John H. Walker, president of the Illinois Federation of Labor, with whom she organized coal miners and later opposed the policies of John L. Lewis. Their close personal relationship included the Walker family. She provided financial aid to assist them in purchasing a house and educating a daughter. On the other hand, she abhorred John L. Lewis who did not renew her appointment as an organizer and centralized and bureaucratized the union. William Green, a colleague of Lewis and secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers in the early 1920s, behaved differently and retained her confidence. They exchanged many letters and she applauded his character and called him kind hearted, honest, and well meaning. However, she feared his lack of strength and perception would make him susceptible to wrong advisers.

Professor Steel has compiled a valuable volume for students and scholars which captures the spirit of Mother Jones and depicts her ideas and activities in her own words. His helpful introduction precedes a convenient collection of letters which draws on the Mother Jones Collection, The Terence Powderly Collection, the John Mitchell Papers, and the John Walker Papers. This book together with Mother Jones Speaks edited by Philip Foner makes the words of Mother Jones more accessible to the general public. These words and her actions recall a different era in which some labor organizers travelled light, preached a gospel of socialistic trade unionism and spoke from the barricades.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

IRWIN M. MARCUS


This work was commissioned by the University administration. The author, a research historian with Penn State’s College of Agriculture, has written a comprehensive history designed for a wide variety of readers. This is not a picture book; there is a solid text. Mr. Bezilla’s descriptive account focuses on the institution itself, with relatively little attention to national context. He weaves the disparate threads into one tapestry, giving even-handed treatment to administrators and faculty, finances and physical plant, curriculum and athletics, students and alumni.

The book is organized chronologically. The first eight chapters carry the story to the end of the Second World War. Chartered in 1855 as the Farmers’ High School, with control vested in a board of trustees chosen from agricultural societies, the institution opened in 1859. Although it received the revenue from the Morrill Act in 1863 and was renamed Penn State College in 1874, it remained a private corporation. Six presidents came and went by 1881 as the College searched for a proper balance between the old and the new education. Four presidents sufficed from 1882 to 1947, with George W. Atherton and Ralph D. Hetzel serving long terms. Hetzel was called “the hesitant pretzel” (p. 172), which may explain his durability. Though perceived as a “cow college,”
the institution was primarily a school for engineers. Administrators ran the place, the faculty was poorly paid, the library woefully inadequate, the intellectual climate inferior, the political and social atmosphere conservative, and the campus ethos aggressively vocational. The College community took pride in this self-image.

A new era opened after the War. The six chapters that describe these developments emphasize quantitative growth and the quest for national recognition. President Milton S. Eisenhower finally succeeded in changing the name to The Pennsylvania State University, and he improved relations with the faculty. Eric A. Walker, whose tenure was troubled by student activism, presided over establishment of the Commonwealth Campus system and the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center. John W. Oswald reopened dialogue with students, thus winning the sobriquet of “Jack the Rapper,” but he increased the number of vice presidents from eight to twelve in three years!

Mr. Bezilla is largely successful on his own terms. He writes well. The illustrations are well chosen and the index is useful. Five vignettes on special topics (e.g., the Nittany Lion, Penn State in China) are attractive. The text shows care, though I note some ten spelling or typographical errors. The name of the early University of Illinois is erroneous (p. 31), two men are described as the ninth president (pp. 104, 138), the picture captions on p. 318 are reversed, and the number of members on a state board is confusing if not erroneous (p. 320).

Yet Mr. Bezilla’s history would be far more “useful and interesting” (p. xi) if he raised a number of questions which he ignores and if he analyzed, criticized, and interpreted rather than merely described. Let me offer some illustrative examples. First, educational leadership and governance. The trustees apparently provided little leadership, but the author never really evaluates the individual or collective contribution of the board to the institution. The faculty is the heart of a university, but the Penn State faculty had little voice in institutional governance, and administrators often treated professors as hired hands in a “pickle factory” (p. 230). President John M. Thomas, who boldly sought to emulate leading Midwestern state universities in the 1920s, resigned after three years. Why? What large purposes (larger than producing more engineers and business majors) did Penn State serve? These issues deserve attention.

Second, religion. We are told that Penn State long maintained compulsory attendance at chapel on weekdays and Sundays, that Sunday movies could not be shown in the town until 1955, and that a chapel was built on the campus in the 1950s. But the vital question of the relation between religion and higher education is simply ignored. Third, sponsored research. The author describes the establishment at Penn State after the Second World War of two government-supported research facilities that engaged in secret weapons research, but he never addresses the question of whether such research is compatible with the mission of a university.

The book merits are thus offset by serious shortcomings, and the list of unexamined questions could be multiplied. All facts are not equal, and even-handedness, which is often a virtue, may become a vice. Judgments must be made. The historian must ultimately grapple with moral issues.