Book Reviews

Edited by R.J.M. Blackett. *Thomas Morris Chester, Black Civil War Correspondent: His Dispatches From the Virginia Front.*

(Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989. Pp. xvi, 375. $35.00.)

R.J.M. Blackett's third book on African-American history adds a new dimension to Civil War historiography by giving us a view of the war through the eyes of a black newspaperman, Thomas Morris Chester. Historians have long used newspaper accounts to delve into the "brothers' war." Yet, in the best known studies of the influence and attitudes of the northern press, J. Cutler Andrews's *The North Reports the Civil War,* and Emmet Crozier's *Yankee Reporters, 1861-65,* there is barely a mention of a black viewpoint. Because Chester was the nation's only black war correspondent (of approximately 300) for a major daily during the Civil War, his dispatches are important for their unique perspective.

Born in 1834 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, the son of a former slave, Chester grew up in a family active in abolitionist circles. His father was the only agent in the state capital for William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator* and the family's restaurant became a meeting place for antislavery advocates. Harrisburg straddled a major escape line of the Underground Railroad and the city's five hundred black residents often harbored and helped fugitive slaves. During the 1850s Chester became convinced that America offered no real future for blacks and he became involved in the city's chapter of the American Colonization Society, a group devoted to the resettlement of blacks in the African nation of Liberia. While the A.C.S. and northern abolitionists disagreed strongly, Chester's decision shows the schism within the black community between those fighting for equality at home and those accepting emigration as the only option in a racist society.

Chester keenly felt the duality of being an African-American that W.E.B. DuBois later described as a: "two-ness—an American, a Negro, two souls, . . . two warring ideals in one dark body. . . ." Chester wanted to believe that America would one day live up to its expressed creed that "All men are created equal," but he was realistic enough to recognize that whites had not allowed blacks open and fair competition. Thus, Chester split his loyalties and efforts between making America more egalitarian and helping black expatriates relocate to Liberia.

In 1854, Chester went to Africa to teach. For the next nine years he alternated between America and Liberia, always promoting emigration while finding time to further his own education. Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation (January 1863), buoyed black hopes for a better America and gave them a chance to fight. Chester headed the recruitment drive that sent 135 men from Harrisburg and the surrounding area to join the Massachusetts 55th (sister unit to the 54th regiment made famous in the movie *Glory*). In the fall of 1864, the *Philadelphia Press* hired him to cover the activities of black regiments during siege operations at Petersburg.
Chester wrote his dispatches between August, 1864, and June, 1865. Despite Blackett's claim that Chester "had a keen eye for detail" (p. xii), Chester's descriptions of black soldiers and camp life offer only sketchy information. Still, there are some interesting and important highlights. Chester consistently wrote of the willingness of black soldiers to fight and of their bravery in the face of the enemy. He told of the racism of white soldiers toward their black comrades and of discriminatory treatment by field hospitals toward wounded black soldiers. He wrote of the diversity within the ranks of black troops, of the different perceptions and loyalties between ex-slaves who escaped into Union lines and black northerners. Chester's main theme was his insistence on equality and hope that America would live up to its creed and offer blacks a chance at the American dream.

After the Fifteenth Amendment gave black citizens the right to vote, Chester devoted himself to Reconstruction. He participated in Louisiana politics, became the first black admitted to the Louisiana bar, gained a commission as a brigadier general of the state militia, and served as a superintendent of public education. Then as Reconstruction forces lost to the Redeemers, a discouraged Chester again became an active supporter of Liberian emigration. The last years of his life remain shrouded in mystery. Chester died in 1892.

Blackett rescued Chester from historical anonymity, but his short 92-page biographical essay leaves the reader with an incomplete explanation of Chester's character or mind. Considering the paucity of papers about his life, perhaps this is all we can hope for. Still, Chester left behind his dispatches from the Virginia front and Blackett might have made more of them than simply collecting them. The editor admitted to using a "minimalist approach" (xiii) to footnotes, but in so doing, he might have examined the correspondence in an expanded biographical essay. The footnotes reveal little more than identification of some of the persons and units mentioned by Chester; they neither acquaint the reader with sources for comparison nor provide analysis or information about statements made by Chester.

This book should find an audience among Civil War specialists and African-American historians. General readers interested in a comprehensive view should consult Joseph T. Glatthaar, Forged in Battle: The Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers. Researchers will find Chester's dispatches filled with the names of black soldiers who fought for the Union and those interested in Pennsylvania history will find scattered references to black soldiers and units from the Keystone State.

Russell Duncan, John Carroll University


In 1903 S.S. McClure told Ida Tarbell that she was "the most generally famous woman in America" (p. 148). Admirers of Jane Addams might well have contested that nomination, for McClure, after all, was Tarbell's publisher. However, this recent
assessment by Kathleen Brady clearly confirms McClure's assessment. Addams supporters may still dispute the claim for Tarbell's preeminence, but Brady ably documents her subject's eminent position among early 20th century American women.

In 1939 Ida Tarbell published her autobiography, *All in the Day's Work*. The structure was the traditional chronological narrative with the focus on the externals of her life. Using the same structure and paying close attention to the autobiography, Brady has also chronicled the main stages in Tarbell's life: her birth, in 1857, and youth in the petroleum regions of northwestern Pennsylvania; her experiences as one of the first female students at Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania; the nearly ten-year stint on the staff of *The Chautauquan* magazine; her years in Paris as a free-lance writer; the muckraking saga on McClure's and *The American Magazine* when she achieved national and international recognition as a popular historian and investigative reporter; and, finally, the post-1915 period as a free-lance writer and lecturer. Brady reports that Tarbell, who died on January 6, 1944, was still writing in the year prior to her death, although then over eighty and a victim of Parkinson's disease.

Brady's special contribution to our understanding of Tarbell is that through a skillful use of Tarbell's diary and private letters she moves beyond externals and the public personna to reveal the inner torment of her subject. This famous woman continuously questioned her own self-worth and the value of her achievements. In 1905 she agonized in her diary over accepting an invitation to a small dinner in honor of Henry James. "All the rudeness—the ignorance, the imbecility, and inarticulateness of my life flared up in me and I blushed to think of sitting near. But they wanted me and I wanted to go. . . . I wanted to be assured. How pitiful I am!" (p. 166). A small but intriguing part of the richness of this book flows from comparing this and similar passages with the biography's contemporary visual images of an assured, serene, even commanding woman of achievement.

The crux of the problem was precisely that Ida Tarbell was a woman in a society that expected its men to be the outstanding achievers in the public sphere. In many ways her life represented a successful challenge to that masculine ethos. The salaries she was able to command as a journalist were not sex-biased but were based on the quality of her work. Although famous for her empathy and compassion she was equally moved by drive and ambition. She could clench her fists in determination and even be positively "vituperative" (p. 177) when confronting S.S. McClure. One of her most famous series was an investigation of the tariff question published by *The American Magazine*. President Wilson was so impressed by her knowledge that in 1916 he wanted to appoint her to his Tariff Commission. She would have been the first woman so honored. Although she refused this offer she did accept his call to work on the Women's Defense Committee in World War I.

Yet, surprisingly, this notable American journalist did not call other women to her career standard. Brady calls her writing on woman's role "confused," for although she lacked personal experience as a wife or mother, she nevertheless "tried hard to uphold a tradition she herself had carefully avoided" (p. 205). She also upheld another tradition—
she opposed giving women the vote. She doubted that the expansion of the franchise to include women would result in any improvements. In 1903 she joined the New York State Association Opposed to the Extension of Suffrage to Women and in 1908 became a member of its executive board. To heighten our sense of paradox Brady tells us that this was the same Tarbell who was to "read & reread" Virginia Woolf's classic feminist statement "A Room of One's Own" (p. 248).

From her start on The Chautauquan through the 1930's, work was the central organizing principle of Tarbell's life. Brady commends her for the long hours spent in research and for her practice of cross-checking her sources. In addition, she also praises Tarbell's skill as a writer—the piece on Napoleon is "still a joy to read" (p. 91)—and applauds her balanced judgment in the Lincoln series and her famous study of the Standard Oil Company. An exception to Tarbell's generally judicious stance was the character study of John D. Rockefeller which appeared in McClure's after the completion of the Standard Oil series. Brady characterizes this piece as a "Balzacian description of rapacity and greed" (p. 153). This uncharacteristic tone is attributed by Brady to Tarbell's "personal anguish" (p. 155) over her father's imminent death from stomach cancer. Although he had been one of the independent oil men who had fought Standard Oil's attempt to control the western Pennsylvania fields, Brady does not see the piece as a personal political vendetta. Tarbell had always been objective in recognizing how her family "had collaborated with their fates" (p. 155).

In writing the book, Brady felt that her greatest challenge was "in trying to explain an enigma" (p. 257). Biographers generally can not expect to offer complete explanations, but Brady, by showing the inner tension which resulted from conflicting beliefs as well as a lack of congruity between belief and action, certainly has succeeded in illuminating her subject. Tarbell clearly believed that love and a profession could not be combined yet she harbored resentment against her mother for steering her away from marriage. She could write of the "essential barrenness of the achieving woman's triumph" (p. 202). Yet, for the last quarter of her life, she knew full well that without her lecture and royalty fees her sister as well as her brother and his wife would have been destitute. In sum, Tarbell's life suggests that in the early years of this century a successful woman in a man's world could savor bitter-sweet triumph at best.

Robert A. Huff, Hobart and William Smith Colleges


The thesis of this book is that, over the course of the first century of settlement, Pennsylvanians of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds coalesced "into a pluralistic and broadly tolerant society" (p. vii). The author begins with William Penn's plan of a tolerant society, but argues that it was the settlers themselves who had to "struggle" to find ways to transform the ideal into reality.
In the first years of settlement, religious differences received more attention than national. National groupings were deceptive; the English, Germans and Swedes were themselves divided into many different, and sometimes antagonistic groups. Only the French traders were perceived as a real national threat in the early years. Hostility toward foreign immigrants increased somewhat during the great wave of migration in the 1730s, but the author argues that it still did not pose much of a problem for the colony.

Potential religious problems were resolved by respecting the boundaries of opposing religions. Quakers and Anglicans had to learn to ignore each other’s religious practices, because neither religion could be legally dominant. Through the first half century of settlement, much potential for religious discord was avoided by confining missionary activities to the unchurched on the frontier rather than to members of other churches or sects.

This tacit agreement between religious groups was broken during the 1740s by the simultaneous arrival of the Great Awakening and the Moravian missionaries. The former tore apart the Presbyterian community while the latter caused dissension within the German-speaking settlements. The author argues, however, that most Pennsylvanias, seemed untouched by the religious controversies. The political discord of the 1750s and the 1760s brought ethnic and religious differences into the open, but again the author argues that most Pennsylvanians were unaffected.

The final challenge to the “fundamental harmony that subsisted among Pennsylvania’s varied ethnic and religious groups” (p. 267) came in the 1770s and the 1780s. The author does not mention—either to refute or support—the purported role of Ulster Scot Presbyterians in the revolutionary movement and the framing of the Constitution of 1776. The test oath controversy is dismissed as having been resolved by 1778. No mention is made of double or treble taxation and disfranchisement of nonjurors well into the 1780s. "The course of the Revolution illuminated the potential tensions that could occur within a pluralistic society during a period of crisis, but there were few fundamental deviations from the course the province had taken over the previous decades.... If the war tested the limits of toleration, it also provided an opportunity for Pennsylvanians to affirm the wisdom of the principles and policies articulated by William Penn” (pp. 290-291).

The book contains much valuable material on Pennsylvanians’ attitudes regarding ethnic and religious differences. However, it is unsatisfying in a number of ways. The author asserts that there are social and cultural differences among ethnic groups, but never describes these differences, either as practiced in Pennsylvania or as originated abroad. The immense social differences between religious groups is also neglected: the differences between sect and church membership would seem to be only a matter of taste in type of worship service available. A person unfamiliar with the practices of Moravians would think the Moravian missionaries somewhat like New Englanders in Hawaii. The intermarriage and pacifist crises faced by the Society of Friends is completely ignored; indeed, there is no discussion at all of the internal government of Friends or their special social practices. The author does not describe social or economic
conditions for anyone in Pennsylvania during this period. The few statistics on immigration presented derive from secondary sources. It should also be noted that there is virtually no discussion of attitudes toward African Americans, either slave or free, during this time period.

A more serious problem with the book is the thesis itself: the author is hard pressed to argue consistently that toleration toward ethnic or religious groups increased steadily throughout the century, culminating in a truly pluralistic society with the establishment of the new nation. Reading the same evidence, one could argue that as long as there was abundant land and a weak provincial government there was no real reason for tension, and thus no "struggle" to oppose toleration. There was therefore no progression toward a more accepting society later in the century.

Finally, the author fails to address the substantial body of literature on the subject of ethnic and religious groups in Pennsylvania during the colonial and revolutionary periods. She relies heavily on James Lemon for statistics, but makes no mention of any of the theses in his book. Similarly, the author does not confront relevant material in works by Gary Nash, Dietmar Rothermund, Alan Tully, and Theodore Thayer. The author also ignores the significant controversy in the literature regarding the relationship between ethnic and religious groups and revolutionary issues.

Problems aside, there is a considerable amount of primary research behind the work. There is much to offer historians interested in attitudes toward immigrants and religious groups in Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century.

Mary McKinney Schweitzer, Villanova University


In this novel and sometimes witty book, Mark Summers presents a painfully detailed account of political corruption in the 1850s. Political and governmental malfeasance is hardly new ground for research, but Summers places corruption and, more importantly, the public's concern about corruption, within the framework of the sectional and political conflicts of the 1850s.

While Summers does not believe that political corruption was the root cause of disunion, he does believe, and effectively demonstrates, that it was "more than a sideshow during the boisterous 1850s." He argues that corruption was so widespread and blatant that it "helped destroy the Whig party and discredit the Democratic leadership. Antislavery men made the ethical debauch a standard charge against the Slave Power, and their use of the issue helped wreck the Buchanan Administration, elect Abraham Lincoln President and make any sectional compromise more difficult" (p. xiii). In pursuing this theme, Summers successfully blends the mechanics of dishonesty with the political crisis of the 1850s. The result is a fascinating study of the complex political culture of the pre-Civil War period. Clearly, this is an important contribution to the
historiography of the period, even though Summers may be faulted for the way in which he presents his case.

Summers has conducted an impressive amount of research and he generally tells his story well, especially when he delves into the specific details of notoriously corrupt acts. In over 300 pages the reader is treated to a host of sordid practices ranging from an in-depth analysis of gross irregularities connected with Erie Canal finances to voter fraud in Kansas; from dishonest activities of various state legislators and state treasury officials to the moral turpitude of the Buchanan administration. Juggling books in Michigan, paying off newspaper editors (apparently everywhere), illegally transporting men from Pennsylvania to vote in New York elections—a common practice known as "pipelining"—all illuminated the degree of corruption during the 1850s and all signalled to a frustrated and weary electorate that the republic was decaying. Summers explains these and many other cases of venality in such fascinating detail that the book might be mistaken for a 19th-century primer on political underhandedness.

Yet, these very details occasionally detract from subtler, but crucial, points in his conceptual framework. On the one hand, Summers demonstrates that the decade was unmistakably corrupt, and that the theme of corruption is an important one in understanding the political malaise of the 1850s. On the other hand, we are told that "most" politicians were not corrupt [p. xiv], that "Most ... pilfering that reporters mentioned was petty enough ... " [p. 69], and that "much 'stealing' was of the ... trivial sort." [p. 90] After presenting details of questionable dealings among lobbyists, he concludes that "most ... were honest." [p. 89] In fact, whether corrupt or not, Summers believes that "most" legislators voted the way their constituents would have wanted. [p. xiv]

These are important points and, while they do not detract from Summers' thesis—indeed, they bolster it since the perception of corruption is just as critical as corruption itself in understanding the tragedy of the 1850s—they do tend to get lost in the mire of specific cases. Furthermore, since "most" is a quantitative measure, Summers might have offered an explanation regarding how he arrived at the conclusion that the majority of politicians of the 1850s were honest, especially since he spent so much time plumbing the depths of political depravity.

In similar fashion, the sheer volume of detailed cases tends to mask the degree and range of corrupt acts. Surely there is a difference between a Vermont state treasurer embezzling funds and Missourians stuffing ballot boxes in Kansas. Summers undoubtedly is sensitive to these differences. But in constructing his story he piles one misdeed upon another in unremitting fashion so that, like contemporaries reading overblown and never-ending charges of wrongdoing in partisan 19th-century newspapers, the modern reader is pulled deeper into the vortex of venality and stands the risk of losing the capacity to distinguish between various corrupt acts.

These are minor criticisms when considering the scope of the book, for it is clear that Summers' analysis is, overall, noteworthy. He is especially adept at weaving the theme of corruption through the familiar political party battles of the period. The result
is a fresh perspective on politics in the 1850s, one that adds depth and nuance to personalities and events. For instance, in one chapter, "The Politics of Party Decay, 1849-1853" he demonstrates how corruption—or the charge of corruption levelled at party leaders—riddled every important political concern from the details of the Compromise of 1850 to the moral worth of the Taylor-Fillmore presidencies. The charge of corruption in the early 1850s was so widespread that many Whigs and Democrats were thankful that their respective parties nominated General Winfield Scott and Franklin Pierce for president. Both were seen as throwbacks to a simpler, less corrupt, age. Pierce, for instance, was vague on slavery, which certainly helped his position within a divided and cantankerous Democratic party, but more importantly, he had been absent from Washington for almost a decade, occupying himself with the affairs of the New Hampshire Democratic party (Summers mistakenly notes that Pierce was serving as governor—an office he never held). Such a man, Democrats reasoned, would be independent enough to stand up to those in government who had been so willing in the past to court special interests. Likewise, General Scott spent a long and distinguished career in the military, and because his involvement with politics was limited, he symbolized one who had maintained "a more upright past" (p. 191). The nominations of these two men are all the more revealing when juxtaposed with hardened and cynical national politicians. For instance, "Slippery Simon Cameron" of Pennsylvania supported Lewis Cass for the nomination in 1852, not out of respect or loyalty to the Michigan politician, but out of abhorrence for Cameron's arch rival and fellow Pennsylvanian, James Buchanan. Thanks to Cameron's influence "Votes at Dillsburg," notes Summers, "sold at fifty cents to five dollars apiece" (p. 191).

*The Plundering Generation* deserves a wide readership. One may take issue with the presentation of the material—indeed, one may grow weary of it—but Summers has, in the main, written an important work that deservedly will influence future research into 19th-century political history.

Stephen L. Cox, *New Hampshire Historical Society*


With *Socialist Cities*, Richard Judd joins the ranks of those who have explored the "failure" of socialism in the United States. He believes the debate on this issue has been too focused on the oversimplified "internal" versus "external" factors dichotomy. One of the ways to understand the question of socialism's failure, he argues, is to transcend this dichotomy and look at the actual experience of the Socialist party in American politics and its relationship with the working class.

Judd does this by examining the involvement of Socialists in municipal politics during the early twentieth century. This is a useful approach for several reasons. Leaders of the Socialist Party of America emphasized local politics as the first step toward a
classless society: local politics would help the party build a mass base, provide training in political organizing, and produce a cadre of experienced officeholders. For historians, moreover, Socialist political activity reveals many of the difficulties facing those who sought to put America on the road to the cooperative commonwealth by working through the political system.

The six "Socialist cities" discussed at length here are Cleveland, Dayton, Lima, and Lorain, Ohio; Flint, Michigan; and New Castle, Pennsylvania (in one chapter, St. Marys and Martins Ferry, Ohio, receive extended attention). In addition, Judd draws on the many recent local studies of Socialist and working class political activity. By combining his investigations of specific cities with the insights derived from other local studies, Judd is able to make a number of generalizations about the political environment in which Socialists won, exercised, and lost power on the municipal level.

While Judd identifies too many patterns to consider in a brief review, several are illustrated in his treatment of New Castle. Following a bitter steel strike, the Socialist party successfully fielded a municipal ticket in 1911. Socialist candidates sought workers' votes by exhorting them to recapture the city from the capitalists who had beaten them in the strike. At the same time, the party appealed to a middle class unhappy with inefficient local government by stressing its general commitment to reform. A coalition of organized workers and the reform-minded middle class elected a Socialist mayor and several Socialist councilmen. This same cross-class alliance, Judd finds, accounted for most of the party's municipal victories across the nation.

In office, the Socialists were blocked by Republican and Democratic politicians acting in concert—again, a typical situation for Socialist administrations. They faced another common problem, that of making the transition from agitation to administration. As long as the party was locked out of office it could stress broad socialist principles and incorporate people with divergent ideas about political action. Office-holding, however, required decision making. Socialists had to ask themselves why they had engaged in city politics: was it to educate, or was it to govern? Should the focus be on calls for fundamental change or on concrete accomplishments? Such questions set advocates of direct action against those who emphasized immediate demands. Middle class voters, meanwhile, saw that the abstract commitment to reform they shared with Socialists masked radically different ideas about policy.

Soon the business community fixed on structural reform, in the guise of commission government, as the solution for the city's problems. When the state legislature created a commission government for the city, a solidly middle class Nonpartisan Voters' League was organized to elect "business" candidates to the new commission and remove socialist "partisanship" from local politics. As often happened, the umbrella of progressive reform was used to shelter a middle class coalition of antisocialist voters and remove a Socialist government from office. While the party re-elected its mayor, at-large election insured that Socialist candidates for the commission would be defeated. This exclusion from power eventually starved the party of support.
In New Castle, as elsewhere, Socialists did not "fail" because they could not build a base of support among workers or because the two major parties adequately met workers' demands for reform. They failed because of "progressive" structural roadblocks to their acquisition and exercise of power and because of the formation of a middle class antisocialist coalition. They failed, in short, not because class politics was irrelevant, but because it was present and strong.

Judd seems more interested at times in the debate over socialism than in his "Socialist cities." He begins by discussing the explanations that have been advanced for the failure of socialism and the promise and perils of the party's municipal strategy. This long introductory section is effective. Still, one reads over one-third of the volume before reaching the actual case studies that are its heart; perhaps some of the attention devoted to this section could have been used to expand the number and variety of cities considered. Nor does the volume actually focus on "socialism": rather, it traces the experiences of the Socialist Party of America, certainly the largest and most important organizational expression of socialist sentiment but not the only socialist game in town. One also wishes Judd had addressed the fundamental matter of whether the "failure of socialism" remains an intellectually useful question.

Qualifications aside, the book has much to offer. Judd does an excellent job of describing patterns running through his case studies and adeptly links local experiences and broader conceptual questions. Certainly he makes the case that the municipal experience has much to tell us about socialism in America.

Gary L. Bailey, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

By Keith Dix. What's A Coal Miner To Do? The Mechanization of Coal Mining.


This interesting book is the sequel to the author's brief 1977 study, Work Relations in the Coal Industry: The Hand-Loading Era, 1880–1930, which provided a neat depiction of the coal miner's experience up to the time of large-scale mechanization in the industry. Here Dix offers a detailed history of the technological development in coal-mining mechanization. In particular, he traces the spread of the Joy coal-loading machine, though he also gives the background of the earlier cutting machines. Most of the book, however, deals with the impact of mechanization on miners' work. The mechanization that took place prior to the use of the loading machine had generally accommodated the traditional practices of coal mining—most important, the miners' control over work time and his insistence on the tonnage-rate pay scale. But when the coal industry found itself in a crisis in the mid-1920s and a restructuring of the industry followed, the fundamental nature of the coal miner's job changed. The industry finally felt the impact of scientific management, and greater managerial power in the pits resulted in a drastic loss of the miner's control over his workplace. The full application
of coal-loading machinery in the 1930s followed the commitment to scientific management and the loss of the miners' power over their jobs.

Dix explains how the coal-loading machinery created awful new health hazards for coal miners. Mechanical loaders filled the mine with coal dust which increased the likelihood of explosions, but even worse, it led to the problem of "black lung," or pneumoconiosis. "The quality of working life—the quality of life itself—deteriorated for thousands of the nation's coal miners who had to breathe the dust created by the new loading machines and other mining equipment" (p. 106). This book provides an important contribution to our understanding of how mechanization changed the nature of work in industrial America, usually to the detriment of the worker's well-being. Dix's effort fits comfortably in the historiographical tradition of Harry Braverman, David Montgomery, and David Noble.

But Dix's discussion of historical responsibility for mechanization of the coal industry raises questions that should be controversial. After explaining the evolution of coal machinery technology and showing its impact on the workers, he goes back to explain why mechanization came when it did. Here he dwells on the large role of John L. Lewis in encouraging mechanization. Lewis, he explains, supported the advent of machinery in the mines because he believed that higher levels of production would result from mechanization and that the efficiencies so realized would work to the advantage of the large, highly-capitalized, unionized companies against the smaller, non-unionized companies. Dix tells us that Lewis forced this strategy on the mine workers in spite of the opposition of the many miners who did not want their jobs to change.

Dix takes pleasure in exposing every inconsistency and false step of Lewis. His sympathies are so clearly with the socialist faction within the UMWA, who supported nationalization of the mines in the early 1920s, that he does not consider sympathetically Lewis's strategy. Having failed after World War I to organize the southern Appalachian fields, Lewis resolved to strengthen the position of the unionized Central Competitive Field by encouraging efficient, high-wage production there and undermining the competitiveness of southern coal through higher railroad freight rates. Dix does not consider the viability of that strategy, but instead condemns Lewis for selling out the independence of the miners to the Joy machine.

While few of us could honestly say that we would want John L. Lewis for a boss or a son-in-law, he must be given credit for representing the democratically-expressed wishes of his membership. Dix does not take the full measure of Lewis's popularity. Lewis won the 1926 race for the union presidency by almost three-to-one over his chief critic, John Brophy. Surely the overwhelming majority of UMWA members who rejected Brophy and the nationalization of the mines in that election should account for more of Dix's reckoning of historical responsibility for the advent of the mechanized coal industry.

Dix says that the Lewis strategy might have worked if he "could have organized the whole industry and imposed a uniform wage" and if he could have "neutralized local control" to impose national standards of wages and machine use (p. 164). Lewis's
strategy emerged precisely because he could not organize the whole industry or get all miners to agree to a national policy. The strategy was meant to solidify the union's position in an extremely depressed industry against managers who were effectively undermining the union's position throughout the country. Indeed, Dix's analysis appears at times to take place in a vacuum removed from the myriad forces that opposed Lewis in the 1920s. Such an "evil-genius" or "false consciousness" explanation for coal mechanization is inaccurate historically, because it absolves the majority of miners who supported his policies and fails to weigh properly the overwhelming power of coal operators to have their way in a time of economic depression.

This problem of misplaced historical responsibility does not, however, undermine the author's important contribution to how coal mechanization came about. I may reject the explanation for "why," but I learned much of the "how" and I am indebted to Dix for that.

Robert J. Norrell, University of Alabama

By Hugh Barbour and J. William Frost. The Quakers.


With The Quakers, J. William Frost and Hugh Barbour have given serious readers of American Quaker history a first-rate replacement for Elbert Russell's History of Quakerism published almost half a century ago. One of the Greenwood Press's 'Denominations in America,' this study augurs well for subsequent volumes in the series. Barbour and Frost have used the ample secondary literature that has appeared in the last four decades to fashion a detailed, well-written study.

That a denomination so all-inclusive now could have had such a narrow focus at its origins might surprise the unwary. Quakerism began in England in the heady days of the Puritan Revolution. Some later developments could be seen at the beginning: many early Friends rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, and their newfound faith sometimes led a few of them into outrageous behavior appropriate for nineteenth century camp meetings on the American frontier or worse. Quakers soon brought these exotic manifestations under control. By the eighteenth century the Religious Society of Friends, the formal name for this religious body, was rational, sober, and, with the exception of the outward sacraments of baptism and communion, safely in the fold of orthodox and trinitarian protestantism.

In detailing Quaker fortunes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Barbour and Frost carefully set out expansion into the colonies before Pennsylvania's founding. Discussion of the major Quaker centers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania keeps developments in Britain in full view. The authors carefully set out the changes that followed the reform of eighteenth-century American Quakerism, incorporating the differing views of Jack Marietta, Jean Soderland, and Frost among many others.
The nineteenth century presents an especially difficult century for Quaker historians. First there was the Hicksite Schism, the first of several schisms that split Quakerism into many competing factions. While there is ample work on which to base an account like this, the subject still raises difficult points and memories, and historians writing on it have to tread carefully. Even more difficult is the task of dealing with subsequent schisms and, in the last third of the century, the onset of evangelical Quakerism that incorporated most features of evangelical protestantism from the mourner's bench to water baptism by immersion. Change was so radical that some Quaker historians still find these developments offensive. While many useful recent studies have added to our knowledge of Friends in this period, the secondary literature is still limited enough so that the authors faced a difficult task. Barbour and Frost have mastered the complexities of this era and have given a broad survey that helps readers unravel the many novelties for Friends and others.

In the twentieth century some of the old schisms were healed and other differences accommodated. As the secondary literature for this era of Quaker history is scant, the authors faced an even more daunting task than for the previous century. They have made a valiant effort to digest the many different approaches to life and worship that go under the name Quaker in this century, from evangelical protestant emphases close to the Nazarenes and holiness churches on the one hand, to worship and social action inspired by early Friends and secular liberals on the other. The result is a balanced and detailed account even more useful to the general reader than the better known information that appears earlier.

*The Quakers* is a detailed study that masters ample secondary literature. Like other Greenwood Press studies it contains a section of biographical sketches that gives helpful information on many leading Friends from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries. Most readers will find this section very helpful. Inevitably, some readers will miss favorite Friends: for one familiar with New England, the William Rotches, Samuel Rodman, and Thomas Richardson are not to be found. Other readers will find similar omissions, but, to be fair, space and relative importance for Quaker history had to dictate the choice of biographies. Frost and Barbour have chosen their subjects well. They have also given to Friends and the scholarly community at large an overview of Quaker history that will stand for years as a model denominational history.

Arthur J. Worrall, *Colorado State University*

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By Bruce Laurie. *Artisans Into Workers: Labor In Nineteenth-Century America.*


One of the key questions in the field of labor history over the last few years has been how to synthesize the ever-growing pool of information about the evolution of the American working class over the past two hundred years. Although researchers have uncovered a wealth of information about all aspects of workers' lives, most of this...
material remains locked away in scholarly studies of particular communities or industries. While debates about republicanism, worker’s control, the role of the state, or patriarchy have flourished at conferences or in professional journals, the insights or conclusions reached through these discussions have had little impact on the way students or the public-at-large view the history of working people in this country.

*Artisans Into Workers,* represents a very important step for developing a synthesis of recent scholarship. Drawing upon much of the major research identified with the "new" labor history, while not ignoring the work of earlier generations of historians, Laurie has written a fast-paced, comprehensive survey of how changes in technology, government policy, the organization of work and the composition of the labor force itself shaped and reshaped the nineteenth century American working class. Central to the response of both artisans and factory hands to those changes was the ideology of radicalism. While it served as an impetus to militant protest against unfair or arbitrary treatment on the job, its affinity with aspects of mainstream politics prevented the development of a more class-based perspective. The resiliency of radicalism, even in the face of government repression and industrial terrorism during the latter part of the century, prevented the development of a broad-based movement dedicated to redressing the balance of state power, thus leaving workers at the mercy of forces largely beyond their control.

Using concepts of “movement culture” and “received culture,” the author also explores the various, and sometimes conflicting, sets of values and beliefs that informed workers’ behavior in the nineteenth century. During the 1820’s and 1830’s, especially in Philadelphia, agitation for the ten hour day sparked the formation of trades unions, labor journals and workingmen’s parties, institutionalized expressions of the widening gap between the realities of life in a rapidly expanding capitalist economy and the professed cultural norms of the leaders of that society. The devastating economic collapse which began in 1837 destroyed most aspects of the movement culture, allowing more socially acceptable notions of temperence or nativism to take root among American workers. Along with increased immigration and a growing concern over the expansion of slavery, these ideas split the nation’s workers along racial, ethnic and political lines.

The inherent limitations of radicalism as a response to the evergrowing economic, political and cultural assault on workers in the last third of the century became all too clear with the dramatic rise and fall of the Knights of Labor as well as labor’s defeat in the Pullman strike. Carefully observing and weighing the outcome of these events, Samuel Gompers and other trade union leaders adopted a strategy of “prudential unionism.” Emphasizing short-term gains and long-term survival, this strategy represented a final acceptance on their part of the overwhelming power of big business aligned with all branches of government. Rather than embark on hopeless political crusades against a mighty foe or attempting to organize the unskilled masses, trade unionists used their skills as a lever to gain a minimal standard of decency for an important, if minor, segment of the working class.
By the very nature of their role in the nation's history, Pennsylvania's workers often take center stage in *Artisans Into Workers*. Many of the century's most significant confrontations between labor and management such as the Railroad Strikes of 1877 and the Homestead lockout of 1892 took place within the state's borders. Both the Knights of Labor and the A.F. of L. got their start in the Commonwealth and such giants of the early labor movement as William Heighton, William Sylvis and Terence Powderly all hailed from Pennsylvania. The importance of its coal, textile, iron and machinery industries guaranteed that the Keystone State would figure prominently in any account of the development of the working class in nineteenth-century America.

Any work of synthesis carries the inherent burden of being limited by existing sources. People unfamiliar with nineteenth-century working class history will find much that is new and exciting in this work; specialists will generally be familiar with the examples used to illustrate key points. An exception is Laurie's integration of the experiences of both white and black southerners into the overall development of the working class during the 1800's, one of the major contributions of the text. One serious shortcoming of the book is the author's cursory treatment of the 1860's. The Civil War stirred up extensive class antagonisms in the North, resulting in both anti-draft riots and the rapid expansion of trade unionism. The use of federal troops to break a strike of coal miners in Tioga County, Pennsylvania in December of 1864 set an important precedent which bore bitter fruit in the post-Civil War era. While he briefly touches on some of these issues, the author does not give the decade the attention it deserves. These relatively minor problems do not detract from the overall importance of the book. Laurie has produced a first-rate piece of work which is rich in both factual detail and analytical depth. People interested in the history of American workers in general and Pennsylvania wage earners in particular would profit from reading this book.

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(Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989. Pp. xvii, 531. $34.95.)

Gerber's study attempts to introduce the analysis of public (as opposed to private) life to the new social history and to the study of ethnic communities. In this he succeeds admirably. The work's central theme is that American urban society was deeply divided along ethnic lines, that competing ethnic groups were locked in considerable conflict and filled with invidious stereotypes, but the result of this conflict was not the destruction of community but the "Making an American Pluralism" that allowed them to live together, albeit in tension. Buffalo is seen as a test case for that process.

There is a topic in the book for almost everyone. The author uses the latest concepts, questions, and methodologies of the new social history to examine, in both a comparative and interactive context, labor history, religious and denominational history, popular culture, ideology and world view, political mobilization and voting patterns,
economic developments, as well as social, demographic, and family characteristics of Buffalo's three major ethnic groups of the period—native-born whites, Irish and Germans.

On almost every page the reader will find some notable insight or observation, and a reviewer can only highlight some of the ones that most struck him. Particularly well done are the analysis of inter- and intra-ethnic politics, as well as descriptions of festivals and celebrations, especially among the native-born and Germans. Stereotypes held by the native-born of Germans and Irish are well described, and pretty much what one might expect, but the reverse is an eye-opener—especially German stereotypes of native-born cultural foibles, inadequacies and hypocrisies. Participation of native-born middle class families in German festivals is unexpected and revealing. Descriptions of the nuts and bolts of illegal and semi-legal enrollment of immigrants in the Democratic Party, and their often equally dubious double and triple voting are welcome. The nature of changing work patterns among artisans is well done. The internal contradictions and ambivalence of nativist world-view and ideology are also insightful and seem on the mark.

In addition to revealing insights and rich detail, the author makes a number of important, and provocative, larger arguments, and these of course can always be debated. Here are the ones that most stimulated, and provoked, me. First, the author makes a strong argument that the native-born can be treated as another "ethnic group," something others have long contended, but have seldom developed. Gerber sees this emerging in the 1850s, with the rise of the Native-American, or Know-Nothing, Party, out of frustration with their own declining sense of peoplehood (German bands, militia and Vereine had by then largely taken over even the July 4th celebrations) as well as by their declining influence in a city by then predominantly foreign-born. Fine, but the author does not follow through on this useful insight or give us an idea of how deep or long-lasting was this "ethnicization." The Know-Nothing Party lasted only five years; did the Yankees take back their 4th of July Celebrations or other symbols of identity?

Second, the portrait of the Irish focuses too much on pathology. Irish girls, driven by poverty, it is argued, left home at 10, 11 or 12 years of age to work as live-in domestics. Perhaps, but so did the daughters of the much better-off Germans. Moreover, very few Irish women stayed as live-in domestics following marriage (only black women did that), suggesting that more than pressures of poverty shaped such behavior.

Third, the story of how some Germans were ultimately attracted to the Republicans is not entirely convincing. After nicely describing the regional and religious differences dividing the early German community, and acknowledging that religion (Catholic-Protestant) was the vessel in which the emerging German ethnicity was shaped, this insight is lost by the end of the book in an argument that a middle-class life-style emphasis on neatness, orderlines, and property acquisition forged a common identity among Germans as well as political bonds between Germans (including Catholics) and native-born Republicans.
Finally, the "American Pluralism" that emerged from the conflicts of the age were far from complete. To be sure, the Germans were partly accepted into the social compact, but there is no sign that either the Irish or the blacks were yet welcome.

Nonetheless, this book will quickly be recognized as one of the very best ethno-cultural community studies we now have of the antebellum period. It is gracefully written, richly detailed, thoroughly researched, and broadly and imaginatively conceived.

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As Gary Grobman makes clear in the Preface, the purpose of The Holocaust: A Guide for Pennsylvania Teachers, a project of the Pennsylvania Jewish Coalition's Holocaust Curriculum Task Force [a group of twenty-seven rabbis, scholars, archivists, and educators] is "not so much to provide the gory details of the Nazis' race war against the Jews as to permit students to understand the types of thinking and behavior which led to genocide during World War II (p. i)." One need go no further than this seemingly innocent sentence to appreciate how fraught with special difficulties the study of the Holocaust is, for there are those who would insist that the very subject defies "understanding," and no doubt others who would further insist that a respectful silence is more appropriate than high school courses on the Holocaust—however noble the intention, however well-meaning the teacher.

Such skepticism is hardly new, but I have always responded by keeping faith with the possibilities of education (well aware that, in such courses, trivialization, trendiness, and hollow-sounding pieties always pose a risk); and reading through this Guide has only strengthened my conviction. For those who labored more than four years to compile its information have kept their focus on what can properly be explored in an academic context. As Linda Hurwitz, Director of the Holocaust Center of Greater Pittsburgh and author of an introductory section of the The Holocaust (entitled "How to Use This Guide") puts it: "The first responsibility of the teacher is to teach the event. The actual history must be the foundation for any critical understanding and pursuit of the issues related to the Holocaust (p. iii)."

In general, The Holocaust proceeds chronologically, moving from the backgrounds of modern anti-Semitism through chapters that explain Hitler's rise to power, events such as the Nuremberg Laws and Kristallnacht, and the implementation of the "final solution" itself. There are also units on the history of the Jews and the history of anti-Semitism, on Nazi fascism and the modern totalitarian state, on Jewish resistance in the concentration camps and on those "righteous gentiles" who, at great risk, harbored Jews or helped them to escape. Moreover, the Guide contains useful appendices that outline Pennsylvania's laws, regulations, and programs that try to minimize unfair discrimination, and the histories of discrimination that prompted these measures (e.g.,
the Christiana Riot and the Walker lynching). Each chapter contains sections on instructional objectives, chapter content, vocabulary, activities, discussion questions, evaluation, and teaching strategies.

Not surprisingly, some of the suggestions strike me as problematic. For example, it is one thing to suggest that teachers obtain a copy of the Anti-Defamation League's "A World of Difference" and quite another when they are urged to play Simon & Garfunkel's "The Sounds of Silence" and then use it as a basis for discussing "silence, indifference, fear of new people and situations (p. 15)."

Nonetheless, I applaud the genuine effort made to expand the study of the Holocaust well beyond history classes per se. In addition to the list of such predictable courses as world cultures, European history, and American history, the makers of the Guide have included ways in which a unit on the Holocaust might be added to existing courses in literature, in art and music, and not least of all, science. For, as they argue, the Holocaust raises central questions about scientific responsibility as surely as it does about the sociology of stereotyping or the role of government with regard to genocide.

In short, the possibilities of a responsibly designed "Holocaust study" widen to encompass nearly everything usually associated with an academic curriculum. What the study of the Holocaust adds, however, is a dimension of seriousness, of question-raising, that is not generally a feature of high school courses:

Was this aberrant behavior by so-called "civilized" human beings a half-century ago a quirk of history? How could this have happened? Could it happen again? How could it happen to you or me here in the United States? What parallels do we see today between what happened in Germany and what is happening today? Why isn't genocide an anachronism instead of being today's front-page news? (p. i)

My hunch is that there are many high school teachers throughout Pennsylvania who would be eager to add a section about the Holocaust to their existing courses, or even to offer a special topics course on the subject, but who are fearful about grabbing hold of such a hot wire. They are the teachers who feel that they are insufficiently informed, who worry that they will be "unworthy" of the subject's terrible demands on both the head and heart. However, these are precisely the nagging doubts that are probably necessary as a beginning. The second step is to read The Holocaust: A Guide for Pennsylvania Teachers thoroughly. It contains invaluable information: clear statements of objectives and strategies; suggested topics to explore in class discussions and assignments; and bibliographies—in short, everything that can help the right teacher design and conduct a first-rate course.

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