

## Book Reviews

Edited by Dorothy Twohig. *The Papers of George Washington: Revolutionary War Series.*

(Volume 8 January-March 1777. Charlottesville and London: The University Press of Virginia, 1998. Pp. xxxiii, 692.)

Edited by Dorothy Twohig. *The Papers of George Washington Presidential Series.*

(Volume 8 March-September 1791. Charlottesville and London: The University Press of Virginia, 1999. Pp. xxxi, 635.)

These two volumes offer marvelous insights into the character of George Washington. No matter how little of significance may have happened during the two periods covered, Washington looms as the ultimate leader, the single most concerned as well as the most heavily depended-upon individual in the American states. In 1777, most of his soldiers' enlistments having expired, Washington argued relentlessly by letter with all parts of the country to send men. Men were a greater priority than money. He touted the New England states for offering a higher bounty to serve in their militias than Congress was offering to serve in the Continental Army. He realized that smallpox was being brought into the army by men from the southern states and ordered an inoculation center set up close to Philadelphia where the men were directed and treated before joining the main army.

Washington knew that there was plenty of flour in Pennsylvania and urged those in government to see that the army received its share. James Mease of Philadelphia asked to be named clothier general and Washington was pleased to reply that he had already submitted Mease's name to Congress, which approved. He expressed worry about prisoner treatment and corresponded with General William Howe in hopes of obtaining improvement. In this regard, the editors have included an excellent description of prisoner confinement in Concord, Massachusetts, as reported from Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell in February. Washington was glad to get notice from the Pennsylvania Council of Safety that there would be an eclipse of the sun on January 9, 1777, the effects of which, without previous knowledge, might have been devastating to the troops, in his opinion. Otherwise, it is notable that the weather is seldom mentioned, most likely because the commander-in-chief had too much else on his mind and too many other concerns for his scribes to pen.

Washington expressed his affection for Benedict Arnold in a letter of February 3, 1777, in a footnote to a February 26 letter, the editors reveal their expertise in genealogical research by sorting out the Nelson family of Yorktown, Virginia. Washington heard regularly from Governors Trumbull of Connecti-

cut, Cooke of Rhode Island, and Livingston of New Jersey and kept up a regular correspondence with Robert Morris and the Pennsylvania Council of Safety as well as with his officers in the field. He objected bitterly to the promotion of foreign officers to ranks equal to or above those of his own American officers. On rare occasions, such as in his letter of March 15 to General John Sullivan, his papers reveal his ability to chastise when he thought it necessary. He labored to keep up with British military positions and intended movements. All of this may be found in his correspondence, a mountain for this three-month period.

Washington began his presidency in 1789. By the period covered here, the opening of his third year, his correspondence had lessened. Much of his time was spent touring the southern states to compensate for an earlier tour of New England, and much of his attention was also focused on building the new federal city. This will prove an important volume for those interested in the planning and building of the District of Columbia. Reading these letters should remedy any lingering uncertainty as to why it was named "Washington."

While Washington was touring the South, his wife Martha remained in Philadelphia. He corresponded voluminously with his secretary Tobias Lear in regard especially to the education of his nephews and to the loyalty of his slaves to the household. He worried somewhat about Pennsylvania's laws concerning slaves. During and following his summertime tour of the South while at Mount Vernon, he kept up with governmental activities through correspondence with Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, and others.

In spite of the fourteen years difference between these volumes the names of many correspondents are the same. The editing, as we have come to expect, is equal to the high level required to deal with the enormity of its subject. A sad note is the number of "letters not found" that appear in both volumes, but we can be certain that the editors have scoured the country to find every possible scrap. Indeed, those few known items not published here are cited as included in the CD-ROM version of all papers collected by the project. The inclusion of a map as the frontispiece in the Revolutionary War volume is a thoughtful addition. That these carefully edited volumes will long remain available is assured by the craftsmanship obviously demanded by the publisher. We can only urge and hope that publication of this series continues.

Frank C. Myers, *New Hampshire State Archives*

Edited by Paul H. Smith and Ronald M. Gephart: *Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774 - 1789: Vol. 25, March 1, 1788 - July 25, 1789 with Supplement, 1774 - 87.*

(Washington: Library of Congress, 1998. Pp. xxx, 843.)

This volume is the 25<sup>th</sup> in a series of 26. The final volume is pending in 2000. Covering March 1788 to July 1789, volume 25 also includes supplementary material for the years covered by earlier volumes (1774-1787). In addition to the adoption of the Federal Constitution and planning for the implementation of the new Federal government, the major issues confronting Congress in 1788 and 1789 were administration of western lands, Kentucky statehood, and Indian affairs. Failure to achieve a quorum was a constant problem during this period, especially in the months immediately preceding the new government. Beginning in October 1788, the Continental Congress did not reach a quorum; on November 3, 1788, only two delegates attended the first session of the government year.

Delegates were concerned with the progress of the Constitution's ratification; they wrote home with news and rumors and requested the same in return. Another issue was the location of the new government's capital. Philadelphia eventually lost out to New York, which was named the temporary home. The discussion on the topic, both inside and outside Congress, grew heated. Pennsylvania John Armstrong, Jr., wrote of the matter from New York to his future wife Alida Livingston. "I know not whether a Pennsylv. Delegate can mingle in any society without a risque of either insult or seduction. . . (if the reports say true) that when the tongue (their natural weapon) fails, they resort to the hand, & even box & pull hair" (p. 254).

The supplementary material will be of particular interest to scholars of Congress and the Revolutionary era. Most of it is full text, although some entries are corrections or addenda to items published in earlier volumes. The supplement, which amounts to over 200 pages, would be even more useful if the delegates were identified by state. If a reader is unfamiliar with a delegate, he or she must consult the list in the volume that covers the appropriate period, or the comprehensive list that will be published in volume 26. One of the more fascinating additions is the full text of "Proceedings of a Treaty Held at Easton [January 30-February 6, 1777]" (pp. 601-611). The treaty, which was referred to the committee for Indian affairs, was not well received by Congress. The committee's report was tabled. In volume 6 of *Letters*, the editors "mistakenly reported that no copy of the offending treaty is known to exist" (p. 611). The surviving treaty was located in the Scottish Record Office.

The personal lives of the delegates are intertwined with their professional duties in many of the letters. Some, however, do not mention Congressional business at all. The March 4, 1777 letter from John Hancock to his wife Dorothy makes no reference to government or war. After remarking upon the

problems caused by bad roads and an ice-blocked ferry, Hancock relayed his problems with a servant. "My Boy Joe has Treated me very ill, he drank a deal of my Wine in the Waggon, broke & lost several Bottles, dropt out my Trunk which was luckily found, & was brought to the Tavern drunk & put to Bed, I shall turn him adrift at Phila. I am Glad I did not leave him with you, he would have been a plague to you" (p. 613). Hancock's irritation is palpable 222 years later.

The editors of this project have done an impressive job of locating material, no matter how far-flung. The only evidence of the existence of some manuscripts was information available from auction catalogues. In these cases, the editors have included descriptions from the catalogues or transcriptions from catalogue illustrations. For example, the Hancock letter was transcribed from a 1992 Sotheby's catalogue. Previously published transcriptions or descriptions were used for documents no longer extant.

*Letters* contain a timeline of Congressional actions and a list of delegates, by state, with attendance records. A complete summary of all delegates with attendance information will appear in the final volume. It is well-indexed by both name and subject. The series, without illustrations, is also available on CD-ROM from Historical Database of Summerfield, Florida.

The editors have provided easy access to important material that was, in many cases, unavailable or difficult to locate. *Letters of Delegates to Congress* depicts not just the workings of the Continental Congress, but the lives of the delegates. It is a wonderful reference tool.

Laurie A. Rofini, *Chester County Archives*

By Kevin Kenny. *Making Sense of the Molly Maguires.*

(New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. Pp. xii + 336. \$39.95 cloth, \$18.95 paper.)

The Molly Maguires, the infamous Irish Catholic group in the southern anthracite region of Pennsylvania during the 1860s and 1870s, has generated passionate responses. For some they were nothing less than an evil conspiracy, led by the notorious John "Black Jack" Kehoe, advancing their criminal goals through murder and perjury. Others declare them innocent victims of a conspiracy against Irish Catholics and/or labor unions by grasping corporations embodied by the nefarious Franklin B. Gowen, President of the Philadelphia and Reading Companies. A few even question their existence. Kevin Kenny offers us a well-balanced and well-researched study which substantially increases our understanding of this legendary group.

Kenny's description of how Franklin B. Gowen, Benjamin Bannan, and nativists used the Molly Maguires to demonize the Irish Catholics is solid and traditional. But his cultural analysis of the episode is important. He reminds

us that Irish immigrants were not culturally homogenous. Those who migrated to America through England, for example, had adapted to industrialization as did those moving directly from the more advanced counties in Ireland. Most of the Molly Maguires, however, were Irish speaking immigrants from the more undeveloped areas of north central and northern Ireland, particularly Donegal, with a traditional culture that sanctioned the concept of retributive justice.

After placing the Molly Maguires in their cultural context, Kenny next turns his attention to the key interpretative issues of the existence and extent of a conspiracy and its relationship to trade unions. He notes that the traditional Irish found a fraternal home in the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Gaining control of a number of these lodges, the Mollies converted the AOH into an instrument of retributive justice. In this sense a limited cabal did exist, but nothing of the size and power imagined by contemporaries. As might be expected in an environment where the employer was often landlord, store-keeper, and tax collector, most recipients of these "acts of justice" were officers of coal companies. Although enacting revenge for a work-related abuse could be construed as a form of job response, it could hardly be defined as collective action for the improvement of working conditions. The Workingmen's Benevolent Association, dominated by non-traditional Irish, not the Mollies, was the true labor movement in the anthracite region.

Kenny offers important insights into the role of Molly Maguires in intra-ethnic struggle. A large part of that struggle involved the "Devotional Revolution" within the Catholic Church in both Ireland and America. The revolution sought to enforce more ritual devotional practices and erase such folk practices as wakes, which the more traditional Irish resisted. The secretary of the oath-bound AOH also caused clerical condemnation. It is instructive that from the gallows several convicted Mollies attributed their fate to a failure to follow the church's teachings.

Harold W. Aurand, *Penn State, Hazleton*

**By Daniel T. Rodgers. *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age.* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Belknap Press, 1998. Pp. 672. \$35.00 cloth, \$18.95 paper.)**

Historians of late nineteenth century reform and twentieth century progressive have known for years that among things Americans sojourning in Europe lugged back home in their cultural baggage were ideas about settlement houses, friendly rent collecting, social insurance, greenbelt towns, and state-aided worker housing. However, Rodgers in this critical work on the trans-Atlantic roots of American progressivism, has rigorously documented the case and solidified the importance of the legacy. He has presented his

analysis systematically, and greatly enlarged the size, the scope, and the significance of the contribution made by this cross-fertilization of European and American reform ideas.

Although James T. Kloppenberg, in his *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1877-1920* (Oxford, 1988), identified the linkage of European and American progressivism, Rodgers enables us to more fully comprehend the trans-Atlantic dimension of American progressive reform and to understand better the scale and vitality of the intercontinental discourse about how society should address the social and environmental degradation wrought by nineteenth and early-twentieth century urban industrialization. Rodgers regards the Atlantic as a "seaway" for the movement of ideas and aspirations as well as for people. But until the 1920s and 1930s, "asymmetry" marked the knowledge-sharing relationship between Europe and America. Seeking solutions, Americans—often students at European universities such as Richard T. Ely and Edith Abbott—devoured German ideas about social insurance and British ideas about worker housing. Meanwhile, no longer enchanted by the romance of wilderness democracy, Europeans traveling in America cringed at the grim and grimy despair of Chicago and Pittsburgh industrialism.

Rodger's saga spans the years from the 1880s through the 1950s, an era when spurred on by European social theorizing and social experimentation social politics eclipsed *laissez faire* in policy discourse. Social politics posited an interventionist state that effectively limited the social costs of aggressive industrial capitalism. Progressive states insured workers against industrial accidents, unemployment, and old age, provided safe and sanitary housing, and imposed land-use planning and zoning upon the chaos of traffic-congested city streets.

The core of Rodgers' book focuses on the transit of these social reform ideas about insurance, housing and planning from the universities, salons, and expositions of Paris, London, and Berlin to America. After 1920 European fascination with Fordism, and American incorporation of the crux of social politics into the New Deal shifted the flow of ideas westward.

Throughout this large book (672 pages) Rodgers profiles key American progressives, Richard T. Ely, Jane Addams, Paul U. Kellogg, Lewis Mumford, Catherine Bauer, and others who drew heavily upon European ideas and models. He sees World War I—as others have done—as a crucial socializing event, hitching the nation state to public goals, mentally conditioning Europe and America to accept an interventionist state. But, the war also shattered assumptions about the supremacy of European efficiency and European culture. Indeed, after the war Europe embraced American "technical efficiency," especially, as noted, Fordism, at the very time, ironically, when Lewis Mumford, Catherine Bauer, Fred Ackerman, and other "housers" flocked to Europe to

see the modern "international style" *bauhaus* workers' homes bejeweling Frankfurtam-Main's suburbs. Rodgers argues that by the 1930s, however, American progressives had stashed away a prodigious supply of European social-political ideas. Only a crisis of the enormity of the Great Depression awaited the unleashing of this arsenal. Thus, in the 1930s America—not Europe—forged ahead as the champion of the progressive state.

Rodger's book is a *tour de force* strongly documenting the case for an Atlantic perspective on nineteenth and twentieth century social reform. It is especially trenchant as a corrective to those wedded to a more provincial interpretive of the roots of urban planning, housing, and social insurance. No doubt such an Atlantic perspective ignores crucial indigenous forces shaping reform such as American evangelical fervor, or the uniqueness of American housing and planning traditions as detailed by Kenneth Jackson, Michael Ebner, and Robert Fishman. But this large book serves its purpose admirably. No future treatment of planning, housing, or social reform can now ignore the existence of a trans-Atlantic reform milieu. Rodgers' book represents a landmark in the historiography of the Progressive Age.

John F. Bauman, *Muskie School, University of Southern Maine*

**By Ellen Carol DuBois. *Harriot Stanton Blatch and the Winning of Woman Suffrage*.**

(New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997. Pp. 353.)

A half century after the first women's right convention was held at Seneca Falls, the women's suffrage movement in New York State was stuffy, unproductive, and showed little promise for future success. Harriot Stanton Blatch, the daughter of pioneer women's right activist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, would help to change that. The present biography, by suffrage historian Ellen Carol DuBois, describes the life of Blatch, a brilliant political strategist who did much to reinvigorate the suffrage movement on the state and national level and contributed significantly to the winning of women's suffrage.

DuBois explores the public and private life of Blatch, her relationship to her famous mother and other influential suffragists as well as her contributions to the success of American efforts for women suffrage. Though the daughter of two celebrated American reformers, Harriot chose to live much of her early adult life outside the United States. After graduating from Vassar, Blatch traveled in Europe, married a British citizen, and lived abroad for nearly twenty years. Combining a married life that produced two daughters with a public life in politics, she participated in the British women's suffrage movement and became influential in the British Fabian Society. Returning to the United States after the death of her younger daughter, she became involved in suffrage efforts in the United States.

Convinced of the necessity of including the working classes, in 1907 she founded the Equality League of Self-Supporting Women, a successful suffrage organization that included a full-spectrum of working women from college-educated professionals to garment workers. Open to new methods and innovative in her own right, she revitalized the New York State suffrage movement with tactics ranging from suffrage newspapers, radio talks and motion pictures idealizing suffragists, to grand balls, and dramatic parades. Later on a national level, she led efforts to develop voting blocs among women already enfranchised on the state level that led to the establishment of the National Women's Party in 1916. Once the vote was achieved, her "left feminism" led her to become involved in other efforts to achieve full equality for women.

DuBois' portrait also notes Blatch's limitations. Though devoted to the inclusion of the working classes in the suffrage movement, she did not welcome the new immigrants as voters. More a guerrilla fighter than a team player, Blatch was instrumental in the establishment of a number of significant suffrage organizations, but often found it difficult to work well within them. Though a gifted politician who eagerly worked within the male dominated political system, she often came into conflict with other suffrage leaders, such as Carrie Chapman Catt.

This interesting and highly readable biography is based upon a wide variety of primary sources including oral histories. It makes the culmination of many years' research by an author who has written extensively on suffrage politics. A vivid retelling of the suffrage struggle with a focus on the contributions of Blatch, it is an excellent contribution to the growing literature of the important and complex struggle for the suffrage.

Theresa McDevitt, *Indiana University of Pennsylvania*

**By Judith Modell. *A Town Without Steel: Envisioning Homestead.***

(Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998. Pp. xxiv+341.)

In the 1980s former center of American industrialism deindustrialized as factories closed, unemployment soared, and tax bases contracted. Historians have begun to describe and analyze this process in books about Detroit, Kenosha, and Youngstown. Deindustrialization has joined the new global economy and the burgeoning service sector as major markers of the new economy. These studies emphasized the activities of labor unions, management, and government and pay some attention to the roles of race and gender. Until now, the deindustrialization of Homestead, Pennsylvania, has been neglected by most historians.

This volume, the work of an anthropologist and photographer, partially fills this gap with a community study, based largely on interviews of residents who shared their recollections and information about family, neighborhood,

and a way of life. Their perspective emphasizes the values of hard work, perseverance, and honesty reinforced by daily lives pervaded by neighborliness. Special occasions, especially weddings, attracted family and neighbors for prolonged festivities. Ethnic associations and neighborhood bars reinforced solidarity and churches provided a religious setting, a community center, and a sense of identity.

In the early twentieth century churches bonded members of the denomination while separating them from other denominations, especially in the case of potential marriage partners. Neighborhoods played the same role as "below the tracks" residents recalled examples of mutual aid; these same residents differentiated themselves from those living "on the hill." In addition, they emphasized the distinctive features of West Homestead, Homestead, and Munhall. The informants describe Munhall as a white middle class area and Homestead, especially after the closing of the mill in 1986, as a poor, black area.

In the last two decades race has replaced religion as the main dividing line in Homestead and its environs. White residents often associated the decline of Homestead with the death and departure of long term white residents and the influx of new residents who lacked jobs, values, and roots. They decried the recent increase in violence and crime which they attributed to lower-class blacks who created a sense of fear and sparked racial tension. In contrast, long-term residents took solace in their endurance and spoke of restoring the community around traditional values, the remnants of remaining institutions, and the securing of outside aid. The recollections of black residents differed from their white counterparts. Whereas informants prized voluntarism and decried civil rights activism, affirmative action, and federal government intrusion, black residents, embraced these initiatives as necessary to end discriminatory mill policies and segregated theaters and bars. They also noted their exclusion from the neighborliness "below the tracks" and the prevalence of residential segregation.

The coverage of deindustrialization displays the strengths and limitations of the book. The combination of Brodsky's photographs and Modell's text present an enlightening picture of the town before and after mill closing, especially the perspectives of family, neighborhood, and community. Memories of life in "the good old days" highlighted the value system, the way of life, and civic pride of the residents. Homesteaders decried the closing of the mill as an unexpected and unjustified blow to a labor force and community which produced steel, generated profits, and won wars. They exposed the shock, fear, and despondency of the 1990s with examples of endearing town loyalty and future hopes.

While Modell and Brodsky do justice to the community aspect of the town, some readers will be disappointed. Modell provides little information

about the management decisions, the pattern of labor-management relations, and the global economic context which produced deindustrialization. The responses of government officials to the crisis received little attention and, except for the Rainbow Kitchen, the community organizations which arose to cope with the crisis are overlooked.

Nevertheless, Modell and Brodsky effectively integrate an anthropological and a photographic perspective to envision a steel community before and after the mill closing. Their cultural approach illuminates the pivotal roles of family, church, and neighborhood and highlight gender and race elements. On the other hand, the volume downplays the class factor and the importance of strikes, including the Homestead Lockout of 1892, although the memories of town residents and the town's reputation focused on this event. The strikes of 1919, 1946, and 1959 as well as the role of the United Steelworkers of America receive little attention in this volume, and historians who want information about these events should turn to other sources. While future historians of Homestead and other deindustrialized venues should consult this study as an important perspective, they should also strive to integrate the sagas of mill and community in a more holistic manner.

Irwin M. Marcus, *Indiana University of Pennsylvania*

*Editor's Note: The reviews published in this issue are the last edited by Professor Bauman. We wish him all the best in his new position.*

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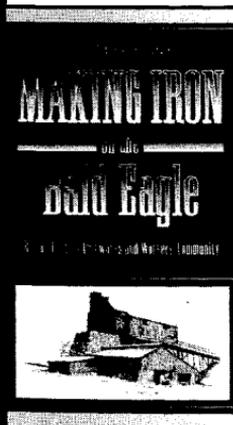
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*Steelworkers March for Democracy: Steelworkers march boldly through the streets of Aliquippa in the summer of 1936 behind the banner of their union, the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers of North America, Beaver Valley Lodge No. 200. (Formed that summer, SWOC had not yet come to Aliquippa.) The workers of Amalgamated Lodge No. 200 had already taken over the local Democratic Party and had come to see Franklin D. Roosevelt as labor's "Gallant Leader," as the sign next to the Amalgamated banner proclaims. The parade is also led by an American flag, to which the carrier has doffed his hat in respect. The flag behind the Amalgamated banner seems to be an Italian or other ethnic flag. Besides the numerous signs urging workers to join the union, signs attack Republican presidential candidate Alf Landon and declare that steelworkers, 500,000 strong, are on the march and voting for Roosevelt. Behind these signs is one stating, "America (and, presumably, Aliquippa) is yours, Organize and claim it!"*

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