

While the account is a thorough one reflecting many years of research, it does not venture a guess on the total number of Scotch-Irish emigrants to the colonies, since the records of the emigration are so fragmentary. There is a short explanation of the process of flax cultivation and linen production that may require further development for American readers unfamiliar with how linen was made. The total amount of goods involved in the trade is also not in the book, but again the records are inadequate for a proper estimate. MacMaster prefers to use the term "Scotch-Irish" to refer to the Ulster people in the story he tells, and he has found several new references to them from the time using this expression, including one from Edmund Burke, who never visited the colonies. Some of the sources mentioned in the book also used the term "Irish" to refer to these people in the eighteenth century, so exactly what to label what Patrick Griffin calls "the people with no name" is not definitively settled. This reviewer wishes that the author had written more about what he calls the Ulster merchants' "consciousness and culture," much as Timothy Breen has done for tobacco merchants or as Bernard Bailyn did for New England. Were the merchants something more than a calculating people, focused on the details of the counting house, profit and loss, and the practical problem of economic survival in the American colonies?

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Diane E. Wenger. *A Country Storekeeper in Pennsylvania: Creating Economic Networks in Early America, 1790–1807*. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008. Pp. x, 263, illustrations, tables, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$55.00.)

Samuel Rex came to Schaefferstown, a village of five hundred in south central Pennsylvania, in 1789 to work as a clerk in a general store. He went into business for himself in December 1790, operating a country store until he sold it to his brother in 1807. A large number of documents survive from his business, including daybooks, ledgers, receipts, and an inventory. Diane Wenger utilizes these papers to examine the role that Rex and, by implication, other country shopkeepers played in the local and regional economy around the turn of the nineteenth century. At once a biography of Samuel Rex, a business history of a country store, a study of the consumption patterns of a rural

Pennsylvania German community, and a contribution to the transition to capitalism debate, the book adds to our knowledge of rural economic life and rural-urban trade in early America.

Samuel Rex grew up in a village north of Philadelphia. The son of a shopkeeper, Rex arrived in Schaefferstown as a twenty-three year old on a one-year contract to work as a clerk at a newly established general store. When his boss moved on, Rex stayed in Schaefferstown and opened his own store in a rented room in a tavern. He married the daughter of his landlord and eventually moved the business to the large town hotel. Rex ran the store, the second largest in Schaefferstown, from December 1790 to May 1807. He faced competition from at least two long established storekeepers, as well as from inn and tavern keepers who sold goods. He eventually sold the store to his brother and became a gentleman farmer, hiring wage laborers to work his fields and renting land to tenants. Remaining active in local affairs, Rex lived in Schaefferstown until his death in 1835. The net value of his estate, \$15,961, was comparable to that of a modest Philadelphia merchant.

Rex's customers extended from town out to the farms and iron plantations in the countryside to the Philadelphia merchant community, thereby creating a network linking rural and urban consumers and producers with each other. Most of Rex's local customers lived within a few miles of the store: 58 of 68 heads of household in Schaefferstown in 1798 had accounts at the store. Rex sold a wide range of essential as well as luxury items. A huge variety of goods were on sale ranging from alcohol, books, groceries, hats and clothing, hardware, household goods, meat, patent medicines, provisions, and textiles. A customer might have found French brandy, saffron, a camel's hair shawl, a violin, velvet shoes, and conch shells on the shelves alongside more mundane items like candlesticks, ham, and flax linen. Women made about ten percent of all purchases at the store. Rex also provided banking services. Customers could borrow cash or pay third-party debts by using their store accounts. Rex accepted locally-produced items as payment from customers only when he could use them himself or resell them profitably. He spent three to four times more on farm products, mostly pork, butter, and whiskey, than on locally-produced manufactured goods. These items were paid for with store credit. He also made large purchases from local suppliers to acquire replacement store inventory. These mostly cash transactions were for such products as earthenware, tin ware, barrels, and tobacco products. Rex also had long-term arrangements with local craftsmen, such as the nail smith and the tanner. In addition to buying and selling goods, store customers could

also send and receive mail and obtain legal and writing services from Rex, a practice he continued after selling the store.

Between one-third and one-half of the store's income came from the iron-producing community. Cornwall Furnace was five miles west of Schaefferstown and Elizabeth Furnace was five miles south. Another half dozen iron producers were located within a day's ride. Rex sold supplies, mainly meat and coal and mine baskets, to the ironmasters in exchange for iron bars, papers representing iron, other commodities, and cash. He served as a banker for the iron plantations by making loans to ironmasters and procuring local items for them by paying craftsmen in store credit. Ironmasters also used their credit at the store to pay their employees. It was through Rex and other storekeepers that the iron plantations were integrated into the local and regional economy. An interesting feature of this trade is the use of iron bars produced by the ironmasters as a kind of currency. Orders for iron passed through the economy, also serving as money. Rex typically moved the order into the local economy by selling it to a blacksmith.

The third node in Rex's network was the Philadelphia merchant community. Working mostly through agents, Rex hauled butter, lard, beeswax, tallow, pork, iron, and whiskey to Philadelphia and returned to Schaefferstown with goods for his store. This node connected Schaefferstown to the wider Atlantic economy.

Wenger concludes that the activities of Samuel Rex demonstrate that early rural America was a blended society in which market and community interests coexisted. The residents of Schaefferstown combined traditional community-based negotiations with impersonal market-driven bargaining. This nuanced view, while likely true then as it is today, is asserted rather than proven. What proportion of Rex's transactions fall into each category? The problem is that the distinction between market and community-based transactions is rather blurry. Community transactions are "based on shared values of knowledge, understanding, and trust," but surely a market economy requires such shared values as well (110).

Much of Rex's activities were driven, as Wenger demonstrates, by the profit motive. His local customers produced items such as butter for the market, further evidence of the strength of the profit motive in early America. If market-based transactions are driven by the search for profits while community-oriented transactions are influenced by some other set of incentives, then Wenger's study shows that markets had penetrated into

rural Pennsylvania by the start of the nineteenth century along the networks created by county shopkeepers like Samuel Rex.

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Gary B. Nash. *The Liberty Bell*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010. Pp. 243, illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$24.00.)

One can hardly imagine Philadelphia without the Liberty Bell: the ringing bell at Citizens Bank Park that celebrates Phillies' home runs, the commemorative bells scattered around the city, or the real thing itself in its pavilion at Sixth & Market streets. But as Gary Nash reminds us in *The Liberty Bell*, this icon had a long and complicated journey toward its present-day ubiquity. Lost in obscurity in the years following the American Revolution, the mute bell found its voice in the antislavery movement, and rocketed to popular fame by the 1876 centennial celebration of American independence.

Nash's book, the newest addition to Yale University Press's *Icons of America* series, is the most complete account of the Liberty Bell published to date, and the most successful at incorporating the methodologies of cultural history. Divided into five chapters, the book begins with a brief account of the Pennsylvania Assembly's decision, in 1751, to order a bell for the State House. The inscription chosen for the new bell, "Proclaim Liberty throughout all the Land unto all the Inhabitants thereof" (Leviticus 25:10), was a biblical reference to the Year of Jubilee, a reallocation of power and wealth that upended the haves and have-nots of ancient Israel every fifty years. Though Nash explains why the concept of Jubilee would have resonated with Pennsylvanians in 1751—the colony was immersed in a struggle to define the legacy of William Penn's Holy Experiment—a richer account of the nuances of colonial politics would have been useful here.

The growing tension between the Penn family and the increasingly powerful Assembly, the beginnings of Quaker agitation against slavery, and a long debate over the cultural identity of the province made both liberty and universality contested concepts in colonial Pennsylvania. The same year that Isaac Norris, the Speaker of the Assembly, ordered that the new bell include the Jubilee inscription, a more famous Pennsylvanian, Benjamin Franklin,