

BOOK REVIEWS

John Jay: Defender of Liberty against Kings & Peoples; Author of the Constitution & Governor of New York; President of the Continental Congress; Co-author of the Federalist; Negotiator of the Peace of 1783 & the Jay Treaty of 1794; First Chief Justice of the United States. By FRANK MONAGHAN. (New York & Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1935. xi, 497 p. Illustrated. \$4.00.)

No one who thinks twice about the meaning of the words "liberalism" and "democracy" will attempt to equate them. Nevertheless, to many Americans today they are Siamese twins, never separable. This erroneous conception is only natural, for in these post-war years events have demonstrated that only in democracies do human liberty and liberal ideals survive. But if the reader carries the confusion arising from an acquaintance with the modern world into a study of the formative years of the American nation he will be twice confounded. Many if not most of the men who led the American colonies to independence were, in the words of Professor Morison, "political liberals without being democrats." Even Thomas Jefferson was no democrat in the modern sense. But the archetype of those leaders who appear paradoxical to us today was John Jay of New York, and Mr. Monaghan, in the subtitle of his fine biography, has hit off Jay's political character to perfection: "Defender of Liberty against Kings & Peoples."

The provocative phrase forewarns all who are predisposed to read the past in the light of the present, and he who reads the book will quickly find it justified. In this absorbing and discriminating work the author limns the character of a man who was always a liberal but never a democrat; whose devotion to that liberty which was a major deity of the eighteenth century alone drew him into the struggle against a stupid British government which would throttle it; who, despite his abhorrence of democracy, quietly accepted the triumph of Jefferson in 1800 because the victory had been achieved under the Federal Constitution which embodied his liberal ideals. In 1774 at the beginning of his political career Jay expressed his creed in stirring words addressed to the English people:

We believe there is yet much virtue, much justice, and much public spirit in the English nation. To that justice we now appeal. . . .

But if you are determined that your ministers shall wantonly sport with the rights of mankind; if neither the voice of justice, the dictates of the law, the principles of the constitution, or the suggestions of humanity can restrain your hands from shedding human blood in such an impious cause, we must then tell you, that we will never submit to be hewers of wood or drawers of water for any ministry or nation in the world.

Still firm in his ideals twenty-seven years later, he appealed to disgruntled Federalists on whom the victory of Jefferson bore hard:

I take the liberty, therefore, of suggesting, whether the patriotic principles on which we profess to act do not call upon us to give (as far as may depend on us) fair and full effect to the known sense and intention of a majority of the people, in every constitutional

exercise of their will, and to support every administration of the government of our country which may prove to be intelligent and upright, of whatever party the persons composing it may be.

The life of John Jay as Mr. Monaghan tells it is an object lesson for politically-minded Americans, especially for the extremists on both left and right. But this biography is much more than a political primer. The author has resurrected from oblivion one of the most completely and undeservedly forgotten of Americans, and in doing so has enriched and corrected our knowledge of American history. It is high time we were reminded ("informed" might be the better word) that Jay takes rank with the ablest of the most brilliant group of political writers the modern world has known, that he was the peer of Franklin, Jefferson, Wilson, Hamilton, Adams and Madison, and that he deserves the distinction not solely for his contributions to the *Federalist* papers. We needed to be told of the man to whom George Washington tendered a respect and an admiration he rarely gave. Most of all, Mr. Monaghan does well to remind us that John Marshall was not the first Chief Justice of the United States, and to emphasize (for few even of the historians seem to have grasped the fact) that John Jay was more nationalist in his interpretation of the Constitution than was his famous successor.

These points alone would not justify a biography of the size of Mr. Monaghan's, and indeed they constitute but a tithe of all he tells us. There is, running through the whole book, a charming and discerning picture of the society of the late eighteenth century. It serves as background for Jay's activities and is one of the author's excellent devices for making real to us a man whose ideas and interests are so foreign to the twentieth century. A happy domestic life is honestly portrayed, yet rightly kept subordinate to the public career without which Jay would be unimportant. (Modern "biographers" please note.) Mr. Monaghan recounts Jay's disheartening experiences as President of the Continental Congress. He tells, with the minimum of necessary background, of the problems which faced his subject as Secretary for Foreign Affairs after the Peace of Paris, and of the ways in which he attempted to solve them. He leads us confidently into the maze of New York State politics, and reveals Mr. Jay as a statesman who not only said that the office should seek the man, but actually acted on that principle, refusing at all times to campaign or to indulge in the political invective of the day,—invective which makes the most outrageous of modern mud-slinging seem mild by comparison. He makes a good case for Jay the diplomat who met aggravating frustration in Madrid, achieved extraordinary success at Paris, and was hanged in effigy at home for the treaty with England which bears his name. In short, this book deserves the over-worked appellation "definitive." But it differs from most others of the class in being neither too long nor dull. It is an excellent example of the type of book which history sorely needs: it appeals to the scholar for its truth and to the amateur historian for the literary skill with which it is written.

In his treatment of controversial episodes Mr. Monaghan has demonstrated an admirable touch which other historians would do well to study. Rather than

enter each controversy belligerently, he has simply sketched the points of view differing from his own or indicated where they may best be examined. Then he has proceeded clearly and surely to tell the story as he has learned it from his extensive reading in the sources. He has maintained the tone of the critical historian, rather than descended to the level of the partisan special pleader. An outstanding example of this method is the account of the oft-discussed peace negotiations of 1782. Jay's biographer throws much new light on those parleys and especially on the relations of the three American commissioners, Franklin, Adams, and Jay, which must lead to the revision of textbooks and other general works. In doing so he refutes in one brief sentence the accepted view that Jay was as suspicious of Franklin as was Adams, and he carefully refrains from naming names in the text.

I have but two quarrels with Mr. Monaghan. Both concern emphasis and are therefore merely matters of opinion. Mr. Monaghan has, it appears to me, drawn out too long the chapters on Jay's mission to Spain in 1779-1782. Those exasperating years had an undoubted effect on Jay's proud nature; some account of them was of course essential to an understanding of his attitude during the Paris negotiations; and their history serves to remind us of the humiliating contempt our fledgling state suffered in the courts of Europe. Nevertheless, the detailed narrative in *John Jay* is too complete, and interrupts the swift course of an otherwise sparkling stream. To the history of another episode in our relations with Spain, the abortive Jay-Gardoqui conversations, Mr. Monaghan has assigned very little space. He confines within six and one-half pages his narrative of this affair, and while he successfully acquits Jay of contemporary charges of dishonesty, he does not explain the attitude and actions of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs in a completely satisfactory manner. Perhaps it could not be done.

But these are relatively minor points. As a whole this biography is excellent. Through its pages there moves a living man, and, *rarissimè*, the reader is sure that the John Jay who lives in Mr. Monaghan's words is the John Jay who died in the flesh one hundred and seven years ago.

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JOSEPH E. JOHNSON

A History of Pennsylvania. By WAYLAND FULLER DUNAWAY. (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1935. xxviii, 828 p. Illustrations and Maps. \$4.00.)

This is the first comprehensive one-volume history of Pennsylvania which has appeared within over thirty years. The older works were for the most part of an ultra-patriotic variety placing their emphasis mainly upon political and military matters and such works as have appeared in recent years have tended to follow this stereotype. Until the appearance of this work there has been no adequate synthesis of Pennsylvania history written from the modern point of view. Considerable monographic work has been done in the field of Pennsylvania history in recent years and the time was ripe for the preparation of a new synthesis of Pennsylvania history along modern lines of newer interpretations,

objectivity, and with more emphasis upon the economic, social, and cultural aspects. The author defines the purpose of his work as "to describe the political, economic, and social development of the people of the commonwealth from the beginning of settlement down to the present time." Since it undertakes to tell the story of the life of the people in all its phases, the space allotted to political development is shortened in order to permit a more adequate handling of the social and economic aspects. The work is primarily intended as a college textbook but it is admirably suited to the needs of the general reader.

A description of the contents and organization of the book will best show the author's plan. The book is divided into two parts: the colonial era to 1790, and the later period since 1790. In each of these divisions the author has traced the political, economic, and social progress of the people through the period treated. Thus, Part I which deals with the colonial period is subdivided into chapters dealing with beginnings (1609-1790); the founding of Pennsylvania (1681-1684); the development of democratic institutions (1684-1718); the settlers of colonial Pennsylvania (1681-1790); the era of peaceful progress (1718-1754); the French and Indian War (1754-1763); the age of controversy (1754-1776); Pennsylvania in the War of the Revolution (1776-1783); the rise of the commonwealth (1774-1790); population, land, and labor (1681-1790); agriculture (1638-1790); manufactures (1681-1790); transportation and trade (1681-1790); social life and customs (1681-1790); religion (1638-1790); education (1681-1790); arts and sciences (1681-1790). Part II deals with the history of the commonwealth since 1790 and has chapters dealing with conflicts and readjustments of a new era (1790-1820); development and disorder (1820-1839); political problems and new party alignments (1839-1860); Pennsylvania and the Civil War (1861-1866); the Cameron Regime (1867-1887); the reign of Matthey S. Quay (1887-1911); through the World War to the present time; population and labor; agriculture; manufactures; transportation, trade, and banking; mineral industries; religion; education; literature and the fine arts.

Thus it will be seen that the organization of the work is largely topical within the limits of each of the two chronological periods into which the work is divided. There are no footnotes although there is an excellent bibliography at the close of each chapter. The style is characterized by clearness and lucidity. While the nature of the work is such that one would expect the author to place his main reliance upon secondary works, these so frequently ignored important aspects of the subject that it has been necessary for the author to pursue extended investigations in the sources. Scholarly monographs have been used where they are available and much use has been made of special articles found in historical magazines and in the publications of local historical societies. In his interpretations the author has achieved to a very remarkable degree that objectivity which is the goal of every true historian. One wishes that the book had been more liberally supplied with maps. There are a few minor errors of the type which is all but unavoidable, such as slips on the part of the author and oversights in proofreading, but they are few in number and of slight consequence. In a few

instances the reviewer is inclined to question the author's judgment with reference to individuals singled out for special mention, especially the omission of some of the names one might expect, as well as the omission or meagre treatment of certain topics. Thus one looks in vain for the names of such industrial figures as Asa Packer, David Thomas, and J. Edgar Thompson and of such political figures as John W. Forney, Hendrick B. Wright, and Robert W. Mackey. Thomas A. Scott, master in politics and railroad management, is merely mentioned as having served as assistant secretary of war in Lincoln's administration; John Bannister Gibson, probably the greatest jurist the state has produced, is merely mentioned in a list of "eminent judges"; mention of Alexander K. McClure is limited to one quotation from him and two allusions to the fact that he directed the draft of 1862 in Pennsylvania. One wonders too whether an issue that so long disturbed the politics of the state as did the tonnage tax does not at least deserve mention and whether an institution which has so profoundly influenced the political, economic, and social history of the state as has the Pennsylvania Railroad Company does not merit at least a page. But after all these are matters of opinion and the reviewer hopes that the enumeration of these items may not serve to detract from the merits of a very excellent book of which its author may very well feel proud.

Case School of Applied Science

STANTON LING DAVIS

Virginia Newspapers: 1821-1935. A Bibliography with Historical Introduction and Notes. By LESTER J. CAPPON, Ph.D. (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 1936. xiv, 299 p. \$5.00.)

A Check List of American Eighteenth Century Newspapers in the Library of Congress. Originally compiled by JOHN VAN NESS INGRAM. New edition revised and enlarged under the direction of HENRY S. PARSONS. (Washington: Government Printing Office. 1936. vi, 401 p. \$0.75.)

A Check List of United States Newspapers (and Weeklies before 1900) in the General Library, Part iv North Carolina. Compiled by MARY WESCOTT and ALLENE RAMAGE. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1936. 706 p.)

When the "Union List of Newspapers in the Libraries of the United States and Canada," now in preparation under the editorship of Miss Winifred Gregory, is published, the main known files of all newspapers will be readily located. However, the very size of Miss Gregory's task necessarily means that only limited information can be given on each newspaper. For details concerning completeness of files, bibliography, etc., we must depend on more local lists.

Virginia Newspapers: 1821-1935 sets a high standard for all such local lists. Here are recorded all newspapers known to have been published in Virginia since 1821. Including the addenda, one thousand seven hundred sixty-three titles are listed, many of which are known only through mention in other papers and the various trade lists.

Under each place of publication, in alphabetical order, are listed all the papers ever published there; but these towns and cities are also arranged alphabetically instead of by location in counties. This geographical association of the various newspapers by their places of publication has been very practical in the list published in the *Report of the Pennsylvania State Librarian* for 1900; and it is to be wondered whether it would not also have been an advantage in *Virginia Newspapers: 1821-1935*. However, each title appearing in the list is numbered consecutively, and references for the most part are made by these numbers, a very efficient method of handling cross references. To facilitate specialized research still further, Dr. Cappon has supplied a most complete index, including such general headings as Agricultural papers, Farmer's Alliance papers, Federal soldiers' papers, Labor papers, Negro papers, Republican papers, Temperance papers, and Whig papers, to name only a few.

Another unusual and valuable feature is the historical introduction, which Dr. Cappon has prepared after careful and exhaustive examination of all existing files of Virginia newspapers. In these thirty-one pages the author presents not only a condensed history of journalism in Virginia, but a concise picture of the political influences at work in Virginia through the various periods of her growth. He tells of the political policies and sympathies of the leading papers in every part of the state, and the gradual change in their tone as the Civil War became inevitable. Although the vast majority of newspapers in Virginia had always been Democratic before the struggle between the states, the leading papers were about evenly divided between Whigs and Democrats. The war itself was a deathblow to most of the papers—by 1870 at least half the 1860 publications had been discontinued. After the war several attempts were made to establish journals affiliated with the Republican party, but except in the extreme Southwest, none of these lasted, and few were ever important. Since 1865 the Virginia press, although losing much of its provincialism, has retained a goodly portion of its inherent conservatism and its Jeffersonian democracy.

To the Pennsylvania student, the new edition of Ingram's check list (first published in 1912) will be disappointing, for, although the number of files of eighteenth century American newspapers in the Library of Congress has increased from 369 to 506 and the number of volumes from 908 to 1,520, the Pennsylvania files have had few additions. The newspapers of New York and of the South have fared much better. Photostatic copies of many of the rarer files from these sections have been added. The usual detailed history of each newspaper mentioned would be more useful if it were not for several obvious errors. The first newspaper published in Pennsylvania was William Bradford's *American Weekly Mercury* and not the *Pennsylvania Gazette* (p. 242). Poulson's *American Daily Advertiser* was merged with the *North American* in December, 1839, and not in 1850 (p. 259).

The continuation of the check list of American newspapers in the Library of Duke University forms part four of a work begun in 1932 and it is similar in arrangement to the preceding parts. As the newspaper collection at Duke

University has been made in recent years, many of the papers are represented by single or by widely scattered issues. The compilers of this check list, Miss Mary Wescott and Miss Allene Ramage, nevertheless have endeavored to give all the changes of proprietorship and title for every newspaper listed. That they have been able to do so in nearly every instance shows the thoroughness with which their task was done. It is to be regretted, however, that the plan of the check list did not call for noting the political affiliations and the nature of each newspaper in the manner that Dr. Cappon has noted them. Even this omission, however, cannot keep the present work from being of great value to every historical library.

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania

J. HARCOURT GIVENS

The Aaron Burr Conspiracy. By WALTER FLAVIUS McCaleb, Ph.D., Expanded edition with Introduction by Dr. Charles A. Beard. (New York: Wilson-Erickson, Inc., 1936. Illustrated. xxiv, 318 p. \$6.00.)

This is not a revised but, as stated on the title page, an expanded edition of Dr. McCaleb's well-known monograph. To the first edition, which appeared in 1903, has been added an introduction by Dr. Beard, a second preface, and, to round out the story of Burr's life, a twelve-page prologue and a ten-page epilogue; otherwise, save for a few minor corrections, the two editions are identical.

Since Dr. Beard's introduction is strongly commendatory, one reads with heightened interest the following broad interpretation of the Burr conspiracy by Dr. McCaleb: "As for the conspiracy, patriotism was but one of its elements. For him who reads the secrets of the Anglo-Saxon character, there is epitomized in the movement the whole course of the race that threw down the bulwarks of Rome, that terrorized Europe in a Viking's fleet, that conquered the Western world, and that looks confidently forward to the time when the struggle for universal supremacy shall test its powers. Expansion—conquest—was the keynote of the conspiracy;—it is the keynote of the history of the race" (p. xv). It is surprising to find Dr. Beard conferring the accolade upon the ghost of Gobineau, even though he doubtless conferred it inadvertently. We mention this matter because we believe that every historian writes with a bias, that Dr. McCaleb's bias is revealed in the passage just quoted, and that his identification of Burr's conspiracy with what he conceives to be the genius of the Anglo-Saxon race goes far towards explaining his fervid defence of Burr and the other conspirators.

Dr. McCaleb's decision not to revise his book seems to have been taken in consequence of his belief that since it was first published "there have been uncovered no substantial facts to alter the conclusions reached in that earlier treatise" (p. xxiv). Even if the belief is justified, there are doubtless many historians who will regret the decision; for surely the multifarious activities of other specialists in this field over a period of more than thirty years have produced results worthy of incorporation in the original work. They have published monographs that would enable Dr. McCaleb to enrich his narrative and

perhaps fortify some of his conclusions; they have published documents that he consulted, and still cites, in manuscript form; and they have published or otherwise rendered accessible manuscript sources that he did not consult.

When it was first published, *The Aaron Burr Conspiracy* was a remarkable achievement, especially for so young a scholar as its author then was. Many of his sources and most of his conclusions were new; and, although his argument was not always convincing, it was sustained with unusual vigor and ingenuity. Today, even in its unrevised form, this book remains one of the outstanding monographs in the field of American history, and it is still considered the best account of its particular subject, the Burr conspiracy.

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