
In October 1980, the American Antiquarian Society held an international academic conference to explore the relationship of “Printing and Society in Early America.” The central question raised was the bearing which printing history might have had on American intellectual and cultural life of the colonial and early national periods. Papers were invited from a wide group of specialists, and presumably the nine best were accepted in revised form for publication.

The book which the conference produced is an effort to make a logical summary of this miscellaneous collection of reports on special topics in a relatively new field of research. The individual chapters deal with colonial booksellers and bookstores, general bibliographical problems, and broader cultural themes. Each is complete in itself, but the collection remains a miscellany. Summary chapters at the beginning and end by David D. Hall and Richard D. Brown (each excellent in itself) fall short of generalizations inclusive enough to make a coherent story. Nevertheless, a general sense of the history of printing as a force in the evolution of an indigenous American culture emerges.

During the earliest phase of this history, from the beginnings to about 1750, printing was mainly of religious books which were “steady sellers” with a readership largely limited to the elite—whether in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, or Virginia—and books imported from London. Between that date and 1790, there seems to have been a “fundamental shift of sensibility” leading to a period of secularization and democratization, with a rapid increase in all forms of printing and circulation. Political and social upheaval, accompanied by technical advances in all aspects of the printing process itself and in means of communication and of access to its products, led to a breakdown of the structure of colonial life and, as David Hall tells us, to “a major transformation of print culture” (p.2). Dramatic developments in methods of printing and circulation (steam brought both the rotary press and railroad transportation) led, between 1790 and 1810, to a readership of the “people” rather than of only the elite. These technologies also brought an explosive growth of newspapers and magazines, the rise and domination of fiction and of the theatre, and even “a correlation in the Early Republic between sectarian medicine, radical republican politics, and religious dissent” (p.273). By 1850 there had developed
a close and fruitful relationship between printing and other aspects of American culture which may be hard to understand in a world dominated, as ours today has become, by the mass media. The printed word was then the backbone of the culture.

Sources for the individual chapters in this collection are autobiographies like those of Joseph Buckingham and Samuel Goodrich (Peter Parley), advertisements in contemporary British and American newspapers, and (even more important where they exist) account books and probate records of individual booksellers like Jeremy Condy of Boston, William Hunter of Williamsburg, David Hall (Franklin's partner in Philadelphia), and the "religious firebrand," Elias Smith of Woburn, Massachusetts.

Some of the chapters take many pages to reach largely negative conclusions, but such chapters as those on "Music Printing and Publishing" (with its discussion of wood-block, etching, and rotary press methods) and "Print and the Public Lecture System" (with its involvement of such figures as Beecher, Agassiz, Greeley, and Emerson) open doors on new and exiting vistas of cultural history. Perhaps most unexpected of all is the story of Elias Smith who, with others like him, had not "enjoyed formal education, wealth, or social standing," but who brought about "the crisis of confidence in a hierarchical and ordered society [which] led to demands for root and branch reform: in politics, in law, and in religion" (p. 258).

If, as a whole, this book fails in finding a single inclusive perspective, it at least succeeds in offering a stimulating promise for future research. Its challenge was far too comprehensive and its planning far too permissive to produce anything approaching a definitive result. Since the time of Isaiah Thomas, there have been no comprehensive studies of printing in America, except the somewhat specialized work of Rollo Silver, C. William Miller, Lehmann-Haupt, Wroth, Charvat, and the chapters on "Instruments of Culture" in Literary History of the United States. A book like the present one which contains only casual references to Benjamin Franklin and Mathew Carey does not meet this need—nor does it pretend to do so. Many of these essays make valuable if limited contributions to the printing-based cultural history which is here projected, but what we now need is much more of the same, and an over-all social and cultural perspective to pull them all together. There are many nuggets in this mass of ore.

*University of Pennsylvania*  
ROBERT E. SPILLER
Absolute Liberty: A Selection from the Articles and Papers of Caroline Robbins.
Edited by Barbara Taft. (Hamden, Conn.: Published for the Conference on British Studies and Wittenberg University by Archon Books, 1982. xii, 460p. Frontpiece, bibliography, $27.50.)

This volume is a very useful addition to published works on the English and American radical tradition; it is also a fitting tribute to a distinguished historian whose work has significantly influenced our understanding of the ideology of reform as it emerged in England in the eighteenth century. Caroline Robbins is well known for her edition of the Diary of John Milward, esq. (1938), The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman (1959), Two English Republican Tracts (1969) and scores of articles and reviews revealing and commenting on aspects of English politics and ideas from the Renaissance through the end of the eighteenth century. The essays chosen for inclusion in this volume reflect this major interest of the author. Of the sixteen essays, one, on Andrew Marvell is new. All are characterized by an inquiring mind, wide-ranging research and breadth of learning which assures an enduring validity for this work. A perceptive forward by J.H. Plumb defines the unique features of Caroline Robbins's scholarship. The valuable bibliography of the author's writings from 1938-1980 reflects the many subjects that have engaged her interest and facilitates the easy location of those articles which, regretfully, had to be omitted from this collection, notably the many important articles on the Restoration parliaments. An index of over one thousand names of persons mentioned in the text suggests the richness of these articles and the wealth of information they contain.

Organized by the editor, Dr. Barbara Taft, under four headings which underline their themes—Liberty of Conscience, Political Systems, Strenuous Whigs, and Revolutionary America—the essays, read together as they now can be, tend to reinforce each other in defining certain significant aspects of the English radical tradition. Most striking is the centrality of religious liberty in the English conception of natural rights. Explored in the first two essays (“Absolutely Liberty: the Life and Thought of William Popple, 1638-1708,” and “Faith and Freedom [ca 1677-1729]”), the insistence on religious liberty helps explain the emergence of Unitarianism in England by the end of the eighteenth century, and the phenomenon of persons, distrustful of religious dogma and a state church, yet pious in their reverence for the authority of Scriptures, and influenced by that piety in their work for a more humane society. A second, over-arching theme is the way in which an inherited radical tradition was reinterpreted in the eighteenth century by a galaxy of scholars, publicists and administrators of empire, all strenuous whigs: Francis Hutcheson, professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow, 1729-1746, who raised the
question of when colonies were justified in seeking their independence; Thomas Hollis of Lincoln’s Inn and Dorsetshire, who encouraged colonial resistance by his bequests of books to Harvard College and preserved the literature of English radicalism for future generations; and Thomas Pownall, learned antiquary but also governor of Massachusetts in 1757 and proponent of imperial reform after 1763.

The impact of the heritage of English radical ideas was experienced most dramatically in America. This is the theme of the section on Revolutionary America. The author explores the influence of Algernon Sidney’s *Discourses Concerning Government*, the meaning of the famous term used by Jefferson, “pursuit of happiness,” and the definition of rights and grievances by those assembled in Carpenters’ Hall in Philadelphia in 1774. The section and the volume comes to a felicitious conclusion with a lovely article on “The Rage for Going to America,” in the decades after the achievement of independence and peace.

Enhancing the value of this collection is Caroline Robbins’s new essay on Andrew Marvell. Long recognized as an authority on the seventeenth-century poet, satirist and member of parliament for Hull, Caroline Robbins sums up what is known of Marvell’s politics and the people with whom he associated in this article. “The Being of the King and the Kingdom: Andrew Marvell’s Concept of English Politics and Constitution, 1665-1678” is probably the best brief analysis of his political views that we shall have for a long time to come. Of special interest is Marvell’s concern for an independent judiciary as a bulwark against royal absolutism and for greater religious toleration of Protestant sects.

The care with which this volume was edited by Dr. Barbara Taft is matched by Archon Books’ handsome production. The result is a book which will please as well as instruct all students of English and early American political ideas.

*Hunter College, CUNY*  

**NAOMI C. MILLER**


Minot Myers, Jr., professor of government at Connecticut College, has performed a task surprisingly neglected by historians, the writing of a complete history of the Society of the Cincinnati, from its inception to the present.
It is true that the late Wallace Evan Davies of the University of Pennsylvania included the Cincinnati among the organizations he surveyed in his *Patriotism on Parade: The Story of Veterans' and Hereditary Organizations in America, 1783-1900* (1955). It is also true that Davies's examination of the Cincinnati was such as to render somewhat unfair Myers's claim that no historian has inquired into the truth behind the fears of Aedanus Burke, John Adams, Elbridge Gerry, and Thomas Jefferson that the members of the Cincinnati "aimed at becoming a hereditary nobility that might well transform a republic into a monarchy" (p. ix). Davies may have been more interested in reactions to the society among outsiders than in its founders' ultimate motives, but he certainly did not ignore that central issue. Nevertheless, Davies concerned himself with many associations, not just one, and Myers now gives us by far our fullest account of the Cincinnati.

It will probably astonish no one that he concludes that there was a considerable measure of truth in the fears of the society's critics. The Cincinnati were conservative military men whose concept of the kind of liberty that was desirable in America tended consistently toward the notion that liberty must be "ordered"—well regulated by appropriate authority. "The pressure for ordered liberty," says Myers, "runs through the whole early history of the society" (p. x). Myers perceives a cause-and-effect relationship between the collapse of the Newburgh Conspiracy in March 1783 and the creation of the Society of the Cincinnati almost immediately afterward. Henry Knox, Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben (or "de Steuben" as he styled himself by this time), and the other principal founders of the organization intended it to be a more acceptable means of seeking the same objects as the abortive coup, that is, a satisfactory settlement of the financial claims of the Continental Army officers in particular and a stronger central government in general, along with a perpetuation of the political influence of the officer corps. Emphasizing throughout a conservatism among the society's leaders tending toward monarchism, Myers makes much of such an incident as Steuben's writing on November 2, 1786, to Prince Henry of Prussia, inviting him to assume an American crown. Conceding that he has found no documented proof of involvement in this affair by the society as a group, Myers nevertheless assembles an array of coincidences suggesting that the monarchical sentiments of many of the Cincinnati were running strong in the year of Shays's Rebellion, and that other leaders of the society knew that something more or less in the nature of Steuben's letter was afoot.

At the least, Myers shows that much of the society's apparent retreat in the face of Aedanus Burke and the other critics was window-dressing. To that generalization, the activities of George Washington formed an exception. Washington was troubled enough by the criticism that he probably would have
pushed hard to disband the society, had he not been persuaded that the formation of the French chapter had gone so far that dissolution would have embarrassed Franco-American relations. Washington nevertheless insisted that the “institution”—the constitution—of the society be amended to forbid political activity by the organization as such and to eliminate hereditary membership. But as events turned out, these amendments were never ratified throughout the state chapters to make them clearly effective. The status of the amendments became ambiguous. Some states did away with hereditary membership for a time, while others did not. Political activity in the form of lobbying for a financial settlement and land grants did not cease.

Myers catalogs the activities of individual members in the movement for the Constitution, particularly in the Philadelphia Convention of 1787, the ratifying conventions, and early politics under the Constitution. Thereby he further reinforces, sometimes to the point of tedium, the conclusion that the members indeed sought a distinctly ordered kind of liberty. Yet he also notes that as early as 1792 the public’s sense of the society as a menace had receded sufficiently to permit the Cincinnati to become in Hugh Henry Brackenridge’s novel Modern Chivalry simply a butt of humor (along with much else in the new republic, to be sure). Thus, having demonstrated in more copious detail than any previous scholar that the Society of the Cincinnati merited much of its critics’ distrust, Myers soon demonstrates also that the society was pretty much a fizzle.

This conclusion, if anticlimatic, has the effect of allowing Myers to write about the Cincinnati with a degree of affection notwithstanding his scholarly balance. He goes on to chronicle the whole checkered history of the organization, from its near-extinction in the nineteenth century to its rebirth in the era of nationalistic self-consciousness late in that century. Throughout, there is much about the Pennsylvania Cincinnati, for which the author acknowledges his indebtedness to Clifford Lewis 3d. There is also considerable detail about the society in France. In short, the book fulfills its promise to be the first complete history of the Cincinnati, and it will long remain the standard work.

The reviewer might add a final note, expressing for himself a measure of sympathy with the founders of the Cincinnati akin to Myers’s. The founders suffered a legitimate sense of grievance. Congress had made promises to the Continental Army that were not kept. But as military men, the founders had difficulty expressing themselves politically in any fashion without raising the ghost of Oliver Cromwell. If the early Society of the Cincinnati was not an altogether desirable element in democratic politics, the problem with which its founders sought to deal—how to give voice to the legitimate political concerns
of soldiers, without threatening civil control of the military—is a problem still unresolved.

Temple University

RUSSELL F. WEIGLEY


Dr. Robert Wright and the U.S. Army Center for Military History present in this excellent monograph three books in one on the organization, tactical doctrine, history, and records of the Continental Army. First, there is a heavily footnoted, compressed text of 186 pages chronologically describing and analyzing the Army’s development from the siege lines at Boston in 1775 to the first postwar regiment in 1784. Second, there are organizational lineages of 177 continental units. Third, there is an extensive bibliography of about 1,000 basic references on the Revolution. There is also the offer of additional lineage references and bibliography listings for those who ask. This volume is the last of three special studies commissioned by the Center in observance of the Bicentennial. The other two studies, published in 1981, were M.C. Gillette’s _The Army Medical Department_ and E. Risch’s _Supplying Washington’s Army._ The present volume is also one of the Army Lineage Series, of which more are planned.

The book’s main theme is the evolution of the Continental Army’s organization and doctrine. Campaigns, battles, transfers, leaders, and politics are mentioned, but provide backdrop for these central issues. The most important finding is the surprisingly large extent to which the Army adopted European military concepts. The French, in particular, had been critically examining their military doctrine; some of their advanced theorists, responding to the French defeat in the Seven Years War, were proposing new approaches to tactics and organization. Also, the attention of some military strategists turned to the repeated successes of Prussia’s Frederick the Great. French and other European officers serving in the Continental Army introduced their ideas and skills to Washington, his officers, and Congress. The Army, for its part, needing to counter the better trained and equipped British and Loyalists,
sought to capitalize on the strengths of the American soldier and to take advantage of the conditions and terrain on which the War was being fought. The atmosphere was therefore receptive to new ideas on a selective basis. Wright quotes Nathaniel Greene cautioning a council of war in December 1777 that experience and custom tempered with reason should be the course in copying European policy.

Baron von Steuben's 1779 *Regulations for the... Troops of the United States* ["The Blue Book"], written at the request of Washington and authorized by the Continental Congress, provides evidence of the introduction of new French and Prussian concepts. Steuben's *Regulations* included a manual of arms and detailed regimental organization, specific field and staff responsibilities, and even the paternalistic attitude appropriate for an officer to take toward his men. In his service as Inspector General, Steuben's professionalism and personality was an effective force in developing the army's support functions, particularly shaping the Adjutant-General's duties.

Pennsylvania's role in the Revolution receives a full share of attention. In addition to the history of the establishment of the various Pennsylvania units, their redesignations and transfers are related to other state lines and interwoven through the main text. A complete outline history of Pennsylvania regiments, battles, and leaders is provided.

In addition to the main text, lineages, and bibliography, appendices list present-day Army units having origins in the Revolutionary War, department commanders and principal staff officers, and engagements. There are excellent maps and charts together with many black-and-white and color illustrations. One painting that has for years been identified as a portrait of Anthony Wayne by Sharples is now known to be that of an unidentified officer and not of Wayne.

Dr. Wright and the Center have produced an outstanding reference work that will be useful to all historians and genealogists interested in the Revolutionary War. The book should be on the shelves of all libraries.

Radnor

Edward W. Richardson

A *Bibliography of Loyalist Source Material in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain*. Edited by Gregory Palmer. (Westport, Conn.: Meckler Publishing. Published in association with the American Antiquarian Society, 1982. ix, 1064p. Appendices, index. $115.00.)

In 1968 Robert A. East of City University of New York, determined that the "other side" should not be absent from the approaching Revolutionary
bicentennial, took an initiative that led to the establishment of the Program for Loyalist Studies and Publications under his Executive Directorship. The objectives of the Program, which had branches in Canada and England, were to prepare bibliographies of Loyalist sources, film them, publish significant selections, and encourage research. Unfortunately, because of insufficient funding, not everything was fully accomplished but, as the book under review triumphantly demonstrates, the bibliographies certainly were.

Four items are reprinted from the Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society: the Canadian and U.S. bibliographies plus an appendix of Loyalist newspapers in America, and another of Loyalist imprints printed in America. (The Canadian bibliography includes newspapers and published sources.) There are two new items—the bibliography of Colonial Office Papers in the Public Record Office and the bibliography of sources elsewhere in Great Britain and Ireland. The overall history is by depositories grouped geographically, but the editor, Gregory Palmer, a scholar long involved with the program, has provided a complete index which makes a whole of the separate parts. He and the other bibliographers, too numerous to mention, deserve our thanks for a job well done.

It should be stressed that most sources are briefly described, details of newspapers given, the imprints usually succinctly summarized. Nowhere is a Loyalist source defined but a policy of broad construction characterized the book. Also, readers are advised that only the Canadian “programme” did much filming, the results of which are deposited in the library of the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton.

The only caveat concerns gaps. Other PRO series besides the Colonial Office have useful Loyalist material. The British Library manuscripts are not included, nor are newspapers in British depositories (e.g. the Cornwall Gazette of Montego Bay in the Bristol Public Library is invaluable for the Loyalists of Jamaica), nor are British imports. Most serious is the absence of the Public Archives of Bermuda, the Bahamas, Dominica, Jamaica and Sierra Leone, and the Institute of Jamaica in Kingston. But the “Palmer Guide,” as it will doubtless come to be known, is a major reference work for all scholars (not just those interested in the Loyalists) of the American Revolutionary period and early Canadian history. During the years to come the price of $115.00 will be seen as money well-spent. One looks forward to the imminent republication of Lorenzo Sabine's biographical dictionary of Loyalists with additions drawn from the PRO material by Palmer which will make a companion volume to this excellent bibliography.

University of New Brunswick

WALLACE BROWN

David F. Long of the University of New Hampshire is obviously conducting an one-man crusade to revive memories of American naval commanders during the period from the turn of the nineteenth century to the Civil War. To previous studies of Commodores David Porter and William Bainbridge, he now adds a biography of Commodore James Biddle of Philadelphia. The effort expended fulfills a worthy purpose, for these men are most interesting as individuals, and, in addition, their lives tell us much about their times as well as the institution they served so faithfully if controversially.

Born February 18, 1783 into one of the most eminent of Philadelphia families, James Biddle continued a tradition of public service. His father Charles had once been chosen President of Pennsylvania's Supreme Executive Council, and his younger brother Nicholas gained fame by his role in the Second Bank of the United States. Other brothers served in the army and the navy, and as prominent lawyers and politicians in Pittsburgh and Michigan.

Perhaps inspired by the achievements of his uncle Nicholas during the War of American Independence, James Biddle entered the navy as a midshipman aboard the U.S. Frigate President in 1800. From that time until his death in 1848 he remained loyal to the cause and rose rapidly to the highest peacetime rank. Despite the dull periods when he was reduced to half-pay status between cruises, he managed to accomplish many diverse assignments with competence and vigor. He was captured by Tripoli pirates in 1803 and imprisoned for two years with fellow crewman from the Philadelphia. His heroic fighting on the Wasp and the Hornet during the War of 1812 earned him a gold medal from Congress. He acted as a diplomat as well as a commander during later cruises of the Ontario to the west coasts of South and North America and of the Columbus to Hawaii, China, and Japan. During one tour of shore duty in Philadelphia, he laid the scholarly foundations for what became the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis.

As a sailor, he was representative of his contemporary naval officers. He believed resolutely in strict discipline though he apparently used the lash with more restraint than some. Moreover, he was fully convinced of the merits and righteousness of his own decisions and deeds. The antebellum corps of naval commanders were a quarrelsome group who competed strongly among themselves for the few sea assignments available. Vicious verbal and written attacks upon the characters and veracity of their peers were common, and Biddle participated as enthusiastically as the others. This pettiness detracts from
Biddle's character, discouraging the reader from real sympathy toward him despite his many commendable virtues.

Long based his research upon the Biddle papers at the family estate Andalusia outside Philadelphia, the collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the files at the Department of the Navy, the National Archives and other depositories. His work has rewarded us with a fine biography of one of our forgotten naval commanders who served in difficult and frustrating times. If for nothing else, Biddle should be remembered for his roles in determining our relationships with revolutionary Latin America and in the preliminary stages of opening Japan to contact with the West.

Adding to the scholarly merits of his book, Long has presented us with a very readable adventure story about the period essential to the growth of American sea power. His book is recommended to historians of the era and to everyone interested in the sea and the ships and men who sail upon it. They will not regret the experience.

Kane, Pennsylvania

James D. Anderson


Many of the communities in which the factory system emerged in the nineteenth century were synthetic creations of the factory system itself, initially built by the manufacturer to provide housing and services for the workers in his mill. Not so Lancaster, Pennsylvania, which had developed by the middle of the eighteenth century into a distribution center for the fur trade, a market for surrounding farms, and a place of work for colonial craftsmen. Thus, when that Johnny Appleseed of cotton manufacturing, the engineer Charles Tillinghast James, in 1845 persuaded some Lancaster entrepreneurs to establish the Conestoga Steam Mills, there was already in place an old and well established industrial and commercial town in an old and well established agricultural region. In the years thereafter, up to 1880 (the terminus of this study), cotton manufacturing formed an important part, but only a part, of Lancaster's economy. Winpenny's excellent book reveals the social consequences. But Winpenny goes beyond historical chronicle. He chooses to examine anew the question of the human effects of the industrial revolution and
particularly its effect on the workers who labored in the mills, and their families, with Lancaster as the case study. Initially he sets up a dichotomy of conventional approaches to this problem: on the one side, histories that uncover "untold misery in satanic mills" and emphasize the rise of class consciousness and class conflict; on the other, studies that display the factory system as beneficial and the relations between capital and labor, at least in the early period, as "essentially harmonious" (p.ix). Winpenny interprets his data on Lancaster as supporting the latter view. As he puts it, "the working people of Lancaster welcomed the factory system, profited from its presence, and by 1880, on the whole, had few regrets" (p.99). His method is primarily statistical, eked out by a few family sketches, and depends largely upon the U.S. census schedules, Lancaster newspapers, directories, a biographical dictionary, and the business records of the Conestoga Steam Mills.

The reason for the absence of serious labor conflict in cotton manufacturing (in comparison with railroads, iron, and coal mining) is not revealed in this monograph and it was not Winpenny's purpose to explain it. One factor, however, undoubtedly was the high proportion of temporary female employees and children in the labor force; and this in turn relates to the technology involved in cotton manufacturing. Unfortunately the type of machinery used in Lancaster mills is not described and the reader cannot tell what the ratio of mule to throstle spindles was—and that ratio determined the age and sex composition, and the power structure, in the work force. Also the author does not really deal with the actual decline in real wages for cotton mill operatives from 1850 to 1880. Nonetheless, his successful documentation of a relatively benign industrial environment, in an old, well established community with a diversified economy, suggests that part of the reason for the low level of labor conflict may have been a perception by the operatives that life was good in Lancaster (at least as compared with what they were told of Manchester, England).

*University of Pennsylvania*  
*Anthony F.C. Wallace*

(New York: Oxford University Press, 1983. xii, 715p. Illustrations, index. $35.00.)

One of the anomalies in the historiography of the Jacksonian era has been the absence of a scholarly biography of one of the leading men of the day, Martin
Van Buren, the architect of the Democratic party and holder of practically every state and federal office it is in the power of the people to bestow. He left voluminous papers and the sources for a modern biography have long been available. Slightly over a decade ago James Curtis published a study of his presidency and a symposium on Van Buren generated some interest in the mid-1970s, yet at least two potential biographers have been diverted by other projects. Now it would seem, as the dust jack proclaims, "the Little Magician has found a biographer worthy of him."

John Niven, a professor at the Claremont Graduate School and the biographer of Gideon Welles, has produced the best biography of the Sly Fox yet written and perhaps the best we are likely to get. It has many qualities. If it is not particularly exciting, it is readable. It is also reasonable and evenhanded. Niven refuses to portray the political battles of the period in black and white terms, as a struggle between good and evil. He is not easily pigeonholed with any of the warring schools of Jacksonian historiography. He sticks to his man and eschews trendy psychoanalytical extremes.

One can understand why even many of his political enemies liked Van Buren. He emerges from these pages as a genuinely nice man who was sometimes generous to a fault. Niven, like Curtis before him, struggles to dispel the common charge that Van Buren was a "trimmer" and insists that, while a political realist, he followed a fairly consistent Jeffersonian line. At times, in fact, his principles got him into trouble. On this score, Niven is generally convincing, but his sub-thesis that Van Buren was not "a compromiser on the slavery issue" tends to be reiterated rather than proved. The discussion of the Missouri Compromise is almost nonexistent and that on the Gag Rule ignores evidence in such obvious sources as the Polk papers and the Washington Globe. It is the inconsistency of Van Buren's position that makes it interesting. Niven makes little of this opportunity to broaden our understanding of the complex antibellum attitudes on the "peculiar institution."

Nor has Niven added much on the structural changes that were taking place in American politics at the time and in which Van Buren was intimately involved. He offers us incredible detail on relatively unimportant matters like the "green bag" incident and then slights major topics. He can not bring himself to take Antimasonry seriously and does only slightly better on the Bank War. There is an unusual lack of balance to the book; in mid-flight the author seems to run out of steam. More than half of the book is devoted to Van Buren's career before he became Secretary of State. His administration is given relatively short shrift. The Hammett letter gets a chapter, but one producing few definitive answers. At the end, the meaning of the subtitle is still a mystery.

Niven also has certain unsettling stylistic quirks. He is prone to the over-use such clichés as "that stormy petrel Noah," a tendency to proclaim victory for
his hero in the midst of disaster, and to make "knowing" asides that are not always that knowledgeable. Also, while it is not the author's fault, the book is littered with typographical errors.

These matters aside, Niven has filled a historiographical void in the same sort of comprehensive and professional fashion that characterized his previous work.

Lehigh University

WILLIAM G. SHADE

With Good Intentions: Quaker Work Among the Pawnees, Otos, and Omahas in the 1870s. By CLYDE A. MILNER II. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982. xiii, 238p. Maps, illustrations, bibliography, index. $21.50.)

Early in his administration President Grant launched an experiment in appointing Indian agents nominated by religious denominations which came to be known as the Quaker policy. Milner traces the origin of the policy as well as the previous development of Friends' concern with Native Americans. Particularly interesting is the author's discussion of the virtual lack of communication between Hicksite and Orthodox Friends which hindered efforts to coordinate their Indian work.

Milner has chosen to concentrate on three of the tribes for whom the Hicksite Friends nominated agents in Nebraska—the Pawnees, the Otos, and the Omahas. For these tribes he has provided more than just an account of their relations with their Quaker agents. Where pertinent, aspects of their tribal culture are explained, as well as the general setting on the Central Plains in this period. The result is a thoughtful and well balanced account of Quaker stewardship for the three tribes.

The author acknowledges that, even in their own eyes, the Quakers failed to achieve their goals with the Native Americans. The Friends were part of the contemporary consensus that assumed that assimilation was the answer to Indian survival. They, like other reformers of the day, failed to anticipate the tenacity with which Indians clung to the cultures they themselves had evolved. Milner makes the perceptive observation that there were parallels between Quaker modes of operation and those of the native cultures, but the Quakers failed even to perceive this.
Besides setting their goals impossibly high, the Quaker agents faced other problems. They had the bad luck to try in the 1870s to introduce Indians to the white man’s style of agriculture when a combination of grasshoppers, drought, and depressed markets harried even the best of white farmers. And for the tribes Milner discusses, there also were the problems of Sioux raiders and desperate settlers who disregarded reservation boundaries in their scramble for land and timber. The Pawnees and the Otos, the two tribes having the most difficulty in making the transition to the new life style, sought to delay it by moving to Indian Territory, producing even greater strains on the fragile tribal political fabrics. But even the relatively progressive Omahas compiled a poor record of progress under their Quaker agents.

Milner concludes that good intentions simply were not enough to achieve results. To run an Indian agency successfully required superior administrative talents and the Friends were not necessarily better equipped in this area than were other segments of the population. They were honest, however, in a period which saw many corrupt agents. The only Friend guilty of collusion with contractors was not motivated by hope of personal gain. Quaker agents were guilty of nepotism, but even these lapses could be explained as resulting from their desire to create a community on the reservation which would provide role models for the Indians.

The accession to office in 1877 of Commissioner of Indian Affairs Erza A. Hayt marked the beginning of the end for the Quaker Policy. In an effort to achieve bureaucratic efficiency, Hayt subjected the Friends to a type of surveillance which they found intolerable. As individual agents resigned in protest, Quaker annual assemblies refused to nominate replacements. It had been a noble experiment, and we are indebted to Clyde Milner for a thorough and objective analysis of its career.

State University of New York  
College at Fredonia  

WILLIAM T. HAGAN


Between 1885 and 1887 hundreds of thousands of people in cities and towns across the country joined the Knights of Labor in search of a better life. In
many communities their unprecedented labor activity gave rise to local political campaigns, but with a few exceptions those campaigns have received little attention from historians. *Workingmen's Democracy*, by Leon Fink, is an ambitious attempt to investigate that local political upheaval and to assess its implications for students of both American labor and American politics.

*Workingmen's Democracy* includes local studies of five very different communities: Rochester, New Hampshire; Rutland, Vermont; Kansas City, Kansas; Richmond, Virginia; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. For each community Fink provides an outline of industrial development, a discussion of the social milieu in terms of ethnic communities and elites, a review of the local labor movement, and a description of the rise and frustration of local labor politics. At times the details are overwhelming, but on the whole Fink manages to integrate his material and mould it into a series of convincing local portraits.

Although the five portraits are very different in detail, they share an important theme: workingclass politics in the 1880s was the result of successful labor organizing and not an alternative to it. In each community the enthusiasm stimulated by the Knights around economic issues spilled over into politics and encouraged different sections of the workingclass to cooperate in political campaigns. As soon as the economic organization began to decline, the political unity it inspired also fell apart.

Fink suggests that even these limited, temporary victories had some important consequences. In Rutland and Rochester, for example, the workingmen's challenge disrupted the old political pattern of town meetings dominated by established elites and stimulated the development of more modern institutions and methods. In Kansas City, the Knights' political success became the organizational basis for a social reform administration, another "progressive" response. These developments suggest an interesting comparison with the modernizing effects of the Knights' economic campaigns, but unfortunately the comparison is not pursued.

Fink's studies also underline the significance of the employers' response to the Knights. In the economic sphere the employers often reacted by closing ranks within and sometimes even across industries to force the organization out of their mills. In the political sphere they also formed new alliances, sometimes embodied in "Citizens's Parties," to drive the workingmen out of local office. Fink does not devote much space to the political views of the employers, but their response suggests that the political challenge of the 1880s may have helped solidify a new attitude toward government as well as new strategies for maintaining political control.

Although the Knights were politically active in several hundred communities, they were least successful in large cities. Fink suggests that this failure was the result of active two party systems that were able to integrate at least part
of the workingclass into the existing party structure. That appears to have been the situation in Philadelphia where the Democrats and sometimes even the Republicans nominated workingclass candidates for local office and used patronage without shame or hesitation. In spite of their success at organizing around economic issues, and in spite of repeated attempts, labor leaders in this city were unable to build a constituency for independent politics. In 1886-1887, a slew of labor men were nominated for local office, but the few who won election to the Philadelphia City Council or State Assembly were also supported by the Democrats and their victories did little to strengthen the small, independent United Labor Party.

My reading of Fink's book suggests that the Knights played a noteworthy role in the development of local political institutions and I was frankly disappointed that the concluding chapter did not deal with the effects of their campaigns in a more substantial way. Instead the conclusion meanders from the class nature of the political upheaval to the failure of American labor politics without a clear or satisfying discussion of any of the interesting issues raised along the way. Workingmen's Democracy nevertheless provides much needed information and asks a number of important questions.

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This informative and clearly written volume, comprising the first half of a projected biography, covers the years from Frankfurter's birth at Vienna in 1882 until his appointment to the Supreme Court early in 1939. Parrish is at his best in explaining the impact of Progressivism upon young Frankfurter; then demonstrating the origins and development of Frankfurter's skepticism about excessive judicial review (even as early as 1921, when he still was very much a liberal Progressive); and then showing the contradictory feelings of devoted loyalty that Frankfurter elicited from his "boys" (former students at the Harvard Law School) contrasted with strong hostility from the likes of Henry Morgenthau, Jr., FDR's Secretary of the Treasury, or A. Lawrence Lowell, the president of Harvard.
Chapters four to six, covering 1914-1918, provide an admirable treatment of efforts to apply Progressive ideals in Washington, D.C., during World War I, as well as the deep frustration that resulted from callous indifference by big business along with the manipulative behavior of narrow-minded labor leaders like Samuel Gompers. Parrish adds a new dimension to our understanding of Frankfurter's breadth by discussing his knowledge of, and concern for, international economic relationships during the Hoover years and FDR's first administration (see pp.218-19). Parrish is entirely persuasive in his claims for Frankfurter's influence on New Deal legislation, particularly during 1935-36.

Other reviewers have already noted that Parrish underplays the special relationship between Frankfurter and Justice Brandeis. By comparison with Bruce Allen Murphy's recent book, The Brandeis/Frankfurter Connection (Oxford, 1982), that complaint is certainly fair. The annual retainer that Brandeis paid Frankfurter is never mentioned by Parrish. But the law professor's role as an advocate for Brandeis's views is clearly indicated (in 1921, 1925, and 1928); then in 1933 as a conduit between Brandeis and Raymond Moley; and even as late as 1935 when Frankfurter communicated the President's impending tax policy to Brandeis, and the latter used his erstwhile protégé to explain controversial Court decisions to FDR. By that time, however, Frankfurter was covertly betraying Brandeis by encouraging Roosevelt's hostility toward the Court. In 1937, as the book moves swiftly to a close, the long-standing friendship between Brandeis and Frankfurter had become severely strained. (See pp. 162, 200, 230, 248, 262-63, and 270.)

Because we now have Murphy's book as a complement to Parrish's, my reservations about the latter run along different lines. First, Frankfurter was not an especially prolific writer of books and articles, in part because he poured so much energy and eloquence into his private correspondence. Frankfurter surely must have been one of the most engaging letter writers among all the public figures in twentieth-century American history. Parrish would have been justified in devoting a chapter to Frankfurter's extraordinary correspondence, utilizing some of the new techniques of textual analysis to enrich our understanding of Frankfurter's extremely complex personality. It is disappointing that Parrish failed to use the valuable Frankfurter letters located at Princeton in the papers of Edward S. Corwin.

Second the book is marred by too many minor errors of factual accuracy; and therefore is less than authoritative on the "His Times" part of Parrish's title. The sketch drawn by Gutzon Borglum in 1913, for example, must have been of the Confederate Monument planned for Stone Mountain in Georgia, rather than for Mount Rushmore, which was not conceived until a decade later (p.52). And, at p.140, the author, in discussing Frankfurter's Zionist activ-
ities, has the Hebrew University of Jerusalem established in 1918, seven years prematurely.

Third, the book is strewn with distracting typographical and spelling errors, some of which cause the reader confusion as well as annoyance. E.g., p. 87 where “frame” should (I think) read “fame”; and p. 52 where “the nation’s economic value” surely ought to read “values.”

Still and all, this study convincingly alters our image of Frankfurter as a conservative constitutionalist who placed judicial restraints above humanitarian concerns. We find him at the War Department in 1917 advocating equal pay for equal work on behalf of women and minorities (p. 85), a very radical position at that time; and throughout the half-century covered by this volume, Frankfurter’s abiding commitment to economic reform and social justice remained absolutely constant.

Cornell University  
MICHAEL KAMMEN


The rationale for this book is unclear. At first I imagined that it contained letters of visitors about Philadelphia. On closer examination, however, it turned out to consist of letters written in Philadelphia; indeed that is the only criterion for their inclusion and the only feature they possess in common. A large proportion have nothing to do with the city whatsoever and a majority are of little historical or literary significance. I counted perhaps ten contributions which might be of interest to the general reader. These include Manasseh Cutler’s description of Benjamin Franklin, Mark Twain’s gossipy letter to his brother on the city’s architecture, Henry David Thoreau’s sketch of the Academy of Natural Sciences, and Susan B. Anthony’s “Declaration of Rights of the Women of the United States.” Charles Dickens, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Mathew Arnold, Henry James, William Carlos Williams, and Edgar Allan Poe provide interesting asides on Philadelphia’s social life but these constitute slim pickings in a collection of fifty letters and documents.
This is a shame, for Philadelphia, in the three hundred years of its existence, has elicited countless opinions on its institutions and eccentric individuals. During the city's Silver Age (1780-1850), in particular, Europeans flocked to the "Athens of America" to inspect her prisons, hospitals, schools, churches, navy yard, and waterworks, hoping to find examples worthy of emulation.

Almost uniformly the visitors described a physically charming city. The Hungarian naturalist John Xantus claimed that "Philadelphia is certainly the most beautiful city in the Union. . . . All the streets are lined with tall trees, which are teeming with thousands of squirrels so tame that they eat the nuts out of your hand. The public squares are all made into parks, each with its own little lakes where swans and ducks swim. . . . It is almost miraculous for an industrial and commercial city to be so spotlessly clean." The Scottish phrenologist George Combe concurred, noting that "the stores, or shops, in this city, are very handsome, and their wares are of a sumptuous description. The display of female beauty and good taste presented by Chestnut Street on a fine day, would do credit to any European city. . . . an emotion of astonishment presses on the mind, that this large, rich, regular, beautiful, and enlightened city, should all have grown up from an absolute wilderness since 1681."

Charles Dickens, who visited Philadelphia in 1842, quizzically remarked: "it is a handsome city, but distractingly regular. After walking about it for an hour or two, I felt that I would have given the world for a crooked street. The collar of my coat appeared to stiffen, and the brim of my hat to expand, beneath its quakery influence. My hair shrunk into a sleek short crop, my hands folded themselves upon my breast of their own calm accord, and thoughts. . . of making a large fortune by speculations in corn, came over me involuntarily."

Visitors to Philadelphia often noticed that, next to Boston, it was the most European of American cities. There was no monarchy to be sure, but social life was rigorously ruled by a native aristocracy. Thomas Hamilton, a wealthy patrician from Britain, noted in 1827 that "there is no American city in which the system of exclusion is so rigidly observed as in Philadelphia. The ascent of a parvenu into the aristocratic circle is slow and difficult. . . . Claims are canvassed, and pretensions weighed; manners, fortune, tastes, habits, and descent, undergo a rigid examination." Henry Fearon, who visited America in 1818 to report on its suitability as a residence for several wealthy English families, remarked that "there are many who keep carriages, have truly elegant houses, and superb furniture. These are called of the 'first class;' and although they have not the pomp or the titles, they have the pride of an aristocracy."

For much of its existence only outsiders have really appreciated Philadelphia's past; Basil Hall, an Englishman who came in 1827, lamented that "nothing whatsoever is venerated in America. . . . Neither historical associa-
tions, nor high public services, nor talents, nor knowledge, claim any peculiar reverence from the busy generations of the present hour. . . . all the rich panelling, cornices and ornamental work of [Independence Hall], have been pulled down, and in their place, tame plastering and raw carpentry have been stuck up, on the occasion of some recent festival.” Luckily this has all changed; indeed within the last decade a veritable fever of preservation has gripped the city. City Hall is being restored to its original glory (only twenty-five years ago it was under threat of demolition), the Musical Fund Hall at Eighth and Locust Streets has been saved, and the Lit Brothers facade has been rescued, to give just three recent examples. Philadelphia is belatedly recovering her glorious past.

The most fitting coda comes from a foreign visitor from our own century. The novelist G.K. Chesterton was, no doubt, indulging in typical rhapsody, but how striking that he should choose Philadelphia as the object of his self-indulgence! “In coming into [Philadelphia]. . . I felt something quite sincerely of that historic emotion which is satisfied in the eternal cities of the Mediterranean. I felt in America what many Americans suppose can only be felt in Europe. I have seldom had that sentiment stirred more simply and directly than when I saw from afar off, above the vast grey labyrinth of Philadelphia, great Penn upon his pinnacle like the graven figure of a god who had fashioned a new world.”

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