BOOK REVIEWS


Some book titles seem to promise more than the contents deliver. This volume, nominally on lawmaking and legislators in Pennsylvania, 1710-56, and the second in a projected series of four volumes on colonial and revolutionary legislators, only hints at the wealth of information contained in the introductions, text, tables, bibliographies, graphs, and indexes.

It is certainly a biographical dictionary where the reader can consult listings for prominent individuals such as Isaac Norris, 1671-1735, twice speaker of the assembly during sixteen terms as assemblyman, or relatively obscure individuals such as Samuel Eastburn, 1702-85, who served a single term in 1749. These are no barebones biographies, although the first paragraph of each entry does concisely note birth, marriage, and death dates, place of birth, date of migration to Pennsylvania, parents, wives, children, and other offices held. The full text of each entry offers substantially more information as well as judicious evaluations of both the sources and the individual. For example, while Eastburn's legislative career is characterized as "lackluster" and "undistinguished," his residences, occupations, tax liabilities and tax rankings, marriage, civic activities, legal battles with a mulatto servant, legislative career, and, most especially, his prominent role in the reformation of American Quakerism are discussed in some six columns of text. Footnotes point to additional information on Eastburn. The fact that official documents refer to him as a farmer, while he himself identified his occupation as blacksmith is checked against the inventory of his estate which finds substantially more blacksmithing tools than farm equipment. The listing for Norris, more than twenty pages in length, draws on contemporary diaries and correspondence as well as legal, religious, and provincial records. Economics and politics dominate the essay on Norris, but the editors also offer a nuanced discussion of European-American attitudes on the slave trade in the early decades of the eighteenth century, on Norris's opinions about immigrant Scots-Irish and Germans, and suggest the importance of marriage.
negotiations in the formation of political alliances and enmities, among many other topics. These meticulous biographies of legislators recreate the lives of both prominent and obscure men, ranging from the economic and social elite to the "middling sorts." The careful, detailed reconstruction of these life stories also allows glimpses of women, children, apprentices, servants, and slaves in a rapidly growing, major British colony.

This volume, like its predecessor, gives the legislature a central role in the political and economic development of a prominent colony. But if scholars imagine that this series is of interest only to political historians, then they are missing one of the most important reference guides to colonial history. Scholars of a linguistic turn might find Norris's labeling of his political opponents as "Cocksure" or "Male contents" of some significance—for the authors of the individual entries have a fine eye for the telling quotation in addition to an aptness for factual and interpretive accuracy. The first two volumes of the *Biographical Dictionary of Early Pennsylvania Legislators* are an invaluable resource for historians, political scientists, economists, demographers, genealogists, and others. The range of information offers many opportunities for further study in a large number of areas: indebtedness, real estate transactions, taxation, educational levels, career advancement, life cycles, demography, family formation, community ties, migration, kinship obligations, political allegiances, self-interest and disinterestedness in politics, among a multitude of possible topics. The *Dictionary* will be a valuable resource for undergraduate research as well as for more advanced investigations of the period.

There is much more in addition to the biographical dictionary. The introductory material includes the rules of the assembly, sessions lists, officers, election procedures, the committee structure, the building of what is now known as Independence Hall, and the growth of political organizations. Religious issues receive considerable attention, particularly in the discussions of political alliances, the machinations and compromises by Quaker leaders to avoid swearing an oath in political and judicial proceedings, and the divisions over the provision of a military presence in the colony—a conflict that caused most Quakers to withdraw from the assembly, and which provides a watershed year for ending this volume. Pennsylvania governors have their own chapter and each is accorded a brief biography. The editors supply a survey of economic development, particularly relating to taxation and currency issues, immigration, and population growth in the colony. The latter two areas do not, however, always draw on the most recent studies. There is a fascinating discussion of outside influences on the assembly: the role of pamphleteers, newspapers, a few unusually active Lancaster and Chester county women, and the election rioters of 1742. An entire chapter is devoted to statistical analysis of the representatives, including such data as place of birth, religion, occupation, kin networks, and slaveholding. The thirty-three-page bibliography is
a godsend for researchers in history and genealogy. The appendix provides a glossary, a detailed chronology of Pennsylvania history, analyses of assemblymen's religion and place of residence, legislation by subject area and petitions by year, as well as extensive indexes to subjects and names.

It is the custom of academic book reviewers to balance a favorable review by finding something to criticize. In this case, it is difficult. There are a few errors of fact or spelling, but this is to be expected in a work of this magnitude and the editors have provided for corrections in future volumes. The subject index might have been more inclusive: crime was not a category, nor were marriage negotiations, kinship networks, or a number of other topics frequently appearing in the individual biographies. The statistical graphs in the chapter on "Selected Characteristics of the Assembly and Its Representatives" are sometimes hard to read and do not contain the full data on which the graphs are based. A researcher who wants to know the exact percent distribution of assemblymen by geographic origin for Philadelphia County, 1710–56, for example, will have to recalculate the numbers and percentages or, perhaps, write to the editors, because the information cannot be read from the graph and is not in the text. The publisher could be faulted for the fuzzy reproduction of some maps, while the binder deserves harsher criticism: the binding in my copy began cracking and separating after comparatively little use. Since the price virtually guarantees that most copies of this book will be sold for reference use in libraries, the need for a strong, flexible binding is all the more necessary. These are, however, minor points and do not distract from the usefulness and value of the volume.

The second volume of Lawmaking and Legislators in Pennsylvania is a remarkable achievement. It deserves to be widely used and scholars of early Pennsylvania and the middle Atlantic region should consider buying a personal copy: it is worth the investment. The editorial team deserves to be congratulated on another fine achievement.

Rider University

SUSAN E. KLEPP

The Devious Dr. Franklin, Colonial Agent: Benjamin Franklin's Years in London. By DAVID T. MORGAN. (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1966. xi, 273p. Bibliography, index. $34.95.)

Benjamin Franklin used his years in London as an agent for Pennsylvania and later for Georgia, New Jersey, and Massachusetts to create the persona of the foremost American in politics, diplomacy, and science. The Devious Dr. Franklin is
a meticulous account of how Franklin manipulated the shifting sands of imperial politics from 1757 until 1775 to advance the interests of both himself and his colonial constituents. Throughout his study, David Morgan illuminates the complexity of Franklin's character and charts the growing intransigence on the part of the colonies and the British ministry that culminated in the American Revolution.

Sent first to England by the Quaker-dominated Pennsylvania Assembly to secure its right to tax the proprietor's land, an endeavor in which he eventually succeeded, Franklin remained in Great Britain to advance his land schemes and to attempt to wrest the colony from the Penn family and turn it over to the king. Simultaneously, he looked after the interests of the increasing number of colonies he represented. Whether by nature or necessity, Franklin pursued all of these objectives with a disingenuousness that bordered on duplicity. Such a style creates problems for the myriad historians who have attempted to fathom the various facets of Franklin's endeavors. When was the man telling the truth? This question may have been of little concern to Franklin, but it is of paramount importance to scholars who are attempting to unravel the tangled skeins of the Revolutionary era in order to weave a comprehensive account of the period. Morgan makes a valiant attempt to understand the activities and motivations of the Doctor, confessing when he is mystified and clearly explaining his reasoning when his judgment differs from that of others. When corroborating evidence is absent, he is forced into a tentative acceptance of Franklin's version of events.

Morgan is equally balanced in his presentation of Franklin's generous treatment of some, such as Polly Stevenson, and shabby treatment of others, most notably in his lifelong dealings with his wife, Deborah, and his later treatment of his son, William. Franklin's blatant self-promotion, assiduous pursuit of fame and riches, horrendous miscalculations in the Stamp Act crisis and publication of the Hutchinson-Oliver letters are related with clarity and aplomb, along with his honest attempts to advance the interests of the colonies he represented and to effect an imperial reconciliation.

*The Devious Dr. Franklin* remains firmly focused on the man in London, relying on a skillful integration of the background knowledge that specialized monographs have provided in greater depth and directing the reader to them. This has kept the volume to a manageable length. A concluding chapter provides a brief summary of the evolution of Franklin from a self-seeking colonist to a patriotic American during his London years. Both the general reader and the scholar will profit from this lively account of these formative years in the public career of America's most celebrated colonist.

*Mississippi State University*  
ELIZABETH NYBAKKEN

In this very solid intellectual/institutional biography, Bryan Le Beau, chair of the Department of History at Creighton University and director of the Center for the Study of Religion and Society there, describes Jonathan Dickinson as a "moderate newsider" whose efforts at balance and compromise in the founding of the Presbyterian Church in the middle colonies "helped Presbyterians to accommodate the diversity of traditions within their ranks." Le Beau's thesis is that in every controversy Presbyterians encountered, from Dickinson's ordination in 1709 to his death thirty-eight years later, the minister/pamphleteer found a position in the middle of the road. In so doing he helped keep the early church from tearing itself apart, helped establish steady foundations, and helped satisfy the church's "simultaneous longing for freedom and need for order." The Presbyterians, moreover, were not alone in this longing—many American churches underwent similar ordeals—so the Presbyterian experience can be read as a case study of early American religious experience in general.

The loss of both Dickinson's diary and the records of the Elizabeth Town First Presbyterian Church which he served preclude a personal biography, so the author must concentrate on the minister's public life. Le Beau takes up six main issues that occupied Dickinson's public writings: his demands that the Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia formally require its ministers to subscribe to the Westminster Confession, the trial of Samuel Hemphill for unorthodox beliefs, quarrels with Anglicans over the rights of religious dissenters, debates over free will and free grace raised by the Enlightenment, New Side versus Old Side divisions in the Great Awakening, and divisions over the founding of the College of New Jersey. The Great Awakening occupies three chapters; each of the other issues takes a single chapter, and the pattern of the chapters is almost unvarying. Each opens with an explanation of the issue and a summary of appropriate comments from other authors (David Harlan's Clergy and the Great Awakening in New England is often cited). This is followed by a summary of Dickinson's relevant pamphlets and pamphlets written in opposition to him. The chapter then concludes that Dickinson's approach was the moderate one while his opponents took extremist positions. Dickinson brought "the more radical new sides to a more centrist position" (p. 164); he defined "a middle course through the turmoil of the revivals" (p. 143).

To this reviewer, Le Beau's discussion of the blending of Scots-Irish traditions with Connecticut Valley Puritan ones to form the Presbyterianism of the middle colonies (chap. 1) was particularly interesting; so was his discussion of the antiestablishment origins of early American demands for religious toleration. I would have liked more analysis on the extent of Dickinson's influence. The author
refers simply to Dickinson's "ultimate success" and he leaves the reader to assume that this came mainly from readership of his pamphlets and from his personal efforts in such affairs as the establishment of Princeton. Who read him and how did his personal influence develop? Can one argue that the effectiveness of Dickinson's moderate stances is demonstrated in the moderation of the Presbyterian Church? I still have questions. But certainly for students of the Presbyterian Church and the Great Awakening the book is worthwhile reading.

University of Maryland, College Park

ALISON OLSON


Gary Nash, who proposed doing this festschrift for Richard Dunn and who provides a thoughtful assessment of his scholarship, stresses that Dunn's career exemplifies the growing emphasis on social and cultural history. Dunn amplifies that point in "A Conversation" with William Pencak, a dialogue that underscores Dunn's commitment to a scholarship and an America built on "equality" (p. 344).

No brief review can assess the sixteen original essays—all heavily annotated with endnotes—which form the core of this volume. Fortunately, Joseph Illick (pp. 7–10) provides a brief summary of each of the volume's essays. While the essays range widely over time, geography, and methodological approaches, the editors have focused on three general topics that reflect special interests of Dunn: "family studies, trans-Atlantic connections, and race and class relations" (p. 5). The editors also note, and the volume's essays demonstrate, that analysis of religious issues often figures prominently in Dunn's work and that of his students.

Nicholas Canny took charge of developing the section on trans-Atlantic connections. The authors who focus on the 1600s find, as Alison Games says, that population movements which fueled British colonization were "part of a much larger range of mercantile and migratory adventures" (p. 67). Researching 1700s topics, Rosalind Beiler and Beverly Smaby stress that, as Smaby phrases it, "trans-Atlantic ties remained strong" (p. 153). The same theme appears in Marion Winship's scintillating exploration of internal migration in the early Republic. Winship convincingly demonstrates that migration was not a one-way journey but that "power, information, and expertise criss-crossed" in many ways (p. 94).

Illick, who contributed an essay on childhood, organized the family studies section. Here, as in the work generally, special attention is given to the less
powerful. Marilyn Westerkamp and Ann Little, who examine Puritan culture, and Smaby, who studies Moravians, show how men strove to formulate a society that would keep them in power and how women responded. Barry Levy, whose work is part of the section on race and class relations that Nash shepherded, touches on family as well as labor issues. He shows that colonial Massachusetts depended on child labor.

Five authors address the status and activities of blacks. The essays examine: the colonial mid-Atlantic iron industry, how nations dealt with slave property in the Caribbean, the struggle against slavery in the America of 1785–1810, and the religious concerns of blacks in Delaware and the Caribbean. Focusing on religion in Trinidad and the Bahamas, Rosanne Adderley illustrates the increasing tendency of scholars to examine cultural development by utilizing anthropological methodologies in a comparative framework. As a group, the authors show that slave labor played a crucial role in mid-Atlantic America and that, even in the shadow of slavery, blacks resourcefully built their own religious and cultural systems.

Reflecting Dunn's love of documents and his dry wit, the volume includes a delightfully cantankerous commentary by Francis Jennings about the falsifying of the historical record, and, fittingly, the volume closes with a brief plea to help fund an effort to save vital early documents (pp. 370–71).

Readers will, of course, find points—some major, some minor—with which to quibble. For example, it is bothersome that Westerkamp overlooked the work of Lyle Koehler (A Search for Power: The 'Weaker Sex' in Seventeenth-Century New England [1980]). However, the essays are typically of high quality. Even with its wonderfully low price, though, the work's diversity might not make it suitable for easy use in classrooms. Nevertheless, this impressive work, which honors Pennsylvania History as it honors Richard Dunn, belongs on the shelf of everyone who teaches about early America just as it belongs on the shelf of every university and major public library.

University of Cincinnati

JOHN K. ALEXANDER


Eric Hinderaker's thoughtful study offers a fresh, frontier perspective on the clash of empires that shaped the history of the eighteenth-century Ohio Valley. The "empires" of the Ohio Valley, he suggests, need to be understood as "negotiated systems" whose construction and reconstruction owed more to "the people immediately engaged in colonization than [to] policy directives originating in
London, Paris, Philadelphia, or Washington" (p. xi). Again and again, the complicated contingencies of intercultural relations thwarted grand imperial designs and made empire building an elusive end for French and British claimants to the Ohio Valley. Only after the Revolution did a new model of empire enable Americans to exert unchallenged control first across the region and eventually across the continent.

Borrowing from Thomas Jefferson, Hinderaker labels the American model an "empire of liberty," which he contrasts with earlier varieties of colonialism that were constructed by the French and British in negotiation with Indian peoples in and around the Ohio Valley. The first of these Hinderaker types "empires of commerce," a brand of colonialism that made intercultural trade paramount and gave Indians considerable power to determine the rules of exchange. Despite important differences, both the French and the British initially confined themselves to this model of empire, and intercultural relations followed a fluid course. But in the middle of the eighteenth century, both European kingdoms sought greater control by erecting "empires of land." From Canada, the French tried to populate the lower end of the Ohio Valley with farming villages; from Pennsylvania, the English looked to plant their own settlements in the upper valley. Caught between, Ohio Indians attempted to play colonial rivals off one another, to prevent the loss of lands and to preserve the old colonial regimes. They might have succeeded had not American independence unleashed an empire of liberty. In the last decades of the eighteenth century, this pursuit of landholding independence by white citizens overwhelmed all Indian rights. Indeed, the triumph of American colonialism coincided with a heightening of interracial violence and a hardening of racial lines.

Hinderaker's subtle and inventive argument deserves a careful reading from specialists in colonial and frontier history. Covering much the same ground as Richard White's *The Middle Ground* (1991), Hinderaker's study lacks the startling originality of that book, but its clarity and brevity make it a welcome addition to the fast-growing literature on North American colonialism. Certainly, readers of this journal will particularly profit from examining the prominent role Hinderaker assigns Pennsylvania in the shift from empires of commerce, to land, to liberty.

More attentive to Pennsylvania than *The Middle Ground*, *Elusive Empires* shares with White's book a focus on the northern side of the Ohio River. That is understandable in the case of *The Middle Ground*, which, after all, examines the Great Lakes region. It also makes sense for Hinderaker to emphasize happenings north of the river, for that was where imperial designs and intercultural dealings played out most dramatically. Still, *Elusive Empires* might have devoted more space to the Indian peoples, primarily Cherokees and Chickasaws, who inhabited the southern tributaries of the Ohio River, and to Virginia and North Carolina as staging grounds for the Anglo-American occupation of the Ohio Valley.

Also worthy of further consideration is Hinderaker's contention that the
redrawing of racial boundaries accompanied the American conquest of the Ohio Valley. The point is an important one, but Hinderaker underplays its irony. As Richard White has pointed out, the animosity between American pioneers and Ohio Indians grew out of their cultural similarities as much as from the differences that they came to pronounce.

University of California, Los Angeles

STEPHEN ARON


This is the ninth work on Benedict Arnold, including two videos, to appear in the 1990s. Like the others it seeks a popular audience, although it evinces scholarly apparatus and method, and will interest students of the American Revolution.

James Kirby Martin tells us that most previous writers have wrongly assessed Arnold's character. Arnold had a strong ideological aversion to arbitrary power, he dealt honorably with others, and he contributed selflessly to the American cause until after the battle of Saratoga. The book covers in detail Arnold's life to the early months of 1778 when, supposedly, his pretreason disenchantment with the American cause set in. A prologue and an epilogue deal very sketchily with the treason itself. Readers of the _Pennsylvania Magazine_ may lament the absence of narrative concerning Arnold's crucial Philadelphia activities, including his marriage to Peggy Shippen.

The book contains expertly researched and well-written military history. Martin does a fine job describing Arnold's bravery and sacrifice. It is clear how Arnold developed his skills as a battlefield commander, although Martin does not extensively comment on this. He led the night attack on a Quebec barricade in the “forlorn hope” of capturing that stronghold. In subsequent engagements Arnold attacked valiantly but not foolishly. He anticipated and found weak spots into which he could lead a charge to rout the enemy as he did at the second Freeman's Farm battle, or by which he could escape, as at Split Rock on Lake Champlain. Martin's narrative attests to Arnold's credentials as a general and a heroic soldier, and both scholarly and casual readers will readily comprehend his merits.

The author ends his narrative in 1778 because he believes that his analysis up to this date explains Arnold's later treason. Martin makes a good case that Arnold's prewar career was not marked by antisocial or disreputable behavior. Some might see Arnold as afflicted with a narcissistic personality disorder, but Martin views his actions as grounded in ideology. “He would challenge arbitrary power wherever it lurked, especially when directed against his person, character, and reputation” (p.
His wartime experiences confronting equally self-interested opponents "congealed in such a way as to convince him that the cause of liberty was actually hollow—and even fraudulent—at its core" (p. xiii). Martin argues that because of such confrontations, by August 1776, Arnold "[s]ubconsciously, at least, had begun to ask himself whether the cause of liberty, with all of its grand-sounding rhetoric, was more hollow than genuine—and perhaps not worthy of his continued sacrifice" (p. 245). The author identifies as a "major turning point in Arnold's life" his reaction to Congress's failure to restore his seniority in August 1777 (p. 357). The narrative ends when Arnold, after Saratoga, supposedly became a "disenchanted patriot [who] would now do for himself first" (p. 417) because Congress, which "had corrupted the ideals of the Revolution" (p. 415), ignored him while excessively honoring General Horatio Gates.

Martin's account does not contain the evidence necessary to show that these pre-1778 instances of being rebuffed or unappreciated caused his treason. The author does not demonstrate Arnold's supposed subconscious intent. With his seniority restored, Arnold rushed back into Washington's service, casting doubt on the significance of the alleged "turning point." Arnold's statement of motive as reported by Sir Henry Clinton did not mention pre-1778 events. Martin ignores the influence of his second marriage. He minimizes Arnold's intent to sacrifice comrades in arms. He treats Arnold's financial rewards for treason as of minor significance, though Arnold haggled about the amount. The book is a major contribution to understanding Arnold's career only up to 1778; it is not otherwise convincing.

Texas Tech University

Benjamin H. Newcomb


Joseph Fischer brilliantly examines the fighting abilities of the fledgling American revolutionary army in 1779 by detailing the relatively unknown campaign of General John Sullivan against the New York Iroquois. Fischer sets out to prove not only that the revolutionary army performed quite well under difficult frontier circumstances but that its (partial) success reflected the military vision and administrative vigor of George Washington. In the Sullivan campaign Washington showed a thoroughness and innovation in his manipulation of the principles of military intelligence. Sullivan's tactics, particularly where they follow Washington's explicit directions, were solid even when imperfectly executed. Leadership in Sullivan's forces generally mirrored the goals promulgated by Washington for a
democratic military organization. So successful was Sullivan and his officers that Sullivan overcame a logistical nightmare by adopting a living-off-the-land strategy and by getting voluntary compliance on the part of the rank and file for campaigning on half rations. One of Fischer’s most insightful discussions centers on why the men endured the military hardships even though it looked as though they would never receive the material rewards promised them.

Abysmally deficient logistical support accounts for Washington’s marked failure to order an attack on Fort Niagara, a strategic failure that allowed the victories of Sullivan’s forces to be canceled out the next year by large-scale Iroquois attacks from that fort. For this reason, Fischer’s book is not called “The Well-Executed Success.” Fischer spends some time documenting the revolutionary rhetoric, political climate, and draconian military measures, all of which so soured relations between various civil and military authorities that Sullivan never had a realistic chance of getting enough supplies to capture Fort Niagara. More originally, Fischer distances himself from other writers by his exact knowledge of how difficult it was in eighteenth-century Western Europe (much less on the American frontier) to sustain soldiers in a campaign. For such reasons as these, a number of weaknesses of Sullivan’s foray into the heart of Iroquoia can hardly be blamed on the commander.

Readers who have already studied Sullivan would not expect such a positive portrayal of Sullivan who more generally has been pictured as unlucky, excessively cautious, or too demanding. While writings focused on Native Americans never forget that the Sullivan campaign in a short time halved the population of the Iroquois and in a few years formed the basis for loss of much of their tribal lands, most military writers have felt that ultimately the expedition had really nothing to show for all its efforts and expense. Indeed, in comparison with the 1779 achievements of Evan Shelby against the Cherokees or George Rogers Clark against the Ohio Valley Indians, Sullivan’s enterprise does seem amateurish. But these cavils are unfair to Sullivan, for time after time in the woods regular armies had consistently shown how poorly prepared they were for subduing Native Americans. In point of fact, Sullivan showed—as Mad Anthony Wayne would do later—that only the excessively cautious army commander could outmaneuver Indians.

Sullivan’s campaign also illustrated a fundamental fact that pathetic General Arthur St. Clair ignored in his loss of Ticonderoga in 1777 and then even more disastrously in 1791 in the Ohio woods: an army could only best the Native Americans when they had Indians as scouts or soldiers (such as Sullivan’s Oneida Indian officers), or at least a plentiful number of seasoned frontiersmen, as Sullivan had in Morgan’s Raiders. Only when one accepts the idea that the apparently undisciplined Indians skillfully followed very traditional rules of woodland war that regularly granted them success does one understand why Sullivan’s Indian enemies did not bother to evacuate their families until after they lost the only pitched battle of Sullivan’s campaign. Based on their past experience, the Native Americans
simply assumed that they would be successful against regulars. Sullivan's successful thrust of an essentially traditional army into the heartland of the Iroquois justifies Fischer's central point that by 1779 the American army had matured to a point where it was unreasonable for Whitehall to assume that the British army could easily overwhelm the Americans.

University of Dayton

LEROY V. ELID

*Between Authority and Liberty: State Constitution Making in Revolutionary America.*


This is a valuable contribution to a rich literature on the creation of state constitutions in the revolutionary era. By arguing that "the American science of politics" was in place in 1776, Kruman challenges the dominant interpretation that the nation's political system was not completely formed until the adoption of the federal Constitution in 1789. He also emphasizes that imperial conflicts were major factors in the formulation of American written constitutions. Framers, dissatisfied with parliamentary claims of absolute supremacy and unhappy with the undifferentiated powers exerted by provincial congresses before independence, grounded the majority of state constitutions upon explicit declarations of rights, and structured authority according to the doctrine of separation of powers, all of which were designed more to limit potential legislative tyranny than to correct past executive abuses.

Kruman challenges the idea that the Massachusetts Constitution (1780) was significantly different from other revolutionary constitutions. It was unique in that after the people rejected a constitution written by the legislature, a specially elected convention drafted a new one, which was then ratified by the people. Both in form and content, it was a model for the federal Constitution in 1789. Nonetheless, according to Kruman, the other state constitutions were founded upon the same principles. Special congresses which wrote most state constitutions were not ordinary legislatures, rather they were elected especially for that task, and most did not perform other legislative activities. All shared a dependence upon the authority of the people.

The role of the people and the question of suffrage are at the heart of this interpretation. Historians argue that political inequality was perpetuated by basing suffrage on property qualifications, a condition that was undermined but not undone during the Revolution. Militiamen, who were often poor, demanded suffrage rights through a reduction of property qualifications or by substituting mere payment of taxes. Property qualifications would be ignored as states disenfranchised Loyalists.
and nonassociators. With women among the disenfranchised and accounting for almost half the population, only New Jersey followed the logic of the nexus between voting and property ownership to enfranchise some of their number. Kruman argues that the replacement of property with taxpayer suffrage inverted the Whig model, producing a new standard for full citizenship in the new century.

This interpretation also offers new insight into Pennsylvania's unique unicameral system. Where the system is portrayed as an example of unbalanced popular government, Kruman asserts that it was formed upon the same principles of republican state building which underlay bicameral systems. Requirements to hold open legislative sessions, record roll call votes and publish journals, and enact legislation only after the succeeding election, were designed to keep government under the watchful eye of the people, who enjoyed a liberal franchise. Annual elections and term limits were designed to prevent the development of professional politicians. In addition, this ostensibly unbalanced unicameral system adhered to separation of powers principles. Both the legislature and the executive were elected directly by the people, and their independence was strengthened by a prohibition of plural officeholding. Although the executive lacked a veto, a Council of Censors was empowered periodically to deal with bad legislation. This system was designed to provide for popular control over the legislature and to create some institutional balances within it.

Although Kruman goes to great lengths to pay homage to Gordon Wood's definitive Creation of the American Republic (1969), and to other important contributions, notably those by Donald S. Lutz and Willi Paul Adams, this work effectively challenges many of their conclusions and offers a convincing new synthesis.

University of Maryland, College Park

WHITMAN H. RIDGWAY


Len Travers's Celebrating the Fourth is an important, comparative description of Independence Day observations in Boston, Philadelphia, and Charleston between 1776 and 1826. It joins David Waldstreicher's In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820 (1997) and Simon Newman's Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic (1997) in demonstrating the central role of celebrations in the political culture of the early Republic. All three authors emphasize the intensely politicized and frequently partisan nature of these events. While Newman and Waldstreicher—whose earlier
work Travers does not engage—look at a broader range of political festivals and provide a more thorough analysis of their place in republican politics, Travers pays greater attention to the holiday character of the Fourth, to the colors and music, food and frolicking we associate with the day.

Travers’s rich narrative, based primarily on contemporary newspaper accounts, orations, and diaries, shows how the organizers of Fourth of July celebrations interpreted the recent American past and offered a vision of the Republic’s future. He charts a trajectory from the creation of a foundational rite that “seemed to obliterate distance and diversity” among Americans (p. 10); its elaboration in partisan observations and attempts to create communal rituals; to its transformation into a nonpolitical entertainment in the late 1810s, occasioned by the disintegration of the first party system and the growing belief in a “national character” that transcended political and sectional differences. The first observations of Independence Day employed the established forms of colonial holidays—the ringing of bells, orations, militia parades, dinners, and fireworks—but used them to shift loyalties from an imperial to an American framework. Surrounded by the British army and faced with ambivalent American attitudes, patriots used the day to justify the Revolution and considered participation as a test of allegiance. With independence secured, organizers saw a need to educate and unite their fellow Americans to maintain a republican government. (Here Travers’s detailed account of Philadelphia’s “Grand Federal Procession” of 1788 deserves special praise.) However, divisions along social, racial, and political lines appeared quickly: conservative elites tried to imbue the Fourth with their particular vision of social order, white denial of black citizenship prevented black participation in the observation, and Federalists and Republicans organized competing celebrations that put forth partisan definitions of republicanism and contested the meaning of national symbols. While the Federalists considered the attainment of independence to be the termination of the American Revolution, the Republicans believed that the Revolution was an ongoing process, a promise of liberty and equality yet unfulfilled. The Republican rise to power in Washington did not end partisan contests over the Fourth, even though it became a holiday less and less congenial to Federalist sensibilities.

In his analysis Travers employs concepts borrowed from the anthropological and sociological study of ritual, which lead him to highlight the reconciliation and consensus-building nature of celebrations. The result is a persistent tension between his assertion that observations built *communitas*, and his conclusive demonstration that they were used as instruments in divisive political confrontations. By interpreting celebrations as either consensual or partisan, Travers obscures the political uses of the rhetoric of unity and patriotism, a rhetoric that created exclusive definitions of citizenship and “the people,” and led to the paradoxical construction of an American nationalism out of the clashes of early republican partisans. Still,
this caveat should not distract from the fact that Celebrating the Fourth provides a much-needed evaluation of a crucial and previously neglected cultural and political phenomenon of early American history.

*University of Virginia*

**Albrecht Koschnik**


Annette Gordon-Reed, a law professor at New York Law School, examines the way historians have explained (or explained away) the Sally Hemings story. Political philosopher Conor Cruise O'Brien blasts historians who have, he says, misrepresented Jefferson's support for the French Revolution.

Gordon-Reed admits that we lack definitive proof whether Jefferson and Sally Hemings had a long-term sexual relationship. Her main purpose is to explore "the way some scholars . . . have mishandled" the story, and how they have "mistreated black people in the process" (p. xvii). Echoing W.E.B. DuBois, Gordon-Reed calls for historians to adhere to an objective standard, and not to rewrite history as we would like to have seen it happen. Historians who have tried to excuse Jefferson—by slighting Madison Hemings's testimony while accepting the testimony of Ellen Coolidge—have presented "a warped view of black people and of the history of the South as well . . ." (p. 226). Something valuable was lost by ignoring the lives of the Hemingses in order to protect Jefferson's image.

Gordon-Reed's accomplishment is to shift the focus of inquiry from the Jefferson family to the Hemings family. Her chapters on Madison Hemings and Sally Hemings present each character as an individual with a life worth studying regardless of the reputed father and lover. She has found all available evidence about this remarkable family and analyzed it in a compelling way. One son escaped from slavery, a daughter was quietly freed by Jefferson, and two sons were freed in his will. Three children eventually crossed the color line: one became a successful musician in Ohio and Wisconsin, another reputedly demonstrated a hot-air balloon in Petersburg, Virginia, on July 4, 1834. These stories of the Hemings family—delineating the influence Paris had on Sally, her relationship with Martha Wayles Jefferson, the fact that Sally's was the only Monticello family that did not sell produce to the Jeffersons—are more interesting and important to our
understanding of history than the paternity of her children. No DNA test can change the fact that Sally Hemings's children would have made any parent proud.

In 1994 Chief Justice Rehnquist presided at a mock trial to determine whether Thomas Jefferson's hypocrisy negates his positive contributions to American life. A distinguished Harvard Law School professor prosecuted Jefferson, who was defended by the U.S. solicitor general. Gordon-Reed, who attended the event, wondered what Jefferson would have made of two African-American lawyers arguing his fate. He would have been pleased at the resounding verdict in his favor, an outcome that relieved even the prosecutor (pp. 105–6).

The outcome would not have relieved Conor Cruise O'Brien who sees Jefferson in a different light. According to O'Brien, Jefferson bequeathed a legacy of "No Free Blacks in America" (p. 322), disciples such as Hendrik Verwoerd and the right-wing militia movement, and the "civil religion of an effectively multiracial America" (p. 319). "It is difficult to resist the conclusion," O'Brien says, "that the twentieth-century statesman whom the Thomas Jefferson of 1793 would have admired most is Pol Pot" (p. 150).

O'Brien comes to these conclusions after discussing Jefferson's reaction to the French Revolution. Jefferson kept his faith in the French Revolution after the dire predictions of Edmund Burke (of whom O'Brien wrote a laudatory biography) and John Adams had been borne out. The Revolution, they said, would lead to anarchy and tyranny, but Jefferson discounted their fears as apologies for the old order. No one disputes that Jefferson was too optimistic about the French Revolution. He was not as wise as Burke nor as realistic as Adams. But he was not the only American who misread the Revolution: even those who decried its violence celebrated it for advancing liberty. The key to the Bastille hangs not at Monticello but at Mount Vernon.

O'Brien argues that Jefferson's real objective in zealously supporting the French Revolution was to divert American attention from the problem of slavery. It is an intriguing argument, but will not bear scholarly scrutiny. O'Brien strip mines Jefferson's writings to find evidence of his subject's perfidy and psychological deviousness. Although Jefferson never referred to Jean Jacques Rousseau in any of his writings, O'Brien finds what he calls an "implicit reference" to Rousseau in a 1798 letter, and from this proclaims Jefferson's "intellectual inheritance" from Rousseau to be "quite clear" (p. 12). O'Brien reads a 1787 letter warning of "the passions of kings and those who would be kings" as a warning about George Washington—though Jefferson was "not consciously" aiming at Washington, he "did have Washington in mind" (p. 50). Jefferson did loathe kingly power, and by the mid-1790s he feared that the presidency had acquired trappings of monarchy. But when he wrote this letter in August 1787, the office of president had not even been created, let alone filled by the power-passionate Washington, who was in fact the recipient of the letter. If Jefferson, consciously or not, had Washington in mind,
Washington must have missed the point. Or perhaps a study of Washington's psychological deviousness is in order.

Gordon-Reed's book will challenge historians to more thorough and honest explorations of the past. Though she makes any future study of Jefferson and Sally Hemings redundant, she has opened up new inquiries into the roles of people like the Hemings family in American history. O'Brien's eighteenth-century style polemic against Jefferson and historians leaves room for serious study of American reactions to the French Revolution, and for more study of the relationship between ideas of liberty and the brutality of slavery. Jefferson, the man of ideas, may be central to both stories. Not all of Jefferson's ideas were good; his ideas on race and his practice of slavery were reprehensible. But Americans should think long and hard before they discard the single idea on which Jefferson staked his political life: that governments rest on the consent of the governed.

Suffolk University

Robert J. Allison


Few students of Pietism in North America enjoy a deep acquaintance with the Reformed tradition's contribution to this renewal movement in early modern Protestantism. Steven O'Malley here brings to bear years of deep acquaintance with the theological background that finally contributed to the Pietism that found expression in the work of Philip Wilhelm Otterbein and the United Brethren movement of the late eighteenth century. Otterbein is at least reasonably familiar to students of North American religious history; O'Malley also edits for inclusion here the contributions of Johann Christian Stahlschmidt, the mutual friend Otterbein shared with the more famous Gerhard Tersteegen. O'Malley also commendably includes a selection from Friedrich Adolf Lampe, arguably one of the most influential figures of eighteenth-century Reformed theology. A final selection of primary sources acquaints the reader with the Berleburg Bible radicals whose Wittgenstein origins accounted for the high regard in which this scriptural commentary was held at the Ephrata Cloisters.

The major flaw in O'Malley's work stems from the book's organization and the lack of clear definitions at the outset. The footnotes are very useful for students already familiar with the theology and history of Pietism. But the uninitiated have to work backwards through the texts without an introductory explanation of what Pietism's main tenets were, and what distinguished the Reformed Pietism elucidated in this collection from other strains in the movement. Eventually, a clarification
emerges, but beginners will naturally wonder why this particular strain of the broad and complex phenomenon should be privileged.

The inclusion of Otterbein's 1760 sermon serves as a kind of point of departure; a certain logic probably will make it clear to the initiated why one can relate key themes found there to the Heidelberg Catechism, and thence to the German Reformed Pietist roots. For others, however, it would have been far more useful to see at the outset how the critical concept of "following Christ" flowed from the Reformed understanding of the Order of Salvation, and why this understanding was so different from, for example, orthodox Lutheran application, yet somewhat similar to, among others, uses common in Halle-inspired Lutheran Pietism.

O'Malley's bibliography is similarly eclectic; some citations reveal an awareness of recent work published in *Pietismus und Neuzeit* and the work of the Historical Commission dedicated to promoting scholarly research on Pietism. In other instances, one misses more recent work on Ephrata, Michael Schlatter, and especially the interpretive essays on various aspects of Pietism (including the Reformed variants) now available in the projected four-volume work by Martin Brecht, et al., eds., *Die Geschichte des Pietismus* (Göttingen, 1993–).

Despite occasional printer's errors (pp. 326–7) and consistent misspellings (*theologia gloriae* seems to have consistently escaped attention) the volume is handsomely produced and well indexed, including a useful (pp. 341–50) set of scriptural references. For the seasoned student interested in placing various strains of late North American Pietism in the proper trans-Atlantic context that extends back to the German Reformed theological insights, much can be gleaned from O'Malley's reflections. Beginners should start with the author's earlier work on the Otterbeins and the still-indispensable survey of Pietism in North America by Ernst Stoeffler.

*Pennsylvania State University*  
A. G. ROEBER

*The Salmon P. Chase Papers. Volume 4: Correspondence, April 1863–1864.* Edited by JOHN NIVEN. (Ohio and London: Kent State University Press, 1997. xxiii, 479p. Illustrations, acknowledgments, bibliography, index. $45.00.)

In his 1995 biography of Salmon P. Chase, John Niven characterized his subject as high-minded and moral, possessed of courage and self-confidence. Elected as both governor and senator from Ohio, Chase served as Abraham Lincoln's secretary of the treasury and chief justice of the Supreme Court during Reconstruction. In spite of these enviable successes, Niven's Chase emerges as a tragic figure, his ambition unfulfilled.

This fourth volume of Chase's papers covers the critical period of 1863–64 when
the Ohioan sought to advance the status of African Americans, stabilize the war-torn finances of the Union, and commence a bid for his party's nomination for the presidency. Chase appears as a man of conscience and concern. Bright, aggressive, and uncorruptible, he articulated the position of the Republican "radical" who championed a strong hand in dealing with the rebels and a generous compassion for the newly freed slave. Chase, who believed in the melding of military and political policy, provided a steady stream of advice to the president, congressmen, and generals. Relentlessly arguing for an increased role for African Americans in the liberated South, Chase took particular interest in the successes of black troops and the rental of abandoned plantation lands to freedmen. As Louisiana moved to a reconstructed government, the secretary wrote numerous letters promoting black suffrage. He deeply feared that compromises would be made in 1864 that could produce peace, but spell the reenslavement of African Americans.

Burdened with the responsibility of funding a two-million-man army and a huge navy, Chase attempted gallantly to create an integrated economic structure. He had considerable success in launching bond sales both at home and abroad. An uncooperative Congress, however, hindered his efforts to develop a solid tax system and an exclusive national currency.

Chase expressed a consistent dissatisfaction with the manner in which Lincoln ran his administration. He complained quietly about the lack of central direction or policy from "Honest Abe" that permitted each cabinet member to "run his own machine." The administration was not "guided by a bold, resolute, farseeing, and active mind, guided by an honest, earnest heart" (p. 155). Chase perceived the president's unwillingness to direct or coordinate departments (except for War) as a weakness. He decried Lincoln's lack of resolution and aggressiveness on the subjects of total emancipation and pursuit of the war. This absence of confidence in the chief executive, combined with his own ambition, allowed Chase to become the stalking horse for many disgruntled Union Party supporters. This volume traces the rise of the Chase White House balloon in 1863 to its deflation in March 1864.

Embarrassed by his failed bid, angered by attacks upon the integrity of his department by political enemies, and frustrated by a parsimonious Congress, Chase resigned his post in June 1864. The melancholy Ohioan lamented that he felt "out of place" (p. 418) in the cabinet, commenting about the president, "I feel that I do not know him" (p. 432). Even so, Chase's retirement was brief. The volume concludes with his appointment as chief justice of the Supreme Court, about which Chase ruefully remarked, "I should like the offer better than the seat" (p. 438).

This book contains only a small sample (p. 269) of the thousands of Chase letters available from the period—many of which are housed in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Niven has chosen carefully, however, and the mix of economics, politics, and personal life provides us with a revealing portrait of the man. Although a calendar of the letters would have been useful, the work is well
done. Regrettably, Professor Niven's death last year will deprive us of his editorial skills for future volumes.

University of South Florida

John M. Belohlavek

The Union Soldier in Battle: Enduring the Ordeal of Combat. By Earl J. Hess. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997. xii, 244p. Illustrations, conclusion, notes, bibliography, index. $29.95.)

Like other recent studies of Civil War soldiers, Earl J. Hess's The Union Soldier in Battle challenges the thesis advanced a decade ago by Gerald Linderman's Embattled Courage, which "portrays Civil War combat as an unmasterable experience that warped the view of its participants" (p. x). In contrast, Hess demonstrates convincingly that, despite the enormous casualties of Civil War battles, Union soldiers "were not victims, as twentieth-century authors tend to portray soldiers in all wars, but victors over the horrors of combat" (p. ix).

The strongest part of this book is its graphic portrayal of these horrors. Drawing on letters, diaries, and memoirs by Union soldiers, Hess depicts the shock of the initial combat experience, for which no amount of training could prepare a soldier. He traces the evolving ability of veterans to withstand without flinching the sight of friends cut down by bullets and the imminent possibility of suffering the same fate themselves. Hess shows how religious faith and fatalism, Victorian values of duty, honor, and manhood, patriotic and ideological convictions, and the bonding with comrades who became as a "band of brothers" enabled soldiers to endure carnage and fight through to victory despite the discouragement of many defeats.

A dominant theme of the book is the loss of innocence by soldiers who quickly discovered that war was not the glorious adventure many anticipated when they enlisted. Nevertheless, this "loss of innocence and the gaining of experience did not necessarily bring disillusionment," as Gerald Linderman maintained. "Most Northern soldiers successfully blunted the tendency to become bitter and lose faith in the war, survived the suffering that inevitably attended conflict, and managed to convince themselves that the results of the war had been worthy of their sacrifices" (p. 192).

Despite the many fine qualities of this book, it is marred by some lapses and omissions. The Union army numbered about seven hundred thousand by the summer of 1862, not three hundred thousand (p. 57); only a fragment of the Army of Tennessee regrouped after the battle of Nashville to fight again at Bentonville (p. 60); the photographer who took the famous pictures of unburied soldiers on the Gettysburg battlefield was Timothy O'Sullivan, not James (after p. 72); if it were really true that "coming under fire was, of course, an unusual experience for the
Northern soldiers," (p. 24), Hess could scarcely have written this book—what he probably means is that coming under fire the first time was a novel experience. The book contains a good brief discussion of how religion functioned to sustain the morale of Union soldiers, but does not refer to the most important dimension of religious faith in this regard: the literal belief of many soldiers in a life after death, which bolstered their courage in combat by enabling them to face the prospect of physical death more calmly because they believed in the eternal life of their souls. And while Hess persuasively emphasizes the importance of ideological convictions in motivating Northern men to enlist and fight, he neglects the opportunity to discuss two of the most important wartime events that called forth extensive commentary in their letters and diaries concerning the ideological motives and purposes of the war: the issue of reenlistment for three-year veterans in the winter of 1863–64, and the presidential election of 1864. Except for a couple of references in the final chapter, which analyzes the veterans’ postwar retrospectives on their experiences, the book virtually ignores the issues of slavery and emancipation, about which many Union soldiers wrote a great deal in their letters and diaries, especially during the months surrounding the issuance of Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation.

Mention of the veterans’ postwar memories raises another question: the nature of different kinds of sources for understanding soldiers’ wartime experiences and perceptions. Close to half of Hess’s citations for what soldiers thought and felt during the war are from memoirs and recollections written after the war, sometimes several decades afterward. Given the elements of myth, romanticization, and faulty memory that inevitably creep into such recollections, some discussion of the reliability of these sources would have been in order—especially since such an abundance of uncensored wartime letters and diaries unsullied by later rewriting or by intention to publish exists for the historian to get inside the minds of those men. Postwar descriptions of combat experiences were often more vivid and detailed than those contained in soldiers’ wartime letters, and the use of these narratives provides much of the color and drama in Hess’s account—but also makes some of it suspect.

Princeton University

JAMES M. MCPHERSON


In this work Herman Hattaway steps back from the monumental two-volume military history of the Civil War, How the North Won and Why the South Lost, which he coauthored, to write a useful introductory military history of the Civil War. It
joins two other introductory military histories of the Civil War appearing in the 1990s, those by Charles Roland and Frank Vandiver. All three go in distinctive directions.

This superb, well-written study has a prologue and an epilogue that skillfully places the Civil War in the history of military technology and professionalism. Between these bookends this master of tactical and strategic narrative leads the reader through an engaging journey of campaigns and battles as the Civil War drifts in the direction of modern total war. With respect to the lively discussion as to how far the Civil War drifts in that direction, Hattaway lines up on the side of caution with Mark Grimsley and Mark Neely against James McPherson and Edward Hagerman who see the Civil War tipping the scales toward the first modern total war.

Succinct snapshots of personalities add to the pleasure of the text, as does the author's wealth of anecdotal information and his sense of the pithy quote to make a point. The work is well informed by the most recent scholarship, and contains a very useful annotated bibliography which the author supplements by way of a helpful dialogue with many of his sources as he works his way through the narrative. Hattaway's whimsical humor also slips out on occasion, as when he includes a computer-enhanced Matthew Brady photograph of Robert E. Lee holding an AK-47, taken from Harry Turtledove's interesting novel, *The Guns of the South*. This is the introductory military history of the Civil War that teachers from upper high school levels through university have been waiting for.

*York University  Edward Hagerman
Toronto*


In this companion to a Wadsworth Athenaeum exhibition (September 8, 1996, through March 9, 1997), William Hosley seeks to take "the reader on a journey through the Colts' world and . . . to probe the inner yearnings that earned them a place among the most celebrated personalities of their age" by telling the "story of two lives, two visions, a great fortune created and disposed of, and the transformation of an American city". The story unfolds in nine roughly chronological chapters, beginning with an overview of Sam and Elizabeth Colt's lives, their family backgrounds, Sam's early attempts and failures at establishing firearms businesses, and his eventual success in his hometown, Hartford,
Connecticut. Hosley also probes the "legend" of Sam Colt, asserting that "Colt himself created the basic components of his mythology. His widow embellished it, burnished its prestige, and authenticated its pedigree by revealing its roots in childhood experience and asserting its moral significance." Sam succeeded after repeated failures, we learn, not only because of hard work, dedication, and discipline, and in spite of his lack of technical expertise, but because he was a penultimate salesman.

The book's second and third chapters chronicle Colt's success in Hartford and the context in which that success occurred. Colt's business was able to grow and prosper in large part because of contracts with the federal government, which was interested in achieving uniformity in the production of firearms. The U.S. War Department's interest in rapid-firing arms also led to improvements in ammunition and loading mechanisms, including the revolver, which Colt claimed credit for inventing but which Hosley attributes to Elisha Collier. The growth of the firearms industry also resulted from the ever-increasing demand for firearms in the nineteenth century. During the era of great national expansion, involving violent conflict with Mexicans and numerous Native American groups, the military's need for guns was justified, ironically, as necessary for both winning and deterring war (Colt marketed one of his revolvers as the "Peacemaker"). The last century also saw the rise of a professional police force that began to carry firearms and an increase in the popularity of recreational marksmanship. Firearms were symbolic of the frontier spirit, and skilled hunters and marksmen such as Buffalo Bill and Annie Oakley became national heroes.

Coltsville, the subject of chapter four, was Sam Colt's attempt to build an almost self-sufficient company town at the south end of Hartford. Although never fully realized, Coltsville's two hundred acres eventually included the firearms factory, buildings for manufacturing gun cartridges and willow furniture, housing for workers, a vast multiuse structure for social, educational, and civic activities, a farm, transportation facilities, and the Colt mansion, Armsmear. Coltsville, populated in part by a significant number of German immigrants, provoked substantial opposition among Colt's detractors, especially Hartford's established elite. The design, building, and furnishing of Armsmear, the palatial Colt residence, and life therein are the subjects of chapter six. The fifth chapter is a brief but deft account of Sam Colt's use of the symbolism and veneration of Connecticut's legendary Charter Oak tree to rebuke Hartford's old established elite for snubbing and opposing Colt. Colt named streets and a building in Coltsville for the fabled oak, and after the ancient tree collapsed in 1856, he commissioned a number of elaborately carved objects from its wood, including a cradle for son Samuel that was more monument than resting place.

The book's last three chapters focus primarily on Elizabeth, who survived Sam by forty-three years. While Elizabeth did not actively run the Colt business after
Sam’s death, she did retain ownership, with other family members, until four years before her own death. And in 1864, when a disastrous fire destroyed the Colt armory just two years after Sam’s death, Elizabeth made the decision to rebuild a larger fireproof building at great expense. As a widow, Elizabeth used the vast wealth at her disposal for both personal and philanthropic purposes. She acquired contemporary art for the gallery at Armsmear; collected expensive souvenirs of her European travels; commissioned a costly book about Sam, the armory, and Armsmear; built an Episcopal church and a memorial house for her son Caldwell, both in Coltsville; and spearheaded fund-raising activities for numerous civic causes. She also bequeathed the Colt collection of arms and artwork to the Wadsworth Athenaeum, along with funds to build an addition to house the collection.

Hosley has given us a richly detailed view of the lives of two seminal figures in the history of America’s rise to industrial preeminence. His engaging work effectively blends biography with technological, business, and social history, and he masterfully integrates text with a liberal selection of historical images and photographs of artifacts. Throughout the book Hosley refers to the Colts’ significance and the elements of the Colt “legend”—Sam’s marketing acumen, including his unabashedly shameless promotion of himself and his name; his ability to assemble a team with the expertise and experience necessary to produce a superior product; Sam and Elizabeth’s fabulous wealth, which enabled an opulent lifestyle and generous giving to their community. As with most legends, Colt’s ripened with time; it was not until long after Sam’s death that the famous Colt 45 revolver (developed ten years after Sam died) came to be known as “the gun that won the West.”

While many readers will know of Sam Colt’s fame, a broad general readership would have benefited from a concise recapitulation of the Colt legend in the first pages of the book. It is unfortunate, as Hosley acknowledges, that no firsthand accounts by Colt factory workers or Armsmear household employees survive. Inevitably, our understanding of the Colts’ personae and their impact on the lives of others must be incomplete without the perspective of employees. My last criticism is the book’s lack of an index. While it may have been intended as a narrative story, the book nevertheless constitutes an important reference work, and the absence of an index prohibits its use in this way. These criticisms notwithstanding, Colt is a solid work of scholarship that contributes much to our knowledge of the nineteenth-century firearms industry, the history of mechanization, and the history of Hartford. It is also a good read.

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