

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Many Legalities of Early America*. Edited by CHRISTOPHER L. TOMLINS and BRUCE H. MANN. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va., 2001. ix, 466p. Genealogical charts, tables, notes, index. Cloth, \$59.95; paper, \$22.50.)

More than three decades ago, David H. Flaherty and the University of North Carolina Press published *Essays in the History of Early American Law* (1969). His work was designed to demonstrate the current state of legal history, to identify areas worthy of investigation, and to encourage legal and nonlegal historians alike to accept the challenge of looking more closely at early American law and its institutions. Flaherty's effort stimulated a variety of works offering fresh looks at law, legal institutions, and the early bar. Nonetheless, fifteen years later, Stanley N. Katz ("The Problem of a Colonial Legal History," in Jack P. Greene and J. R. Pole, eds., *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era*, 1984) complained that colonial legal history had failed to establish a critical interpretive presence for itself. Katz maintained that, as of 1984, no legal-historical perspective had surfaced to shape a general interpretation of the early American experience. Now, nearly two decades after Katz's lament, Christopher Tomlins, Bruce Mann, and the University of North Carolina Press have issued still another threefold challenge. They ask us to consider articles on the cutting edge of the "new legal history," to deliberate on the implications of these articles for our own work and that of others, and to produce even more provocative and stimulating studies linking the law and concepts of legality to social, political, and economic developments.

Tomlins, Mann, and their contributors do not limit themselves to an examination of law and legal institutions. They have a broader vision, one that encompasses both concepts and practices of legality. That is, they are concerned with what constituted legality in the minds of early Americans and how individuals set about to work out their lifestyles in terms of those concepts. By definition, legal history in this broader sense guarantees that more than formal law and legal institutions will be embraced. It permits authors to probe informal institutions and practices that often shaped early lives every bit as fundamentally as the more recognized and acknowledged ones. Unfortunately, it also tempts them to lose sight of the law and legal institutions in their preoccupation with nonlegal institutions and forces.

Like most collections of essays, the result here is uneven both in style and worth. Each reader will find his or her own most compelling essay. And, without question, there is something for everyone, organized in four sections: "Atlantic Crossings" (four essays), "Intercultural Encounters" (three essays), "Rules of Law: Legal Relations as Social Relations" (four essays), and "Rules of Law: Legal Regimes and Their Social Effects" (five essays). The editors provide useful introductions to and summaries of each section. Sixteen contributors join Tomlins and Mann in sharing their perspectives on "the many legalities of Early America." They include James Muldoon, Mary Sarah Bilder, David Gaspar, David Konig, Katherine Hermes, James Brooks, Ann Marie Plane, Christine Daniels, Linda Sturtz, John Kolp, Terri Snyder, Holly Brewer, Cornelia Hughes Dayton, William Offutt Jr., Richard Bushman, and A. G. Roeber. The brevity of this review precludes describing or assessing each article, but within the scope of the book one finds treatments of the full plurality and complexity of early American society.

Topics include English and Spanish as well as Native American societies. They include men and women, free and unfree, adults and children, rich and poor. They also move beyond older legal history by confronting many of the most popular issues of current historiography—family, gender, race, ethnicity, patriarchy, and dependence.

In their desire to exhibit the newest legal studies, to demonstrate the relevance of these essays to others working in the field of early history, and to stimulate scholarly thought on legal history in fresh terms, Tomlins, Mann, and their contributors succeed. They illustrate how the ideas of legality can be employed to explore the many ways in which the peoples of early America arranged their lives and determined their relationships with each other. The majority of essays stress accommodation and practicality in the formations of early "legalities." Still, if the new legal history is more all-encompassing, more sophisticated, and more nuanced—and shown not to be the exclusive purview of lawyers and legal historians—it is also more peripheral than central to many of the authors. Several essays hardly engage the law or legal institutions at all. Doubtless the next generation's "new legal history" will address this shortcoming.

*University of Northern Colorado*

G. S. ROWE

*"The Tyranny of Printers": Newspaper Politics in the Early Republic.* By JEFFREY L. PASLEY. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001. xvii, 517p. Illustrations, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$37.50.)

Jefferson had it wrong. We were not "all Republicans"; we were not "all Federalists." At best, Jefferson's olive branch was held out only to political elites

across a narrow span of shared gentility and aristocratic status. For the humble newspapermen of little status and fewer means who created the "newspaper-based party" (p. 17), orchestrated the "revolution of 1800," and stood at the vanguard of nineteenth-century democracy, the frontline battle between aristocratic Federalists and ordinary Republicans, and all that these divisions implied, was continuing and in earnest.

In this comprehensive book, Jeffrey Pasley presents an intelligent, engaging "analytical narrative" (p. 22) of printer-editors, primarily focusing on Republican editors who, after all, were much more responsible than their Federalist counterparts for the advancement of partisan political newspapers. He does so generally by employing something numerically less rigorous but qualitatively more satisfying than Namierist collective biography to achieve his argument. (His personal website, [www.pasleybrothers.com/newspol](http://www.pasleybrothers.com/newspol), provides easily accessible biographic vignettes of many of the printer-editors from 1776 to the mid-nineteenth century.)

Pasley begins by tracing the role of printer-editors from their colonial origins, when they were only slowly drawn into political conflict, through the Revolution, when they "were more conduits for Revolutionary rhetoric than initiators of it" (p. 37). He arrives at the real start of his story in the 1790s when newspapermen launched the fight "to secure the right of American citizens to peacefully change their government and to implement the democratic promise of the early days of the American Revolution" (p. 46). Oddly, the banal John Fenno, who brought his editorship to the service of Alexander Hamilton's Federalists, seems slightly favored in the first episode of printer-editor partisan initiative in contrast to the more intelligent Philip Freneau, whom Pasley exposes as more the "hireling" in the politics of Jefferson and Madison.

Ambiguities of many kinds receded, Pasley rightly argues, when Benjamin Franklin Bache, with "great courage" (p. 79), advanced the partisan press in the Philadelphia *Aurora*, a paper that finally succeeded in addressing an "imagined partisan community of readers" (p. 96) willing to support the Republican cause. Pasley sentimentalizes Bache's democratic martyrdom, however, by creating a fictional aristocratic inheritance for Bache, claiming extravagantly that he even "lost caste by siding with the Republicans" (p. 89). Bache was raised for industry and artisanship, did not inherit any of his grandfather's property aside from his printing house and tools, and had no aristocratic cachet worth mentioning. He learned very early on that public ideology and private accomplishment interlocked where aristocracy had no place, in the ideals of independence, republicanism, and democracy.

Change en masse began to take place when "the Sedition Act 'failed' by transforming a large number of printers into something more than simple pliers of the printer's trade" (p. 131). Featuring lesser-known printer-editors like Charles Holt, Pasley identifies "a new breed of printer, a group of artisan politicians who

dispensed almost entirely with the standard commercial ideology of the printing trade" (p. 161), and pushed on through poverty and even physical attacks to create a cooperative network of newspapers largely free of top-down Republican control. Radical democratic partisanship found its early epitome in William Duane, Bache's uncompromising successor, who along with others attacked the genteel aristocratic forms and the lawyer-bound exclusivity of officeholding to which Federalist and Republican leaders alike clung. As partisan printing advanced, it remained in the hands of persons of lower to middling status. When the Federalists turned their hand to the same game, they proved either incompetent or vicious and vulgar, while Republican editors became the ones who generally suffered the withering fire of libel suits. Nor did eventual Republican victories lead to spoils until much later, as Duane's career so blatantly revealed. Only a few, such as James J. Wilson and Thomas J. Rogers, found partisan publishing to be a semi-stable steppingstone to public office and political success. Still, between 1807 and 1815, the "political newspaper networks . . . attracted fresh, committed recruits" (p. 348), and by the 1830s newspapermen had become "the most disproportionately represented occupational group in politics besides lawyers" (p. 349).

Pasley's book is now the most comprehensive and important work on the partisan printer-editors of the early republic. Despite its reliance on the foundational work of people like Donald H. Stewart, William David Sloan, Kim Tousley Phillips, Rosalind Remer, and others, whom he generously acknowledges in his footnotes and bibliography, it is the first work students and general readers should consult on the subject. It is not a work that closely examines newspaper contents, and it is not interpretively perfect, insofar as he acknowledges but ignores the many blemishes of his printer-editor heroes. It is a well-written, persuasive book, however, that both contests the belief that early American history was little more than a slow bland evolution toward "modernism" and adds weight to the revived Federalist-Republican debate found in the works of people like David McCullough and Richard N. Rosenfeld.

*University of Lethbridge, Canada*

JAMES D. TAGG

*The Sixty Years' War for the Great Lakes, 1754-1814.* Edited by DAVID CURTIS SKAGGS and LARRY L. NELSON. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2001. xvii, 414p. Illustrations, maps, notes, notes on contributors, index. \$49.95.)

By addressing the struggle among Indians, Americans, Britons, Frenchmen, and Canadians for power and suzerainty over the Great Lakes region, this collection makes a genuine contribution to the field of frontier history. The volume's twenty

essays give the region's history a new coherence; in them we see the importance of the sixty-year struggle for the Great Lakes on the history of northeastern North America.

Following Larry Nelson and David Curtis Skaggs's introduction, Skaggs offers a tone-setting overview for the rest of the essays. He suggests that readers should see the several wars in the Great Lakes regions between 1754 and 1814 as phases of a single conflict that spanned generations and cultures. W. J. Eccles, in his last published work, contended that the first phase of the Sixty Years' War—the Seven Years' War—was as much a struggle between opposing ethical and moral systems as an imperial conflict. The conquest of New France, Eccles wrote, marked the beginning of the decline of gentility in the Western world.

Remaining focused on the Seven Years' War, Charles Brodine suggests that historians have unduly credited Colonel Henry Bouquet as an innovator of irregular tactics for wilderness warfare. In another essay on British war making, Matthew Ward challenges historians' assumption that the British Army purposely introduced infectious diseases to the Indian peoples of the Ohio country. Ward presents a compelling argument that the spread of smallpox, influenza, and other deadly diseases among both Indians and Euro-Americans was the direct, albeit unintended, consequence of British policy.

Michael McDonnell uses a biographical sketch of métis Charles Langlade to illuminate the shifting sands of cross-cultural politics during the Sixty Years' War. Jon Parmenter's essay neatly follows McDonnell's; his explanation of the Iroquois Confederacy's relationship with the Mingoes of Ohio suggests the difficulties of maintaining Iroquois unity in the face of Euro-American encroachments on Indian lands. Keith Widder discusses another group—the Interior French—who found their world turned upside down with the defeat of New France. Widder points out that although British officials distrusted their new subjects, the Interior French provided nearly the exclusive access to the furs that traders desired. Susan Sleeper-Smith's essay on the extended family web of Louis Chevalier, an Interior French patriarch, bolsters Widder's point that the Interior French were indispensable to British governance in the Great Lakes region. She observes that Briton's failure to embrace the Interior French significantly hindered their effort to recruit Indian allies during the American Revolution.

Americans' attitudes toward settlement of the Old Northwest are covered in Eric Hinderaker's and Leonard Sadosky's essays. As Americans poured into the Old Northwest, Hinderaker argues, they created an "Empire of Liberty" based on land ownership; the changed meaning of liberty and power was the harbinger for the removal of the Indians from their lands. In an essay influenced by Hinderaker's earlier writings, Sadosky defines the Gnadenhutzen Massacre of 1782 as a manifestation of frontier rebellion against eastern elites and officers of the Continental army.

The Sixty Year's War often served as a means of cultural encounter. Elizabeth Perkins moves beyond the horrific violence of Gnadenhutten to examine another legacy of the Sixty Years' War: the attempts of both Euro-Americans and Indians to find a common humanness in each other. Robert Cox shows how Quaker missionaries found a common ground with Indians, as both groups were disempowered and marginalized by mainstream society. David Edmunds explores how shared interest and identification led most Shawnees to remain loyal to the United States in the War of 1812. Likewise, E. Jane Errington explains how close cross-cultural interaction between Canadians and Americans following the American Revolution made many Canadians reluctant to take up arms against their American friends, neighbors, and kin. Carl Benn discusses similarly divided loyalties among the Iroquois during the War of 1812. Tragically, the imperative for the Iroquois living in New York to prove their loyalty to the United States drove them to declare war on their Canadian tribesmen.

The changing face of the Great Lakes region is not lost in this collection. Brian Leigh Dunnigan uses a cartographer's approach to show how Detroit changed from an isolated military outpost to a modern town. Douglas Hurt discusses post-Revolutionary War land speculation and plans for development in the Firelands in north-central Ohio. Philip Lord Jr. describes the changes along the Mohawk/Oneida corridor as Americans labored to make it into an avenue over which trade and commerce could flow to the Great Lakes. While Jeff Seiken's essay focuses primarily on American naval policy in respect to the Great Lakes after 1807, we see how prewar internal improvements to the corridor contributed to the American naval victory on Lake Erie. Andrew R. L. Cayton concludes the collection with an essay in which he suggests that the Sixty Years' War has been overshadowed in American historiography because of a sense of shame over its imperialistic designs.

Unlike many collections of essays by different authors, this one is noteworthy for the consistent high quality of its scholarship. Specialists as well as general readers of Great Lakes history will find *The Sixty Years' War* insightful and thought provoking.

*United States Air Force Academy*

JOHN GRENIER

*Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government.* By CATHERINE ALLGOR. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000. xii, 279p. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95.)

This prize-winning book by Catherine Allgor looks at the way the wives and daughters of early national political leaders invented social rituals integral to capital

politics. The newness of both the republic and its capital city created an opportunity to develop social rituals that provided access to government officials, cemented alliances, and facilitated lobbying. In short, women controlled the social grease that kept the wheels of government turning.

Allgor argues that Thomas Jefferson deliberately flaunted protocol while president, in part to limit the role that he had seen women play in European politics. His use of small dinner parties left a social void that allowed James and Dolley Madison to develop their own style of entertainment. Dolley became the center of informal, large-scale weekly events that allowed political rivals and petitioners to mix and conduct business on seemingly apolitical ground. Formal rituals of making social calls developed determined social precedence and became an essential feature of measuring and maintaining influence in Washington. In this world, women such as Margaret Bayard Smith became skilled lobbyists for family and friends seeking positions. They also filled the galleries of the Capitol for important debates.

The arrival in 1817 of John Quincy and Louisa Adams, when John joined President James Monroe's cabinet, destabilized the Washington social scene. Although Elizabeth Monroe had continued the Madison tradition of hosting frequent large social events, she had withdrawn from social calling. Louisa Adams followed suit, provoking the "etiquette wars" of 1819, and making social calls the subject of cabinet meetings. Allgor claims the Adamses deliberately destabilized Washington's social system in order to establish themselves at its center. Their Tuesday night entertainments mustered support for John Quincy Adams as president, and attendance became politicized. Allgor gives much of the credit for John's success to Louisa.

Andrew Jackson used the elegant social life that had propelled Adams to the presidency as a political target. Jackson's election in 1828, and his arrival in Washington as a widower, brought a radical challenge to the established social order. The Eaton affair was more than a source of capital gossip. Cabinet member John Eaton's wife, Margaret, was completely unacceptable to polite Washington society. A Washington native, Peggy Eaton was suspected of immorality and was the daughter of a tavern keeper. Washington women dictated to their husbands that they would not receive her, and the city's social life came to a halt as newcomers were afraid to offend anyone by making social calls. Jackson's attempts to force acceptance of Margaret Eaton led eventually to the dissolution of the cabinet. Ironically, Allgor believes, women's exercise of this power resulted in a long-term decline in their influence.

Allgor puts a new spin on early national politics. If one reads *Parlor Politics* in conjunction with Elizabeth Varon's *We Mean to be Counted: White Women and Politics in Antebellum Virginia* (1998), it is clear that the separation of public and private spheres was incomplete, and women had political maneuvering room. Varon's work suggests a rise in women's political action outside of Washington at

the very time Allgor marks their decline in Washington. Together the books raise questions for new studies at the state and local level.

I have only one note of concern. Given the importance of this book, it is unfortunate that the author has chosen more than once to use secondary works as the source for a quote. (For example see chapter 3, note 8, or chapter 4, note 62.) Nonetheless this is an impressive effort that deserves to be widely read.

Chatham College

JOAN R. GUNDERSEN

*America's Jubilee: How in 1826 a Generation Remembered Fifty Years of Independence.* By ANDREW BURSTEIN. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001. xiv, 361p. Illustrations, maps, notes, index. \$30.)

According to Andrew Burstein's new book, the year 1826 marked "a dramatic generational transition" (p. 6). The Revolution begun a half century before was no longer a living memory for most Americans. Even as they celebrated and honored it, however, they also worked hard to create a more democratic, sentimental, and entrepreneurial society than the revolutionaries had envisioned. *America's Jubilee* recalls this moment when what Burstein calls "the successor generation" (p. 5) both remembered the past and looked forward to the future. In a series of loosely organized but often fascinating portraits, the book examines a variety of famous and not-so-famous individuals, looks at the interactions between the primary characters in national politics, and finally notes the celebrations and discussions that marked the fiftieth anniversary of American independence.

Although it focuses on the year 1826, *America's Jubilee* begins with the Marquis de Lafayette's triumphant journey through the United States two years before. Burstein's account of the celebrations that marked the progress of the Revolution's most famous foreign soldier nicely sets up the theme of looking back as well as forward. William Wirt, attorney general under both James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, is described next. In Burstein's account, Wirt was strongly attached to both the Revolution and the new romantic sentimentalism, a tension that shaped Wirt's celebrated book on Patrick Henry.

The book next moves into the provinces. A chapter on Elisabeth Lanesford Foster examines her 1826 novel *Yorktown: An Historical Romance* and assesses its distance from *The Coquette*, the important 1797 novel written by her mother, Hannah Webster Foster. Burstein then looks at Ruth Henshaw Bascom, a minister's wife in central Massachusetts who prepared silhouettes and kept a diary. Burstein interprets the emphasis on death in Bascom's entries as part of a widespread "culture of bereavement." The Ohio governor, senator, and canal promoter, Ethan Allen Brown, dominates the next chapter, a discussion that ranges through

a number of economic and social issues.

Four linked chapters on national political culture follow. Beginning with President John Quincy Adams, the chapters look at South Carolina representative George McDuffie's attempt to reform the electoral system as well as at a variety of interrelated characters, including Secretary of State Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, John Randolph, and Andrew Jackson, waiting in Tennessee for the presidency that he felt certain he would gain two years later.

Two chapters on the Fourth of July itself follow. The first looks at a number of celebrations commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of independence, most notably the ceremonies in Washington, D.C., where President John Quincy Adams (a former professor of oratory) privately criticized the main address as made up of "loose fragments, without much connection" (p. 234). Adams would only learn several days later that both Thomas Jefferson and his father, the previous President Adams, had died on that very same day, exactly fifty years after the Declaration of Independence had been approved. The book concludes by looking at the discussions and commemorations of their deaths, another series of attempts to recall and assess the Revolution. An epilogue notes the later history of the book's characters.

Burstein's choice of these figures is one of the strongest parts of the book. The volume features a fascinating cast of characters, allowing attention to a rich variety of subjects from John Adams's last words (almost certainly not "Thomas Jefferson survives") to the history of cheese making. Burstein's descriptions furthermore are often deft. Ethan Allen Brown is characterized as "a man on the move in a state on the rise" (p. 107).

These smaller pleasures, however, are not provided with an analytical framework that would give them larger meaning. Burstein suggests at the start that he does not consider an overarching argument his primary goal, writing that he intends instead "to humanize more than to intellectualize" (p. 6). Perhaps because of this focus on specifics and descriptions, the work's broader statements often lack rigor. Is 1826 really the moment of generational transition (other historians have pointed to the War of 1812)? Do many historians these days (if they ever did so) really hold to such a rigid chronological scheme that they will be surprised to read that Jacksonian democracy may already have been flourishing in 1826 (an argument made at the beginning of the work, but hardly mentioned later)? Although these are points worth arguing about, the work spends little time expounding or examining them. It too often settles instead for vague generalizations such as the introduction's none-too-helpful statement that "the Americans of 1826 were, overall, a robust breed, a people of longings" (p. 6).

*America's Jubilee* does not follow, nor does it wish to be judged by, the traditional standards of either monographic history or the grand synthesis. Rather than hurrying to reach a predetermined destination or offering an expansive overview, the book instead offers a stroll with a congenial guide who feels free to

linger over whatever catches his fancy. Scholars who take the tour (especially impatient ones) are unlikely to find themselves altering their views about any major topic. But even they, like the general readers who clearly make up a large part of the book's intended audience, are likely to discover a number of new and intriguing things they had not noticed before.

*Worcester Polytechnic Institute*

STEVEN C. BULLOCK

*Making Houses, Crafting Capitalism: Builders in Philadelphia, 1790–1850.* By DONNA J. RILLING. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001. xii, 261p. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.)

In this thoroughly researched and richly detailed study, Donna J. Rilling examines the changing roles of artisans in antebellum Philadelphia's building trade—both in the production of buildings and in the development of the capitalist economy. Shifting her focus from many urban labor histories, she does not revisit worker struggles and strikes, formation of crafts associations, or ethnic and racial issues. Nor does she reaffirm a picture of inherent conflict between capitalist and artisan-workman. Instead, in a book that is “both a study of labor and a study of business,” her interlocking purposes are to concentrate on “work and productive behavior” rather than episodes of conflict; to depict the “day-to-day” and “career experiences” of journeymen, masters, and entrepreneurs in the building trades; and, perhaps most important, to show how builders themselves defined new roles and methods amid economic and technological change from 1790 to 1850. Artisan often turned capitalist in a dynamic economy.

Although suggesting that her findings can illuminate practices in other cities, Rilling focuses on Philadelphia and, specifically, on its builders' production of the city's thousands of row houses. Built to accommodate explosive population growth, most of these dense rows of contiguous dwellings were erected as speculative ventures by local builders who combined craft skills with various sources of credit and deals struck with other artisans and suppliers. Given the complexity and change both in the building trades and the boom and bust economy, this building type offers a productive field for exploration of many issues.

Six chapters consider building from different angles. “Men on the Make” examines the careers of a few representative builders of varying situations and eras. This chapter is especially engaging in its attention to the human side of the building business, illustrating how luck, health, community and family connections, weather, and timing affected a builder's potential for success or disaster. A chapter on “Financial and Legal Contexts” treats in extensive detail the landholding and credit situations in the city. Especially important was Philadelphia's ancient “ground rent” landholding arrangement, an unusual and complex setup where a purchaser could

essentially buy the use of the land without acquiring the property itself. This practice allowed builders to construct and sell speculative buildings on land they did not own. It thus permitted many more artisans to become capitalist entrepreneurs than was possible in communities where an individual had to buy the land on which to build a house for future sale. Additional chapters detail the practices of material suppliers such as brickmakers and marble cutters; the daily work and roles of carpenters, bricklayers, joiners, and other artisans; and the overall process of building as well as financing houses.

The author presents each topic through myriad examples drawn from hundreds of primary documents including newspapers, censuses, deeds, wills, tax records, court records, and other sources. Scores of different builders' experiences yield a nuanced picture of a complex business. The building trades showed both change and continuity over the generations. Change was often uneven, with old practices persisting alongside new ones.

Rilling pays special attention to the shift from the multi-skilled house carpenter of the late eighteenth century to the increased specialization and early mechanization of the nineteenth century. She begins with the traditional process, in which a master and his journeymen executed every aspect of construction from fabrication of building components to erecting the structure to final finishing. She argues that increasing specialization of workshops in specific productions—such as fabricating window sashes, doors, etc., for sale—preceded mechanization. Artisans welcomed and even introduced efficiencies provided by mechanization rather than regarding them as threats to their status. Many became entrepreneurs in real estate or manufacturing, employing large shops, subcontracting with other workers, and “crafting capitalism.” Artisans in the building trades, far from being pawns in an impersonal process of industrialization and capital expansion, were often leaders and eager participants.

One of the great strengths of the book is the author's exhaustive research in diverse primary sources, and her presentation of examples and quotes from a multitude of builders of different experiences. The main weakness of the book is the other side of the same coin. Sometimes the sheer quantity of detail becomes “too much of a good thing”: the many names of builders who come and go essentially as bit players in the story, and the frequency of quoted material occasionally obscure the narrative thread and direction of analysis. For readers concerned with the ins and outs of Philadelphia, particularly the names of builders and the complexities of the city's financial and landholding systems, all this will surely be a gold mine. But for the more general reader, some judicious pruning of the trees would have illuminated the forest. So, too, given the role of Philadelphia as an influential metropolis for building trades across much of the nation, a broader attention to its interaction with other cities and states would be useful. But this is a local study with a tight focus and a trove of information, and as such it carries out its goals effectively.

*Making Houses* makes a fresh and valuable contribution to the still-small body

of scholarship on the history of building trades in America. In contrast to manufacturing and agriculture, and despite the immense number of people employed and the centrality of construction to the economy and the culture, the topic has received scant attention. Rilling's careful study of a key era in Philadelphia will be a lasting resource for students of that great American city and of the larger national history of work.

North Carolina State Historic  
Preservation Office

CATHERINE W. BISHIR

*Matthew Calbraith Perry: Antebellum Sailor and Diplomat.* By JOHN H. SCHROEDER. (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2001. xx, 326p. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$36.95.)

We stand at a great remove from America's seafaring men and women prior to the Civil War, especially amidst the powerful presentist tyranny that makes any history earlier than 1945 hard to locate. Military and diplomatic history journal editors—and conference program chairs in these disciplines—express the joy of a paleontologist when they discover serious new research on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This is why John Schroeder's new biography of Admiral Matthew C. Perry is doubly welcome. As a work of original research and empathic approach, it takes its place alongside Samuel Eliot Morison's magisterial "*Old Bruin*": *Commodore Matthew C. Perry, 1794–1858* (1967). That tome evoked comments that no more Perry biographies were necessary, but Schroeder refutes this judgment. For one thing, times have changed, considerably. For another, substantial new research has emerged on antebellum naval history, as well as U.S. relations with West Africa, China, and Japan.

The author possesses solid background in the history of American naval expansionism before the Civil War. He also profits from the new social and cultural history. He asks questions of his subject that Morison did not consider, and despite the latter's unsurpassed sense of the sea and wonderful place descriptions, Schroeder's work supersedes the master's for those who wish to comprehend Perry's place in the naval firmament.

And what a place it was! More than any other naval officer of his day, and far more in peacetime than in war, Perry had a hand in intersecting developments on both land and sea that created the modern navy and also served as litmus tests for important directions in American history. He was a Zelig-like character, turning up in West Africa assisting settlements of freed slaves sponsored in the 1830s by the American Colonization Society; protecting commerce and fighting pirates in the Mediterranean; commanding the African Squadron at its creation in 1843. While

on shore he became a notable reformer, seeking to improve methods of recruitment, training, and education to make the navy more effective. Toward this end he helped establish the Naval Lyceum—a focal point for continuing education. He also took great interest in developing a steam navy and navigation aids, and he introduced Paixhans guns, iron hulls, and exploding-shot ordnance.

But the often gruff scion of America's leading naval family—his brother Oliver Hazard Perry was a hero in the war of 1812—owes his eminence to his role in opening Japan to diplomatic (but not commercial) relations in 1854. The story, oft-told, remains compelling. Anticipating President Theodore Roosevelt's policy of wielding a big stick behind soft words, and at the same time foreshadowing the policy of deterrence through his display of U.S. naval power to Japanese officials, Perry benefited from developments outside and within Japan. But Schroeder shows that Perry's imprint remained huge, from beginning to end, encompassing research, overall strategy and tactics, an ability to overcome obstacles, and appreciation for detail. If at times Perry could be arrogant and inflexible, there were worse in the antebellum navy. And high standards and tough-minded devotion to duty got things done, especially when so many jack tars lacked preparation and training.

Above all, Schroeder reminds readers of the varied peacetime functions the navy served as sea power became an important factor in American territorial and oceanic expansion. The list included the expansion as well as the protection of commerce. Naval vessels and officers not only conducted diplomacy and protected American lives, property, and trade—chastising, when necessary, natives and rulers who attacked U.S. citizens; the service also helped identify and open new markets and launched numerous explorations that advanced scientific, geographical, and commercial interests. The navy's myriad charts, surveys, and helpful information on whale migrations also contributed to the republic's global outreach—less appreciated than it should be in an era dominated by territorial expansion. Schroeder's well-researched and gracefully written biography extends our understanding of this outreach and the navy's diverse contributions.

Queen's University, Canada

GEOFFREY S. SMITH

*Best Companions: Letters of Eliza Middleton Fisher and Her Mother, May Hering Middleton, from Charleston, Philadelphia, and Newport, 1839–1846.* Edited by ELIZA COPE HARRISON. (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2001. lii, 532p. Illustrations, maps, genealogical charts, notes, index. \$39.95.)

We owe much to those who made this rich and rewarding volume possible, as it affords an intimate and compelling portrait of the lost world of southern elites

before the Civil War. First and foremost, the two Middleton women whose correspondence comprises the bulk of the book wrote vivid and detailed letters to one another. These women of privilege—from the parlors of their low-country plantations and Charleston townhouses to salons in Philadelphia and Newport where they were equally at home—share a wealth of information about such an extended circle of friends and acquaintances that the reader requires constant assistance to keep up with the overflowing cast of characters. Luckily, editor Eliza Cope Harrison (whose annotation includes sixteen pages of genealogical charts as well as endnotes for each letter) is thorough, but brief.

Harrison's task is formidable; she sheds enough light to keep Middleton stories straight but does not overwhelm with minutiae. At one point, to explain the family's difficulty with an eccentric family member, Harrison confides that he showed up at a spa "in a 'screaming check suit and a velvet shirt'" (p. 225). When this dandy marries an Italian woman, his new wife visits the family's South Carolina estates. Eliza Middleton Fisher is astounded to find that her sister-in-law enjoys her sojourn, even when the woman is exposed to the slaves' cabins which Eliza thinks are "hideous."

The only weakness of Harrison's otherwise compelling observations is that she does not offer enough insight about the two correspondents' views on slavery—the Middleton women's vagueness on the topic of bondage and race in general deserves more attention. Certainly when Eliza writes to her mother from New York "whether in consideration for Ben [a family slave] Papa intends trying coloured Servants this year—Every body here prefers them & thinks them much more respectful and manageable than the Whites . . ." (p. 61), or when she shares a morning with Fanny Kemble discussing slavery (pp. 427–28), we would like to have more of Harrison's commentary.

These women were intellectual and literate. Eliza keeps her mother informed about her reading: "I have finished the first Vol. Of Fanny Calderon's books . . . Mrs. F. reads aloud to us a Swedish Novel, translated by Mary Howitt—called the Neighbours . . ." (p. 298). Mary Middleton writes to her daughter to tell her that her brother "begs [her] not to distress yourself about Texas and above all not to trouble yourself about the interest of the South . . . all the others are equally ardent in the cause of annexation & yr. Father perfectly red hot" (p. 379). The letters are sprinkled with comments on "northern brethren," on sectional conflict, and national political debates. Eliza Fisher, however loyal to her husband's family in Pennsylvania, remains tied to the land of her birth: she writes to her mother with deep concern: "What dreadful accounts I see in the Papers of Famine in the upper parts of S. Carolina, in Spartanburgh particularly—I hope they may be exaggerated . . ." (p. 479). Both of these intelligent women were conversant with issues that divided the nation—they must have had feelings about slavery and its impact on their lives.

Yet the letters selected mainly feature issues which preoccupied the women's

private lives. Newlywed Eliza confided to her mother about delayed luggage at her new home in Philadelphia: "I know that 2 months after the ceremony I had little right to adopt the 'costume de mariée' [bridal dress] but the dates were not particularly referred to" (p. 41). She longs to have her mother under the same roof—at her home in Philadelphia or when they summer together in Newport. This desire became even more acute after Eliza gave birth, when children and the worries of family life were all-consuming for any female head of household. From medical advice ("thank you for proposing to send her some Aconitine" p. 485), to family updates ("she is in rather better spirits but has had a severe attack of rheumatic gout" p. 289), Mary and Eliza's letters were crammed full of the ups and downs of daily life.

Each and every letter reported on health concerns; mother and daughter constantly traded news and remedies. Eliza revealed precautions taken in Philadelphia to ward off deadly fevers ("painting, white washing & burning tar," p. 210), and her mother congratulates her on being vaccinated "& hope you will be spared every other anxiety" (p. 240). This rich and intense correspondence diminishes in frequency and intensity when Mary's husband dies—and at his death, she moves to Philadelphia to be near her daughter. Their reunion is our loss, but we remain in their debt. These best companions shared their lives through letters and Eliza Harrison's terrific compendium brings them to life for twenty-first-century readers.

*The Citadel*

CATHERINE CLINTON

*"If You Love That Lady Don't Marry Her": The Courtship Letters of Sally McDowell and John Miller, 1854-1856.* Edited by THOMAS E. BUCKLEY. Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 2000. xlv, 896p. Illustrations, notes, index. \$29.95.)

From a collection of letters housed in the library of the University of Virginia, Thomas E. Buckley has fashioned a narrative history of the most memorable two years in the lives of its principal players: Sally McDowell, a well-born Virginia divorcee, and Philadelphia clergyman John Miller. While they had met very briefly in 1846, it was their chance reintroduction in 1854 that led to the correspondence that chronicled Miller's dogged and ultimately successful attempts to persuade McDowell to marry him.

If that were all, this record of a courtship would still engage us, for the two parties were well-educated, well-informed, and well-connected to their worlds of family and friends, and each had responsibilities and interests beyond their immediate circles. But there was more: unusual for her time, place, and status,

McDowell was a divorcee, and Miller a prominent and ambitious Presbyterian minister. One signal success of this volume is that it conveys the stresses—and distresses—that such situations inevitably created for McDowell and Miller, although many twenty-first-century readers will find it easier to sympathize with their obvious depth of feeling than to empathize with their peculiar circumstances.

Sally McDowell was the daughter of one governor of Virginia, the niece of another, and the divorced wife of Francis Thomas, a governor of Maryland. She was born into a kinship that included some of the most prominent families of the South, with relationships to families in Virginia, Kentucky, and South Carolina. One would like to have known something of her education, for its quality manifests itself in all her correspondence. As a young woman she spent time in Washington, D.C., with her uncle by marriage, Thomas Hart Benton, senator from Missouri (and father-in-law of John Charles Frémont). There she met Francis Thomas, then a congressman from Maryland. Overcoming her parents' objections (among them, the twenty-year age difference), they married in 1841. The marriage proved disastrous; Thomas was prey to irrational jealousies, and launched unfounded accusations of adultery against his wife, even to the point of publishing his case in a pamphlet of 1845. Today such cases are sadly not uncommon; in the 1840s, it caused a sensation. Although at the time divorces were rare indeed, Sally was able to obtain one, which, unusually, carried with it restoration of her maiden name. Although clearly the injured party, Sally McDowell's reputation was forever changed, and she shunned any reappearance in the society in which she had once moved. However, far from leading a passive life, McDowell took charge of her family's plantation near Lexington, Virginia, and responsibility for the upbringing of her young sister after her parents' deaths.

John Miller, when he entered her life for good, was a widower and the father of two small children. A graduate of Princeton, Miller followed his father into the Presbyterian ministry after a brief postgraduate foray into natural science. By the time he met Sally, he had become minister of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia and had embarked on a major building campaign, resulting in the building still standing, now a landmark known as the West Arch Street Presbyterian Church. It was as a respite from this effort that Miller visited the Shenandoah Valley, reacquainted himself with Sally McDowell whom he had briefly met when she lived as a married woman in Frederick, Maryland, and impulsively proposed to her. Her predictable rejection initiated the correspondence that fills this volume.

It is important to keep one other fact in mind when reading these letters: urbane, well-written, never dull; their authors had each experienced deep and lasting religious conversion; each could be called, from that point onward, evangelical Christians. As such, the question of Sally's divorce was a factor both in her reluctance to commit herself to another lasting relationship and in Miller's problems with his congregation's acceptance of his marriage (in fact, the title of the book is

a direct quote from one of the many pieces of well-meaning advice showered on the couple when their intentions became known). It is interesting that these religious scruples seemed to weigh more heavily on Miller as a practical, rather than a theological, matter. Opposition also arose from members of Sally's own extensive family of brothers and sisters and close "connections."

The volume is a study in perseverance on Miller's part and gradual acceptance on McDowell's. They wrote each other several times a week, an astonishing achievement to those of us who rely too much on e-mail. Along the way, there is much to learn about matters other than their relationship alone, for they discuss travel, reading, the management of farms and of Presbyterian congregations, problems raised by household servants and their supervision, theological rifts within Presbyterianism, and much about their families past and present. Sally, as mistress of a plantation, described a crisis precipitated by an attack on her overseer by a trusted slave; John, his hopes for carving out time and space to devote himself to a planned work of scholarship on ethics. Having initiated the correspondence in August of 1854, one might think that John Miller's happiness was finally achieved with Sally's letter of the next April, confessing that in spite of misgivings, "At last I come to tell you that I am yours . . . Your own S. C. P. McDowell." But their wedding was not to take place until October 1856: every possible obstacle—personal, social, and financial—needed to be surmounted first, and much of the rest of the correspondence deals with these many pressures, including Sally's attempts to calculate her personal monetary assets, and to make decisions about the education of her young sister and ward, and John's decision finally to leave his Philadelphia congregation.

After all this, it is a pleasure to learn that the Millers' marriage was to last for almost forty years. They died within a week of each other, in 1895, in Princeton. (One would like to have learned more about the lives of their surviving children). Miller in later years seems to have become somewhat single-minded and eccentric in his religious outlook, becoming a "character" in Princeton's townscape; but all evidence points to this hard-won union as lastingly firm and good.

Reading such letters is both revealing and challenging: revealing in that we realize how much we can share, effortlessly, in this episode of the emotional landscape of the mid-nineteenth century; and yet, challenging in our suddenly being asked to understand certain scruples particular to that time, place, and milieu. McDowell and Miller emerge as a couple we would like to have known; intelligent, witty, thoughtful. Their letters are a good read, and bring us as close to this engaging pair as the gulf of years will allow. Their editor is to be thanked for his informative introduction, and for his careful, unobtrusive shaping of these letters into a lively and compelling narrative.

*In the Hands of Strangers: Readings on Foreign and Domestic Slave Trading and the Crisis of the Union.* Edited by ROBERT EDGAR CONRAD. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001. xvii, 516p. Illustrations, notes, index. \$34.95.)

This anthology documents the one act that more than any other epitomized the base nature of African slavery—the slave trade. From obscure vignettes, such as a southern court offering a reward for information leading to the arrest of persons guilty of depositing in the local harbor the corpses of slaves who failed to survive the Middle Passage, to better-known materials, among them excerpts from the slave narratives of Charles Ball and John Brown and the decision of Chief Justice Roger Taney in the Dred Scott case, Robert Edgar Conrad conveniently draws together in one volume an extensive amount of materials revealing the social, psychological, and economic impact that the commodification of black men, women, and children had on the United States.

The book is divided into three parts. Part one focuses on the African slave trade and includes documents describing the journey of African captives from their abduction and sale on one side of the Atlantic to their disembarkation in American seaports on the other. Part two looks at the internal United States slave trade. It documents the growing sectional dispute that resulted from the transfer of tens of thousands of slaves from the upper to the lower South. Part three considers some of the controversial issues Northerners and Southerners debated in the years leading up to the American Civil War, among them the westward expansion of slavery into Texas, Kansas, and the territory ceded to the United States following the Mexican-American War, along with the efforts by some Southerners to renew the Atlantic slave trade and various colonization schemes intended to deal with emancipated slaves.

Each section of the book begins with an introductory essay by the editor placing the documents that follow into historical context. Most documents reveal characteristics of the slave trade that are familiar to students and scholars of early America. These include the arbitrary nature of countless trades, the painful psychological and emotional torment slaves endured as a result of every sale, and the various acts of resistance to which they resorted in an effort to protect themselves and their loved ones from sale. But a number of documents shed light on some lesser-known aspects of slave trading, including the primary role Africans played in perpetuating the Atlantic slave trade and dictating the terms of most trades to European traders, the extent of American participation in this trade after its abolition by the United States Congress in 1808, and the rise of, and sectional dispute over, the internal American slave trade in the years leading up to the Civil War.

The strengths of the book are several. First, by juxtaposing tales of savagery on

the high seas with similar brutalities in the internal slave trade, the book reveals the inhumanity that typified both. Second, the documents in section three demonstrate how the proliferation of the internal slave trade and the attempts by some Southerners to revive the Atlantic slave trade in the 1850s widened the sectional divide. The debate over slave trading did not end in 1808, and the documents detailing the slave ship *Wanderer*, which landed roughly four hundred African captives on the Georgia coast in 1858, are especially enlightening.

The book's greatest shortcoming is its failure to address the nature of slave trading as it varied over time, from the fifteenth through the nineteenth century. There are, for example, no descriptions provided of the brutal trade in white indentured servants or the often fatal enslavement of non-Africans, especially Native Americans. African slavery was not an inevitable consequence in America, but there is little evidence of that here. Another flaw worth mentioning is that this anthology loses much of its utility as a reference work because of an inadequate index. Readers searching for specific names, locations, and events will likely search in vain the scanty three-and-a-half-page index provided.

In sum, there is little new here for scholars, as many of these documents are published elsewhere. Nevertheless, the collection is aimed at a wide reading audience and provides an excellent starting point for those looking to acquaint themselves with one of the fundamental processes of American slavery. The work rightfully deserves a place on a shelf alongside other anthologies of the African American experience, such as the volumes of the Freedom and Southern Society Project. It also makes a nice companion piece to the recent, intrepid scholarship on the antebellum slave market by Walter Johnson, as well as some of the pioneering work on the internal slave trade by Frederick Bancroft and the external trade by Elizabeth Donnan and Philip Curtin.

*American University*

MATT CLAVIN

*Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania.* By WILLIAM J. SWITALA. (Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Press, 2001. viii, 216p. Maps, illustrations, bibliography, index. Paper, \$19.95.)

In his monumental work, *The Underground Railroad*, published in 1872 and reprinted in several subsequent editions, black abolitionist William Still offered a compelling rationale for publicizing the history of the Underground Railroad: "The generations are growing in light. Not to know of those who were stronger than shackles, who were pioneers in the grand advance toward freedom; not to know of what characters the race could produce when straightened by circumstances, nor of those small beginnings which ended in triumphant emancipation will, in a short

time, be a reproach." Still's admonition is amply heeded in William J. Switala's *Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania*. Switala, a professor of history at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, focuses primarily on the Underground Railroad's operations in Pennsylvania by meticulously reconstructing the various routes it followed in the different sections of the state. This work serves as an important guide to the operations of the Underground Railroad for two reasons: one, it provides an important contextual dimension for understanding the complexity of antebellum antislavery efforts; and two, it significantly updates and expands on earlier works which served as useful guides but were limited in either scope or emphasis.

The discussion of various escape routes is prefaced with an assessment of the origins of antislavery sentiment in Pennsylvania. Closely linked to the settlement of the area by Quakers and Mennonites, antislavery sentiments developed early. The Pennsylvania Abolition Society was formed in 1775 and the state served as a leader in gradually emancipating its slaves in the aftermath of the American Revolution. Because of its location north of the Mason-Dixon Line and proximity to New York and Canada, Pennsylvania served as a natural haven and as a logical route toward freedom for runaway slaves.

In addition to useful information concerning antislavery activism in the state, Switala also provides basic facts about the operation of the Underground Railroad. This information is varied in scope, ranging from the origins of the term "Underground Railroad" to the various means utilized by slaves to escape slavery. The text opens with the dramatic story of Henry Box Brown, who escaped from his owner by being shipped by crate on the railroad from Richmond to Philadelphia. This event serves to contextualize many of the subsequent issues discussed in the book such as the chapter devoted to the active role of organized religion in antislavery work. It highlights the work of Baptists, Methodists, African Methodist Episcopalians, and Unitarians.

Switala's book is also useful because it updates and revises earlier works on the Underground Railroad, such as Wilbur Siebert's *The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom* (1876); Robert Smedley's *History of the Underground Railroad in Chester and the Neighboring Counties of Pennsylvania* (1883); and Charles Blockson's *The Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania* (1981). Following the lead of his predecessors, Switala employs a fairly linear method to discuss the routes. Throughout the book, he emphasizes the importance of black participation. This was true not only in large cities such as Philadelphia and Pittsburgh but also in smaller cities and rural communities such as Mifflintown, a small town along the central route.

Switala also painstakingly reviewed the routes to make sure earlier descriptions were accurate. Benefiting from the use of more precise maps, he uncovered the existence of stations and conductors omitted from the original record. In each

description of routes, he also adds important information about the social, political, and economic character of the community. For instance, Switala convincingly challenged a map that appeared in Siebert's study of the Underground Railroad. The map fails to show how fugitive slaves proceeded from Uniontown, in western Pennsylvania, to Pittsburgh. By employing information found in Howard Wallace's *Historical Sketch of the Underground Railroad from Uniontown to Pittsburgh*, Switala uncovered several new routes that explain how this journey occurred.

For novice and expert alike, Switala's *Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania* is a treat. Useful for both high schools and college survey classrooms, this book provides a highly accessible introduction to the Underground Railroad with numerous illustrations. Indeed, for "generations growing in light," Switala's book sheds significant light on all facets of the Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania.

Ohio State University

STEPHEN G. HALL

*Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory.* By DAVID W. BLIGHT. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press/Harvard University Press, 2001. 512p. Illustrations, notes, index. \$29.95.)

This impressive book brings together more than a decade's worth of work by various historians on the troubled historical memory of the American Civil War. David Blight's 1989 intellectual biography of Frederick Douglass was seminal to this scholarship, and indeed Douglass is center stage in *Race and Reunion*. But so are Albion Tourgée, William T. Sherman, Thomas Nelson Page, Jefferson Davis, Mildred Lewis Rutherford, and Booker T. Washington, plus thousands of less celebrated memorialists who tended veterans' graves, boycotted *Birth of a Nation*, or joined the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Blight is an exceptionally wide-ranging writer, with interesting things to say on topics as various as the real origins of Memorial Day (hint: it does not lie among Northerners or white people), and Wilbur Siebert's invention of the Underground Railroad. We learn about Oliver Wendell Holmes's "soldier's faith," but also about those who did not share it; about the Lost Cause, but also about John Mosby and other Southern dissenters from it; about monuments to "faithful slaves" that were built, and monuments to black soldiers that were not. This is the synthesis the field of Civil War memory has needed, and it is a triumph.

Blight's main argument is straightforward: between 1865 and 1915, a sentimental version of the war based on white supremacy and manly valor—North and South—crowded out the emancipationist memory of the war championed by Douglass, W. E. B. DuBois, and others. Many ingredients went into this dangerous reunionist brew: loss of Republican political will, horrific racial violence in the South,

widespread fears of populism, white veterans' emphasis on their mutual suffering, Northerners' embrace of plantation fantasy as an escape from their own class and racial troubles. Blight explains the often complex ways in which these elements mingled through the postwar period. His insightful analysis of Ambrose Bierce, for example, points out that Bierce's gruesomely realistic fiction was simultaneously an attack on the sentimental bosh that was helping Northerners forget the war, and a tool of forgetting, since it portrayed Union and Confederate soldiers alike as helpless victims. If the war was nobody's fault (or, as Lost Cause proponents argued by the 1890s, everybody's fault), the road was open to reunion. But it was reunion on Southern terms, and the road led straight over the bodies of black Americans.

Blight's exploration of black Civil War memory makes that tragedy plain in one of the book's strongest chapters. Like white memories, African American approaches to the past were never simple, especially in the years after 1883, when white retreat from the emancipatory narrative became unmistakable. Starting from the general question of how people come to grips with traumatic past events—in this case slavery—Blight shows how black Americans chose from the narrowing memorial options available to them. Some, like Douglass, clung to patriotic recent memory, insisting that black soldiers and emancipation ought to be at the center of national history. Others, like Washington, tried to fold the black American story into the white reunionist one through paeans to industrial education and "the progress of the race." Still others, like Henry McNeal Turner, transcended the awful past (and the increasingly awful present) though a kind of millennialism that saw black suffering as one stage in a long continuum of Christian development. For all of these thinkers loomed difficult choices between patriotism and resistance, celebration and lamentation, integration and segregation. In the age of Jim Crow, Blight observes, African Americans were "a people for whom it was never fully safe to remember or forget."

Though he phrases them gently, Blight offers correctives to some pieces of conventional historians' wisdom. The idea that realistic literary treatments of the Civil War were marginal and slow to appear (first broached by Daniel Aaron in *The Unwritten War*) appears to be at best an overstatement. The even older idea that the Lost Cause was strictly regional and antireunionist, which Gaines Foster and Nina Silber previously worked to demolish, appears to be seriously mistaken. And this is not a book that readers of the *Southern Partisan* will relish, since many cherished ideas of twenty-first-century Confederates—the myth of the "faithful slave," for example—are shown to be utter rubbish.

While *Race and Reunion's* narrative is roughly chronological, its topical chapters on memory among veterans, Southerners, literary figures, blacks, and Reconstruction politicians produce a layering effect, with each new twist gradually obscuring the emancipationist vision. By the time we reach the Gettysburg veterans' reunion of 1913, where both sides were declared to have fought for "the ideal of civil liberty," and where the president of the United States proclaimed the war a "quarrel

forgotten," we know exactly what is being repressed. "[A]s long as we have a politics of race in America," Blight writes, "we will have a politics of Civil War memory." This fine history shows us why.

*Pitzer College, Claremont*

STUART MCCONNELL

*History of the J. G. Brill Company.* By DEBRA BRILL. (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2001. xvi, 264 p. Illustrations, notes, appendixes, bibliography, index. \$49.95.)

Debra Brill's recent book about the J. G. Brill Company, a Philadelphia manufacturer of transportation vehicles, meets the dictionary definition of history as a "continuous, systematic narrative of a particular subject."

In twelve profusely illustrated chapters, the author follows the Brill Company history from its founding as a small horsecar building firm soon after the Civil War through its consistent growth in a rapidly expanding industry until by World War I it had become the fifth largest in its industry in the nation, to its ultimate demise early in World War II.

The book argues that the Brill Company succeeded and became the industry leader through progressive management and careful nurture of a reputation for quality work. There are more than 246 pictures in 215 pages of text. They include a congenial blend of company advertisements, views of the factories, construction drawings, executive portraits, and many vehicle photographs. A family and company chronology appears at the beginning and provides a useful reference guide for the years 1817–1955.

The first Brills in America came to Philadelphia from Germany in 1847. They quickly Anglicized their names to George and Juliana. George Brill found a job with a small company that made railroad cars and horse-drawn street railway coaches. His cabinet-making skills were important in the construction of the essentially wooden vehicles of those days.

In 1868, together with his oldest son, Martin, the ambitious and hard-working immigrant formed his own company, J. G. Brill and Son. After a modest beginning supplying parts to other trolley car manufacturers the new firm grew to be a world leader. The Brill Company and its subsidiaries eventually produced one-third of all trolleys built in the United States.

The author credits this achievement to a corporate culture that stressed skilled craftsmanship, good management of capital, a broad business base that came to include overseas customers, and an inventiveness that kept Brill ahead of its competitors. These priorities, established with the horse and steam cars of the 1870s, continued with the cable cars and trolley cars of the next decade. The author shares

the interesting tidbit that the actual "trolley" of these last-named cars was the little wheel which ran along the overhead wire and provided the direct connection between the wire and the vehicle below.

The Brill Company soon looked for business beyond Philadelphia. The cities of Baltimore and St. Louis were among its early customers. Then came orders for trolleys and railroad cars from Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil. In 1897 the city of Buenos Aires bought more than 350 horsecars.

Brill built what its customers wanted, including street railway baggage and freight cars, ambulance and funeral cars, even private parlor cars, but passenger trolleys were the moneymakers. In addition to the car bodies, the Brill Company also made the "trucks"—groups of axles and two or more pairs of supporting wheels—on which they rode. The manufacture and installation of trucks contributed greatly to the company's success, as Brill could sell them to competitors who made only the car bodies.

Successive company presidents James Rawle, Samuel M. Curwen, and William Woodin maintained the momentum, and the Brill Company continued to prosper. Production peaked in 1912 when the company made more than half of all electric vehicles purchased in the United States.

In the early 1900s, the Brill Company expanded by acquiring competitors in Massachusetts, New York, and Missouri. The new Brill Corporation came to control the original J. G. Brill Company, the American Car and Foundry Company of St. Louis, and seven related firms. Corporate prosperity meant overcoming continual competition from rival car builders, but Brill kept ahead technically and financially, and for years publicized its achievements through the trade paper *Street Railway Journal* before launching its own *Brill Magazine* in 1906.

The author also sprinkles in a few demerits, mentioning, for example, the company's refusal to pay royalties under a license agreement with the St. Louis Car Company, and a period when the firm was "adrift in a sea of confusion."

But it was larger, systematic changes that ultimately brought the company down. Beginning with its first loss in 1929, Brill struggled through the plant closings of the Great Depression, lost a vital bank credit line, and then faced the grim reality of 1940 "when the electric traction industry collapsed and its biggest producer collapsed with it."

This is a well-documented, easy-to-read book about an important Philadelphia corporation. Persons interested in old mass transit vehicles will also enjoy an appendix that lists surviving Brill cars and indicates where to find them in museums from California to Pennsylvania and Texas to Wisconsin, with a few in Australia, Finland, and Portugal.

*Enterprising Images: The Goodridge Brothers, African American Photographers, 1847–1922.* By JOHN VINCENT JEZIERSKI. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000. xv, 346p. Illustrations, notes, index. \$34.95.)

When Bill Ferris, former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities and an inductee of the Blues Hall of Fame, spoke at Carnegie Mellon University on February 5, 2002, he recalled a dialog between Shreve and Quentin, two characters in William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom*. The Canadian, Shreve, asked the Southerner, Quentin, "Tell about the South. What's it like there. What do they do there. Why do they live there. Why do they live at all."

"These questions are important," Ferris explained, because "Place makes you who you are." Ferris went on to praise Pittsburgh artists and historians who work with local history and with oral histories and portraiture because they are the people working in the region to address Shreve's queries.

The impressive work by John Jeziarski, *Enterprising Images*, is precisely the kind of work that Ferris praised. Through detailed research on over a thousand photographs, Jeziarski demonstrates how the work of the Goodridge brothers sheds light on American life, African American history, and changes in photographic technology from 1847 to 1922. These three threads are interwoven throughout the book as Jeziarski reconstructs the Goodridge family business through carefully referenced annotations to each photograph.

Hints of the family connections to the abolitionist movement abound. Lacking diaries or letters, these links are not easily substantiated, but there is enough in the record to intrigue the reader. The Goodridge family had its origins in Baltimore, Maryland, with William C. Goodridge, the son of a slave woman and a white man. Apprenticed to a tanner, William learned the craft and established himself in York, Pennsylvania, in the 1820s. William's wife and business partner was Evalina Wallace Goodridge, and together they established a barbershop and built a series of successful ventures, one of which was a freight business. They also had a number of children, six of whom outlived their mother. After the enactment of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law, the Goodridge barbershop became a stop on the Underground Railroad and William C. Goodridge apparently assisted runaway slaves on their way to Canada. The stories are tantalizing, if difficult to verify, and echo the clandestine abolitionist activities that took place in antebellum Pittsburgh at John Vashon's barbershop.

With the help of his father, eldest son Glenalvin established a portraiture business in 1847, employing the eight-year-old technology of daguerreotypes. He was not the first photographer in York, but he was the first one whose business lasted more than a few months, and his services were in demand. By 1853 his work achieved national as well as local recognition. But after fifteen years of building up a clientele a family scandal forced the business to close in 1862. Glenalvin was

charged with rape, found guilty, and sentenced to five years. He served two years and was eventually pardoned, in part due to questions about the case, but also to the fact that he had contracted tuberculosis while in prison. One of the conditions of his pardon was that he would leave the state. The family subsequently relocated to East Saginaw, Michigan.

Although the move to Michigan is shrouded in mystery and family tragedy, Glenalvin's younger brothers, Wallace and William O. Goodridge, started making photographs in 1863, shortly after the family's relocation. Within a year the brothers established a studio and began to solicit business. Again, their studio thrived; the ups and downs of their business reflect the changing fortunes of the lumber town, the flow of immigrants westward, and the continuing technological innovations in the photographic industry. From the daguerreotypes to albumen images, and from stereographs to Cirkut panoramas, the Goodridge brothers excelled in the latest photographic techniques.

For historians of American life, the work of the Goodridge brothers provides a remarkable archive, especially for York, Pennsylvania, and Saginaw, Michigan. These photographs of place and people help us to understand nineteenth-century life and provide a visual record of life in York before the Civil War and Michigan in the years after. For students of photographic technologies, their work provides a textbook study of the impact of new tools on nineteenth-century photographers and some insight into the highly competitive nature of the profession in its earliest days.

Perhaps the most important legacy left by the Goodridge brothers, however, is the example they set as literate, professional, middle-class African Americans in the antebellum and post-Civil War periods. The trajectory of the Goodridge Brothers photographic studio defied the social prejudices and norms of the time. Glenalvin, Wallace, and William O. Goodridge were artists, inspired by the world around them to produce timeless imagery that offers contemporary viewers a window into the past. It is a past for all Americans. The Goodridges help us to answer Shreve's questions and to understand more about ourselves as citizens and our country as a place.

*Pittsburgh*

STEFFI DOMIKE

*From Paesani to White Ethnics: The Italian Experience in Philadelphia.* By STEFANO LUCONI. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001. x, 264p. Notes, bibliography, index. Paper, \$19.95.)

Traditionally, historical studies of American ethnic communities have focused on the 1830–1930 period, the age of massive immigration. Only recently have historians begun to assess the impact of the Great Depression and World War II

on ethnic minorities, and very few have carried the story beyond 1945. By surveying the history of Philadelphia's Italian Americans from its late-eighteenth-century beginnings to the 1990s, Stefano Luconi provides a valuable long-range perspective often lacking in ethnic community studies.

Prior to the 1880s, most of Philadelphia's small Italian community came from northern Italy, especially Liguria and Piedmont. An influx of immigrants from the *mezzogiorno*, especially Sicily, led to a rapid increase in the city's Italian population; by 1930, 183,000 first- and second-generation Italians comprised about a tenth of Philadelphia's inhabitants. Luconi maintains that the development of an Italian American identity among these newcomers, and its subsequent decline among their descendants, was a slow and halting process, one that in some ways remains incomplete even today. Ethnic identity among the first generation was rooted primarily in regional, provincial, or even village loyalties, rather than an identification with Italy as a nation. Within Italian areas of settlement in the city there were numerous "subnational" enclaves, where people from the same Italian village or province resided. The newcomers spoke many dialects, so these immigrants did not even share a common language. They mistrusted outsiders and tended to rely upon professionals and merchants who had emigrated from the same area in Italy.

According to Luconi, major events such as World War I, the cutoff of most immigration after 1924, and the Great Depression did not weaken ethnic group consciousness so much as transform it. As the flow of immigrants dried up, Philadelphia's Italians began to replace particularistic loyalties with a "national" ethnic identity. Luconi qualifies Lizabeth Cohen's thesis that the Great Depression benefited chain stores at the expense of local businesses and that the growth of radio and consumerism promoted Americanization. There were no large chain stores near Italian neighborhoods in Philadelphia, and ads by retailers like Woolworth's were "conspicuously lacking" in Italian-language newspapers. Small Italian businesses went under in the 1930s, but they often consolidated into larger enterprises that appealed to Italians from many regional backgrounds. Meanwhile, ethnic consciousness was actually strengthened by the development of Italian programming on the local WRAX radio station. Luconi also disagrees with scholars who have stressed the Americanizing experience of cross-ethnic participation in unionization in the 1930s. Most of Philadelphia's unionized Italian workers, he points out, were members of locals composed predominantly (sometimes exclusively) of Italians.

Luconi continues this theme into the 1940s and 50s. The voting patterns of Italian Americans in the city demonstrated considerable ethnic loyalty both at the national level (mostly in response to foreign policy issues) and local level (support for Italian American candidates and opposition to politicians who slandered Italian Americans by stereotyping them as criminals). Only in the wake of the ghetto riots of the 1960s, he claims, did ethnic consciousness among this group begin to decline, as Italian Americans joined with other white ethnic groups to oppose affirmative

action and the construction of black housing projects such as the Whitman Park complex.

For the period prior to World War II, Luconi's "delayed assimilation" thesis has considerable merit. He provides a useful corrective to glib generalizations about the gradual "whitening" of European immigrants in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As late as 1945, there was little evidence of antiblack hostility among Philadelphia Italians, who themselves experienced considerable racial antipathy from other "white" groups, especially the Irish. While Luconi examines many aspects of community life, however, important areas remain largely unexplored. Despite a cursory discussion of immigrant occupations, for example, he makes no attempt to systematically trace Italian American job structure. Beyond the issue of unionization per se, there is evidence that the second generation was beginning to move into white-collar jobs that brought them in contact with non-Italians, not only at work but outside the workplace.

A more glaring omission is the author's failure to assess the degree to which the evolving status of Italian women affected group identity. It may be, of course, that the role of Italian women as "custodians of culture" remained fundamentally unchanged. But that must be demonstrated, not assumed. Luconi's examination of the post-1940 period is inadequate. His discussion of World War II—which most historians see as an important Americanizing experience—is weak, and election data for the late 1940s and 1950s measures only one aspect of ethnic identity. After 1945, increasing levels of formal education among younger Italian Americans and the movement of Italian women into work outside the home may have significantly altered ethnic consciousness. These long-term structural changes probably were more important in shaping a pan-ethnic identity than any reaction against affirmative action.

Despite these limitations, Luconi's study raises important questions about how ethnic groups evolve and adapt over time. This wide-ranging community history should be of interest not only to specialists in Italian American history, but to historians of ethnicity in general.

Temple University

KENNETH L. KUSMER

*Wilson's Ghost: Reducing the Risk of Conflict, Killing, and Catastrophe in the Twenty-First Century.* By ROBERT S. MCNAMARA and JAMES G. BLIGHT. (New York: Public Affairs, 2001. xvi, 270p. Notes, index. \$24.)

If the world does not find a better way to deal with international conflicts, said Woodrow Wilson in 1919, "there will come some time, in the vengeful Providence of God, another war, in which not a few hundred thousand . . . will have to die, but

... many millions. . . ." That gloomy prediction, say Robert McNamara and James Blight, has proved all too accurate. In the bloody twentieth century 160 million people died in wars and other conflicts, while there still drifts over us all the specter of a nuclear war that would almost certainly end civilization. Neither the horrors of a Second World War nor the terrors of nuclear stalemate during the Cold War have led the world to adopt effective measures to stop the killing, and in some ways, the risks of the post-Cold War world are even greater now than before the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Wilson thought he knew how to reduce the danger, and the authors believe he was partly—but only partly—correct. "Wilson's ghost" is the vision of collective international action to mitigate conflict, but it is also the nightmare of national self-determination that has brought so much death and sorrow to the world. What we must have if the twenty-first century is not to be even more catastrophic, McNamara and Blight argue, is an American foreign policy that builds on Wilson's vision but avoids his mistakes.

Their agenda is easy to state but difficult to achieve. It includes two "imperatives": adopting as a major goal of American foreign policy the avoidance of the carnage of the twentieth century; and an absolute commitment on the part of the United States that while it will provide leadership, it will never, except in response to a direct attack, use its power except in collaboration with other nations. More specifically, they call for a serious effort to achieve an empathetic understanding of the needs and desires of Russia and China to reduce their sense of isolation and threat and to begin to build a genuine basis for multilateral cooperation. They contend that civil conflict in failed murderous states represents a threat to world peace that justifies and even requires foreign intervention to reestablish order—provided that such intervention is always collective. And they argue that since nuclear weapons have no military value except as a deterrent, and since proliferation vastly increases the risk that they will be used, it must be American policy to move as rapidly as possible toward a nuclear-weapons-free world.

It may be, McNamara and Blight concede, that the United States is a benevolent hegemon in the post-Cold War world, but other nations do not always believe that, and sooner or later they will, individually and collectively, resist American policies. In the end, American power, great as it is, cannot control the world unilaterally. The only alternative to war and chaos is frustrating and imperfect multilateralism. That was the argument Woodrow Wilson made to the United States Senate in 1919, and it led to the rejection of the Treaty of Versailles. There is little likelihood that a post-9/11 United States will adopt McNamara and Blight's recommendations, although many of the events of recent months bear out their conclusions. As the "smart bombs" blast the caves of terrorists, it is easy to ignore their warning.

This is a passionate, eloquent, and lucidly argued book that uses history to illuminate the present. The problems that Wilson tried to address have not dis-

appeared, and no better solution than his has yet been found. We may for a time delude ourselves that the United States can control the world, but as McNamara and Blight argue, so long as we ignore Wilson's ghost, millions of people will continue to die.

*University of South Carolina*

KENDRICK A. CLEMENTS

*The Eternal Frontier: An Ecological History of North America and Its Peoples.* By TIM FLANNERY. (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2001. 404p. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$27.50.)

"Frontier" and "ecology" are ideas that do not seem to blend well at first taste. A "frontier" conveys the idea of human participation, that there is an edge to the realm of familiarity—the deep frontier of the oceans, and the high frontier of space. We equate the American frontier with frontiersmen, wagons west, and railroads—compelling and ravaging human adventures. But an "eternal" frontier removes its traditional geographic constraints to impose a temporal aspect. It stabilizes the geographic framework and allows the events and participants within it to alter what is meant by the frontier. "Ecology," too, conveys multiple ideas. It is "green," a landscape of water, air, plants, and beasts including humans; and it is "gray," a warped dimension of understanding that takes account of the bits and pieces of a wasted fossil landscape, an attempt to reconstruct a former world trashed by time to sediment.

Flannery's North American history begins with a bang, literally: the crystalizing impact of a huge meteor that demolished the Yucatan 65 million years ago, changing life as it was then known. It is this moment that Flannery takes as the turning point of North American ecology, an improbably random event that (for example) just as improbably populated North America with indigenous horses and hippopotomuses, and, for better or worse, created the modern American economy. This is an ecological version of *Connections* (1978), James Burke's monumental exercise in linkages.

What is unsettling about Flannery's eternal frontier is its eternal perspective. I have not before encountered an author who, in a book-length breath, takes on a sizable segment of paleontology of the Tertiary and Quaternary Periods; then, unstopped by the traditional boundary of continental ice sheets and the arrival of humans, turns headlong into a commentary on the evolving social structure of a "civilized" world as a part of North American ecology, and heads toward the end to such ecological plights as Grand Canyon feral burros and the return of near-extinct California condors to the skies over the canyon. I was, frankly, at once taken aback and taken ahead. I was bewildered by the mix of such "apples and oranges," and

teased by the intriguing train of thought.

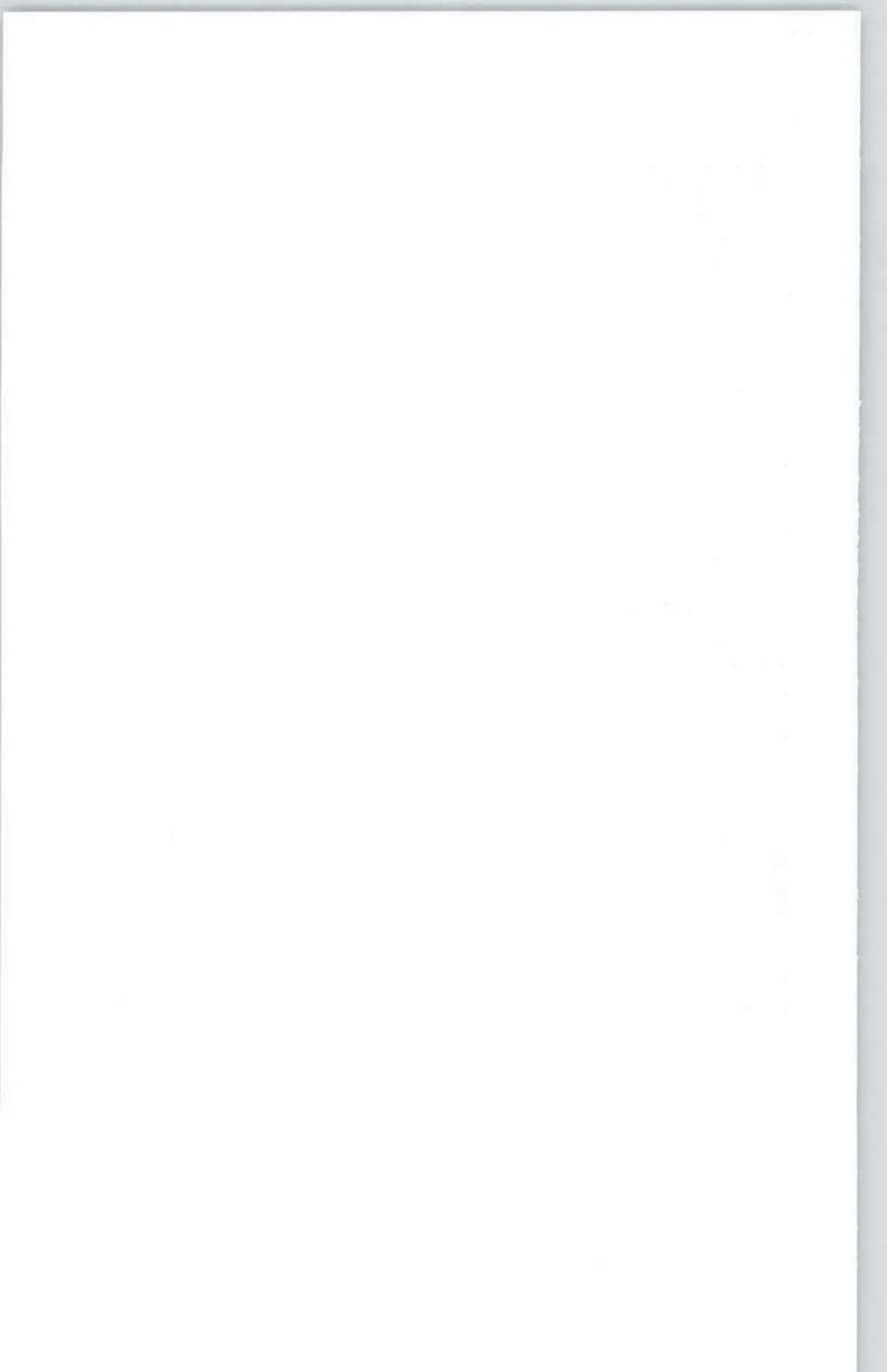
The North American landscape before the arrival of humans is one which hosted diverse kinds of animals and plants; they proliferated in environmental conditions unique to this continent. The whole picture is difficult to comprehend, diffused partly by Flannery's insistent itemization of the fossil zoo in his running narrative. Nor do scientific names have to be italicized genera and species to overwhelm the reader. Here, they turn one's focus to an impressionistic roll-call of conventionalized scientific family names. Of course, few extinct animals have common names—for the very reason that they are no longer commonplace!—so all that is left are the names given them by scientists in nineteenth-century fits of brilliance. But the bewildering bestiary here is accompanied by just a few meager illustrations, leaving us to wonder what these animals really were, and to pass over the words on a longer way to the point.

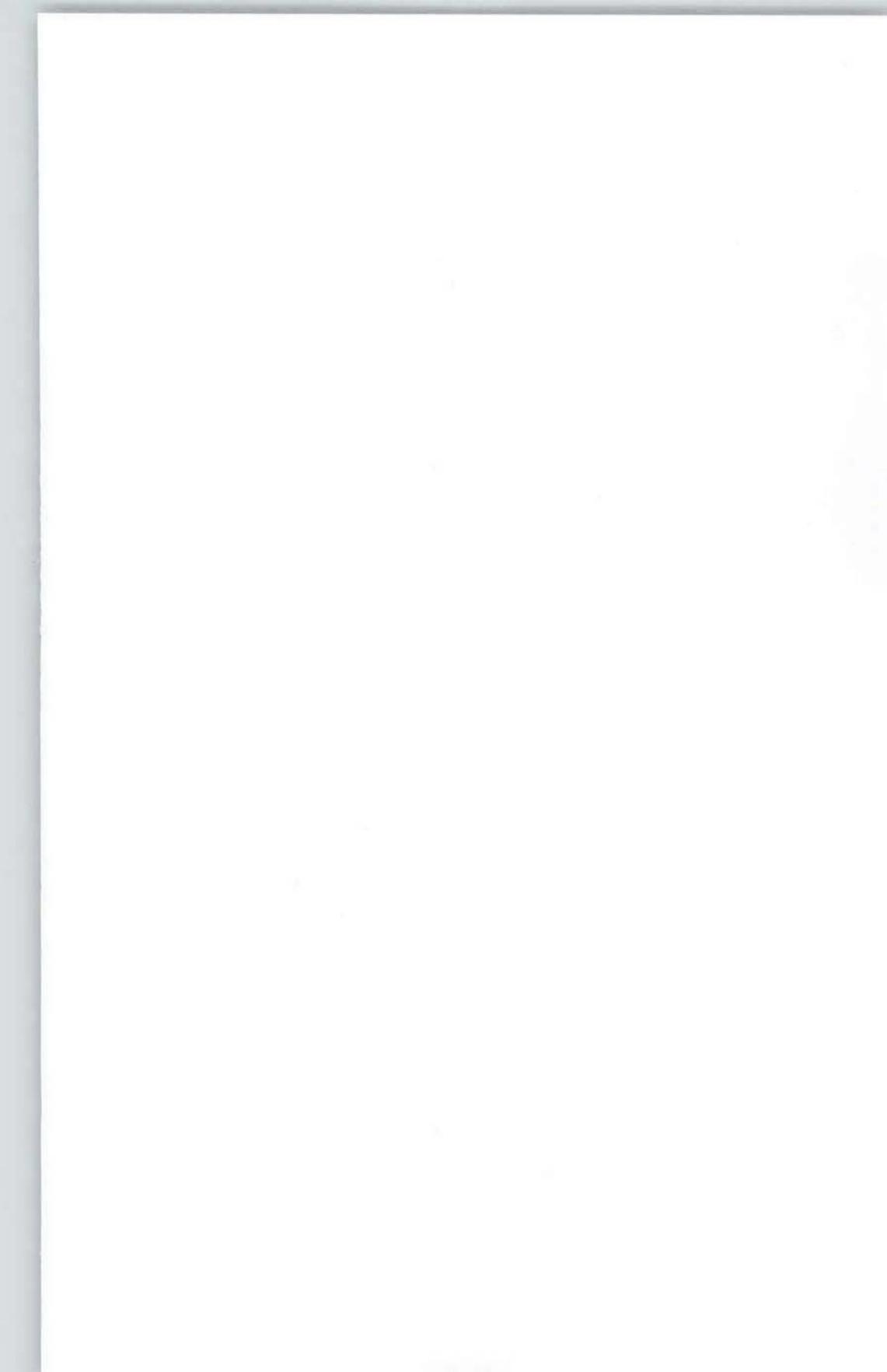
Establishing the time of human arrivals in North America is, and may forever be, a fitful academic pursuit. But arrive they did, on foot for whatever reasons, and in ships at more certain dates and for very specific reasons, changing the environmental stage as effectively as did the Chicxulub meteor. The history of geologic and climatic changes that carved out a physical geography for North America offered man and beast a landscape of geographic funnels and obstacles, and ecologically and geologically founded resources inspired the best and worst in human nature. North America was transformed from a seemingly well-oiled machine of nature responsive to natural calamity, to a coal-fired, steam-powered omnibus filled with humans out to set and see frontiers and make it worth their while. Flannery's argument is that this is unique to North America, at least since the close of the Cretaceous Period.

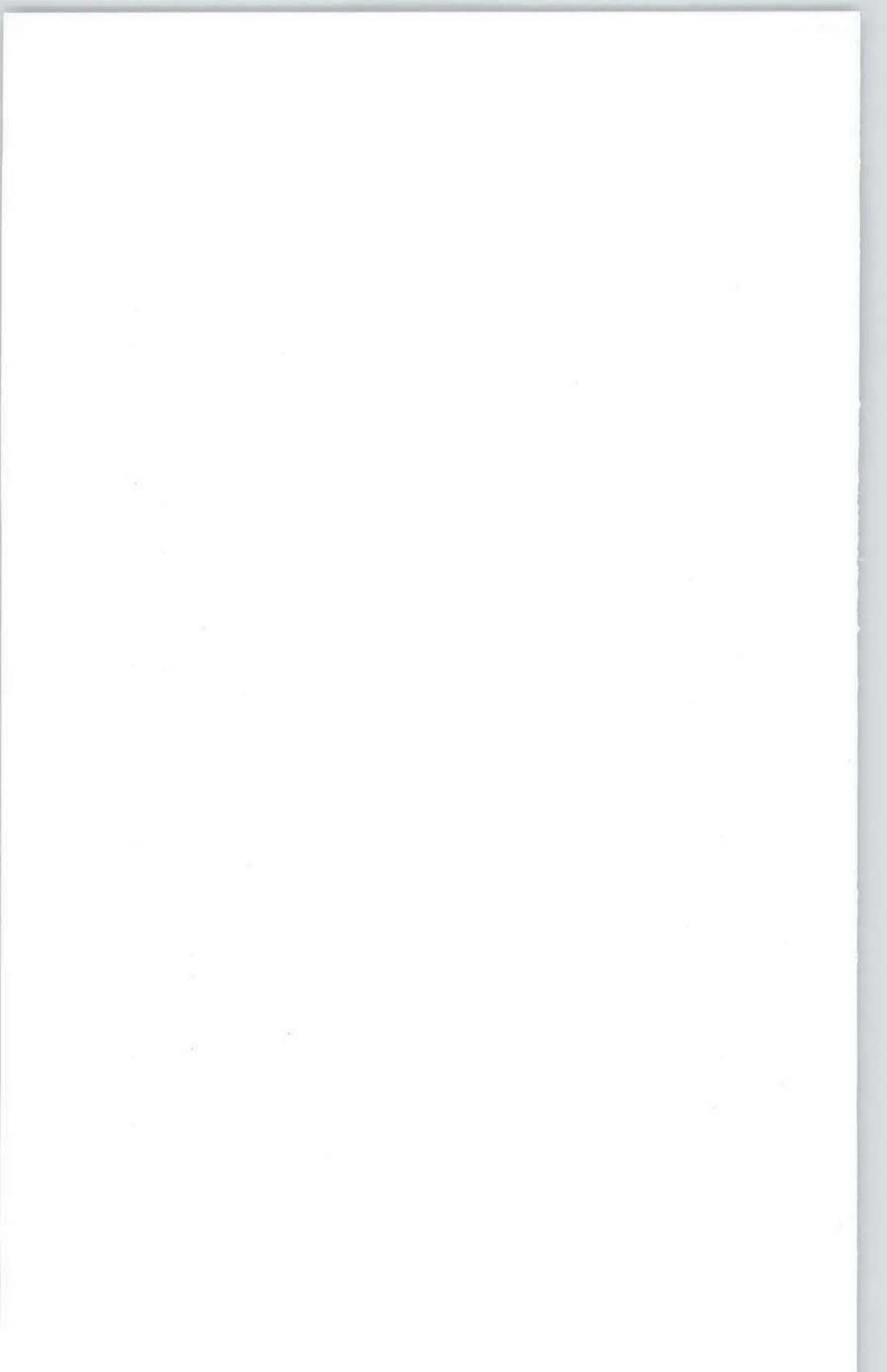
As with any story, the whole story is much more complex; and it demands more attention from the reader than does a casual reading. A good story is one that has some improbability in it, with plot twists and surprise associations. This is not the American epic, but the delight here is that it is an American *Connections*. If one is game to ignore several distractions—the rattle of a paleontological *Who Was Who*; the topical leap from a populated North America to a peopled North America, with its very “un-natural” banter of human social and civil graces and complaints; and read the text as a series of associations rather than a continuing narrative—then North America is transformed into a fun house of continental proportions. If in the end one grasps that there is a connection between Clovis hunters and Cleveland Amory's hunt for survival, you've gotten the point of this book.

*Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia*

EARLE E. SPAMER







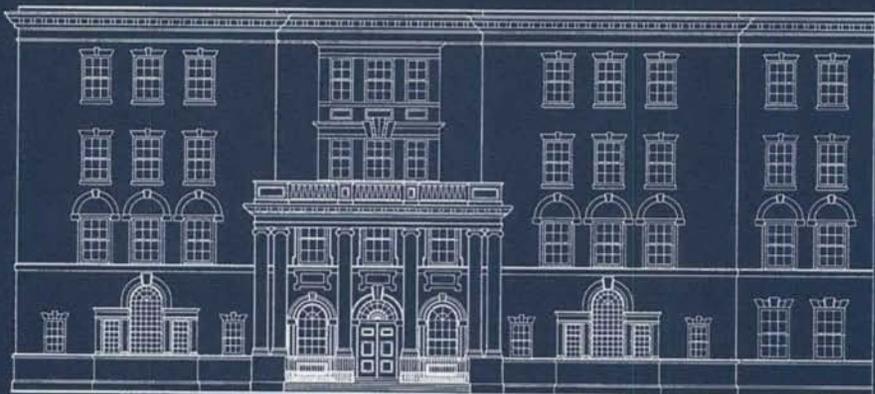
## 2003 Virginia Historical Society Research Fellowship Program

To promote the interpretation of Virginia history and access to its collections, the Virginia Historical Society offers fellowships of up to four weeks a year. Awards include the Andrew W. Mellon Research Fellowships, the Betty Sams Christian Fellowships in business history, the Frances Lewis Fellowships in women's studies, and the Reese Fellowships in American Bibliography and the History of the Book in the Americas. We make awards on the basis of the applicants' scholarly qualifications, the merits of their proposals, and the appropriateness of their topics, as demonstrated by citation to specific sources in our collections.

We award a few grants (\$150 per week) for mileage to commuting researchers. However, the majority of awards (\$500 per week) go to those who live farther away. We expect recipients to work on a regular basis in our reading room during the period of their award. We welcome applications from doctoral candidates. Undergraduates, master's students, and graduate students not yet admitted to Ph.D. candidacy are not eligible.

Applicants should send an original and three copies of the following: a cover letter, c.v., two letters of recommendation (sent separately), and a description of their research project not longer than two double-spaced pages that also states the length of the award requested. The deadline for applications is 1 February 2003; awards will be announced by 15 March 2003. The committee will make partial awards and will consider reapplications in following years up to these limits: for doctoral candidates, a maximum of three weeks in a five-year period; for faculty or independent scholars, a maximum of six weeks in a five-year period.

Send applications to: Dr. Nelson D. Lankford, Chairman, Research Fellowship Committee, Virginia Historical Society, 428 N. Boulevard, Richmond, VA 23220; telephone 804-342-9672; fax 804-355-2399; [nlankford@vahistorical.org](mailto:nlankford@vahistorical.org). <http://www.vahistorical.org>



The Historical  
Society of  
Pennsylvania

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1300 Locust Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107-5699  
Phone: 215-732-6200 • Fax: 215-732-2680  
Website: [www.hsp.org](http://www.hsp.org)