

make up the lives of Bethlehem's inhabitants, lives punctuated by the worship of a Christ of the Passion, a Christ who is the Eternal Bridegroom, a Christ whose blood and body are celebrated in verse, song, art, and service. After reading Atwood's work, the picture of the Moravians of Bethlehem must be fundamentally changed into one that is informed by the best kind of research in the field of church history.

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*Benjamin Franklin's Vision of American Community: A Study in Rhetorical Iconology.* By LESTER C. OLSON. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004. xviii, 323p. Illustrations, notes, indices. \$49.95.)

*The Papers of Benjamin Franklin.* Vol. 37, *March 16 through August 15, 1782.* Edited by ELLEN R. COHN ET AL. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004. lxii, 896p. Illustrations, notes, index. \$90.)

The heart of Lester C. Olson's well-researched study of Benjamin Franklin's imagery is a study of Franklin's four best-known pictorial creations: the "JOIN, or DIE" snake cartoon (1754); the engraved image of the dismembered Britannia, "MAGNA Britannia: her Colonies REDUC'd," (late 1765 or early 1766); the thirteen interlinked chains of "WE ARE ONE," on the paper currency (1776); and the *Libertas Americana* medal (1782–83). Besides an introduction to emblems and symbols, Olson includes a chapter on "Franklin's Earliest Commentary Envisioning Colony Union" and two concluding chapters, one on "Franklin's Verbal Images Representing British America" and another on "National Character and the Great Seal of the United States."

Writing on the snake cartoon, the most famous cartoon in American political history, Olson breaks new ground in the section "British Audiences for 'JOIN, or DIE,' 1754" (pp. 46–53), where he proves that British officials in London read references to the snake cartoon in dispatches from America and that some saw the cartoon in one or more colonial newspapers. The next section, "'JOIN, or DIE' during the Stamp Act Controversy, 1765–66" (pp. 53–68) is also groundbreaking and thorough.

I do not fault Olson for not citing an earlier work by an authority on the symbols of America, E. McClung Fleming's "Seeing Snakes in the American Arts," for it appeared in an obscure place (*Delaware Antiques Show Catalogue 1969*, pp. 75–85 [odd pages only]), but it contains useful information supplementing Olson, and therefore I mention it. I admire Olson's research and scholarship in the chapter devoted to the *Libertas Americana* medal, especially the three sections on its distribution in France, the United States, and its use in international

diplomacy (pp. 158–93).

Olson's primary thesis is that the four symbols chart Franklin's change from an American Whig who believed in "Britain's constitutional monarchy" to a rebel who believed in "republicanism as a form of government in the United States" (p. 17). There is no doubt that Franklin was an American Whig from the time of his writing for the *New-England Courant* in 1721 to at least 1754 and that he believed in a republican government by 1783, but I am not sure that Franklin unreservedly believed in a "constitutional monarchy" before the Revolution, nor am I convinced that either of the earlier two symbols show that he did. Franklin has numerous satirical references to monarchs and the idea of aristocracy in *Poor Richard* in the 1730s, 1740s, and 1750s, as well as in various other writings before 1773.

Franklin's 1751 editorial comparing the transportation of criminals to America to dumping "Jakes on our Tables" and his satire a month later advocating exchanging "Rattlesnakes for Felons" were the bitterest anti-English satires before 1773. If the snake cartoon of 1754 is read in light of the editorial and satire of three years earlier, then it could be seen as a threat prefiguring the "Don't Tread on Me" message so common as a symbol of America during the Revolution. To be sure, in 1754 the symbol primarily called for unity of the colonies in order to fight the French and Indians, though the thought probably occurred to Franklin that if they were unified, perhaps they could also (as the English feared) defy England. Olson, however, is in the good company of Verner S. Crane, Esmond Wright, and others in seeing a consistent development in Franklin's political thinking during the prerevolutionary years. I am in the minority in finding that Franklin shifted back and forth, sometimes being more bitter and anti-English than any of his contemporaries and sometimes (though only when writing personal letters to English friends or writing propaganda for an English audience) sounding like an Anglophile and a lover of the British monarch.

Volume 37 of *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin* contains a key political document and a major satire, plus numerous splendid letters—all faithfully edited and thoroughly annotated. The key political document is "Journal of the Peace Negotiation, May 9 [–July 1], 1782." One laments that Franklin did not continue it through the negotiations, but we are grateful for the journal we have. It presented an editing problem that was wisely solved. The editors print the actual "Journal" as one piece (pp. 291–347), including brief summaries of the various letters and documents it refers to. Then in the appropriate chronological order, they print in full the actual letters and documents. This way, we have the journal with Franklin's continuous commentary and the actual papers in their chronological order. These pieces of Franklin's superb diplomacy are presented in the most revealing way possible.

The major literary work of the period is Franklin's *Supplement to the Boston Independent Chronicle*. The first edition of the pretended supplement was printed

on only one side. Under the date "Boston, March 11," it contained in its opening and closing a supposed extract of a letter from "Captain Gerrish" of Albany. That framework enclosed a letter from "James Craufurd," dated "Teoga, Jan 3d, 1782," to "Colonel Haldimand, Governor of Canada," describing the contents of eight bundles of scalps of Americans that Craufurd was sending for the reward offered by the British. Captain Gerrish had captured the wagon with the scalps and the letter and sent them on to Boston. The whole comprises a grisly, savage satire and hoax, of the kind that only Jonathan Swift and Franklin, in the eighteenth century, were capable of. The satire was considered so barbaric that no English newspaper reprinted it.

The second edition of the supplement contained an additional purported letter from John Paul Jones to Sir Joseph Yorke, mocking Yorke for calling Jones a "pirate." Jones/Franklin proceeded to itemize the insults committed by George III (i.e., the English authorities) against various peoples and nations, especially against the Americans, and compared them to the English tradition of rights and Whiggish principles that Sir Joseph Yorke's father had espoused. After reading the letter reprinted in an English newspaper, the shrewd English litterateur Horace Walpole immediately guessed that "Dr. Franklin himself, I should think, was the author. It is certainly written by a first-rate pen, and not by a common man-of-war."

Extraordinary Franklin letters in this volume include that to John Thornton, May 8, on William Cowper's fine poetry; to Joseph Priestley, June 7, giving an apologue of a young angel visiting earth and judging it to be the true hell; to Bishop Jonathan Shipley, June 10, recalling the "sweet Conversation & Company I once enjoy'd at Twyford"; and to Richard Price, June 13, with its reflections on the differences between oratory in classical times and the printed word in the eighteenth century.

Editorial annotations throughout the volume are exemplary. I even think that in some cases I recognize the individual editor responsible, partially because of her or his special expertise. Thus I judge Ellen Cohn to be the editor mainly responsible for the expert note on the type Franklin used in printing the passport for William Rawle (p. 283 n. 1) and Jonathan Dull to be primarily responsible for annotations on the Earl of Shelburn's letter to Franklin, April 6 (pp. 102–4). Each editor named on the title page knows more about Franklin during this period of his life than anyone has ever known—except, possibly, Franklin.

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