

control, and, for at least some of the rebels, take a stab at a new revolution, a "New Jerusalem" as Herman Husband called it, a new republic called "Westsylvania." While academics may wish for more Pennsylvania context, a direct engagement with the new historiography of rural protest, and scholarly endnotes, the general public could not wish for a better book on the Whiskey Rebellion.

*University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown*

PAUL DOUGLAS NEWMAN

*America's Joan of Arc: The Life of Anna Elizabeth Dickinson.* By J. MATTHEW GALLMAN. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. vii, 262 pp. Illustrations, bibliographic essay, notes, index. \$30.)

Contemporaries likened Philadelphia's Anna Dickinson to Joan of Arc when she rocketed to fame as a spellbinding orator during the Civil War. Dickinson peaked early, perhaps as early as 1864, the year she addressed Congress and President Lincoln in the Capitol, at age twenty-one. She rode her fame into the postwar years as a well-paid campaigner for the Republican Party and popular lecturer. For fifteen years, Dickinson was arguably the best-known woman in the country—a voice against slavery, champion of black suffrage, successful public woman, and world-class flirt. When her popularity waned in the 1870s, Dickinson turned to the stage as playwright and actress with minimal success. She lingered on at the fringes of celebrity for five more decades.

Matthew Gallman provides the first biography of this curious, troubled woman since Giraud Chester's *Embattled Maiden* in 1951. Mining the rich lode of Dickinson's papers at the Library of Congress, he traces her career and the tangled relationships with accomplished women and powerful men who fell in love with her. With fondness for his subject, Gallman delivers a compact, enjoyable book.

Gallman frames his story with a tale of injustice meted out to Dickinson by woman suffragists who wrote her out of history. This is a stretch. He shows that she took counsel from those who advised against risking her popularity on the controversial cause. Only so long as Radical Republicans maintained a voice for woman suffrage inside the party did Dickinson pour energy into its promotion. Moreover, the authors of the maligned *History of Woman Suffrage* took pains to credit Dickinson for her work during Reconstruction and placed her image on the frontispiece of the appropriate volume.

By applying the image of the martyred saint to Dickinson's whole life, Gallman limits his vision of her. While he seeks the stake for burning, readers meet a tragic figure whose fall has less to do with persecution than with fatal flaws. Failure brought out the worst in her. Angry and short of money, she sab-

otaged her own attempts to return to the limelight. Disappointed by the fleeting currency of fame, she felt entitled to perpetual payment for her aid to the war and the Republicans. More than once she blackmailed prominent men to pay her bills. "[T]hought *centred on one's self* is sure to bring that one to grief sooner or later," said Susan B. Anthony in 1891, "& with poor Anna it has been sooner."

One of the great mysteries of Dickinson's later life is the remarkable loyalty she elicited from very busy people, loyalty that survived her outrageous treatment of those who tried to help her. To them she stood for something worth protecting, even at her most unpleasant. Dickinson was not an original thinker, nor a singular example of economic independence. In her prime, she had clothed in her glamor the ideas of reformers who spent the postwar years rethinking the heroines of history, the family economy, women's need for rewarding work, and the concept of universal rights. For hundreds of women practicing medicine, setting type, or breaking into journalism, she existed in the imagination as the archetypal new single woman who crafted a public, novel, and self-supporting life. None of them could afford to let the aging Anna Dickinson crash and burn, a sign of their own vulnerability. Her importance lies in that community.

*Rutgers University*

ANN D. GORDON

*Robber Baron: The Life of Charles Tyson Yerkes.* By JOHN FRANCH. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006. 374 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$45.)

When author John Franch needed a vivid example for the dictionary definition of "Robber Baron," he selected an unscrupulous plutocrat in the person of the influential and wealthy John Tyson Yerkes. The nineteenth-century street-railway czar gained influence, wealth, and power, but his corporate chicanery and personal tawdriness tarnished the hoped-for favorable impression he desperately sought to create as his legacy. Yerkes, a contemporary of Andrew Carnegie, J. P. Morgan, and John D. Rockefeller, has remained an obscure figure of Gilded Age, business America. This biographer believes he deserves greater visibility. Freelance writer Franch presents the controversial but colorful Tyson in impressive detail, obviously reflective of persistent, thorough research.

The book tells the story of a man whose family came to America from Germany circa 1700. In a sense, it may be called a tale of three cities: Philadelphia, Chicago, and London. Yerkes, born 1837 in the Quaker City, graduated from high school, and started work as a bookkeeper in 1854. Within five years he formed his first company.

Franch describes this ambitious maverick financial tyro as having a bewitching personality and possessing almost hypnotic powers. He could disarm men's vigilance and influence them against their better judgment. Yerkes achieved early