

personal lives and public personas. Yet inevitably, not every element of the narrative lives up to this exciting challenge, and several key constructs are too little developed to be fully convincing. In his treatment of science, for example, Chapin seems to consider Kane's search for the Open Polar Sea as a form of "pseudo-science," an assertion that is both problematic and anachronistic, and classifying Kane as an "Humboldtian" is accurate only in the comparatively banal sense of having far-flung scientific interests, but not in the more important sense of engaging in grand cosmic theorizing. Chapin's discussion of Spiritualism fares even less well. In contending that Spiritualism was largely about entertainment and practice, rather than ideas, Chapin is too ready to discount its importance as a set of ideas and social practices.

More fundamentally, the "Culture of Curiosity" that Chapin describes is ill constrained, and the mixture of science and entertainment at its core would seem no less applicable to the late eighteenth century or, for that matter, the late twentieth. Still more central to his argument is Kane's ambivalence over his fame that results from his participation in this culture, an observation that is not without ambiguity. As Mark Sawin has shown in an excellent dissertation, Kane had been a skillful self-promoter since at least the time of the Mexican War (to which Chapin devotes too little commentary) in ways that had little to do with being an entrepreneur of the exotic. Perhaps, though, these quibbles are a mark of Chapin's ultimate success: his book opens avenues for research and commentary that will engage scholars for some time to come.

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*Union Jacks: Yankee Sailors in the Civil War.* By MICHAEL J. BENNETT. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. xv, 337p. Illustrations, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95.)

American naval life has always been a culture apart, and in *Union Jacks* Michael Bennett fully explores the nuances of that culture as it participated in the Civil War. Bennett describes characteristics that identified a Yankee sailor, reveal that life in the Union Navy proved as much of a challenge as fighting the Confederates, and examines the frequently contentious relationship between sailors and officers. The result is a thorough social history of a little documented and underappreciated facet of the Civil War.

Bennett provides a vivid description of the life the average sailor lived, and the culture that sailors created. Sailors lived a hard life, and the work attracted rough men; they were tough, profane, and prone to drink. Because the sailors came from the margins of society, their attitudes regarding the war defied the societal norm, becoming, as Bennett labels them in chapter 1, "dissenters from the American

mood." Instead of the usual reasons for enlistment that attracted Union soldiers (duty, country, or abolitionism), sailors enlisted for secure work, steady wages, or to escape the draft. Sailors rejected the patriotic overtures of the government and resisted efforts by the Christian Commission to reform them into wholesome souls. Their primary motivations remained the pursuit of prize money and liquor, especially after the end of the whiskey ration in 1862.

As participants in a distinct culture, sailors refused to meet the standards set by others that did not meet their own needs. Moreover, sailors refused to adapt their culture to the influx of new wartime recruits. Instead, veteran sailors expected the recruits to accept the established sailor culture, and soon recruits caused the same problems that experienced sailors inflicted upon their officers. Insubordination, ranging from constantly questioning order to outright mutiny, remained a constant problem for commanding officers. Sailors justified their intransigence as a defense of their rights as citizens or as a rejection of the social superiority that an officer's rank conferred. Fighting, gambling, and petty crimes often disrupted the ship's routine, bringing summary punishments that only further strained the sailor-officer relationship. The main cause of many problems was simple boredom, and sailors welcomed any effort to break the monotony of blockade duty. The introduction of African American recruits, which added a negative racial dimension to the already tense atmosphere aboard many ships, caused other problems.

Although Bennett's description of naval life is perhaps too vivid (one wonders how anything got done if discipline was as bad as he described it), *Union Jacks* is an important contribution to the social history of the Civil War. As a snapshot of a unique segment of nineteenth-century America, the book takes readers into a long past rough and tumble life. This glimpse into the life of the average sailor is a worthy companion to the expanding library of books dealing with the common soldier of the Civil War.

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*Building on the Gospel Foundation: The Mennonites of Franklin County, Pennsylvania, and Washington County, Maryland, 1730–1970.* By EDSSEL BURDGE JR. and SAMUEL L. HORST. (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2004. 927p. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.99.)

The interpretive thrust of *Building on the Gospel Foundation* explores the arrival of Mennonites, primarily by way of Lancaster County, to Franklin County, Pennsylvania, and Washington County, Maryland, and the gradual emergence of three distinct streams of Mennonites by the 1970s: old order, conservative, and evangelical. The development of these three streams, however,