

supported the patriot cause.

Carlisle did not experience the same kind of economic distress as other communities following the war, as local cloth and grain production made the town a central site of exchange in the region. All was not quiet in the community, however; ethnic and religious tensions divided the town, as did political unrest over the Constitution (which led to riots between Federalists and Antifederalists). The area's response to the whiskey tax further symbolized the hostility toward the establishment that had been manifested against the proprietary government in the 1750s.

Ridner's study of Carlisle is quite masterful in its use of primary and secondary sources to tell the story of the first fifty years of Carlisle's history. She has effectively mined manuscript collections, county, provincial, and state records, and college archives to tell the story of a town undergoing a transformation during the second half of the eighteenth century from a backwoods settlement to a community at the crossroads of the early American frontier. Contemporary illustrations and photographs of period structures enhance the text, a highly readable study of one of the most significant interior towns in early America.

Mansfield University

KAREN GUENTHER

The Ordeal of Thomas Barton: Anglican Missionary in the Pennsylvania Backcountry, 1755–1780. By JAMES P. MYERS JR. (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2010. 278 pp. Illustrations, appendices, notes, selected bibliography, index. \$52.50.)

James P. Myers Jr. has written an engrossing account integrating biography and exegesis in *The Ordeal of Thomas Barton*. That said, Myers flirts with hagiography as he argues for a reform of Barton's image from that of a possibly unprincipled young man, naive plagiarist, and propagandist to that of a well-respected minister and ultimately victim—a martyr, as Myers puts it, to the Revolution. Another key component of Myers's argument is Barton's significance as an agent of church and empire on the frontier. Barton was essentially “a proprietary placeman” (37), and the crises of the 1750s to 1770s put such middlemen in extremely uncomfortable, even ethically untenable, positions. As such an establishment agent, Barton appears at times to have been simply a tool. Myers concludes, for instance, that Barton, despite his sympathetic portrayals of Native Americans and stated desire for missionary work among them, may have written a pro-Paxton Boys screed because pushed to do so by proprietary and Church of England interests. Barton compromised his principals at that time, but according to Myers he redeemed himself in his own eyes—and those of his chronicler—by refusing to compromise his principles during the Revolution (115).

The chapter on whether or not Barton wrote the 1764 tract *The Conduct of the Paxton-Men* particularly illuminates the strengths and weaknesses of Myers's analysis. As Myers takes the reader through the process by which he determined authorship, he provides an engaging exposition and spirited defense of the literary critic as historical detective. But when he moves from the evidence of authorship to explanations of why Barton may have written what he did, Myers overdoes the psychological analysis, though his points about possible political coercion and material concerns are valid. Myers confirms the latter concerns in the next chapter when he shows Barton's desire for Sir William Johnson's patronage by deconstructing their mutual correspondence.

Barton served and directed spiritual and secular plans in the westernmost counties for over twenty years after 1755, executing the policies of the church, Crown, and Penn proprietorship. He was also a chronicler of the frontier as he tried to stabilize it. However, Barton—a person who had labored for conformity in church and state—was deemed a dangerous nonconformist by the revolutionaries. Although like many Church of England missionaries, he tried to disengage from the escalating crisis, he faced only increasing isolation and hostility and in the end exile and death in New York. Myers honors Barton and the other rural Pennsylvania clergy who “did not capitulate before appeals to expediency” as did their Philadelphia brethren such as William Smith (137). In doing so he rescues these Loyalists from obscurity.

Myers also offers eight appendices, running sixty-six pages, which include transcriptions of Barton's journal when he accompanied the Forbes Expedition in 1758, reports to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and two petitions to Pennsylvania's revolutionary government. The inclusion of these documents and Myers's highly readable text make *The Ordeal of Thomas Barton* a valuable work both for the insight that it provides on a middling official caught in challenging events and for the documents valuable to students and scholars.

Duquesne University

HOLLY A. MAYER

David Franks: Colonial Merchant. By MARK ABBOTT STERN. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010. 263 pp. Appendices, notes, bibliography. \$60.)

David Franks (1720–1793) was one of Philadelphia's earliest Jewish residents and among the region's premier merchants. From the time of the French and Indian War until his death, much of his business activity coincided with political events. Despite Franks's central role in commerce in Pennsylvania, his membership in Philadelphia's elite circles, and his family's prominence in trans-Atlantic trade, no full-length treatment of his life had previously been published. The rea-