

with adequate general perspective frequently lack full scholarship, while scholarly writers often lack both perspective and biographical art. As an illustration chapters 16, 17 and 18 have the appearance of addenda.

Excellent authorship is sometimes featured by sins of omission rather than of commission. The treatment of the Molly Maguires is more apologetic than explanatory. The early coal industry and the rise of trade unionism in general are virtually neglected. The later fate of coal mining as affected by technology and by competition from oil and gas is hardly suggested. Annotations in the Index are mainly confined to major items.

The merits of this work greatly outweigh its demerits. All prices today are inflated, but this volume, regardless of its inferior paper and typography, will be found by many to be worth the price indicated. It is a contribution to American historical scholarship and understanding.

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ALFRED P. JAMES

Early American Homes for Today. A Treasury of Decorative Details and Restoration Procedures. By HERBERT WHEATON CONGDON. (Rutland, Vermont: The Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1963. Pp. 236, illustrations, glossary, index. \$12.50.)

The dust jacket of this handsomely produced book consists of a single photographic spread of a pleasant New England house set among lawns and trees; the picture thus embracing the printed pages is so potent a symbol of the contents that the superimposed title seems almost redundant. With this pictorial introduction, one knows what to expect, and one has only to learn if the book is well- or ill-written, inadequately or elegantly illustrated. But the name of this volume is important as an evidence of some interesting cultural trends in present day America.

The title informs us that this is a book about early American houses, and the picture may be taken as the visual symbol of the author's theme. An examination of the contents, however, reveals that this is a volume devoted solely to Vermont houses built prior to 1850. The name is thus, to a degree, misleading, but we recognize it as a device to give a regional product a wider, national distribution in the

popular culture market. Since this is not, *per se*, a scholarly treatise on local architectural history (although scholarship is by no means lacking here), but a handbook designed to reach a fairly large body of readers who will certainly profit by it, we have no real objection to the publisher's "dodge," although we do feel it necessary to call attention to it. It all depends to what degree the part may stand for the whole, and perhaps the jacket picture has sufficient authority almost totally to reinforce the title.

Mr. Congdon, a photographer as well as an architect (he has provided the illustrations to his text), is certainly an authority in his field. His *Old Vermont Houses* (Brattleboro, Vermont: Stephen Daye Press, 1940) and *The Covered Bridge* (published by the same press in 1941), bear eloquent testimony to the thoroughness of his regional studies, as well as to his love for his material. These knowledgeable and charming volumes, which are purely descriptive, are essentially different from the volume under examination, which has primarily a didactic purpose.

This impression is reinforced by the subtitle, which tells us that this is a treasury of decorative details and restoration procedures. We approve. If one is going to restore (and such activity has become practically a minor industry nowadays), one should proceed with the best available knowledge of method, material and models. None of these seems lacking here. If the book is to be used as a copybook for *new* construction, we most emphatically disagree. The decorative details shown may in the case of new work inspire the craftsman, but he should not slavishly imitate them. The method of approach to this material may well constitute in craftsmanship and architecture the difference between a living and a mortuary art.

The beginning text goes on to state that the book "is intended to be a help to the do-it-yourself man who has had the good fortune to come into the possession of one of New England's old homes. It describes and illustrates a considerable variety of . . . designs of several periods . . . It should help the man who is 'handy with tools' or any intelligent carpenter of the neighborhood, to make the most of a neglected but worthy old building."

This then is preponderantly a "do-it-yourself" book for that considerable group of persons who have taken up carpentering as a hobby, or who can no longer afford the services of building craftsmen. A good carpenter who can execute proper period detail is nowadays, if he can be found, almost worth his weight in rubies, and the middle-

income "restorer" of old houses is perforce left to his own devices. If none other were needed, this book is direct evidence that there is a real need for practical restoration advice for those who like to collect and restore old houses of the smaller sort.

Although some of the houses included in the author's 1940 volume make a second appearance here, there is much new material. Most of the examples shown are simple and unpretentious — appropriate models for amateur carpenters. Simplicity was one of the undoubted virtues of 18th century Vermont domestic architecture (the grandeurs of Philadelphia and New York are quite lacking) and the author makes the most of his sparingly adorned cornices and unostentatious doorways. No doubt the home carpenter with an antiquarian bent will make the most of them as well.

The book contains no actual drawings or diagrams to give the do-it-yourselfer a step-by-step pattern of action. The author assumes that the reader knows how to handle his tools, and he merely presents photographic examples and a practical descriptive text written in an easy, agreeable style. There are chapters on the principal elements of a house — walls, roofs, gables, doors, windows, cornices and stairways. Especially interesting sections are devoted to chimney and fireplace building, to mantels, and even to types of wood that make the best fuel. There is a useful glossary of architectural terms appended to this parade of practical erudition.

The author is a child of his time — that not so distant day when the opinion was widely held that good architecture was no longer produced after 1850 — but this short-sighted view is more than made up for by his affectionate regard for and his intelligent study of his material. The book should be quite useful as well to historians and students of early American architecture and social customs.

We note that Mr. Congdon's earlier books were printed and published in Vermont, but this volume was produced in Japan — a fact that is not uninteresting, both bibliographically and culturally. When we consider New England's long commercial and cultural interest in the Far East, this new evidence of a close connection hardly seems surprising. Undoubtedly, also, it is cheaper to print in Japan.

Even if one is not "handy with tools," this book is a decidedly pleasant one to handle and read. In an age of increasing automation, this volume extols the virtue of hand labor without being arty-crafty: it is proper that every man should have some work to do with his own hands, and if the author's doors and cornices conduce to such activity,

they will have performed a needed service. But all the elements of that early house, and the years, and the land from which these structures grew, contrive for the general reader an almost Arcadian vision of the rugged simplicities of America's past. These doors lead homeward.

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JAMES D. VAN TRUMP

William Penn's "Holy Experiment": The Founding of Pennsylvania, 1681-1701. By EDWARD BRONNER. Temple University Publications. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962. Pp. x, 306. \$6.00.)

Dr. Bronner's book is a chronological narrative primarily concerned with significant events involving the religious, social and economic life of the people of Pennsylvania between the years of 1681 and 1701.

It covers the voile of former scantily documented studies of this period with a tightly woven and enduring fabric of impressive research. The pattern is a design of comprehensive and adequate annotations and bibliographical references.

William Penn was a deeply religious man who had intense feelings for Pennsylvania which was his "magnificent province in the New World," and granted to him, he believed, with the approval of God.

His obligation for this sacred trust urged him to develop spiritual guidance and benefits for the people of Pennsylvania by governing his community in a manner befitting the highest Christian morals. To William Penn the "holy experiment" was a community populated by virtuous people who were motivated by an all-pervasive love of God.

He believed that Pennsylvania had a large population of such people, including the Society of Friends, all of whom accepted religious liberty, political freedom and pacifism.

William Penn's solution to all practices or theories was to ask "is it in accordance with the Will of God?" If the answer is "no," it must be discarded, and if "yes" it must be adopted.

For two years William Penn's dream of Utopia materialized to his fullest expectation. As time went on, however, the Quakers continued to practice strict honesty in their dealings with one another, but reneged in paying taxes although they had sufficient money for this purpose. Their plea of not enough money for taxes was only a ruse to perpetuate their excessive desire to pyramid their savings. The "holy