
This study is a very vital addition to the history of western Pennsylvania and of the French and Indian War. It does what its title indicates—demonstrates the importance of presents to the Indians in that wilderness conflict between France and England for the control of the St. Lawrence, Great Lakes and Ohio Valley country. The idea, of course, is not new; but the demonstration of it is new. Scholars will now be better able than ever before to treat the Indian side of the frontier movement with adequate knowledge.

The treatment starts with an analysis of the place in Indian civilization of the custom of giving and receiving presents. Gifts connoted words; the former made the latter meaningful, sincere; transactions became bona fide when each side gave up something dear to him. It might be the exchange of patiently wrought wampum to symbolize true friendship, or it might be the trade of human scalps for powder and ball to symbolize good faith in warfare.

With much erudition and documentation Jacobs describes the types of presents—toys, blankets, strouds, waistcoats, gorgets, rum, pipes, and so on—with thoroughgoing recognition of the uses to which the tribesmen put them. One gets the feeling of Indian need, dependence, and also of decline and decay. Prices are analyzed, and the quality of goods, with the English shown as superior in the former respect, and the French as superior in the latter. The superiority of the French in their highly systematized method of distribution is contrasted with the disorganized competition of the English. But the fatal weakness of the French in maintaining their supplies in times of war, because of naval inferiority, is also demonstrated. Behind it all is seen the need by both white factions of Indian help in the great imperial contest—not as a major military force, but as scouts and hunters.

And so the story of the great Anglo-French contest unfolds. At the base is the invaluable work of Sir William Johnson in requiring adequate supplies for the Iroquois. Aiding him in the Pennsylvania country are Conrad Weiser and George Croghan, who were only less
effective because of the impecuniosity and constitutional squabbling in Proprietary and Quaker Pennsylvania. A veritable orgy of competition between French and English in lavishing gifts upon the red men led to French aggression and the outbreak of war. Surprising is the demonstration that Braddock's defeat was not due to the English general's ignoring of Indian aid, but to the refusal of Governor James Glen of South Carolina to cooperate with Braddock's and Dinwiddie's plans to bring the Cherokee and Catawba tribemen to scout and hunt for the British army; the Iroquois being assigned to Johnson and Shirley in New York. Down through the history of the French and Indian War author Jacobs correlates the fighting with the Indian supply problem; the campaign for Niagara, Oswego, Crown Point, Ticonderoga, Montreal. It is significant to note that Forbes had six hundred Indians in his Fort Duquesne campaign compared to eight for the unfortunate Braddock. Finally, the terrific volume and expense of supplying the Indians (who were often aggravatingly greedy, or neutral) to defeat the French is contrasted with the great let-down resulting from Amherst's desire to economize after the victory was won. Under the circumstances Pontiac's War was obviously inevitable.

Jacobs' scholarship is for the most part adequate, his interpretations sound, his documentation useful. Occasionally he has slipped, as when he insists on calling the Juniata River the Juanita (pp. 101, 140). One misses Kellogg's French Regime from the footnotes and bibliography. These, however, are minor. A good book has been written.

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Seat of Empire: the Political Role of Eighteenth-Century Williamsburg.

By CARL BRIDENBAUGH. (Williamsburg, Virginia, c1950. x, 85 p. Map, illustrations.)

The appeal of John D. Rockefeller, Jr.'s re-creation of Colonial Williamsburg has been widespread. It has profoundly affected the interior decoration as well as the tourist trade. Lovers of Americana have a new focus through it.

The combination has aroused the interest of many in colonial history. All this has been pleasing to those whose interest lies in American history. With this small book, the first of a series, "Williamsburg in America," this interest bids fair to be even more widely spread, a con-