
In this volume, Dr. A. P. James, professor emeritus of history at the University of Pittsburgh and a mainstay of this society and magazine, brings together the details of the operations of the Ohio Company of Virginia, which represents the first attempt by British nationals to settle the headwaters of the Ohio and the Trans-Appalachian West. The publication of these papers will in all probability prove to be the most important serious historical contribution made to the celebration of the Pittsburgh Bicentennial Anniversary.

The Ohio Company came into being, and cast covetous eyes on the forks of the Ohio, during King George's War in the 1740's. The Indians of the continental interior had been beneficiaries of a limited trade with the French, and when the British navy made French shipping hazardous the Indians "revolted" and turned to the British for better trade alliances. One of the most important of the new alliances formed at that time was made at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1744, when the Iroquois (Six Nations) "gave" their control over the Ohio Valley to the British King for trade and occupancy. The Virginia representative at this negotiation, Thomas Lee, subsequently formed the Ohio Company by enlisting the support of other wealthy Virginians and a London merchant. The company planned to supply the Indian trade and to settle a Protestant population recruited in England and Germany. A grant of 200,000 acres at present Pittsburgh was obtained, trading was begun and the holding was explored, but a series of adverse circumstances prevented further accomplishment. The company lingered for thirty years, and its attempts to grasp a firmer hold on the future were rewarded with a series of legal controversies. To historians, the Ohio Company has appeared as the spearhead in British occupancy of the older West, but the precise nature of the company's activity has remained obscure until the publication of the George Mercer Papers and, more usefully, this volume. Even though much of the
documentation of the company is known to be lost without hope of recovery, the picture is now clearer.

The materials published in this volume were scoured from archives, historical depositories, libraries, and courthouses—chiefly in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The first part consists of a meticulously documented summary of the company's "business history" (185 pages). Appendix A provides texts of representative and of some specially important documents among the more than a thousand transcripts relating to the company that Professor James has collected, now forming a special collection in the Darlington Library. The second and third appendices list commercial and land transactions. Appendix D is an extended list of Ohio Company documents, indicating chronological order and sources of the primary record. The scope of the book is fashioned to fill in the gap of the "inner history" of the company, and for the broader role in international, intercolonial, and frontier history, Professor James refers to previously published books.

The summary "inner history" and the documents printed or otherwise noted in the appendices indicate distinctly to this reviewer that the materials now available justify a re-evaluation of the role of the Ohio Company as a leader with foresight in the settlement of the West. The company's contribution to the Indian trade was three cargoes of goods from London, valued at £6,000, but much of this was sold to settlers and another part was requisitioned by the military. Another £5,000 might have been spent, Professor James finds, on explorations, surveys, roads, warehouses, personal services, and land purchases. Some of this expenditure was incidental to the regular operation of a trade which was already in existence. The Indian traders "employed" by the company did not mind tapping this new and inexperienced source of credit and income and had no difficulty in simultaneously serving rival masters. The later claims of "great expense" incurred "in behalf of the public interest" appears to have been included in this £11,000 investment, and it is Professor James's conclusion that the company may not have gained the anticipated windfall but that it at least broke even. This would seem to deny the cliché that the leaders of the colonization movements may have been foresighted but invariably suffered bankruptcy and great losses of fortune. It now seems more likely that the Ohio Company was organized with considerable
cleverness by Thomas Lee to "get in on the ground floor" on a "good thing" with something of a monopoly, but that through adversity and inept and negligent, as well as inexperienced management, failure was inevitable. Comparable efforts, although without the prospects of colonization that are peculiar to the Treaty of Lancaster, in other colonies were similarly failures. Some, notably Charles McNair and Company in South Carolina's exploitation of the Choctaw "revolt," had even better official support than did the Ohio Company, but they too failed.

As an indication of the source information about the Ohio Company, the list that forms Appendix D will make this volume the logical basic reference to future research. The contents of each entry can, in most cases, be easily guessed. Five pages of further bibliography are devoted to standard source collections and histories, or to historical journals with no reference to articles contained in them. In addition, the typography of the book is very attractive, permitting easy reading.

In sum, this reviewer believes Professor James has successfully accomplished his own stated objectives in this book. Librarians may grieve, however, that two of their number to whom the author is specially indebted will find their names incorrectly given in the foreword. The text elsewhere is remarkably free from slips.

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_A Pittsburgh Album_, as the title implies, is a comprehensive collection of pictures, showing people, structures and events associated with the development of our city, as far back as we can go. This fact alone commends it to the tired business man, too occupied to _read_ of the past, or the work-a-day TV or radio fan who views a page of type with a jaundiced eye. There are 270 pictures in this book, all worthy of visual study. Should any of them arouse a spark of interest there are annotations contiguous to each, offering