

had made it possible for him to kill large animals such as the mammoth and mastodon which formed his principal food.

This book is published as the first volume in the new Anthropological Series by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Others will be brought out as manuscripts and funds become available.

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*The Historian's Handbook*. By HELEN J. POULTON. (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972. Pp. xix, 304. Indices. \$4.95.)

Professors and students of history long have faced the problem of locating reference aids for their research projects. In particular, undergraduate and beginning graduate students often view the library as an inscrutable and forbidding place. Helen J. Poulton's purpose in preparing *The Historian's Handbook* is to alleviate this difficulty by listing and discussing the "major reference titles which can help the student and researcher select most efficiently from the thousands of titles the specific ones he needs." She is quite successful in this endeavor.

The author prefaces her discussion on reference works with a brief chapter on libraries and the use of card catalogs. Then she launches into a series of chapters under the following headings: "National Library Catalogs and National and Trade Bibliographies"; "Guides, Manuals, and Bibliographies of History"; "Encyclopedias and Dictionaries"; "Almanacs, Yearbooks, Statistical Handbooks"; "Serials and Newspapers"; "Geographical Aids"; "Biographical Materials"; "Primary Sources and Dissertations"; "Legal Sources"; and "Government Publications." Under each chapter attention is given first to sources relevant to American and British history, although titles useful to scholars interested in other areas also are discussed.

In addition to selecting and listing a significant number of reference materials, Poulton provides a valuable commentary on the usefulness of the various works. Her comments include an evaluation of scope, annotation, index, thoroughness, and accuracy. She also provides a general statement regarding the utility of the source for researchers and comments on the known strengths and weaknesses of

various titles. For example, she notes that *The Lincoln Encyclopedia* must be used with caution because "it contains inaccuracies and a number of known forgeries."

Poulton's chapters read like bibliographical essays, and in spots the narrative is interesting as she relates the history of a particular work or compiler. The book most often will be used for reference, however, and the author has provided an outlined table of contents, an index of titles, and a general index to render this as simple as possible.

Readers should be careful not to confuse *The Historian's Handbook* with a book by Wood Gray et al., entitled *Historian's Handbook*. The latter essentially attempts to explain the mechanics of researching and writing a paper and contains a section in which reference aids are listed without comment. Poulton's book is much more valuable for locating materials for research. Indeed, researchers in history will find it an invaluable aid, and it should be a required acquisition for the beginning graduate student.

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