erally accepted chronological-cultural classification now used by most archeologists in eastern North America. The basic traits for each complex are discussed and the major artifacts illustrated in a series of drawings. Kinsey pays particular attention to changing patterns of village organization and economic pursuits from Archaic period times through the Woodland cultures and final breakup of Indian life in the early Historic period.

Kinsey discusses the relationships of the Upper Delaware Valley cultures with other manifestations in the East. His comments on the development of the Archaic cultures are particularly important and of widespread interest to anyone working with these early cultures. Of equal importance are his findings concerning the development of Owasco-Iroquois culture in the Delaware Valley and the relationship these sites had with those in New York. Kinsey considers the Upper Delaware Valley Owasco an in situ development and a full participant in this tradition over a long period of time.

In a seventy-six page appendix Kinsey presents descriptions of the major projectile and pottery types found in the Upper Delaware Valley. This section is very useful for students working on typology and comparative problems.

Archeology in the Upper Delaware Valley is a carefully prepared, well-illustrated, and informative volume that will become a standard reference for all future work in the Delaware Valley and the East in general. It is a major contribution to knowledge of the prehistoric past of the area.

Carnegie Museum
Pittsburgh

Don W. Dragoo


John F. Marszalek, professor of history at Gannon College, has written a well-researched, straightforward, and objective account of the 1881 court martial of Johnson C. Whittaker, one of the first black cadets at West Point Academy. Neither Whittaker nor the court martial was particularly exciting in the usual sense of the word. Whittaker, of above-average intelligence, was a shy, quiet, and intense-
ly religious young man whose distinguishing characteristic was an incredible capacity to suffer quietly indignity without losing his own dignity. The court martial was long, tedious, and filled with obscure, extraneous, and often absurd technicalities. However, it is precisely the very ordinariness of the case that gives it its significance, for it tells us much about the first generation of black leaders who emerged in the post-Civil War era and reveals much about American institutions and values.

Whittaker's background is significant, and Marszalek sketches it in *Court Martial* as best he can from the scanty documentation. Born in 1858, his father was a free mulatto, and his mother was a light-skinned house slave of the wealthy, leading Southern statesman and later Confederate general James Chesnut (from whom Whittaker took his middle name). As a member of the upper echelon of slave society, Whittaker was raised in relative comfort and serenity and given the type of background that enabled him, at age sixteen, to enter the recently integrated University of South Carolina. After two years study there (where he did outstandingly well), he was recommended by his friend and professor, Richard T. Greener (Harvard's first black graduate), for a congressional appointment to West Point.

Arriving at West Point at the age of eighteen, of slight build (5'8" and weighing only 110 pounds), a nonsmoker (and presumably a non-drinker), of strong religious convictions, scrupulous in his dress and demeanor, and conscientious in his studies, Whittaker should have been the model, successful cadet. Unfortunately, this was not to be. His trace of African ancestry meant he was to be subjected to the unrelenting prejudices reserved for all black cadets. This consisted of ostracism — the total refusal of white cadets to speak to, sit or march next to, or in any way associate with black cadets except when absolutely necessary. The effects were devastating.

Of the first twenty black cadets admitted in the 1870s and 1880s, only three graduated. Whittaker bore up with remarkable dignity especially since, except for his first year and part of his second, he was the only black cadet. Cut off academically, militarily, and socially he was terribly, terribly lonely. Only his strength of character and his Bible (filled with underlined passages relating to loneliness and forgiveness) bore him through. Nonetheless, his grades suffered, and he dropped toward the bottom of his class. In his third (senior) year he was forced to repeat the previous year. Then, toward the end of the year, with final examinations approaching and Whittaker still near the
bottom of the class (but apparently not in danger of failing), occurred
the event which shook West Point, triggering Whittaker’s ultimate
court martial and making him temporarily a national celebrity and
leading to his dismissal from the academy. Absent from the 6 A.M.
reveille on April 6, 1880, Whittaker was discovered lying in his un-
derclothes, bleeding about the head, apparently unconscious on the
floor, with his hands tied tightly together, and his feet lashed to
the bed.

Next unfolded the incredible series of events which forms the bulk
of Marszalek’s book (the preceding was condensed into the first fifty
pages). Rather than searching for the culprits (Whittaker produced a
note of warning given him before the nighttime assault), the authori-
ties at the academy turned the tables and accused Whittaker of sham-
ning the whole thing. When Whittaker protested and demanded a
court of inquiry, they turned it into a farce. Whittaker’s counsel was a
faculty member himself, who counseled the cadet not to attend the
sessions on the pretext that he should not miss class. The brunt of the
testimony was that the “probity, honesty, veracity and integrity” of
West Point cadets would have prevented them from perpetrating such
an act and from covering it up. Found guilty, the distraught cadet
demanded a full-blown court martial as a last hope of getting a fair
hearing.

At the court martial, Whittaker was better represented, the trial
was held away from the academy, more extensive evidence was collect-
ed and evaluated, but the result was the same. Through long weeks of
tedious (but curiously fascinating) testimony, the flimsy case was built
against Whittaker. Convicted again, Whittaker was suspended from
West Point. Finally, the judge advocate general of the army, D. G.
Swaim (himself of antislavery background), reviewed the case (for
reasons which the author never makes clear), and in over one hundred
pages of minute dissection, “decimated the prosecution’s case and held
the court martial decision up to ill-disguised contempt.” Finally, in
1882 — two years after the incident — President Arthur overturned
the court martial (on a technicality), cleared Whittaker — and dis-
charged him anyway from the academy. The reason? During the
original court of inquiry, two years previously, Whittaker had failed
his philosophy examination.

The whole proceedings reveal much about both the academy and
American values in the 1870s and 1880s. During the Civil War many
of West Point’s faculty, cadets, and graduates had been disloyal to the
Union. Unsure of their position in the postwar period, they detested the black cadets as somehow subhuman, appointed by radical Reconstruction congressmen to embarrass and divide the academy. Under such circumstances, it was clearly impossible for them honestly to determine whether Whittaker was indeed shamming (to get out of the final examinations and seek revenge on the academy for its ostracism of him). In the larger sense, it had been the academy on trial, and it failed.

Whittaker's response is also revealing. Right to the very end he hoped for a reinstatement. After his hopes faded, he made a few public speeches denouncing the academy and his treatment, but thereafter maintained silence on the subject — even to his family. Returning to South Carolina, he became a lawyer and educator of middling success, married a demure young lady, raised a proper family, bought a little property, lived for awhile in Oklahoma, and saw one son go off to fight in World War I. Light enough to pass for white, he never denied his ancestry, never sought social equality or social relations with whites, and clearly believed in the best Booker T. Washington sense that through education, religion, and middle-class virtue, his people could uplift themselves and ultimately receive their due from white society. Never a radical, he did not advocate immediate change, counseled patience and forgiveness — and died in 1931 of a gastric ulcer.

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