

Revolutionary Virginia: The Road to Independence, Volume 1: *Forming Thunderclouds and the First Convention, 1763-1774, A Documentary Record*. Compiled by WILLIAM J. VAN SCHREEVEN. Edited by ROBERT L. SCRIBNER. (Charlottesville, Va.: Published for the Virginia Independence Bicentennial Commission by the University Press of Virginia, 1973. Pp. xiv, 308. Preface, chronology, index. \$13.50.)

The approach of the American Revolution bicentennial promises to bring forth a host of works designed, in good faith, to publicize and propagandize the event throughout the nation. Some will undoubtedly be a major contribution to learning; some will entertain and enthrall (not necessarily a bad thing in these troubled times), but some will be of dubious validity, designed to either take advantage of the expanded market for historical memorabilia of the eighteenth century or to satisfy the desires of the coffee-table crowd who bask in their bloodlines. Such, I fear, is the nature of *Revolutionary Virginia: The Road to Independence*, Volume 1.

The book under review is an obvious labor of love, and the editors admit that it makes no original contribution to knowledge. It is essentially a documentary record of the independence movement in Virginia from 1763 to 1774 with two-thirds of the information covering 1774 alone. While all the materials may not be accessible in local libraries, scholars in the field would have little difficulty acquiring them. Also, some of them are collected from strange sources, not always the best edited one. For example, Jefferson's *Summary View*, readily available in Julian Boyd's superb edition of the *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, is reprinted from an original copy, with none of Jefferson's corrections or Boyd's annotations. Similarly, Document 16, "Resolutions of the House of Burgesses Establishing a Committee of Intercolonial Correspondence," is extracted from the records of Rhode Island. Many of the citations in the headnotes are also from unusual or obsolete sources.

The volume does have some value, however. The selection of materials demonstrates that the depth of feeling on behalf of colonial rights extended into the countryside as well as influencing men in the more settled areas of the tidewater (see Document 6). They show that the use of violence in opposition to the policies of the British government was not confined to the urban "mob" (Document 8). Certainly by 1768, emphasis on "American" liberty as opposed to "English" liberty can be seen in Virginia despite the closer ties of the Chesapeake

colonies to the mother country (Document 10). That the policy of nonimportation was not the exclusive domain of the colonial merchant is plainly illustrated as is the independent attitude of the members of Burgesses (Document 14).

Perhaps the most important contribution of the collection is the detailed account of the Convention of 1774. It was that body that issued one of the several spontaneous calls for a Continental Congress and that adopted an association that must have influenced the later delegates at Philadelphia. Fully one-fifth of the volume is devoted to the maneuvering leading to the meeting, with an additional 150 pages pertaining to the work of the group itself and the response, both pro and con, that it generated. In light of the absence of any surviving journal of proceedings, these pages are especially valuable. They clearly demonstrate the breadth of the revolutionary movement in Virginia, indicating that more than just the elite group of planters and lawyers was disturbed by the practices of the British ministries. The settlers in the backcountry were just as concerned as the tidewater aristocrats.

Despite these strong points, it is difficult to see why such a volume is necessary and at such an expensive price, when most of the information is available to anyone so inclined. Two scholarly monographs of equal length could have been published for about the same price as the subject of this review. Perhaps the Virginia Independence Bicentennial Commission should reassess their decision to issue a documentary series on the period and find more useful ventures to underwrite.

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Kentucky's Last Frontier. By HENRY P. SCALF. (Pikeville, Kentucky : Pikeville College Press of the Appalachian Studies Center, 1972. Pp. 565. Foreword, introduction, illustrations, endnotes, bibliography, index. \$6.00.)

Eastern Kentucky is the setting for this well-researched regional history. This area was denied many opportunities to develop a prosperous economy which would benefit not only absentee investors but also local residents. The twelve counties of eastern Kentucky are an interesting microcosm of some of the heritage and the problems which are confronting the entire Appalachian region.

Scalf, in *Kentucky's Last Frontier*, writes in a manner which be-