

Revolutionary War Journals of Henry Dearborn 1775-1783. Edited by LLOYD A. BROWN. Biographical Essay by HERMON DUNLAP SMITH. (The Caxton Club, Chicago, 1939. Reprint by Da Capo Press, Inc., New York, 1971. Pp. 236. Introduction, maps, works consulted, index. \$12.50.)

These are the complete journals of a revolutionary-war officer from New England, whose name is familiar to Chicagoans through Father Dearborn (counterpart of Pittsburgh's Pa Pitt), through Dearborn Street, the town of Dearborn, and historic Fort Dearborn.

Dr. Henry Dearborn, who became captain of his own company in the First New Hampshire Regiment, missed the battle of Lexington by a few hours despite a forced march. He fought at Bunker Hill and was taken prisoner during the long march to Quebec. He fought Burgoyne, was with Washington in many places including Valley Forge, and was commended by Washington for a gallant charge at Monmouth. Then followed a stretch of garrison duty before he joined Sullivan's campaign against the Indians in New York. And, finally, there was Yorktown. Dearborn's military career spanned the entire war; it is interesting both to general readers and to historians.

There was nothing flashy about Henry Dearborn. In fact, he might be compared to one of Oliver Cromwell's dedicated officers: he was capable, took the hardships of war as they came, and had direct contact with his men. He was interested not only in individual battles but also in the unfolding of the overall strategy that ultimately wins a war. Definitely, he was not a seeker of rank or headquarters position. The *Revolutionary War Journals* contain no undercutting of fellow officers or Fourth of July oratory; he was a plain man who believed in his cause and served it from beginning to end, attaining the rank of colonel.

Dearborn had little chance to enjoy home life after the war. Under President Washington, he became United States marshal for the District of Maine. Massachusetts made him a major general of militia. President Jefferson in 1801 made him secretary of war.

As secretary of war, he began his association with Chicago. After General Anthony Wayne's Indian treaty in 1795, interest grew in "certain reservations including one piece of Land Six Miles square at the mouth of Chikago River emptying into the southwest end of Lake Michigan where a fort formerly stood" — and where another fort would be built, named Dearborn, as necessary for the protection of this new square of land.

Also of importance in the story of Dearborn's life is his letter of warning to General Andrew Jackson about Aaron Burr's plot; thus the controversy was started by the testy Scotch-Irish Jackson's reaction to the warning — end of a fine friendship.

Next Dearborn became collector for, or of, the Port of Boston.

When tired and sixty, at a time of life when he would have preferred a fireside chair and comfortable old slippers, he became President Madison's choice to lead the almost nonexistent army of the United States as major general. Many of his fellow New Englanders and many wealthy New Yorkers were bitterly opposed to the war.

Inevitably, Dearborn became the whipping boy for the military failures of the War of 1812 and for the British naval victories in the lake area. Once more he was involved in controversy, this time with General William Hull who had ordered Fort Dearborn evacuated, with the resultant massacre of the soldiers and their families by the Indians. With impaired health, the unhappy Dearborn resigned; ironically, his replacement was General James Wilkinson, Aaron Burr's fellow conspirator.

The happy side of Dearborn's life included his three excellent wives. The third, whom he married in 1813, was the wealthy Sarah Bowdoin, who was the Pearl Mesta of her day. Sarah Bowdoin Dearborn's most celebrated party was a reception for Lafayette.

Dearborn had one more official post, that of minister to Portugal, before his death in 1829.

The diary in all its detail is left for the reader to explore. There are many entries on Major André and Benedict Arnold and much detail on every battle in which Dearborn participated. Nathanael Greene has many entries. Of interest to Pittsburghers is the mention of Lt. Col. Richard Butler, General Edward Hand, and Daniel Brodhead.

Dearborn was an outstanding American. It is unfortunate that history has emphasized the sixty-year-old whipping boy, and not Dearborn, the young soldier and patriot.

Pittsburgh

FLORENCE C. McLAUGHLIN