

in the Revolutionary age. Washington, Morris, Duer, Mifflin, Rittenhouse, Gallatin, Burr, Brackenridge, among others, were all involved with him at one time or another.

Nicholson was something of a financial wizard but, like others of his generation, viz., William Duer and Robert Morris, he overextended himself. Greed was his downfall. He was so interested in becoming very wealthy he neglected his family and, ironically, even his businesses as he constantly strove to extend his personal empire into the never ending greener pastures. His methods rarely stopped at the limits of the law, which he clearly flaunted for his own ends. But Arbuckle exonerates him in the end, seeing him as more of a "Captain of Industry" than a "Robber Baron."

The author is to be commended for bringing to the fore a heretofore obscure member of the eighteenth century. While it is doubtful that Nicholson is worthy of emulation, it is revealing to document the human foibles of one of our nation's leading men. After all, they were all mere mortals.

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A Documentary History of the Indiana Decade of the Harmony Society, 1814-1824: Volume 1, 1814-1819. Compiled and edited by KARL J. R. ARNDT. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1975. Pp. xxvii, 837. Illustrations, introduction, editorial note, acknowledgments, index. Cloth, \$17.50, paper, \$8.00.)

When you pick up this book, you are holding the first product of the great lifework of Karl Arndt. It represents over thirty-five years of research and scholarship by Dr. Arndt on the Harmony Society. This scholarship has already resulted in a two-volume history of the society (*George Rapp's Harmony Society, 1785-1847* and *George Rapp's Successors and Material Heirs, 1847-1916*, both published by Fairleigh Dickinson University), and so many other monographs on the Harmony Society that a complete listing would take several pages. Arndt's lone pursuit of the obscure Harmony Society has publicized it, at least in scholarly circles, and brought it the attention it deserves.

This volume is just one part of a much larger projected work

which will cover the documentary history of the society from about 1785 through the nineteenth century. It takes up a very important period in the life of the society. By the time the society moved to Indiana in 1814, its members had established themselves in America and had their mission clearly defined. They had developed their method of communal living, had clarified their religious beliefs, had begun their long adventure with technology, and had developed enough capital to do as they pleased. This volume covers the first five years of their sojourn in Indiana. They had to sell their old home, move a large number of people to the edge of the wilderness, clear the land, build a town, establish their farms, and market their products. The documents clearly show the combination of deep religious piety and hardheaded practicality which made the society a success.

One develops a deeper insight into the history of the society by reading these documents. Instead of the unchanging monolithic organization which some of the oversimplified histories of the society discuss, one finds a dynamic, changing society. They were experimenting with communal and religious forms. They discussed a merger with the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearance (Shakers), but discarded it. Despite their wealth developed through industry, they still did not have a clearly defined economic base. In the period of this volume, their principal source of income, other than farming, was from flour milling and similar processing of farm products. Cotton spinning and woolen cloth, which was to be their major industrial endeavor for the next thirty years, plays only a minor role in the period of this volume. One gets the picture that they are developing from a simple Germanic village farm economy to an industrial society. In this period they are a super farm community, sort of an industrial farm village. Those who think that all one needs to found a communal society is a mission will get a good picture of the practical necessities of the running of a group such as this.

This is not a complete documentary history, but a selection. The major criterion of selection of documents was to pick those which showed the thinking of the society and its individuals. Other criteria included all letters of George Rapp (1757-1847), the leader, and Frederick Rapp (1775-1834), his adopted son and business head of the society, and letters of members "that contribute to the total picture of life in the Society . . ." There are ten different criteria in all. The boundaries are large and give a complete picture of the society in this period. Any selection is an editorial process, and consciously or un-

consciously, a point of view of the compiler is brought out and developed. In Arndt's selection one will seldom find anything that shows the society making an error in judgment, in conflict, or looking bad. Having been through the same set of documents myself, I have to say that in truth there is little in the records which would show these things, but some are there.

Since the selection of documents is aimed mainly at showing the thinking of the society and toward understanding their way of life, an important aspect of its history has to be left out or greatly reduced. This is the participation of the Harmony Society in the development of American technology, and their involvement in manufacturing and business. The Harmony Society was in the forefront on the frontier in developing manufacturing. It is unfortunate that the amount of space involved will not allow more of this material to be printed. One can hardly fault Arndt for not including more of this material.

As one would expect from any book passing through the hands of Gayle Thornbrough, director of publications, and Dorothy Riker, editor, Indiana Historical Society, the mechanics of editing are very good. The book is quite adequately annotated and cross referenced. The citations for each document are a little sparse. When no location is given in the citation, it means that the document is in the archives at Old Economy. The archives in question are arranged rather than catalogued, but I think that a reference to a box number would be a good finding aid. Letterbooks are not at Old Economy, as implied, but are in the Pennsylvania State Archives in Harrisburg. References to page numbers in these letterbooks would have been useful. The footnotes cite many secondary works, and constitute a handy bibliography of currently available works on Indiana history for this period. It would have been useful to cite these in a bibliography. Space may have precluded this, or it may be intended for the second volume.

The space imperative dictated that the documents follow one another rather closely. However, whoever arranged the book managed to include a lot of white space, including wide margins. Unlike many scholarly works lately, the type and format are pleasing, footnotes are on the same page, and some sensitivity has been displayed in the arrangement of what could have been monotonous. The Indiana Historical Society has a reputation of bringing out well-edited and well-printed books, and this one lives up to that reputation. The major cause behind this, no doubt, is the Lilly Endowment, which supported the cost of preparing the manuscript along with the National Endow-

ment for the Arts and Humanities, and contributed to the cost of publication. It is unfortunate that there is not some similar organization in Pennsylvania which would finance the publication of the Pennsylvania years of the society (1803-1815, 1824-1905).

Dr. Arndt is a professor of German, and one of his greatest contributions has been the translations in the book. Although most of the business correspondence is in English, a great many of the documents useful in this work are in German. One might say that almost all the writings involving the thinking of the society are in German. The only way the average reader is going to get to them is through translation. Even native speakers have a great deal of trouble with the Swabish dialect and the German script. Dr. Arndt has tried to keep the original style of the German, sometimes at the expense of being a little clumsy. His original intention was to print the text of the document in German and a translation. It is unfortunate that space requirements precluded this. He carefully annotates his translations. The text of English letters is printed with just enough textual changes to make it readable. Original spelling and punctuation have been retained, which is valuable.

The faults of the book are minor. In his introduction Arndt states that George Rapp, after an unsuccessful attempt in 1806, never again sought government aid. Over their long history, the Harmony Society took subsidies for silk and hemp, accepted government aid for their school and roads, and lobbied for a subsidy for wool. They accepted government subsidies for their railroads as well. They also lobbied for indirect aid such as high tariffs on foreign manufactured goods and on foreign wool, and for certain types of tax relief for such things as mills. When it came to the physical side of the American community, the Harmony Society was very much a part of society. One or two travelers' accounts published in other places appear in the book. These are not documents in the same sense as the rest of the items published in the book. The 1814 to 1819 period of this volume was a sort of blank period in published travelers' accounts. The next period was not. If the editors are going to publish many travelers' accounts in future volumes, a great deal of material is going to be published which is available elsewhere. This might be at the expense of manuscript documents which are not available anywhere else. These accounts might best be included as citations in a bibliography.

Several of the illustrations are incorrectly cited as to source. There is some question whether the cloth label on page 583 shows Harmony,

Indiana, or Harmony, Pennsylvania. I believe it is from Indiana, around 1818-1820, but the other point of view should be given. In any case, it is from the collection of Old Economy and not Historic New Harmony as is the cloth book below it. One map of Posey County made it into the book and is quite useful. A map of Indiana would have been equally useful, as well as one showing the political consequences of the changes in county boundaries during this period. Post office routes and main roads would have been useful on the map of Posey County. All of these things are discussed in great detail in the documents. But these are minor quibbles in a book which is a monument of research.

This first volume of the documentary history is not just a reference work, but is something that interested students can sit down and read for pleasure. It is hoped that the rest of the series will be published shortly, and that it will live up to or exceed the standards in this work.

Old Economy
Ambridge, Pennsylvania

DANIEL B REIBEL

They Who Would Be Free: Blacks' Search for Freedom, 1830-1861.

By JANE H. PEASE and WILLIAM H. PEASE. (New York: Atheneum, 1974. Pp. 319. Preface, bibliography, index. \$4.95.)

Segregation in public transportation, housing, and education, Negro pews in churches, generally no voting rights, and where granted restricted by property qualifications, frequent threats on their lives from white mobs, were only some of the myriad problems confronting free blacks in antebellum America. As it became quite apparent by the second decade of the nineteenth century that America had no intention of fulfilling the high-sounding claims of its Declaration of Independence, northern blacks began to harness their own resources for survival. They formed black churches in reaction to the dehumanizing tradition of Negro pews in many white churches, literary societies in the hope of improving educational standards, and mutual aid societies as communal efforts to meet the exigencies of life in the North. These experiences, peculiar to black Americans, informed their reactions to racism in the North and slavery in the South, so that when formal antislavery began to emerge in the early 1830s, blacks were prepared to join its ranks. They brought to the abolition movement their par-