

enacted in the 1960s? In other words, were the "successes" of one epoch predicated on or influenced by the "failures" of another, or were they simply divorced historical issues?

In addition, the Peases fail to deal with the very vital issue of "black nationalism," a phenomenon which has occupied the attention of historians of black America, especially since the events of the 1960s. It is quite possible that the authors would disclaim any intention of examining this issue, but with their vast knowledge of and long experience in researching black American history, the reader is somewhat disappointed that this crucial issue is overlooked.

In spite of these qualifications, this book is a most valuable contribution to the history of the black experience in the period before the Civil War. It should be a basic text in any Afro-American history course. As in their other works, the Peases continue their unselfish tradition of mentioning the location of the very valuable and scattered sources from which we must piece together the history of antebellum black America.

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Andrew Carnegie and the Rise of Big Business. By HAROLD C. LIVESAY. (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1975. Pp. 202. Editor's preface, note on sources, acknowledgment, index. \$3.95.)

This volume is a part of the Library of American Biography Series, edited by Oscar Handlin. As such, it is more a study of the growth of business and the formation of the American industrial machine than it is a biography of Andrew Carnegie. The author contends, rightly so I believe, that aspects of Carnegie's personal life and his fascinating career must be interwoven in the saga of industrial growth. He does this so well that it is difficult to separate the biography from the story of big business in the late 1850s.

The author sets his theme nicely when he writes: "His [Carnegie's] most spectacular achievement — building Carnegie Steel into the world's largest steel producer — rested primarily on his successful transfer of the railroad's [Pennsylvania's] managerial methods to the manufacturing sector of the economy. The first industrialist to effect

this adaptation, he made his own company so efficient that his competitors were forced to emulate him. Carnegie thus played a critical role in the genesis of the American system of manufacturing that built the United States into the world's leading industrial power by 1900." (p. 29)

And that Andrew Carnegie did and did well. And Livesay recounts this tale in eminently fine fashion and with a high degree of historical accuracy. From the opening chapter, telling of the impact of the industrial revolution in Scotland and its effect on the Carnegie family, through the excellent description of Pittsburgh as a center for industrial development, the story moves quickly and with interest.

The influence of his mother, Margaret, as well as that of Edgar Thomson and Tom Scott on the young Scot is noted. Carnegie's "radical conscience," a heritage of his younger days in Scotland, and his reaction to the philosophy of Herbert Spencer and Social Darwinism are considered by the author. His sensitivity to his own image as a great man is discussed, and the various phases of his career after coming to Pittsburgh are examined, not in detail, but with a degree of completeness sufficient for a volume of this length. The main emphasis of the book, however, is on the story of the development of the United States as an industrial power and Carnegie's part in it.

Carnegie came to America in 1848, just at the time of the growth of the railroads. He played an important part in the building of the Pennsylvania Railroad, learning that "price must be based on actual costs" — the formula for a capital-intensive business. "Learn costs and reduce them as much as possible," was a lesson Carnegie learned well from his mentors, Edgar Thomson and Thomas C. Scott. By 1865 the Pennsylvania Railroad was the largest private business firm in the world in terms of revenues, employees, and value of physical assets. The story of that railroad and Carnegie's part in its growth is well told.

Important in his life as were his adventures in finance, bond selling, and promotion, nothing equals the story of the building of the Carnegie Steel Company. This fascinating epic Livesay tells well. It seems Carnegie forgot nothing. First there was horizontal and then vertical integration. Early in the game we see the importance of chemistry in steel manufacturing and the role of Henry Phipps in that development; quality control; the Jones hot metal mixer and the key role played by Captain "Bill" Jones, all are told in detail. The reader learns of the constant conflict with the railroads and the creation

of both the Union Railroad and the Bessemer and Lake Erie; of Henry W. Oliver and iron ore; Henry Clay Frick and coal and coke; and even the rather minute detail, rare in a biography of this nature, of hot ingots traveling on flatbed cars from open hearth to blooming mill to save handling and reduce heating costs. This is common practice today, but was revolutionary in Carnegie's day. Livesay telescopes the history of steel, but the view is in good focus and the picture comprehensive.

I can fault the author on these points only. He could be much more detailed in his development of the story of iron ore, the Mesabi Range, Henry W. Oliver, John D. Rockefeller, and Carnegie. As for Frick, he is much too severe in his criticism of that interesting man in a story about one other than Frick himself. But these are minor faults in an interesting history of the growth of an industrial empire. Let there be no mistake, however, this is Carnegie's story as well.

On page 85 Livesay writes: "Long before the formal elaboration of 'scientific management' . . . , Carnegie instituted a system that generated detailed cost data on units of labor and material per unit of output and applied it to management and decision making. Thomson and Scott, developers of the system, had turned the Pennsylvania [Railroad] into the 'standard railroad of the world' with it. Carnegie applied the system to iron and steel manufacturing, built the first modern industrialized unit in America, revolutionized the structure of his own industry and established the pattern that others imitated so effectively that the United States rose to world industrial supremacy."

The author's view of Carnegie's character, however, is not so complimentary. The pages of the book are salted with such muckraking expressions as, "liar, greed, brutality, wickedness, trickery, shoddy promotions, and filth of watered stocks." Admittedly, Carnegie was no saint, but Livesay's judgment of him is much too harsh for this reviewer and, it seems to me, more often than not, at odds with the views held by Joseph Frazier Wall, who wrote Carnegie's exhaustive biography. But neither Wall nor Livesay can explain Carnegie's consuming ambition, although both agree that it was present in the diminutive Scotsman from Dunfermline, and drove him to the heights of success he achieved.

The book is well written and well organized. The chapter headings are provocative. The index is adequate. The inclusion at the end of the book (pp. 191-94) of "Notes on the Sources" is welcome indeed. Herein the author lists, sometimes with comments, the location of and

description of the available source material relating to the life of Andrew Carnegie.

All in all, this volume does well with the life and times of a man who was telegrapher, railroad superintendent, financier, master money man, salesman par excellence, entrepreneur, and builder of the world's largest steel complex. The author has captured in words Carnegie's great genius, namely, the ability to sense the tremendous potential of a new service, such as the telegraph, the railroad, and iron and steel with all its vast and important developments. Unlike so many men, Carnegie not only saw the potential but knew how to act once he had seen it.

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A Mirror for Greatness: Six Americans. By BRUCE BLIVEN. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975. Pp. 251. Acknowledgments, preface, epilogue. \$7.95.)

Bruce Bliven, journalist, professor, and lecturer, arbitrarily selects six Americans in order to draw a composite picture of what he considers to be the magnitude of this nation. He selects Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Sojourner Truth, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry David Thoreau as epitomizing what America means to him. His thesis is that these six people incontrovertibly made the nation and set it upon the journey it continues to travel.

He views Franklin as a self-made genius in intellectual, political, and journalistic matters, who was instrumental in dissolving the barriers between class distinctions. Actually it seems quite appropriate for a man who was first a journalist to begin his *A Mirror for Greatness* with a famous man who began his academic life as a printer and a journalist. Franklin really had the inquiring type of mind necessary for innovative achievement.

Bliven's next great American is John Adams, who lived and practiced what came to be known as the Protestant Work Ethic. Somehow Adams is portrayed as a man with whom every American, as well as every other nationality, can identify. Although he tried hard all of his life, and sacrificed much, he always was the recipient of much criticism.