

## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Pennsylvania Navy, 1775-1781: The Defense of the Delaware.* By JOHN W. JACKSON. (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1974. Pp. xiv, 514. Preface, illustrations, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$12.50.)

This book represents a labor of love in more than the conventional sense for the author, a historian by avocation and a former director of the Philadelphia Maritime Museum. Jackson has performed a signal service in rescuing the Pennsylvania state navy from undeserved oblivion. At the same time, his account of naval operations on the Delaware in 1776 and 1777 represents, in all probability, the definitive study of American efforts to defend the maritime approaches to Philadelphia. Despite tremendous handicaps in competing with privateers and the Continental navy for men and material, the galleys acquitted themselves well. In fact, the author argues, it was a healthy respect for the galleys which caused the Howes to shift the landing of British forces from the Delaware to the Chesapeake in the 1777 campaign. Perhaps the Pennsylvania navy's efforts were not, in the end, unrecognized by contemporaries. Although Jackson makes no effort to do so, a case might be made that the subsequent interest of the American government in the use of galleys for coast defense in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries stemmed from an appreciation of their efforts on the Delaware and elsewhere.

Although meticulously researched, this book contains much that will be of interest only to the specialist, and it tends to omit some items of general interest. A central issue, never satisfactorily answered, is raised by a failure to explore fully the significance of the denial of the Delaware to British vessels. Jackson similarly does not adequately coordinate the Delaware campaign with events on land during the critical year of 1777. Ira Gruber's excellent study, *The Howe Brothers and the American Revolution*, should be consulted in both respects. The importance of the *chevaux-de-frise* to the defenders surely warrants fuller treatment within the body of the book, rather than in an appendix. Conversely, much of the material contained in several of the opening and concluding chapters appears of marginal importance and could, in the reviewer's opinion, have been condensed or omitted. Finally, the editors unaccountably failed to provide an adequate map of the Delaware from Chester to Philadelphia. The smaller-scale one on page 260 is not an acceptable substitute.

*Department of History*  
*Allegheny College*  
*Meadville, Pennsylvania*

RICHARD W. TURK