the end. The problem, it seems clear, was that Jacksonianism by the 1850s was morally and imaginatively bankrupt. What had once been dynamic was now tired; what was once fresh was now stale. What had been bold nationalism in Jackson's hands as he put down the South Carolina Nullifiers was inept unionism in Buchanan's. Put another way, his unionism was a thinly disguised, dull standpattism, no matter how sincerely held. So, Buchanan did set out to accomplish something. But it proved to be the impossible, as Lincoln, whom he woefully underestimated and could not understand, knew. The difference between Buchanan and Lincoln is the difference between moral obtuseness and a tragic sensibility.

Professor Smith's brief book is part of a series on American presidents aimed at synthesis rather than original scholarship. Smith offers little that is new — as he modestly acknowledges in his references to standard accounts and to Philip S. Klein's exhaustive 1962 biography. Smith's judgments are balanced; he is not particularly sympathetic to the man as one might expect, given his interpretation. Unfortunately, the book is mostly descriptive narrative, with little analysis of the sort found, say, in Joan Hoff Wilson's recent and brilliant biography of Herbert Hoover (1974) or in John Morton Blum's distinguished, brief study of The Republican Roosevelt (1954). Historians of the behavioral school will find nothing of interest. Nor is the book particularly well written. The prose is flat but adequate.

Department of History
Allegheny College
Meadville, Pennsylvania

Bruce Clayton


This collection of essays surveys Republican politics in nine Northern states after the Civil War and constitutes yet another manifestation of recent scholarly efforts to attack the Reconstruction era from a new perspective. James C. Mohr (Maryland, Baltimore County), the editor and author of the essay on New York, feels that academe has largely ignored the Northern states during this period. He argues, correctly, I think, that a regionally balanced portrait is not only mandatory, but also long overdue. All the essays (only one
is not new) include some background to the development of state parties during the 1850s, politics in the war years, and a catchy subtitle that keys one to the political process in that state after the war. Also, most of the scholars treat their topics in a traditional methodological manner, i.e., they deal with elites, factions, and issues, without attempting to support their generalizations with any quantitative data.

Mohr insists that there are common themes in these states. That is true: the most common themes were reactions to black suffrage and factionalism. However, each scholar’s pursuit of his topic leads the reviewer to conclude that each state’s political history was, as in the South, sui generis (see below). Richard H. Abbott’s (Eastern Michigan) study of Massachusetts ("Maintaining Hegemony") is an analysis of a majority party controlled by a small clique, the "Bird Club." Black suffrage was not a divisive issue, but every other issue seemed to cause factionalism, e.g., railroads, the laboring class, health, and public education. The bitter infighting by party leaders is interwoven with these issues and the emergence of B. F. Butler. However, to John Niven (Claremont), Connecticut was an example of ‘Poor Progress’ in the Land of Steady Habits,” where both parties were excruciatingly closely divided. The Democrats were successful in using the black suffrage issue in the 1867 election, which prompted the Republicans to retaliate with a campaign of political coercion against the working classes in mill towns. Both parties, in fact, used almost any tactic to control the immigrant vote. In this situation, the Fifteenth Amendment was an important “vote getter” for the Republican party. David Montgomery’s (Pittsburgh) "Pennsylvania: An Eclipse of Ideology" is a reprint of his "Radical Republicans in Pennsylvania, 1866-1873," which appeared in The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography (1961).

The essays on New York and Ohio were written by historians who have published monographs on their subjects. The Empire State, according to Mohr, suffered a “Depolitization of Reform,” when the two Republican factions jointly pushed reform at the state level until 1867; then, reform was discredited by the Democrats’ use of the black suffrage issue, which led to a legislative deadlock to 1869. Mohr also delineates the decentralization of state power, which caused the "Tweed Era" and the rise of the Conkling machine with the introduction of ethnocultural issues. The Ohio study, by Felice A. Bonadio (California, Santa Barbara), illustrates the Republicans’ “Perfect Contempt of All Unity.” Bitter factionalism allowed the Democrats to
use the black suffrage issue in a manner that neutralized the majority party's strength.

George M. Blackburn (Central Michigan) outlines the story of Michigan's "Quickening Government in a Developing State" via the three conservative, "fiscally responsible" administrations of Governors Crapo, Baldwin, and Bagley (1864-1874). Economic development, particularly internal improvements, dominated the state's internal politics within a milieu in which the "Bloody Shirt" was a way of life. According to Richard N. Current (North Carolina), Wisconsin Republicans used "Shifting Strategies to Stay on Top." These included patriotism ("Bloody Shirt"), materialism (internal improvements), and patronage. With the black suffrage question settled by a state court, Current discusses in some detail President Johnson's input into state politics in 1865-1866. He also relates the crosscurrents of temperance among the ethnic groups to antimonopoly and economic themes, all of which led to the ill-fated Reform party of the early 1870s. On the other hand, Phillip D. Swenson (Massachusetts, Amherst), argues that Illinois voters became "Disillusioned with State Activism." The so-called reform issues did not really interest the people, but race relations, monopoly control of railroads, and scandal did. Too, he thinks that what "progress" that occurred in these areas was by default, not by party activism. By 1870, with legislative corruption rampant, opposition to the state government helped to undermine the party's position in the South, i.e., the people believed the worst about the Southern Republican governments and urged an end to "intervention."

Robert R. Dykstra (Iowa) uses a quantitative methodology to determine why Iowa, the "Bright Radical Star," voted for black suffrage in 1868 — unlike any other Northern state. First, he compares Iowa's position, in rank order, to other Northern states according to percentage of blacks in the population, Civil War mortality rates, electoral strength, and percentage of military population furnished to the Union. Finding inconclusive explanations there, he, secondly, compares the editorials of forty-two newspapers and constructs a matrix of editorial opinion (from ultraradical to ultraconservative) during the last half of 1865. Subdividing those six months into four periods, Dykstra concludes that the radical and neutral positions were the most popular for each time period. Third, he compares the legislators who were ultraradical to all the remainder by using selected biographical data. Finally, he uses Pearson's r and multiple regression analysis to compare election data, 1865-1868, and concludes that (1) prosuffrage
sentiment had "congealed" prior to the war and (2) that the Grant "coattail" factor was minimal in predicting the final configuration of the black suffrage vote.

Mohr does a creditable job of editing, including an excellent introduction and a knowledgeable historiographical postscript. These essays, as he suggests, partially fill a gap in historiography and serve to encourage others to follow up with additional and/or corrective research. This volume, indeed, is now a commendable companion to Richard O. Curry's *Radicalism, Racism, and Party Alignment: The Border States during Reconstruction* (1969). The gap will not be closed, however, until the legislative and voter behavior is analyzed and synthesized with traditional methodologies. Until then, this collection will act as an important catalyst in many seminars.

*Department of History*
*California State College*
*California, Pennsylvania*

**J. Kent Folmar**


Since it was originally published by Macmillan in 1961 as *The Black Hat Brigade*, a surfeit of Civil War military histories have filled bookstore shelves. Reissued in 1975 as *The Iron Brigade* by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, the book remains a thoroughly researched, reliable, and absorbing account of the best fighting unit in the Union army.

The "Iron Brigade," which was organized near Washington in October 1861, comprised the Second, Sixth, and Seventh Wisconsin volunteer regiments and the Nineteenth Indiana. It was the Army of the Potomac's only completely western brigade. Later, to replenish depleted numbers, it received the Twenty-fourth Michigan and retained its regional character. But while its geographical distinction is interesting, the Iron Brigade was one of the best fighting brigades in the army. When the going got tough, commanders increasingly came to rely on the brigade. The result was that a greater proportion of its men were killed in battle than any other brigade.

As Nolan states, and I concur with him, much of the brigade's esprit de corps and effectiveness was the result of its second command-