

ture Dutch principles, and that at least for its leading sponsor, John Adams, it was intended for the moral improvement of international affairs, a goal to be achieved by establishing trade relations in place of military ties. Gregg L. Lint's essay makes the strongest statement that American diplomacy was distinctive. He says that we began our diplomatic practice by using the law of nations in a manner anticipating post-1815 internationalism. Because the Founding Fathers were farsighted enough to recognize, during the war, that national survival would ultimately depend on international recognition of neutral rights, they chose a law-of-nations style of diplomacy.

David Griffith contributes an essay on Catherine the Great explaining why the American Revolution did not offend her autocratic instincts. Attracted by statements of the English political opposition, she saw the Revolution as an inevitable tragedy that had to be played out because the leadership of Pitt had been repudiated and such ideas as Bolingbroke's had been ignored.

Professor Kaplan's essay on emerging isolationist policy summarizes diplomacy from the French treaties to 1801, rather than discusses popular arguments in favor of isolation. It is an excellent condensation. One may see the key step in America's withdrawal as occurring with the collapse of a Jeffersonian delusion. Jeffersonians had held on to the belief that both the French alliance and neutrality could be preserved. But French pressure following Jay's Treaty forced them to admit that they were not willing to press for fulfillment of the obligations made to France in 1778.

It is fortunate that these addresses have been preserved in print.

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George Stevenson (1718-1783): Conservative as Revolutionary. By ROLAND M. BAUMANN. Cumberland County Historical Society Publications, Vol. 10, No. 1. (Carlisle: The Society and the Hamilton Library Association, 1978. Pp. x, 64. Preface, appendixes, illustrations, notes, essay on sources. \$2.00. Available through the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.)

This is a work of love, for the writing of even a brief biography of an obscure historical figure, moreover one mainly of local interest, is difficult. It involves on the part of the author a sense of curiosity,

a devotion to the hunt for information, and an understanding to collate the facts found. Baumann, in this book, commendably fulfills the first two requirements by serious research into the archives and in printed sources and pertinent monographs. However, in the employment of "historical imagination," he is less successful. A major part of the difficulty rests with his subject and the scarcity of available material.

Stevenson left no body of papers to posterity, and references to him are scattered. Information on his early life is lacking, but that is more the usual condition than not for colonial Americans. Of Irish derivation, upon his arrival in America he hitched his future to that of the Penn family, serving the proprietors as a surveyor and land agent in the Lower Three Counties (Delaware) and in York and Cumberland counties in Pennsylvania. He thus acted as the Penns' representative in all matters concerning their vast land holdings in a sparsely settled area. He performed his duties zealously, apparently never hesitant to evict squatters from Penn property. On his own devices, Stevenson speculated in land, financed iron furnaces and other simple industries, and opened a law office. Fortunately, his second wife was independently wealthy, for all these endeavors proved unprofitable in the long run. After the Revolution, his money problems resulted in his spending his spouse's funds without authorization, and this ultimately wrecked his marriage.

Politically, according to Baumann, Stevenson supported his employers, the Penns, despite some difficulties at York, to 1776. If so, he was not a conservative but a reactionary, since as early as 1774 even such traditionalists as Joseph Galloway admitted that some changes had to be made in the province's position within the empire. Baumann ably demonstrates that divisiveness and not unity marked the politics of this frontier region. Stevenson joined with James Wilson in opposing the radical constitution of 1776 but then accepted American independence. His reasoning for so doing is obscure, but personal gain evidently was a major influence. He invested in an armory at Carlisle, used charcoal and iron from his own works to manufacture arms, diligently harassed Tories, and acted as a state agent of forfeited estates, the latter as a participant in a particularly messy and graft-riddled program. He also served on various local committees and for a time commanded the local militia unit.

Wisely, Baumann hesitates to attribute motives to explain Stevenson's actions where documentation is lacking. Some interpretation is possible, however, by analyzing the known facts, and Bau-

mann's attributions of patriotism to Stevenson's response to revolution are made questionable by the author's narrative. Perhaps *Opportunist as Revolutionary* would be a more appropriate subtitle for this study.

Nonetheless, any additional information on this period contributes to our knowledge and understanding. Students of Pennsylvania history, especially that of Cumberland County, will welcome Baumann's work. His efforts should inspire others to follow his example and cast additional light on a shadowy but vital stage in this state's development.

Kane, Pennsylvania

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The Treaty of Amity and Commerce of 1785 Between His Majesty the King of Prussia and the United States of America. Edited by KARL J. R. ARNDT. (Munich: Heinz Moos Verlag, 1977. Pp. 119. Introduction, bibliography, acknowledgment. \$24.00.)

The new nation under the Articles of Confederation reached out in the mid-1780s for commercial ties with countries on the European continent. The motives for this were complex, but generally centered upon a desire to secure the young Republic's economic relations with nations outside the orbit of the British Empire. These efforts met with little success, because for years after independence, America remained commercially linked to Great Britain.

In this handsome volume, Karl J. R. Arndt, professor of German at Clark University and a noted scholar of the Harmony Society, has for the first time translated into German the complete text of the commercial agreement concluded between the United States and Prussia in 1785. (Curiously, Frederick II "the Great" of Prussia cared little for the German language and preferred his official copy in French.) The treaty itself is reproduced in facsimile in both its French and English versions, and it is transcribed and printed in parallel texts with Arndt's German translation, thus allowing comparison by the reader proficient in the three languages. The content of the understanding follows the usual outlines of most such treaties, all of which emphasized trade guarantees on a most-favored-nation basis and liberal neutral rights. The provisions for "free vessels making free goods" and a narrow definition of contraband were directly contrary to Britain's maritime policy of trade restrictions in peacetime and long contraband lists in time of war.