
This volume covers correspondence to and from George Washington from November 9, 1756, through September 30, 1757, the gritty period between the ebb of British power in the west after the Monongahela and its resurgence with Forbes in 1758. As the papers show, it was a time of small dramas and great hardships; a world of rumor, raids, panics, Indian diplomacy, and the building of forts which, notwithstanding the money and labor lavished upon them, seem always to have been vulnerable and incomplete.

The papers are monuments to grinding struggle. To those responsible for the security of the frontier it must have seemed that nothing, not even the simplest task, could be accomplished without a host of attendant problems. A primitive rural economy was tangled in a war too great for its resources to bear, and if there is a single word summarizing this period it would be "shortage"—of money, troops, tools, food, weapons, powder, cooperation, information, experience, hope. Washington was not the sort of man to bear a burden uncomplainingly, although he was the man to bear the burden, and if one occasionally wearies of his sighs and groans one must recognize that he had every right to both. As the letters of British professionals in a similar situation reveal, the frontier tried men's souls.

It is difficult to ignore this period as the tap-root of future American success in the Revolution, although many scholars still persist in doing so. It is in the post-Monongahela period that men learned how to endure a world of endless disappointments and frustrations and when a lonely, humorless, proud and ambitious man learned the hard way the arts of command. It is in this volume that the Virginia Regiment learns its trade, thanks to the wisdom of the legislature in keeping it upon a year-round footing. This would be the unit that British officers would later admit to be the equal of theirs; that it was never absorbed into the regular army must, from an imperial angle, be seen as a major misfortune since it was from this unit that so many emerged in the later war to help turn the world upside down. Alas for the mother country, it was her fate for the Virginians always to operate
upon the peripheries of the great war against the French, far from the main Anglo-American forces. Most king's officers saw little to praise in the annually recruited (and annually deteriorating) rabble of the northern colonies, and it was from these that the more common British perception of American manhood stemmed.

The material in this volume will provide solid value to a wide variety of researchers. Those seeking to understand how the Revolution occurred will find herein much to ponder, as will those interested in late colonial society, especially the way it organized itself for war. The vital role of Indians and the complexity of "managing" their affairs can be seen in absorbing detail, and it is not the least irony of this period that few officials saw that it was the Indians who were doing the managing, not Washington, and certainly not the egregious Edmond Atkin, manager of Indian affairs in the south. The British presence, if one excludes Atkin, is distant for most of the period covered by this volume. There is competition between the Virginians and Royal American Regiment for increasingly scarce recruits; there is muted alarm over British attention to Pennsylvania; and there is, predictably, Washington's ill-tempered and inaccurate comparison between his services and those from "St. James's &ca where real Service, or a field of Battle never was seen" (p. 113). Apart from these grumbles there is little overt evidence of Anglo-American animosity; indeed, the evidence is overwhelming that Virginia did its duty loyally, unquestioningly, and well.

Intercolonial rivalries are quietly in evidence as are intracolonial stresses, all exacerbated by the strain of the war. These are evident, for example, in Washington's excoriations of the militia, and it may be doubted whether any British officer, drunk or sober, ever expressed a more scathing criticism of the citizen soldier than did this oligarchical planter with his neat surveyor's mind. What a magnificent Tory he would have made!

For those interested in Washington himself the volume is, obviously, essential. One is struck by aspects of his veiled and complex nature—his sensitivity to reproof, which surely stemmed from insecurity, and his cool, almost impersonal relationship with family members and fellow officers. Others might laugh, disparage themselves, or shed before close friends the armor of dignity, but not Washington. Encouragement and sympathy are strangers to his behavior; stiff correction and scathing anger are its familiars. Critics have said of the British that they never understood the Americans and from the evidence of these papers one cannot be certain that Washington under-
stood them either. He seems to be more coldly English than the English, thereby redoubling the irony of his future.

Concerning the production and editing of this volume there can be little but praise. It is a clean, good-looking book in clear type. It is easy to hold. Compliments are in order to those who undertook the stupefyingly boring task of proof reading documents riotously various in their orthography. If there are misprints they escaped me. About two matters only do I have criticism: the absence of maps and the partial failure of footnotes always to let us know what was going on "on the other side of the hill." We sometimes are told what the French did, or planned to do, but not in sufficient detail. I cannot believe, for example, that Canadian or French archives contain no more information on the disappearance of Captain Spotswood's party than is contained in the footnotes on page 124. These are minor blemishes, however, and Dr. Abbot and his staff deserve thanks for a job well done.

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The work at hand contains over five thousand bibliographic entries on the War of 1812. In his preface, John C. Fredriksen indicates why he believed such a compilation was necessary. He feels that "Mr. Madison's War" has been understudied by American historians and therefore we have not learned the lessons which that conflict has to teach. But regardless of lessons, the compiler hopes that his bibliography will serve as a useful tool to anyone wishing to undertake a serious study of the War of 1812 in any of its various ramifications — economic, political, military, social, intellectual, and so forth. This reviewer certainly agrees with Fredriksen's statement that the conflict has not received sufficient attention.

To a large degree, the compiler is successful in fulfilling his goal of providing a convenient starting place for scholars. The bibliography is broken down into thirteen major divisions — General Texts, West and Northwest, Lake Erie, Niagara Frontier-Lake Ontario, St.