

men. That on religion is heavily weighted toward the Scotch-Irish tradition. That on education gives much more attention to Washington and Jefferson College (though completely ignoring its switch from church-related status to a private school) than to the larger, public California State University (now California University of Pennsylvania). Singularly, too, the discussion of public schools ends with 1953.

This work includes no index, no information on the writers (surely a sentence could have been given on each), and citations on sources or quoted matter are absent or inadequate.

Nevertheless, the work was a good idea, and includes a great deal of worthwhile material on events in Washington County since the publication of its last great histories. May other counties follow this example, although with more care. ■

George Swetnam *Pennsylvania Historical Association*
Glenshaw, Pennsylvania

English America and Imperial Inconstancy: The Rise of Provincial Autonomy, 1696-1715. By J. M. Sosin.

(Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1985.

Pp. xii, 287. Introduction, index. \$26.50.)

With this volume, the last in a three-volume work, J. M. Sosin has completed the most comprehensive study of England's imperial policy since Charles M. Andrews' *England's Commercial and Colonial Policy* (1938). In this volume, as in the two earlier ones, Sosin attempts to find a middle ground between the imperial interpretation of Andrews, Beers, and Osgood, and more recent historians such as David Lovejoy and Richard Johnson, who have stressed the growth of American autonomy and democracy. Using a syncretic approach, Sosin describes the years between 1691 and 1715 as a time when England's administrators were preoccupied with domestic politics and were shortsighted in their policies toward America. At the same time, a new class of opportunistic, self-interested colonial leaders compounded the difficulties of effective royal administration.

Sosin begins his monograph with a description of the political environment in England during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In this section the author challenges the imperial argument that a systematic colonial policy had evolved by the early eighteenth

century. Sosin argues that the period was characterized by intense partisan politics which made it impossible for either the Whig or the Tory party to command a majority. Political instability and frequent shifts in policy made administrative continuity difficult and led to an ever changing bureaucracy. The Commission of Trade and Plantation, which administered policy in America, was particularly vulnerable to factional maneuvering.

Prolonged warfare with European enemies, particularly France, and commercial interests that often contrasted with colonial interests complicated the administration of America. Many officials under both William and Anne considered the western hemisphere to be of secondary importance and were unwilling to adequately defend the colonies. Instead, commercial restrictions and conciliatory actions were taken to avoid conflict in America. Much of the burden of implementing these policies became the responsibility of colonial governors. Unfortunately, the Crown did little to support its governors. This undermined royal authority and nourished an evolving American leadership.

While briefly examining political life within each colony during the period, Sosin describes the growth of local leadership in America. Throughout his description the author demonstrates little sympathy for colonial leaders and accuses them of using "the rhetoric of liberty or the rights of Englishmen" for opportunistic purposes (p. 55). Unlike Lovejoy and Johnson, both of whom depict an increasingly democratic America, Sosin claims that small groups of aristocratic politicians with little concern for democracy sought to control provincial governments. Factional leaders such as David Lloyd in Pennsylvania, Lewis Morris in New Jersey and New York, and the Calverts in Maryland plotted to replace royal authorities in a quest for power, position, and profit. Characterized by a strong sense of localism and a resentment against imperial manipulation, these colonists adeptly played one side against the other in Parliament. By taking advantage of England's difficulties in administering American policy, colonial leaders were able to gain significant control over provincial government by 1715.

While Sosin's work offers an interesting interpretation of America at the turn of the eighteenth century, the monograph is marred by several major flaws. Most disturbing are the sources that are used. The English sources are excellent, but colonial sources do not hold up as well. For instance, the chapter about Pennsylvania was done without consulting the *Pennsylvania Archives*, a serious omission. Likewise, Maryland is described without reference to the *Maryland Archives*.

Instead, much of the colonial data comes from English sources or from secondary works that are often a bit dated. This shortcoming is magnified by the absence of a bibliography or a bibliographic essay. Also, the author spends little time discussing the important role that the West Indian sugar islands played in England's imperial scheme. Despite these problems Sosin's work is a worthwhile contribution to the current historiography of the period and deserves to be read by scholars of colonial America. ■

Paul E. Doutrich *Division of History*
 Pennsylvania Historical and
 Museum Commission
 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Penn State: An Illustrated History.

By John Gazella.

(University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1985. Pp. xii, 415. Illustrations, foreword, preface, notes on the sources, index. \$39.50.)

The study of colleges and universities to determine their role in shaping American history has been rather neglected by historians. Before World War II, such studies were limited largely to the famous old liberal arts institutions of the East. These books made little stir because they were written for a limited audience somewhere between scholars and alumni, without really exciting either. After World War II, this situation began to change. Schools west of the Hudson River began to reach their centennial years and sponsored centennial histories. This stimulated a new interest in academic history.

This new academic history has taken a different approach to its subject. With their less hallowed reputations, the younger schools were more inclined to accept a popularized writing style from the historian. This has had both bad and good results. Superficial histories have been published which ought to embarrass the institutions they are supposed to be celebrating. These books seem designed to tease the interest of those with a minimal attention span. On the other hand, the younger schools have stimulated some academic history which deserves notice by historians. Beginning about the time of Robert Manley's *Centennial History of the University of Nebraska* (Univer-