non-migrants similar. These entrepreneurial moves followed the rivers to other regional communities in the early years, but by the late nineteenth century, the elite was directed toward large cities in the East. By this time, the continued accumulation of advantages depended upon participation in a larger social and economic network.

Marriage patterns reflect this search for a larger urban context. After 1880, 79 percent of the elite’s marriages were to non-local partners. Rishel sees these marriages as evidence of the formation of a national upper class. However, he found that the most prestigious local families tended to be the last to seek non-local partners.

He also discovered little evidence of newcomers rushing to join the elite through marriage. Marriage was a bonding of individuals of similar station. As he explains, “[F]amilies with similar interests and ambitions pooled their resources and management capabilities into closely knit networks.” Common interests and ambitions helped to keep these marriages stable — divorces were few. Rishel finds elite families smaller than those among the general population. In fact, even within the elite, he finds smaller families to have been more successful. The transmission of elite resources between generations was facilitated when at death the property that had developed within the marriages was distributed proportionately among all children.

The description of the social milieu of this upper class elite is the least successful part of this study. The research design makes this weakness understandable. The tracing of individuals resulted in memberships and associations that are attributes of individual status. In addition to attributing status, however, churches, schools, and clubs serve to define those with whom we wish to identify, as well as to exclude others with whom we do not wish to associate. The author’s inability to discuss group purposes and membership inhibits conclusions about the inclusivity/exclusivity of the elite as-sociational network.

On the other hand, three-fourths of the founders were either Presbyterian or Episcopalian. The Episcopalians showed gains over the Presbyterians as the century went on. Masonic ties were critical in the early years, becoming less so later in the century. The elite chose early to educate their children in local schools, but later they began to send their children to upper class Eastern schools. Early community involvement included an active commitment to associations focused on public needs. As the century progressed, this social advocacy was replaced by membership in exclusive recreational clubs.

Like any worthwhile study, Rishel’s has left us with many concerns. We could wish for comparative data on other industrializing cities. We might hope for evidence that this group was cohesive, that it continued to be representative of the city’s elite upper class, or that it faced competitive elites as time went on. We would like to know how this group related to less fortunate classes in the city. We might wish to know more of the overlap between the political, economic, religious, and ethnic cultures in the developing city. We might hope that this study would show how this elite interacted with a whole host of major events that shaped the city. But we are asking what the author did not promise.

This study delivers on its promises. It is a valuable contribution to the growing literature on status and change in the industrializing city. It implements a difficult longitudinal research design with important results. It describes a group of remarkable individuals who acquired and sustained their leadership resources over a century of urban economic change. It clarifies the economic and family strategies that enabled them to successfully maneuver through these challenging times. And it demonstrates the author’s main point, that these energetic founding families were more successful than not in meeting these challenges. No matter what else went on around them — and we have many questions about this — they survived and prospered in Pittsburgh’s transition from frontier outpost to metropolis.

James C. Holmberg
Community College of Allegheny County

Sons and Daughters of Labor: Class and Clerical Work in Turn-of-the-Century Pittsburgh
By Ileen A. Devault

For many of us who primarily know Pittsburgh from reading its history, it is a city built by and composed of workers and capitalists—individuals whose combined efforts made it the “Steel City.” Once the center of the nation’s emerging steel industry, Pittsburgh and its surrounding area stand as a prime example of the transformation of industry in late nineteenth and early twentieth century America and the social and economic changes that accompanied it. The Pittsburgh Survey documented for us the details of urban, industrial, and immigrant life. Histories by scholars like Couvares, Bodnar, Simon, Weber, and Kleinberg explained the intricacies of its working class life. Names like Carnegie, Mellon, and Frick conjured up images of vast wealth in the city. The Homestead Strike showed the depth of the conflict between the two as well as almost any event in nineteenth century America.

Now, in her provocative book, Ileen Devault asks us to rethink our

image of Pittsburgh. Rather than focusing on the two poles of capitalists and industrial workers, she looks at the expanding number of clerical workers who were becoming an integral part of Pittsburgh’s work force at the turn of the century. And, in doing so, she considers several important historical issues.

One is the evolving status of clerical workers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Their jobs were undergoing dramatic changes in what they involved, who held them, and how many there were. No longer were they the domain of the handful of men who worked as personal assistants to corporate managers and who could expect to move into management roles themselves. Instead, as corporations grew along with their need for paper work and as typewriters altered how that paper was created, the office became the home of many rather than few. Women appeared where they had never been before as clerks, typists, and stenographers. Equally important, these clerical jobs stopped being the training ground for promotion into management and became a distinct sector of the labor market that required specific training to enter and offered fewer common paths for advancement.

These changes in clerical work are of particular interest to DeVault because they point to an even broader set of issues about the nature of class and class relations in turn-of-the-century Pittsburgh and America. Historians and labor market observers have long posited a strong boundary line between blue-collar and white-collar work. Tales of upward mobility recount the climb from the factory to the office. Historical studies of social mobility record that step as a positive achievement and its opposite as a fall in status. DeVault is not satisfied with these assumptions. Instead she wants to refine them — to ask where clerical work stood in turn-of-the-century Pittsburgh’s social and economic hierarchy, to uncover the individuals who aspired to these jobs, and to understand why they did.

Her approach to those questions is imaginative. Using the records of the Commercial Department of the Pittsburgh High School, she sampled the students who enrolled in that curriculum from 1890 to 1903, to learn about their educational and familial backgrounds, their progress at the school, and whether they graduated or left for other reasons. To provide even more information on their families and their jobs after leaving the program, she linked her sample to city directories, census manuscripts, and marriage records. From this data she is able to identify the origins of these students. Over half were children of working-class families. Almost all were born in America; half were born of native parents. Males outnumbered females over the whole 23-year period, but the sex ratio started to reverse after typing was introduced into the curriculum. They came from all over Pittsburgh to learn the new commercial skills and practices and 41 percent stayed long enough to graduate.

This data also points to the changing nature of class boundaries in late-nineteenth-century Pittsburgh. The experiences of the Commercial Department’s students and their siblings show how individual families straddled the collar line as they worked on both sides of it. DeVault credits this new permeability not only to the transformation of clerical work but also to the changes affecting skilled labor, the aristocracy of the working class. Challenged by corporate efforts to reduce their shop-floor power and to destroy their unions, and by the shifting economic and ethnic composition of their neighborhoods that resulted, these workers and their families had to consider new choices for their future.

To ground this conclusion, DeVault looks closely at two Pittsburgh neighborhoods, Lawrenceville and Hill Top, to ascertain why these skilled workers were willing to send their sons and daughters to the Commercial Department and into white-collar jobs. Within those two communities she documents the dynamics at work that led to that change in attitude and action. Foremost among them were two key factors. First was the belief that high school and its Commercial Department were extensions of the local school systems over which these skilled workers had been able to exert a great deal of control. Education continued to be an arena where they had power and their children would take advantage of it. Second, this schooling and the clerical jobs that resulted helped distinguish these native and western European workers from the unskilled new immigrants who were moving into their neighborhoods and factories. Both worked to offset the trends that seemed to undermine the status of these workers who had dominated the blue-collar ranks.

Finally, DeVault follows the students into their lives after their commercial training. Here she finds that job and marriage choices show the same kind of mixing across the white-collar/blue-collar boundary, and movement back and forth across it, that she found in the classroom. In explaining the phenomenon, she shows again that historians have to rethink their assumptions about social mobility and class definitions at the beginning of the twentieth century.

If a serious complaint can be made about the study, it is that DeVault is far more cautious methodologically than she is in challenging older interpretive frameworks. The way in which she presents her data is revealing in terms of particu-
lar questions. It is less revealing of the complex interaction of gender, ethnicity, and class than it might be. Many tables begged for the inclusion of other variables that might clarify patterns or suggest new ones. To do so might have answered some questions left hanging. Yet, even without taking full advantage of her data, DeVault has written a book that is an important addition to both the history of Pittsburgh and of American society. Its arguments should cause historians of class relations in America to view their subject differently. They raise serious questions about the meaning of social mobility studies in the twentieth century. For, as DeVault concludes (page 177), she has explained how “these individuals became white-collar employees, but remained the sons and daughters of labor.”

Jan Reiff
Newberry Library, Chicago

**War on the Great Lakes:**  
**Essays Commemorating the 175th Anniversary of the Battle of Lake Erie**  
Edited by William Jeffery Welsh and David Curtis Skaggs  

If the number of relevant titles on bookstore shelves is used as a measure, the 1812 War ranks among the least-known conflicts in North American history. Every year new treatments of the American Revolution and the Civil War are published, and there is no shortage of works dealing with the hostilities of this century. But “Madison’s war” seems to have been all but forgotten.

Events such as the re-launching of the U.S. brig *Niagara* at Erie, Pennsylvania, are serving to revitalize interest in the 1812 period. Occurring on September 10, 1988 (the 175th anniversary of the Battle of Lake Erie), the launch attracted international attention. Another gathering, the “War on the Great Lakes Symposium,” was held that same weekend at Windsor, Ontario, and Put-in-Bay, Ohio. While the *Niagara* will sail the lakes in years to come, reminding people of a distant war’s events, the subject of this review, a compilation of papers presented at the symposium, will help fill the wide gap on bookstore shelves.

The volume’s 11 articles are the texts of presentations by some of the leading historians studying the period. Their papers were chosen by the planning committee to provide “a truly objective assessment of the war in the Lake Erie basin,” a goal that is attained quite successfully. Experts and novices alike will be intrigued. The first paper, a compelling narrative by Gerard Altoff, immediately focuses the reader’s attention on the clash between the British and American squadrons. His account makes the events vivid, with its “exhausted and mentally stunned sailors,” and Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry’s boot heels rapping “a steady tattoo” as he paced the deck. A critic might complain that Altoff waxes too poetic, but versions of the story like this one are useful. They remind us that real people, who lived and breathed, felt fear and confusion, manned the warships. In addition, his account gives equal attention to the men of both nations.

After the narrative, the reader encounters an exhaustive investigation of the influences that ordnance had upon the course of the battle. Frederick Drake painstakingly examines the nature of the batteries aboard the American and British squadrons, casting aside the notion that weight of metal alone is a suitable means for comparing the opposing forces. Given the disparity in firepower between the forces, Drake asserts that the British should have avoided a close-in action with Perry. Commander Barclay might have been better off to put all of his men in his three strongest vessels and to engage Perry in a running fight.

While admitting that numerous other circumstances influenced the battle, Drake argues that the manner in which the opposing commanders organized and used their ordnance was critical to the eventual outcome.

Drake’s paper raises interesting questions about the command decisions that preceded the battle. Commander Robert Barclay is discussed by W.A.B. Douglas, who also sheds some light on several other members of the British naval establishment. Unfortunately, there is little new information in Douglas’s paper; it is, rather, a basic review of well-known literature.

Some fresh insights, however, may be found in a pair of articles that step back from the action of that sunny Friday in September 1813 to examine circumstances that existed before and after Perry’s great victory. R. David Edmunds explores the relationships among the native peoples who supported the British. Generally, Tecumseh has been the principle Indian leader connected with these events. Edmunds points out that the Shawnee chief, while being especially influential, was only one of several influential tribal leaders. His brother, Tenskwatata, also known as the Prophet, Main Poc of the Potawatomis, Roundhead, and Walk-in-the-Water, were all involved in the many different confrontations and coalitions that evolved during the war. Those who survived continued to pursue their struggle or learned to live with their changing world, their part in the conflict mainly forgotten. Edmunds’s article offers a number of enticing leads for further study.

In a similar manner, Dennis Carter-Edwards explores what happened after Barclay’s defeat had led to the