

# Florida Historical Quarterly

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Volume 40  
Number 2 *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol 40,  
*Issue 2*

Article 7

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1961

## Book Reviews

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### Recommended Citation

Society, Florida Historical (1961) "Book Reviews," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 40: No. 2, Article 7.  
Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol40/iss2/7>

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Confederate Strategy from Shiloh to Vicksburg.* By Archer Jones. (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1961. 240 pp. Maps, bibliography, and index. \$5.00.)

CONFRONTED WITH a mass of already published material and the certainty that much more will flow from the presses during this centennial period, the Civil War writer is challenged to produce a work that deserves more than a casual perusal. Archer Jones has met this challenge with a book that is sure to interest both the general reader and the specialist. In particular, those who are attracted to the Johnston-Davis feud will find fresh food for thought in this well-researched volume.

“The vast area of the Confederacy west of the Appalachian Mountains presented the most difficult problem in command to the Richmond authorities, by reason of its great extent and its remoteness from the capital.” This book is concerned with the attempt to meet these command problems during the period from Shiloh to the fall of Vicksburg. George Wythe Randolph, grandson of Thomas Jefferson and Confederate Secretary of War from March to November, 1862, is given much of the credit for the reorganization of the West and the creation of a super command under Joseph E. Johnston. Making use of new material from the Alderman Library of the University of Virginia, Jones assigns to Randolph a role of importance not previously accorded by other writers.

Jefferson Davis, whose overall strategy was defensive, adopted a policy which stressed the “defense of the complete territorial integrity of the Confederacy.” The Confederacy was divided into departments and districts, and individual commanders were charged with responsibility for the defense of a particular geographical area. Cognizant of the need for flexibility and appreciative of the difficulty of giving more than limited central direction from Richmond, Davis wisely delegated considerable authority to his departmental commanders.

Johnston emerges from these pages as a man who preferred field command to administration and who frequently left Richmond in the dark as to his plans. Nonetheless, he “ingeniously

exploited the opportunities for strategic co-ordination in his department," and his relations with Davis in this period are described as "quite cordial." The western commander not only shared many of the problems of his eastern counterpart, such as man-power, communications, supply, and forage, but his problems were often magnified by the greater distances involved. Readers are vividly reminded of Confederate weaknesses in transportation when they follow the circuitous rail route (good maps are included) used to shift troops from one district to another within the Department of the West.

With renewed activity by Grant in the spring of 1863, there were some indications that the West might be reinforced with troops from the East. But out of the debates on the relative merits of action in the different theaters came cabinet endorsement of Lee's plan for an offensive in the East. In analyzing the factors behind this decision, the author, who has made a real contribution to the study of Confederate strategic planning, is understandably critical. As he observes, Lee, "subconsciously perhaps, cast himself in the role of strategic oracle for the Confederate government, yet he seems to have viewed the situation through the glasses of a local commander." Many unanswerable questions are involved, but surely the Confederacy would have done better to attempt to save the Mississippi, if not directly, then perhaps indirectly, as Beauregard suggested, by offensive action through middle Tennessee and points north.

LAWRENCE E. BREEZE

*Jacksonville University*

*Why the North Won The Civil War.* Edited by David Donald.  
(Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1960. xv,  
128 pp. Suggested Readings and index. \$2.95.)

THE CHIEF CONTRIBUTION of this volume is not in the conclusions it produces, but in the fact that a group of serious historians have pooled their resources and efforts to evaluate the various reasons "why the North won the Civil War." This is one of the few objective, serious attempts to find an answer, or answers, to this question.

This writer has not come upon a single new reason among those advanced by the five contributors. Some have been more

clearly stated, but none is new or original. Several reasons for the failure of the South have been given added importance and emphasis. Some, such as the questions of morale or social structure have been fetched a little farther, but in each of these secondary causes for failure, one is able to identify similar (and usually more serious) defections and weaknesses in the Northern ranks.

Failures to secure foreign alliances are given much attention by two of the authors. Another reason given considerable attention is the inferiority of Confederate leadership. This cannot be taken too seriously when all of the army commanders on both sides have been compared. Nearly all had had the benefits of the same school, training, and experience. Too much democracy (or individualism) is one other factor given a great deal of attention: during the American Revolutionary War there was much more of this, when whole regiments in the English armies were recruited from among the Americans.

The authors give a multitude of other reasons for the failure of the Confederate government. The facts that they underestimated the importance of the Northern "blockade," were unable to comprehend the "business methods" of their Northern adversaries, the failure of the Davis Government to coordinate the transportation system of the South, and the South's inability to bring its industrial production up to a reasonable level are but a few of those more frequently mentioned.

The men contributing to this volume all bring out the differences between Southern and Northern leadership. One even goes so far as to suggest that if Lincoln had been the President of the Confederacy, the outcome might have been different. Prominent members in the two administrations are also discussed in much the same manner. The problems of finance, the use of the resources at hand, the utilization of manpower by the two groups of leaders are contrasted in these and in most of the other arguments, the conclusion seems to approach the same thesis. Success was the result of the "materialistic outlook" of the North, its leaders, and the business men who approached the winning of the war as just another milestone in the world of material success.

The only fundamental problem the South failed to solve was that of logistics. It never had a surplus of anything but cotton.

It is quite true that many of the ideologies of the South, and the quirks of some of its leaders, complicated the process of trying to find a solution to this problem, but the fact still remains that the North solved it and the South did not. The North not only supplied its own fighting forces, but also those of generals Forrest and Morgan, and many smaller units in the Confederate armies. The North ended the war with the most powerful navy the world had ever seen while the South had none. And, while the South was being bled white in every branch of its economic and supply structure, the North was growing more populous, developing a greater industrial and transport system, and was in a stronger financial position than it had ever been even when the Confederate States were a part of the Union. When the war came to an end it was relatively simple for the Northern Government to send to the Mexican border an army strong enough to scare the French puppet rulers right out into the Atlantic Ocean.

The only weakness of the volume is its brevity. The reasons for the final outcome of the war, when taken in detail, could well fill ten times as many pages. The physical characteristics of the book are as outstanding. Nothing can be criticized here reasonably. Let us hope that this is merely a beginning to a tremendous job.

THEODORE R. PARKER

*Freeport, Grand Bahama Islands*

*Americans at War, The Development of the American Military System.* By T. Harry Williams. (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1960. 139 pp. Illustrations. \$3.50.)

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT book dealing with America's military command organization and its effectiveness. All the conflicts in American history, beginning with the American Revolution and running down to 1914, are examined in detail (the author deals with World Wars I and II in very general terms because he claims they are too recent for a historian to evaluate), but the evaluation of the leadership on each side in the Civil War will probably evoke more contemporary interest than the others. Until the very closing months of that war, the Presidents of the two governments were in effect the command strategists of their respective armies.

Considering only their backgrounds, the author points out that one would expect the Confederate President to be the greater war leader because of his long army experience; President Lincoln had never had any military experience except briefly as a militia soldier in the Black Hawk War. However, the conclusion is reached that Lincoln was a great war president and Davis a very mediocre one. Not until U. S. Grant was appointed General-in-Chief was Lincoln able to surrender much of the responsibility for the over-all Union strategy. It was not until this appointment was made, the book asserts, that the United States achieved anything comparable to a modern command system. Failure of the South, though brilliant in tactical maneuvers and in battlefield strategy, is attributed to the fact that it never succeeded in creating a competent command system or in setting up a unified plan of strategy.

Not until the waning months of the Civil War was a plan developed with a commander-in-chief to state policy in the general objective of strategy, a general-in-chief to put the strategy in specific form, and a chief of staff to coordinate information. Only then did the United States possess for the first time in its history what the author calls "a model system of civil and military relationships and the finest command arrangements of any country in the world."

Though the book is brief and at most only an introductory study, it opens up an unexplored area of American military history. Mr. Williams feels that although our command organization has been improvised hastily when needed, the subject has long been neglected because the United States has won all of its wars and consequently there has been no need to examine the command structure. With the apparent lack of over-all planning characteristic of each of our wars, one marvels that the outcome in each instance has been so fortunate for the country.

Washington's part in the Revolution was complicated by the fact that in addition to being the supervisor for all armies, he was also the commander of a field army. In the War of 1812, the author points out that over the forces "raised there presided in the first two years of the war one of the choicest collections of incompetent generals in our military history."

James K. Polk is characterized as being one of our nation's strongest chief executives because of the manner in which he

exercised his authority during the Mexican War. Polk is said to be the first president to demonstrate that a civilian could act effectively as commander-in-chief.

Elihu Root, as Secretary of War under President McKinley, is credited with laying the ground work for our present command system, which has to find a place for a civilian commander-in-chief, a civilian Secretary of War (Defense), a Chief of Staff, a general staff, and field commanders. With slight adaptations the Root system has survived for nearly sixty years.

Williams points out that lack of interest in strategy and command experiences has characterized most Americans, even prominent American historians. Heading the list of the uninformed at the time of World War I was "the commander in chief, that former eminent historian, Dr. Woodrow Wilson." The emphasis of the book is on Army command organization to the almost total exclusion of the naval aspects, but, as Mr. Williams points out, his researches have centered on the Army and it is this study which has convinced him that investigation of the organizational aspect of America's war direction is urgently needed.

CHARLES T. THRIFT, JR.

*Florida Southern College*

*Marquette Legends.* By Francis Borgia Steck. Edited by August Reyling. (New York, Pageant Press, 1960. xxii, 350 pp. Facsimiles, maps, notes, bibliography, and index. \$5.00.)

FATHER STECK'S amazing work gives a clear and powerful demonstration of scholarship and historical sleuthing at its best.

Actually Father Steck, who returned to Quincy College in 1947 after illness forced him to leave the Catholic University of America, offers this abstract of his doctoral dissertation as his swan song to his writings on Marquette. Since receiving his doctorate in 1927 his interests and teaching have been in the field of Spanish-American History. Continuing inquiries and correspondence concerning his radical explorations on Marquette moved him to offer the present volume as a published, definitive work to replace the huge, two volume mimeographed form of his dissertation.

In 1923, while teaching at Quincy College, Father Steck was asked to prepare a series of articles about Marquette as part

of the 250th anniversary of the Jolliet-Marquette expedition of 1673. These articles, based on careful research, presented a picture of the earlier events which were so much at variance with accepted data and facts that they were not used in the commemoration. However, they were published later and caused an anguished protest by the worshippers of Marquette.

These articles became the core of his doctoral study when he went to the Catholic University in 1924. After he had received his degree, Father Steck, with the assistance of Father Reyling O.F.M., mimeographed, assembled, and distributed 350 sets of the two-volume form of his dissertation to libraries and universities throughout United States and Canada. The study demonstrates meticulous scholarship and largely destroys the legendary Marquette, but the work is done without heat or wrath. Steck's book should fascinate the lay reader of history and cause the professionals to glow with the satisfaction that one of their members could produce such a work. Fifty-one pages are used for the 689 footnotes of this 244-page abstract. When Father Steck finished each topic of his book, one felt that the definitive word had been given.

A rather interesting fact is that Father Steck, a Franciscan, exposes the work of two high Jesuits, Reuben Gold Thwaites, and other laity in the fabrication of the Marquette legends. One present-day Jesuit, who read the book, absolved Steck from malice :

Legends sprout so easily and the partisans and those who have worshiped at the shrine of the overrated hero take it ill when their idol suffers diminution of splendor. But - let the truth prevail.

Jacques Marquette S. J. (1637-1675) entered the Jesuit novitiate at Nancy when he was seventeen. He was admitted to his first vows two years later. For the next nine years, until 1665, he taught in six different schools. Two years after he began, his superiors judged him talented only for teaching in missions abroad. By that time the ratings on his work began to decline, slipping from *bonum* to *mediocre*; then to *melancholica*, *sanguinea*, and finally to *biliosa*. He became a *repetens* - a repeater in the important subjects of the curriculum.

After several appeals for transfer to foreign mission fields, he was sent to Canada in 1666. He was sent to missions in the



western Great Lakes area to study the Algonquin language. During the next nine years, until his death in 1675, he was stationed in six different missions. His last charge was Sainte Ignace on Michilimackinac Island.

Traditionally, Marquette was supposed to have accompanied Louis Jolliet on his exploration of the Mississippi in May, 1673. In 1674, accompanied by two guides, Father Marquette is supposed to have made a second voyage of his own down the western shore of Lake Michigan to the Illinois River. Ill health forced him to cut short this trip to return to Sainte Ignace, but he died before he completed the return. Two years later his body was exhumed and re-interred in the chapel at Sainte Ignace. He died shortly before his thirty-eighth birthday.

Father Marquette's historical significance came from the belief that he was Jolliet's companion on this first trip down the "Missepi" - a belief that Father Steck successfully and impressively refutes.

If Marquette did go with Jolliet, his role was minor since this expedition was one of imperial approval designed to scout the Mississippi Valley for French claim and had no religious purpose. Jolliet's expedition was an early project in the new mercantilist design established for Canada when Count de Frontenac came to that colony in 1672. A basic step in the new development of the province was to take it back from the clerics and develop it commercially. Frontenac (Jean de Baude) and Jean Talon, the royal *intendant*, laid the groundwork for this new policy. Jolliet was selected by them to make the voyage down the river.

Louis Jolliet was a native Canadian who had started Jesuit training but left the order for business. Before he departed on his voyage, he and six associates organized a fur company for later development. Presumably, before his departure, Jolliet visited Father Claude Dablon S.J., Superior General of the Jesuit Missions in Canada. If Marquette did join the party when it came west, it was the result of Dablon asking for his inclusion in the party.

The Jolliet Narrative of 1681 does not mention Father Marquette as being a member of the party and Marquette in his annual *Relations* does not mention it either.

On his return trip northward, after wintering in Green Bay, Jolliet stopped at Sainte Ignace and then continued eastward

to Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. During the trip down the St. Lawrence River, Jolliet's canoe was overturned in Lachine Rapids. Two rowers and an Indian boy, the gift of a chief earlier on the river trip, were drowned. Lost also was the strong box which contained Jolliet's journals and a map.

Jolliet visited Father Dablon and gave an oral account of the expedition which Dablon took down. Later Father Dablon wrote Jolliet's *recit* into a fuller report which he sent to his superior in Paris in 1674, saying that a fuller report would follow as soon as a second copy of Jolliet's journals could be sent by Father Marquette. In 1681 Jolliet's *Narrative* was published by Melchisedech Thevenot of Paris.

The supposed role of Marquette in the expedition of 1673, if he did accompany it was a part of a crafty device of Dablon to "plant" a Jesuit on a strictly governmental venture in order that the Church could claim credit and glory by his membership in the party.

Since Jolliet's journals were lost in the river, Dablon, in enlarging the *recit* into the *Narrative*, became the only one who could tell the story of the voyage, and the recital of what did occur on the trip came from Dablon's pen. Father Steck, after careful review, declares Dablon to be the author of the *Narrative* of 1673. Dablon did not have time between taking down Jolliet's *recit* and transmitting the *Narrative* to his superior in Paris to have secured Jolliet's second copy of the journals, reputed to have been left with Marquette at Sainte Ignace. After Marquette's death, Father Dablon reported that he had obtained the mission priest's papers, but failed to mention the duplicate of Jolliet's journals. Steck amasses thirty-four sources on the matter of Marquette's part of the trip. He states that twenty of these indicate that Marquette did not accompany Jolliet.

After Dablon had spuriously placed Marquette on the Jolliet expedition, in 1675, he ingeniously routed a letter to Virginia where it fell into the hands of William Byrd, warning the English that French clerics were already on the Mississippi. Since this date, 1675, coincides with the Virginians' thrust toward the west, it shows Dablon's sharp knowledge of continental affairs. The letter, which survives only as a copied translation of the Latin original, was signed "Jacobus Macput." Steck deduced that the "cpu" of the name was meant to be the "rque" of Mar-

quette, and that the letter was attributed to Marquette. However, Dablon had written the letter and given it to Father Jean Pierron, a Jesuit, who was going to work in the missions in Maryland. Pierron gave it to one of his Indian trustees to deliver to an Englishman in Virginia. The Macput Letter was the final ruse in Dablon's build-up of "his man" in his struggle to keep the Jesuits in the Canadian foreground even though their days were numbered. The fatal falsehood of the letter was that it bears a date, August 19, which was more than two months after Marquette had died.

The next elaboration of the Marquette legends occurred in 1844 when Father Felix Martin, S. J., Superior of the Jesuit community at Montreal, received from the nuns of Hotel Dieu a lot of manuscripts which had been left with them for safe keeping by Father Jean Cazot, the last of the former Jesuits in Canada. Father Martin, personally interested in the history of Jesuit activity in Canada, stated in a letter that the documents contained the "original work of Marquette," meaning the copy of Jolliet's journal of 1673. When Father Martin returned to France in 1861, he arranged to have these documents published in two volumes: *Relation Inedites de la Nouvelle France, 1672-1679*.

Father Steck's examination of the "Montreal Narrative" shows that the manuscript was not written by Marquette, had not been corrected by Dablon, and that it was based on the Thevenot printing of the Narrative of 1673. Steck names Martin as the fabricator.

In addition to counterfeiting the Montreal Narrative, Martin brought out the so-called Marquette "Autograph Map." Father Steck subjected this document to his relentless examination. He shows that the map had two different handwritings and place names spelled differently from the Thevenot printing of the *Narrative* of 1673.

Last of the Martin fabrications of the now hopelessly bemired Marquette was the *Journal of the Second Voyage*, the voyage supposedly made by Marquette to the Illinois in 1674. This manuscript contains numerous corrections and strikeovers which reveal errors of its manufacture. Father Steck parades twenty-seven authors and other sources to demolish the authenticity of the *Narrative*. The villain was again Father Martin, still advancing the greatness of Marquette. Martin had faked the autograph

of Marquette on the map and also Marquette's signature on a baptismal record in Boucheville to serve as evidence of Marquette's authorship of the *Journal of the Second Voyage*.

Dablon, Martin and Marquette - all Jesuits and each serving the Lord and advancing the greatness of their Order. Dablon fabricated a journal and a letter to make an obscure priest an advance guard of the Order in resistance to Colbert, Talon, Frontenac and the mercantilists. Martin, working more than a century and a half after Marquette's death, continued the work of Dablon's defense of the Jesuits and all their works. And Marquette? He was a simple novitiate who was shipped to the provinces because he did not have the ability for full work in the Order. Happy to be assigned a role as a missionary among the Indians around the Great Lakes, he spent the last nine years of his life working in that distant field of the Church, a lowly and humble servant of the Lord. Fortunately he died before the fabrication of his role began. He had no part in the fabrication of his place in history.

NATHAN D. SHAPPEE

*University of Miami*

*Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War.* By David Donald. (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1960. xxii, 392 pp. Illustrations, list of manuscripts cited and index. \$6.75.)

THE "COMPLEX ART OF BIOGRAPHY," James L. Clifford, distinguished biographer and Johnsonian scholar, has explained, is a difficult one, for the problems of the biographer are numerous and require a well-trained and gifted scholar. The author who undertakes such a study must come to terms with a personality who has lived, often, in a period removed from his own, and which may differ from his in such essential matters as idiom of expression and values. In addition, the biographer must become fairly expert in his knowledge of the special interests and activities of his subject; indeed, a professional study must demonstrate the author's understanding of the problems and skills of his subject, and an ability to present them in a comprehensible way. The biographer must be able, after sifting through all available evidence, to arrive at an image of the central figure which shuns sentimentality, and which highlights him consistently; that is,

the author must interpret but not preach, and he must do so in a way which does not divert the reader's attention from the main character. Because all of these problems have been handled so expertly in David Donald's recent work, *Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War*, it is an example of the art of biography.

The problems which confronted the biographer of Charles Sumner, a major figure in American history, help to explain why a new biography of him did not appear until this year. Since Sumner had a policy-making position in the drama of the Civil War and Reconstruction, the importance of such a study had for a long time been obvious; his life-history held clues as to the causation of that critical period in our history-but as a personality Sumner was complex and difficult to understand. Edward O'Neil, the historian of American biography, wrote, "Sumner had one of the most complex characters of any man in American life. . . ." As Professor Donald has shown, his personality shifted in strange ways, indicating tensions and motivations better understood today than in Sumner's own time. These vagaries of Sumner's personality required a highly perceptive and imaginative biographer.

The confusion in state and national politics in the United States during the 1850's presented another obstacle for the biographer of Sumner, since Sumner's interests and needs led him to politics. As a native of Massachusetts with a distinguished scholastic record at Harvard, it was both logical and proper that Sumner enter the Whig Party upon graduation. It was the only political organ for men of respectability, and the dominant party of the state for more than a quarter of the nineteenth century. This was also the century of institutional change, and Sumner followed the shifting current of political strength and contributed to the break-up of the once powerful Whig Party. Sumner moved, as did the state and the nation, gradually but noticeably away from orthodoxy. Politicians in Massachusetts went from Whiggery to Conscience Whiggism to Free Soilism to coalition with the Democrats and finally to a new major party with considerable stability - the Republican Party. The biographer of Charles Sumner would have to explain in some meaningful way this dramatic change in the political structure of what had been a singularly conservative and stable state, relate this to the life of Sumner, and not diminish the importance or responsibility of

the future Senator from Massachusetts. The writer would have to sift evidence and weigh the possible explanations; was it slavery, political ambition, cultural change, or economic factors which best explained the change? It is to Professor Donald's credit that he meets this problem with great skill and learning. Donald presents, to this reviewer's knowledge, the best analysis of the change in Massachusetts politics, and offers several ideas which may well be studied by all students of nineteenth century political history.

With Sumner's election to the United States Senate in 1851, the story becomes even more complicated, for in Washington Sumner was a victim of the complication endemic to our federal system, that in which a Senator must always weigh national issues against his party's sentiment back home and his own feelings; needless to say these are not always in accord. The biographer must keep one watchful eye on Sumner in the Senate and another very sharp one on the shape of things in Massachusetts. For example, there is the touchy question of just how much of Sumner's own conviction went into his devastating attacks on slavery and how much they were the result of pressure from party leaders back home who needed an issue to consolidate their position with the electorate; or, did Sumner's votes on national issues mirror himself, Massachusetts, or even a smaller group of articulate and politically ambitious men? Donald not only faces these questions but provides convincing answers to them.

Finally, the quantity of material, manuscript and printed, relevant to *Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War* is enormous. There are literally mountains of manuscript materials pertaining to each of the participants in this book; the list of secondary readings dealing with the Civil War is legendary; newspaper files, census returns, and pamphlet material complete an imposing mass of literature which faced the careful and conscientious scholar.

Donald's thorough acquaintance with such materials is seen in his previous works on the Civil War period: *Lincoln's Herndon*, a biography of Lincoln's law partner; *Lincoln Reconsidered*, a remarkable group of essays on different aspects of the Civil War period; and a host of thoughtful articles and creative book reviews in which the author has clearly established his position as a Civil War expert. Even with this background of competence

it is not surprising that this biography (the first of a two-volume work) should have taken ten years to complete; in fact, when one re-reads the book carefully, it becomes amazing that it did not take twice that time. To understand Sumner, Donald has hunted far and wide for reliable sources; nothing has been left to chance; every manuscript collection, abroad and in the United States, which could have provided a clue to Sumner has been studied. In addition, the author's text and footnotes show very careful reading of the influential newspapers of the day, an arduous task in itself. The footnotes reveal also how hard and successfully the author has labored to maintain an uninterrupted text without avoiding the really complex questions which required answers. Election results, for example, are interpreted in the text with their analysis and details left in footnotes for the interested and specialized reader; an analysis of Sumner's perplexing behavior following his caning by Preston Brooks is handled in the same way. What is most rewarding is that all of this hard work has been given life and meaning by a brilliant prose style which can be enjoyed by all, general reader and specialist alike.

The picture of Sumner which emerges in this first volume of the biography is understanding and clear, but far from sympathetic. Sumner's early life and formative years are presented - actually, they seem to present themselves - and they reveal a distorted personality, whose goals in life could not be realized in a normal way. Sumner's mind functioned in a framework of absolutes which did not recognize the shadings of reality, and whose destructive tendencies were early recorded by those who knew him well. The Senator possessed powers of oratory and intellect but used them as a vehicle for his personal needs with disastrous consequences for the nation. This was an unhappy, callous man who contributed to an equally unhappy period of history. This biography, when added to what other scholars have revealed about the Civil War, should challenge textbook authors and teachers of American history to reconsider the basic question of causation of the Civil War. *Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War* is an outstanding example of the art of biography.

ALBERT FEIN

*Long Island University*