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Book Reviews

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Mississippi in the Confederacy, As They Saw It. Edited by John K. Bettersworth. (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1961. 362 pp. Illustrations, \$5.95)

Mississippi in the Confederacy, As Seen in Retrospect. Edited by James W. Silver. (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1961. 362 pp. Illustrations, \$5.95)

The story of the American Civil War is always most interestingly told by those who witnessed it. What they observed and recorded cannot be rewritten more poignantly by historians of a later era. These two volumes record the day-to-day reactions of Mississippians to secession, war, invasion, army service outside of Mississippi, the struggle for existence on the home front, and all other facets of life which had to be lived during the Civil War. Great care has been taken to retain the flavor and authenticity of the original works and to preserve for the reader an atmosphere which creates a sympathetic tie between our times and the war years.

In *Mississippi in the Confederacy, As They Saw It*, John K. Bettersworth has compiled a comprehensive anthology from a large number of unpublished materials, diaries, letters, and personal papers, as well as from official records and public sources, to tell the story of Mississippians during the war. All material in this volume is contemporary to the war period and tells the day to day reactions of the people. Bettersworth, an established historian, has edited a volume of great interest and value both to the professional historian and to the Civil War "buff."

The second volume, *Mississippi in the Confederacy, As Seen in Retrospect*, edited by James W. Silver, is made up of post-war reminiscences of many persons who took part in the war and of accounts by later writers about Mississippi during the war. These writings blend together to take the reader on a fascinating journey into Civil War Mississippi and the triumphs and the sorrows of the war era. Mr. Silver makes excellent use of materials written by such diverse individuals as Jefferson Davis, Ulysses S. Grant, William Faulkner, Mark Twain, Bell I. Wiley, and Rembert Patrick.

Together these two books give a comprehensive view of the times and provide the reader an extraordinary insight into the

history of a state and its people during the trying times of the Civil War.

JOHN E. JOHNS

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The United Colonies of New England, 1643-1690. By Harry M. Ward. (New York: Vantage Press, 1961. 434pp. Plates \$4.50.)

Although cheaply bound, replete with typographical errors, and printed on poor quality paper, which is as hard upon the reader's eyes as the blurred illustrations, the physical make-up of Professor Ward's book is commendable for the very useful map of colonial New England and New Jersey inside the front cover, and that showing the territories of the various Indian tribes inside the back cover. It is also useful to have the full text of the Confederation of 1643 and 1672 in the first two appendices and a full summation of all their meetings in the third; the fourth gives brief biographical sketches of the Commissioners. Commendable also is the plan which the author used in writing the book: the first chapter, "Determining Influences," traces the background of the Confederacy to its origins in the United Provinces of the Netherlands, the lessons of history gleaned by the Puritans from their Humanistic learning, the covenant theology, and colonial experience with representative government. The second chapter gives a careful account of the specific situations, the Dutch threat, the French threat, the Indian threat, the absence of English support during the Civil War, and the need to maintain Congregational orthodoxy, that led to the formation of the New England Confederation in 1643.

An analysis of the structure of the United Colonies accompanied by a good deal of quibbling over the question of sovereignty, precedes an account of the role played by the Confederation in its relations with New France including the Bay Colony's ill-fated espousal of LaTour's cause against D'Aubrey, the initiation of the Synod which adopted the Cambridge Platform of Church discipline in 1648, the laying of groundwork for converting the Indians, and the settling of intercolonial boundary disputes. The author brings the first segment of his book to a

close at the end of Chapter Five, having traced the development to the year 1652, the last ten years of which Professor Ward calls "the decade of optimism" and sums up as follows: "the Confederation during the first decade had provided leadership in both internal and external affairs, creating a solidarity in action essential to the existence of the infant New England colonies . . . the singular outstanding contribution of the period, of which it cannot be denied that the Confederation was largely responsible, was the preserving of peace."

The three following chapters flash back to give full exposition of the Confederation's handling of Indian affairs, Dutch relations, and land disputes and are followed by a resumption of the historical narrative through the constitutional crises of 1653-5, the efforts of the three smaller colonies, Connecticut, New Haven, and Plymouth, to counter the powerful Massachusetts Bay dominance, the weakness of the Commissioners in dealing with Royal Commissioners after the Restoration, and its survival under circumstances "from 1655 to 1670, when by reason the Confederation should have collapsed, there appeared a cement of union - the spreading of the Gospel in the New World."

The final phase of the book begins with the Second Confederation of the United Colonies at Plymouth in 1672 and the new Articles of Confederation, differing from the older one in "that all the powers of the Confederation were to be delegated and there were no inherent powers derived from the freemen, as the earlier Confederation had implied. The Commissioners were subject to the same checks as other general officers of a colony and not members of nor perennial plenipotentiaries to a super-government." Major interest in this final segment lies in the account of the Commissioners acting as a supreme military council during King Philip's War and the domination interlude under Andros culminating in the revolt of April 18, 1688. The story comes to a close in April, 1693, with William Stoughton's letter to the Corporation in England for Promoting the Gospel as "a commissioner of the United Colonies." In the final chapter, "A Legacy for America," the author sums up the significance of the New England Confederation in ". . . implanting into the colonial consciousness an experience in federal union and an example of the capability of the colonists to shape their own destiny. Fifty

years of Confederation left a feeling for union and a longing for independence that was never to die.”

Professor Ward's book embodies a painstaking research, making thorough use of the available materials pertaining to his subject; it is carefully documented, the usual chapter having over a hundred footnotes at the end; and, although marred by inept phraseology, is valuable in its forcing upon the consciousness of the reader the significance of the United Colonies of New England in our constitutional history. Perhaps there is little that is new in this book (the author makes his major claim to a contribution in showing that the Confederation was revived in the New England Union of 1689-90); but it does put a major segment of the Puritan contribution to democratic institutions into full perspective.

ROBERT S. WARD

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