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Book Reviews

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Evolution of a Federalist, William Loughton Smith of Charleston (1758-1812). By George C. Rogers, Jr. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1962. xiv, 439 pp. Preface, charts, bibliography, index. \$8.00.)

William Loughton Smith, 1758-1812, a Charlestonian of prominence in the early years of the Republic, is practically unknown to South Carolinians of later days. In spite of his five times election to Congress from his native state, he holds an uneasy position in its history. Dr. Rogers has penetrated and exposed the cause of his near but always elusive success as a great national figure.

The early events of William Smith's life are well-ordered and follow the pattern of the society he frequented. Born in Charleston of a merchant-banker family of good ancestry, he was connected later by marriage with other prominent families of the city: Izard, Manigault, Ladson, Wragg. His education followed a Carolina rule; he was sent to England at age eleven, studied in London, Middle Temple, and in Geneva. Dallying abroad during the Revolution, he returned to Charleston only in 1783. He was elected to the House of Representatives and appeared in the First Congress from South Carolina. He immediately took a prominent part in the Federalist arguments for strong central government. He was on easy terms with Washington, Hamilton, and Madison but always in opposition to Jefferson. Finally in 1796, he was appointed minister to Lisbon, where he relished the splendors of the society but despised the post. After leaving his legation he loitered on in Europe, traveling at leisure, until 1803. He stood for Congress in three successive terms and was defeated three times, but was elected to the legislature of his state.

Yet, despite his education, money, relatives, and honors, Smith must have been a poor man. It is incomprehensible that he did not regret missing the American Revolution, but how would he have fitted in with Moultrie, Pickens, Sumter, Marion, and Greene? It is surprising that he survived this handicap and was able to engage in a political career. Hamilton thought him second rate; his constituents burned him in effigy in Charleston in 1794, along with Benedict Arnold and the devil. He was accused of illegal and unethical speculation on the funding of the state debts. He was further distinguished as being the first U. S.

Congressman to have his seat challenged in the House.

If the success of the writer is measured by the degree to which he inspires further reading, Dr. Rogers has been extraordinarily successful. The *Annals of Congress* have lost their dust and their dryness has disappeared under the interest stimulated by this readable book on an important person in our history. Yet *Evolution of a Federalist* is complete; it tells the whole story. It tidies up all the details with ample notes, tables, and foot-notes to keep the reader informed as to the genealogical connections, the relatives, the descendants even down to the present. Imagine finding a friend in the footnote! It is a pleasure to read history when written with such style and enthusiasm.

VIVIAN PRINCE

University of Southern California

Jefferson and the Ordeal of Liberty. By Dumas Malone. (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1962. xxx, 545 pp. \$7.50.)

In a work of such grand design as Malone's multi-volume study of Jefferson, facts become secondary and the heart of the matter is to be found in interpretations and insights which can not be expected to occur to the casual researcher, no matter how well disciplined or sincerely motivated. The facts are largely in, although Professor Malone is "ahead" of the definitive edition of the Jefferson papers, and relies heavily on the Ford edition as well as on his own wide familiarity with the manuscripts.

This volume, the third in the series, opens with Jefferson's reluctant agreement to stay on as Secretary of State through most of 1793 and with his relationship to the Giles resolutions on Hamilton's conduct of the treasury. Dr. Malone is satisfied that Jefferson was not a prime mover in this event, but that he was doubtless privy to it, and with disarming frankness he admits he is resorting to "sheer speculation" to support this view.

He then turns to the great issues of the year—the onrushing events of the French Revolution and their implications for the United States. Professor Malone goes out of his way to forgive Jefferson's exaggerated expressions on the justification of blood for freedom's sake, but does a better job, I think, of portraying the delicate balance in Jefferson's thoughts on the execution of

Louis XVI. Moreover, he gracefully acknowledges that more men than Jefferson saw the necessity of non-involvement and makes no attempt to ascribe the authorship of the neutrality policy exclusively to Jefferson. One of the finest moments in the book occurs when Malone describes so penetratingly the distress in Jefferson's mind when, while honestly endorsing the Neutrality Proclamation, he personally yearned to participate in the triumph of France as the symbol of liberty struggling against tyranny.

The perplexing and embarrassing issue of Genet is masterfully described, from Jefferson's early enthusiasm to the difficult moment in August, 1793, when he was prepared to abandon Genet entirely. Professor Malone wonders how Jefferson "managed to overlook the Reign of Terror" and seems to conclude that Jefferson saw only what he wanted to see in the French Revolution—a heroic crusade for human liberty.

Dr. Malone rightly considers Jefferson's opinion in favor of maintaining the French treaty of alliance as one of his ablest papers as well as "the most devastating opinion that Jefferson ever directed against the arguments of his colleague" (p. 78). This reference to Hamilton raises the question which one expects to be asked about any study of Jefferson: How does Hamilton fare? We read within the first eighty pages of the "eager hands" of "this natural prima donna" and of the "pugnacious nature" of "this imperious man." He is described as "unquestionably high-handed" in his financial activities and as "the officious Secretary of the Treasury" with an "imperious temper." Enough.

After the break with Hamilton, Jefferson's drift toward his role as the nucleus of political opposition occurred in almost imperceptible stages. With reference to Washington, Malone writes: "If one need pick the precise point at which he began to question the wisdom of Washington, whose judgment he so generally respected, this [Washington's castigation of the 'self-created societies' at the time of the Whiskey Rebellion] seems to be it" (pp. 190-191). Jefferson remained aloof from the debate over the implementation of the Jay Treaty, but "these events perceptibly quickened the course of this gentleman of Virginia in the democratic direction" (p. 257). Of the election to the vice-presidency, Malone concludes: ". . . the simple truth is that he had nothing to do with it. The evidence leaves no room for doubt that this

supposed principal in a national contest was actually a non-participant; and his personal indifference at this time appears to have been genuine" (p. 273).

One can feel almost personally what Jefferson felt when the XYZ papers were made public - his grave disappointment at the tone and actions of the French officials, his alarm at the rising pitch of belligerency in America, particularly among the high Federalists, and his greater fear that many Republicans would desert the fold in order to throw off any taint of being pro-French and perhaps cause the party to founder at the moment when Jefferson believed a strong opposition party to be of paramount importance. This importance was heightened, he felt, by the passage of the Sedition Act, although his biographer puts as gentle an interpretation on this act as the present reviewer has ever seen. To Jefferson, however, the heart of the issue transcended politics to the realm of liberty, to whose preservation and enlargement he had dedicated his life. To redress the balance for liberty Jefferson took the strongest stand on states rights as a check against federal encroachment that he would ever take. But his zealous statements in the Kentucky Resolutions-contrasting with the more modest tone of Madison in the Virginia Resolutions-lead Malone to write: ". . . it now seems a pity that Madison did not draft both papers" (p. 408). A reviewer is quite disarmed by Professor Malone's remark in the introduction that this episode "was perhaps the most difficult of any that I have attempted to describe in this volume, and I sincerely trust that I got the nuances right" (p. xix).

The impression is clearly left that the Presidency was imposed on Jefferson by default of any other available or reasonably promising leader of the opposition. His self-imposed curtailment of letter writing during the "reign of witches" is well known, and he seems a picture of anything except an active candidate for office. This did not save him from becoming the object of personal attacks which "were the most vicious in any presidential campaign on record" (p. 479).

The volume ends with a tightly written account of the suspenseful resolution of the Presidential election in the House of Representatives. The final paragraph of summation is a gem.

American historiography is again impressively indebted to Dumas Malone.

FRANKLIN A. DOTY

University of Florida

Ante-Bellum Southern Literary Critics. By Edd Winfield Parks.
(Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1962. 259 pp.
\$7.50.)

Edd Winfield Parks study of literary criticism in the South before the Civil War side-steps the figure of Edgar Allan Poe, and is thus a *Hamlet* without Hamlet. This notable omission, however, is by no means the sum of Professor Parks' failures. His book does not discuss any of the writers of the Colonial period, despite the fact that almost all the themes which were to become important in the era of Simms and Grayson can be seen emerging in the work of William Byrd, Robert Beverly, George Alsop, and Ebenezer Cook. How can we understand the tradition of Southern criticism without an awareness of how and why the tradition began?

This question does not bother the author of *Ante-Bellum Southern Literary Critics* in the slightest, for the simple reason that he is not really interested in the Southern tradition in American literature. His book contains no discussion, either by way of introduction or summation, of what was "Southern" or of what was "Ante-Bellum" about the literary attitudes of the writers he considers. We are presented, rather, with a series of disconnected essays arranged more or less chronologically by author. No reason is advanced for the choice of authors, and none-except the mere fact of their fame-can be discerned. No effort is made to place them within a developing context of critical concerns. Few if any comparisons with Northern criticism are ventured. Social and political factors, which played such an important role in the literature of the South in the ante-bellum period, are ignored.

The essays contain a certain amount of information, most of it familiar to anyone who has read the monumental work of Jay B. Hubbell, but they never quicken into life. More than anything else, the essays read like reading notes which have been worked up, with a painful and terrific effort, into complete sen-

tences. Professor Parks' wooden style even manages to make Jefferson dull. Indeed, the only vibrant question which this worthless book raises is, why was it published?

KENNETH S. LYNN

Harvard University

The African Colonization Movement, 1816-1865. By P. J. Staudenraus. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961. ix, 323 pp. Appendix, bibliography, index. \$6.00.)

In 1919 Early Lee Fox published *The American Colonization Society* which covered only the early years of the organization. Professor Staudenraus has made an exhaustive study of the much broader colonization movement. His book explains the origins of colonization, traces the activities of the Society down to the abolition of American Negro slavery at the close of the Civil War in 1865, and gives a brief summary of the Society to 1909 when it still had five members. Of greater importance Staudenraus evaluates and interprets the overall significance of the colonization movement.

Staudenraus shows that the idea of colonization of free Negroes had its origin during the Revolutionary era, and found its earliest and strongest support in Virginia among such notables as Thomas Jefferson, Ferdinando Fairfax, and St. George Tucker. The leadership which was to bring fruition to the movement for a colonization society, however, was religious and humanitarian rather than political, and it came largely from the northeastern states. The Reverend Robert Finley of New Jersey saw the possibility of a benevolent society as an agency through which Americans could pay a part of their moral debt for enslaving African Negroes. He enlisted likeminded men, notably Elias Boudinot Caldwell, his brother-in-law, and Francis Scott Key of Maryland, both of whom supported Finley's plan in the *National Intelligencer*. They won the support of Episcopal and Presbyterian clergy as well as national political leaders. At a meeting in Washington on December 28, 1816, "The American Society for Colonizing Free People of Color in the United States" was organized. Bushrod Washington was elected president. Among the vice presidents were Henry Clay, William H. Crawford, John Taylor of

Caroline, Richard Rush, and Andrew Jackson. The political leaders were predominantly Southerners but the responsibility for the work fell to clergymen and humanitarians who were largely Northerners. Outstanding leaders were Finley, Jehudi Ashman, and Ralph R. Gurley. The press gave the Society favorable publicity and it won widespread popular support, including an endorsement by the Virginia legislature. The Society sent agents, chiefly northern ministers, throughout the country to solicit funds.

The Society sought support from the United States government in securing a colony in Africa. Ultimately, under the provisions of the Slave Trade Act, President James Monroe appointed agents to work with the Society. Largely through the support of Lt. Robert F. Stockton, U. S. N., the agents of the Society purchased land for its colony in December, 1821. The colony was named Liberia, its capital Monrovia. The settlement suffered many hardships and grew slowly. Because of differences of views on the management of the colony both Maryland and Mississippi established separate state colonies; colonization was not a successful enterprise for only 10,676 free Negroes were sent to Liberia between 1821 and 1865.

The Society suffered many vicissitudes in the United States. Many free Negroes opposed colonization because they feared it would raise the price of slaves and retard manumission. Northern whites saw in colonization a scheme of Southerners to get rid of unwanted free Negroes and slaves, while Southerners saw in it a plot of northern abolitionists to abolish the institution of slavery. Whites in midwestern states supported colonization hoping thereby to prevent the migration of free Negroes to that region. The proposal to use the proceeds of the sale of public lands for emancipation and colonization brought sectional division. Northerners supported it; Southerners characterized it as an "officious and impertinent intermeddling with our domestic concerns."

William Lloyd Garrison bitterly attacked the Colonization Society for fear it would retard the abolition movement. He characterized colonization as "odious, contemptible, antirepublican, and anti-Christian." Society members replied in equally vituperative language.

This is an excellent study. There is no doubt in this reviewer's mind that Staudenraus' book will replace Fox's as the standard

work on this subject. The reviewer, however, would have welcomed a fuller treatment of the African Colonization Movement in the post-Civil War years.

FLETCHER M. GREEN

University of North Carolina

McClellan, Sherman and Grant. By T. Harry Williams. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1962. 113 pp. \$3.50.)

These essays, comprising the 1962 Brown and Haley Lectures, were presented by T. Harry Williams at the University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington. Unfortunately, they are not this respected Civil War historian's most notable work.

In the first essay, the author asserts that McClellan "loved his men so much he could not bear to sacrifice them in battle." This persistent stereotype ignores such battles as the Seven Days, South Mountain, and Antietam, where McClellan seized the initiative and attacked Lee. Williams contends that McClellan did not understand that there were political considerations in the war. But the General said—among other similar statements— "I regard the civil or political questions as inseparable from the military in this contest." The author also errs in saying that McClellan reneged on his promise to leave Washington secure when he embarked for the Peninsula. Williams speaks of McClellan's "conviction that he had made no errors." But the General himself admitted, "That I must have made many mistakes I cannot deny. I do not see any great blunders." Grant once said of McClellan, "All my impressions are in his favor." And Lee, when asked who was the ablest opponent he had faced during the war, responded at once, "McClellan by all odds!"

The essay on Sherman is better, although the author should have mentioned that it was Grant who gave Sherman his orders to conduct the kind of campaign he did against the Confederates. But Williams is on firm ground when he notes Sherman's nervousness "and almost manic elation"; his relentless ambition; his self-doubts; his mental and emotional collapse in Kentucky; his "fevered and distraught imagination"; his ability as an engineer and logistician; his talent to lead great marches, if not to fight

great battles; and his skill in waging economic warfare "for a psychological end, war against the popular will of the enemy."

The essay on Grant is an unconvincing apology for that general. Williams distorts the number and quality of Confederate troops as compared with Grant's in the Vicksburg campaign. The author minimizes or tries to explain away Grant's failures at Belmont and in the earlier part of the operations against Vicksburg, as well as his defeats at the hands of Lee in Virginia. Williams is correct in crediting Grant with being a consummate General-in-Chief, but he fails to substantiate that Grant was Lee's superior as a strategist, while acknowledging that Lee was superior as a tactician. Actually, of course, Grant's attrition-type campaign against Lee was the direct negation of generalship.

In short, Williams' arguments and characterizations are too black and white; there are too many sweeping statements, extreme opinions, and lyrically phrased judgments for which the reader has not been prepared. Finally, the author has provided no index and no maps, while his bibliography is woefully inadequate.

WARREN W. HASSLER, JR.

Pennsylvania State University

A Borderland Confederate. By William L. Wilson. Edited by Festus P. Summers. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962. 106 pp. Notes, epilogue, appendices, index. \$3.50.)

Yankee in Gray. By Henry E. Handerson. Prologue by Clyde Lottridge Cummer. (Cleveland: Press of Western Reserve University, 1962. 117 pp. Notes. \$6.50.)

These two small books have much in common. Both Wilson and Handerson were active participants in the Civil War and both were Confederates by choice. Both young men clearly regarded the war as one of the most significant periods of their lives. Both served honorably in battle. Both had the experience of being captured by the enemy, and both survived to pursue long and distinguished peacetime careers. Moreover, both wrote about

their war experiences and both had admirers who prepared the documents for publication with loving care. Here the similarity ends.

The two editors have prepared their volumes quite differently. Festus P. Summers, who edited *A Borderland Confederate*, deserves congratulations for weaving his biographical comments, Wilson's diary, and his letters home into a single cohesive story unencumbered by excessive annotation. *Yankee in Gray*, on the other hand, starts with a rather touching and sentimental biographical sketch of Handerson. This is followed by Handerson's memoirs, his letters, and then notes on each of the three. If the notes could have been judiciously pruned and included at the bottom of the page in the text, the volume would have been somewhat less disjointed.

As far as the documents themselves are concerned, there is again a great discrepancy. Wilson's diary and his letters to his mother are for the most part prosaic, with great attention to insignificant details and very little to the stirring events in which he was a participant. When he does show feeling, as in the case of Gen. Turner Ashby's death or during the concluding months of the war, he becomes so emotionally involved and writes in such flowery language that any reader would question seriously his objectivity. This volume, as a result, makes no real contribution to the literature and very little to the history of the Civil War.

Handerson's memoirs, on the other hand, are outstanding. His insight into the personalities of Confederate leaders is keen and perceptive. His descriptions of events are realistic and clear even when the events themselves are hopelessly confusing. He writes with a lively sense of humor and the reader cannot help comparing the memoirs with Stephen Crane's *Red Badge of Courage*. *Yankee in Gray* includes one of the truly great documents of the Civil War. Historians and general readers alike are indebted to Dr. Cummer for preserving and editing it, and to Western Reserve Press for making it available in such an attractive book.

BENJAMIN F. ROGERS

Jacksonville University