Florida Historical Quarterly

Volume 42
Number 3 *Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol 42, Number 3*

Article 10

1963

Book Reviews

Florida Historical Society
membership@myfloridahistory.org

By Sea and By River: The Naval History of the Civil War. By Bern Anderson. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962. xiv, 303 pp. Maps, illustrations, and index. $5.95.)

The centennial of the American Civil War has resulted in the appearance of a legion of new books and reprints, although relatively few of these concern the naval side of the conflict. There have been a number of excellent books to appear, and a great many worthless ones to cash in on the market. *By Sea and By River* is in the first category. In fact, it is unquestionably the best one volume account of the naval war to date. The emphasis is strategical; tactics and engagements are subordinated to strategic planning and how it contributed to the outcome of the war. Bern Anderson, retired admiral and former assistant to Samuel Eliot Morison, was well-qualified to contribute this addition to the literature of the war, and it is regretful that the admiral's second career as a historian and writer was cut short (he died in February, 1963, at the age of 62).

In spite of the overall excellence of the book there are a number of errors. Most of them show a general lack of knowledge about the Confederate States Navy. For example, the decision to convert the *Merrimack* into an ironclad was taken in July, 1861, not May (p. 71), and the construction of ironclads at Memphis and New Orleans was decided on in August and September (p. 43). Three ironclads *(Tennessee, Huntsville, Tuscaloosa)* were constructed at Selma, Alabama, not five (p. 235), and the *Nashville* was not sunk across the main channel to the city of Mobile, but was surrendered to Federal forces in April, 1865. Admiral Anderson's lack of information about the Confederate navy was apparent in other ways. In his analysis of the operations around Mobile after the battle of Mobile Bay in August, 1864, he completely ignored the presence of three Confederate ironclads that did contribute to the defense of the city until it surrendered in April, 1865. Ironclads constructed within the Confederacy were not built primarily to break the blockade, but to defend the harbors, inlets, and rivers of the South. The European armorclads that the Confederate navy contracted for, however, were definitely built to raise the blockade. Admiral Anderson's inadequacies here can perhaps be defended for two reasons: (1) the emphasis

on the broad picture which in itself relegates the efforts of the Confederate navy, and (2) the fact that our knowledge of the Confederate navy is based on incomplete records. We need more monographic studies of the South's naval efforts; studies that rely not just on the Official Records, but on the mine of available manuscript material.

WILLIAM N. STILL, JR.
Mississippi State College for Women

Front Rank. By Glenn Tucker. (Raleigh: North Carolina Confederate Centennial Commission, 1962. 83 pp. Illustrations. $3.00.)

"In the number of soldiers furnished, in the discipline, courage, and loyalty and difficult service of these soldiers, . . . and in all the qualities that mark self-sacrifice, patriotism, and devotion to duty, North Carolina is entitled to stand where her troops stood in battle, behind no state, but in the front rank of the Confederation, aligned and abreast with the best, the foremost, and the bravest." These words of the state's dynamic Civil War governor, Zebulon B. Vance, furnish both the title and the theme of this volume, eloquently written by Glenn Tucker, author of *Chickamauga* and *High Tide at Gettysburg*, and attractively illustrated with original pen-and-ink drawings by Bill Ballard, a North Carolina artist.

Though possessing only one-ninth of the total population of the Confederacy, North Carolina supplied one-sixth of the soldiers and sustained the heaviest loss in casualties among the Southern states. Eighty-four regiments, comprising an estimated total of 185,000 troops, as compared with a voting population of 115,000, made the phrase "more volunteers than voters" emphatically true of North Carolina. North Carolina troops fought mainly outside the state, on far-flung battlefields, including Antietam and Gettysburg, which must be accounted the two great battles of North Carolina history. How notable were their contributions to these fields may be seen from the fact that one-fourth of Lee's losses at Gettysburg, the most costly battle of the war, were of North Carolina troops.

Front Rank contains a brief narrative of North Carolina's part in the Civil War, primarily on the battlefield but also on the home front. It tells of a state which, though forced into a conflict which she did not seek, was fiercely loyal to the cause which provoked it. *Front Rank* is a book that can be enjoyed by young and old alike. To the school child it will offer a sweeping introduction to a fascinating period in North Carolina history. More experienced readers will find in it a colorful and much-needed survey of events rarely found so well described in such brief compass.

The book's handsome layout is made additionally attractive by the design of the typeface, which is reminiscent of the typography of the Civil War era.

JAMES W. PATTON

University of North Carolina

Lee's Maverick General: Daniel Harvey Hill. By Hal Bridges. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961. viii, 323 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. $7.50.)

The author says this book is not a biography but a study, with some biographical background, of Daniel Harvey Hill's Civil War career. He touches lightly upon his boyhood, his West Point career, his distinguished service in the war with Mexico, and his educational career as professor of mathematics at Washington College and Davidson College following his resignation from the army until he entered military service in North Carolina, April, 1861. His journalistic and educational leadership after the Civil War is also treated.

This book is refreshingly free from detailed description of military movements. These are given only when necessary as a background for more detailed examinations of areas of controversy directly or indirectly bearing upon the study of the character, personal traits, and military competence of General Hill.

General Lee is reported as saying of D. H. Hill, "This man has the heart of a lion and the tongue of an adder, but I would not trade him for a brigade." His acrimonious criticisms of able-bodied men who were not in service, politicians and profiteers, and

of military leaders of both recognized competence and incompetence, made many bitter enemies. One can now recognize the validity of many of Hill's criticisms, especially of Jefferson Davis who supported Braxton Bragg in his efforts to make Hill the scapegoat for his, Bragg's obvious incompetence following Chickamauga and at Missionary Ridge.

The back-flap blurb states correctly ". . . this magnificent volume traces the turbulent life and keen, penetrating observations of Daniel Harvey Hill: tough, uncompromising-and until now, one of the least understood of all major Confederate generals."

R. L. GOULDING

Tallahassee, Florida

Four Years With General Lee. By Walter H. Taylor. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962. xi, 218 pp. Preface, introduction, illustrations, notes, and index. $5.75.)

In his preface, Colonel Walter H. Taylor states that, "It will be at once seen that it is not my purpose to attempt a review of the military career of General Lee, nor a critical history of the army which he commanded in the field. . . . mine is the more humble task of giving a summary of the more prominent events in the career of the great Confederate leader, together with a comparative statement of the strength of the Confederate and Federal armies that were engaged in the operations in Virginia."

Colonel Taylor more than accomplished his purpose. Because of his intimate professional and personal relationship with General Lee, the book constitutes a seminal treatment of Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia. Colonel Taylor served as aide-de-camp and Adjutant-General to General Lee. Indeed, he among Lee's staff officers, probably was the General's closest associate during the "irrepressible conflict." Taylor wrote Lee's dispatches, frequently transmitted messages personally to various field commanders, received individuals who called on Lee, and attended to a multitude of matters on his own initiative. Colonel Taylor also had the singular distinction and responsibility for preparing and submitting the monthly returns of the Army of

Northern Virginia. As such, he knew the numerical strength of Lee's forces in all engagements better perhaps than anyone in the Confederate armies. These valuable statistics, along with personal memoirs and extracts from his wartime correspondence, comprise the substance of *Four Years with General Lee.* The first edition appeared in 1877, and represented a standard authority on Confederate military history for many years. Material subsequently gathered by Colonel Taylor from official government documents was added, and published in 1906. The present edition includes the more significant and revealing of these additions in the notes edited with an informative introduction by the Civil War historian, James Robertson, Jr.

Among the several virtues of the book, two deserve special recognition. First, the statistical data concerning the comparative strength of Lee's troops and opposing Federal forces, in addition to a careful analysis of the operations and campaigns of both armies, reflects exhaustive and authoritative scholarship. In particular, the treatments of Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg are outstanding. Second, with remarkable clarity and brevity, Taylor presents an intimate insight into the character of General Lee. Perhaps above all, the author provides the reader with a profound appreciation and understanding of Lee's patriotism and devotion to duty. Numerous instances are cited to demonstrate unmistakedly that Lee's foremost consideration and care was the army. The honor and security of the Confederacy had been entrusted to the soldiers. The command of an important and active army, therefore, always was uppermost in Lee's mind.

Taylor asserts that if posterity should decide that Lee failed to achieve perfection as a military leader, the failure would be ascribed to Lee's excessive consideration of the personal feelings of his subordinate commanders, his apprehension about wounding their pride, his concern for their reputation, and because he also was too willing to abide by the decisions of his superiors in civil authority. Taylor concludes that the traits of excessive generosity and perfect subordination, "while they adorned the life of General Lee, are not compatible with the generally accepted notions of perfection in a revolutionary leader."

ROBERT GOLDSTEIN

University of South Florida

History of Alabama, 1540-1900, as Recorded in Diaries, Letters, and Papers of the Times. By Lucille Griffith. (Northport, Alabama: Colonial Press, 1962. x, 457 pp. Preface and index. $10.00.)

This is a book of selected primary materials on the history of Alabama, especially useful for the classroom. These documents fill in for the reader a life-like picture of the times. The utility of the *Zeitgeist* is now so widely recognized that it has promoted the current fad among publishers of printing historical documents. In some cases these collected documents vary widely by era and topic and are used to supplement textbooks on national history. In state histories, however, the story is quite different in that there is a dearth of textbook-type selections of primary materials. As in the case of the history of Florida, the history of Alabama is by no means lacking in published documents, such as Malcolm C. McMillan's outstanding recent (1963) title *The Alabama Confederate Reader;* and Alabama history through the years has been written from extensive source materials, generally analogus to those used for the history of Florida, as readily shown by works like Rhoda C. Ellison's *Early Alabama Publications* (1947).

In the Griffith book there are numerous travel accounts of which the following examples lend color to phases of Alabama history: *Final Report of the DeSoto Commission* (1939), Jacob R. Motte, *Journey into Wilderness, an Army Surgeon's Account of Life in Camp and Field during the Creek and Seminole Wars, 1836-1838* (1953), edited by James G. Sunderland, and also Charles Lanman's title *Adventures in the Wilds of the United States and the British American Provinces* (1856). These three titles incidentally illustrate the fact that many of the sources of Alabama history are also raw materials for Florida history. Students of the history of either state might well wish that Dr. Griffith had devoted more than a scant 28 pages to colonial times. In this book, as in most histories of Alabama, it is the middle period which as a rule receives the most emphasis in teaching and writing. In the same era there is also an obvious affinity between the history of Alabama and that of Florida. The same statement might be made concerning later years, and this is very well exemplified in Dr. Grifiith's book. In short, the specialist in various

phases of Florida history may wish to see what this author has put between the covers of one volume, particularly as these selections include subjects extending over more than three and a half centuries. Certainly the idea is suggested that similar publications might be issued in states other than Alabama.

The work contains so many interesting documents that selection becomes difficult, but a few samples will nevertheless be mentioned. Among the several striking documents relating to Indians there is one that gives an account of ball-play by the Choctaws. Another is an unusual account of the massacre at Fort Mims. The territorial census of 1818 should be mentioned and also a contemporary letter explaining the reasons for the failure of the Vine and Olive Colony. The burning of the state capitol building in 1849 should not be overlooked; nor should Thomas C. DeLeon's account of "A Steamboat Race." Another outstanding document is selected from Parthenia Hague's *A Blockaded Family: Life in Southern Alabama during the Civil War*. "The Sunday School Pic-nic" is an interesting selection from a Marion newspaper of 1859. These few samples should suffice to illustrate the wide offerings in political, social, and economic history in Dr. Griffith's book. For this work criticisms should be small and commendations large when one reflects that this book is the first title which is devoted to primary accounts of Alabama history and at the same time extends from colonial times through the nineteenth century. For this publication the publisher should share credit with the author.

CHARLES GRAYSON SUMMERSELL

University of Alabama

The Segregationists. By James Graham Cook. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962. 376 pp. Introduction and index. $5.95.)

James Cook is a southern-born journalist with a keen reportorial ear who has set down the words and the heartbeats of the segregation leaders in the South. He does this through the mixture of quotations, interviews, and background material which has

developed as an almost standard genre of reportorial analysis of southern society.

His concern is that while the court decision may have broken the ice for school desegregation, it has loosed no more than a trickle of flow. "The problem," he writes, "is not how gracefully to desegregate Miss Hunter or Miss Lucy or a dark little Louisiana girl with a bright ribbon in her hair; the problem is how to mix hundreds of thousands of Negro pupils (and Negro adults) with hundreds of thousands of white pupils (and white adults) and keep hell from breaking loose." According to his calculations, based on the extent of school desegregation over the period 1954-1962, "deliberate speed" will take 7,288 years.

To the people on whom he reports, this will be much too soon. Mr. Cook has interviewed more than a score of the most active and influential leaders of segregation and has added information on many more. They add up to a mighty army which he groups as The Councilors (of the White Citizens' variety), Klansmen, Racists (such as Admiral Crommelin and the National States Rights Party), Lawyers (like Leander Perez), Crusaders (of the pulpit), Counter-attackers (such as the Federation for Constitutional Government and Robert Welch), Investigators (in the state and national legislatures), and Dark Segregationists (among the Booker T's and Black Muslims). Mr. Cook scarcely touches upon Florida, although in such a study it was not possible to avoid paying tribute to Senator Johns' Florida Legislative Investigation Committee. With the possible exception of his last category, the minds of the segregationists are remarkably alike. It is not mere integration which they fear; all of them, rich and poor, ignorant and educated, whether trained in the North or the South, see a great Jewish-Communist plot to destroy the American way of life through the use of such agencies as the U. N. and the Supreme Court. This is the segregationist syndrome.

The author is pessimistic. The experience of the integrated schools of the District of Columbia offers him no encouragement. Neither does his admiration of Martin Luther King and the handful of white Mississippi believers in equal rights. In dealing with the segregationist leadership, however, he presents no information on the size, intensity, and intransigency of their following. He misses the tides of change that are loose in the land and, at least

in this book, sees only the most vocal flag-wavers on the ramparts. James Cook has traveled widely and listened well, and his report is the stuff that historians will find useful when they piece together the various parts of this revolutionary age.

DAVID M. CHALMERS

University of Florida

The American College and University: A History. By Frederick Rudolph. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962. xxxvii, 516 pp. Preface, bibliography, index. $6.75.)

Frederick Rudolph has chosen to create a vast design stretched across the canvas of several centuries and a broad continent, woven against the military, political, and economic tapestry of a new people creating a new way of life. His thread is *The American College and University - a History.* He has more than succeeded.

Covering both minute detail and sweeping developments, Mr. Rudolph makes a significant contribution to historical research by relating the growth of higher education to the totality of the American scene. At the same time he has produced a readable literary effort-set apart from books for popular consumption not by its style, which is well paced and clear, but by its depth of documentation.

Rudolph is himself an historian. He serves his colleagues well by focusing attention on the need for scholarly research into the development of higher education. His unique bibliography indicates many specific topics which will serve doctoral candidates well.

Under his deft touch and judicious choice of incident, the book will appeal to the layman reader-if they discover it behind its austere title. With the great public interest in higher education-and the dollar bite education is going to take from the taxpayer-there is much information here that should be more generally known.

Rudolph writes with the skill of the novelist in keeping his narrative alive. His chapter introductions pique the readers' curiosity and his summation serves as a cliff-hanger leading into his subsequent topic.

His opening chapters move quickly through the founding of the earliest colleges in colonial days and discuss the impact of the Revolution on college values. In succeeding chapters he discusses religious influence, the Great Awakening, collegiate life, the curriculum battle, and the extracurriculum - now known as student activities, showing for each its roots in the 1700's, its course through the 1800's, and occasionally, how it casts its shadow in the 20th century. Emergence of the university system, opening of collegiate doors to women, acceptance of vocational and technological training and of the elective system, even football, come in for review.

Contemporary educators and educational administrators, immersed in their pressing problems, will gain a fresh perspective as they read through the book and are brought up with the comforting realization that today's set of problems, too, will fade away to be replaced by a new set. Few of us would change today's crises in education for those of earlier times.

On faculty salaries, Rudolph recalls an 1883 editorial in the *New York Times* - "No professor worth his salt ever devoted himself to learning for any other reason than that he loved learning." Or Harvard's President Eliot saying in 1869, "The poverty of scholars is of inestimable worth in this money-getting nation. It maintains the true standards of virtue and honor."

On fraternities, Rudolph brings back one of the earliest criteria for membership used in 1836 - "Would you want your sister to marry him?"

On excellence in education, Rudolph poses the remarks of Dean Briggs of Harvard who as late as 1904, "announced his preference for 'moderate intelligence'," and even later a Yale dean was advising freshmen, "A man should not put more than half of his time into his studies."

As we survey the long road higher education has yet to travel it is good to pause and reflect. Whence have we come? Mr. Rudolph's book permits us to do just that and does it in a skilled and scholarly manner.

KENNETH R. WILLIAMS

Florida Atlantic University