

hensive, integrated study of Ohio country diplomacy. The accounts of the major treaties—Ft. Stanwix (1784), Ft. McIntosh (1785), Ft. Finney (1786), and Ft. Harmar (1789)—are models of clarity. The book also contains sensitive and revealing sketches of such Indian leaders as Joseph Brant (Mohawk), Cornplanter (Seneca), and Little Turtle (Miami). While clearly sympathetic to the plight of the Indians, the authors treat the emotional and controversial subject of Indian-white relations in a dispassionate, judicious manner. In sum, this tightly written and closely argued work will serve as a standard diplomatic history of the Northwest during the Confederation period.

While there is little to criticize in the substance of the book, there are weaknesses in format and presentation. The authors do not provide sufficient background or perspective; there is neither a discussion of the wartime diplomacy so essential to a just appreciation of postwar developments nor an attempt in the cursory "Epilogue" to relate the diplomacy of the 1780s to the larger course of relations between the United States and Indians in the nineteenth century. On occasion the flow of the narrative is disrupted because the eight chapters are arbitrary divisions of the text rather than unified topical subdivisions. The work is marred by careless editing; inconsistencies abound, especially in the footnotes. Finally, a personal complaint: the illustrations are attractive, but the sketch "Indian Ambush along the Ohio River" (p. 78) is an unnecessary and tasteless portrayal of the ignoble savage stereotype.

Such criticism aside, the book can only be judged a success. The authors deserve congratulations for a job well done; the Indiana University Bicentennial Committee deserves commendation for sponsoring a work of substantive scholarship as an enduring commemoration of the Bicentennial.

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Britain and the American Frontier, 1783-1815. By J. Leitch Wright, Jr. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1975. Pp. xii, 251. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$9.50.)

As the United States begins its third century, it is worth recalling how many people believed that the new republic would not survive its youth. J. Leitch Wright's new

book makes vividly clear the expectations of British policy-makers, former Loyalists, Canadian officials, Indian leaders, and even some frontier Americans, that the United States was a sport of nature whose existence would be painful and short.

If most Americans viewed frontier problems in terms of how far and how fast they could expand against Indian resistance and foreign machination, the British (in both North America and England) and the Indians saw things differently. Their questions always was: how could they hasten, and benefit from, the inevitable disintegration of the United States?

This is not the full study of British frontier policy which the title suggests, but rather a tale of the influence which old Tories, Canadian officials, Indian traders, and the Indians themselves had—or hoped to have—on British policy. Indian leaders wanted English help in holding back the advance of white settlement. Loyalists who had fled to Canada, Florida, and the offshore islands, hoped to regain land and status when the United States broke up. The Canadian government wanted to protect its underpopulated colony by securing control of the upper Mississippi, detaching part of New England or the Northwest from the Union, or at least creating an Indian buffer against the advancing American tide. Each of these groups was perennially optimistic about the impending fall of the United States: just a little more British pressure, a little more wooing of frontier dissidents, would do the job.

The British government had no quarrel with any of these aims and it hoped itself to see the new nation collapse. The key goal, as seen from London, was a unified Mississippi Valley under British control. This would give Canada a southern water outlet, tie the Indians firmly to Britain, and eventually provide an enormous market for British goods. Yet, while the home government wished to gratify the desires of its adherents in North America, Wright shows that it seldom did so. Other considerations, particularly the valuable American trade and the course of European diplomacy and war, usually outweighed the opinions and advice of British subjects and their Indian friends in America. In the end, Britain did little of consequence on the frontier, except during the actual war with the United States after 1812.

The author is quite at home in this period, having written several previous books in the field. His research, heavily

weighted toward British sources, is strong in both public and private manuscript materials and contemporary pamphlets. However, he lists only one secondary work published since 1971 and—in common with too many historians—has barely touched the store of good doctoral dissertations on the period. The book should be definitive on its particular subject—the attempt by North American groups to influence British policy—but not on the general topic of Britain and the American frontier from 1783 to 1815.

Centennial History of the James H. Broussard
Indiana General Assembly, Indianapolis

Frontier Musicians on the Connoquenessing, Wabash, and Ohio: A History of the Music and Musicians of George Rapp's Harmony Society (1805-1906). By Richard D. Wetzel. (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976. Pp. xi, 294. Notes, illustrations, appendixes, bibliography, index, sound sheet. \$16.00.)

In the preface, Richard D. Wetzel states that his purpose has been to provide a comprehensive account of the musical life of George Rapp's Harmony Society. The basic material for the text is provided by the "descriptions of the Society's vocal and instrumental ensembles, their repertoires and performance practices" (p. ix), but Wetzel admits "it is the people themselves who emerge as the predominant subject" (p. ix).

After sketching the general history of the society, the musical activities in the periods 1805-1825, 1825-1832, 1832-1892, and 1892-1906 are covered. In addition the volume carefully documents the sources and the development of the Harmony Society's unique hymn repertoire and sketches John Duss' colorful life and concert band career. Frequent footnotes and quotations support the flowing writing style. Although Wetzel occasionally quotes from the original German text he usually provides passages in English. Twenty-four illustrations are included, but a few, especially those of badly worn manuscripts, are poorly reproduced.

Wetzel complements his more general musical history of the Harmonist Society by four useful appendixes. The first reproduces twenty-two musical examples from the various periods as illustrations to the text. This generous com-