

restore the Union. Actually, they had plenty to offer, the *status quo ante bellum*, the sanctity of the Constitution, and the political structure inherited from the age of Andrew Jackson.

Research is admirably done, and the writing is superb. Reliance is placed on original sources, such as local newspapers, which are too commonly neglected. Wubben's literary style makes his book interesting and absorbing as well as informative. The volume is an objective, well-researched, in-depth study of events and attitudes on the local level, just the sort of thing that seems most needed in the field of Civil War history.

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The Past before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States. Edited by Michael Kammen. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980. Pp. 524. Notes, tables, figures, index. \$19.95.)

This book, originally conceived by the American Historical Association in 1977 as "a report on the part of historians in the United States to their colleagues in other parts of the world," gradually grew "broader and deeper than anyone envisioned at the outset" (p. 11). The result is a publication of great significance—a benchmark volume that professional historians will refer to frequently, graduate students studying for qualifying examinations will devour, and anyone interested in developments within the historical profession in the United States during the past decade or so will find interesting and informative.

Following Michael Kammen's thoughtful introduction, which summarizes the "marked transition [that] occurred within the guild of historians in the United States" (p. 20) in the 1970s, the book is divided into three sections. Part One—"Units of Time and Areas of Study"—examines American scholarship in seven broad temporal and geographic fields (e.g., Early Modern Europe, Asia). Part Two—"Expanding Fields of Inquiry"—focuses on eight areas of investigation that underwent substantial growth and/or change during the past decade (labor history, Afro-American history, and family history, for example). Finally, Part Three—"Modes of Gathering and Assessing Historical Material"—treats methodological innovations in research (oral, psycho-, quantitative social-scientific, and comparative history) and teaching.

Inevitably, the quality of the essays varies. Virtually all are well written and well documented, however, and the bibliographic overview of recent scholarship provided in the footnotes is itself worth the price of the volume. Among the essays dealing exclusively or primarily with United States history, this reviewer found only "The Negro in American History" to be unsatisfactory—largely because it focuses on just a few major monographs. Readers of the *Indiana Magazine of History*, who presumably have special interests in state and local history, are directed to Kathleen Neils Conzen's "Community Studies, Urban History, and American Local History" and Herbert T. Hoover's "Oral History in the United States."

Although it is dangerous to generalize from a volume that ranges so broadly, two trends seem unmistakable. First is the overwhelming impression of the vigor—indeed domination—of social history during the past decade. Peter N. Stearns observes in his essay that although debate continues on the definition of social history, those who share "at the very least a concern for achieving a historical perspective on the everyday activities of ordinary people, have steadily grown in number and expanded the range of their activity" (p. 205). Many of the other contributors offer similar comments. Second, the increasing Balkanization of the profession stands out in bold relief. It is notable that many of the scholarly specialties treated here in depth would not even have been accorded separate-chapter status ten or fifteen years ago. As Kammen puts it, if Clio's house has always had many mansions "it would now seem that History has suburbs and shantytowns, trailer parks and condominiums as well" (p. 45). Many of the contributors put "synthesis" near the top of the profession's agenda for the 1980s.

Thanks are due all concerned for this useful and well-produced examination of what might be called the "Transition Decade" of American historical scholarship. It deserves to be widely read and thoughtfully considered.

Indiana Historical Bureau, Indianapolis Robert G. Barrows

A History of Industrial Power in the United States, 1780-1930.

Volume I, *Waterpower in the Century of the Steam Engine.*

By Louis C. Hunter. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, for the Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation, 1979. Pp. xxiv, 606. Notes, illustrations, tables, appendixes, index. \$24.95.)