

This book is a valuable compilation of materials despite numerous drawbacks. George C. Roberts has used the Butler papers at the University of Notre Dame, and his account is dispassionate and generally reliable. The book is of convenient size, only two hundred pages, and the notes are placed handily at the end of each chapter. Unfortunately, the volume leaves too many questions unanswered. For example, Butler was suspected of being ambitious. Did he hope for nomination to elected office? What does it say about Butler, the man who believed civil rights was the nation's most important issue, that before election as national chairman he signed a pledge not to make segregation an issue? The pledge appeased southern members of the party but apparently repudiated Butler's convictions. And what was Butler's attitude toward other events of his time? The reader has only a vague notion of the influence of McCarthyism, the Korean war and its aftermath, the sputnik crisis, and Martin Luther King's activities. Finally, Butler's contribution is not clear. This lack of clarity may stem from the book's overlapping, topical organization. What, for example, was the effect of the party chairman's ignorance of foreign relations and acceptance of partisanship as a political principle? One especially would like to know Butler's importance in the John F. Kennedy nomination and victory in 1960.

Other deficiencies include cumbersome sentences and paragraphs that fail to carry a theme and the fact that the book relies on manuscripts and secondary sources in political science but reveals little knowledge of the historical literature on the Eisenhower presidency or on the election of 1960. Finally, there is no bibliography. Useful perhaps for specialists and graduate students, this book is ill-suited for both undergraduates and general readers.

WILLIAM B. PICKETT is professor of history, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Terre Haute. His research and writing have focused on Indiana and national political history, American diplomacy, and the career of Dwight D. Eisenhower. In 1989-1990 he will be a Fulbright lecturer in Japan.

Letters From a Young Shaker: William S. Byrd at Pleasant Hill.

Edited by Stephen J. Stein. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1985. Pp. x, 165. Illustrations, appendixes, notes, index. \$15.00.)

United States Judge Charles Willing Byrd of Sinking Spring, Ohio, became interested in the Shakers at Pleasant Hill when family members were part of a mob that attacked the community in 1825. He investigated the faith of the Shakers, stated his intention to join the society, and in June, 1826, sent his twenty-year-old son, William S. Byrd, to live at Pleasant Hill.

The Shakers seemed awed by the prospects of a United States judge as a potential convert and treated his son, a descendant of

the noted Byrd family of Virginia, with deference. Despite the spartan life-style of the Shakers and their insistence upon community labor, young Byrd, who lived the life of an honored guest, was provided with his own apartment, his own stove, and his own schedule and, in fact, appeared to do little except take walks and write an occasional letter.

William wrote his father a series of letters that have been preserved with other Byrd family manuscripts at the Lilly Library at Indiana University. Transcripts of these letters, which comprise but forty-six pages of this slim volume, are preceded by a 47-page introduction and are followed by sixty-three pages of appendixes, notes, and index.

The letters themselves are disappointing in their content. While William lived among the brothers and sisters and had access to the inner circle of the elders, the writings dwell on business transactions between William, Charles, and the Shakers and on the health of father and son. Little light is shed on the day-to-day life of the village. The insight the letters provide into the insidious dissent among the western Shaker communities in this era is perhaps their greatest value. This dissension was the beginning of a long, slow decline of Shaker life. Slight reference is made to the abandonment of West Union, or Busro, the Indiana Shaker village. The letters stopped with the unexpected death of Judge Byrd in August, 1828. William never became a Shaker during his two years at Pleasant Hill; however, when he died five months later in January, 1829, he left a will bequeathing his property to the Shakers.

Stephen J. Stein has provided an extensive and well-written introduction to the letters and an appendix of other relevant documents. The value of the book would have been enhanced by transcription of letters between Charles W. Byrd and Frances Voris, the Shaker trustee; diary notes of Charles W. Byrd about the Shakers; and other Charles W. Byrd letters containing Shaker references. Two letters written by Charles W. Byrd to William S. Byrd are included in the appendix but could have appeared chronologically with the William S. Byrd letters. Endnotes would be easier to use if in consecutive numerical order from beginning to end rather than beginning again with each section.

Manuscript material from Pleasant Hill is scant. In contrast to the very restrictive policy of one major repository of Shaker manuscript materials, permission to publish these letters by the Lilly Library is to be commended as a welcome addition to Shaker scholarship.

JOHN MARTIN SMITH, a practicing attorney, is a student of Shaker history. He has recently written *DeKalb County, 1837-1987* in commemoration of the sesquicentennial of his native county and is currently writing a full history of the Shaker community at Busro to be entitled *West Union on the Wabash: Indiana's Pioneer Shaker Community*.