

may fall short of its mark. The author is most successful in identifying the various individuals and topics for inclusion in the work. Most of the major and minor subjects in Indian-white relations of the Northeastern Woodlands are mentioned at least in passing. For example, those interested in Indiana history will find entries on major figures such as William Henry Harrison, Tecumseh, Little Turtle, and Blue Jacket, as well as for lesser-known individuals such as Frances Slocum or Leather Lips. The problem lies not in the selection of material but in the bibliography and sources. Although Heard does cite some recent works, too many of his references are dated. Little effort seems to have been made to use the most recent or best secondary works for the various entries. For example, his entry on the Walking Purchase makes no mention of Francis Jennings's important studies. His entry on Joseph Brant ignores Isabel T. Kelsay's definitive biography published in 1984. The entry on Sir William Johnson ignores the most reliable works by Milton W. Hamilton and James Flexner. Equally troubling is the author's puzzling decision not to include the dates of publication for the various books cited. Readers have no way of knowing whether references were published in the 1930s or 1990s.

Volume II of the *Handbook of the American Frontier* is not nearly as useful or as comprehensive as it might have been. What makes it even more disappointing is that this type of encyclopedic volume is greatly needed. It is to be hoped that future volumes will be better.

RICHARD AQUILA is professor of history and director of the American Studies Program, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana. He is currently working on a study of Indian-white relations on the British colonial frontier.

River Towns in the Great West: The Structure of Provincial Urbanization in the American Midwest, 1820-1870. By Timothy R. Mahony. (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1990. Pp. xi, 319. Notes, figures, tables, illustrations, appendixes, index. \$39.50.)

This incisive and comprehensive analysis of the settlement and urbanization process that took place in the antebellum Midwest is an important contribution to the historical literature of urbanization. The "Great West" defined by the author was a regional economic and urban system that developed across the Mississippi River Valley between 1820 and 1860. Settlement patterns and economic advantages early on favored the development of towns on the west bank of the river. Later, as a result of competition between transportation systems, the region divided into the upper valley dominated by Chicago and the lower valley dependent on St. Louis. Many towns were founded in this region, but their survival was subject to the vicissitudes of population movements, eco-

nomics, and the strategies used by their leaders to interact with this emerging regional urban system. The economic and cultural interactions among the towns and cities were accompanied by the social interactions of the individuals who populated the region. The migratory experience of these people and their interaction with the urban system as individuals and groups establish the basis for understanding how the urbanization process affected the lives of the people.

This detailed analysis of the historical development of the Great Valley prior to the Civil War and Timothy R. Mahoney's perceptive and original interpretation of the regional urban system that emerged lays an excellent foundation for future studies of urbanization in this region and elsewhere.

Mahoney has written a fine study grounded in exhaustive research in primary and secondary sources. He presents substantial material in the form of clear descriptive tables and figures. The topics of the tables range from Edmund Dana's 1819 ranking of the attractiveness of thirty western locations based on soil quality, climate, healthfulness, market access, and other variables to a detailed schedule of farmer Edward Ingraham's twenty-nine trips to market to deliver 641 bushels of corn between 1852 and 1853. The maps clearly depict subjects such as the attractiveness of western locations, human settlement patterns, soil quality, urban hinterlands, roads and rates of travel, the hydrology of the Mississippi River, and the location of businesses in Galena and Davenport. These figures, tables, and maps provide students of regional history and the urbanization process a rich mine of information that is clearly presented and interpreted.

WILLIAM L. CROZIER is professor of history, Saint Mary's College of Minnesota, Winona. He is currently writing a social history of Winona County and editing an anthology on the Lower East Side of New York City.

The Road to Disunion: Volume I, Secessionists at Bay, 1776-1854.

By William W. Freehling. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990. Pp. xii, 640. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$30.00.)

America in 1857: A Nation on the Brink. By Kenneth M. Stampp.

(New York: Oxford University Press, 1990. Pp. ix, 388. Map, illustrations, notes, index. \$29.95.)

In the first volume of his long-awaited study of secession, William W. Freehling offers a complex account of a fragmented social order. After a leisurely tour of the South's physical and human geography, he quickly focuses on slavery as the centerpiece of southern society. From the eighteenth century onward slaveholders had precariously balanced a preference for Enlightenment def-