

The book is rightfully included as part of *The Nation Divided: New Studies in Civil War History*, a series edited by James I. Robertson.

CAROL HUNTER is assistant professor of history, Earlham College, Richmond. She is working on African-American abolitionists in Indiana.

*Black Troops, White Commanders, and Freedmen during the Civil War.* By Howard C. Westwood. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992. Pp. ix, 189. Notes, index. \$19.95.)

The truth about the role of slavery and African Americans in the Civil War was one of the victims of the Lost Cause, that large counterfactual myth that for one hundred years dominated, and still marks, Civil War history. Designed to decontaminate secession and the Confederacy of slavery, this myth removed blacks from their true role as the issue, ignored their actual participation in the struggle, and portrayed them as unconcerned about their own enslavement. Today's generation of historians has sought to exorcise this myth, but American history has not yet fully recovered from it. Howard C. Westwood's book is another major step in correcting the record.

The book is a series of topical essays, some of which have been previously published in historical journals. The first four are concerned with the issue of black enlistment in the Federal army. With fine insight and thorough familiarity with the facts, the writer details the halting and sometimes inept Federal course that began in 1861 with a prohibition of black soldiers and ended with 180,000 of them, largely former slaves, in the United States armies. Lincoln's role in this politically and socially complicated story is carefully described, as is the sad tale of discrimination against these soldiers.

Westwood devotes one chapter to a detailed accounting of the story of Robert Smalls, the slave wheelman of the Confederate steamer *Planter*. In 1862, Smalls and several other slaves captured this vessel in South Carolina and delivered it to the Federal blockading squadron. Pronounced by Rear Admiral Samuel F. DuPont as "one of the coolest and most gallant naval acts of the war," the Smalls incident is well known, but Westwood tells it in unique and compelling detail.

In other chapters, Westwood goes into the nooks and crannies of blacks' roles. Here he plows new ground, examining subjects that have previously received little or no attention: the Confederacy's treatment of captured black Federal soldiers, including former slaves; the army's reaction to black soldiers' mutinies; early and unsuccessful efforts to make land available for the freedmen; and the only known criminal case enforcing the Emancipation

Proclamation. These chapters are fascinating, and they also serve to illuminate the tragic character of race relations at the time that abolition of slavery was finally confronted by Americans.

*Black Troops* is a valuable book. Concerned with an important aspect of the Civil War, it is thoroughly researched, finely written, and highly informative. It reminds us that the war cast a long shadow. We stand in that shadow today.

ALAN T. NOLAN is a practicing lawyer and historian. In addition to numerous periodical articles, he has written *The Iron Brigade* (1961), a Civil War military history, and, most recently, *Lee Considered: General Robert E. Lee and Civil War History* (1991).

*United We Stand: The United Mine Workers of America, 1890–1990.* By Maier B. Fox. ([Silver Spring, Md.]: United Mine Workers of America, 1990. Pp. vii, 609. Notes, sources, illustrations, table, bibliography, index. \$29.95.)

“Coal fueled the industrial revolution” (p. i). With that bit of wordplay, Maier B. Fox opens his centennial history of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), probably the most influential union in the nation’s history. Fox traces the life of the UMWA in what will certainly become a key source for students of that union and of coal mining in general. Just as important, he provides a powerful reminder of the contributions made by progressive, socially conscious unionism.

Fox begins by briefly stressing the importance of the UMWA, noting that it has not only focused on improving the lot of miners but has at times provided vital leadership to the United States labor movement and has been a pioneer in the field of social legislation and innovative contractual arrangements. He further notes that, while individual leaders and events associated with the union have been studied, there is no available comprehensive history of the organization.

With the stage set, Fox moves on to a roughly chronological discussion of the union’s first century. This is, by design, primarily an institutional history, focusing on leaders, organization, strikes, contract negotiation, and legislation. Of course, the expected high points appear: the union’s birth struggle in the late nineteenth century; the exciting John Mitchell period; the emergence of John L. Lewis as leader; Lewis’s purges of opponents in the 1920s, especially those on the Left, and his sudden (some would say opportunistic) embrace of aggressive organizing and politicking during the 1930s; and the difficulties, political and economic, of the post-Lewis years. Moreover, Fox frequently makes brief forays into such matters as community, ideology, and similar topics of current interest to working-class historians.