man of the Democratic National Committee (1904–1908) while he was the committeeman from Indiana to that national committee (1900–1916).

This is the first complete biography of Taggart. The full scope of the book's coverage is not revealed by its title. While much of the biography focuses on Taggart's roles as an officeholder and as a political boss, almost half of it concerns his business affairs and family life. Although not uncritical, the volume presents a sympathetic view of Taggart as a genial, generous, honest, and decent man who was devoted to his family and to public service. While describing Taggart as the unrivaled Democratic boss in Indiana during an age when this state's role in national electoral politics was perceived as pivotal, James Fadely concludes, "He made governors, congressman, senators, vice presidents, and even presidents" (p. xii).

The book's endnotes cite a great variety of published material, several interviews, and some manuscript collections, including the Taggart papers. Newspaper accounts furnished much of the information about Taggart's life, especially for the period when he was approaching the zenith of his success (1895–1905). The book provides fuller descriptions than analyses of Taggart's achievements in business and politics.

Thomas Taggart should be read by students of state and national political history. James Philip Fadely tells an interesting life story in a readable style that may appeal to general readers, as well as to scholars.

WILLIAM W. GIFFIN teaches Indiana history at Indiana State University, Terre Haute. He is the author of a chapter in *Peopling Indiana: The Ethnic Experience* (1996).

Blue Lightning: Wilder's Mounted Infantry Brigade in the Battle of Chickamauga. By Richard A. Baumgartner. (Huntington, W. Va.: Blue Acorn Press, 1997. Pp. iii, 244. Illustrations, maps, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. $30.00.)

In June of 1863, while fighting in their first real battle in Hoover's Gap, Tennessee, a brigade of Indiana and Illinois men advanced so rapidly and fought so aggressively they earned the nickname Lightning Brigade. Richard A. Baumgartner has written the history of this Civil War brigade during the time Colonel John T. Wilder was its commander, from December, 1862, through the Battle of Chickamauga in September, 1863. During this time the brigade helped the Union's Army of the Cumberland drive the Confederate army out of middle Tennessee and then out of Chattanooga. At the Battle of Chickamauga, Wilder's brigade managed by its tenacious fighting to slow the Confederate advance at several crucial times, thus helping the Union army avoid destruction.

The Lightning Brigade was different from most Civil War units in two ways. The men were mounted infantry, thus were pioneers in developing the new idea of fighting as infantry but using horses to move about rapidly. They had better weapons than most of their opponents since they were equipped with Spencer breech-loading repeating rifles.

The book should appeal to those interested in the military history of Indiana's Civil War soldiers. The brigade included two Indiana mounted infantry regiments, the 17th and the 72nd; three regiments from Illinois, the 92nd, 98th, and 123rd; and the 18th Indiana Battery of Light Artillery commanded by the young Captain Eli Lilly. Wilder, who before the war owned a foundry in Greensburg, Indiana, is described as an innovative, aggressive, and effective commanding officer. The book includes numerous photographs of men who were in the brigade. There is a list of those who were casualties in the Chickamauga campaign. Throughout the text the author includes biographical information about many of the men.

A good feature of the book is that the author quotes very extensively from brigade members' letters and diaries. The men describe skirmishing, scouting, and camp life as well as the ferocity of battle, especially at Chickamauga. There are lively, often humorous accounts of the difficulties that ensued when these men, originally infantrymen, became mounted infantry and had to learn how to ride and deal with horses and mules. The men acquired their mounts by simply taking them from civilians in the vicinity who were presumed to be "disloyal inhabitants" (p. 19). Since they spent so much time on foraging expeditions, their letters describe many encounters with civilians in Tennessee.

Baumgartner's descriptions of military actions are not always easy to follow. This is partly because of the nature of the book. The author is focusing on the actions of many individual men in one brigade in the midst of very complicated moving and fighting of two large armies. Readers need to have some basic knowledge of the military events treated here, particularly the Battle of Chickamauga. The maps in the book do not show sufficient details; most do not indicate position or movements of various military units. Readers would have found it helpful if the author had summarized in an appendix the details about the brigade's organization and officers, explained how it fit into the Army of the Cumberland, and noted the times when various units of the brigade, such as the 92nd Illinois, were temporarily detached for special assignments.

SHARON HANNUM SEAGER is professor of history, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, where she teaches courses on the Civil War, the South, and women in American history.