

diseases and prison camps in the nineteenth century, and medical practitioners' lack of understanding and inability to deal with them. Gillispie's focus on wartime records and Confederate prisoners' wartime diaries is important; however, his reliance on the published *Official Records* and *Medical and Surgical History of the War of Rebellion* is unfortunate. The *Official Records* represents a mere sample of the mass of records found in the National Archives. Extensive records, far more than those selected for publication in the *Official Records*, exist for each of the various prison camps.

Gillispie's argument would have been stronger had he consulted the originals. Still, his book serves as a useful corrective to the distorted picture produced by reliance on postwar Lost Cause narratives.

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Abolitionists Remember
Antislavery Autobiographies and the Unfinished Work of Emancipation
 By Julie Roy Jeffrey

(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008. Pp. xii, 337. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Clothbound, \$59.95; paperbound, \$24.95.)

Ruminating in 1935 on the meaning of emancipation, the African American historian and sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois wrote: "The slave went free; stood a brief moment in the sun; then moved back again toward slavery."

In *Abolitionists Remember* Julie Roy Jeffrey examines how, during the four decades following emancipation, white and black abolitionists memorialized and remembered their contentious and long campaign to overthrow the "peculiar institution." She defines "abolitionist" broadly, including "all who embraced the anti-slavery cause" and focuses on the broad significance of the abolition movement in late nineteenth centu-

ry America, a time when the freed-people "moved back again toward slavery" (p. 256 n.7).

Specialists will welcome Jeffrey's close reading of the autobiographical texts of such well-known abolitionists as William Still, Levi Coffin, Frederick Douglass, Parker Pillsbury, George Julian, Calvin Fairbank, and Thomas Wentworth Higginson. In addition to uncovering and analyzing obscure proceedings of abolitionists' reunions in 1875, 1884, and 1893, she also studies the recollections of lesser-known abolitionists, including former slaves John Quincy Adams and John P. Parker, as well as John Malvin, a free black southerner.

Jeffrey joins only a handful of historians who have researched publishers' archives, including advertisements, publishing contracts, reader's reports, reviews, and sales and royalty figures. Such documentation, usually identified with "the history of the book," enables her to explain the marketing of books by subscription and chart the degree to which various autobiographical texts entered public discourse. Jeffrey also scours post-Civil War popular monthly magazines to discern the changing image of abolitionists in historical memory, especially what David W. Blight has termed the "reconciliation" narrative that redefined the Civil War as a struggle for nationhood, not one to destroy slavery.

Jeffrey finds, not surprisingly, that in their autobiographical writings abolitionists continued their fight against racial injustice. "Abolitionists," she writes, "challenged every important point of the reconciliation narrative, trying to salvage the nobility of their work for emancipation and African Americans and defending their own participation in the great events of their day" (p. 3). In reflecting on their fight against slavery, former abolitionists explained their motivations, detailed the opposition they confronted, and described slavery and the world the slaveholders fashioned. "Explicitly or implicitly," Jeffrey writes, "their narratives offered an analysis of the causes of war" (p. 4).

Even before the end of Reconstruction, however, white Americans

generally lost sympathy for the slaves and increasingly celebrated national harmony, including a shared sense of white racial hegemony. Jeffrey documents this in her analysis of the pro-southern, pro-slavery characterization of slavery and abolition in popular magazines. If anything she understates the breadth and depth of anti-black thought. Predictably, the inattention readers paid to abolitionist autobiographies resulted in low sales figures and, accordingly, major publishing houses stopped publishing them.

Jeffrey's most original contribution is her close analysis of the transitional and often ignored 1880s. During this decade popular writers reevaluated the abolitionists (debunked as fanatical agitators), the Civil War (celebrated as restoring national unity), and the freedpeople (ridiculed as childlike and unprepared for freedom).

With chattel slavery abolished, but with new forms of servitude and racial and class proscription on the rise during and after Reconstruction, the old abolitionists directed their ire at racial prejudice. The restoration of southern Bourbon regimes in the 1880s and the institutionalization of Jim Crow in the 1890s convinced them that their work of racial reform remained unfinished. Regardless of the indifference shown his *Acts of the Anti-Slavery Apostles* (1883), Pillsbury declared that he wrote his book "for History, for Humanity, and for Posterity, regardless of cost and loss"

(p. 201). The abolitionists' contributions would be rediscovered during another period of racial change—the modern civil rights movement.

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