ing so closely tied to Beard's own system of interpretation. The author is prevented, for example, from investigating the role of ideas in the development of the new government. The reviewer looks forward, however, to the promised sequel, which will undoubtedly make a more positive contribution to the study of the tangled web of motivations and interests behind the framing and ratification of the Constitution of the United States.

DePauw University

Clifton J. Phillips


William Lee of Massachusetts journeyed to France in 1796 on business and remained until 1816 as a commercial agent at Bordeaux. During this period, he recorded the details of life in France and of the strained relationship between France and the United States during the Napoleonic era. On returning to America, Lee served as auditor of the Treasury for thirteen years and turned his critical pen on Washington society during the administrations of Monroe and John Quincy Adams. Relieved of office in 1829 by President Jackson, Lee continued his correspondence until his death in 1840.

The major figures of France and America people Lee's writing. He knew and wrote about Napoleon, Talleyrand, Jefferson, Monroe, and John Quincy Adams. Included in this volume are several previously unpublished letters of Jefferson, additional information on the personages of the XYZ Affair, and a letter noting the failure of a plan by Lee and others to carry Napoleon to America for asylum. Lee's diary, written from 1796 to 1798, recalls the travels of Arthur Young, while his letters describe the intrigues of Napoleon's court and the reaction which followed the Bourbon Restoration. The letters written in the United States are disappointing, although they contain comments on the election of 1824, the slavery controversy, and the panic of 1837.

The personality of William Lee is fascinating. Contact with France after the Revolution strained his republican principles. "I begin to dislike this liberty and equality," Lee writes. "I think myself superior to a bawd or a pickpocket" (p. 12). But his republicanism triumphed in the end, and Lee remained a Francophile throughout life. His writings also record unwittingly the transformation wrought in a New England puritan by the pleasures of French life. These letters portray their author as a faithful husband, a kind father, and a strange composite of idealism and common sense.

The scholar will regret Miss Mann's decision to correct spelling and punctuation and her omission of portions of the letters which are "too detailed . . . or simply statistical" (p. x). Three memoirs prepared by Lee on the relations between France and the United States are omitted without comment by the editor. Some reference to their content
and location would have been useful. Miss Mann also mentions many letters written by Lee to officials in Washington protesting the assumption of authority by David Warden after the death of Joel Barlow, American Minister to France. Despite their apparent importance these letters are also omitted. Deciding which letters of a collection to publish is the thankless task of an editor, but on the whole Miss Mann, a great great granddaughter of William Lee, has performed her task with taste and accuracy.

William Lee as a recorder of events was not without faults, but even his prejudices flavor rather than detract from his letters. Allan Nevins in his Foreword calls A Yankee Jeffersonian “a delightful find.” Few readers will dispute his choice of adjectives.

Indiana University

Joseph C. Burke


This book is an illuminating document, not only on army life on the frontier, but on the sorry state of American military establishments in the West during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. It contains a brief Introduction by the editor, and the main text consists of selections from the official reports submitted by Colonel George Croghan, Inspector General for the western posts.

Colonel Croghan was a nephew of George Rogers and William Clark, and he too had emerged as a national hero—for his command and successful defense of Fort Stephenson during a British attack during the War of 1812. As Inspector General, Colonel Croghan made periodic tours of the two thousand mile western military perimeter which extended in zig-zag fashion from Fort Brady at Sault Ste. Marie in the north to Fort Jackson, sixty-five miles below New Orleans on the Mississippi River. In all, Colonel Croghan inspected twenty-seven forts—some as many as nine times—during his years of intendancy, 1826-1845. The Colonel’s duties were to report to the General-in-Chief on such matters as the suitability of fort locations, dispersements of troops, the strength or lack of it of the garrisons, and supplies as well as on general discipline, morals, and health of army personnel. For this he was admirably qualified, even though his heavy indulgence in spirits disrupted, at times, orderly procedures.

The reports, had they been made public at the time of their writing, would doubtless have been unsettling. In Croghan’s opinion, “All the forts in the Indian country . . . seem to have been constructed solely with a view to the comfortable accommodation of the troops engaged in their erection and without even a thought about the strength of the garrisons that might eventually be assigned to them, or of the fact of their being important links in the great chain of connection between the northwest and southwest points of our interior frontier” (p. 22). Croghan found army personnel more involved with self-sustaining agri-