

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

Army Life on the Western Frontier: Selections from the Official Reports Made Between 1826 and 1845 by Colonel George Croghan. Edited by Francis Paul Prucha. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958. Pp. xxxvi, 187. Map, illustrations, bibliographical note, appendix, index. \$4.00.)

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 intendency, 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 accomodation 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-

cultural pursuits than with strictly military matters. By and large, the equipment was inadequate, efficiency low, and capability for withstanding Indian attacks nil at many of the establishments. Beginning with Fort Brady, Colonel Croghan asks, "Why this place is dignified with the name of fort I can not imagine, for it is fitted for neither offensive or defensive purposes" (p. 35). He held that public funds were shamefully wasted upon Fort Atkinson. The stables at Fort Leavenworth he found "execrable, worse than the worst stables at the worst country taverns. . . ." (p. 45) and completely out of the protective range of the guardhouse. Moreover, the administration and services at the forts were likewise in a deplorable state. However, soldiers at most of the western posts ate simply and well.

Viewed in their entirety, these reports are incisive, highly informative, and thought-provoking. The Introduction by Francis Paul Prucha is well-written and provides a basis for an appreciation of the documents. But inasmuch as these reports expose the flagrant inadequacies of military defenses during the period indicated, one wishes that Father Prucha would have provided his own considered evaluation of army life on the frontier. He is, on the whole, content to let Colonel Croghan tell his story with a minimum of challenges or corroborations. Critical footnotes are few and far between.

Indiana University

Oscar Osburn Winther

Franklin Pierce: Young Hickory of the Granite Hills. Second edition.

By Roy Franklin Nichols. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1958. Pp. xvii, 625. Illustrations, notes, bibliographies, appendix, index. \$8.50.)

Roy F. Nichols, Vice-Provost and Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Pennsylvania, is one of America's distinguished historians. Few know as much about the 1850's in the United States as the scholar who in 1949 won the Pulitzer Prize for his outstanding volume, *The Disruption of American Democracy*. Nichols' *Franklin Pierce*, an earlier product, lacks the stylistic smoothness of its sequel. But in it there are many evidences of the same painstaking research and understanding of political realities which make the name of Nichols synonymous with the best in history and biography.

Through the years, experts have stressed Dean Nichols' mastery of partisan and factional intricacies, which so often present dilemmas to students of mid-nineteenth century drift and disaster. Your reviewer has long been equally impressed by the Pennsylvania scholar's interest in related problems of personality. It is provocative, for example, to contemplate the ways in which events and incidents might have been different if promising little Bennie Pierce had not been killed in a railroad accident, after the Fourteenth President's election but before his inauguration. This tragedy certainly had an effect on the American people as a whole through its impact on the boy's mother and father. It was far more consequential than Willie Lincoln's death during the Civil War. Indeed, a strong case could be built on the premise that no other parental bereavement in the annals of our nation has affected