

The value of such a study is obvious. Any future student of the company and of the Ohio Valley in the mid-eighteenth century will be placed deeply in debt to Professor James and will find his volume indispensable.

University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

Reginald Horsman

George Croghan: Wilderness Diplomat. By Nicholas B. Wainwright. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, for the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, Va., 1959. Pp. viii, 334. Maps, bibliographical essay, index. \$6.00.)

Nicholas B. Wainwright, while performing his duties as editor and research librarian of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, made a discovery of the type all historians dream about. In an old trunk in a Philadelphia attic he found the personal papers of George Croghan. These documents, along with the discoveries of other collections and the published papers of men like Sir William Johnson and Colonel Henry Bouquet, have made available much new information on Croghan's life and career. This is material which Albert T. Volwiler never had when he published his excellent work, *George Croghan and the Westward Movement*, over thirty years ago. Mr. Wainwright, who is the author of several previously published books, makes excellent use of this new information in presenting an authoritative and colorful biography of a fascinating figure of the early American West.

George Croghan has long been a person of interest to students of American colonial history. Even with the new information which Wainwright has uncovered, there is still much unknown about him. The author admits that "nothing is known of Croghan's life before he came to America" (p. 107), not even his age nor his appearance. He arrived in this country in 1741, but there is still little information about him before 1748. Therefore, much of the first chapter of this biography, which covers these early years, is conjecture based on the author's knowledge of the period and of the comparatively few pertinent documents. The remainder of the book, however, is a detailed and well-documented description of Croghan's life up to 1776, when he again became a rather obscure figure until his death in 1782.

During the thirty years or so of his active life in this country, Croghan was an outstanding Indian agent and trader. "His ability to understand the natives, to gain their respect, and to sway their opinions was Croghan's most important attribute" (p. 308). Frequently he served his country as a peacemaker and negotiator with the Indians and was unusually successful, Wainwright maintains, because of his talent for salesmanship, his tenacity, and his charm.

Croghan was also a speculator, but suffered frequent failures in business and died in poverty. These difficulties caused him to be distrusted by many, and a direct result of this distrust was the fact that both the British and the colonials treated Croghan as a traitor during the Revolution.

One of the striking aspects of this volume is its objectivity of presentation. The faults of Croghan's character are indicated as well

as his virtues. Wainwright speaks of Croghan's making promises he often left unfulfilled, of his heavy drinking, and of his near-illiteracy. The author admits that Croghan's honest trading methods did not stem from nobility of character but from practicality since such a policy was profitable. Wainwright freely criticizes, when necessary, Croghan's opinions, such as his explanation of the defeat of Braddock's expedition, which he had accompanied.

Wainwright has contributed in this book not only a detailed description of the eventful years of Croghan's life, but also a work which gives some insight into the frontier and its problems during and immediately after the French and Indian War. His work is interpretive as well as descriptive, and the interpretations are based upon much analysis of the evidence. The most notable of Wainwright's interpretations of Croghan's career is the contention that his failures were not caused by the plundering of the French, as Volwiler maintains, but by Croghan's own mismanagement of business affairs before the difficulties with the French ever occurred.

Huntington College

Robert H. Paine

Frontier America: The Story of the Westward Movement. By Thomas D. Clark. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959. Pp. xi, 832. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, appendix, index. Text edition, \$6.75; trade edition, \$10.00.)

In *Frontier America* Professor Thomas D. Clark paints in broad strokes the colorful, dynamic, often tragic history of pioneer days and ways as America moved west. Between the middle of the eighteenth century and the end of the nineteenth, the period this volume covers, the nation was formed and shaped as the successive frontiers of fur trader, cattleman, miner, and pioneer farmer laid the basis for settled agricultural life and the rise of towns and cities.

Clark skillfully cuts his way through the maze of local history and legend that often obscures the meaning of events. He presents an understandable account of the significant aspects of national growth, giving attention to incident and color but emphasizing broad social and economic developments rather than the element of individualism. The author makes no particular claims that the process of American expansion nurtured and matured the American democratic process. In fact, the book breaks with some others in the field in that it makes little effort to relate events in the rest of the country to the course of frontier settlement. Clark believes that America's history was vitally influenced by the westward movement and that many major national problems had connection with the frontier, but the reader is left to think through these complicated interrelationships for himself.

The book follows the general organization of courses in the westward movement. An opening "perspective" characterizes frontier America, skillfully outlining its traits and warning the reader to avoid the stereotyped notion that the frontier's basis was purely agricultural, an assumption which often dominates studies such as this. Modern,