
A recent estimate of the number of Scotch-Irish who found their way to the New World in the eighteenth century has placed the figure at 385,000. Constituting the last great wave of immigration to the colonies, the Scotch-Irish were compelled to push beyond the older settlements to find homes on the edge of the wilderness. As Theodore Roosevelt has said, in his Winning of the West, the Scotch-Irish were America's first frontiersmen. When the Revolutionary War began these hardy people constituted a fringe of settlement all along the frontier from New Hampshire on the north to Georgia on the south. They were almost one hundred percent Presbyterian in their affiliation. With their tradition of an educated ministry, both in Scotland and North Ireland, together with their schools, which were considered a necessity in every Scotch-Irish settlement, the Presbyterian Irish constituted the advance guard of Christian civilization west of the Alleghenies.

John McMillan, the subject of this careful biographical study, was a second generation Scotch-Irishman, born in Chester County, Pennsylvania, of devout Presbyterian parents. He attended John Blair's "Log College" at Fagg's Manor in his home county and later received his first baccalaureate degree at the College of New Jersey (Princeton) where he sat at the feet of John Witherspoon, but recently come from Scotland to assume the presidency of the college. Later he returned to Robert Smith's famous "Log College" at Pequea where he spent two additional years. Such was the preparation for the Presbyterian ministry then available to young Scotch-Irishmen such as John McMillan; thus there came to be an American-trained Presbyterian ministry suited to the needs of an advancing American frontier. Another pattern which John McMillan typifies was that of the ministers' making preaching tours through the back country previous to their settlements over congregations. In McMillan's extended tours he came to know the Redstone Country—southwestern Pennsylvania—where he received a call to two congregations, Chartiers and Pigeon Creek. Here he spent his entire minis-
try from 1776 to November 16, 1833, the date of his death. He was the first settled Presbyterian minister west of the Alleghenies.

The Presbyterian frontier minister combined school-teaching with his work as a minister, and John McMillan, like many others, conducted a “Log College.” The vast educational need all about him, as well as the necessity of increasing his means of livelihood, naturally lead the college-trained minister to assume the schoolmaster’s task in connection with his ministry. John McMillan’s school developed into Jefferson Academy, and Jefferson Academy became Jefferson College. At Washington, Pennsylvania, only fourteen miles away, another Presbyterian “Log College” was formed by Thaddeus Dodd, likewise a Princeton graduate, which later became Washington Academy. In the course of time (1865) the two colleges merged, after a long “college war,” to form what is now Washington and Jefferson College.

“Politics” is the title of an interesting chapter on the Whisky Rebellion in western Pennsylvania and John McMillan’s part in it. To John McMillan the “Rebellion” constituted a threat to the orderly life of the community and he courageously took the side of law and order. In fact, all the frontier churches stood for obedience to law and constituted islands of order in a sea of disorder.

The author has further served the cause of frontier history by including the hitherto unpublished John McMillan Journal, together with his brief autobiography, in an Appendix.

*Pomona College*  
William Warren Sweet

*America First: The Battle Against Intervention, 1840-1941.*  
By Wayne S. Cole. (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1953, pp. xi, 305. Bibliography and index. $3.50.)

Surely it is part of the historian’s province to study events and movements of the recent past; and Cole’s brilliant little volume, *America First,* proves that such study in some instances can be done so thoroughly that it will never have to be done again. Inaccessibility of materials used to be the plea against full-dress historical investigation of events with-