

the phrase "but in the opinion of the author" appearing in a footnote was almost startling.

In the opinion of this reviewer, some of the best writing of the entire series appears in the present volume. Especially is this true of the first five chapters by James Lea Cate, which deal with the China-based raids. Lee Bowen's account of the siege of Myitkyina is superb, as are parts of Frank Futrell's description of the Leyte campaign. The last chapter by Cate and Wesley Frank Craven, concerning the atom bomb, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the surrender, and an appraisal, is a distinct style departure. It is as if all other chapters and the previous volumes had been written by military historians for military men. Cate and Craven's final chapter in this volume, "Victory," is written by military historians for civilians.

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Dwight L. Smith

Zachary Taylor, Soldier in the White House. By Holman Hamilton. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1951, pp. 496. Illustrations, bibliography, and index. \$6.00.)

In this day those who seek political offices travel far and wide and deliver numerous speeches to win their goal. Yet, over a hundred years ago a planter and soldier who had no political aspirations and who had never even voted, became the favorite candidate of the masses for the highest office in the land, and was elected without having either toured the country or delivered a speech. Many reasons for this warrior's going into the White House could be cited, but suffice it to say that Zachary Taylor regarded politics not as a "highroad to power and glory, but rather as a path to be followed reluctantly to the place where a citizen could perform a service."

Holman Hamilton in this second volume of his biography of Taylor has carefully traced the steps of "Old Rough and Ready" from planting and soldiering into politics. His meticulous digging has produced a biography of outstanding merits. Most of Taylor's papers were destroyed during the Civil War and the *Congressional Globe* and other related sources had to be studied with care. Hamilton's search revealed

the authorship of the Allison Letters. A preliminary draft of the first letter was prepared by Logan Hunton, James Love, and Balie Peyton at Baton Rouge in April, 1848. It was discussed with Taylor and he "agreed to sign a letter incorporating 'what he had said & no more.'" Thereupon Hunton composed "the most important document of the preconvention campaign," but insisted that the "letter must be in Taylor's handwriting." The second Allison Letter was written by Alexander Bullitt at East Pascagoula, Mississippi, on September 4, 1848. "This product of Taylor's pen was his only significant stroke during the first three weeks of September."

One so inexperienced in the political world as President Taylor could not please everybody. Hamilton claims that Taylor's mistakes upon the whole were errors in "language and not in policy." "Old Zack" was well aware of his shortcomings and frequently remarked that he preferred his planting duties to the Presidency. The author feels also that the planter and soldier has been misjudged because of the "supposedly baffling contrast between what his background indicated he would do and what he actually did." Some writers have criticized Taylor because he owned slaves—"speculating why an investor in such property proved so staunch a Unionist." Taylor was "nationally minded; private economic interests never oversloughed his devotion to the Union."

A third fact which has confused some interpreters is the contradictory support given the General in 1848. Hamilton is of the opinion that if "Old Rough and Ready" had "broadcast what he thought and felt about every issue disturbing the nation, he could not have been elected." A fourth aspect, "not firmly grasped," was the origin of the President's Plan. The fifth and last misinterpretation is closely related to the first two. "He was *more* than a successful soldier. Rough and ready in battle, he exemplified in peace an attractive mingling of Virginia gentility and frontier earthiness. Stormy when aroused to anger, he was calm, considerate, modest, patient in the majority of his contacts. At times he failed to assert himself. And his most damaging tactical error lay in his reluctance to dismiss his ministers. But, just as he developed as a soldier, he improved as a political leader, gaining confidence from day to day."

Throughout the second volume, Hamilton has portrayed the qualities of the soldier-president and has expressed con-

viction that Taylor was a " 'strong executive' in the Jacksonian sense, when illness came to carry him off." In the production of this biography, Hamilton has made a significant contribution to the field of history.

Indiana University

Elfrieda Lang

The Hoosier Training Ground; A History of Army and Navy Training Centers, Camps, Forts, Depots, and Other Military Installations Within the State Boundaries During World War II. Compiled by Dorothy Riker. (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana War History Commission, 1952, pp. xiv, 381. Illustrations and index. \$5.00.)

Many significant stories of interest to Indianians have been brought together within this volume. Probably every Hoosier knows more or less about some of these developments; but few will have knowledge of the combined effect of all the government construction programs in Indiana during the second World War. The building of Camp Atterbury, Wackem Hospital, Baer Field, Bunker Hill Naval Air Station, Freeman Field, and Billings General Hospital is described in short chapters devoted to training installations. Among the military depots and proving grounds dealt with, Miss Riker has assembled chapters on Crane Naval Ammunition Depot, Indianapolis Chemical Warfare Depot, Jeffersonville Quartermaster Depot, Terre Haute Ordnance Depot, and the Jefferson Proving Ground. Miss Riker wrote ten of the chapters, Professor Lynn W. Turner of Indiana University five, May E. Arbuckle and Richard Simons one each.

Few will realize that the federal government poured one billion dollars into the hills of Martin County or that approximately one-fortieth the entire value of the United States Navy is to be found within the confines of Crane Naval Ammunition Depot. Fifty-six thousand acres in Jefferson, Jennings, and Ripley counties were incorporated in the Jefferson Proving Ground for the testing of explosives. The miracles of speedy construction, the building that took place before Pearl Harbor in order to make the United States an arsenal of democracy, and the quickness with which these institutions were put to work are all revealed in the various chapters. The reader will understand more realistically why war costs so much.