

railroad builder of the land," as one who made stockholders happy by the rise in their securities resulting from his manipulation, but who did not seemingly make them sad when, as was more commonly the case, his actions depressed the value of their stock.

Gould's association with western railroads, notably the Wabash, Missouri Pacific, and Union Pacific, was accompanied by construction of new lines and the acquisition of feeders, but though profits were made for a time and dividends paid, all were brought to receivership by spite construction, constant and destructive rate cutting, payment of unearned dividends, extravagant purchases of Gould-owned lines, and excessive costs that benefitted only Gould. In his effort to rehabilitate Gould, Professor Grodinsky maintains that these breaches of railroad agreements and rate cutting benefitted the American economy, and pictures Gould, surely with tongue in cheek, as tilting against monopolistic practices and high rates. His conclusion, despite the most damning evidence to the contrary, is that "the public benefited from his [Gould's] activities as a man of business in the railroad industry and in the field of speculative capital" (p. 610). Few of Gould's contemporaries could have accepted such a judgment.

Gould apparently left no papers which have been available to the author in the preparation of this study. Use has been made, however, of materials on the Burlington Railroad in the Newberry Library, the Villard papers in the Harvard Library, and in other smaller collections well known to historians of transportation. Heavy reliance is placed on railroad and financial journals and metropolitan newspapers.

Notwithstanding the author's efforts to find something constructive in Gould's career, there is much merit in the book. The reader is successfully carried through the most complicated financial maneuvering, and many details of the rivalry of railroad magnates in the seventies and eighties are clarified. His characterizations of the first two Vanderbilts, of Charles Perkins, John Murray Forbes, Collis P. Huntington, Russell Sage, and Henry Villard, while not acceptable to all scholars, are pungent, instructive, and at times corrective. Every reader will wish that the maps were as clear as the prose.

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Chicago Giant: A Biography of "Long John" Wentworth. By Don E. Fehrenbacher. (Madison, Wis.: American History Research Center, 1957. Pp. viii, 232. Illustrations, bibliography, notes, index. \$4.50.)

In 1853 a correspondent of the *Missouri Republican* warned, "Long John is here, and some think the deuce is to pay . . . everybody is awaiting with breathless anxiety the coming of some sad calamity . . . he is a terror to his enemies. A more successful political necromancer is not to be found" (p. 122).

What manner of man was this who began life so unobtrusively in New Hampshire in 1815 and departed this world in Chicago in 1888 so lavishly? John Wentworth, the Chicago Giant, stretched his six-foot

six-inch frame from the hills of New England to young and rough Chicago in 1836, and from that time on earned the respect, and more often fear, of his associates as he played many roles in a turbulent half-century of activity. Six times he served as congressman from Illinois, rubbing elbows with and helping to make or break some of our greatest political leaders. Twice he served as mayor of Chicago, the first time as Chicago's first Republican mayor. At no time during his half-century in Chicago was he completely severed from the rough and tumble of politics in Illinois.

Into this fabric of politics, his first love, Long John wove the threads of journalism as editor of the *Chicago Democrat*, of land speculation from which he made his million, and of farming from which he gained great personal satisfaction and no small success as a cattle breeder. For one who thrived on combat, marriage, too, should have been challenging, but here his achievements were far from great. Throughout most of his life he lived apart from and seldom saw his wife and daughter who would, no doubt, have found little satisfaction in his company.

The *Chicago Giant* has greater value if read by one possessing a more than average knowledge of the basic political issues and personalities characterizing the period, 1836-1872. The relationship shown between Illinois politics, with Long John as the vehicle of expression, and the consuming struggle of national politics is probably the most rewarding feature of this study. It is doubtful if the lay reader could easily comprehend the political significance of Long John's cataclysmic defection from the radical pro-Jackson ranks to the Republican party. Such a reader would furthermore be hard pressed to travel from Chicago to Washington to Springfield and back many times, meet so many political personalities and listen to their political discussion, and still remember where he had been, with whom he had spoken, and what had been said. Any reader, however, would understand and enjoy Chapter 9, the only chapter in which one is really allowed to feel the growing pains of youthful Chicago.

The bibliography and notes, particularly the many manuscript and newspaper references, speak eloquently of the thoroughness of the study. It is, therefore, with considerable presumption that the following observations are made. Long John's introduction into this world seems, in Chapter 1, to be confusing as the branches of the Wentworth family tree struggle to disentangle themselves. It appears too, in the same chapter, that too much effort is expended in trying, with little success, to make Long John a boisterous college student. One wonders also if the Jacksonian revolution was "a completed chapter" by 1843 (p. 40). At times, furthermore, the continuity of chronology becomes disjointed to the temporary discomfiture of the reader—e.g., on July 27, 1861, the final issue of the *Chicago Democrat* appeared and Chicago's first newspaper "spoke no more" (p. 189), yet, in the following chapter (p. 192), Long John is still writing incendiary editorials in the *Democrat*. If these be faults they count as little, however, as we recall the event-full life of this "little man" who matched strides and wits with the nation's "big men" and who, in the process, became the Chicago Giant.