

Book Reviews

Colonial Virginia. Two volumes. By Richard L. Morton. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, for the Virginia Historical Society, 1960. Vol. I, *The Tidewater Period, 1607-1710*: Pp. xiv, 408. Vol. II, *Westward Expansion and Prelude to Revolution, 1710-1763*: Pp. viii, 409-883. Illustrations, maps, bibliographies, index. \$15.00 per set.)

Professor Morton has written a comprehensive and detailed history of colonial Virginia, 1607-1763, in a broad setting. Early chapters tell of Virginia's founding, detail initial difficulties and perils involved in its early years, discuss its transition from a royal to a proprietary colony, and consider the political and economic beginnings of the Old Dominion. Once these foundations in tidewater Virginia are established, however, the scope of Morton's account is rapidly extended. Although the author emphasizes the history of tidewater Virginia, he fortunately exhibits substantial knowledge of and continued interest in Virginia's westward expansion.

To this reviewer at least, these two volumes afford much information to indicate that the successful formation of the United States as a separate country during and after the American Revolution was certainly not an inevitable development from colonial experience. In fact, they strengthen the impression that the Old Dominion exhibited important elements favorable to its becoming an independent country rather than a part of the United States. By the time Virginia's westward expansion reached its zenith during the American Revolution, Virginia held or at least had strong title to not only her present area but also what is now West Virginia, Kentucky, part of western Pennsylvania, and the Old Northwest, from which more than five states were subsequently carved. Virginia's surrender of her claim to the Old Northwest in the 1780's and her effective leadership in establishing a central government for the United States during and after the Revolution are significant developments which are made all the more remarkable in view of the role westward expansion had long played in her history.

Professor Morton's *Colonial Virginia* is desirable—perhaps even required—reading for persons with serious interest in the early history of the American Middle West. This is true not only because a significant proportion of the early settlers of the Middle West were either natives of Virginia or descendents thereof but equally true because the most important problems faced by the pioneers of the Middle West had previously been faced by Virginians—conflict with Indians, the impact of the frontier, the necessity for much self-sufficiency, the organization of local government, the development of transportation facilities, and so on. To a substantial extent, the life and institutions of the early American Middle West was bottomed upon English life and institutions as modified by Virginians. Thus, in various respects the founding of Jamestown in 1608 is a more important part of Indiana's history than La Salle's use of the St. Joseph-Kankakee portage in 1679.

This two-volume history is an important contribution by a mature scholar. Professor Morton exhibits detailed knowledge of Virginia's history; he relates Virginia's history to that of England and to other colonies; and, as indicated, he gives attention to western expansion as an important factor in the Old Dominion's history. Useful maps and illustrations and extensive bibliographies are included. The author seems aware that local history cannot be written in a purely local context, but his two volumes illustrate how essential such studies are to an adequate understanding of the larger stream of history. The University of North Carolina Press is to be congratulated for having published these volumes for the Virginia Historical Society.

Indiana University

Donald F. Carmony

The Great Lakes Frontier: An Epic of the Old Northwest. By John Anthony Caruso. (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1961. Pp. 432. Maps, notes, selected bibliography, index. \$6.50.)

Professor Caruso has continued a study of the frontier which he began in *The Appalachian Frontier*. This volume on the Great Lakes frontier deals with a century and three-quarters of the history of the Old Northwest from the arrival of Louis Jolliet and Jacques Marquette at Green Bay to the admission of Wisconsin as a state. In twelve lengthy chapters the author has condensed a staggering amount of frontier history into this book. There is nothing especially new in either his organization or approach. His research nevertheless was extensive, giving his study a marked degree of dependability. He has attempted to produce an account of the vigorous American thrust into the Northwest which is at once compressed and readable. The compression has been done with highly acceptable skill, and the writing is facile, even if at moments it appears strained. For instance, Caruso refers to "sputtering" rifles (p. 369), and there are other such figures which seem miscast. Nevertheless the text flows on with interest.

There is an extensive chapter on the formation and administration of Indiana Territory which centers largely about the cardinal issue of whether or not slavery would exist there. Jonathan Jennings is treated as a central figure who stirred opposition to slavery and who saw the territory created free as a sort of personal triumph.

The entire Northwest was involved in the vaguities of American Indian policies, a trial and error approach to much of its settlement, an involved relationship with Great Britain, and the rising pressures of partisan politics. The Indian problem was central in the early phases of territorial expansion. From the arrival of white men along the Great Lakes to the end of the Black Hawk War the region was troubled with threats and conflicts. The Shawnee chieftain Tecumseh was to leave an impression on the early Northwest almost comparable to that of George Clark and William Henry Harrison. Like Glenn Tucker, Mr. Caruso looks upon the Battle of Tippecanoe as an indecisive skirmish which "made Tippecanoe—a mere border skirmish that settled nothing—one of the great victories in American history. In twenty-nine years it grew so big that it won Harrison the presidency of the United States."