

struction was no reconstruction at all, Hesseltine states. "It was in fact a new national construction," although it was highlighted for a decade by "an era of unprecedented corruption" on the part of "carpet-baggers, scalawags, and Radical Republicans." Hesseltine's reference to "hate-mongering Radicals, intent upon destroying the South and prating about freedom" hardly coincides with those modern writers who would have us accept the image of "Lincoln and his loyal opposition."

The whole introduction contains a multitude of sweeping generalizations. Many are true, some are provocative, and several will no doubt invite long and loud rebuttals. This reviewer might agree with Hesseltine's analysis of Robert E. Lee as "a supreme tactician sadly deficient in concepts of strategy" if the axiom applied only to Gettysburg and not to Lee's conduct throughout the war. Yet the statement hardly has validity in the case of Chancellorsville, where Lee's daring in tactics and strategy reduced his capable opponent, Joseph Hooker, to a state of blubbing disconcertion.

The book has one glaring weakness, which is not the fault of the editor. The publisher, displaying rare shortsightedness in a volume of this size, omitted an index and thus restricted appreciably both the value and the usefulness of the total study. Only a superior anthology could withstand so painful a wound. This is such a work, presented in a stimulating fashion that has made the name Hesseltine synonymous with academic excellence.

National Civil War Centennial Commission James I. Robertson, Jr.

Service with the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers. By Rufus R. Dawes.

Edited with an introduction by Alan T. Nolan. (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, for the Wisconsin Civil War Centennial Commission, 1962. Pp. xv, 330. Illustrations, table, bibliography, index. \$5.00.)

The Twenty-fourth Michigan of the Iron Brigade. By Donald L. Smith.

(Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole Company, 1962. Pp. 312. Maps, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$6.50.)

A happy aspect of the Civil War centennial observance has been the republication of esteemed but relatively obscure books such as Colonel Dawes' which otherwise would have remained collectors' items not available to the ordinary buff or to students remote from large city or university libraries. And—whatever may be said about the centennial jubilees and battle reenactments—contributions to the literature of the war like Mr. Smith's give lasting value to the observance. Often regimental histories yield fresher, more detailed pictures than are found in biographies of the celebrated leaders or the more popularly read and applauded general histories.

Dawes' *Sixth Wisconsin*, long regarded a Civil War classic and indispensable to those concerned with the formation, growth, and campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, is here offered as an old treasure in a new chest. The publishers have performed a valuable

service to the ever-growing corps of Civil War enthusiasts by permitting easier access to one of Wisconsin's most cherished stories.

Alan T. Nolan, historian of the *Iron Brigade*, of which this regiment was a part, has not only given an enticing summary of the book in his Editor's Foreword, but has also distinguished it among the vast number of regimental histories. The Sixth Wisconsin was in the vortex of combat. With Colonel Dawes, the reader is on the firing line in most of the eastern campaigns.

Another characterizing feature of this book is the author's ability as soldier and writer. He possessed objectivity, good power of observation, an understanding of people, and familiarity with numerous other army units. Dawes was a noteworthy man of distinguished ancestry whose sons were to include industrial leaders and a vice president. He wrote clearly, intimately, engagingly.

The editor rightfully finds merit in the manner of presentation. The book is a combination of immediate reactions and more seasoned judgments. Throughout are scattered letters, carefully preserved by the colonel's wife, which give immediacy. Where error or hasty judgment occurs, the editor's narrative supplies elucidation.

A bit of Americana in the book which does not seem to have gained deserved notice in general war histories relates to the visit of Julia Ward Howe to the Sixth near Washington early in the war. She returned with the regiment from the army review at Bailey's Cross Roads and heard the lusty-lunged tenor, Sergeant John Ticknor, lead the singing about Jeff Davis and the sour apple tree while dews and damps of evening were falling about. That march, according to Dawes, inspired her to write "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Her own account of the writing does not conflict, but tends to confirm Dawes' story, though she does not mention this particular regiment or Sergeant Ticknor.

None interested in that bitterly fought war will make a mistake in reading and owning this splendid story of an intrepid regiment.

The Twenty-fourth Michigan of the Iron Brigade is the result of some twenty-five years of research by a member of the Detroit police force whose hobby has been devotion to the famed Twenty-fourth Michigan Volunteers. Much of the reading was done during two long hospital stretches when author Donald L. Smith was recovering from aggravated wounds.

A veteran of both World War II and the Korean unpleasantness, Smith is familiar with combat, and that word was almost the surname of the Twenty-fourth Michigan. Born amid the strife of a street riot in Detroit, it lived its entire existence in the battle blast.

Perhaps its only peaceful assignment, and manifestly the greatest honor which came to it, was to be selected to head the military procession, directly behind the hearse, at the funeral of President Lincoln in Springfield, Illinois. Like the Sixth Wisconsin, the Twenty-fourth Michigan was an "Iron Brigade" unit.

The word "famous" may be associated with this regiment discriminatingly. It had its baptism of fire at Fredericksburg, stood unwhipped at Chancellorsville, fought as gloriously at Gettysburg as any regiment in any war at any time, inched through the Wilderness with Grant, shared in the deadly combat at the "mule shoe" salient at Spotsylvania,

and supplied the covering fire when the mine was exploded at Petersburg.

The book is remarkable because of the splendid research, careful annotation, and great mass of detailed information accumulated by Mr. Smith, a self-made historian who has demonstrated that the urgency to write sometimes is more important than an academic background.

Of interest to Indiana buffs is his treatment of Solomon Meredith, the Quaker colonel of the Nineteenth Indiana who became brigadier general and commander of the "Iron Brigade" succeeding John Gibbon. Historians have taken delight in downgrading Meredith partly because Gibbon, a West Point graduate and good soldier, opposed his elevation but mainly because he was backed assiduously by Indiana's war governor, Oliver P. Morton, and was deemed a politician-general. Smith assures the reader repeatedly of Gibbon's opposition but is a bit more generous with Meredith than are some other chroniclers.

The prose, while at times lacking the elevation of a finished or professional writer, is free of the ornateness which strains much Civil War writing; it reads easily and does not intrude itself above the telling of the story. Though it could scarcely be rated distinguished, the book as a whole is a creditable achievement which gives the regiment the visibility to which it is entitled. The maps are unusually good for a regimental history.

Flat Rock, North Carolina

Glenn Tucker

Reconstruction: After the Civil War. By John Hope Franklin. *The Chicago History of American Civilization.* Edited by Daniel J. Boorstin. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961. Pp. x, 258. Illustrations, chronology, suggested reading, index. \$5.00.)

The tug of war between President Kennedy and Governor Ross Barnett of Mississippi over the admission of a Negro student to the University of Mississippi is a grim reminder that southern defense of secession and of the "harmful" effects of Reconstruction still arouses heated emotions, especially in parts of the Deep South. Daniel J. Boorstin, editor of *The Chicago History of American Civilization*, of which this volume is one of the chronological group, aptly states: "The Reconstruction era has properly been called the bloody battleground of American historians" (p. vii). Professor Franklin, Chairman of the History Department at Brooklyn College and currently William Pitt Professor at Cambridge University, has given a balanced account of Reconstruction, "Counter Reconstruction," and "The Aftermath of 'Redemption.'"

He concludes that, immediately after the Civil War, "the spirit of the South and the principles underlying it were very much alive" (p. 53). This revival of the antebellum spirit and the protests of Negro conventions against it contributed to the determination of Congress to enforce its own plan of Reconstruction. Some northern states objected to granting Negroes the right to vote, not only in the formerly seceded states but also in their own states. These actions emboldened President Johnson to denounce Negro suffrage with new vigor in his message to