

Sam Houston: American Giant. By M. K. Wisheart. (Washington: Robert B. Luce, Inc., 1962. Pp. xiv, 712. Illustrations, notes, note on sources, bibliography, index. \$10.00.)

Nineteenth-century America produced many soldier-statesmen; Sam Houston ranks among the greatest of them. Major general, governor of both Tennessee and Texas, president of the Republic of Texas, and United States Senator from Texas, Houston combined in his life great valor, public service, and principle along with alcoholism and despair.

Prior to Wisheart's biography, the chief lives of Houston were by Lester (1846), Crane (1884), Bruce (1891), Williams (1893), Creel (1928), and James (1929). Of this group, *The Raven*, by Marquis James, was undoubtedly the best. Wisheart's study is not as interesting nor his selection of material as good as James's. It is, however, more definitive and accurate. For example, Wisheart, unlike James, does not have Anson Jones committing suicide on his hotel steps or Houston setting out to acquire Texas for Jackson at the latter's request. In addition, Wisheart's extensive notes and bibliography indicate that he did more exhaustive research than James into the abundant and scattered materials relating to Houston's life.

Wisheart's book contains much material on Houston's personal relationships with Eliza Allen, Tiana Rogers, and Margaret Lea, as well as on his public relationships with such political giants of the period as John C. Calhoun, Daniel Webster, Andrew Jackson, and Henry Clay. It also covers some of the major political issues of the period 1840-1860 and Houston's positions on them. Wisheart relates Houston's struggle for Texan independence; his desire for United States annexation of Texas; his advocacy of the Mexican war and the Compromise of 1850; and his opposition to Calhoun's ideas on secession and to the Kansas-Nebraska Act and Texas secession from the Union. Wisheart also stresses the lawlessness and erratic nature of the Texas populace during its early development and the continual violent verbal attacks against Houston throughout his career.

This most recent Houston biography with its extensive index, notes, and bibliography should be welcomed by scholars. General readers should also find it interesting even though it is long. It is highly recommended for all general historical collections.

Arkansas Polytechnic College

Kenneth R. Walker

Ignatius Donnelly: The Portrait of a Politician. By Martin Ridge. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962. Pp. x, 427. Illustrations, notes, selective bibliography, index. \$7.95.)

When Ignatius L. Donnelly was seventeen years old, he received a letter from the popular New England author, Oliver Wendell Holmes, predicting that "by and by we shall hear of Ignatius L. Donnelly" (p. 1). Holmes was commenting in 1848 on Donnelly's promise as a writer, and while the prophecy was accurate enough as regards the future author of *Caesar's Column*, *Atlantis*, and *The Great Cryptogram*, much more was to be heard of Donnelly as a politician and advocate of reform than as a poet or novelist.

Born in 1831 in Philadelphia of Irish Catholic parentage, Ignatius Donnelly was reared in that city and there began the practice of law and his interest in politics.

It is with Donnelly's political career that Martin Ridge, Associate Professor of history at San Diego State College, is concerned in this excellent biography. Professor Ridge's title is happily chosen for what he has sought to do—present the portrait of a politician. Donnelly entered politics in 1855 as a Democratic candidate for the Pennsylvania legislature, but withdrew from the race the day before the election. In 1856 he campaigned actively for the election of James Buchanan to the presidency and in the same year he moved to Minnesota and settled in Nininger City where he maintained his home for the remaining forty-five years of his life.

Beginning with Donnelly's election as secretary of the Republican territorial convention and his nomination for the Minnesota senate in 1857, Professor Ridge traces in interesting detail a political career which included Donnelly's activities as a Lincoln Republican lieutenant governor and acting governor of Minnesota during the Civil War; as a Radical Republican congressman in the Reconstruction period; as a leader of the Liberal Republican movement in Minnesota in 1872; as an organizer of the Minnesota Granger Movement; as the leader of the Anti-Monopoly party in the Minnesota senate; as temporary chairman of the Greenback party national convention in 1876 and a Democratic-Greenback nominee for Congress in 1878; as a congressional candidate supporting Grover Cleveland in 1884; as leader of the Farmers' Alliance in Minnesota and their spokesman in the lower house of the state legislature in the mid-1880's; as the gubernatorial nominee of the Farmer Labor party in 1888; as an Alliance Labor Union state senator in the early 1890's; as an organizer of the Populist party, member of its national committee, and nominee for governor of Minnesota in 1892; as supporter of William Jennings Bryan in 1896; and as vice-presidential nominee of the Mid-Road People's party in 1900.

Students of United States history have long been aware—often only vaguely—that Donnelly was an important figure. Professor Ridge tells us why. Relying mainly on manuscript sources and newspapers, though without neglecting theses and monographs, Ridge paints an accurate historical picture not only of Donnelly but also of the period in which he lived. This biography is well written, the footnotes are at the bottom of the pages where they belong, and there are no noticeable errors of any significance. Professor Ridge's book represents a difficult task well done, and is an important contribution to the history of Minnesota and of the nation.

Davis and Elkins College

Thomas Richard Ross

Antislavery and Disunion, 1858-1861: Studies in the Rhetoric of Compromise and Conflict. Edited by J. Jeffery Auer. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963. Pp. xii, 427. Notes, index. \$6.00.)

Twenty-three essays, each focusing on an incident of public address during the latter stages of the sectional crisis, have been brought