

A Banner in the Hills: West Virginia's Statehood. By George Ellis Moore. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1963. Pp. xii, 256. Maps, notes, appendixes, index. \$5.00.)

In this brief book George E. Moore, professor of government at Slippery Rock State College, attempts to present the story of secession and Civil War in the western counties of the Old Dominion and to trace the steps by which the state of West Virginia was created and admitted to the Union. He limits his attention primarily to the years 1860-1863 and almost exclusively to political and military factors. On the whole he has accomplished his purpose quite well.

Some effort is made in the first thirty pages to summarize the long history of conflict between the western and eastern sections of Virginia prior to 1860. Unless one dares to assume that the reading public is well informed on the decades of political controversy between these sections, the rather sketchy background provided in this book must be regarded as a serious defect. For example, it has long been thought that the antislavery sentiment of the Methodist Episcopal church was a fact of tremendous importance, and even today one hears it said that the "Methodists made West Virginia." Professor Moore, however, merely states that "the region was generously supplied with churches, half of which were Methodist and one fifth of which were Baptist" (p. 11) and on the same page adds that "the clergy of the Methodist Episcopal Church denounced slavery and slaveholders." Hardly more attention is given to the nationalistic legacy of the Jacksonian Democrats or to the influence of pro-Union newspapers.

One reason for the neglect of historical background is probably to be found in the author's view that "there was, to be sure, the tradition of an ancient quest for political independence, but if the 'insurrection' had ended within ninety days . . . there would have been no new state" (p. xi). The war did not end in ninety days and there was a new state made out of Virginia—but not out of Missouri or Illinois or Indiana—and thus the "tradition of an ancient quest for political independence" in western Virginia deserves much more attention than it is given in this book.

Chapters IV, V, VI, VIII, XIII, XIV, and XIX deal with political maneuvers and describe the various conventions whereby the secession of Virginia from the Union, the separation of West Virginia from Virginia, and the organization of a new state were effected. The other chapters recount the military operations in western Virginia from the Battle of Philippi in 1861 to the failure of the Confederate raiders in 1863. Professor Moore is at his best in showing the relationship, all too often neglected, of events on the field of battle to those in conventions and congresses.

The footnotes are listed at the end of the book and are followed by appendixes which include the texts of various proclamations, declarations, and addresses. There is no bibliography. The jacket states that "this book has the official endorsement and sponsorship of the West Virginia Centennial Commission."

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