

by a rather detailed account of the government of the country by the British (particularly as it differed from French techniques of government). Then come two sections on the records of the two most important sources of documents, the Illinois Country and Detroit. Two important classes of documents are discussed in detail: land records and ecclesiastical records. There are also rewarding discussions of manuscript collections (including bodies of material collected by private individuals and their eventual disposition) and reproductions from British Archives held currently by institutions in the New World.

A final section of the volume consists of bibliographical sources. It is a model of excellence, although Mr. Beers missed the more valuable second edition of the Clements Library *Guide* compiled by William S. Ewing in 1953. A new tool, which may not have come to Mr. Beers's attention, is the series of catalogues of important libraries published by the G. K. Hall Company of Boston. Several of them—the New York Public Library catalogue of its American section and the Newberry's Edward E. Ayer catalogue, for example—cover such large quantities of books that they can be of great value to the student of the Old Northwest.

All in all, this is a fine and rewarding work which will satisfy many, many users.

The Newberry Library

Colton Storm

Messages and Papers relating to the Administration of Samuel Bigger, Governor of Indiana, 1840-1843. Edited by Gayle Thornbrough. *Indiana Historical Collections*, Volume XLIV. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1964. Pp. vii, 669. Frontispiece, notes, index. \$7.50.)

The administration of Samuel Bigger as governor of the state of Indiana began on December 9, 1840, and ended with the completion of his single term in office three years later. During this critical period he had to cope with many problems which had their inception in previous administrations and which were destined to carry over into several subsequent administrations.

While the problem of an extremely ambitious internal improvements program with its numerous financial ramifications was of primary concern to the Bigger administration, such ancillary problems as the public debt, the state bank, taxation, revenue, and relief laws came in for their share of attention. During this period of recurring financial crises in Indiana there was a tendency to neglect less pressing problems. As a result, attempts to improve public education, care of the insane, and conditions at the state prison were undertaken only half-heartedly. The fact that these attempts were relatively slight, however, does not deny good intent on the part of the governor and legislators alike.

In editing this seventh volume of the Indiana Historical Bureau's series of governors' messages and papers, Miss Gayle Thornbrough was faced with the unenviable task of attempting to present complete coverage of Governor Bigger's administration without benefit of any

collection of Bigger's correspondence. In lieu of such a collection she has had to supplement the few extant letters with numerous other letters which were written by members of the General Assembly and were published in various contemporary newspapers throughout the state. In addition to this material she has included selected items from the Senate and House *Journals* and the *Documentary Journals*.

Even though it is both logical and customary to arrange the messages and papers of public officials in chronological sequence, frequently the result is a variegated pattern of events containing many loose ends. This is especially true of the papers of the Bigger administration since many of the problems it faced were common to several administrations. The editor has demonstrated appropriate restraint in not exceeding the limits of the period covered by the messages and papers themselves. In a generous introduction she has carefully delineated the principal problems of the period and has discussed the various attempts at solution. Those readers who desire additional background information need only peruse earlier volumes in this series, while those who are interested in developments subsequent to the Bigger administration can either turn to the original documents or await publication of later volumes of the series.

Despite the many obstacles inherent in a work of this type, the editor has succeeded in compiling a wealth of information dealing with this early period in Indiana's history. Although in general her selection of documents has been judicious, it appears that a few were included solely for the sake of completeness. For example, all three of the Governor's Thanksgiving proclamations were included in the volume when perhaps one would have sufficed to show that Governor Bigger did not depart from the usual stereotyped holiday proclamation. This observation is not so much a criticism of editorial judgment as it is a commentary on the paucity of extant official documents and letters for the period.

The annotations of the documents in this collection are both thorough and scholarly. The work is further enhanced by a useful index. While it may have only limited appeal to the casual reader, certainly the serious student of the Hoosier heritage will recognize it as a worthwhile contribution to history and will look forward to the time when other volumes of the series are completed.

Ball State Teachers College

Richard H. Caldemeyer

Earlham: The Story of the College, 1847-1962. By Opal Thornburg. (Richmond, Ind.: The Earlham College Press, 1963. Pp. xv, 484. Illustrations, notes, appendixes, index. \$7.50.)

College histories are too often written as by-products of an anniversary celebration or for the edification of the alumni. While they serve the useful purpose of preserving facts about a single institution, which, however small, is of course an integral part of the historic whole, they seldom relate that institution in any significant way to the context of higher education or of national life in which it develops.