

During this time questions of statehood and slavery spiraled into a crisis, but the author makes no mention of the Missouri Compromise. Of the states included in the study, nine had a population over fifty thousand by 1820, and their influence in the affairs of the nation cannot be dismissed. There are also minor errors: Fort Harmar is misspelled; the map showing the routes of Generals Hull and Harrison in the War of 1812 is incorrect (p. 267).

The editors, because of ample citations in the footnotes, have deleted a bibliography and included a historiographical note on the Turner thesis.

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American Forts Yesterday and Today. By Bruce Grant. (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1965. Pp. 381. Illustrations, maps, glossary, selected bibliography, index. \$5.95.)

It appears that many Americans suffer from an edifice complex. How else can one explain the rapid rise in the number of books written on forts? At least six of them have appeared on the market during the past three years, and a number of others are in the production stage. They are limited, however, to military posts, to the fur trade, or to those found in a particular region of the country. Forts of the American West seem to be especially attractive to writers, historians, artists, photographers, publishers, and book buyers, if quantity is a valid indicator. In this newest addition to the list, Bruce Grant goes one step further. He attempts to cover them all—every stockade, palisade, blockhouse, redoubt, garrison, camp, mission, shack, ruin, and rockpile, which at one time or another someone in wisdom or foolishness decided to dub a fort. There are more than 1,200 entries, each of them a monument or a memory to the ingenuity of man.

The author has a sense of balance for which we may be grateful. Descriptions vary in length according to the importance of the fort. In most cases, the basic information is included. Grant usually gives the dates of the establishment and the abandonment of each fort and frequently includes a statement of its significance. If remains exist, they are discussed in detail. The book is also easy to use. It is divided into sections by geographical area, and forts are grouped by states. The eight regional maps are crowded but adequate. The drawings by Lorence Bjorklund are delightful. Although lacking in detail, they capture the spirit of the times and occasionally evoke an intended chuckle.

The book has a fatal flaw. One cannot depend on its accuracy. Some of the descriptions appear to be correct, but others are obviously not. Take, for example, the treatment of Fort Laramie, Wyoming. Grant devotes a full page (p. 258) to the post but commits so many errors, both common and uncommon, that it would take several pages to recount and correct them. One need mention only a few to cast a long shadow on the research of the author.

Grant states that the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 provided for the payment of an annuity to the Northern Plains Indians in return for certain lands. Actually, the Indians retained ownership of the land. They simply agreed to allow emigrants to travel over the Oregon, California, and Mormon trails free from harrassment and to permit the United States Army to build fortifications along the route. Grant reports that "Old Bedlam," the famous officers' quarters immortalized in a novel by Charles King, cost from \$60,000 to \$85,000 since lumber for its construction had to be hauled all the way from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Records show, however, that the lumber came from trees growing within a fifty mile radius of the post. In fact, logging still continues on nearby Laramie Peak. Grant declares that the State of Wyoming bought Fort Laramie and donated it to the federal government in 1927. In truth, the state purchased the buildings and land in 1937. It became a part of the National Park System in 1938.

Since the market for books on forts is a bullish one, it is quite possible that another author may soon supply a volume which has all of the strengths and none of the weaknesses of *American Forts*. At least let us hope so.

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A Nation on Trial: America and The War of 1812. By Patrick C. T. White. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1965. Pp. ix, 177. Notes, maps, suggested reading, index. Cloth, \$4.95; paperbound, \$1.95.)

American historical scholarship has, so it seems, exhausted the Revolution and its aftermath and has turned to the War of 1812, and the book under review is only one of perhaps a dozen volumes to appear in the past few years. Where it differs from the others is its attempt at synthesis—a short, general account of the causes of the war and the diplomacy of the peace. The author, Patrick C. T. White, cites to documents in the Public Record Office of Great Britain and to numerous writings of contemporary Americans, public and private. He contends that the Americans faced in the British Government an enemy that was almost implacable, that the British had decided that their European problems came first and that American interests had to work themselves out within the larger arrangements—such as the Orders in Council—for British national security. The author does not hold a brief for the diplomacy of Jefferson and Madison, which he remarks contained too much hope and not enough practicality. But he believes that the War of 1812 had a good result because it showed the British they could not step on the Americans, and that "the new freedom from the Old World provided the United States with an impetus for growth that might otherwise not have existed" (p. 167).

The above quotation, part of the book's penultimate sentence, points to one of the difficulties of this volume—for White has written the book as collateral reading for college undergraduates, and no under-