

and shortly after the Civil War. She has not only brought together documents related to the various Fisk and Holmes expeditions of those years, but after an assiduous search the compiler has collected extensive wagon train rosters for these Minnesota-launched trains. Genealogical societies will mine her information for years to come.

Much of this collection is built around a nineteenth-century western prototype, James Liberty Fisk. Fisk is almost too much the stereotype to be believed. However, as one document after another makes patently clear, this dreamy-eyed frontier dynamo was no abstraction. Thanks to Mrs. White, James Liberty and the three Fisk brothers have now obtained the historical recognition too long denied them. Despite his effervescent, "My spirit never droops" (p. 161), James Fisk certainly suffered his share of pioneer oscillations. With a middle name like "Liberty" Fisk had to be controversial. Few Northwest Indian episodes received more unsavory notoriety than the deliberate strychnine poisoning of two dozen Sioux with which he was connected. Actually he appears considerably more prudent than many of his wagon captain contemporaries. To eager but ill-prepared Minnesota gold seekers he counseled, "None who have *homes* and a reasonable means of livelihood should be incited by big stories, however true they may be, to emigrate to far off territories after a phantom fortune" (p. 11). And the manner in which he armed one expedition with a twelve-pound mountain howitzer, advanced them into hostile country, and held the wagons together in the face of repeated attacks by Sioux invites Hollywood's prevaricators to turn to nonfiction copy.

Most important, Mrs. White has compiled a great mass of social history dealing with the pioneers of the 1860's. Her study is larded with information on their hopes, their daily activities, and even the tools with which they mastered their environment. The Minnesotan's achievement, and it took twenty years to amass, is unquestionably the best single summation of the northern overland wagon trains during the decade of the 1860's.

San Jose State College

Ted C. Hinckley

"Black Jack:" John A. Logan and Southern Illinois in the Civil War Era.
By James P. Jones. *Florida State University Studies*, No. 51. (Tallahassee:
The Florida State University, 1967. Pp. xvii, 314. Illustrations, notes,
maps, bibliography, index. \$8.50.)

The ubiquitous John A. Logan, Illinois congressman and Civil War general, has often been portrayed as an opportunist of the deepest dye. Like many others of his political generation who were caught up in the maelstrom of sectional conflict and war, Logan was converted from an outspoken Democrat to a Radical Republican. As a member of the Illinois legislature

in the 1850's, he authored that state's Negro exclusion law; yet, by the end of the war he had become a champion of abolition. The story of Logan's conversion and the motives behind it provide a theme for this book. An opportunist Logan undoubtedly was; but there was a good deal more integrity in the man than he has been given credit for, as this generally sympathetic portrait reveals. A resident of the pro-southern counties of Illinois' "Egypt," Logan mirrored the divided allegiances of his district; but he also exerted considerable influence on it. Southern Illinois' devotion to the Union during the war may be traced in large measure to his efforts.

Perhaps the most puzzling period in Logan's career has been the crucial months of the secession crisis. A follower of Douglas and an advocate of compromise, Logan was widely reported to have counselled secession, only to make a complete about-face later when he declared his support to the government and joined the Union army. Jones, in an able and well-documented chapter, has finally set the record straight. Far from being a secessionist, Logan merely reflected the predicament of many Douglas followers. Douglas' urgent support of the Lincoln administration following Sumter was more than they could immediately appreciate. After months of soul searching, some Douglasites in Illinois, like William A. Richardson, became Peace Democrats; others, like Logan, chose the path of Union and became War Democrats. Resigning his congressional seat, he took the field as one of Lincoln's abler political generals and emerged from the war as one of Illinois' great war heroes. Undoubtedly, the realities of the postwar political situation as well as the popularity he had achieved in the war contributed to his affiliation ultimately with the Radical Republicans, but Jones also credits Logan with deeper motivations.

Jones has not chosen to produce a full-scale biography but rather has concentrated on Logan's immediate prewar and wartime record, "an attempt to present a man of divided loyalties leading an equally divided section in days of national crisis" (p. xvi). In doing so, he has produced a first-rate study. He has combined a painstaking and critical examination of a wide range of sources with a persuasive analysis of a most difficult figure during an equally difficult period. The story of Logan's role in the military campaigns of the war—from the effort to clear the Mississippi Valley of Confederate resistance to the sweep through the Carolinas—to which most of the book is devoted is detailed with clarity and suspense. A native Floridian, Jones has added significantly to the story of Illinois in the Civil War as well as to the impact which the war had on the career of one important professional politician.