

themselves and their children, by the size of the family group (about a dozen or more) living together in one house, by the extent of visitation between citizens in the town and the number of travelers to the town, and by the long hours of the work day (from 4:00 or 5:00 a.m. to 8:00, 10:00, or 12:00 o'clock at night). Calvin's account of the reaction of Indiana's banks and merchants to the Specie Circular is personal and perceptive. The problems of bad weather and sickness displayed in the diaries are not new, though they are overwhelming.

This is a warm and intimate record of the day to day activities—and often thoughts—of two young people whose aspiration was to live pleasantly, but without ostentation, to raise and educate a respectable family, and to serve their community. Well edited, this publication is a valuable contribution to the Indianapolis Sesquicentennial.

Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

James H. Rodabaugh

The County Courts in Antebellum Kentucky. By Robert M. Ireland. (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1972. Pp. x, 194. Notes, tables, maps, essay on authorities, index. \$9.00.)

Professional historians have generally neglected the study of local history, leaving the field to amateurs and county historical societies. Professor Ireland has attempted to correct this historiographical deficiency for the state of Kentucky with a detailed study of the county court system to 1850. The southern county court system in general may be traced back to England, the Kentucky court in particular directly to Virginia. The county courts, consisting of the justices of the peace of a county, performed the judicial, legislative, and executive functions of county government, such as overseeing the administration of estates, tax collecting, road building and maintenance, and ferry and mill licensing. Ireland not only explores the historical and legal background of these duties but also their practical effect on the people.

An analysis of the socioeconomic status of the average member of the county court revealed that he was forty-nine, probably a farmer, owner of substantially more taxable property than the average resident, a political leader (often a member of the state legislature), and an officer in the militia.

Although a significant number of magistrates were members of the state legislature, a study of voting behavior revealed no bloc voting on bills that affected the powers and jurisdictions of the county courts or that attempted to remove errant justices of the peace. Ireland's study also delineates the relationship of the county officials with the governor, the higher judicial tribunals, and the towns and cities of the state.

The patronage power of the county courts was highly significant and virtually absolute. The clerk, constable, jailer, coroner, surveyor, sheriff, and county attorney were regularly appointed by the court. The office of sheriff, the most lucrative financially and powerful politically, by law evolved onto the senior magistrate. In the larger counties the office was often sold and at times publicly auctioned off to the highest bidder.

The system was not without fault. "Inattentiveness, cumbersomeness, disorderliness, and inexpertness pervaded the local tribunals" (p. 145). The system was reformed in 1849, although Ireland concluded that many of the deficiencies persisted under the new arrangement.

The study is well researched and competently written. In the section on the financial business of the courts it would have been useful to have indicated the comparative size of county budgets for various periods. One also would have hoped that Ireland would have explored in greater detail the family relationships mentioned on page 67.

If local history in other states can receive similar incisive treatment, then one of the major gaps in American historiography will be closed.

Indiana University, Fort Wayne

Dwight F. Henderson

Constitution Making in Illinois, 1818-1970. By Janet Cornelius. *Studies in Illinois Constitution Making.* Edited by Joseph P. Pisciotte. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, for the Institute of Government and Public Affairs, 1972. Pp. xv, 175. Map, notes, bibliography, index. Paperbound, \$3.45.)

One important branch of constitutional law which has never received the scholarly or the public attention it deserves is state government. This has been true despite the large