could not possibly deal with in limited space. This well executed history should challenge every other department to follow suit, and first in line should be the Department of History.

*Indiana University, Bloomington*  
Thomas D. Clark


There really is very little point to this review other than as an object lesson in the perils of the Bicentennial. It is not simply that the book under consideration lacks the distinguishing qualities of a scholarly work, but that it is inadequate even as a specimen of popular history. It serves to illustrate nothing more than the grubby opportunism of the marketplace.

Stringing together a series of eyewitness accounts of military actions hardly constitutes a history of the American Revolution, but taken even as a military history it is deficient. The author provides little in the way of a narrative framework. The eyewitness reports are left to stand without critical comment. The War for Independence might just as well be taking place on the moon for all meaning the author imparts to the battles that are described. A lay reader would indeed be hard put to make consecutive sense of the events that constitute the War for Independence.

The claim to pictorial history is equally farfetched. There are all sorts of visual materials scattered through the text, but little rhyme or reason for their presence. Lacking attribution for the most part, it is difficult to say whether the illustrations are in fact of contemporary origin. The impressionistic water colors provided by Smith are pretty but wholly inappropriate to the subject, or to the claim that the work is documentary in character.

In summary, what we have here is a glossy piece of merchandise passing as a history of the American Revolution,
with little in redeeming value for a general public that certainly needs to know more about its revolutionary heritage.

**Indiana University - Purdue University, Bernard Friedman**


The American frontier produced many men of extraordinary vision and ambition capable of seizing upon the boundless opportunities of a developing wilderness. Typical of this breed was James Patton whose personal saga was played out on the western frontier of mideighteenth century Virginia. A Northern Irish sea captain, Patton made his first contact with America in the 1730s when he delivered cargoes of indentured servants to the labor hungry planters of the Old Dominion. By 1737 Patton had abandoned the sea and had become involved with the influential William Beverley in land speculations along the Rappahannock River. Within a remarkably few years Patton emerged as one of the most powerful figures along the entire Virginia frontier. Settling in the sparsely populated Augusta County, Patton became the local militia commander, coroner, president of the county court, tax collector, sheriff, and head of the local Presbyterian church board of commissioners. As the author notes, Patton ran Augusta County as a personal fiefdom with little consideration for the democratic principles that supposedly flourished on the frontier.

First and foremost Patton was a land speculator, and much of this biography is devoted to his unceasing efforts to acquire more land patents. Although the author does not choose to comment on the subject, Patton's experience is an excellent example of the role played by land speculators in the settlement of America. Patton was a greedy man driven by an insatiable hunger for wealth and power. One result of his pursuit of riches is that he explored and surveyed a vast region of the frontier, publicized the availability of choice lands, and thus hastened the populating of those areas. Another result was that he necessarily had to involve himself in Indian relations in order to improve the security of his hold-