

away from the academic historians, the professors and return it to you [the people]" (p. 1815). Well, the people have it, but the professors, too, will find this "long journey" a profitable, at times exciting, and often a novel experience.

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Eagle and Sword: The Federalists and the Creation of the Military Establishment in America, 1783-1802. By Richard H. Kohn. (New York: The Free Press, 1975. Pp. xx, 443. Maps, illustrations, notes, essay on sources, index. \$13.95.)

Time has a way of erasing blemishes and romanticizing the unromantic. Never has this process been more apparent than in this era of America's bicentennial. Bicentennial fever, with its alarming symptoms of verbal inflation and hero worship has struck. As a result millions of Americans are busy paying homage to the Augustan age of the Founding Fathers when saintly giants ruled.

Richard H. Kohn is not one of these uncritical celebrators. A generation or two ago Kohn might have been called, with some distaste, a "debunker," implying that he had selectively used evidence to undermine maliciously a well accepted "truth." In fact, of course, Kohn is no debunker but a careful historian whose book traces in well documented detail the beginnings of the American military establishment.

That America needed an army after the Revolution was apparent, but what kind, militia or regular, and of what size? On one side the Nationalists (later the Federalists) favored a strong central government and a regular army. Their opponents, the Anti-Federalists, saw in a regular army a potential weapon of dreadful tyranny and raised the old Whig cry of "No Standing Army."

It is likely that many Americans today share in the teleological fallacy that history is about the successful and dismiss the notion that the Federalists ever planned to use the army for political purposes simply because they never did. Kohn points out that this is not the case and that some high Federalists, Hamilton included, were caught up in such a frenzy of suspicion about Republican activities in the 1790s that they might well have used the army to suppress their

opposition. Their failure, according to Kohn, was due to an inability to understand either popular sympathies or the determined opposition of John Adams. In the end the Federalists destroyed themselves. From that political wreck the Republicans did salvage the army but one clearly nonpolitical and under civilian control.

The political machinations involving so many people make this a complex tale. It is to Kohn's credit that he manages, despite the mass of information, to make the story an interesting and at times absorbing one. Ironically, one of the weakest portions of the book is the last chapter. This is the same one that in his acknowledgments the author maintains "materially improved the book." The chapter is forced and repetitious. It should also be added that in such a well founded scholarly work the use of brief introductions for each part which read as though they had been drawn from a John Barth novel is both affected and unnecessary.

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The Presidency of John Adams. By Ralph Adams Brown. (Lawrence: The University Press of Kansas, 1975. Pp. x, 248. Frontispiece, notes, bibliographical essay, index. \$12.00.)

As a volume in the American Presidency Series, *The Presidency of John Adams* is intended to provide "historians and the general reading public" with an "interesting, scholarly" assessment of John Adams' administration. It will serve the second audience more effectively than the first.

On balance, the book offers an informed, well organized, and readable political narrative of Adams' term as president. It is essentially a synthesis of the secondary literature for the period, though Ralph Adams Brown does offer some interpretive suggestions of his own, particularly as they relate to Adams' handling of the presidential office. Perhaps the most debatable of Brown's theses is the assertion that during the heat of political argumentation over the Alien and Sedition acts, Adams remained conspicuously calm and level headed. Certainly Adams deserves credit for finally steering a course away from war with France. And probably throughout his term he hoped that war could be avoided on terms acceptable