

Hamilton has indeed presented a precisely detailed account of Johnson's rise to preeminence in colonial America. This reviewer, at least, hopes the legend will achieve flesh and blood in the forthcoming, concluding volume.

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Adams: An American Dynasty. By Francis Russell. New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc., 1976. Pp. 374. Illustrations, bibliography, index. \$15.00.)

In 1966 Thomas Boylston Adams, peace candidate for the United States Senate, received eight percent of the Massachusetts Democratic vote. Descendant of two presidents who were defeated after single terms, Adams took an unpopular stand which he thought consistent with the meaning of his name. An Adams, he told a reporter in 1975, should "always be on the side of the rebels" (p. 369).

Adams' view is one permissible way of interpreting a tradition that includes John and John Quincy Adams, the "Novanglus" papers, and unbending opposition to the gag rule. Others who bear that tradition may view it differently; George Caspar Homans, Harvard sociologist, Republican, and "hard-boiled egghead," is no rebel in any obvious sense; and fellow Adamses have been business executives, yachtsmen, and gentlemen farmers more often than leaders of revolt (p. 369). Their tradition, begun by a rebel who was also a founder of American conservatism, is consistently distinguished but not uniformly rebellious.

Francis Russell's deeply respectful history of the Adams family briefly recognizes its living members but properly concentrates on the generations from President John Adams through great grandson Brooks, last of the line to occupy the "Old House" at Quincy, now part of the Adams National Historic Site. Those four generations were united by a sense of place, education at Harvard College, brilliant achievements in politics and literature, deep personal disappointment, and recurrent pessimism about the course of democratic culture. Whether they rebelled against empire or slave power, learned to make and keep money in Jay Gould's unseemly era, or sought refuge in the Virgin, the Adamses were usually out

of harmony with their times. In 1919 Brooks Adams thought that the world had grown tired of his family; the idea was more characteristic than original.

The Adams family history is familiar to literate Americans, and Russell tells it in familiar terms. He has digested the standard books and documents, which are listed in his short bibliography, and has made a coherent, highly entertaining narrative which will neither excite nor offend scholars. Some might object to his insistent support of the Adamses against all opponents—"devious" Martin Van Buren, "hawk-nosed, slaveholding" John Tyler—but that is unimportant (pp. 202, 226-27). This is a tribute as much as it is a history; its partisanship is entirely aboveboard and is not usually heavy handed.

The book owes much to its publisher, American Heritage. It is characteristic of the firm's products, handsomely printed and bound, lavishly illustrated, and unencumbered by any scholarly apparatus beyond a single page of bibliography. It is intended to be popular in an honest and instructive way; it fully merits an extensive readership.

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Andrew Jackson and the Search for Vindication. By James C. Curtis. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976. Pp. xi, 194. Note on sources, index. Clothbound, \$7.50; paperbound, \$3.95.)

Like other volumes in the *Library of American Biography* series, *Andrew Jackson and the Search for Vindication* is a concise, interpretive biography intended for a general college audience. Based primarily on published sources, the book retells the familiar saga of Old Hickory. James C. Curtis clearly recounts Jackson's turbulent youth, rise to power and prominence in frontier Tennessee, military exploits, entry into presidential politics, and eventful two term presidency. Because the events of Jackson's life have been described many times, this brief volume adds no new details to the story.

What Curtis has done is to interpret Old Hickory's life and career in a fresh manner. Using an incisive, no nonsense, psychological analysis, Curtis argues that Jackson's life represented a continual search for personal vindication. Beneath Old Hickory's aggressive and bold behavior lay "deep un-