

BOOK REVIEWS

J. R. Adams. *Interstate*. Boulder, Colorado: Rocky Mountain Writers Guild Publication, 1983.

When a man reaches the point where disillusionment seems to overshadow all purpose in his habitual life, he may seek renewal in a pilgrimage, in an affair, or in a major project such as writing a book; or he may "drop out", quit his job, turn to drink, or commit suicide.

Jim, the main character in *Interstate* by J. R. Adams, chooses to go on a trip through a number of states, leaving his wife and his job behind and barely staying in contact. A certain measure of the pilgrimage is involved, an affair becomes the major ingredient in his journey, and in a sense, Jim does "drop out."

A vaguely defined health problem is listed as a partial excuse for Jim's odyssey, but it is quite obvious that his main problem is that there no longer seems to be any point in what he does. In fact, he admits to being totally alienated from his job as a professor of English. His ennui is caused not only by his work, but, it appears, by his entire life-style and even his wife.

There is no telling how Jim's trip would have gone if he had not met Helen. It would most likely have been much less interesting. Helen, too, is alienated from her life-style and spouse, and the two of them find in each other what they can find nowhere else: something to care about, a response that appears to be of a more fundamental nature than ordinary communication. Their relationship soon becomes the main theme of the book and is certainly the one that makes the most sense. In the course of reading the book, the reader may very well find himself shifting his sympathy and interest from Jim to Helen.

Jim seems weaker than Helen and is perhaps borrowing strength from her. When he finally shows resolution, it is in an act of delayed, and thereby pointless, revenge, which, though the victim of the vengeance, George, is presented in such a way that the reader never becomes particularly interested in him, makes the reader shy away from Jim in dismay and confusion. The reader never has a chance to get to know or care about George, who is Helen's husband. George kills Helen, the most likeable character in this book, so he deserves what he gets, but Jim still shocks the reader by killing him.

This vindictive killing is in jarring discomfiture with Jim's lack of purpose. If nothing matters any more, why kill a man in revenge? Revenge is a strong-felt emotional purpose, so perhaps we are to understand that the loss of Helen has changed Jim in some way.

The theme of purposelessness is thoroughly interlaced with a sense of dissolution of the borderline between reality and the unreal. The movies on television sets in the endless string of motel rooms represents an unreal

world pretending to be real. The motels themselves, the roads, the coffee houses, and even the towns are all real, but appear almost as illusions, as they blend together in a repetitious blur. The accident involving a raft on the Mississippi River is real, but remains strangely unreal and leaves everyone unexpectedly detached. Jim's comment, "Huck's drowned," links the incident with fiction, thus removing it further from reality.

The elements of the absurd, pointlessness and a certain measure of irony, haunt the other characters, too. Karl is traveling south, for ever talking about traveling north. Karl and Patton argue about the nature of dreams, but reach no agreement. A mentally deranged killer stalks the country committing one pointless, cruel murder after the other.

Long before Jim suspects Patton of being the mad murderer, the reader will have made the connection. When Jim does suspect Patton, he does nothing about it. The fact that he feels indebted to Patton is his excuse, like the health problems which served as an excuse for the trip itself, and his lack of reaction is, of course, in tune with his general lethargy. To the reader, however, this is still rather unfulfilling. Who would drive aimlessly around the country with Jack the Ripper in the back seat as if he were an old friend?

Patton's role is altogether unresolved. The only justification for his presence in the book seems to be the fact that he is part of that haphazardly thrown together hodge-podge we call the real world. He represents the wild animal in the jungle, the danger in the wilderness. He is Pan, half man and half beast. "Those who see him die," says Helen, as she discovers Pan's effigy on a stone in a New Orleans cemetery. The linking factor is the shape of his ears. Pan has large, pointed ears; so does Patton, and before Jim meets Patton, he imagines seeing the outline of a pointed ear in the pattern on a motel room ceiling, as a foreshadowing.

On several occasions the country is referred to as a jungle, and in one place it is pointed out that civilization exists for the protection of "the weak". It is left unexplained who "the weak" are—and who the others are.

Although his roaming the countryside makes Jim a bit of a Homeric Ulysses, his wife, Suzanne, is not much of a Penelope. In fact, Helen makes a better Penelope for Ulysses/Jim. Though it may be a farfetched link, it is not impossible to discern the echo of Molly Bloom's interior soliloquy from the Penelope chapter of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, when she receives Jim in intercourse with a repeated "yes". "'Yes,' she said. 'Yes. Yes. Yes.'" However, Jim is not a true Ulysses, as he is not seriously concerned with finding his way home, or, for that matter, anywhere else. Miami, rather than a goal, appears to be little but another illusion.

There are traces of semiautobiographical material in the novel. At one point, the characters pass the Adams' house in Missouri, apparently the author's parents' home. The author's first name is Jim, which is the first name

of the protagonist. If the author's wife's first name is Suzanne, one imagines that the writer must have had some explaining to do, when the book was published. A reference to the Adam's Family Restaurant may simply be an example of contingency.

The author's extensive use of dialogue keeps the book alive and provides an unimpeded insight in the personalities of the characters. It makes the book easy and readily accessible reading. J. R. Adams obviously has a talent for dialogue, for it is impeccably natural and never seems sought or artificial.

What all this amounts to is an account of a man who has found it necessary to stop and reexamine his life, a man who is in need of new incentive, a man in search of purpose. It is also an account of a woman on a very similar quest, and the very pleasant story of the relationship that develops between the two of them, told with warmth and understanding. They are like islands in a chaotic ocean of turmoil; they are life surrounded by nothingness. For a brief moment, they seem to hold a small share in the very quintessence of life itself.

Svend S. Nielsen

Thomas D. Clark. *The Greening of the South*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1984.

Clark offers a review of Southern history that has been ignored by the "cotton-blinded" celebrators of the Antebellum South. He brings into clear focus the human panorama that shaped the South, coming full circle beneath a canopy of pines and hardwoods.

Many Southerners who grew up in the 1950's and 60's have images of the timber industry as the rickety trucks with their precarious loads chained between pine-like standards. Most of us can tell stories about a favorite wood that fell prey to the chainsaw and the ravenous blade of the 'dozer. Logs were stacked and burned to free land of questionable value. Fence rows, windbreaks, and floodplain timbers were all destroyed, making room for soybeans, rice or the latest king of the staple crops.

The clearing began with the first white farmers. They sought to rule the land instead of living in concert with it, as the Indians did. The 400,000 square miles of primeval forest in the South was a "worrisome barrier to human advance and security." Desolate skeletons of cabins attest to the struggle between man and the forest for possession of the land.

The forests held their own until the devastation of the Civil War. Thousands of acres were ignited by gunfire, to build gunboats, battlefield bulwarks and other accoutrements of war.

From 1865 to 1900, the Southern lumber industry expanded rapidly. Millions of acres were denuded while extravagant cutting practices wasted the vast majority of nature's bounty. The hardwoods and long-leaf pines quickly disappeared as tens of millions of boardfeet were shipped to the North and to Europe.

Clark's harsh indictment of the attitudes of typical Southern wastrels is well documented. They treated the forest as a limitless resource cluttering potential farmland. Their livestock trampled seedlings, while the long-snouted hogs destroyed the root systems of entire forests. Within two generations after they stripped the land bare, erosion destroyed crop profitability and left gullies as permanent scars.

Forest fires were commonplace in the South. The spark-belching locomotive was a chief offender. However, deliberate arson was the major cause. Fire was used to clear underbrush, to get rid of snakes or ticks, and to scare wildlife out of the woods for sport. In 1880 alone 5.3 million acres of timber were destroyed by fire in the U.S. South.

Large companies and "peckerwood sawmills" competed for forest tracts selling at \$1.25 per acre. Lumber thieves cut entire sections without detection. Great forests were dragged away by muscle-weary men and mules, the land abandoned, diminishing the tax base and the future of the South.

Clark begrudgingly admits that the timber industry created dramatic social and economic changes. The jobs created acted as a safety valve, transferring peonage from the decaying farm system to the log camp commissaries. As late as 1920, over 300,000 laborers sweated out an existence in the Southern forests. By 1925, mechanization and diminished acreage of quality timber resulted in a recession in the industry. Hordes of workers went North to the promised land. Farm sites, homeplaces, country churches, even entire communities were swallowed up by the forest on corporate lands. An entire generation was displaced with no homeplace awaiting their return.

Wherever there are villains, there must be heroes. Clark shares stories of individual, organizational and corporate heroes who have changed the attitudes of the South. The pioneers in manufacturing enabled a wide variety of timber to be used in producing quality paper products. The Dixie Crusaders, the Mississippi Federation of Women's Clubs and conservationists combatted the ignorant incendiaries by educating the general population in the far-reaching effects of forest fires. The Silviculturists began harvest rotation on timberland, nurtured mother trees and established genetically superior strain of trees. Even Congress took action under the Weeks Law, the CCC and T.V.A. All of this activity encouraged the location of corporations that created thousands of jobs and an annual value of manufactured products over three billion dollars.

Government estimates project that in the year 2030 approximately one hundred seventy-two million acres of Southland will be in forest. This is a tiny fraction of the virgin forest invaded by our ancestors. However, the forests will be a lasting source of jobs and enjoyment to Southerners. Southern timber is a renewable resource marketed around the world.

Thomas D. Clark's presentation has an obvious bias, but his lively narrative carries a subject that could easily have become bogged down in reams of statistical data. He redirects our view of the past and points out problems that persist even to this day. The book leaves the reader with a warm glow and instills pride in a heritage we are most privileged to share.

Gleyn T. Twilla

Thomas L. Connelly and James Lee McDonough. *Five Tragic Hours: The Battle of Franklin*. Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1983.

More has been written about the Civil War than any other event in American history. Thousands of volumes have been published and the number is still increasing. Why another volume about the Civil War? It appears that the author wanted to settle the many unanswered questions concerning The Battle of Franklin.

On that dreary day November 30, 1864, General John Bell Hood and his Army of Tennessee spoke of capturing Nashville and even crossing the Ohio River. But when he arrived at Franklin, Hood saw that General John Schofield's Army of The Ohio blocked his way. The telescopes of Confederate officers along Winstead Hill could see across the blue grass fields to the near impregnable breastworks around the village.

The Spring Hill Fiasco on November 29 became one of the War's decisive encounters. Hood, aiming to cut Schofield off from Thomas' Army at Nashville, skillfully outflanked him. Hood possessed the opportunity to destroy Schofield's Army completely. But he fumbled the opportunity, and Schofield was allowed to retreat to Franklin within the light of Confederate campfires.

Franklin, located in a curve of the Harpeth River, was a natural fortress on the north, west, and east. On the south side of the town—Hood's approach—the Federals since 1862 had maintained a long set of earthworks which extended from the river above the town to near the river below Franklin. These were no ordinary earthworks; there were deep outside ditches, headlogs atop the dirt parapets, and a menacing array of abatis to allow an enemy's advance.

Such an advance had to come across two miles of rolling, open ground. From Winstead Hill, a ridge south of the town, the land leveled into

an open plain stripped of trees. An attack on the northern position would subject the Confederates to a murderous artillery fire from the guns in the earthworks. An assault on such a position would be madness.

Hood reached Winstead Hill about 2 p.m. and instantly ordered the army to prepare for a frontal assault. His subordinates protested. However, at 4 p.m. the signal was given to advance, and the long battle line weaved forward unevenly.

It was the last great spectacle of the old style of war. Eighteen infantry brigades in battle formation marched across the bluegrass plain. Regimental bands played, tattered battle flags lifted in the breeze, and wildlife fled the approaching Confederates. The signal came, and thousands of yelling Confederates attacked the earthworks.

After heavy fighting, the firing died down about 9 p.m. and the Confederates drifted back to count their losses. About 16,000 infantry had gone into action and 6,200 were casualties. Of these, 1,750 enlisted men had been killed in five hours of combat. Losses among officers were equally staggering. Six generals had been killed, five were wounded, and one was captured. Fifty-four regimental commanders were killed, wounded, or captured.

With a "might have been" victory at Spring Hill, the battle of Franklin would have never been fought.

The authors have produced a significant and well-written book. However, a fine map of Franklin portraying the situation as it existed during the battle would be most helpful.

William Wayne Chester

Albert E. Cowdrey, *This Land, This South: An Environmental History*. Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1983.

This Land, This South represents a refreshing approach to Southern history. For possibly the first time we are afforded the opportunity to view the settling of America, and in particular, the South from an environmental point of view. In order to begin to understand today's complex ecological problems, a basic understanding of the times and conditions that led up to these problems is necessary. It is Cowdrey's goal to give the reader, in generalized terms, a short, concise accounting of the "conquering" of the South and its early environmental problems as well as its solutions—solutions that sometimes became forebears of more complex modern problems. This view of past practices is important for a clearer understanding of what the South faces today. Many of the South's current environmental problems can trace their roots to the ecological practices of yesterday.

Cowdrey begins his history with the first appearance of man in North America. He makes the point that man did not evolve in the Western hemisphere. Instead, he erupted suddenly and assumed the role of top carnivore by virtue of his weapons and use of fire in a food web that was not able to support this intrusion. Coupled with climatic changes as North America became increasingly more arid, this intrusion represented a transformation in the ecological balance that probably contributed to the extinction of many large herbivores whose demise can be verified through the fossil record.

Cowdrey next discusses his concept of the role of the American Indian as an environmental factor. He feels that the Indians did not live in total harmony in a balanced ecological system, as is generally assumed. Instead, they used the land's resources and reshaped its forms primarily through burning in line with their own desires. Cowdrey thus makes an attempt to demonstrate that the mismanagement of the land is far from a modern problem.

The most severe damage to the Southern environment, however, began with European settlement. Colonization was spurred onward by the promise of financial gain. It appeared that whenever it was possible to make such a gain, it was at the expense of the environment. The New World was a land of seemingly limitless resources to be exploited regardless of the consequences. Early pelt and plumage hunters as well as early lumbering practices tend to give credence to this view.

In later years little development in ecological practices could be noted as poor land management practices resulted in severe deforestation and loss of wildlife habitat. Loss of top soil by erosion choked streams and rivers that had been leveed and channelized in an attempt to prevent flooding. Man, spurred on by greed, had not yet realized the long-term price he must pay for short-term gain.

In the years during and since the Depression, much has been accomplished to correct poor land management practices. Organizations such as the Civilian Conservation Corps, with its reforestation programs, and the Tennessee Valley Authority, with its land-use education programs for farmers, helped facilitate this progress. However, TVA also assumed a dual role as a detrimental factor when its smokestacks contributed to crop defoliation and acid rain and when its flood control dams submerged thousands of acres of prime farmland. Cowdrey dedicates a considerable length of space to TVA and its ecological roles.

The South of today has changed dramatically from an environmental perspective. New dangers, from the burning of petrochemicals to the use and abuse of herbicides and pesticides have combined with old problems such as erosion and flooding to form a complex ecological dilemma. Much has been accomplished as far as the education of landowners and users to their respective responsibilities for the land. *This Land, This South* is con-

tinuing that learning process by attempting to show how past practices have contributed to present problems. The author should be commended for this attempt at environmental history, despite his occasional bias.

Russell Kiesling

Richard N. Current. *Northernizing The South*. Athens: The University of Georgia Press. 1983.

Beginning with Thomas Jefferson, at least in his old age, it has been argued that the South was different from the North in fundamental ways and that the North was a threat to Southern uniqueness. This idea has been the concern of a long list of notable Southerners such as George Fitzhugh, James D. B. DeBow, the Nashville Agrarians, Wilbur J. Cash, Louis D. Rubin, Jr., and C. Van Woodward. In *Northernizing The South*, Richard N. Current looks closely at this question and raises serious questions concerning the uniqueness of the South.

Current divides his material into three major segments: the period up to and including the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the first or antebellum period there was a great deal of regionalism. The North was rapidly developing a mixed economy with industrialization making great strides. The South was at least ninety percent agrarian. Perhaps the greatest difference was the institution of slavery in the South. The North was a free soil area while the South had two labor systems—free and slave. These differences and the crises they generated—the Missouri Compromise, the Nullification controversy, and the Compromise of 1850, among others—eventually led eleven Southern states to secede from the Union, and a great Civil War was fought.

Many Northerners saw the Civil War and Reconstruction as a “heaven-sent opportunity to Northernize the South.” Most of these people believed that the mere abolition of slavery would accomplish this goal. Soon realizing that this was not so, the South was put through a radical reconstruction by Congress. This coupled with a large-scale movement of Northern men and money into the South they thought would complete the Northernization of the South.

However, things did not turn out as expected. Most of the Northerners who went South made no conscious effort to change Southern customs or attitudes. As the 1870's moved forward, one after another of the Radical Republican Reconstruction governments fell from power until all of the former Confederate states were controlled by the old established conservative leadership of the South. For the next seventy-five years Northerners seldom tried to remake the South in its image.

By the end of World War II, the South had changed greatly and would continue to change, especially after the Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education decision of the Supreme Court in 1954. It became increasingly difficult, Current maintained, "to tell the difference, economically or socially, between the South and the rest of the country." They looked more and more alike as the South was rapidly industrializing and her cities were growing phenomenally. At the same time the percentage of black population was growing in the North. The dreams of Henry W. Grady, an apostle of the "New South" in the 1880's, were being realized. The similarities between the sections were now far more significant than the differences, brought about in part by Northerners and in part by Southerners. Even in the Antebellum and Reconstruction periods, Current sees many similarities between North and South. For example, in the Constitutional Convention of 1787, he found George Mason of Virginia, among other Southerners, arguing for a ban on the importation of slaves from Africa. On the question of racism, a Maine native travelling in the South found a comparative absence of racism among Southern whites: "The Negrophobia at the North is unknown at the South," he wrote. Alexis de Tocqueville was of the same opinion.

Current is in agreement with Southerners such as Hinton Rowan Helper, Henry W. Grady, Walter Hines Page, Charles G. Sellers, and Frank E. Smith, who believed that cultural differences between the North and South were minimal, and that even those could be further lessened with no real loss to either side. For all practical purposes, the South, Current argues, has evolved from New South to No South. In other words, the South no longer has a separate identity. By no means do all historians agree with this proposition. At about the same time Current was delivering the lectures that constitute this book, historians were participating in a symposium at Duke University and were arguing for the persistence of Southern uniqueness. George B. Tindall maintains that on ethnic and other grounds the South was not about to disappear. The South's performance was still, as always, "less a disappearing act than a transformation scene."

In *Northernizing The South* Richard N. Current has done an outstanding job in tracing "the idea of Yankeeification and the arguments for and against it in the North and for and against it in the South from the 1780's to the 1980's." He has drawn conclusions that not all will agree with, but his book is one that all serious students of American history and the history of the South should read.

Lonnie E. Maness, Ph.D.

Charles L. Fontenay. *Estes Kefauver*. Knoxville. The University of Tennessee Press, 1980.

Author Fontenay, a journalist, was a friend and admirer of Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee, and this fact becomes a matter of concern when one notes that the original manuscript of this book was critically read by Kefauver friends and admirers. The trail of research, as described in the Foreward, indicates a highly fragmented pursuit; and the bibliography is heavily weighted with secondary works which include even two basic survey textbooks. Also listed in the bibliography are two earlier Kefauver biographies, equally laudatory of the senator, which have adequately covered his life; thus, there seems to be little justification for this work.

This is not to say that Kefauver's career is not worthy of ongoing and specialized appraisal; it is. His political career uniquely qualifies for careful study by political scientists and would-be politicians for its idealism versus the real world of American politics. Of particular interest to political scientists would be the role the primaries play in a candidate's seeking the presidential nomination: the people preferred Kefauver; the establishment nominated Stevenson. Also, psycho-historians could find a study in the personality of this man as it influenced his success as a campaigner and failed him as a politician among politicians. He was often described as a "political maverick," which probably meant that he simply did not fit a mold acceptable to establishment politicians. With great frequency his motives were questioned by colleagues who interpreted his Southern liberalism as insincere; that liberalism translated into personal ambition for national political leadership. His liberalism not only created problems for his fellow Southerners, but also for fellow liberals because, according to Stewart Alsop, Kefauver "lacks the elegance and eloquence liberals like in their heroes." Also, he was suspect in the eyes of his colleagues because "he does not pull his oar in the galley-work of regular committees, but goes sailing off on investigations to make the headlines." Joseph B. Gorman, in his 1971 biography of Kefauver, makes the very interesting observation that "self-righteousness is the indispensable psychological prop of any political maverick, and Kefauver was no exception to this rule." Mildly put, self-righteousness and headlines-seeking are not well received by politicians. On the other hand, Kefauver was consistently rated by the media as one of the best senators in the land.

Therefore, if Kefauver's personality traits are responsible for the failure of several of his major problem-solving efforts, the tragedy is inscribed in the growth or contribution of those targeted problems, e.g., prices of pharmaceuticals, growth of organized crime, problems of civil rights, energy resources, etc. Having survived earlier attempts at correction, these problems and their causes are possibly even more invincible today than they were thirty years ago.

It is an interesting story that can be read also with equal pleasure in Harvey Swado's or Joseph B. Gorman's biography of Kefauver. This biography is particularly interesting reading because it makes today's political battles more meaningful, and in that sense, Kefauver was ahead of his time.

Langdon Unger

Ellesa Clay High. *Past Titan Rock: Journeys Into An Appalachian Valley*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1984.

Past Titan Rock resulted from the oral history interview Ellesa Clay High, a West Virginia University Assistant Professor of English, made in Red River Gorge of eastern Kentucky over a period of five years. Her introduction is essential for understanding her variety of approaches and techniques. She consciously strives to avoid stereotyping or idealizing her interviewees and their lifestyles. The material is presented in third person prose rather than in interview format.

Red River and its influence are recurring themes. In fact, High says that "time depends on the river here." The frequent flooding has made parts of the valley agriculturally rich through the years. One farmer acknowledged, "I'd say this river is our life line." Several locals spoke against dam projects. One proclaimed, "We beat the Corps of Engineers," and "We don't want no channelization!" The river also marked "a social boundary" and even brought destruction and death as High ably points out in a short story: "There is a river, and it flows where no man can see."

Likely the most appealing subject for music lovers is Lily May Ledford, a tall mountain woman adept with fiddle or banjo. Her poor family consisted of fourteen children whose parents provided as well as they could. Lily May recalled the two times the family could afford lemonade, since lemons were scarce and sugar was expensive. She especially remembered early family Christmases and "how bad they (the parents) felt about not being able to put hardly nothing in the stocking. But us children were tickled to death." Sometimes the gifts, purchased from a secondhand store, were cut-out paper dolls or a box of used crayons or an orange and striped candy. Her mother reserved for Christmas dinner the rare treat of a big baked hen or rooster. The Ledford children received "a wealth of musical ability" from their father. Lily May loved the fiddle so much that she made her own and next traded for one. She put a rattlesnake rattle inside to improve the sound quality. Several sisters formed the Red River Ramblers, "discovered" by a WLS Chicago radio executive in 1936. He renamed them the Coon Creek Girls, the first all-girl band on the National Barn Dance show. At different times they were associated with Red Foley, Woody Guthrie, Merle Travis, and the "Duke of Paducah." On one occasion they played for President and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt and the King and Queen of England. Around

1957 the girls disbanded and returned to Red River Gorge. Lily May continues playing, story telling, and otherwise keeping the mountain musical traditions alive.

This is a delightful book for readers who like to know about the lives of "ordinary mountain people" this century.

Marvin L. Downing, Ph.D.

Victor B. Howard. *Black Liberation in Kentucky: Emancipation and Freedom, 1862-1884*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1983.

Historians have not attempted to record the experiences of blacks in Kentucky during the period of the Civil War and Reconstruction, the result being that this society has not been depicted as it really existed during this period of time. In *Black Liberation in Kentucky: Emancipation and Freedom, 1862-1884* Victor B. Howard has sought to correct this flaw in Kentucky's history. This work is not exclusively a black history of the times; rather, it is the story of both blacks and whites during the Civil War and Readjustment.

Interestingly enough, during the antebellum period antislavery advocates often predicted that if slavery was abolished in the South, Kentucky would lead the way by taking legislative action. Why did they think this way? In 1833 Kentucky passed the Non-Importation Act, which prohibited the importation of slaves into Kentucky by purchase. Kentucky also did not prohibit slaves from being taught how to read and write. Kentucky required jury trials for blacks. Also, Kentucky churches took the lead in keeping the question of slavery before the people. Furthermore, antislavery groups in Kentucky continually addressed this question. Hence, it was believed that Kentucky was more liberal on the slavery question than any other of the slave states. Nevertheless, in spite of these facts, Kentucky did not lead the way in the abolition of slavery.

When the Civil War began, Kentucky had 225,483 slaves, with only Virginia and Georgia having more. When the Thirteenth Amendment was adopted by Congress, legal slavery existed only in Kentucky and Delaware. Kentucky remained loyal in order to help preserve the Union and not to free the slaves. When President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, Kentuckians felt betrayed, determined to resist what he was trying to do.

Nevertheless, by the end of 1863, slavery was considerably undermined in Kentucky. This process began with the massive troops movements across the state, with slaves rushing to the Union camps and being given protection from their masters. Disobeying their orders to leave slavery alone, Union soldiers aided runaway slaves. Not being able to bring about compensated emancipation in the slave border states, Lincoln is-

sued his Emancipation Proclamation, which further undermined slavery in the loyal states, and later agreed to the enlistment of blacks in the Union Army, an act which further undermined slavery in Kentucky.

The slaves were not passive in this process. They recognized the war as an opportunity to lessen their bonds and acted accordingly. As slavery began to collapse, thousands of blacks moved to the cities. They earned wages working for the army and while serving in the United States Army, wages that "were translated in time into institutional wealth in the form of schools, churches, fraternities, and small businesses such as boarding-houses and barber shops." A rising middle class supplied the leadership in the struggle for the right to testify in civil and criminal cases, the right to vote, and access to the equal education.

In 1928 when W. E. Woodward published **Meet General Grant**, he observed that "the American Negroes are the only people in the history of the world . . . [who] ever became free without any effort of their own." This statement was believed by most students of history at the time, but, as Howard states, "It is not true of the blacks of Kentucky. They actively participated in securing their freedom from the beginning."

Howard's *Black Liberation in Kentucky* is a well-written, well-researched, and well-documented volume on a much-neglected topic. Students of history will find it very interesting.

Lonnie E. Maness, Ph.D.

Daniel A. Novak. *The Wheel of Servitude: Black Forced Labor After Slavery*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1978.

This relatively short book is primarily a legal history of sharecropping in the southern United States from the end of the Civil War to the 1960's. It begins with the Black Codes enacted by southern legislatures in 1865 and goes through the United States Supreme Court's ruling in **Pollock v. Williams** in 1944. The first three chapters attempt to give fairly full coverage to the period 1865-1877, but the remaining chapters, except for a short conclusion, deal only with court cases. The book contains much useful information, but righteous indignation at injustice sometimes gets in the way of narrative and decription.

Insofar as Novak is concerned, the Black Codes were nothing more or less than attempts to preserve slavery in another guise. The Union army and the Freedmen's Bureau were much more concerned with getting freedmen back to work than they were with assuring their freedom. Radical Reconstruction resulted in the introduction of sharecropping and the crop lien as a means of keeping black labor under tight control. These assumptions are too narrow to be fully accurate. Most historians would agree that the Black Codes were at least as much concerned with defining the social and

political status of freedmen as with making them peons. The crop lien was the only possible source of agricultural credit in the South in 1867, and sharecropping was forced upon the planters by freedmen at least as much as it was forced upon freedmen by planters. Furthermore, sharecropping was firmly established a year before the beginning of Radical Reconstruction.

Novak errs in attributing the beginning of the convict lease system to Reconstruction governments. In Louisiana the leasing of convicts began well before the Civil War. Also, Novak assumes that the great increase in black prison population after the Civil War came about because of the demand of convict labor. He overlooks the fact that black criminals had usually been punished on the plantation under the slavery regime, but that as freedmen they were sent to the county jail or the state penitentiary. The number of convicts would have increased had there been no lease system, though probably not as much as it did through such a system.

When Novak leaves Reconstruction and Redemption, he becomes almost purely a legal historian, dealing with the courts' handling of peonage cases. Here he makes his most significant contribution, though these chapters could have been improved by some flesh and blood examples. The author bemoans the fact that so little has been written on southern blacks from the end of Reconstruction to the end of the Populist period. Yet he cites George Tindall, C. Vann Woodward, Joel Williamson, and Vernon Wharton. He does not cite William Ivy Hair's **Bourbonism and Agrarian Protest**, but he could have used it with profit.

In his conclusions Novak deplores the fact that the Federal Government imposed "forced labor" on southern blacks at the same time that it sought to give them political rights. He does not suggest what alternative, available in the late 1860's, could have prevented the development of sharecropping and the network of laws that kept the system in effect. Nor does he make any distinction between the peonage of the sharecropper and the currently more frequent peonage of migrant farm workers. He insists that whites were not victims of the system, even though it is common knowledge that there were millions of white sharecropper families in the South of the 1930's.

This work could be very useful to a student interested in court cases dealing with peonage. It is not a reliable guide to the history and nature of sharecropping in the South.

Joe Gray Taylor, Ph.D.