

BOOK REVIEWS

Carol Crowe-Carraco. *The Big Sandy*. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky.

Carol Crowe-Carraco, Associate Professor History at Western Kentucky University, began, "The Big Sandy is a river and a watershed and a place where yesterday, today, and tomorrow exist together in haunting harmony." She devoted her primary attention to that Eastern Kentucky valley.

She shows its history and its people as different from the hillbilly stereotype. This area constituted Kentucky's last frontier because of its geographical isolation. Consequently Shawnee Indians and American frontiersmen interacted there in the hope of possessing the land. She writes of the many land conflicts, a major frontier difficulty. Steamboating and logging provide interesting topics for the reader in antebellum Big Sandy Valley.

Crowe-Carraco also covers the Civil War era. The Big Sandians were divided in their allegiances. In the 1860 Presidential election most residents preferred the Constitutional Union candidate with the Southern Democrat second. The Union early took the Big Sandy Valley. However, some difficulty existed as one officer noted: "We were in a mess from the blood thirsty rebels. When we sat down to dinner, I held a sword in both hands and a pistol in the other." (The historian puzzled, "One can only wonder how he managed to eat his meal.")

Understandably the author gives considerable attention to coal because "the history of the Big Sandy River Valley and that of Kentucky's bituminous coal industry are irrevocably intertwined." That economic sector has gone through several booms and busts, most notably the 1920s-30s industrial regression and, in contrast, the energy boom and bust days of the 1970s.

In the last chapter, Crowe-Carraco considers "Kentucky's Land of Promise?", the post-World War II years. Poor economic conditions meant a worsening of the inhabitants' general situation. New Frontier-Great Society programs helped until these were undone by Vietnam. At times, Big Sandians were caught between the demands of the coal industry and the environmentalists' wishes. The author concludes, "Kentuckians must face the approaching twenty-first century together, and the Big Sandy River Valley and its residents are an integral part of this future."

Crowe-Carraco handles the material well with a lively style and a proper dash of humor.

Marvin L. Downing, Ph.D.

John R. Finger. *The Eastern Band of Cherokees: 1819-1900*. University of Tennessee Press.

John R. Finger, an Associate Professor of History at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, became interested in the Eastern Cherokees in response to a student's

question on how some Cherokees kept from being relocated in Oklahoma in the 1830s. His curiosity led him to study the legend of Tsali, a noted Cherokee, who supposedly sacrificed his life in return for his people's being allowed to stay in Western North Carolina. Finger questioned that legend, now so ably presented in "Unto These Hills," a noted regional drama produced each year in Cherokee, North Carolina. Shortly, the professor realized that only a brief 1900 account of the Eastern Band, based on limited primary sources, existed. So, Finger sought to write a major history using many sources, particularly materials in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which other authors have not known were available or which other writers have ignored.

In fact, Finger garnered enough material for two volumes about the Eastern Cherokees. He chose to limit the first part to developments between 1819 and 1900. The former year saw a treaty to which some Cherokees objected, opting for a permanent eastern home, thus becoming the founders of the Eastern Band. Finger selected the year 1900 because U.S. courts had then only recently asserted federal responsibility for those Cherokees. Thereafter, "the U.S. government became a more intrusive force in Cherokee life."

During the 1819-1900 span Cherokees especially struggled with two major ongoing problems. First, they were frequently and generally confused by their shaky and uncertain legal relationship to nearby whites and their particular association with the North Carolina and U.S. governments. It is little wonder that the Indians and various white authorities acted erratically. For at least forty years the Eastern Cherokees were ably represented and largely protected from social, political, and legal critics by their legal counsel and adopted white chief William Holland Thomas. Unfortunately for Thomas and his Indian brothers, he eventually became discredited, a fact which ended his effectiveness. Second, the Eastern Cherokees struggled to maintain their separate identity. Naturally they changed in various ways through the years, but they still were definitely Cherokee despite their many difficulties. They definitely retained ballplay at which young Cherokees played vigorously and aggressively. At times, those contests must have appeared to outsiders somewhat more as wrestling. The Cherokees continued their athletic contests because they possessed both religious and social meanings for individuals and families.

Finger added to the visual quality of his book by including four maps detailing Eastern Cherokee locations and twenty drawings and photographs depicting important persons and places associated with those Cherokees.

Marvin L. Downing, Ph.D.

Ronald N. Satz. *Tennessee's Indian Peoples: From White Contact to Removal, 1540-1840*. The University of Tennessee Press.

Almost ten years have passed since the Tennessee Historical Commission and the Tennessee Press issued the first edition of this volume. The material proved so valuable and so much in demand that its third printing in paper was done in 1985. At the time of the original publication, Dr. Ron Satz was in charge of the Tennessee-Martin Graduate Studies and Research Program. Since then, he has become the Dean of Graduate Studies and University Research at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

It is a pleasure to read such a brief but full volume about the Creeks, Shawnees, Chickasaws, and Cherokees. He has briefly mentioned the Choctaws who had almost no impact on Tennessee. He directs most of his attention to the Chickasaws and the Cherokees because they and the Tennesseans interacted most, of the groups considered. He combines information about the Creeks and the Shawnees into one chapter while the Chickasaws receive one chapter.

His introduction basically considers representatives of the various tribes before the coming of white men. Likewise, his second chapter, "Native Culture and Society," deals generally with those Indians rather than specific groupings. Satz aptly pointed out, "It can be seen, then, that no single Indian tribe lived predominantly within the boundaries of Tennessee." Obviously, those Indians significantly interacted with Tennesseans, however.

In addition to the scholarly text, Satz has included a number of features which assist in understanding the subject. Thirty-three illustrations give additional insight and perspective. Four maps serve to locate the Indians and the events in time and place. Drawings and pictures of prominent Indians and whites mentioned in the book leave less to the reader's imagination. Two such illustrations are especially impressive. One shows the Cherokee alphabet and the cover picture in color shows the able Cherokee Sequoyah, who invented that nation's alphabet.

It was my pleasure to be a Tennessee-Martin colleague of Professor Satz who saw him begin his volume and again my pleasure to read the entire account almost a decade after the original publication was issued.

Marvin L. Downing, Ph.D.

Michael B. Ballard. *A Long Shadow: Jefferson Davis and the Final Days of the Confederacy*. Jackson, Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 1986.

The last months of 1864, and the early months of 1865, witnessed the final days of the Confederacy, including the government's retreat from Richmond to Irwinville, Georgia, between April 2-May 10, 1865. Most historians of the Civil War have ignored the final days of the Confederate States of America as did Clement Eaton in his book *Jefferson Davis*. The only previous scholarly account, Alfred Jackson Hanna's *Flight Into Oblivion* (1938), focuses on the fortunes of Davis's cabinet members during the retreat and after Davis was captured. Journalist James C. Clark in *Last Train South: The Flight of the Confederate Government from Richmond* (1984) uses the same format as Hanna. Burke Davis's *The Long Surrender* (1985) includes a survey of the activities of the main characters during the postwar years. However, no one of these studies deals with the historical significance of the crucial final days of the Confederacy or of how they influenced later Southern and American history. This omission has been corrected by Michael B. Ballard in *The Long Shadow: Jefferson Davis and the Final Days of the Confederacy*.

Although most of the book deals with the period from April 2 when Davis and the Confederate government left Richmond until Davis was captured on May 10 in Georgia, it does cover the last several months of the life of the Confederacy. In Ballard's discussing events during this period, the emphasis throughout is on Jefferson Davis and how this retreat affected the Confederate president's image in the postwar years. As defeat became more and more evident, Davis became the

target of increasing criticism during the winter months of 1864-1865. However, during his final three months in Richmond, the president skillfully handled several major issues. Ballard points out that Davis was very successful in handling several troublesome political issues such as the way he won approval for the use of black soldiers, the way he handled the peace movement, and the popular demand that Robert E. Lee be made commanding general. Davis handled all of these matters in such a way that presidential prestige was reserved, which enhanced his reputation as a champion of Confederate independence.

Then there was the flight of the government from Richmond. At Danville, Virginia, the Confederate president rejected the idea of surrender and issued a defiant call to arms. He wanted to continue the war west of the Mississippi River, using Kirby-Smith's forces as the nucleus. In Greensboro, North Carolina, Davis and his cabinet were not hospitably received by the local citizenry, an act of discourtesy that rebounded in Davis's favor; they were received in a more friendly manner in Charlotte, North Carolina. From Charlotte to Irwinville, Davis's determined devotion to the cause – his desire to continue the struggle – impressed citizens who saw him. Moreover, the sight of the remnants of the Confederate government "evoked deep sympathy and pity for Davis and his followers." Then came Davis's capture and his imprisonment, in part on the false suspicion that he was involved in the assassination of Lincoln.

Thus, the events of the last five months in the life of the Confederacy enhanced Davis's standing throughout the South to the extent that he came to occupy an important place in the hearts and minds of the Southern people. He became the embodiment of the "Lost Cause."

Michael B. Ballard's *A Long Shadow: Jefferson Davis and the Final Days of the Confederacy* is a well-documented, well-written account of an important segment of the history of a dying nation. It gives us glimpses of the South that was to evolve from the ruins of war. This work is recommended reading for all who are interested in this period of American history.

Lonnie E. Maness, Ph.D.

Richard E. Beringer, Herman Hattaway, Archer Jones, William N. Still, Jr. *Why The South Lost The Civil War*. Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1986.

Since the end of the Civil War in 1865, there have been many interpretations by contemporaries and subsequent scholars that try to explain why the Confederacy did not win the war and establish its independence. In a delightful little volume, *Why The North Won The Civil War* (1960), edited by David Donald, the contributing authors listed many reasons for Confederate defeat. They maintained that God supported the heaviest battalions, or in other words the North; overall, the military leadership of the North was better than that of the South; northern diplomacy was more effective than that of the Davis government; the South died of too much democracy, and President Davis simply was not as effective a leader as Abraham Lincoln. Other interpretations have dealt with the blockade, desertion, disloyalty, state rights, and inadequate command system, and poor use of the black population. Important as all of these factors are, Richard E. Beringer and his associates maintain that they are

not sufficient to explain the outcome of the war for Southern Independence. It is their contention, ably put forth in *Why The South Lost The Civil War*, that the Confederacy failed to win its independence because Confederate nationalism was too weak to meet the demands of this great conflict and also because of feelings of guilt concerning the institution of slavery.

During the early part of the conflict Southern morale was high, but as the war continued with its rising casualty rates and with no end in sight, many Confederates began to question their objectives and to doubt that God supported their cause. Most Southerners, Beringer and associates argue, held a view of God which made them believe that he controlled all things and expressed his approval or disapproval through events. Hence, early in the war when the South was winning victories at First Bull Run, the Seven Days Battle, Second Bull Run, and Fredericksburg, this was a sign of God's blessing. However, the losses of 1863 and 1864 – Gettysburg, Vicksburg, the siege of Petersburg, and the Atlanta campaign – were signs that God was displeased with the Confederacy and did not wish it to succeed. In short, God was unhappy with the Confederacy for trying to preserve the institution of slavery. This growing conviction helped undermine the bid for independence, "which rested upon a base of nationalism that never firmly existed," the authors maintain. In the end the Southerners simply lost heart and quit the war even though they possessed the means for prosecuting the war beyond 1865.

However, by the end of the war, Confederates had convinced themselves that they had not fought the war to preserve slavery or for independence. They had fought, Beringer and associates maintain, for honor, for state rights, and for white supremacy. Former Confederates eventually claimed they had achieved each of these goals following the end of Radical Reconstruction.

In putting forth this interpretation the authors have tried to seriously undermine some long-held interpretations on why the South lost the Civil War. To them it was not internal dissent (states' rights), economic inferiority, military inadequacy, or a host of other things. When the end came "the South still had large combat-ready armies and... these armies surrendered and went home. When Lee met Grant at Appomattox..., surrender was not the only choice open to him."

Beringer and his associates have vigorously supported their position in a book of over five hundred pages. But is their argument convincing? Will their interpretation become the dominant thesis as historians seek to explain why the Confederacy lost its bid for independence? One can doubt that it will. It is doubtful whether slaveowners were any more guilt-ridden in 1864 and 1865 than they were during the 1850s. Even now it is difficult at best to define what nationalism really is and how nationalistic a given people are. However, it would seem to this reviewer that there was a high degree of nationalism in the Confederacy when one looks at the sacrifices the people of the South made during the war. Look at how the economy was expanded to meet the wartime needs of the new nation and consider the fact that a greater percentage of the Confederacy's population served in its armed forces than was the case with the population of the North. It also seems that the nationalism of the South was much greater than that of the Thirteen Colonies during the American Revolution, a time when John Adams estimated that only one third of the population were patriots. Indeed, it would seem that the South simply had greater obstacles to overcome.

Furthermore, to embrace the thesis of Beringer and associates, one would have to agree that Lee, Johnston, Taylor, and Kirby Smith did have viable alternatives to

surrender in 1865. Guerrilla warfare, however, is the only real option the authors present, and they even argue that this was not much of a viable alternative because of the barbarity of this kind of warfare and what it would do to Southern society.

The North emerged victorious because of many factors – Lincoln's leadership, the largest armies, effective military leadership, and outstanding diplomacy, to mention only a few. The failure of Southern will was only one of these factors despite the attempt of the authors to make it otherwise.

Lonnie E. Maness, Ph.D.

James A. Ramage. *Rebel Raider: The Life of General John Hunt Morgan*. Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1986.

John Hunt Morgan was one of the more exciting Confederate cavalry leaders, an officer who became a folk hero to the Southern people because of his many daring exploits. Other works have been written on Morgan such as Basil W. Duke's *History of Morgan's Cavalry* (1867), Cecil F. Holland's *Morgan and His Raiders* (1942), Edison H. Thomas's *John Hunt Morgan and His Raiders* (1975), but James A. Ramage's *Rebel Raider: The Life of General John Hunt Morgan* is the first full-length biography of the Confederate general. This latest work does contain new material and more detail than is in previous works. The purpose of this book, as Ramage states, "is to describe the life and career of John Hunt Morgan and to evaluate his role in the Civil War." Historians have tended to dismiss Morgan as a romantic figure who had little impact on the Civil War. Ramage disagrees with this conclusion and describes Morgan as a feared guerrilla leader and as a generally successful one.

Morgan fought in the Mexican war and was involved in business in the Lexington area until the beginning of the Civil War. Volunteering for Confederate service, he was commissioned a captain and given a company of cavalry, in southern Kentucky, for scouting. At Shiloh, Morgan commanded the Kentucky Squadron of Cavalry, having been promoted to Colonel. In June, he was given a brigade, and on December 11, 1862, Morgan was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General. He would make several raids behind enemy lines into Kentucky and was with Generals Braxton Bragg and Edmund Kirby Smith when their armies invaded Kentucky in the fall of 1862. In fact, Morgan erroneously believed and advised Bragg that the people of Kentucky would rise in revolt if the Confederate army marched in as liberators. Nothing of the sort happened and following the draw battle of Perryville, Bragg withdrew from Kentucky. Back in Tennessee, Bragg positioned the Army of Tennessee in and around Murfreesboro. The Union army, now commanded by William S. Rosecrans, moved out of Kentucky and south to Nashville.

It was at this point that Bragg sent Morgan on his Third Kentucky Raid (December 21, 1862--January 1, 1863). His objective was to destroy two large railroad trestles--both 80 feet high and 500 feet long--through Muldraugh's Hill, located five miles south of Elizabethtown. Morgan's Christmas raid was a complete success. Not only were the trestles destroyed, but he captured and paroled 1,800 prisoners, inflicted 150 casualties, burned 2,290 feet of railroad bridgework, wrecked thirty-five miles of track and telegraph line, destroyed several culverts, three depots,

three water-stations, and large quantities of Federal stores. Morgan had two men killed and twenty-four wounded. This raid, in conjunction with General N. B. Forrest's

There are many other Morgan exploits that could be discussed such as the raid into Indiana and Ohio, the last Kentucky raid after Morgan's escape from the Ohio State penitentiary, and Morgan's death in Greeneville, Tennessee, on September 4, 1864, at the hands of Union Private Andrew J. Campbell, a deserter from the 2nd Arkansas Infantry (C.S.A.).

There is little doubt that John Hunt Morgan was a great cavalry leader. There is much doubt, however, in the mind of this reviewer, that Morgan was a guerrilla leader. He was assigned to regular army commands and made raids behind enemy lines. This hardly qualifies for a guerrilla designation. Furthermore, it does not seem that Morgan was as great a leader as Ramage would have his readers believe. Morgan does not measure up to such greats as Nathan Bedford Forrest or James H. Wilson, both of whom engaged in some of the same tactics that Morgan used while on raids. Furthermore, Ramage seems to contradict himself when he makes the point in chapter after chapter that Morgan was not as effective a combat leader after his marriage to Mattie Ready of Murfreesboro as he was before the marriage.

Though this book does have flaws and does repeat a lot that is familiar in the Morgan story, Ramage's *Rebel Raider: The Life of General John Hunt Morgan* does have much in it that is new and that covers all aspects of Morgan's life. It reveals the man in all of his complexity. It is a highly readable account of the life of a great Kentuckian. This book should be on the reading list for all who wish to know more about the early history of Kentucky, the Mexican War, and the Civil War.

Lonnie E. Maness, Ph.D.

Michael Ramsey, et al. *A History of The Dyer, Tennessee Community: The People And Their Work*. Paducah, Kentucky: Turner Publishing Company, 1986.

This book was the product of the joint effort of the members of the Dyer Heritage Committee, a committee which was established by the Dyer Homecoming '86 Committee. It was assigned the task of "providing activities or projects that would emphasize the history of Dyer." The result was *A History of the Dyer, Tennessee Community: The People and Their Work*, the most comprehensive history that has been written about Dyer.

Today Dyer is a city of about 2,500 people located in the north central part of Gibson County, a county that was created by the Tennessee legislature on October 21, 1823. The General Assembly named the county after Colonel John Gibson, an officer who served with distinction in the War of 1812 under General Andrew Jackson. As pioneers moved into the county more and more towns were established, including Dyer. The completion of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad through Dyer and Gibson County in the late 1850's was an economic boom for the area. By 1860 Gibson County had a population of 21,777, and the 21st District—Dyer and the surrounding area—had grown to a population of 633.

Following the bombardment of Fort Sumter, the voters of Tennessee overwhelmingly voted to leave the Union. Soon Tennessee was a state in the Confederacy. During the following four-year blood bath, Gibson County men flocked to the support of the Confederacy. Goodspeed's *History of Tennessee* states that Gibson County, given its size, "supplied more men for military service than any other county in the state." At least two companies were recruited in Dyer, and men from Dyer and the surrounding area served in many other Tennessee companies and regiments. Only one company of Union soldiers was recruited throughout Gibson County. Company F of the 7th Tennessee Infantry (U.S.V.).

Following the Civil War, there was continued growth and development in Dyer. The town was reported to be the largest market for poultry and eggs in the area by 1900. A second bank was opened in 1904, and the local box factory was busier than ever before. The telephone came to Dyer before 1900, and the town had electric lights, at least in part, by 1900. New businesses continued to be established as the decades went by. Schools expanded, and the various churches grew and prospered. Dyer played its role in World War I, enjoyed the good times of the 1920s, suffered through the depression years, and contributed greatly to World War II and to the Vietnam conflict. Many Dyer men served in these various wars and some made the supreme sacrifice for their country.

One of the numerous sins of historians is the neglect of local history. This omission has been ably demonstrated by Sir Lewis Namier, in his famous book, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III*. In this work, Namier emphasizes the importance of local history in explaining many of the things that took place on the national level in Great Britain. This is becoming increasing the case with American history as more and more works are being published on our local institutions, counties, and cities. This is the case with Michael Ramsey, et al., *A History of the Dyer Community: The People and Their Work*. This is an interesting and well-written work that should appeal to the general reader, especially in Gibson County.

Lonnie E. Maness, Ph.D.