

as part of course development may find that Washington now offers a particularly good route to understanding both the early republic and the rise of conscious nationalism.

Longmore's book is a useful study that teachers and undergraduates will find pulls together many of the strands of scholarship that currently contribute to our understanding of Washington. The author's focus is upon his subject's career in Virginia, as well as upon the perceptions of Washington that formed during the early months of his command of the Continental Army. The author thus operates both to describe Washington's own changing self-perception and to account for subsequent perceptions others held of him.

To deal with the first of these topics, Longmore strives to link two major themes of contemporary scholarship. One is the recent emphasis upon economic change in the Chesapeake region. Here Washington emerges as representative of the tidewater planters whose carefully constructed mixture of political and economic interests in land speculation and tobacco culture broke up rapidly in the 1760s. Faced with a combination of challenges from Britain, Washington is portrayed as a leader who ultimately realized that economic and political independence went hand in hand.

Longmore's second strand is a sustained attempt to place Washington within the context of Whig political ideology. Contrary to usual perceptions of Washington, the author seeks repeatedly to demonstrate that his subject was intimately acquainted with nearly all of the significant books and pamphlets of the revolutionary era. Everything from studies of Washington's library holdings to reports of his conversations are called forth to place him within the Whig and classical republican political ideologies that so interest modern historians.

Longmore goes to some lengths to reject most of the mythic elements that nineteenth-century writers often inserted into Washington's early career. Ambition, energy, and aristocratic pretension all receive attention, although central emphasis remains with the concepts of gentlemanly honor that Washington accepted and sought to exemplify in his public behavior.

Each of these elements serve to place in context the most interesting part of the study, Longmore's analysis of the rise of a mythic Washington in the years between 1775 and 1778. By concentrating upon public perceptions, the author seeks to illustrate the ways in which contemporaries saw and interpreted the commanding general. The central theme is that Washington replaced George III as the focus of popular loyalty, in large measure by substituting his own patriotic *persona* for that of the patriot king. Using images that evoked the role of Cato in ancient Rome, Washington became the central embodiment of republican virtue in his time.

Longmore's study is not without problems. In seeking to join discussions of political thought to a chronological narrative, the author unnecessarily repeats himself at several places. And by leaving most of his arguments regarding Washington's literary interests to a lengthy appendix, Longmore's main text often fails to draw the explicit links between ideas and actions that he obviously believes shaped the young Washington. One must still wonder if access to ideas was sufficient to assure the use of those ideas.

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Carol Bleser, ed. *The Hammonds of Redcliffe*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987. Pp. xxiv, 421. Paper, \$8.95.

Carol Bleser of Clemson University established herself as a fine editor with the original hardcover edition of this volume in 1981. The paperback reissue was due in part to the recent popularity of family and social history, but also as a prelude to her 1988

publication, *Secret and Scared: The Diaries of James Henry Hammond, A Southern Slaveholder*.

The Hammonds of Redcliffe begins with "The Founder," James Henry Hammond, and the onset of civil war. Hammond was a planter-politician, probably best remembered for his March 4, 1858, Senate speech when he declared "Cotton is King!" In 1855, Hammond bought 400 acres overlooking the Savannah River in South Carolina on which he built his cherished home, "Redcliffe." His letters reveal no guilt concerning the ownership of over 300 slaves, and he expected to establish a "rich, educated, well bred, and prominent family" at Redcliffe, but these goals were never realized. He often chastised his sons for their squandering of money and laziness, firmly believing that "listlessness, indolence and selfishness are personified in this family . . . What will become of them when I die? In twenty years not a vestige."

Upon Hammond's death in 1864, hard times had in fact hit Redcliffe, and in the second section, entitled "The Preserver," attention shifts to the eldest son, Harry, who had the responsibility of guiding the family through the ordeal of Reconstruction. His father's heavy investment in Confederate bonds left the Hammonds with virtually nothing other than Redcliffe, and when Harry returned home after the war, he recalled that he owned "a pipe, some tobacco, and literally nothing else." He was even refused credit by a local merchant. This section of letters takes the reader through the agony of adjustment from a family of luxury and wealth to one of poverty and subsistence. Also, the letters detail the transformation of Redcliffe into a plantation of free labor, with most of the former slaves remaining. Unlike his father, Harry refrained from a political career during Republican rule, the conservative backlash, and the Populist uprising. Instead, his energies were directed toward the maintenance and preservation of Redcliffe.

The next section, "The Belle," focuses on another generation, Harry's second daughter, Katharine, who is characterized as "slightly spoiled but attractive, vivacious, and flirtatious." Many of these letters reveal the numerous courtships of Katharine, and her trials and tribulations as a nursing student at Johns Hopkins Training School for Nurses, where she met Dr. John Sedgwick Billings. A stormy courtship ensued, and despite being separated for two years while Billings set up his practice in New York, the couple married in 1897.

The final chapter deals with their first child, John Shaw Billings, "The Restorer." Several letters reveal a strained family relationship due to John Sedgwick's numerous extra-marital affairs and Katharine's poor health and her longing for Redcliffe. John Shaw made several trips from New York to Redcliffe as a child, and in 1935, in the midst of a successful career as managing editor of *Time* magazine, purchased the plantation home of his great-grandfather and began its restoration. He eventually retired to Redcliffe, and upon his death in 1975, the estate was given to the state of South Carolina.

Bleser has skillfully edited the Hammond letters, provided excellent introductory essays for each section, and compiled an extensive bibliography and genealogical record. *The Hammonds of Redcliffe* is a wonderful walk through the private lives of a very prominent Southern family. The book would be invaluable in a seminar on Southern family or social history because it is much more than a collection of letters. It is family history at its finest.

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