

Joseph T. Glatthaar. *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers*. New York: The Free Press, 1990. Pp. xiii, 370. Cloth, \$24.95.

Many Americans—apparently including at least a few textbook authors—still assume that blacks were essentially passive recipients of emancipation during the Civil War. Joseph Glatthaar's new book makes it perfectly clear that tens of thousands of blacks played an active and important role not only in the abolition of slavery but also in the preservation of the republic.

Glatthaar's *Forged in Battle* is the most detailed and illuminating account yet published on the experience of the 180,000 "colored" troops in the Civil War. The author competently discusses various aspects of life and death in the Union army for black soldiers and their (mostly) white officers, including recruiting and training, camp life and combat, and the pervasive racial bigotry that existed within and without the service. Unlike earlier standards such as Dudley Cornish's *The Sable Arm* and Benjamin Quarles's *The Negro in the Civil War*, which largely focus on the politics and propaganda involved in creating black units, this book examines what it was like to be a part of such a unit.

The author accurately points out that despite the amount of print, celluloid, and bronze lavished on the 54th Massachusetts, most recently exemplified by the motion picture *Glory*, the honor of first combat by blacks in blue was won by several regiments of Louisiana freemen and freedmen who fought at Milliken's Bend and Port Hudson months before the assault on Fort Wagner. He is also probably correct in concluding that because of reluctance to put black troops in battle—largely due to the widespread belief that they were inferior soldiers—their greatest contribution to the Union cause was in the uninspiring but vital area of logistics.

*Forged in Battle* is a fine study of a complex subject, but it is not without flaws. There is an annoying amount of repetition, and the catchy title promises more than the author delivers. Glatthaar never convincingly demonstrates that more than a small number of black soldiers and white officers overcame the barriers of prejudice and social convention to form an "alliance" despite shared hardships and dangers. These relatively minor problems aside, however, all Civil War historians (and the best and brightest of their students) will benefit from a careful reading of this important and informative book. Regrettably, some may find that the book's strengths—solid research and rich detail—make it too lengthy for effective use as supplemental reading material in their undergraduate courses.

University of Arkansas at Monticello

William L. Shea

Don H. Doyle. *New Men, New Cities, New South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charleston, Mobile, 1860-1910*. Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1990. Pp. xix, 369. Cloth, \$39.95; paper, \$12.95.

The *New Men* in the title of this volume include a variety of people who led the South after the Civil War, but the important ones were middle-aged businessmen who had lived in the South before the Civil War and who were less than enthusiastic about the formation and activities of the southern Confederacy. This would not today be considered a revisionist view, but it certainly does not comply with older interpretations of these leaders. The *New Cities* in the title of this volume refer to the four cities in the subtitle that are used as examples of a developing urban South. This volume is filled with comparisons and contrasts of these four cities, stressing both similarities and dissimilarities. This is a considerably more useful approach than separate studies of each of these cities. The *New South* in the title of this volume refers to the industrializing, urbanizing South of that era. The author artfully weaves together the three concepts in his title as he leads his readers from 1860 to 1910.

While the focus of this volume is economic, it has passages on religion, leisure time activities, social classes, social clubs, women, and blacks. Unfortunately the author makes no references to political activities. He does not address questions such as: Did the political urban leaders challenge the politically dominant agrarians? If so, how successful were they? Did the cities challenge the rural-dominated county political structures? If so, what was the outcome? How did the Progressive Movement affect the southern cities? Were the cities' political leaders Progressive?

In the past thirty years or so historians of the South have "discovered" the urban South. A considerable body of literature now exists on that subject. The strength of this volume is that it fills in a great deal of detail in the generalizations that previous writers have made concerning the rise of the urban South. For that reason, it is a valuable addition to the continually growing literature on the New South. College instructors of courses on the New South can find material in this volume for

new lectures or to refresh old ones, and they will want to add it to the reading lists they hand out to their students. But this is probably not the sort of book that a high school teacher of American history would find particularly useful either as recommended reading or from which to draw material for classroom presentations.

New Mexico State University

Monroe Billington

**Michael Simpson. *Franklin D. Roosevelt*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989. Pp. 90. paper, \$7.95.**

This is an admirable synthesis and condensation of the existing literature enriched by the author's own shrewd assessments of Roosevelt the man and his achievements. Despite sparing use of anecdote, a clear and convincing portrait both of Roosevelt's character and of his major policies, foreign and domestic, emerges from Simpson's narrative. This is no small accomplishment in so few pages. The book's four chapters, one each on youth and early career, "the road to the White House," the New Deal, and world affairs are followed by a brief conclusion and useful "notes on further reading."

To Roosevelt's upbringing at Hyde Park is attributed the calm self-assurance, eagerness to please, persistence, and "determination to play his cards . . . close to his chest" that became characteristic of his leadership. An ambition to follow in the footsteps of his famous cousin Theodore may have influenced his courtship of Eleanor Roosevelt, TR's niece, as well as his pursuit of appointment as Assistant Secretary of the Navy in the Wilson administration.

Further clues to Roosevelt's leadership and decision-making style are found in his four years as governor of New York and his triumphant 1932 presidential campaign. Roosevelt surrounded himself with able subordinates (the "Brains Trust") who had useful ideas of their own, demonstrated his eagerness to learn from them, and inspired great loyalty in them. But he continued to keep his own counsel and follow his own uncanny political intuition. Stressing his belief that the depression was a domestic problem and revealing his bias toward government action, Roosevelt urged "bold, persistent experimentation. It is common sense to take a method and try it; if it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all try something."

The numerous initiatives of the first and second hundred days reflected his willingness to experiment; their underlying similarities rather than differences are stressed. Although Simpson awards only "two cheers" to the New Deal because of issues left imperfectly addressed, he nonetheless credits Roosevelt and the New Deal with "profound and enduring" achievements (the development of a managed economy and the launching of the welfare state that strengthened business and finance, business opinion to the contrary notwithstanding), restored public confidence, and united the country physically and spiritually.

In world affairs, Roosevelt cautiously awaited the moment when the conjunction of domestic and international politics would enable him to assert the interests of the United States without undermining his support at home. "He brought a united nation into the war, devised and carried out his own strategy, and ensured that the United States would at last play a part in world affairs commensurate with her might and her destiny." Truly a Commander in Chief, FDR played a critical role in strategic planning of the successful international war effort and demonstrated "a happy knack of selecting and then inspiring outstanding commanders, fitting the man to the task with exactitude." If he unwisely delayed talks on the post-war future of Europe and exaggerated his ability to influence Stalin, these miscues must be seen in the context of his successes. The survival of democracy "was due in a large measure to his presidency."

*Franklin D. Roosevelt* can be recommended with confidence to teachers at both the secondary and collegiate levels as supplemental or required reading for their students. The narrative is so spare, however, that students whose knowledge of the Roosevelt era is derived primarily from Simpson's account may fail to develop a full appreciation of its dramatic context.

St. Louis, Missouri

Marvin Reed