

Despite some flaws, Schlesinger's brief monograph has much to offer both the practitioners and students of Clio. Teachers, especially pre-collegiate educators, will find Schlesinger's work a quick way to catch-up in the field. Graduate and undergraduate students will probably find *In the Wake of Columbus* helpful in preparing for exams. As the author points out, "this brief study examines many of the most important, intriguing, and sometimes startling ways in which Europe's relationship with America changed European life in the century or so after Columbus's expeditions."

Maryland Center for the Study of History & Civic Education

James F. Adomanis

**Charles Royster.** *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996 (hardcover 1980). Pp. xi, 452. Paper, \$17.95; ISBN 0-8078-4606-6.

This is a curiously belated, unrevised paperback edition of a highly acclaimed, award-winning work of synthesis on the nature of the American revolutionary character and the revolutionaries' ambivalence toward the army created to protect that culture. Now an established historian with several well-received books to his credit, Charles Royster years ago demonstrated his considerable scholarship in this carefully reworked version of his doctoral dissertation.

As Royster notes in his preface, this book does not lend itself to easy summarization. Throughout his presentation, Royster deftly addresses questions concerning the uneasy relationship between American ideals and actions in the Revolution, particularly in the development of the army. The organization of the book is primarily chronological, beginning with the beliefs that led to revolutionary action against Great Britain and tracing developments through the long years of warfare to final victory and beyond.

Early chapters deal with the popular *rage militaire* (passion for arms) of 1775, the concept of "citizen soldier," and the contrast between the ideals of 1775 and the realities of war. Royster demonstrates how the revolutionaries were able "to rely on the army more than they liked and to support it less than required." In a chapter entitled "Valley Forge," he discusses not only the hardships endured in that encampment but also the nature of the substantial training accomplished during the time there. He shows that Baron von Steuben recognized that Americans' love of liberty and vision of communal happiness were the impetus for war but could not guide conduct within the army. Steuben helped the army become "an internally disciplined group apart, more self-consciously virtuous than the society at large." He based his approach to discipline not on the Prussian model of fear of officers but rather on the American soldier's "dignity as a citizen and a volunteer" and his "willing attachment to both the cause and his superiors." This discussion is vital to the full understanding of the final third of the book that deals with treason and lesser forms of betrayal, final victory in the war, and problems regarding demobilization.

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The book is based on exhaustive research in printed primary and secondary sources. The endnotes serve only to identify the sources of quotations. Royster refers readers interested in a bibliography or in tracing his research to his dissertation. An appendix contains an interesting discussion on historians' interpretations of revolutionary soldiers' motivation.

Although the book is basically well-written, it is not easy reading due to the complexity of the material and argument. The early chapters are particularly difficult because of the introduction of some themes that are not fully discussed until later. The careful reader is, however, well-rewarded, for Royster synthesizes information never brought together as an understandable whole.

It is likely that most professors who would use this work as core reading in a course are already familiar with it. This paperback edition will make it more available for classroom use, but it is appropriate primarily for advanced courses on the American Revolution, American military history, or American civic culture.

University of Wisconsin, Whitewater-Emerita

Mary E. Quinlivan

**Lynn A. Bonfield and Mary C. Morrison. *Roxana's Children: The Biography of a Nineteenth Century Vermont Family*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995. Pp. xviii, 267. Cloth, \$50.00; ISBN 0-87023-972-4. Paper, \$19.95; ISBN 0-87023-981-3.**

Social histories are now commonplace in the discipline, but a new direction has emerged--family history. *Roxana's Children* tells the story of Roxana Brown Walbridge Watts, who lived during the early to mid-nineteenth century on a Vermont farm and who raised eleven children and one grandchild, half of whom stayed at home, while the others moved as far west as California. Even for traditional historians, *Roxana's Children* should be appealing since they, her offspring, toiled in the textile mills at Lowell, Massachusetts, took part in the great westward push across the continent, fought in the Civil War, and even panned for gold in California. Their vocations were also as varied: farmer, soldier, lawyer, minister, teacher, carriage maker, artist, and, perhaps most importantly, husband or wife.

Roxana's children, by all accounts, were common, even ordinary folk living in extraordinary times. The nearly 300 letters and 30 journals and diaries that have survived are replete with both local as well as sectional and national concerns. They provide glimpses of life in Peacham, a typical New England town, examine gender roles and responsibilities, wrestle with the pull of family versus the lure of a "manifest destiny," suffer through the horrors of an uncivil war, and describe the discomforts but opportunities of western life. There are, of course, gaps of information in the surviving letters; some of the children have only a scant handful of memoirs. But the authors, Lynn Bonfield, an archivist, and Mary Morrison, the great-granddaughter of Roxana, skillfully weave