THE FIFTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION

BY CHARLES GRIFF SELLERS, JR.

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The Fifty-fifth Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association

By Charles Grier Sellers, Jr.

Attendance at the annual meeting, held this year in Milwaukee, April 26-28, passed the one thousand mark for the first time, reaching a total of 1,080. By a happy accident the program committee had instituted some experimental innovations that resulted in more sessions than usual. Even so, meeting rooms were usually filled to capacity and often overflowed—except that the historian's traditional indiscipline to arise and hear papers on Saturday morning asserted itself, despite efforts to schedule enticing fare at this hour. The host institutions, through the good offices of Local Arrangements Chairman Frederick I. Olson and his committee, sponsored pleasant receptions for members and their wives at Milwaukee-Downer College and at the Milwaukee Public Library, while Milwaukee's celebrated breweries offered daily hospitality to thirsty historians.

This year the program committee decided to reserve the customary nineteen sessions (four each in the morning and afternoon on Thursday and Friday and three on Saturday morning) for programs arranged by the committee itself. In place of the former joint sessions, the committee invited groups meeting together with the Association to arrange their own sessions in addition to the nineteen committee-arranged sessions, and five groups did so. A third segment of the program was the ambiguously named Alternate Program, consisting of whatever sessions individual members or groups of members wished to arrange for themselves. It was hoped that this device would provide an occasion for less formal interchanges by small groups of historians with specialized interests; and despite inadequate publicity, seven such alternate sessions were scheduled.
Thus there was a total of thirty-one sessions, as well as a luncheon meeting and two dinner meetings. The 140 scheduled participants came from 81 institutions in 34 states, the District of Columbia, Great Britain, and Canada. The Midwest contributed 47 participants, the Northeast, 40, the South, 29, and the Rocky Mountain and Pacific states, 20.

Geographical and institutional balance, however, was not the aim of the program committee. Rather we simply sought to enlist those historians who had the most interesting things to say to their colleagues. While we did not try to set any general theme for the meeting, we did arrange one group of sessions devoted to analysis of recent individual works of major importance in American history. A second group of sessions in the committee-arranged part of the program featured approaches to, and subfields of, American history that are being newly explored. A final group of sessions presented new findings and new interpretations about more traditional subjects. In an effort to keep sessions integrated and to allow full consideration of the matters raised, we scheduled five one-paper sessions and only one with more than two papers.

The sessions dealing with recent important works in American history were among the most heavily attended. A capacity ballroom audience gathered under the chairmanship of George W. Pierson to hear two historians and a political scientist address themselves to Louis Hartz’s *Liberal Tradition in America*. Marvin Meyers began by making clear Hartz’s symbolic use of Locke and pointing out that Hartz was analyzing the unconscious mind of America to make clear a useful contrast with Europe. Yet, he concluded, Hartz had so assimilated everything to the Lockean assumptions that his interpretation seemed less varied and useful than Tocqueville’s similar but more pluralistic perceptions. Political scientist Harry V. Jaffa echoed the charge of a too monolithic interpretation. Contrary to Hartz, Jaffa insisted that fundamental disputes had broken out within the liberal consensus and that the Lost Cause had not been without impact on American thinking. In effect, he said, southerners and abolitionists, sinning in a common faith, had carried the paired ideas of equality and self-government to such discordant lengths that they had brought on a Civil War. The third critic, Leonard Krieger, proposed a framework of analysis that distinguished between various parts of Europe, in place of Hartz’s oversimplified distinction between America and Europe. All areas of the Western world,
Krieger thought, had known a three-step liberal development: (1) of liberty from government; (2) of liberty to share in power and government; and (3) of competition among the various liberty-using individuals and power groups. The major distinction of America, he suggested, was one of timing: Americans, alone, had achieved civil liberties from government and rights in government at the same moment and after a sufficient social preparation, so that their disputes afterward tended to be pragmatic arguments between these balancing liberties. By contrast, European theorists had been “over achievers,” and ahead of the social preparation, which in central and eastern Europe had been so delayed as to postpone realization until totalitarianism took over. Louis Hartz responded to his critics with a vigorous statement of his purpose in the light of competing traditions in American historiography. The germ-theory school of Herbert Baxter Adams, he thought, had emphasized the relation of American to European experience, but had failed because it had been too legalistic and narrow and had neglected the American variations. Parrington and Beard, in reaction, had interpreted American history on the basis of conflict among Americans, ignoring the European perspective. Hartz himself wished to insist on a comparative method which, without eliminating the American conflicts, would give them diminished meaning in a wider perspective. What was needed was recognition of both indebtedness and variation.

More than 150 persons attended the session on “Economic Growth: A New Departure for American Economic History?” which was devoted to a critical examination of Douglass C. North’s recent book, The Economic Growth of the United States, 1790–1860. Chairman George Rogers Taylor comments that, for anyone who has attended similar meetings of historians in the not very distant past, perhaps the most surprising aspect of the session was the unchallenged acceptance of the assumption that attempts to develop at least limited and tentative theories of economic growth and historical change are highly useful. In the central paper of the session, Stuart Bruchey praised North’s book as an “impressive, pioneer effort,” and raised two related questions: (1) does economic growth provide a suitable conceptual framework for American economic history? and (2) if so, is North’s analytical structure adequate for that burden? Both Bruchey’s paper and the prepared comments by Thomas C. Cochran (read in his absence by Arthur Dudden) and Harold F. Williamson gave affirmative answers to these questions,
though with significant qualifications, In rebuttal North stoutly defended his thesis of the central role of the developing market economy as strategically influenced by the export and carrying trade before 1812 and by cotton exports in the following decades. Needless to say this did not altogether satisfy those who insist on the crucial importance of such factors as the rising spirit of entrepreneurship and the major role of various governmental agencies in promoting the vast internal improvements of the period. These and many other interesting questions were raised in a lively general discussion. On the whole, the chief result of the session was to bring home the relative ease of listing the so-called important factors in our early economic growth, but to underline the difficulty of appraising their comparative and strategic importance and of weaving them into a useful explanatory framework.

The session on “The American Revolution and the Age of Revolution,” with Louis Gottschalk in the chair, was devoted to a critique of Robert R. Palmer’s recent work on The Age of the Democratic Revolution. In the principal paper of the session, J. Steven Watson expressed doubts that Palmer’s view of the last four decades of the eighteenth century as an age of democratic revolutions fitted the England of George III. Watson was more willing to grant the validity of the characterization for France, but questioned whether the French revolutionary spirit had as much affinity with or indebtedness to the American precedent as it had to French circumstances and Rousseau’s Social Contract. Commentator Douglass Adair conceded that a reliable full-length biography of George III was needed before his reign could be adequately assessed, but argued that in the minds of the American revolutionaries of 1776 the British monarch was a symbol of despotism that ought to be displaced. Yet Adair did not fully accept Palmer’s description of the American revolutionary spirit. Palmer defended his documentation of particular points that had been questioned by Watson and Adair, as well as by reviewers, but insisted primarily upon the validity of his general thesis and the importance of the similarities, along with the differences, among the experiences of various countries. Many members of the audience of some three hundred persons were manifestly anxious to participate in the debate, but time did not permit comment from the floor.

Eight sessions reflected relatively new interests and approaches among American historians. The recent convergence of interests among historians and anthropologists concerned with “The Acculturation of the American In a session chaired by Allan G. Doerr, his paper on “Protestants, North American Indians, 1760 recurring patterns in white-Indian mission work among whites; (2) division of the In and the traditional approach; an attempt at political integration; and (4) the placations in a tribe already big. Antropologist Fred W. Vogel and American Indian Adjustments a sequence of acculturative’s Indians found old organization type of protective custody, was marked by the rise of prophets and manifestations. Following these Phase, in which religion acted to mentator William T. Hagan d co-operation between anthropologists the difficulty of fitting “into a few of the hundred widely varying, Mary E. Young, similarly t ized at the expense of the pecul. In closing she entered a plea for confessed sympathy for plain M “hypothetical member of a ‘loc in-group.’” J. Cutler Andrews, contributed from the floor before.

Some eighty historians assembled. Sivellette to consider “Education the Colonial Frontier.” Timothy the Child, and the Congregational might be called a sociological re movement and adjustment to fron cation, along with religion, becau ment and psychological security questioned whether the evidence In a second paper, “Government
culture of the American Indian” attracted eighty-five persons to a session chaired by Allan G. Bogue. Historian Robert F. Berkhofer’s paper on “Protestants, Pagans, and Sequences among the North American Indians, 1760-1860” described a sequence of four recurring patterns in white-Indian relations, as illustrated in Protestant mission work among Indians: (1) absolute rejection of whites; (2) division of the Indian village to reflect the Christian and the traditional approaches to life among the Indians; (3) an attempt at political integration of the tribe, in lieu of cultural integration; and (4) the placement of missionaries into existing factions in a tribe already highly fragmented from acculturation. Anthropologist Fred W. Vogel followed with a paper on “Religion and American Indian Adjustment,” in which he likewise sketched a sequence of acculturative stages. The Directed Stage, when Indians found old organizations shattered and themselves under a type of protective custody, was followed by a Restorative Stage, marked by the rise of prophets and intertribal or regional revivalistic manifestations. Following these developments came a Reformative Phase, in which religion acted to stabilize Indian personality. Commentator William T. Hagan described some of the difficulties of co-operation between anthropologists and historians, and especially the difficulty of fitting “into neat concepts and theories the activities of several hundred widely varying cultures.” The second commentator, Mary E. Young, similarly thought the two papers overgeneralized at the expense of the peculiarities of different Indian societies. In closing she entered a plea against “terminological torture” and confessed sympathy for plain Moshulatubbee as opposed to today’s “hypothetical member of a localized face-to-face culture-bearing in-group.” J. Cutler Andrews, Henry Fritz, and Muriel Wright contributed from the floor before it was necessary to end the session.

Some eighty historians assembled under the chairmanship of Max Savelle to consider “Education versus Social Disorganization on the Colonial Frontier.” Timothy L. Smith discussed “The Family, the Child, and the Congregation in Early America” from what might be called a sociological point of view. In a context of social movement and adjustment to frontier conditions, Smith argued, education, along with religion, became a mechanism for social adjustment and psychological security. Commentator Sidney E. Mead questioned whether the evidence presented justified Smith’s thesis. In a second paper, “Government and Education on the Massachu-
sets Frontier," Robert Middlekauff presented the thesis that there was probably not as much "decline" in education on the colonial frontier as hitherto supposed. Commentator Rena Vassar suggested other evidence that might be considered before Middlekauff's thesis could be considered as established.

An animated session on "The American Press in the Nineteenth Century" was chaired by Wallace E. Davies. James L. Crouthamel analyzed "The Newspaper Revolution, 1831-1861," during which the older, conservative, mercantile newspapers were challenged by the popular penny papers, such as James Gordon Bennett's New York Herald. The penny papers succeeded, Crouthamel argued, not so much because of their sensationalism as because they provided the same coverage as the older papers more extensively and more attractively. The mercantile papers and their popular challengers reacted reciprocally upon each other to produce by the 1850's a moderate penny press, typified in New York by the Tribune and the Times. Frederick Marbut's paper on "James Gordon Bennett and the Development of Washington News Coverage" emphasized the innovating importance of Bennett's Herald as an excellent (if sensational), non-partisan (if opinionated) newspaper, which nevertheless had great success in developing official sources of exclusive information in Washington. With the decline of journalistic competition since 1900, Marbut felt that syndicated columnists like Drew Pearson and Joseph Alsop come closest to the practices in which Bennett pioneered. Commentator Louis M. Starr compared Bennett's era with the two later eras of Pulitzer and the tabloid, claiming that all three of these efforts to reach a wider audience were closely related to developments in immigration. Each new approach made considerable use of sex and was denounced by the older press, he pointed out, but each time the conservatives had to adopt some of the new methods, while the innovators themselves eventually calmed down somewhat. A lively general discussion, whose participants included Frederic Merk, Patrick Hazard, and Julius Bloch, debated several points: whether it was justifiable to focus so exclusively on New York innovators; and whether Bennett's anti-Catholic comments indicated that he was nativist or simply congenitally anxious to shock.

Edward Lurie's paper on "The Institutionalization of Cultural and Intellectual Life in the Late Nineteenth Century" attracted a standing-room-only audience of over one hundred to a session chaired by John William W. the dramatic rise of institutions: (1) the influence in all areas of (2) the auspicious enwronment intellectual leaders—the organ named "The Captain of Erudite unlovely consequences of the also suggested gains: professi and others. But he emphasize standing the interaction betw environment. Both commen to Greene, stressed the importance European experience. Fleming tenth-century intellectual life tional scholar's function of col lay behind the specialization o ample, by the introduction of questioned the adequacy of L emphasis on the biographical ap reform, and the definition of t went on.

An overflow audience of or "Folklore, Mythology, and the Mayo presiding. In a paper on American History," Richard N. folklorist and historian. Instructible to rigid handling as a dull calcus set of rules for dealing of the Indian, the Negro, and t to the historian, Dorson mainta able records for the beliefs an groups of obscured Americans." Preface to Nationality: The M tory," Keith B. Berwick decla with its preoccupation with syn ginning of our recovery from t history." Today's historian may Bancroft in their "quest fo a national ethos that could be e an American demigod." After d
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chaired by John William Ward. Lurie suggested two reasons for
the dramatic rise of institutions in all fields of intellectual endeavor:
(1) influence in all areas of the culture of "the idea of science";
(2) the auspicious environment for a new "personality type" among
intellectual leaders—the organizer, the bureaucrat, the type Veblen
named "The Captain of Erudition." While recognizing some of the
unlovely consequences of the bureaucratization of intellect, Lurie
also suggested gains: professional standards, support for research,
and others. But he emphasized mainly the importance of under-
standing the interaction between personality and institutional en-
vironment. Both commentators, Donald Fleming and John C.
Greene, stressed the importance of comparing the American with the
European experience. Fleming suggested that the emphasis in nine-
teenth-century intellectual life on originality, rather than the tra-
tional scholar's function of conservation and synthesis of wisdom,
lay behind the specialization of scholarship as exemplified, for ex-
ample, by the introduction of the laboratory into teaching. Greene
questioned the adequacy of Lurie's use of "personality type," his
emphasis on the biographical approach to understanding institutional
reform, and the definition of the importance of science for all that
went on.

An overflow audience of one hundred attended the session on
"Folklore, Mythology, and the American Historian," with Bernard
Mayo presiding. In a paper on "The Uses of the Oral Tradition in
American History," Richard M. Dorson deplored the rift between
folklorist and historian. Insisting that oral traditions "are as suscepti-
ble to rigid handling as the dullest document," he laid down a me-
ticulous set of rules for dealing with such materials. Oral traditions
of the Indian, the Negro, and the immigrant are especially valuable
to the historian, Dorson maintained, for they "offer the chief avail-
able records for the beliefs and concerns and memories of large
groups of obscured Americans." In a provocative paper entitled "A
Preface to Nationality: The Mythic Imagination in American His-
try," Keith B. Berwick declared that "the new historical writing"
with its preoccupation with symbol and myth "may mark the be-
ingning of our recovery from the self-induced myopia of scientific
history." Today's historian may find affinities with Weems and Wirt
and Bancroft in their "quest for nationality" through discovery of
"a national ethos that could be embodied in a single mystic figure—
an American demigod." After discussing the qualities that qualified
or disqualified Franklin, Washington, Jackson, and Lincoln for this symbolic role, both in the earlier era and in our own, Berwick speculated about the possible qualities of the "new mythic figure"—perhaps a Lincolnesque figure in a button-down shirt—who may emerge from the efforts to define the national purpose. All three commentators, William W. Abbot, Merrill D. Peterson, and William Appleman Williams, thought that Dorson had described skillfully the ways of getting at oral tradition, but questioned whether it had great use for historians beyond a deepened understanding of "large groups of obscured Americans." The commentators similarly found Berwick's paper elegant and suggestive, though perhaps extravagant in places. Peterson, however, sharply rejected Berwick's contention that the recent interest in symbol and myth is akin to the work of Weems and Bancroft. The so-called new historians, he maintained, "do not continue the mythic imagination; rather, they penetrate it, and dissect it."

W. Stull Holt chaired a session on "Equality and Excellence: Problems of the Professions in American History." Daniel H. Calhoun's paper on "1750 to 1850: Mediocrity Regained?" argued that this period began with a sharpening of professional standards but ended, as illustrated by developments among doctors, clergy, and lawyers, with a turning away from individual status and even individual achievement. He explained this reversal as arising in part from Jacksonian egalitarianism, but even more from conflict between personal leaders and the spokesmen for collective leadership. In a second paper, "Since 1850: Professional and Public Welfare," Robert W. McCluggage described the conflict between the desire to distinguish qualified professional practitioners from the unqualified and the desire of society to have the numbers required by a rapidly expanding population. This dilemma conditioned the organization of national federations of local professional societies, the establishment of professional schools, and struggles between the schools and the practitioners over the education of new members of the professions. Commentator Paul Beck, substituting for Thomas N. Bonner, contributed suggestions drawn from research on the medical profession. The second commentator, Corinne Gilb, emphasized the necessity of distinguishing between various groups within a profession, for instance, lawyers who entered politics as opposed to the lawyers who handled most of the private practice. She also stressed the need for a conceptual framework if the professions and their history are to be fully understood.

Some seventy historians at "New Woman." Papers by B. Lasch coincided in emphasizing in changing the situation of violence of women about their intention on "The New England Woman," and insisted that the new women, "going back at tory. Lasch, asking "How N. early twentieth century, controlled women in the past had been n "new women," he argued, were but to escape the conseque joyed.

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Fifty historians attended the banism and Regionalism in Wes E. Atherton presided. In a paper in the American Westward argued that frontier entrepreneur and economics which related undeveloped frontiers. Nowhere ropolitan capitalism more impo where it gave coherence and u graphically dispersed and compo in kind and stages of developme Scheiber, centered on "Urban Ri in the Old Northwest, 1820-1861 programs, 1820-1845, resulted major urban centers and intraste alignment of political forces thatitions. In the surge of railroad
Some seventy historians assembled to take “A New Look at the New Woman.” Papers by Barbara M. Solomon and Christopher Lasch coincided in emphasizing the importance of industrialization in changing the situation of women, and also the continuing ambivalence of women about their roles. Mrs. Solomon focused her attention on “The New England Culture and the Nineteenth-Century Woman,” and insisted that the New Woman was really a “series of new women,” going back at least as far as the early nineteenth century. Lasch, asking “How New Was the New Woman?” of the early twentieth century, contended that the so-called slavery of women in the past had been more to their work than to men. The “new women,” he argued, were really trying “not to win their freedom but to escape the consequences of the freedom they already enjoyed.” Commentator Carl N. Degler took sharp issue with Lasch’s implied definition of “freedom” as the ability to do nothing. Women were merely seeking to make meaningful lives for themselves, he said, whether by gainful employment or otherwise. These remarks prompted from the audience a series of extremely animated statements about the proper role of women, ranging from some that would have been generally accepted in 1800 to some that might be considered radical in 1962. Chairman Robert E. Riegel had some difficulty restraining the vigor of debate—“which at least proves,” he reports reassuringly, “that sex remains a vital subject, even to historians.”

Fifty historians attended the Saturday morning session on “Urbanism and Regionalism in Western Development,” at which Lewis E. Atherton presided. In a paper on “The Concept of the Metropolis in the American Westward Movement,” Charles M. Gates argued that frontier entrepreneurs clearly understood the geography and economics which related evolving metropolitan complexes to undeveloped frontiers. Nowhere, he maintained, was frontier metropolitan capitalism more important than in the American West, where it gave coherence and unity to an economy that was geographically dispersed and composed of sectional elements divergent in kind and stages of development. The second paper, by Harry N. Scheiber, centered on “Urban Rivalries and Internal Improvements in the Old Northwest, 1820-1860.” The state internal improvement programs, 1820-1845, resulted from political alliances involving major urban centers and intrastate regions; and in turn caused re-alignment of political forces that expressed regional and local ambitions. In the surge of railroad promotion after 1845, urban objec-
tives were pursued largely by means of local efforts. The two commentators, Howard R. Lamar and Richard C. Wade, both noted divergences between the two papers: Gates emphasized the anti-parochial, cultural, and economic qualities of a rational and efficient metropolitan system; while Scheiber stressed the localist and political qualities of a highly competitive small-town and subregional urbanism. Wade thought these two approaches to urbanism in western development complementary rather than contradictory, while Lamar urged historians to begin to amalgamate existing urban studies with a view to creating a real synthesis.

The remaining eight sessions in the committee-arranged part of the program cast new light on subjects with which American historians have long been concerned. The centennial of the Homestead and Morrill acts was observed at a session on “Landmarks in American Agricultural History—1862,” with Roy M. Robbins in the chair. Lawrence B. Lee’s paper on “The Homestead Act: Vision and Reality” utilized extensive researches on land disposition in Kansas, Utah, and California to re-examine the idea of an “incongruous land system.” Granting the inadequacy of the homestead system in semi-arid country and its inability to attract floods of Europeans as intended, Lee nevertheless pointed out that 287 million acres were homesteaded, that homesteading was most prevalent in semi-arid areas (during rain cycles and periods of prosperity), and that in various ways the law was applied to allow larger homesteads in areas where local conditions demanded them. John Y. Simon’s paper argued that “The Passage of the Morrill Act” was “not primarily an educational reform but a shrewd political deal.” Coming at a time of declining land prices, the act provided little financial aid to the building of colleges; but it was important in challenging the states into action and responsibility. Commentator George L. Anderson felt that Lee’s researches had put the Homestead Act into a truer perspective, and he suggested that this kind of meticulous study must be extended before the act could be fully evaluated. Anderson took issue with Simon’s contention that the Morrill Act was passed as a “political deal,” and contended that Morrill had a more genuine interest in agriculture than Simon had granted.

Chairman T. Harry Williams introduced the session exploring “The Motivation of the Radical Republicans” by remarking that the careers and personalities of a number of leading Radicals would have to be studied before the problem could be further clarified. He hoped that Harold M. I. Hans L. Trefousse’s pap in this direction. Both H terizations of their subject materialistic, Hyman adm but insisted that as much greater role for the nation and closer co-ordination branches of the governme consistently advocated Ra disadvantage to do so, and labor and Negros. Conn the diversity of backgrour specific points made by tl David Donald wondered swinging too far toward w the chairman and the spe torians, limited by docum persons. Further questions hundred pushed adjournm The session on “Contir the Constitution,” chaired l el papers: one on “The D and one on “The Nation While Main conceded the conservative movement, he lies not in what it preservi ing result was the growth strictions on majority rule that these barriers were re constitutions, and that a pr basis for political alignm maintained that there was a continuous conservative arising most immediately fi conservatives tended to be jective was a constitutional government to repay the Ferguson concluded, “the i with economic objectives tl
hoped that Harold M. Hyman's paper on Edwin M. Stanton and Hans L. Trefousse's paper on Ben Wade would develop a trend in this direction. Both Hyman and Trefousse rejected the characterizations of their subjects as opportunistic, violently partisan, or materialistic. Hyman admitted that Stanton's motives were complex, but insisted that as much as anything he unselfishly advocated a greater role for the national government in expanding civil liberties and closer co-ordination between the executive and legislative branches of the government. Trefousse similarly argued that Wade consistently advocated Radical doctrines, even when it was to his disadvantage to do so, and that he sincerely believed in the rights of labor and Negroes. Commentator Richard N. Current emphasized the diversity of background of the Radicals and questioned several specific points made by the speakers. Commenting from the floor, David Donald wondered whether the revision pendulum was not swinging too far toward whitewashing the Radicals. A discussion by the chairman and the speakers followed about the capacity of historians, limited by documents, to probe the inner lives of historical persons. Further questions from the capacity audience of at least two hundred pushed adjournment well beyond the noon hour.

The session on "Continuity of Conflict from the Revolution to the Constitution," chaired by Elisha P. Douglass, featured two parallel papers: one on "The Democratic Tradition" by Jackson T. Main, and one on "The Nationalist Tradition" by E. James Ferguson. While Main conceded that the American Revolution was in part a conservative movement, he insisted that "the significance of the era lies not in what it preserved, but in what it created. One outstanding result was the growth of democracy." After describing the restrictions on majority rule during the colonial period, Main argued that these barriers were removed or modified under the first state constitutions, and that a preference for democracy was an important basis for political alignment during the period. Similarly Ferguson maintained that there was at the other end of the political spectrum a continuous conservative and nationalist tradition during the period, arising most immediately from economic considerations. Though the conservatives tended to fear unchecked democracy, their major objective was a constitutional revision which would enable the central government to repay the national debt. "Under Robes Moris," Ferguson concluded, "the nationalists merged constitutional reform with economic objectives that anticipated the Hamiltonian formula
in detail: debt payment, satisfaction of the creditor interest, enlargement of commercial capital, a national bank, and political centralization founded upon an appeal to economic self-interest." Both commentators, Stephen G. Kurtz and Clarence L. Ver Steeg, felt that the papers had exaggerated the undemocratic aspects of colonial America, the democratic impulses in the early republic, and the antidemocratic tendencies of the nationalists. Kurtz suggested that the leaders of the early republic were not democratic but whiggish, a very different thing. Ver Steeg agreed with much of Ferguson's description of the nationalists, but argued that they feared disunion more than democracy.

The session on "Judicial Decision-Making" was chaired by Don E. Fehrenbacher. In a paper on "Judicial Unanimity and the Marshall Court," Donald M. Roper argued that the remarkable unity of the Marshall Court resulted more from the Chief Justice's skill as a compromiser and his willingness to submerge his own views in order to achieve unanimity than from his personal domination of the Court. Stanley I. Kutler followed with a paper on "Chief Justice Taft and the Delusion of Judicial Exactness." Drawing his illustrations primarily from labor cases, Kutler maintained that Taft's adherence to the analytical school of jurisprudence, with its vision of a received and precise law, robbed his opinions of any enduring value. Commentator William R. Leslie suggested that both papers paid too little attention to historical setting. The manner of delivering opinions in Marshall's time, for instance, owed much to the English legal tradition, and Taft's predilection for analytical jurisprudence was typical of his entire generation, including Oliver Wendell Holmes. The second commentator, Leonard Levy, declared that both papers lacked fresh insights and presented oversimplified views of complex subjects.

Ray Ginger's paper on economic overcapacity in the late nineteenth century attracted a capacity audience to the session on "The Age of Overproduction." With ample statistical evidence, generally from the behavior of prices, Ginger demonstrated that overcapacity existed in agriculture, in railroads, and in manufacturing among products as diverse as watches, sewing machines, iron and steel, petroleum, and cotton textiles. In keeping with the title of his paper, "Overproduction: A Key to American History, 1877-1898," he argued that this overproduction was responsible for the cutthroat competition of the era, the formation of trusts, the growth of advertising, the aggravation of "mater tent, the dalliance with the the assumption by private as to "capture" foreign ma Chandler, acknowledged th that it was a transient featu it disappeared as big busine keting organizations and as and resources developed. W claimed that the fact of ove had produced no new eviden and that his argument was came from the floor. In clo Kirkland took issue with so to explain historians' failure Chairman Charles M. Wi session on "Slavery Extents: First Crisis"—close to one h controversy that was still in after the meeting had adjourned, and the Missouri Crisis behind him half a lifetime 0 when he led the Senate restr failed to convince comment wholly disinterested in his op the fact that King had freed election to the Senate, and the political alignment. In the se that Martin Van Buren subo partisan interests. In the Mi porter of Jackson, Brown mair Ritchie's Richmond Junto, w southern views, as a means of of North and South that had well. Commentator Joseph H. this explanation was oversimp Van Buren's opposition to b United States Bank were born Louis Filler presided over : Intellectual in Twentieth-Ce
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content, the dalliance with the rule of reason in judicial decisions, and
the assumption by private business of the conduct of diplomacy so
as to “capture” foreign markets. The first commentator, Alfred D.
Chandler, acknowledged the existence of overcapacity, but argued
that it was a transient feature of wholesome and normal expansion;
it disappeared as big business enterprises developed improved mar-
keting organizations and as the urban market with its novel needs
and resources developed. William Miller, the second commentator,
claimed that the fact of overcapacity was commonplace, that Ginger
had produced no new evidence and dispensed with precise definition,
and that his argument was “frail.” A short but spirited discussion
came from the floor. In closing the meeting Chairman Edward C.
Kirkland took issue with some “speculations” Ginger had offered
to explain historians’ failure to pay proper attention to overcapacity.

Chairman Charles M. Wiltse reports that those who attended the
session on “Slavery Extension and Northern Statesmanship: The
First Crisis”—close to one hundred in all—were treated to a lively
controversy that was still in progress around the speakers’ table long
after the meeting had adjourned. In a paper on “Rufus King, Slav-
ery, and the Missouri Crisis,” Robert Ernst argued that King had
behind him half a lifetime of opposition to the extension of slavery
when he led the Senate restrictionists in the Missouri debate. Ernst
failed to convince commentator Shaw Livermore that King was
wholly disinterested in his opposition to slavery; Livermore stressed
the fact that King had freed his own slaves only on the eve of his
election to the Senate, and that he had much to gain from a sectional
political alignment. In the second paper Richard H. Brown argued
that Martin Van Buren subordinated the slavery issue to his own
partisan interests. In the Missouri controversy and later as a sup-
porter of Jackson, Brown maintained, Van Buren, abetted by Thomas
Ritchie’s Richmond Junto, was going more than halfway to meet
southern views, as a means of reviving the old Jeffersonian alliance
of North and South that had earlier served the Republican party so
well. Commentator Joseph H. Harrison, Jr., led those who felt that
this explanation was oversimplified, noting by way of example that
Van Buren’s opposition to both internal improvements and the
United States Bank were born in New York rather than the South.

Louis Filler presided over the heavily attended session on “The
Intellectual in Twentieth-Century Politics.” Charles B. Forcey,
dealing with “The Age of Theodore Roosevelt and Wilson,” argued that intellectuals have exaggerated the roles of Presidents in modern reform movements and the impact that they themselves have had on society because of their close association with such leaders. Theodore Roosevelt and Wilson were politicians, and used intellectuals as camouflage for their own political trimming. Forcey contended that intellectuals would have been wiser to maintain their independence, thus preserving their own integrity and keeping their leaders up to the mark of duty and responsibility. In dealing with “The New Deal Era,” on the other hand, Richard S. Kirkendall maintained that Franklin Roosevelt sought advice from intellectuals as he sought advice everywhere. Though the professors in the administration achieved little power, they did illustrate the uses of the “service intellectual” in public operations, and reflected the “strong utilitarian emphasis” which had developed in American higher education and which Roosevelt encouraged. Commentator Frank Freidel argued that the practical political orientation of the Presidents was justified by the work that wanted doing. The second commentator, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. (whose remarks were read in his absence by Walter Johnson), defended those intellectuals, a small percentage of all intellectuals, who contributed to practical politics, bringing their training to bear upon public service and creating liaisons between the politician and the intellectual community.

The session on “History and the Schools” was arranged in association with the National Council for the Social Studies and chaired by Eugene W. Iffland of the Wisconsin Council. David D. Van Tassel’s paper on “Social Science, Education, and the ‘New Age of Collectivism’” sought to evaluate the work, 1929-1934, of the American Historical Association’s Commission on the Social Studies in the Schools. Some of the Commission’s recommendations reflected continuing orthodoxies among professional historians: objective testing is inadequate in the social studies, and teachers should have better preparation in subject matter, with less emphasis on methods. But in another respect the Commission aroused violent reactions by predicting approvingly that a “new age of collectivism” was emerging, and by urging that the schools must preserve the ideals of Democracy in this new age. Van Tassel thought that the Commission’s work had little effect on social studies teaching, while it seemed to absolve historians of their obligations to the schools; and he concluded that “perhaps the time has come for another major reassessment.” Two commentations, George S. Counts: Commission’s work was; They thought that the C to the world situation an agreed that the time for schools had arrived. The served that the Commission of Charles A. Beard on assessment of history in need was to communicate heart of historical feeling.

Paul W. Gates’s preside was presented at the annu printed in the June issue of.

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ment.” Two commentators who had been members of the Commission, George S. Counts and Erling M. Hunt, contended that the Commission’s work was more useful than Van Tassel had granted. They thought that the Commission should have paid more attention to the world situation and to the non-Western world, and Counts agreed that the time for a reassessment of the social studies in the schools had arrived. The third commentator, John Higham, ob- served that the Commission’s report reflected the enormous influence of Charles A. Beard on historians. Higham, too, called for a new assessment of history in the schools, but insisted that the greatest need was to communicate the value of history, the philosophical heart of historical feeling.

Paul W. Gates’s presidential address, “Tenants of the Log Cabin,” was presented at the annual dinner of the Association, and has been in the June issue of the Review.

In addition to the committee-arranged sessions, five sessions were offered by groups meeting with the Association. The Lexington Group in Railroad History scheduled a session on “Railroad History: New Light and a New Look,” under the chairmanship of Howard F. Bennett. Ben H. Procter’s paper on “A Step toward Progressivism: John H. Reagan’s Fight for Railroad Regulation, 1875-1887,” traced the ten-year congressional campaign waged by the ex-Confederate Texan to secure federal legislation that would curb evil railroad practices. Commentator Gerald D. Nash raised questions about Reagan’s importance in this campaign, about his motives, and about the relative roles of such leaders and interest groups. The second paper, “Railroad History in the Past Twenty Years: An Appraisal,” by Robert L. Peterson, examined the large number of signif- icant scholarly books on railroad history that have appeared in the past decade. Commentator Richard C. Overton called upon his- torians to pay special attention to the recent and current scene, where fundamental changes in the transportation picture are occurring at almost breath-taking speed.

Arthur P. Dudden’s paper, “Swallowing Politicians Alive,” was the central feature of a session on “Native Political Humor” ar- ranged by the American Studies Association. After calling the long roll of American political humorists, from Seba Smith to Will Rog- ers, Dudden asked why “the sustained writing of political humor in the United States is a suspended if not vanished art.” “Fear and witch-hunting,” he suggested, may have “inspired a conformism
detrimental to humor.” Likewise destructive of the tradition, he thought, were “the decline of local individuality in newspapers,” “the amalgamation of American speech patterns,” and the consequent “waning of dialect comedy.” Commentator Walter Blair offered a different explanation. The older humor, he argued, “was based upon the contrast between the way high-falutin educated people missed the truth and the way ignorant people found it by using their horse sense.” Today, however, the complexity of the problems facing the country has “led large segments of our population to think far less highly of the insights, the wisdom, even the vernacular phrasings of rural folk.” The second commentator, Arthur Link, thought that the tradition was actually dying by Mr. Dooley’s day, and that Will Rogers was an anachronism. The chairman of the session, Arthur Bestor, questioned whether political humor was actually as moribund as Dudden thought, and suggested that there had merely been a shift to new forms of humor, especially caricature and cartoon.

Rembert W. Patrick chaired, for the Southern Historical Association, a session on “Controversy and Conflict” that attracted some one hundred auditors. Gerald M. Capers’ paper on “The Historian and Morality: Some Recent Interpretations of the Sectional Conflict” appraised the important works on the coming of the Civil War and urged a more critical evaluation of the abolitionists. Malcolm C. McMillan gave a detailed account of “William L. Yancey and History: The Coming of the War,” and scolded historians for neglecting this fire-eating author of the Alabama Platform. Commentator James W. Silver compared conditions in the South of 1860 with those of today, and chided the participants for presenting papers written in haste.

Studies on the Left, the radical journal of research and social theory, provided unusual sponsorship for a vigorous discussion of “Sources of Twentieth-Century American Foreign Policy.” Warren I. Susman presided, and John W. Rollins read the single paper, on “The Anti-Imperialists and Twentieth-Century American Foreign Policy.” In Rollins’ view, the anti-imperialists were laissez-faire liberals, who had “molded the ideology of industrial capitalism in the Gilded Age,” and who realized that expansion was necessary if the system were to survive. However, they rejected colonialism, realizing that “increased production for an ever-widening mar-

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ket was . . . the only solution in the ideology of laissez-faire liberalism that would minimize government activity and promote the progressive democratization of society." Rollins maintained that the liberal expansionism of the anti-imperialists was ascendant from McKinley until the depression of the 1930's revealed its bankruptcy, following which it became a disastrous legacy to more recent makers of foreign policy. Both commentators, Harold Brown and Thomas J. McCormick, charged Rollins with defining "anti-imperialism" vaguely and unhistorically, and both questioned his claims about the "legacy" of anti-imperialism to later foreign policy. Brown further warned against confusing rhetoric with reality, and wanted to see what relevance the Lenin-Hobson concepts of imperialism might have to American developments. McCormick congratulated Rollins on the stimulating quality of his suggestions, but felt that they were artificial and unsubstantiated. Several members of the audience participated in the ensuing discussion between Rollins and his critics, in an effort to clarify the specific nature of anti-imperialism in America.

An overflow audience of some eighty people was attracted to the session on "Biography as an Approach to State and Local History," arranged by the American Association for State and Local History, and chaired by James L. Bugg, Jr. Speaking on biography "Of State and Local Figures," Walker D. Wyman described the advantages of the biographical approach to historical study and the value of "grass-roots history" for testing generalizations about national affairs. In the companion paper, Homer E. Socolofsky maintained that biographies "Of National Figures" might provide only glimpses of state and local history, but that state and local historical sources were indispensable in the preparation of such biographies. Commentator John A. Garraty noted the biographer's obligation to portray the family and local background of his subject, but warned that local influence could be overdrawn and that it must always be related to the larger setting.

Two groups scheduled meal sessions with single speakers. Donald E. Worcester presided at the dinner of Phi Alpha Theta, where Edward Younger spoke on "The American Specialist in India." After describing his own experiences in this capacity, Younger outlined the qualities the American specialist should possess: thorough knowledge of American civilization, a willingness to learn all he can about
the host country's civilization, an appreciation for the values of other societies than his own, and the ability to remain affable even under surprising and trying circumstances.

At the luncheon of the Agricultural History Society, with James C. Olson in the chair, a large gathering heard Thomas H. LeDuc discuss "Public Policy, Private Investment, and Land Use in American Agriculture, 1825-1875." LeDuc argued that public land policies, by seeking to transfer the public domain to private ownership as rapidly as possible, operated to retard the development of the interior. Land was placed in private hands more rapidly than it could be utilized, much of it remaining idle in the hands of speculators; capital was diverted to speculative land acquisition; and this locking up of both land and capital seriously retarded a rational application of labor and capital to agricultural development of the magnificent resources of the interior.

The final segment of the program, the alternate sessions arranged by individual members or groups of members, consisted of seven sessions covering various areas of specialized interest.

Morton Borden's paper on "The Antifederalist Mind in American History" was the central feature of a lively alternate session chaired by Robert A. Rutland. Borden argued that faulty interpretations have overlooked the oscillation of the Antifederalists between two mutually incompatible extremes and the continuity of their kind of mentality in American history. On the one hand, he said, they were never quite sure that Americans were unlike the older Europeans whose vices condemned them to wars and anarchy, but at the same time they opposed the Constitution because it would crush liberty before their more optimistic hopes for America could be fairly tested. Borden found the Antifederalists and the radical right of the 1960's akin in their skepticism about secular paradies. Commentator Noble E. Cunningham, Jr., contended that the Antifederalists were consistent opponents of a strong federal structure, and that Borden had "confused the main issue by drawing a picture of extremists wavering between two positions." Furthermore, Cunningham thought that Borden's parallelism between John Randolph and Russell Kirk was "the leap of all time." Commentator Forrest McDonald observed that "while there never was Antifederalism such as Mr. Borden has described it," the paper was nevertheless an interesting stimulus to further study of American political parties. One point at issue was the degree of political interest in the 1780's, with Borden and Chairman Rutland spread, while Cunningham potential voters were apathetic to correct misunderstandances. Searches showed that An in local year national issue they did vote in subdivisions, that state-by-state situations that are finally bear.

At an alternate session over by Jack P. Greene, "The Rise of Progressivism: the dominant intellectual progressive history as hav institutions, and his ideas approach steering between stagnation; an implicit an derivative from economic relativism which denied the sentiment which subjugated the moral and social utility; conspiratorial process in play of "real" historical fiction which stressed the mercantilism and capitalism. Crowe's characterization of exaggerating general environment interpretations fail to explain differences in mental, but also ignore such situations, extent of research, a Elmo R. Richardson treaty of Conservation." La significance of Federalism in four relationships: between federal administrations and services, between the central services, and between federal efforts taken examples of the varietion that characterized th
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At an alternate session on "American Historiography," presided over by Jack P. Greene, Charles R. Crowe presented a paper on "The Rise of Progressive History." Emphasizing the influence of the dominant intellectual climate on historians, Crowe characterized progressive history as having: a vivid sense of the place of man, his institutions, and his ideas in the stream of evolution; a pragmatic approach steering between "barren" empiricism and "grandiose" abstractions; an implicit anti-intellectualism which regarded ideas as derivative from economic and geographical forces; an epistemological relativism which denied the possibility of historical objectivity; a presentism which subjugated the past to the present; an emphasis on the moral and social utility of history; a tendency to see politics as a conspiratorial process in which dominant abstractions masked the play of "real" historical forces; and an interpretation of American history which stressed the conflict of agrarian interests with commercialism and capitalism. Commentator John Braeman commended Crowe's characterization of progressive history, but warned against exaggerating general environmental influences on historians. Environmental interpretations of historiography, he suggested, not only fail to explain differences between historians from the same environment, but also ignore such important factors as soundness of assumptions, extent of research, and quality of craftsmanship.

Elmo R. Richardson presided at an alternate session on the "History of Conservation." Lawrence Rakestraw delineated "The Significance of Federalism in Conservation History" with regard to four relationships: between national and state governments, between federal administrations and their "colonial empire" of resource reserves, between the central administrative bureaus and their field services, and between federal and state courts. In each case, he offered examples of the varieties of conflict, compromise, and co-operation that characterized the conservation movement. Gordon B.
Dodds reviewed "The Historiography of Conservation," identifying several themes that are still comparatively undocumented by scholars. Both speakers mentioned many early figures in the movement, especially colleagues and critics of Pinchot, whose roles need evaluation. Commentator J. Leonard Bates urged that conservationists and their opponents be studied with reference to the larger political and economic contexts in which they were involved, and referred to several additional figures, the forester Benton MacKaye and Secretaries of the Interior Walter Fisher and Franklin K. Lane, who need to be studied. From members of the small but room-filling audience came further suggestions about things that demand the attention of conservation historians: soil conservation, conservation in the eastern states, and the voluminous documents available in state archives.

A double alternate session was devoted to "The United States and Latin America." At the morning meeting, Warren K. Dean analyzed the economic troubles of "Cuba in an American Depression, 1926-1934," as arising from that country's one-crop economy and its dependence upon an industrial metropolis, the United States, for disposal of its sugar. In the second paper, Charles L. Stansifer examined the checkered career of "E. George Squier: Versatile yanqui in Central America," with emphasis on Squier's versatility. With due respect to Squier's contributions in the field of diplomacy, Stansifer felt that he should be best remembered for his voluminous writings on Central America. Calvin J. Billman, who acted as both chairman and commentator, complimented the speakers on the quality of their papers, and refereed an animated general discussion. Marvin Goldwurt opened the afternoon meeting with a paper on "The German-Trained Argentine Army and United States-Argentine Relations during World War II." German influence in the Argentine army opened the way, after 1930, for Nazi ideas of Argentine domination of South America and, during World War II, for a policy of Argentine neutrality, imposed by the dominant military elements and in conflict with the United States policy of hemisphere defense. Chairman and commentator Alfred Barnaby Thomas urged greater attention to the internal political struggle, wherein the military sought to defend their privileged position against liberal and pro-Allied groups. The second paper, by Donald W. Giffin, examined "American Responses to German Economic Penetration in Brazil, 1934-1939." Describing the failure of the United States to block or alter German American trade advantages in Brazil, while commenting on this paper points: the relations espionage and smuggling States in securing Braman airliners engaged in.

A similar double al States and Asia." The G. Raymond Nunn's tunities." After descrip Asian studies, Nunn's research was American bodies of source materi University, the Washir sand reels of microfilm the many obstacles to Aministrators, the lack of the public schools, owning ethnocentricity sc mentator, Eugene Boar developments in Asian's Chairman Ronald And the University of I for high school teachers meeting, which focused tant missionaries and Ar Cutaen's paper dealt the view that missionar matic and economic pol between American missi of Wangxia, the suppe t, the missionaries' defense of Confucianism Christianity, and their enator Earl Swisher aries as Sinologists and t The second paper, by Pa
block or alter German-Brazilian trade agreements that affected American trade adversely, Giffin argued that the situation brought Germany both economic advantages in Europe and political advantages in Brazil, while having adverse economic effects on Brazil. In commenting on this paper, Thomas suggested more attention to two points: the relation between German commercial activities and espionage and smuggling operations; and the interest of the United States in securing Brazilian airfields that had been used by German airliners engaged in German-Brazilian trade.

A similar double alternate session was devoted to “The United States and Asia.” The central feature of the morning meeting was G. Raymond Nunn’s discussion of “Research Needs and Opportunities.” After describing the factors that have heretofore retarded Asian studies, Nunn suggested that the most practical area for research was American contacts with Asia, for which there are excellent bodies of source material: the Missionary Research Library, Tokyo University, the Washington Document Center, and five to six thousand reels of microfilm. Commentator Lawrence Battistini discussed the many obstacles to Asian studies: the disinterest of university administrators, the lack of foundation support, and the disinterest of the public schools, owing to teachers’ lack of knowledge and a lingering ethnocentricity in school boards and textbooks. The second commentator, Eugene Boardman, described many promising recent developments in Asian studies at the college and university level. Chairman Ronald Anderson concluded the proceedings by describing the University of Hawaii’s one-year program in Asian studies for high school teachers. Patrick Hazard presided at the afternoon meeting, which focused on the relations between American Protestant missionaries and American foreign policy in China. James McCutcheon’s paper dealt with the nineteenth century, arguing against the view that missionaries were advance agents for American diplomatic and economic policies. McCutcheon cited the growing friction between American missionaries and diplomats following the Treaty of Wanghia, the support some missionaries gave the Taiping Rebellion, the missionaries’ criticism of immigration exclusionists, their defense of Confucianism as a kind of halfway house on the road to Christianity, and their monopoly of Sinology in America. Commentator Earl Swisher emphasized the importance of the missionaries as Sinologists and their concern for Chinese welfare generally. The second paper, by Paul Varg, dealt with the missionary influence...
on American China policy in the twentieth century. While the missionaries must share in whatever errors have derived from a moralistic foreign policy, Varg maintained that "the errors in our China policy, if they were errors, were not the errors of the idealists, who actually had very little voice, but they were the errors of the realists." Ronald Anderson, as commentator, observed that both papers indicated the dangers of ethnocentrism in diplomacy as well as in proselytizing. He noted with approval that even missionary schools are now turning out tolerant, sophisticated students, well trained in the culture and language of the areas where they will work.

The program in 1962, as always, would have been impossible without the hard work and co-operation of many people. Besides the participants and the members of the program committee—Selig Adler, John R. Alden, John M. Blum, John H. Kemble, William H. Masterson, David A. Shannon, and James M. Smith—special mention might be made of the session chairmen, who contributed more than may be readily apparent to the vitality of the sessions and who, without a single delinquency, provided promptly the synopses of sessions on which this report is based.

The growing size of our Association and the increasing variety of the specialized interests it embraces may suggest modifications in the nature of our annual programs. Certainly the increased number of sessions provided in 1962 did not prove excessive. It is harder to evaluate our experimental handling of joint and alternate sessions. The alternate sessions were certainly attended to the capacity of the smaller rooms for which they were scheduled, and they seem to have served a useful purpose for those who participated in them; but it is harder to judge whether they fill a widespread need, and they did not this year reach the level of informality that the program committee thought might be fruitful. Chairman Samuel P. Hays and his 1963 program committee plan to continue these experiments in modified form at the Omaha meeting. The thought and interest of the entire membership, as reflected in general comments and in concrete program proposals, will be needed if our programs are adequately to reflect and further stimulate the vitality of scholarship in American history.