

This volume grew out of a Wayne State University dissertation in history, and it reflects the graduate student's determination to use as much as possible of the research data so painstakingly gathered. I cannot envisage its becoming a best seller. However, thoughtful and persistent readers will be amply rewarded with new insights into the development of Mormonism and characteristics of frontier life in the American West. Illustrations and an index will be useful to all readers, and students will find the notes thorough and the bibliographical essay useful.

The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852-1856, by William E. Gienapp. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. xi, 564 pp. Notes, bibliography, appendix, tables, index. \$39.95 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY GEORGE MCJIMSEY, IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

William Gienapp's book is a *tour de force* of political history. Based on prodigious research and combining the methods and insights of the best contemporary work, it will be the standard against which future scholarship in the field will be judged. Thus, it is important to understand its argument in as much detail as a brief review will permit.

Gienapp says the Republican party grew out of the interactions of mass political beliefs and party maneuvers. Americans' key political value was republicanism, which meant equality under law, the rule of law, individual rights, universal suffrage, and a minimum of social deference. These beliefs were shaped by political parties, which appealed to the voters' values in ways that won their loyalty and achieved high turnouts at the polls. The Republican party arose because many northern voters became convinced that the southern states had mounted a Slave Power Conspiracy against republicanism and because antislavery politicians were able to construct a party to make this belief politically effective.

Gienapp's major contribution is to show that the political realignment that produced the Republican party occurred in fits and starts and at certain critical moments could have been arrested. He begins by pointing out that the first steps toward realignment had nothing to do with slavery, because most Americans believed the Compromise of 1850 had settled the slavery question. Instead, they divided over ethnocultural issues, focusing at first on temperance and anti-Catholicism and ultimately on fears of immigrant voting power. Thus the realignment that eventually produced an antislavery party was originally impelled by nativism.

Slavery was not far behind, however. Nativism succeeded as a mass movement that cut across party lines and mobilized new and previously apathetic voters; the Kansas-Nebraska Act did the same for slavery. Both movements pointed toward a political realignment but left open the question of which would dominate the outcome. Arguing, correctly I believe, that this question was to be answered in state politics, Gienapp proceeds to discuss each northern state in a close detail that, while appropriate and admirable, defies careful summary. His theme seems to be that western states with a strong Yankee electorate moved most rapidly into the Republican camp. Still, it was the party leaders who made the crucial decisions about party formation, and because the Republicans had superior leadership, slavery became the dominant issue.

Republicans found some states easier to lead than others. But whenever nativism and antislavery were raised to the same level in the voters' minds, antislavery triumphed. Here we see the importance of events. Bleeding Kansas and the Sumner-Brooks affair provided such dramatic evidence of an aggressive slave power that gradually the Know-Nothings were forced to agree that nativism should take a back seat to antislavery. Still, as Gienapp wisely observes, Republicans did not eschew nativism, they only subordinated it. Republican organizers realized they had to find a place for the Know-Nothings in their organization and ideology. This realization led to the nomination of John C. Fremont, a political nonentity who could appeal to all factions and who could attract new and apathetic voters with an image of new and idealistic purposes. It also explains why the Republicans supplemented their antislavery with anti-Catholicism, suggesting that, like slavery, popery was an alien and dangerous threat to republican values. The Republicans' failure to capture fully the nativist vote also accounted for Fremont's defeat. Still, the Republicans' strong showing in 1856 deflated the Know-Nothings' political ambitions and thus contributed importantly to Lincoln's election in 1860.

Gienapp's analysis of party formation pays necessary attention to factional groups (Old Whigs, Know-Nothings, anti-Nebraska Democrats, Free Soilers, new voters, apathetic voters). Yet he concludes that nothing so well defined the Republican party as its opposition to the slave power. Here, it seems to me, he makes his only confusing argument. Having identified ideology as the party's core trait, he proceeds to downgrade the importance of free labor by pointing out that Democrats also supported this value; thus, he says, a free labor ideology could not have distinguished one party from the other. In this way he enlarges the significance he has already attributed to

"Bleeding Kansas" and especially the Sumner-Brooks affair. Realizing that, like free labor, republicanism was a pervasive ideology, Gienapp points out that the slave power image strongly attracted Jacksonian Democrats. But his voting analysis shows that Republicans drew very little support from former Democrats. If Gienapp is going to attribute different partisan roles to free labor and republicanism, he should explain why the northern Democratic version of republicanism was less vulnerable to the slave power image.

Scholars will see much that is familiar in William Gienapp's account of the most critical realignment in American political history, but they will not have seen it so thoroughly documented or so comprehensively synthesized.

Cities on the Cedar: A Portrait of Cedar Falls, Waterloo, and Black Hawk County, by Glenda Riley. Parkersburg: Mid-Prairie Books, 1988 (address orders to Mid-Prairie Books, P. O. Box C, Parkersburg, Iowa 50665). xli, 91 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. \$8.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY LOREN N. HORTON, STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

The writing of local history has been repeated often in Iowa and the United States. The past two decades or more have seen a resurgence in the quantity of local history publications. These publications range in type from reprints of nineteenth-century county histories (often with new every-name indexes) to new county histories complete with sketches of local families and businesses written by the subjects or their representatives. The centennials of towns in Iowa, a great number of which occurred during the period 1968-1971, also yielded town histories, many on newsprint in tabloid sizes.

The publishing techniques of these myriad productions range widely, including private and local presses, publishers devoted solely to producing community histories, and commercial publishing houses. Some are written by diligent individuals, some are produced by editors working with submitted materials, and some are put together by committees. The quality of research and writing varies tremendously, but these books do present immense numbers of photographs not previously available to the public. Some of them also have indexes.

All local histories have value. Even if the content is mostly filiopietistic antiquarianism, such books encourage interest in a community's past. Aiding the appreciation and understanding of a collective local heritage is an admirable result. And these books continue a trend that has been strong throughout this country since the centen-

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