

band to what she considered his family's treachery. "They are an 'abomination' in my eyes, and I want to get out of sight and hearing of them," she informed William (47). William, whose letters are considerably shorter and less engagingly detailed than his wife's, swore off his family. "I know they think me an 'unhallowed abolitionist,' and that I have turned you against them," Mary reported before adding defiantly, "I acknowledge the *abolition* part!" (120). With his family hostile to her political leanings and blaming her for the break with their son, Mary returned to Iowa in April 1863 only to find that the Copperhead movement had taken hold there as well. Much of the rest of the book comprises her letters describing the political situation in Iowa.

The descriptions of Copperhead activities are the great contribution of this book. Indeed, it is the most comprehensive published primary account that I can think of on the subject of the Peace Democrats. For too long, historians have overlooked the deep divisions among northerners over the Civil War and the immense strains it placed on families and communities. These issues are at the heart of *Love Amid the Turmoil*. Military matters are present as well for those who are more interested in first-person accounts of military campaigns. But the real value of this work lies in its story of the political ruptures in the North and what happened by the hearth rather than by the campfire.

Sacred Debts: State Civil War Claims and American Federalism, 1861-1880, by Kyle S. Sinisi. New York: Fordham University Press, 2003. xvi, 208 pp. Appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$50.00 cloth.

Reviewer Allan G. Bogue is Frederick Jackson Turner Professor of History Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His books include *Money at Interest: The Farm Mortgage on the Middle Border* (1955) and *The Earnest Men: Republicans in the Civil War Senate* (1981).

In *Sacred Debts*, Kyle Sinisi describes "state attempts to recoup the costs of fighting the Civil War," a neglected story, but one providing "a window into the even lesser known administrative operations of U.S. federalism from 1861 to 1880" (xi). The collection of state claims for military expenses was the most sustained and costly state-federal interaction during the postbellum period. Its study provides an excellent opportunity to describe federalism at work and the factors involved in successful state action.

In the confused initial war effort—and sometimes later—the northern states mobilized troops in the expectation of reimbursement from Washington. Sometimes the states obtained advances against outlay, but often their executives looked forward to future payment. In July

1861 Congress passed a loosely worded act promising repayment of some expenses related to troops "employed in aiding to suppress the present rebellion" (10). Intent on clarification, Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase developed rules for evaluating claims in his office. Claims had to include detailed documentation, and only federally mustered state troops were eligible unless the president or the secretary of war had requested state militia. Unfortunately, the border states often required troops apart from federal needs. Despite criticism, the Chase rules survived; advocates of claims deficient under the Chase criteria had to seek other routes, particularly acts of Congress.

At the state level, the legislatures left the assembly and validation of claims to state executive officers or sometimes authorized the use of a commission or a state agent. Responsibility for overseeing progress in Washington might be assumed by members of the congressional delegation, executive officers (often the senior militia officer), or an agent. Because the federal authorities favored claims for which the states had reimbursed claimants, some states issued scrip against validated claims, looking to the federal payout.

Initial fiscal condition in a state, competing local issues, partisan divisions at the state and congressional levels, public sentiment for retrenchment, suspicion of lobbyists, and the persistence of claimants all affected state success in obtaining reimbursement. By way of illustration, Sinisi details the experiences of Missouri, Kentucky, and Kansas. Initially employing an agent successfully, Missouri floundered in using various strategies, its efforts compromised by the issue of forged scrip. Although as successful as others, Kentuckians excoriated "radical malice" in Washington (112). In Kansas, a rudimentary state apparatus, Indian raids, and reluctance to abandon inappropriate claims all hampered progress. Embarrassingly, scrip was issued greatly in excess of the sums eventually approved.

Despite frustrations in the settlement of Washington's "most sacred obligations," the northern states had by the 1890s satisfied most of their demands (76), and Congress became more compliant in the twentieth century. Although some ineffectiveness, fraud, and speculation in scrip tainted the restitution process at the state level, Sinisi emphasizes the complexity of forces in play. The federal response was more praiseworthy: for the most part overworked clerks and officers performed well.

Sinisi's research is impressive, and his footnotes and bibliography provide an excellent entry into the fragmentary historical research on state-federal relations. His book well illustrates how good state level history can contribute to our knowledge of the American governing

system as a whole. Although, as he suggests, the factors at work in his three adjacent border states were probably present elsewhere as well, his selection is hardly a representative sample. Readers of this journal, for example, will undoubtedly wonder how the Iowa experience compares. Nevertheless, Sinisi has produced a valuable contribution to the history of American government and of the Civil War.

In the Work of Their Hands Is Their Prayer: Cultural Narrative and Redemption on the American Frontiers, 1830–1930, by Joel Daehnke. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003. xi, 299 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$59.95 cloth, \$26.95 paper.

Reviewer Lewis Saum is professor emeritus of American intellectual history at the University of Washington. His publications include *The Popular Mood of Pre-Civil War America* (1980) and *The Popular Mood of America, 1860–1890* (1990).

Joel Daehnke has written an interesting and venturesome book. In large part an exercise in architectonics, it examines the cultural and literary depictions of five disparate elements or episodes, bringing them together, in varying ways, under one theme, that from *Ecclesiasticus*: "In the work of their hands is their prayer."

After an introductory chapter, extensive treatment goes to Caroline Kirkland's *A New Home, Who'll Follow?* Frustration if not futility marks this 1830s and 1840s depiction of pioneer efforts in the woodlands of Michigan. The scene then shifts forward and westward to the creation and development of Yellowstone National Park. That change of scene was not entirely joyous, as the splendor and awesomeness had intimations of the infernal as well as the sacred. Fully as exciting, but for different reasons, the Comstock Lode, with its fortunes and misfortunes, then has the reader's attention. Mark Twain's *Roughing It* provides, from the perspective of a "No Account," a full depiction of "Bonanzas and Borascas."

"The work of their hands" in these locales had left something to be desired, perhaps as always. Some relief if not redemption could be found in two thematic arenas, one unlikely, the other not. The less likely one gets more than fifty pages of treatment in a chapter on fishing, and fishing of the best kind: dry fly fishing. A wealth of intricacies confronts the reader in this chapter, but the upshot is clear. In the luxury of leisure the American man betook himself to the "soliloquizing pools of his withdrawal from a potent national narrative obsessed with making a killing in the world of concrete and mortar" (212). Uneasiness remained, but some relief comes in the last full chapter, subtitled "Redemption and Domestic Economy in Willa Cather's *Death*

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