

1-1-1932

Marion, American Neutrality in 1793; by A.S. White

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr>

Recommended Citation

. "Marion, American Neutrality in 1793; by A.S. White." *New Mexico Historical Review* 7, 1 (1932).
<https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr/vol7/iss1/6>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in *New Mexico Historical Review* by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu, lsloane@salud.unm.edu, sarahrk@unm.edu.

REVIEWS

Givers of Life. By Emma Franklin Estabrook. (University of New Mexico Press, 1931. \$1.25.)

The dividing line between history and archaeology is vague at best. In the American Southwest it hardly exists. There is an overlapping and an interdependence which make the two studies merge into one. The archaeological background is necessary for the understanding of history. On the other hand, the archaeologist finds much of his material in the documents of the early chroniclers.

The Indian left no written records. The world's first concepts of the Red Man came from the inadequate and comparatively few reports of explorers; later from the more voluminous reports of traders and soldiers, and from church manuscripts. The Spanish explorer came with the preconceived notion that the American Indians were fabulously wealthy. His disillusionment was severe and biased him. Either he was forced to exaggerate to save his own face, or he was gullible in the extremes of a hope that was becoming desperate. Those who came later saw in the Indian a heathen to be converted, a simple savage to be exploited, or a menace to frontiers to be subdued. In every case, there was much to make prejudice and inaccuracy, and little incentive to true, objective, or sympathetic study.

From such sources, and from the romancers, the world got its first pictures of the Indian. As often happens, the first impression was strong. In view of the fact that there has been little to modify it in the popular mind, the generally accepted "Red Man" is still primarily a savage, a warrior, a raider, a scalper, and quite generally a pretty bad fellow.

Those who studied a little further have often inclined to the other extreme, and have idealized the Indian as primarily a poet, a philosopher, a dreamer and the possessor of religious ideals far superior to those of the races which have taken his place over much of the American continents.

For the past two decades scientists have studied the Indian rather intensively. They have gone about the work with an objective, disinterested viewpoint, attempting not to confirm preconceived notions, but to gather data and, in

the fullness of their labors, to draw conclusions. They have amassed much material, which has been sorted over, and re-sorted. They have discovered just what sort of race the Indian is, his mental make-up, his viewpoint, his material achievements. Unfortunately, until quite recently, most of this knowledge they have kept hidden away in learned books where only the scholar and research worker had access to it.

But in the past few years interpretative books attempting to make this new knowledge and viewpoint available to the less learned, have begun to appear. A notable addition to these is *Givers of Life*.

Mrs. Estabrook has prepared herself for her task through years of study, both in libraries and museums, and in the field among Indians and what remains of their ancestors. She has associated with leaders in the field of archaeology; she has attended summer school camps. Thus she has gained both the scientific accuracy of knowledge, and the living background for her book. She has brought to her task a clear and imaginative style of writing, and she has illustrated the volume with a wealth of photographic material.

The book is a small one but it covers a wide range. It gives a new interpretation to the Indian, one which is entirely constructive. It pictures him as a rational, practical human being, who was yet both philosopher, poet and artist. It catalogues his material achievements under such chapter headings as "The Indian as Builder," "The Indian as an Agriculturist," "The Indian as an Engineer," "The Indian as a Philosopher."

It will be amazing to most readers to see listed the agricultural contributions of American Indians to the world. They make up a large portion of the present agricultural wealth of the world, including such items as corn, tobacco, rubber, turkeys, and many others less well known. The idea that agricultural activity among Indians was confined to only small parts of the two continents is erroneous. A map in Mrs. Estabrook's book shows that there was agricultural development in varying degrees over most of the area which American Indians occupied.

While the author speaks of the American Indian as a racial unit, and of his contributions from every part of the Americas, her emphasis is placed upon the southwestern United States where most of her studies have been made,

and where she has found best preserved the more primitive methods and philosophies of the Red Man. For the student of Southwestern history, therefore, there is much good background to be had from this volume—much that will aid in an understanding of the Indian, far different from that to be had from studying only the early chroniclers.

PAUL WALTER, JR.

American Neutrality in 1793: A Study in Cabinet Government. By Thomas Charles Marion, Ph.D. (Columbia University Press, 1931. pp. 283.)

Who is to be credited with formulating the principles on which our highly praised Law of Neutrality is founded? In his preface, the author of this interesting volume tells us that his study started as an attempt to discover the contributions of Jefferson to this policy, and that the study soon developed into a study of cabinet government. "It became evident," he says, "that scarcely a single principle was added by an individual. They were nearly all the product of joint discussions in a cabinet that contained, fortunately, as divergent elements as have ever been found in any American cabinet." It was the necessity of compromise that produced a "neutral course, . . . more impartial than that which any individual could have found."

The carefully arranged evidence which supports this conclusion should go far in rectifying many misconceptions and, maybe, misrepresentations, which have been advanced by partisans of both Hamilton and Jefferson. On the other hand, partisans of each will find satisfaction in the evidence that neither the English bias of Hamilton nor the great French sympathy and interest of Jefferson controlled their cabinet votes and their actions when the interest of their own country was made clear. On all these matters, which have been subjects of controversy, this study is well balanced, the evidence is carefully presented, and each point at issue is thoroughly annotated.

In a study of cabinet government the diverse positions taken by Hamilton and Jefferson on almost every issue of neutral policy take on a significance that otherwise might be lost sight of. In fact, as one goes through this volume he finds himself led into agreement with the author that it

was the brilliant presentation of the diverse opinions of Hamilton and Jefferson that enabled Washington and his cabinet to pursue a truly neutral course.

The method adopted by Washington of having his cabinet submit in writing their views on the problems of neutrality confronting the young republic made it necessary that each opinion be well thought out and logically presented. The well known bias of both Hamilton and Jefferson and their chronic opposition to each other, resulting from their conflicting economic, social, and political theories, stimulated the keenest analysis of each problem. Above this conflict of master minds devoted to a solution of the problems of neutrality was Washington of whom it has been said, "If he had ever harbored a prejudiced thought or sentiment at that time, there is no evidence of its having been expressed." In addition to the objective position of Washington and the unanimous desire of his cabinet for neutrality, the saving factor is to be found in the logical qualities of the minds of both Hamilton and Jefferson, who, when their conflicting positions confronted each other and were thoroughly analyzed in cabinet meeting, were capable of seeing the wisest course.

The method of the author follows the logical sequence of events from the arrival of Washington in Philadelphia on April 17, 1793, to the retirement of Jefferson from the cabinet on the 31st of the following December. The study is confined primarily to the development of the policy of neutral duties, which is the significant contribution of America to the Law of Neutrality and, of course, had to be the first interest of the infant republic if it wished to keep out of the European conflict.

Chapter I deals with the issues involved in the proclamation of neutrality. The following five chapters deal with issues which had to be faced and solved as they arose. The issues involved in the proclamation produced the first series of clashes between Hamilton and Jefferson and indicate the strength and value of Washington's method of using his cabinet. Jefferson opposed the proclamation, not because he believed in the desirability of neutrality less than Hamilton, but because he believed, as he wrote to Madison, that "it would be better to hold back the declaration of neutrality as a thing worth something to the powers at war, that they would bid for it, and we might reasonably ask a price, the broadest privilege of neutral nations." He also believed

that the executive, since he had no power to decide the question of war on the affirmative side, should not assume the power on the negative side. The author finds no evidence that Jefferson lacked sincerity on these points but suggests that these reasons may have been reinforced by partisan motives.

Against Jefferson's profit argument, which profit Jefferson expected to exact from England, Hamilton took the lofty position of questioning its "justice and magnanimity." On the second point, while Hamilton did not publicly declare that the executive had the power to bind congress, he argued that when the country is in a neutral position it is the duty of the executive so to declare it and to enforce the laws of neutrality in order "to avoid giving cause of war to foreign powers." When the arguments were weighed by the cabinet, with Hamilton and Jefferson both present, the vote was unanimous that a proclamation should be issued. In regard to this unanimous vote, the author says of Jefferson, "Once both sides were clearly before his mind, Jefferson the neutral, whose first interest was always America, predominated over Jefferson the French sympathizer."

After the proclamation was published, the next great question that confronted Washington and his cabinet was the policy to be adopted in regard to the existing treaties with France. On this issue both Hamilton and Jefferson presented lengthy and conflicting opinions. The diversity of these opinions lead the author to state, "that neither Jefferson nor Hamilton could have formulated a policy of true neutrality for this troubled year. Yet the presence of each was necessary in order that the unprejudiced Washington could select from the proposals of each the elements of a truly neutral policy. Hamilton's proclamation was necessary, so also would the following of his advice on the treaties have been disastrous."

These two illustrations will give some idea of the method of the author in bringing together the clashes of opinion and the cabinet procedure which enabled Washington and his cabinet to work out those foundation principles which preserved our neutrality and upon which was erected the American Law of Neutrality.

After reading this very interesting treatment of the method by which our first executive and his cabinet actually faced and solved probably as difficult problems as any of our chief executives and their cabinets have ever faced, one is

inclined to the opinion that if some such method of facing and solving problems were the practice of today, it might prove of greater value to the republic than the evasion of issues by the appointment of commissions.

A. E. WHITE.