

Antique Pieces

BEHOLD WILLIAMSBURG. By Samuel Chamberlain. New York: Hastings House. 1947. 176 pp. \$5.

THE WILDERNESS ROAD. By Robert L. Kincaid. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1947. 392 pp. \$3.75.

Reviewed by BEACH CONGER

THE HISTORIC and scenic attractions of Virginia have brought tourists to that state for many years. Long before colonial Williamsburg was constructed, visitors swarmed to such genuine pre-Revolutionary sites as Monticello, Charlottesville, Jamestown, and Richmond.

The twentieth-century version of a colonial capital is beautifully illustrated in "Behold Williamsburg." As the captions explain, most of the buildings were burnt to the ground 100 or more years ago, but they have been carefully rebuilt to give twentieth-century tourists an idea of what pre-Revolutionary cities looked like. There are photographs of all the important buildings from several angles, interior and exterior views, as well as drypoints and sketches. Whether or not you have been there,

it is an excellent guide or souvenir for the historian, antiquarian, architect, or plain tourist.

As Mr. Chamberlain explains, the photographs were taken at intervals from March to November, to provide the best possible views, and he waited carefully until there were no parked cars. Generally, he also waited until there were no human beings, so that, with one or two exceptions, the cumulative effect is that of a ghost town in the Far Western silver or gold mining centers.

An entirely different book is "The Wilderness Road," which is an historical account of the events which led to the discovery of a trail into the Western areas, and of its subsequent lapse into disuse and designation of its various sections as U. S. 11, Virginia 421, U. S. 25, and Kentucky 150. There is not much in it which will attract the attention of travelers to Virginia, unless they be careful students of history who appreciate the value of a commemorative marker at the side of a highway rather than historic buildings and famous battle sites.

Mr. Kincaid tells of the struggles against the Indians, of the exploration, of the search even for a route to the fabulous East Indies which led to the establishment of the trail which

first crossed the mountains from the Virginia tidewater regions into what then was considered the "West." The colonists wanted to expand their holdings, but the mountains contained them. Not until the Wilderness Trail was blazed, part of it by Daniel Boone, did settlers begin to move in large numbers across the Alleghenies, through the Cumberland Gap, into the lush fields of Kentucky. Eventually the Ohio River valley route condemned the Wilderness Road to obsolescence, but while it existed, it was an important factor in opening up the Western areas beyond the coastal settlements.

Mr. Kincaid spins a fascinating, albeit scholarly, yarn, with distracting footnotes, of the early and more recent history of this trail. The maps leave much to be desired for the ordinary reader who is not fully acquainted with the region. But for the reader who is avid for details of little-known facets of early American history, the book constitutes a well-written account of colonial life and the urge to expand.

Beach Conger, first foreign correspondent expelled from Germany by Hitler, is the former bureau chief and current travel editor of the New York Herald Tribune.

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The War. A book called "What Would Be the Character of a New War?" by eighteen top-ranking naval and military authorities was published in 1933. The majority of the experts went wide of the mark in their predictions. And now, once again, we are entering a period of memoirs and biographies like Colonel Allen's "Lucky Third" on Patton (don't miss Patton's own forthcoming autobiography "War As I Knew It") and predictions looking towards a new war. Captain Puleston believes that the modern navy, first advocated by Admiral Mahan in 1890 in his "The Influence of Sea Power Upon History," will not be superseded. He may be right—if there are enough people left to care about a navy after the first bombs fall.

"Brains and Guts"

LUCKY FORWARD. By Robert S. Allen. New York: The Vanguard Press. 1947. 424 pp. \$5.

Reviewed by SAUL K. PADOVER

"LUCKY FORWARD" (the code name of the Third Army in the field) is the history of what is perhaps the greatest combat army this country has produced in modern times. The author, Colonel Robert S. Allen, former Washington-Merry-Go-Rounder, was a member of the Third Army staff and he writes both as a soldier and a journalist. For those who do not mind plowing through a maze of military symbols, abbreviations, indications, codes, listings, and numberings, this is a very good and exciting story indeed.

In essence, "Lucky Forward" is Patton's book. That General is its central character and revered hero. The chapter "Brains and Guts," a pen-portrait of Patton, is almost worth the price of the book. Though Allen is no stylist or psychologist, he

gives a vivid, two-dimensional, sharply etched, blunt portrait of a fantastically colorful figure who loved war and was honestly and passionately dedicated to the profession of arms. Allen quotes him as saying: "There is only one thing I am interested in—war. I live it and I breathe it. I always have and I always will. That's the whole story of George S. Patton, Jr." He was superb at his job. Patton, according to Allen, had a keen sense of humor, a truculent nature, and an instinctively sound psychology. Loyal to his men, he demanded and got the last ounce out of them, and they revered him. He knew soldiering and military psychology. His fabulous showmanship and unprintable obscenities (Allen does print a few of the milder ones) were deliberately assumed, for Patton was otherwise a gentleman of education and wealth. He felt that a General should be seen by his troops in splendor and in frequency, and that he should talk the kind of language a combat soldier himself uses. For this reason Patton went to the front and showed himself as often as possible and ordered his staff officers to do the same.

His down-to-earth talks were, indeed, the delight of the boys. He could sling the lingo with the best of them. In the Ardennes, once, he told a combat unit just before it was to jump off:

Some of you probably think I am a son-of-a-bitch. Well, you are right. I am a son-of-a-bitch to the Germans. And you are sons-of-bitches to them and they're sons-of-bitches to you. Everyone is a son-of-a-bitch to someone. That doesn't mean a thing. What is important is what you do about it. You are about to attack a lot of dirty, low-down, Hun sons-of-bitches. The question is what you are going to do about it. There is only one thing to do about it. Be better sons-of-bitches than they are.



—Press Association.

George S. Patton, Jr.: "There is only one thing I am interested in—war."