BOOK REVIEWS

The Art of Paul Sawyier, by Arthur F. Jones. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976. Forward, Preface, Acknowledgements, Introduction, Appendix, Notes to the Plates, Notes, Index. pp. 120. Price $27.50.

Arthur F. Jones' book is an important introduction to the works of the Kentucky artist Paul Sawyier (1865-1917). The lavish quantity of seventy-four color plates looks to the coffee table trade with a text based upon the author's doctoral dissertation. It is a handsome, expensive volume; though cumbersome in its large format it should be acquired to acquaint oneself with a minor American master.

The bulk of the text is divided into seven chapters, widely varying in length. The first and longest includes a great deal of disparate material that could have been handled more effectively as individual sections: the early biography of the artist, his friendships, business efforts and commissions, the popularity of Frankfort's covered bridge as a motif and as a nostalgic theme, Sawyier's reputation in critical publications, his personal appearance and drinking habits, and lastly, the status of art in central Kentucky during his lifetime. (There is a remarkable amount of surviving material on Sawyier, primarily the Jillson collection in the Margaret M. Bridwell Art Library, University of Louisville and the Wingate/Sawyier album in the Kentucky Historical Society. Like Sawyier's paintings, new information continues to appear almost daily. For example, records of the Kentucky River Mills just acquired by the Kentucky Historical Society indicate Sawyier was working for the family firm in 1891, several years later than had been believed.)

Chapter two of the book is more coherent; Jones presents first-hand research done in the Catskills, detailing Sawyier's so-called New York period. Jones obviously prefers the period; about half the color plates are chosen from these four short years (1913-1917) at the end of Sawyier's life. "Sawyier's Popularity In His Own Day" follows as chapter three, but it is largely a reiteration of personality traits and contemporary opinion of Sawyier's abilities as an artist. For some reason, however, Jones repeats the apocryphal story of Sawyier's sister, Mary Neiss-Waner, that President Taft suggested that her brother should exhibit at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington. This episode is taken as fact and leads Jones to

speculations upon it, disregarding the statement of the more reliable of Sawyier's sisters, Lilian Sawyier Hill, who flatly denied its truth, attributing it to her sister's eagerness to "provide interesting copy" for an interviewer.

With chapter four the reader reaches an assessment of the paintings. Sawyier is labeled as an eclectic artist, and a discussion follows of American luminism and tonalism, the "Whistlerian mode," Impressionism, Duveneck's teachings, and Sawyier's relation to each of these. Chapter five is given over to Sawyier's impressionistic style, with speculations as to his knowledge of its theories. The last chapters are devoted to working methods—studio work or *plein-air*—and the documentation of Sawyier's frequent use of photographs for his compositions. The latter will be particularly interesting to the reader unfamiliar with Sawyier's dependency upon this medium.

Scholars will encounter problems with the book. The foremost difficulty lies in the order of the plates—that is to say there is no logical order. They are not chronologically arranged or consistently grouped by subject, but are said to be related "to points of discussion in the text" (p. 93). Actually, the text itself sets aside little room for formal discussion of individual works. There is instead a dearth of stylistical analysis. This situation is compounded by the disorganized plates and serves Jones' assertion that Sawyier was an eclectic artist, unpredictable in style. In fact Sawyier's development can be traced without difficulty from an early, miniaturist style followed by the simplified, serene views of the 1890s (Jones' luminism), and finally an Impressionistic style. Stylistical identification is a much more effective analytical tool than is the checking of signature variations (initials, upper case versus lower case, etc.) that is explained in the appendix. At times the author's observations are simply in error. Contrary to the contention that "rarely did Sawyier permit the bare paper to play a great role in his water-colors . . ." (p. 58) Sawyier often used the untouched paper as the fulcrum of his finished compositions, the highest value in the work, for the illusion of sunlight striking water at the horizon in the central distance, for example. (See plates 17, 18, and 26). Furthermore certain of the author's conclusions are unconvincing or anticlimactic.

> While they [impressionist paintings by Sawyier and his contemporaries] do not demonstrate the historical traits of international avant-gardism, they are pleasing to the eye and interesting to contemplate. Furthermore, a serious examination of Sawyier's work tells the inquirer much

> about the regional character of American art, for it demonstrates one way in which imported impressionism fused with native styles. (p. 87)
>
> Sawyier lived in an age of conflict and change, an age in which painting style was one of the many unresolved issues. It is partly for this reason that American impressionism in general—and Sawyier's impressionism in particular—cannot be described as a single, precisely defined style of painting. But in many of Sawyier's works the influence of French impressionism is evident (in combination with other stylistic features) to such a degree that it does not seem improper to classify these works under the term *impressionism.* (p. 61)

There are also a few flaws of misspelling, misinformation, a missing footnote, and an unreliable index. But collateral data is handled in a credible fashion. The "Notes to the Plates" are useful, and the research on the Wingate/Sawyier album is helpful. Painstaking research in a sober writing style went into the tome, but more important are the reproductions of works by Paul Sawyier, a Kentucky painter of talent and accomplishments.

Frankfort, Kentucky MARY HAMEL-SCHWULST

The Improbable Era: The South Since World War II, by Charles P. Roland. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1975. pp. 228. Price $11.95.

A welcome addition to southern history is Charles P. Roland's *The Improbable Era: The South Since World War II.* In a neat 228 pages, the author explores two paradoxes of the South — the steadfastness of southern institutions and people and its willingness to accept change and new ideas. In fact, as noted by Roland, the remarkable trait of southern people is the ability to assimilate new people and new ideas without giving up favored tastes and traditions (p. 188). As Roland ably demonstrates throughout his study, numerous changes have occurred in all aspects of southern life since World War II. Yet in every sphere, whether it is race relations, industry, religion, politics, or education, no changes have come close to destroying the distinctiveness of the South. The southern people, regardless of class, are still rural in their thinking, lifestyle, and values.

Professor Roland's study is easily divided into three parts. Part one, consisting of chapters one through six, discuss the southern economy, race relations, politics, and education. Part two is devoted to religion and the artistic works of southerners. The last two chapters comprise part three of the book. These two chapters show the author at his best, where he is writing about the enduring

characteristics of the southern people, both white and black. This part of the book does not minimize the changes discussed in part one, but Roland does conclude that "southern courtesy, southern food, southern speech, southern athletic chauvinism, and southern sectional consciousness persisted in the midst of expanding taste and altered mannerisms" (p. 184).

Part one examines many impressive changes in the South since 1945. Modern technology has radically changed industry, and the growth of numerous industries in the South has been important to the region's prosperity. And proportionately, the growth of industry has been greater in Dixie than in the rest of the nation. This period has seen the integration of blacks into all aspects of southern life. As noted by Roland, the rise of black voters and the election of blacks to public offices has been the most striking development in southern politics since the Second World War. Gains in education, at all levels, have been impressive. State legislatures and prominent public figures have cooperated in the expansion and improvement of schools.

Roland is keenly aware of the shortcomings of the South. Despite tremendous gains in agriculture and industry, the South still remains the poorest section in the nation; more people live in poverty in the South than anywhere else in the country. The quality of education in the South has improved, but the South is still a long way from equality in education with the East or the West. Southern schools compare unfavorably with the rest of the nation in facilities, faculty, and curriculum. In politics, despite the rise of moderate politicians and the election of blacks to office, class and race continue to play dominant roles, and Roland suggests that segregation still prevails in those sectors of life beyond the reach of laws and courts (p. 187). Whites have fled to the suburbs leaving the cities predominantly black; by mutual choice of both races, religion is segregated and personal relations seldom cross racial boundaries. The author concludes that the South seems like two giant families, distinguished by color.

Roland's discussion of novelists and poets highlights the second part of his study. Unlike some scholars, Roland understands the uniqueness of black writers in the South. Yet, demonstrating his acute comprehension of southern literature, he explains that all southern writers, including black militants and white supremacists, have emphasized family, religion, sense of place, race, violence, and the inherent sinfulness of man in their works.

Throughout his study, Roland is impartial when discussing the

blacks who were involved in the civil rights movement. This should be a minor point, hardly worth mentioning, but unfortunately, it is not. Too many scholars lack an understanding of the blacks who were involved in the civil rights movement. These writers do not look at blacks critically or objectively. Thus, Martin Luther King, Jr., is praised and the more militant blacks are condemned, when in fact both groups made contributions and mistakes and both often aided each other. After all, the threat of violence often aids nonviolence. In this study, there are no heroes and villains; Roland fairly assesses the contributions of all blacks while not making the mistake of being apologetic for white backlash.

This concise book is a welcome addition to southern history. The general reader and the scholar will benefit from Professor Roland's insight into the people of the South and their institutions.

Durham, North Carolina GEORGE C. WRIGHT

Close-Up: How to Read the American City, by Grady Clay. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973. Acknowledgements, Notes, Sources of Illustrations, Index. pp. 192. Price $10.00.

One of the most notable side effects of the public concern over the "urban crisis" in recent American life has been a deluge of books bemoaning the predicament of the nation's cities. Most of these books are superficial polemics which add little of lasting significance to our comprehension of urban behavior. Most of the exceptions are carefully researched state-of-the-art publications intended primarily for use by specialists in city halls, universities, and consulting firms. Probably the most creative works in the urban library are a handful of studies which go beyond technical analysis to explore the fundamental processes of urban growth, change, decay, and regeneration. Among the more outstanding works of this type are Jane Jacobs' minor classic *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), Ian McHarg's *Design with Nature* (1969), and Jay W. Forrester's *Urban Dynamics* (1969). Gray Clay's *Close-Up: How to Read the American City* adds a new dimension to the examination of urban development.

A distinguished Louisville journalist who has observed American cities for over twenty-five years, Clay challenges the pathological premises inherent in the "urban crisis" mentality and asserts that there are no "true secrets" and no "true chaos" lurking in the urbanscape, but "only undisclosed evidence . . . [and] only patterns

and clues waiting to be organized." This assertion rests upon the author's conviction that cities must be understood in language which conveys their dynamic character—that every scene in the urban landscape "follows rules of appearance and behavior observable over time" and that "in each there is change, decay, replacement, adjustment, and new uses for new times." True to this conviction, Clay constructs the body of his manuscript around a unique vocabulary—a "wordgame"—which captures the essence of these processes in richly illustrated, energetic metaphors.

Part of our difficulty in decoding urban behavior, the author suggests, lies in certain "fixes," such as the rigidly symmetrical perspectivist tradition, which tends to freeze our vision of the good city into a static Renaissance mold. But such fixes are unable to capture the symbolism and emotional energy latent in certain "epitome districts," such as "breaks"—abrupt changes in design or direction of streets which create geographical and psychological barriers to social relationships—or "political venturis"— those systems of pathways wherein the city's central power actors meet frequently in their travels from place to place.

Other terms are equally vivid. Those cutting edges of movement and unpredictable change which mark zones of dispersion and redefine community consciousness are called "fronts." The much-maligned suburban "strips," developments which place a premium upon auto accessibility, are appropriately understood as linear projections of "surplus urban energies" which have antecedents in historical patterns of growth along river roads, Indian trails, and wagon paths. "Beats" are environmental settings for regular networks of movement by specific groups of power actors, while "stacks" are concentrations of raw materials which offer clues to the presence or absence of certain types of economic activities and social classes as they signal the availability of potential energy which can instigate change. Low-lying, swampy, or otherwise hard-to-develop "sinks" may become dumping grounds for those things or groups which the more powerful elements of society find neither useful nor desirable. Possibly the most pervasive single pattern of urban behavior is the self-conscious drive for "turf," the attempt to define territorial space, through forms ranging from scatalogical graffiti on ghetto walls to tightly guarded high-income apartment complexes.

The most remarkable attribute of Clay's vocabulary, despite its boldness, is the absence of any taint of arrogance. Clay realizes that individual formation of urban images is a highly personal

process and avoids the temptation to impose his own images upon the reader. Instead, he offers his own perceptions as tools to enable individual observers to come to their own comprehension of urban dynamics and to intelligently shape their own images of the cityscape.

Clay's purpose is strengthened by a synthesis of interdisciplinary insights drawn from such sources as historians Frederick Jackson Turner and David Potter, psychologist George A. Kelly, philosopher Buckminster Fuller, and urbanologists Jane Jacobs, Edmund Bacon, and William H. C. Wheaton. His penetrating intellectual analysis is further supported by a variety of visual evidence including photographs, architectural drawings and sketches, newspaper clippings, maps, and plans. Louisville readers will find numerous illustrations of local urban phenomena especially thought-provoking.

Louisville Historic Landmarks & Preservation Districts Commission CARL E. KRAMER

A Fair And Happy Land, By William A. Owens. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975. Genealogy, Notes, Index. pp. 314. Price $10.95.

The introduction to *A Fair and Happy Land* acknowledges modern America's fascination with the search for roots. Professor Emeritus and Dean Emeritus of Columbia University, and an expert on folk culture, William A. Owens here embarks on his own odyssey, tracking the journeyings of five generations of Cleavers, the branch of his family comprising his clearest link to the past. Using census records, county and local documents, and oral history, he has collected the fragments and bare traces remaining from two hundred years of this family's trek across the West and South.

The Cleaver family, a handful of German Quakers who immigrated to Pennsylvania in the 1680s, within a decade had begun the migration which, by 1900, had taken them to Pin Hook, Texas — where Professor Owens was born. In a pattern repeated through Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, Alabama, Arkansas, and eventually Texas, each generation of Cleavers resisted the security of permanent roots for the space of new frontiers. To describe the impulse fueling this restlessness is one of the author's major objectives and one far more evasive than the neat logic of genealogical charts.

Organized by generation, the book is episodic without being Gals-

worthian. The descriptions of everyday frontier life are not new, but identification with the Cleaver family gives them a specificity. The real color of the book comes from its generous use of folklore — tales, songs, jokes, travel accounts. One narrative gives poignant focus to the isolation facing early settlers drawn beyond the Appalachian pale:

> Ask these Pilgrims what they expect when they git to Kentucky. the Answer is Land. have you any. No, but I expect I can git it. have you any thing to pay for land, No. did you Ever see the Country. No but Every Body says its good land . . . Travelling hundreds of Miles, they Know not for what Nor Whither, except its to Kentucky.

The text is replete with examples of the optimism and humor of frontier lore. People saved their dolefulness for hymns. Otherwise, their stories and ballads were evocative and exuberant records of pioneer life:

> They called me to dinner and I thought for to eat;
> The first thing I saw was a big chunk of meat
> Cooked half done and tough as a maul,
> An old ash cake baked bran and all.

A Fair and Happy Land is a highly readable and well-researched chronicle of America's frontier experience. Professor Owens has succeeded in his basic purpose — "to seek out [the] human essence" of his forebears and, by intersecting briefly with their lives, to reassert a common past.

The National Portrait Gallery AMY E. HENDERSON

Freebooters Must Die! by Frederic Rosengarten, Jr. Wayne, Pennsylvania: Havorford House, 1976. Illustrations, Bibliography, Index. pp. 226. Price $12.95.

Like Davy Crockett and Andrew Jackson, William Walker was a nineteenth century American hero from the state of Tennessee. Unlike them, however, his star has fallen and Walker's reputation lingers on only where his very name is hated—Central America. *Freebooters Must Die!* is an attempt to restore to life the memory of a man who "was the hottest news personality in America between the discovery of gold in California in 1848 and the Civil War."

Frederic Rosengarten, Jr., brings a unique perspective to his subject as a result of having lived many years in Central America, the place where Walker was executed after his unsuccessful takeover of Nicaragua in the late 1850s. The author traces Walker's

brief life (1824-1860) from his boyhood in Nashville; his remarkable education in medicine and the law in Europe and America; his experience as a newspaper editor in New Orleans; his filibustering activities in Lower California and Sonora; to his ultimate experience—execution at Truxillo, Honduras in 1860.

Freebooters is short and (in spite of what the author calls "new well-documented data concerning William Walker's life") offers the reader little in terms of detail and analysis that can not be found in Albert Z. Carr's more thorough 1963 biography, *The World and William Walker*. On the positive side, Rosengarten's study does contain a wealth of illustrations (136 in all) relative to Walker's life and times, most of which have been heretofore unavailable to the general public.

While this biography, with its thin and occasionally superficial analysis and unencumbered with footnotes or annotated bibliography, will not satisfy scholars, it should find a ready market with general readers of any age interested in the pre-Civil War period of American history. Rosengarten, who is the author of the definitive *The Book of Spices*, has an exciting story to tell, and he tells it well. The book will be especially appreciated by teachers who introduce history to their students by way of biography.

Western Kentucky University CHARLES J. BUSSEY

Diplomacy on the Indiana-Ohio Frontier, 1783-1791, by Joyce G. Williams and Jill E. Farrelly. Bloomington: Indiana University Bicentennial Committee, 1976. Map, Illustrations, Notes, Epilogue, Appendix, Bibliography. pp. 7, 118. Price $3.00

This brief monograph, the product of two Indiana University graduates, explores what the authors claim was the "paramount" problem of the Confederation period—the Indian question. Though of limited scope, the volume is heavily documented (272 footnotes in 99 pages of text) and will therefore appeal primarily to historians and to individuals interested in local history. In a year when a national celebration spawned numerous books of mediocre quality, this balanced and scholarly work is a welcome addition.

Essentially, the two authors outline the course of diplomatic intrigues and negotiations in the Northwest among the Americans, the British, and the various Indian tribes of the region. While perhaps not the paramount question of the day, the issue of Indian, and also British, removal was quite important and created substantial problems in Anglo-American relations at the time. The

events of the period are complex yet the authors carefully unravel the motivations and ambitions of the parties involved. British machinations are particularly interesting. The strong desire to block American expansion and to continue their own involvement in the profitable fur trade placed British officials in an awkward and delicate position. These men faced a formidable task in attempting to appease their distrustful Indian allies without offending the United States government. The British ultimately angered both sides although they did on numerous occasions support negotiations.

The Americans were upset by the British refusal to evacuate the Northwest posts. British collusion with the Indians increased this American hostility. However, Indian leaders were dismayed by the British concessions in the peace treaty of 1783 and the lack of verbal and armed support for their struggle against American expansion.

British intrigue among the Northwest tribes was only one facet of the deeper problem of American expansion. Both the frontiersmen and the government in Washington were intent on expanding American control in this area, peacefully if possible but by force if necessary. The clash during these years was but one episode of a conflict which had begun much earlier and which would continue for another century.

Caught like a pawn in this game of power politics were the tribes of the Northwest. Buffeted between two large and powerful forces, the tribes sought a solution to their dilemma by unity, treaty, and finally, war. All three alternatives eventually failed. The text concludes with a brief epilogue carrying events through 1795 and the Treaty of Greenville.

The shortcomings of this volume center primarily on the brevity of coverage. As a result, topics such as Spanish operations in the region and the American-Indian conflicts of the early 1790s receive a cursory treatment. The views of Henry Knox and George Washington regarding the incorporation of the Indian into white society are interesting but undeveloped. The limited scope of the work also prevents a broader explanation of background events in the Confederation period or a more detailed exploration of the underlying racism of the time. The authors might also have made additional use of the records of the British Colonial Office and other unpublished manuscript sources. However, these weaknesses do not seriously flaw a solid monograph.

University of Georgia NOEL C. EGGLESTON

A Bestiary, by Boynton Merrill, Jr. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976. Illustrations. Price $7.50.

This collection of poems by Boynton Merrill, Jr., is illustrated by Robert James Foose and published in a limited edition of one thousand copies. Mr. Merrill will be known to some Filsonians through another work, a historical treatment entitled *Jefferson's Nephews, A Frontier Tragedy*. Mr. Merrill lives in Henderson, Kentucky where he pursues his interest in agriculture and early Southern frontier history.

The Aberdeen School of Writing and Related Arts, Louisville, Kentucky GLORIA J. RODDEY

BRIEFLY NOTED

John May, Jr., of Virginia: His Decendants and Their Land, by Ben H. Coke. Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1975. Contents, Appendices, Index, pp. vii, 383. Price $13.00.

A genealogical study of the May family of Virginia in the 18th and 19th centuries. The work contains the names of over six thousand people who have lived in forty-nine states and several foreign countries. Copies may be ordered from the author at Route 1, Calhoun, Kentucky 42327.

Kentucky Governors, by Robert A. Powell. Frankfort: Kentucky Images, 1976. Contents, Introduction, Index. pp. 142. Price $15.00.

This book is a collection of drawings of Kentucky governors accompanied by short biographical sketches. Both are by Robert A. Powell. The introduction is by J. Winston Coleman, Jr.

Historic Culpepper, by the Culpepper Historical Society. Culpepper, Virginia, 1974. Soft Cover, Preface, Contents, Photographs, Map, Index. pp. 167. Price $5.25.

A guide to historic sites in Culpepper County, Virginia. Copies may be ordered from Mrs. Charles W. Browning, Route 4, Box 81, Culpepper, Virginia 22701.

An 18th Century Perspective: Culpepper County, edited by Mary Stevens Jones. Culpepper, Virginia: Culpepper County Historical Society, 1976. Preface, Contents, Illustrations. pp. 150. Price $8.50.

A compilation of essays on various phases of 18th century Culpepper County history. Copies may be ordered from Mrs. Browning whose address is given above.

The Descendants of Josiah and Keziah Nichols Woolridge and Their Ancestors, by Wright W. Frost. Knoxville, Tennessee, 1973. Preface, Contents, Index. pp. vii, 221. Price $15.00.

A genealogical compilation of the direct ancestors, their close relations, and the descendants of Josiah and Keziah Nichols Woolridge of Williamson County, Tennessee. Copies may be ordered from the author at 730 Cherokee Blvd., Knoxville, Tennessee 37919.

Amburgey Ancestry in America, by Dorothy Amburgey Griffith. St. Louis, 1976. Soft Cover, Index, pp. xix, 208. Price $6.50.

A genealogical study of the Amburgey family of Virginia, North Carolina, and Perry County, Kentucky. Copies may be ordered from the author at 9514 Minerva Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63114.

What Made Lincoln Great? by Mary Browning. Louisville, 1976. Acknowledgements, Preface, Contents, Bibliography. pp. 95. Price $5.00.

A brief description of Lincoln's character in prose and poetry. Copies may be ordered from the author at 1412 Willow Avenue, Apt. 38, Louisville, Kentucky 40204.

The Family of Adam and Mary/Claycomb/Barr, by Stephen A. Barr. [Louisville, 1976.] Illustrations, Index, pp. 293. Price $15.70.

A genealogical study. Copies may be ordered from the author at 3032 Hendon Road, Louisville, Kentucky 40220.

Window on the War: Frances Dallam Peter's Lexington Civil War Diary, edited by John David Smith and William Cooper, Jr. Lexington: Lexington-Fayette County Historic Commission, 1976. Soft Cover, Introduction. pp. 53. Price $4.50.

Copies may be ordered from the Lexington-Fayette County Historic Commission, 253 Market Street, Lexington, Kentucky 40508.

Across the Fields of Yesterday, by Lennox Allen. Louisville: Ernest Walker Press, 1976. pp. 71. Price $5.00.

This is the third in a trilogy of nostalgic books which is a compilation of short essays and stories revolving around Louisville figures and events in the 1920s and 1930s. Lennox Allen is a Louisville writer and painter who maintains studios in Rockport, Massachussetts and in Louisville. The book is illustrated with many delightful sketches by the author.

RECENT REPRINTS

Missouri Land Claims, with an introduction by Anton Pregaldin. Indexed by Patricia Chadwell. New Orleans: Polyanthos, 1976. Contents, Introduction, Index. pp. vi, 421. Price $17.50. Originally published in 1835.

This reprint makes more widely available data of interest to the genealogist tracing ancestors who went west.

A History of Elizabethtown, Kentucky and Its Surroundings, by Samuel Haycraft. Elizabethtown: Hardin County Historical Society, 1975. Preface, Illustrations, Index. pp. 228. Price $11.95. Originally published in 1869.

An attractive reprinting of a useful town history.