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# Review of the Pottery Industry of Trenton: A Skilled Trade in Transition, 1850-1929, by M.J. Stern

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their personalities rather than on reference to the "social need" (pp. 6-7) of people in this period.

At the heart of the book, however, are three absorbing and well-researched chapters that examine reactions to Christian Science within other denominations, among practitioners of conventional medicine, and in the pages of the muckraking newspapers of the time. Throughout his narrative, Knee is not reluctant to display his sympathy for Christian Science and Eddy. At certain points, however, his effort to balance the harsh treatment that the religion and its founder received at the hands of mainline churches, the professions (including "the medical establishment" in "its century of inadequacy" [p. 94]), and the secular press becomes purely defensive. When the author notes, for example, that "the movement's success was based upon its ability to promote, sell, persuade, and recruit a group in America who looked for relief but were not impoverished," he rushes to plead that "this is not a crime, not even a misdemeanor. Nor is it a fault for a faith to concern itself with fiscal affairs because money is essential to its survival," he adds; "the smaller the group, the greater the demand" (p. 122).

Readers in search of a broad historical introduction to Christian Science in the United States would do better to consult Robert Peel's *Christian Science: Its Encounter with American Culture* (1958) or Stephen Gottschalk's *The Emergence of Christian Science in American Religious Life* (1973). Nevertheless, Knee does a capable job of describing in detail the special world of Mary Baker Eddy, her associates, and their detractors, even if on occasion he pulls his critical punches.

KEVIN J. CHRISTIANO  
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ALLEN C. GUELZO. *For the Union of Evangelical Christendom: The Irony of the Reformed Episcopalians*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press. 1994. Pp. xi, 404. Cloth \$45.00, paper \$14.95.

The Reformed Episcopal church was organized by dissenters who separated from the Episcopal church in the United States in 1873. Although such a secessionist origin for a new church was not unusual in nineteenth-century American Protestantism, it was, in fact, highly unusual in the history of the Episcopal church in the United States until the church's present troubled days. The Reformed Episcopal church was never large, and today it has only 6,000 adult members. Allen C. Guelzo argues, however, that its story is worth telling anyway, in part for its broader implications for American religion.

Guelzo knows how to tell a story very well. I confess I had never heard of the Reformed Episcopalians before reading this book, but Guelzo's presentation, effectively organized and deeply researched, got me involved in the events, personalities, and issues of his tale. It is no wonder to me why Guelzo's account won

the Albert C. Outler Prize in ecumenical church history from the American Society of Church History.

Guelzo develops his story through consideration of the Episcopal church in the nineteenth century. He presents its Reformed Episcopal offshoot in the context of reactions to Anglo-Catholic elements in the Episcopal church as well as the powerful evangelical dynamics in American religion at that time. I enjoyed his portraits of leading figures in the Reformed Episcopal movement, especially its founder, a Kentucky bishop, George David Cummins. Guelzo draws nice portraits and is notably sensitive to the ironies in human experience, such as the fact that the secessionist Cummins actually loathed and feared human conflict even as he generated an enormous amount of it.

Theological issues among the elite actors also receive a good deal of attention from Guelzo. He deals deftly with the debates in the Episcopal church and the Reformed Episcopal church that raged over such questions as what was the legitimate Episcopal prayer book, the authority of the thirty-nine Articles of the Episcopal church, the nature of authentic church authority, and ecumenical relations. What we learn is that such disputes mattered and that many of the controversies that helped lead to the creation of two Episcopal bodies in 1873 reappeared within the subsequent history of the Reformed Episcopal church.

Guelzo also explores larger themes beyond the history of the Reformed Episcopal church that he recounts so well. Among these broader topics are ecumenical relations among the evangelical movement, the Episcopal church, and the Reformed Episcopal church in the United States; the role of republican ideology and religion in the nineteenth century; antimodernism and American religion. Among the more interesting of these considerations are Guelzo's observations on the difficulties that the Reformed Episcopalians had at first in establishing an identity as a church and the subsequent problems it had in becoming too closed on itself: "self-authenticating and self-accrediting" (p. 336). Such reflections suggest awareness of sociological and organizational factors that cannot be ignored in church history. This effort underlines the admirable range of Guelzo's study in the topics he explores and the approaches he employs. This is an illuminating, engagingly written history.

ROBERT BOOTH FOWLER  
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MARC JEFFREY STERN. *The Pottery Industry of Trenton: A Skilled Trade in Transition, 1850-1929*. (Class and Culture.) New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press. 1994. Pp. xiii, 306. \$48.00.

Marc Jeffrey Stern has written a masterful account of Trenton's pottery industry that significantly advances historians' understanding of this skill-intensive, batch-oriented economic sector. Modeled on the type of industrial history pioneered by Philip Scranton, Stern

examines both the interaction between employers and employees and between potteries in Trenton and in East Liverpool, Ohio, the other major center of the American pottery industry. In developing the intensely work-centered perspective of these skilled workers, Stern penetrates a world that normally remains obscure to historians. Examining potters on their own terms, Stern deftly describes a perspective that included work customs brought over from Staffordshire, England; support for Republican Party high tariff policies, a strategy partly intended to keep women out of the trade; defense of apprenticeship systems and exploitation of helpers; a stubborn resistance to mechanization even when this worked to the disadvantage of Trenton producers.

Stern's analysis divides the history of Trenton potteries into three major phases. During the first phase, which stretched from 1850 to 1897, large numbers of Staffordshire potters emigrated to America in order to continue the practice of their craft. Due to the industry's skill requirements, these potters achieved what Stern describes as a "semi-autonomous" status, a term he employs because for all of their "power" on the shop floor the overall economic and social structure imposed constraints on them. Many of the potters established their own firms and the industry remained highly competitive. During the 1880s, in an effort to gain recognition as "citizen-workers," many of the potters joined trades assemblies affiliated with the Knights of Labor. This effort showed promise but fell victim to the Knights' collapse, economic depression, and the low tariff policies of the Democratic Party.

The next phase, between 1897 and 1915, saw the emergence of contractual relations between a manufacturers' organization, the United States Potters' Association, and the pottery workers' union, the National Brotherhood of Operative Potters (NBOP). As in the coal and clothing industries, agreements between employers and employees brought a sense of stability. In Trenton, sanitary ware began to dominate as the less-skilled generalware sector found it difficult to compete with Ohio firms. Contracts incorporated aspects of the stint and most Trenton pottery workers appeared content to leave union negotiations in the hands of a small group of NBOP leaders.

Producing nonessential items, the pottery industry actually suffered difficult times during the World War I era, which ushered in a period of crisis between 1920 and 1923. The period of labor peace began to fall apart when the Warren G. Harding administration, responding to protests over the high cost of construction, gained indictments against a number of firms. The companies in turn began to challenge workers' cherished work practices. As in so many other industries in the early 1920s, the conflict inevitably brought on a bitter strike won by employers. Refusing to acknowledge inroads made by new technological processes, local militants rejected all attempts at compromise, thus insuring the NBOP's demise.

Stern approaches his work like the craftsmen he

describes. Stern, in mastering an enormous amount of information related specifically to the pottery industry, gives us a book that will be of great interest to students of technology as well as to business and labor historians. Employing a rather mechanical writing style, Stern might have made some effort to enliven the narrative. Paying scant attention to community life, Stern says little about potters' family networks or consumption patterns. But these aspects themselves reflect the determinedly work-centered world of highly skilled workers, a world that Stern captures with considerable aplomb.

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CHRIS FRIDAY. *Organizing Asian American Labor: The Pacific Coast Canned-Salmon Industry, 1870-1942.* (Asian American History and Culture.) Philadelphia, Pa.: Temple University Press. 1994. Pp. viii, 276. \$34.95.

From the 1870s to the 1940s, Asian immigrants and Asian Americans were the major source of labor for the canned salmon industry on the Pacific Coast from Alaska to central California. Chris Friday's book, based on extensive research, provides a comprehensive study of the role of Asian and Asian-American labor in shaping that industry and a careful examination of the evolution of the Asian-American labor movement in the industry. Chinese were the first to enter the industry in the 1870s, as rapid development of the business led cannery owners to hire them as seasonal workers through a system of labor contracting, under which a small elite group of Chinese contractors recruited and supervised the Chinese laborers for the owners and managers. In chapters 1 through 3 Friday provides a detailed examination of the evolution of this system and a remarkable description of the working and living conditions of the Chinese workers. In the next three chapters he explains how the number of Chinese laborers decreased as a result of the Chinese Exclusion Acts passed by Congress between 1882 and 1905 and thus provided greater opportunities for Japanese immigrants, as well as Native Americans and European Americans, to enter the job market as workers and subcontractors, and that they quickly became strong competitors of the Chinese. He discusses the fragmentation of the labor market caused by the introduction of new technology and more immigrant laborers and analyzes how Japanese *Issei* men and women and their *Nisei* children became influential within the industry. Next he focuses on the Filipino workers' drive for unionization, discussing how the contract work culture in the canned salmon industry evolved into a union work culture (chaps. 7-8). As their initial attempts to enter the contracting system failed, by the early 1930s Filipino laborers in the Northwest began to push for unionization in the Alaska canneries in order to control labor recruitment and management. At the same time, Asian Americans