The Consequences of Loyalism: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Calhoon

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This book, as the title indicates, is a collection of essays written by Robert M. Calhoon’s graduate students to share Calhoon’s vision of Loyalism and Loyalists. What was loyalty and who were the loyalists?

Calhoon’s students were challenged to examine a variety of questions such as: were those who called themselves loyalists desirous of continuing in the service of the “crown”, were they those who did not want to take up arms and fight the “crown”, were they hopeful of finding peaceful ways of insuring freedom from unfair taxation, etc., were they those who thought the revolutionaries were moving to take away their land and their means of life, were they white, black, Indians?

To shed light on some of these questions, Calhoon’s students contributed essays inspired by his lectures and research, such as “The Politics of Loyalty in the Revolutionary Chesapeake”, “Reexamining Loyalist Identity during the American Revolution”, “Quaker Women Writers of the American Revolution”, “To be Parts and Not Dependencies of the Empire”.

Interestingly, Calhoon led his students to examine the concept of the revolutionary war as a civil war. A civil war in which loyalists and revolutionaries held differing opinions about separating from the British government. Those opinions became obvious when it was shown that Loyalists were counted in the thousands—possibly 500,000 individuals of the white population. Paul Smith (p.1) also says 19% of all citizens at the time of the war were Loyalists. What happened to Loyalists when the Revolutionary War ended, Smith says “the longer-term effect of the Revolution on the Loyalists—the exile experiences of perhaps 80,000 Loyalists and their dependents who departed or the adaptation of as many as 400,000 who remained in the US” (p.3).

The jewel of this book is the raising of our consciousness toward those in early America who wished to remain loyal to the “crown”. Also the essays give us the option to begin to learn more about the Revolutionary War as a “civil war”.

This is a good book for public and academic libraries. Also recommended for archives and historical collections. The book contains 250 pages, Notes from page 251 to List of Contributors on 319 and an Index on Page 321. List of illustrations on pages 45 125,127 and 131.

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Librarian and Consultant


Robert Emmett Curran tells of 1600 letters written by members of the Lynch family. He transcribed and annotated 561 of those letters and placed them in chronological order for us, 1858-1865. These letters were meticulously presented as a life story of the Lynch family in South Carolina during the Confederate War years. Patrick Lynch became the third Catholic Bishop of Charleston, his brother, Francis, established tanneries that supplied shoes to the troops of the Civil War, and his sister, Ellen, established a school for young girls as a protection for them during the War.

Patrick Lynch became a highly respected and much loved Bishop and was selected by Jefferson Davis to represent the Confederacy to the Papal States in hopes of securing support of Europe for the Confederacy. While Bishop Lynch was a slave owner and a secessionist, his reputation with inclusion of black free slaves was well known.

The outstanding elements of this research are the 561 beautifully transcribed and annotated Lynch family letters written to each other during the years of 1858 to 1865. The readability and clever language in each letter along with the inclusion of local and regional happenings helped me as a