

larger program calling for a major reorganization of society based on "rural democracy," financial reforms, and expanded political participation and educational opportunities. As this significant contribution to our knowledge of slavery and its demise in Brazil shows, abolition was a battle won by those anxious for major changes in Brazilian society but the final victory belonged to the entrenched landowning élite. While abolition freed the slave, the failure to enact any major supplementary legislation severely limited the impact of this newly gained freedom. Furthermore, abolition and the tensions which had developed during the conflict leading to its passage led to a heightened racism in the society.

With this study, Robert Conrad has appreciably increased our knowledge of the process by which slavery was abolished in Brazil. His analysis of the regional shift in slaveholding and consequently attitudes toward slavery and especially the conversion of São Paulo to a free labour system will give this study a prominent position in the historiography of slavery in Brazil.

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HENRY C. WILKINSON. — *Bermuda from Sail to Steam; A History of the Island from 1784 to 1901*. 2 vols. London: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Bermuda has more than its share of the fascination common to all small islands. Warmed by the 'ocean river' of the Gulf Stream, it is the most northerly coral atoll in the world, a fragment of the tropics in the latitudes of winter snow and ice. Virtually the nearest of the Americas to Europe's westermost outposts, the Azores, and almost equidistant from Virginia, the Bahamas, and Nova Scotia, it has always been a stopping place for European westward voyages; a natural naval base. Situated where the northerly current meets the westerly winds, it was also an obvious seamark and turning point for sailing ships returning from Caribbean and American plantation colonies alike. Discovered by the English in 1609, Bermuda became the second English colony in America, the smallest of those microcosms in which the fortunate first settlers and their descendants sought to reproduce the polity of rural England (including in due course the ideals of 1643 and 1688) on the backs first of indentured labourers and later, Negro slaves. Too small for large plantations, Bermuda lived by the sea and shipbuilding, its primacy based on the self-oiling, aromatic indigenous cedar, and the rakish Bermudian sloop.

Henry C. Wilkinson is the foremost of those who have brought Bermuda's fascinating history to the attention of a wider world. For more than forty years this wealthy retired doctor — living in a charming waterfront house built by a Bermudian privateer — has monopolised the subject, both by the finality of his *dicta* and the virtual control of the archive sources in Hamilton. As long ago as 1933, in *The Adventurers of Bermuda* he told with vivid detail and almost Churchillian style of English Bermuda's first 75 years, when the miniature archipelago — like so many emergent colonies — was ruled by a chartered company. In 1950 came forth *Bermuda in the Old Empire*, which carried the story forward to 1784, when by the author's account the island colony was left practically an orphan by the independence of the Thirteen Colonies of the mainland.

For almost a quarter century rumour continually reported that Dr. Wilkinson was labouring at bringing Bermuda's history up to date, thus completing a definitive work. However, now that *Bermuda from Sail to Steam* is available at last, it

proves a sad disappointment. Despite huge length (960 pages in two volumes, complete with slipcase), it reaches only to the death of Queen Victoria in 1901. At this rate another thousand pages would be required to bring the story up to 1975, making nearly three thousand pages in all — almost, the wits might say, one for every Bermudian. Length alone, though, is not the deterrent. Indeed, it is a pleasure to handle a book so 'old-fashioned' in its spaciousness and style. What frustrates the reader is the way in which the detail obscures, even distorts, the shape of modern Bermudian history. This is old-fashioned historiography in more ways than one.

The merits of Dr. Wilkinson's earlier books become flaws once he moves from the familiar security of the old mercantilist empire of settlement and plantation into the ages of revolution, *laissez faire*, and Victorian expansiveness, and he shows no sympathy whatever for anything that smacks of modernisation or democracy. Dr. Wilkinson has always been at pains to relate the history of tiny Bermuda to that of the Empire at large, but in these last volumes his method leads simply to tiresome, misleading digressions and carcinomatous footnotes.

Dr. Wilkinson's culling of the local archives has been minute and continuous, but his background reading seems to have stopped short when his research began. Grounded in political history of the old school, he clearly regards the secession of the United States as a 'revolution' on a par with what happened in France and Haïti in the 1790s. He both distorts the causes of American independence and exaggerates its effects upon the British Empire, while at the same time almost ignoring the general revolutionary implications of the Industrial Revolution, the ideas of Adam Smith, and the freeing of the slaves. Besides the standard 'imperialist' works, he cites the first volume of Vincent Harlow's *Founding of the Second British Empire* (1952) in his bibliography, but shows little appreciation of the notions of 'Trade not Dominion' and the 'Swing to the East' found in it. There is no mention at all of the work of Richard Pares, D.K. Fieldhouse, Eric Williams, or any other modern imperial or West Indian scholars, save Parry and Sherlock's outdated high school text, *A Short History of the West Indies* (1956).

Though fatally weak and outmoded on the larger imperial issues, Dr. Wilkinson provides invaluable local detail and colour, for a colony struggling in vain for even minor importance in the general scheme of empire. By a process of accretion the reader builds up a clear picture of petty local government, privateering in the last Anglo-French wars, blockade-running in the American Civil War, the building with convict labour of naval base that was never to be used in war, postal and packet services, the first faint beginnings of tourism, and, above all, the switch from sail to steam to which the title of the book refers. Yet despite the detail, too much is missing or too easily missed by the unobservant reader. The index — vital in such a rembling book — is inadequate, consisting very largely of references to persons. For example, Canadian readers aware of the long connections between Bermuda and the Maritimes will look in vain for references in the index. In the text they will find some mention of naval and steamer connections with Halifax and of the activities of various bishops, but insufficient notice of the way in which Bermuda was incorporated into the Anglican diocese successively of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, and virtually nothing of the activities of Canadian sectarian missionaries, who ministered chiefly to the blacks. Similarly, those interested in insights into Bermudian social conditions will be disappointed by the many illustrations. Apart from a few picturesque scenes, they consist entirely of portraits of 'prominent' local whites.

Dr. Wilkinson's concentration not only on persons, but on white persons, particularly petty functionaries and oligarchs, represents indeed the most serious

fault of this book and his approach to Bermuda's history. *Bermuda from Sail to Steam* is political, parochial history; but more dangerously it is also racially slanted history. Histories of modern countries must be, at least in part, social histories; and social history concerns itself properly with all the people.

Bermuda's black slaves were as numerous as the whites from about 1700, yet they are given scant coverage in Dr. Wilkinson's history. What notice they receive tends to be cosy or dismissive. Bermuda's slave system was probably less harsh than that of the true plantation colonies; but this did not prevent slave rebellions and their constant threat leading to harshly repressive legislation. Dr. Wilkinson ignores entirely the common practice of miscegenation, and likewise the notoriously discriminative laws passed by the Bermudian legislature against all coloureds and blacks once freed. He makes a merit of the legislators' decision to do without the transitional 'apprenticeship' stage at the time of the first Emancipation Act in 1834, and draws the moral from the quietness of the celebrations on August 1, 1834 that the ex-slaves were content. On page 512 he even claims that a number of the slaves regarded emancipation as a punishment rather than a boon. The fact of the matter was that apprenticeship was not necessary because the ex-slaves could not be independent of their former masters. The quietness in August 1834 may well have been sullen resignation. "No extra constable had been called to duty, and none was needed," writes Dr. Wilkinson. "On Monday morning the free men went where they had worked before. For there was no waste land to which they could turn for a living, even if they had the will to do so, which few did."

After 1834 Bermuda developed a system of racial differentiation little different from South African *apartheid*, and this Dr. Wilkinson clearly cherishes as the hallowed Bermudian Way of Life. Revisions to electoral qualifications at first reduced the total numbers somewhat, but almost entirely excluded the coloureds and blacks. The restrictions on economic activity, hitherto legislated, remained almost equally effective in customary practice. Education gradually became general, but schools remained segregated and unequal in quality. The wish of Governor Lefroy to 'amalgamate' the schools in the 1870s provoked a minor crisis in the Assembly, and remained unfulfilled. On the question of appointing the first two coloured men who had stood (unsuccessfully) for the Assembly to the Council, Governor Lefroy was far "sunder," showing no interest. "He probably took so un-British a suggestion," comments Dr. Wilkinson, "as quite inane."

It is often argued that 'natives' rather than outsiders should write local histories. *Bermuda from Sail to Steam* illustrates both the merits and demerits of this argument. Rich in the kind of local detail that only a life-long resident could provide, it is lacking in wider perspective and reflects the bias inherent in local society itself.

Dr. Wilkinson's history is surely one of the last of a dying type. Its narrative can never be completed both because of the economics of book production and the deficiencies of the author's vision. Despite the years of Dr. Wilkinson's antiquarian toil an adequate comprehensive history of Bermuda remains to be written. A single volume, soundly informed, should be sufficient, and in completing this, Dr. Wilkinson's four volumes will at least serve as an invaluable quarry.

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