Builders of Ohio: A Biographical History. Edited by Warren Van Tine and Michael Pierce. (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2003. xi, 338 pp. Paper, $24.95, ISBN: 0-8142-5121-8.)

If an instructor could use only two books to teach an undergraduate course in Ohio History, he or she and the students would be well served by using *Builders of Ohio* and George Knepper's, *Ohio And Its People*. As the editors state in the introduction, "The twenty-four essays in this volume use biography to explore Ohio's history. They are not intended to provide a narrative history….Nonetheless, they do provide a historical overview of the state's development…" (vii). Thus each work serves to complement the other, one providing the full narrative history and the other providing the human dimension to that narrative.

Editors Van Tine and Pierce purposefully chose the biographical approach to Ohio history for three reasons: (1) The personal narrative of a biography brings the work of academic historians more easily to the attention of the interested public; (2) Biographies emphasize the connections between historical events and the contributions of individuals; and, (3) Biography as an historical method "offers the most promising synthesis of culture and history."(viii). Through the biographical sketches of twenty-four individuals, Ohio's settlement, development of political and economic institutions, contributions to social reform, and the slow and sometimes painful transformation from an industrial-based to a service-based economy are highlighted. Some of the biographies describe people already well-known in Ohio's history and others bring to light individuals who contributed much but whom the more traditional histories have left out. The selection of people to include in this work was based on how their lives impacted the political and economic developments in Ohio as it was these developments that made Ohio distinct from other states.

The people chosen by the editors to be included in this book were excellent selections to highlight the political and economic developments and transitions in Ohio's history. The frontier experience was documented by trader, George Croghan, land developer, John Symmes, territorial governor, Arthur St. Clair, and Native-American warriors and/or peace-makers, Little Turtle and Blue Jacket. Biographies of Thomas Worthington, Philander Chase and John Campbell documented the establishment and early development of state government, political parties, and educational and economic institutions. Stories of Frances Dana Gage and John P. Parker highlighted women's reform and anti-slavery issues. The lives of Clement

Vallandigham and George Pendleton described the political tensions and changes in Ohio during and following the Civil War. The lives of B.F.Goodrich, Martin Foran, and George DeNucci documented industrialization and the growth of the labor movement. Biographies of Tom Johnson and William Oxley Thompson described the successes and limits of progressivism in Ohio. The lives of Benjamin Arnett, Florence Allen, Jane Edna Hunter, and Carl B. Stokes highlighted continued reform activities involving African-American and women's political and economic rights. Biographical sketches of Martin Davey, John Bricker, and James Rhodes documented the political changes in Ohio during the twentieth century. The book ends with a look at the life of Dave Thomas and his success with the fast-food chain well-known as Wendy's.

Each biography is written by a different author and, as the List of Contributors found at the back of the book illustrates, all are considered experts in their respective fields and well-suited to write these biographies. I commend the editors for editing the biographies so that the writing styles mesh and flow together throughout the work.

Many of the biographies describe only those aspects of the person's life that document his or her contributions to the political or economic history of Ohio. Several times I was left with the questions: "But then what happened?" or "How was this issue finally resolved?" or "How did his or her story end?" The bibliographies following each biographical sketch prove very helpful, but on occasion, it also may have been helpful to include a short paragraph bringing closure to the individual's life. On the other hand, the interest generated by these biographical sketches about individuals some of whom are not well-known provides praising testimony to the selection and writing skills of the authors and editors.

Although the geographic regions of Ohio represented by these individuals understandably emphasize Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati and the northeast and southeast sections of the state, it would have been refreshing to have at least one individual (outside of the events involving Little Turtle and Blue Jacket) from northwest Ohio. Several known and not well-known people come to mind such as Samuel "Golden Rule" Jones and Ella P. Stewart. The only essay that does not document and summarize the individual's contributions to the political and/or economic transitions in Ohio as well as the other biographies is the last one on Dave Thomas. Although it describes quite well what he did in developing Wendy's, it does not tie these contributions to the overall economic changes occurring in modern-day Ohio.

These are minor criticisms, and this work stands as an excellent source to learn much about Ohio. It stands well on its own and complements other works about Ohio. It is highly recommended to be read and used by Ohio teachers and students as well as the interested public.

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