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**NEW TITLES**


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*History*

**THE VIRGINIA JOURNALS OF BENJAMIN HENRY LATROBE, 1795-1798**  
(2 vols., 1795-1797 and 1797-1798)  
by Edward C. Carter II  
Yale, 1977  
667 pp. \$60 set  
L of C 77-76301  
ISBN 0-300-02198-4



When Thomas Jefferson needed professional help for his building projects, he turned to Benjamin Henry Latrobe (1764-1820), perhaps the finest architect in America before Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright. Latrobe's talents, embodied in his work on the U.S. Capitol, assured his place in history—but obscured his boundless activity in other fields. In his papers, Latrobe emerges as the antithesis of the specialized professional who is the norm today. A pioneer engineer, master draftsman, and water colorist, he was also a botanist, chemist, poet, linguist, author of Gothic tales, and a passable clarinetist and pianist. These volumes (of a projected 10) cover the first three years after his arrival from England in 1795. Latrobe roamed the young Republic, recording his impressions in paintings, drawings, and urbane, often bemused descriptions. The journals must have delighted his children, for whom they were intended. He was a good listener to whom George Washington could confide his fears for public morals if valuable minerals were to be found in Virginia. And he had a keen eye. On the banks of the York River, Latrobe sketched mason wasps, locally called "dirtdaubers," which yielded up to his pen the secrets of their "architecture."

**IN THE MATTER OF COLOR: Race and the American Legal Process: The Colonial Period**  
by A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr.  
Oxford, 1978  
448 pp. \$15  
L of C 76-51713  
ISBN 0-19-502387-0 (v. 1)

U.S. Circuit Court Judge Higginbotham provides a painstaking, moving survey of slavery, the courts, and the legal codes in colonial America. (Later volumes will carry his "lineage of contemptuous law" forward through 1964.) At issue: whether the slaves were human; if so, whether they were a species apart. Most colonies said "yes" to the second question if they said "yes" to the first. But in Virginia, from the time of their arrival