

women, who seemed to suffuse with an almost holy light whatever was theirs, and Mrs. Allanson's attitude towards her husband's Franklin is a nice enough example, but obviously we don't need so much detail to make the point. Such a massing of details is hard to take in the novels; in a short story it indicates a breakdown of technique.

As I have said more than once, O'Hara's fanatical preoccupation with accuracy of detail will some day make him invaluable to social historians. His motivation, I suspect, is a desire to show that he is in the know and always has been. In short, he appears to be, among other things, a snob. It will be remembered that in commenting on the Award of Merit, he says, "It may seem to have taken the Academy a rather long while to get around to it," and in his speech accepting the National Book Award a few years ago, he said straight out that it was about time the judges came to their senses. He has a chip on his shoulder, and my guess is that it has been there ever since his father's death prevented him from going to Yale.

But this is conjecture. What is demonstrable is that several stories in this volume are below par, and it may be just as well that he is going to give up writing stories for a while—though I don't look forward to the novels he will presumably write in their stead. On the other hand, there are stories that are as good as any he has written, and that, as I noted at the beginning, is saying a lot. His imagination may be limited, but within its limits it can function with great power.

—GRANVILLE HICKS

**FRAZER YOUNG'S
LITERARY CRYPT NO. 1112**

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 1112 will be found in the next issue.

UKMKVO DYDQ VSV FUOACSUE

YDQO XKKTSGC DWNDBA XQKZ

GKZD GAQKUE BQSUNSBTD.

ZDTMKPQUD

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 1111

Abuse resembles a church procession; it always returns to the point from which it set out. —MONTI.

A Code Name and a London Contact

Number 7: Alexander Hamilton's Secret Attempts to Control American Foreign Policy, by Julian Boyd (Princeton University Press. 166 pp. \$4), charges that our first Secretary of the Treasury trafficked with British secret agents in an effort to counter the avowed policies of Thomas Jefferson when the latter was Secretary of State. Esmond Wright is professor of American history at Glasgow University.

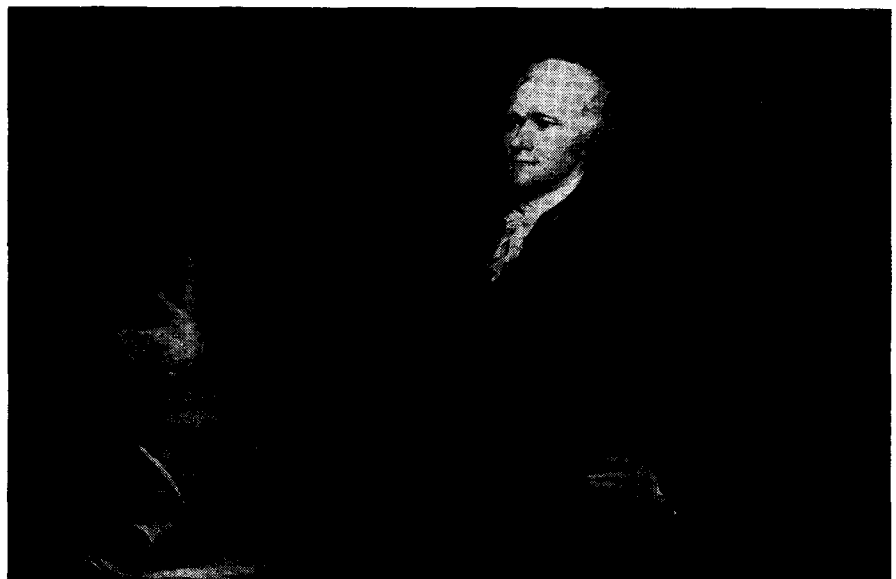
By ESMOND WRIGHT

OF THIS gentleman's sincerity, I have the surest pledge in the knowledge that any event which might endanger the tranquillity of the United States would be as fatal to the systems he has formed for the benefit of his country as to his present personal reputation and to his future projects of ambition." George Hammond, Britain's first Minister to the United States, writing to Lord Grenville in 1793, thus assessed the character and the statecraft of Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury. Hammond preferred, he said later, to make most of his communications privately to Hamilton and to have relations with Jefferson only when absolutely necessary.

We have long known that Hamilton

in foreign policy was the leading "Anglo-man" in Washington's Administration, as strongly pro-British from 1793 to 1795 as Jefferson was thought to be pro-French, and (thanks to the research of Professor Samuel Bemis) we have long known also that he was prepared to convey information to Grenville via Hammond that undermined John Jay's already-feeble bargaining power in London in 1794: the Jay Treaty, Professor Bemis wrote in 1923, might more aptly be called Hamilton's Treaty. In 1794 Hamilton, architect of the Constitution and of American Federalism and advocate of strong government as he was, believed firmly in a close connection with Great Britain. He believed even more firmly in himself.

Julian Boyd of Princeton now offers us evidence of a still more alarming kind. He gives us what he modestly calls "a sort of footnote" to Bemis's *Jay Treaty*: a group of documents drawn from Volume 17 of the Papers of Thomas Jefferson, prefaced by a long and probing introduction. The reason for their separate publication is that they offer a damning indictment: the unneutral and pro-British activities of the Hamilton of 1794—by which time Jefferson had left the Department of State—paralleled by similar maneuvers in 1790 during the Nootka Sound crisis between Britain and Spain. His instrument in 1790, as later, was Major George Beckwith, and Professor Boyd's tracing of



—Courtesy Art Commission of the City of New York.

Trumbull portrait of Alexander Hamilton—"a damning indictment."

Beckwith's operations is a superb piece of historical detection.

Beckwith, a former officer with the British 37th Regiment in the War of Independence, became by the end of the war an aide to Sir Guy Carleton. He returned to North America in 1786 when Carleton (now Lord Dorchester) became Governor-General of Canada, and it was for Dorchester that he conducted four intelligence missions between 1787 and 1790. He lived for eighteen months in New York and Philadelphia, reporting via Dorchester to Pitt and Lord Grenville in London, in constant and easy association with British *simpaticos* like William Samuel Johnson (No. 1 in his code), Philip Schuyler (No. 2), Henry Knox (No. 4) and Alexander Hamilton (No. 7).

Dr. Boyd corrects the previously-held view of Beckwith; he was not a *de facto* minister but simply a secret agent (or not so simply since he was both shrewd and bold). Hamilton used him as a channel to London and as a source of "reliable" information with which to cajole Washington. Their conversations, described as private, in fact involved nothing less than "a penetration of the highest councils of the nation by the confidential agent of another power." And, as devious as he was venturesome, Hamilton twisted Beckwith's statements, of which he was the sole auditor, to suit his purpose, as when he implied that Britain contemplated an alliance with the United States in 1790. Just as he recommended the precipitate and ill-advised mission of Gouverneur Morris to London to sound out the British Government on a settlement of outstanding problems just before Jefferson had returned from France, so by his conversations with Beckwith and his use of them he sought for three years to counter the avowed policies of the Secretary of State. In this telling, the domestic architect of the Constitution emerges in foreign affairs as not only arrogant and deceitful but as treacherous to his colleagues and near-treacherous to his country's cause.

This is a brilliant, carefully marshaled, and in its conclusions shattering piece of analysis. It is an outgrowth of meticulous research made possible by the Princeton study of the *Jefferson Papers*, and Professor Boyd is right to emphasize in his Foreword that it is but a by-product of his "normal obligations" as an editor. It was in that role that he encountered the memo of July 8, 1790, and the letter of Hamilton to Washington of September 30, 1790, recounting a conversation with Beckwith, and Beckwith's utterly contrasting account of the same conversation.

This study is to be saluted for four reasons. First, it suggests that a new examination of Anglo-American rela-

tions from 1783 to 1793 is needed; and—as John C. Miller's study of Hamilton has already hinted—it is probable that Hamilton will emerge from it a much less honorable man than in any previous estimates. Secondly, it confirms that Jefferson as Secretary of State behaved with an objectivity and an integrity that Hamilton lacked. Thirdly, it offers evidence that there was in fact a quite impressive group of British agents at work—Beckwith (ultimately to be a lieutenant-general, and a K.C.B.: the prototype, one feels, of John Buchan's Richard Hannay), John Connolly in the Northwest Territory, the unreliable and irascible Sir John Temple, the more reliable John Hamilton in Norfolk, and

the mysterious Peter Allaire with his reports that the West was ready to declare its independence. Dr. Boyd's note on Allaire, and his promise of a more extended account, are particularly welcome, providing a distinct contribution to knowledge. Finally, this study vividly reminds us how much a matter of chance it was that the United States survived its birth pangs amid the intrigues and tensions of the Great Powers. That it did survive was due far more to the sea-green incorruptibility—and awareness of the military facts of life—of Washington and the firm, middle-of-the-road sense of Jefferson than to its devious, erratic, and ambitious Secretary of the Treasury.

The War That Is Still Being Won

***The Meaning of the American Revolution*, by Dan Lacy (New American Library-World. 308 pp. \$5.95), sees in the Supreme Court's decisions on racial segregation and legislative districting a reassertion of the principles for which the Founding Fathers fought. Richard B. Morris's numerous historical studies include "The American Revolution: A Short History."**

By RICHARD B. MORRIS

AS THE centennial of Appomattox draws near it may well be overshadowed by a spate of preliminary bicentenary observations on the meaning of the American Revolution, observations set forth in sound, sensible books like the one we now have from Mr. Lacy. From the point of view of both the nation and the world this may be all to the good. The Civil War should be laid to rest once and for all, along with the divisive quarrels which that holocaust failed to settle. Certainly a war fought for independence and freedom has more pertinence to the issues of our own age than a civil conflict begun by extremists in order to safeguard their property in other human beings.

So much has been written on the Revolutionary period that one can hardly expect a novel treatment, and Mr. Lacy treads on much familiar ground. His expositions are clear and his judgments balanced, but his main contribution is to be found in his concluding chapter, wherein he considers the meaning of the American Revolution. He points out that the fundamental assumptions of American Revolutionary thought were drawn

from the philosophy of the Enlightenment, and were "superficial in psychology, ignorant as history, and inconsistent as logic." These revolutionary concepts include the notion of equality, of government resting upon the consent of the governed, of written constitutions, of inalienable rights, of due process of law, and of separation of powers.

Mr. Lacy concedes that these ideas possess a certain nobility and demonstrate a continuing vitality, and he is generally approving. He does have reservations, however, on the score of separation of powers, which, along with checks and balances, he blames for the "dangerous rigidity" he finds in our present governmental structure. To this rigidity he attributes the legislative bottleneck, broken only in times of crisis. On the other hand, without recognizing any inconsistency, he asserts that the Supreme Court, through its decisions on racial segregation and legislative districting, is reasserting the principles of the Revolution directly. Considering the history of attacks upon the High Court by either the Presidents or the Congress, it would seem self-evident that it is this very attachment to the principle of separation of powers which has preserved an independent judiciary, one courageous enough to renew the Revolution when it seemed to have bogged down.

In so wide-ranging a study as Mr. Lacy's errors seem inevitable, and there are a few that must be noted. The author errs when he says that the acts of navigation were "freely violated whenever they seriously damaged the colonies' interest." The basic patterns of navigation set as far back as 1660 were stringently enforced. Tobacco exports were diverted from the Continent to England at incalculable cost to colonial tobacco planters. Mr. Lacy confuses the widespread smug-