

REVIEWING THE LATEST BOOKS

BY WILBORNE HARRELL

DON'T TREAD ON ME. By Walter Karig, with Horace V. Bird. A novel of the historic exploits, military and gallant, of Commodore John Paul Jones, founder of the United States Navy. Rinehart & Company, Inc., New York. Published June 28, 1954. 442 pages. \$4.00.

A reviewer should attempt something more than a condensed synopsis of the story—the reader can get that for himself by scanning through the pages. When one lays down a wholly absorbing novel (such as Don't Tread On Me), there lingers an aura or afterglow, as though the mind reluctantly relinquishes the brief association with the fictional characters and resents the rude transition to the present and now when the last page is read. To capture a bit of this afterglow, or impression, is what this reviewer will attempt. He leaves the belabored and hackneyed technique to the professional reviewer—simply because he does not know how to write a professional review and needs must be himself and write what he feels.

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that of the redoubtable Commodore. This reviewer is somewhat prejudiced against first-person stories, but since this one is told, not illogically, by John Paul Jones' secretary and friend, and eye-witness to what he writes, the whole tale is strengthened and gains in force by being thus narrated.

Fisher, a former bound-boy to a sailmaker and ships' chandler of Martha's Vineyard, eventually finds himself, after a grueling apprenticeship aboard ship accepted as Jones' secretary and scrivener, and as time passes, valued friend and companion.

If ever a story can be summed up in one word, Don't Tread On Me can be summed up in the word, destiny. John Paul Jones was a firm believer in destiny—his and his country's—and no man ever followed his destiny to a more gloriously fitting end. A man, "named, but nameless", who barely missed being a pirate, a bit of a poet, but above all an unparalleled seaman, John Paul Jones towers through the pages of Don't Tread On Me, undaunted, unconquered, unconquerable.

From the moment Manesseh Fisher stows away on Jones' ship, the plot, somewhat in the Colonial manner of Inglis Fletcher, moves swiftly onward. We follow Jones and Fisher as they abandon a pirate ship when mutiny threatens and in which Fisher saves John Paul's life, to the Carolinas and to Edenton. There Jones meets Joseph Hewes, who was later to become a powerful influence in his life. Adventure follows adventure as they travel northward, and as rumblings of Colonial rebellion against England begin to shape into action, John Paul Jones, after disheartening and discouraging set-backs that would have stopped a lesser man in his tracks, begins to emerge into the dominant figure he was to become.

Like a golden thread the tender love story of Manesseh Fisher and the aristocratic Lady Margaret weaves through the story. Fisher first meets Margaret aboard the ship that rescued him and Jones after their flight from the pirate vessel. The romance is early beset by difficulties, and when after a few meetings, Fisher is whisked away by John Paul Jones, he thinks all is lost and he will never see his beloved again.

Don't Tread On Me is divided in two parts, the first dealing with preliminary incidents, which leading into the second part recount Jones' immortal

deeds in the Ranger and the Bon Homme Richard. Here as before he was beset with difficulties . . . "jealous detractors . . . motivated by vanity and self-service." But as Fisher makes clear, John Paul Jones lacked "one talent necessary to the complete success he strove to attain: altho assiduous, he was not an artful enough politician." There was the rub—John Paul Jones knew how to deal with men, but knew nothing of the devious schemes of politicians and "short-sighted legislators". But John Paul Jones is triumphant over everything, from the capture of Nassau early in the Revolution to the magnificent victory over the Serapis, in the Bon Homme Richard, the apex of his career.

It was during this engagement between the Bon Homme Richard and the Serapis that John Paul Jones uttered the famous words that have rung down the years as the rallying cry of the United States Navy—"I have not yet begun to fight!"

And again we see the furtherance of the love affair of Manesseh Fisher and the Lady Margaret in a smash sequence that has all the ingredients of a Hollywood thriller. All that is lacking is technicolor and cinemaScope. In breath-taking scenes we find Fisher discovering the whereabouts of his beloved Margaret, and see him bring her away by a clever ruse. Then we see all his new-found happiness dashed away when Margaret's father in turn abducts her and places her in a convent. And then when the wheel of fortune again spins we find Margaret's father in prison and Fisher by another clever ruse learning from him where he had hidden Margaret away. Tensely the plot builds up to a happy ending with Fisher's flight from the convent with the Lady Margaret, and finally their marriage under the auspices of John Paul Jones.

Don't Tread On Me is written in the best tradition of the historical novel, replete with plot, incident, situation and drama. There is the feel of the rolling deck of a ship, of storm and hurricane and the sting of salt spray in one's face, the sound and fury of battle, and the tender touch of a love story to soften the necessary scenes of action, as men fight and sail—and live and die for a Cause.

No man ever flashed across the historical scene of any country with more magnificent brilliance than John Paul Jones displayed, when his exploits and daring adventures meteored across the embattled scene of early America. "Nameless", he was the child of destiny, and his is the story of destiny—the destiny of a man, and the destiny of his country.

Moving Chicks Into Laying House Critical

Most chicks purchased in North Carolina for fall layers are now on range. Some of the birds have develop-

ed to the extent that they will soon be laying a few eggs. This presents poultrymen with a critical decision.

R. S. Dearstyn, head of the department of poultry science, N. C. State College says the decision of when to move pullets into the laying house is one of the important questions to be answered every year by laying flock owners.

Some poultrymen feel the birds should be moved as a group at the first indication of lay. Others believe that they should be left on range until the rate of lay is pronounced (until 15-20 per cent of the birds are producing). Dearstyn explains that despite the fact that sexual maturity is inherited, there is quite a variation, even between full sisters, in the time that sexual maturity occurs. This creates some confusion.

After birds come into production, says Dearstyn, they react to a change in environment and until adjustments are made some slump in production may occur.

Dearstyn believes it best to move birds into the laying house when signs of approaching sexual maturity are "well defined," with this proviso: "That the group in question is hatched at the same time and that all show good body weight."

The quarters into which the birds are moved should have been cleaned and disinfected. When the birds are finally moved they should be handled

individually and strict culling of sub-normal birds carried out.

Insecticide Label Should Be Read Before Using

It's important to read the label on the insecticide you buy, says Julius Daniels, Negro cotton farmer of Williamson, Route 3.

Carl D. Hodges, assistant Martin County Negro farm agent for the Agricultural Extension Service, says Daniels had an experience recently which thousands of farmers have had—that of not taking time to read the insecticide label.

Daniels checked his cotton field for

boll weevil infestation recently and, like other good farmers, decided it was time to treat. He went immediately to the feed store and ordered a well-known weevil spray. The clerk misunderstood and gave him the wrong insecticide.

Daniels hurried home and began applying the material. A week later another weevil check showed that the infestation had increased considerably. Daniels called in Farm Agent Hodges. The first question the agent asked was, "What did you use?" A quick check uncovered the mystery.

Daniels is now convinced that all farmers should read their insecticide labels carefully.

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