Business League, and a loyal Republican—a leader during an era when Black entrepreneurs were widely seen as ideal community and political guides. This ended with the depression. It would be almost forty years, until 1966, before the Spingarn Medal went to another entrepreneur, John H. Johnson, perhaps Overton's successor as "the merchant prince of Black Chicago."

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Modern Cronies: Southern Industrialism from Gold Rush to Convict Labor, 1829–1894. By Kenneth H. Wheeler. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2021. 187 pp. Cloth, $14.95. Paper, $34.95.)

Kenneth H. Wheeler's *Modern Cronies* demonstrates the value of a dense and detailed study of a location and network of individuals over a long period if we want to understand industrialization. The place is the Etowah River valley in north Georgia, and if the name of the river is unfamiliar, the cities that arose at its north and south ends are not: Chattanooga and Atlanta. Wheeler does an excellent job of delineating a sequence of events starting with the gold rush of 1829 and the subsequent removal of the Cherokee from their north Georgia home. This opened the way for ambitious gold miners and town builders such as William Grisham to come in, and then for the creation of the Western and Atlantic Railroad, a vital link through the Appalachian Mountains to the Tennessee River and the West.

Wheeler devotes considerable attention to the resort of Rowland Springs which became a key meeting place for the network of cronies who animate the book. *Cronies,* as Wheeler uses the term, were people who "formed a broad network of interlocking relationships," and "saw government—the state—as a central player in their gambits," at times participating in government themselves, always benefiting from it, and usually operating secretly (p. 2). By the early 1840s, many of these cronies had begun to make the Etowah Valley a major center for iron production, with experienced furnace builders such as Moses Stroup from South Carolina paving the way for others, including his son, Jacob, and John W. Lewis. The main crony in this book, however, is Joseph E. Brown, who emerges not just as a remarkable individual (he was Georgia governor before and during the Civil War), but as a central node in a network of men who, by the late 1840s, had begun to take political power in Georgia and used that power to drive a vision of the South that remained built on slavery but was industrial and connected to the rest of the nation and its economy. Of course, this vision was wrecked by Gen. William T. Sherman in the mid-1860s, and not even Brown's power as governor could prevent it. What Brown was able to salvage, using his political influence, was the support of government for (his and his cronies') private enterprise, in the form of convict labor, which partially rebuilt the iron industry in north Georgia and, again through the assiduously traced networks, helped build Birmingham and shape southern development into the twentieth century.

Modern Cronies proves that "place mattered, as did people," and Wheeler's patient work in local records presents a much fuller account of southern industrialization taking shape over decades in the genealogical landscape of north Georgia (p. 3). A small but significant quibble is that, for a book so focused on place, it lacks a clear map of the region.

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Crying the News: A History of America's Newsboys. By Vincent DiGirolamo. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. xii, 698 pp. Cloth, $49.95. Paper, $29.95.)

In the early twentieth century, the tag "Once a Newsboy" headlined the profiles and obituaries of countless successful tycoons who had risen above their station in "rags-to-riches" glory (p. 499). "Crying the news," these stories suggested, was a kind of portal to a Horatio Algeresque social mobility in which

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individual character, not poverty or class, largely determined success (p. 4).

As a symbol, newsboys have long occupied an elevated status in the American imagination. But as reality, newsboys have somehow managed to escape rigorous historical analysis. In the meticulously researched and beautifully written *Crying the News,* Vincent DiGirolamo is the first historian to disentangle myth from reality. His skillful analysis deconstructs the nostalgic symbol of the newsboy while reconstructing newsboys' actual lives and experiences for more than a century. The result is an epic history of America's newsboys that places these young purveyors of news at the center of American history.

Crying the News proceeds chronologically, with fourteen chapters examining five generations of newsboys, from the 1830s through the 1940s. This impressive scope is matched by an equally impressive range of sources, from newspapers, sociological studies, trade journals, travelers' accounts, and government documents to photographs, novels, comic strips, postcards, and paintings. Analytically, DiGirolamo interweaves multiple approaches, including, most prominently, social history as well as cultural, visual, and aural history. DiGirolamo gives rare attention to the literal voices of newsboys "crying" as an indelible sound that shaped the urban landscape.

Although the contributions of *Crying the News* are manifold, its singular achievement as a work of social history stands out. *Crying the News* resurrects the thoughts and actions of newsboys themselves. It shows how these children—boys and girls, white and Black, immigrant and native—actively shaped American history as they "cried" out the news during nation-altering moments, interacting with and changing the adult world in the process. In 1861, "swiftfooted newsboys" proclaimed the news of Fort Sumter, which was "the first of many unthinkable events that newsboys hollered into reality" (p. 111). DiGirolamo reveals how the information newsboys spread sometimes tipped the scales in favor of Union victory. In the 1890s, newsboys egged on the nationalistic fervor that incited the Spanish-American War while also stoking the flames of working-class anger as they cried out news of labor strikes and organized dozens themselves. During the Great Migration, African American newsboys provided crucial income for their families amid their transition to life in northern cities, and many girls joined the news trade during World War I to serve their country during wartime. Other rich examples abound.

Although DiGirolamo's magisterial treatment of newsboys in American history overflows with fascinating information, vignettes, and insights, readers can lose sight of the bigger picture while wading through so much overwhelming detail. Some repetition could have been eliminated in favor of the author providing more analytical conclusions that support an overarching claim. But this minor drawback should not detract from the astonishing work that DiGirolamo has produced. With remarkable detail and breathtaking scope, *Crying the News* is a stunning achievement that will be of interest not only to historians of labor, capitalism, print journalism, and childhood but also to anyone interested in the American experience.

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Limited Choices: Mable Jones, a Black Children's Nurse in a Northern White Household. By Emily K. Abel and Margaret K. Nelson. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2021. xvi, 215 pp. $24.95.)

Limited Choices is a personal exploration for its authors, Emily K. Abel and Margaret K. Nelson, who are also sisters. A historian and sociologist, respectively, Abel and Nelson reconstruct the dynamic life of Mable Jones, their former child nurse. Born and raised in Jim Crow Virginia, Jones lived with their family in Larchmont, an all-white village in Westchester County, New York, from 1946 to 1953.

Jones, Abel and Nelson write, "played a major role in shaping our lives," yet "we knew little about her" (p. 2). They acknowledge, "attempting to document her life would help us better understand the constraints that forced

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