

Before Sherlock Holmes: How Magazines and Newspapers Invented the Detective Story

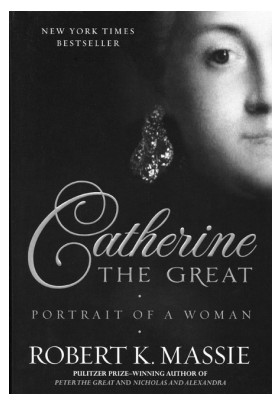
by Leroy Lad Panek (219 pages, September 2011), examines the rise of Anglo-American detective fiction in the mid-19th century. Although Poe is credited with inventing the modern detective story with "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" in 1841, Panek points out that semifiction ("Newgate novels") glorifying the lives of criminals was popular in England in the 1830s. He also surveys the development of Poe's "tales of ratiocination," the detective notebooks published in *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, the murder plots of Charles Dickens, the sensation novels of Wilkie Collins, detective fiction in mainstream magazines, and the short detective stories and serial novels that thrived in American newspapers in the 1870s and 1880s. \$40.00. McFarland. 978-0-7864-6787-7.

Catherine the Great: Portrait of a Woman

by Robert K. Massie (625 pages, November 2011), is a straightforward and fascinating

biography of the German Princess Sophia Augusta Fredericka who left Stettin for St. Petersburg in 1744 on a journey that would lead to her reign of 34 years as empress of Russia. Massie, who wrote a Pulitzer

Prize-winning biography of Peter the Great in 1980, portrays Catherine as an intelligent, well-read, shrewd, quick-witted, and courageous woman who brought European



art, philosophy, and Enlightenment ideals to Russia. Her life and times are vividly evoked in this absorbing story. \$35.00. Random House. 978-0-679-45672-8.

Dr. Joseph Warren: The Boston Tea Party, Bunker Hill, and the Birth of American Liberty

by Samuel A. Forman (455 pages, November 2011), resurrects the role that Warren played as a patriot in the early days of the American Revolution. Not only was he responsible for sending out Paul Revere and William Dawes to warn Concord that the British garrison in Boston was moving out to arrest rebel leaders, but he also enlisted as a private soldier and was killed in 1775 at the Battle of Bunker Hill. Forman, a physician himself, discusses Warren's efforts to contain a Boston smallpox epidemic in 1763, his excellent medical care for patients from future First Lady Abigail Adams to slave and poet Phillis Wheatley, his spy network of patients, his secret life as a Boston Mason, and the legend of Warren's skull being on display at a Boston museum for many years. \$29.95. Pelican. 978-1-4556-1474-5.

The Keats Brothers: The Life of John and George

by Denise Gigante (499 pages, October 2011), fills in some gaps in the erratic biographical record of John Keats, notably the relationship with his younger brother George, who left home in 1818 to start a new life in the American wilderness. Gigante alternates her narrative between the two brothers to show the contrast between John's romantic naturalism and George's actual experiences in the Kentucky forest, where John James Audubon makes a surprising appearance. \$35.00. Belknap Press. 978-0-674-04856-0.

Proving History: Bayes's Theorem and the Quest for the Historical Jesus

by Richard C. Carrier (340 pages, April 2012), argues

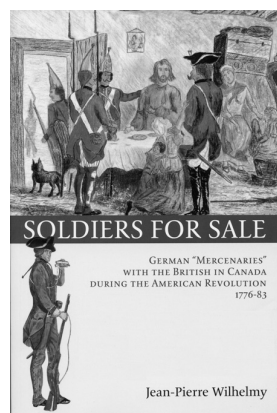
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that Bayes's Theorem, a logical formula widely used in statistics and science, is also an essential tool for historians who wish to evaluate the probability of an interpretation or hypothesis. For historians, the use of a mathematical theorem to establish reliable historical criteria can sound both threatening and misguided. However, Carrier describes and defends the theorem in layman's terms, demonstrates that historians actually think in terms of probabilities while rarely quantifying them, shows how all other axioms and rules in historical methodology are compatible with the theorem, and then gives it a practical workout on recent studies on the historicity of Jesus. Although he is planning a second volume that focuses specifically on the historical Jesus, in this book Carrier shows how the criteria for judging whether or not Jesus was a historical figure (coherence, embarrassment, multiple attestation, contextual plausibility, etc.) are replaceable by Bayes's Theorem, which "if used correctly and honestly . . . won't let you prove whatever you want, but only what the facts warrant." \$28.00. Prometheus. 978-1-61614-559-0.

Roger Williams and the Creation of the American Soul, by John M. Barry (464 pages, January 2012), identifies Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, as the first person in the history of the world to insist that government receives its power from, and should be controlled by, its citizens. He was also one of the first, 150 years before Thomas Jefferson, to call for a "wall of separation" between church and state. Influenced both by British jurist Edward Coke and the scientific methodology of Sir Francis Bacon, Williams traveled to Boston in 1631 as a Puritan Separatist, but quickly found himself at odds with Governor John Winthrop's model of the Massachusetts Bay Colony as a "city upon a hill" uniting God and government. In 1635 Williams was condemned as a heretic and exiled. He made his way to the Narragansett territory and established the settlement of Providence as

a haven for settlers pursuing liberty of conscience. Barry makes Williams's story easily understandable in the context of 17th-century politics and religion and shows how a man with absolute faith in the Bible can still believe it "monstrous" to compel conformity to his own beliefs. \$35.00. Viking. 978-0-670-02305-9.

Soldiers for Sale: German "Mercenaries" with the British in Canada during the American Revolution, 1776–83, by Jean-Pierre Wilhelmy (293 pages, March 2012), chronicles the experience of German military units that supported the British army in Canada during the Revolutionary War. Wilhelmy, a French-Canadian who discovered his German ancestry during a genealogical search, decided to piece together what little is known about the 30,000 soldiers



that King George III purchased from six German princes in order to supplement his limited colonial army. Although known to the Continental army as Hessians, troops from Hesse-Kassel constituted only about half of the total number. During the 1777 campaign, German soldiers made up nearly half of General Burgoyne's army. The first Christmas tree lit in Canada—an event commemorated on a Canadian stamp 200 years later—was in 1781 at the residence of General Friedrich Adolf Riedesel, the commander of troops from Brunswick. After the war, some 2,400 Germans decided to stay in Canada, where they quickly assimilated, frequently changing their last names. Wilhelmy offers abundant maps and appendices with regimental histories, descriptions of uniforms, and surnames of soldiers. \$29.95. Baraka Books. 978-1-926824-12-3. *ZZ*