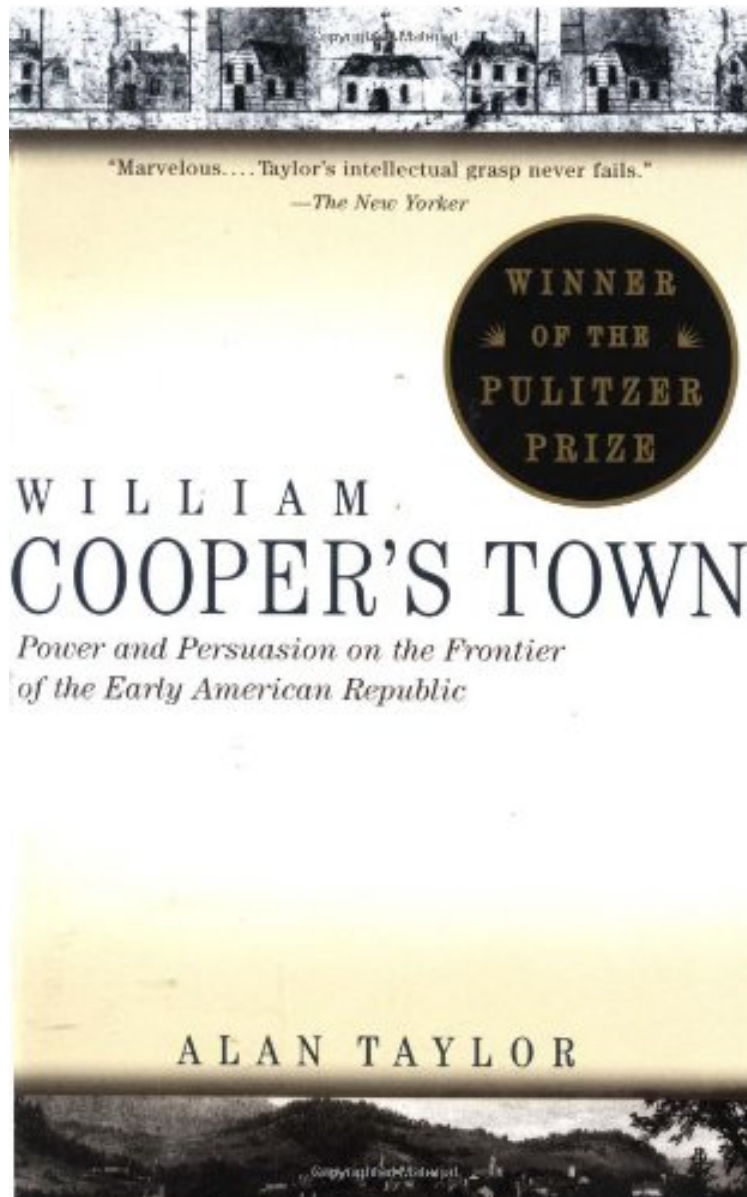


William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic

Alan Taylor

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Alan Taylor : William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic:

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William Cooper and James Fenimore Cooper, a father and son who embodied the contradictions that divided America in the early years of the Republic, are brought to life in this Pulitzer Prize-winning book. William Cooper rose from humble origins to become a wealthy land speculator and U.S. congressman in what had until lately been the wilderness of upstate New York, but his high-handed style of governing resulted in his fall from power and political disgrace. His son James Fenimore Cooper became one of this countrys first popular novelists with a book, *The Pioneers*, that tried to come to terms with his fathers failure and imaginatively reclaim the estate he had lost. In *William Coopers Town*, Alan Taylor dramatizes the class between gentility and democracy that was one of the principal consequences of the American Revolution, a struggle that was waged both at the polls and on the pages of our national literature. Taylor shows how Americans resolved their revolution through the creation of new social reforms and new stories that evolved with the expansion of our frontier.

.com In 1786 William Cooper, determined to become a self-made gentleman of substance in post-revolutionary America, founded Cooperstown, N.Y., through a dodgy land deal. His town rose to become county seat, and Cooper became a judge and then a congressman. He lost most of the prestige he earned later, when he overstretched himself, and his local patronage weakened when he backed the Federalists against the victorious Republicans. Nonetheless, his son, James Fenimore Cooper, the early 19th century's best-selling novelist, wrote essentially a justification of his father in his third novel, *The Pioneers* (1823). Taylor's book--a combination of biography, personal history, social history, literary exegesis and analysis of father-son dynamics--charts the interplay between the fact and the fiction of the days when upstate New York was the frontier. *William Cooper's Town* won the 1996 Pulitzer Prize for history.From Publishers WeeklyTaylor's account of politician William Cooper and his son, the novelist James Fenimore Cooper, was awarded a Pulitzer Prize. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Library JournalWheelright William Cooper became a land speculator in frontier New York following the American Revolution. Taking advantage of postwar opportunities, he bought the Otsego Patent and founded Cooperstown, New York. Using his social and political connections, he became a judge and then a U.S. congressman. One of his sons, the famous novelist James Fenimore Cooper, wrote *The Pioneers*, a fictionalized account of early Cooperstown. Taylor (history, Univ. of California) traces Cooper's life and the development of Cooperstown in exhaustive detail, drawing parallels with *The Pioneers*. He provides a thoroughly researched account of the early village. However, his constant attempt to cram every relevant fact into his text leads to lengthy sentences that dampen reader interest. Only the most persevering reader will make it through this one. For large academic libraries specializing in postrevolutionary American history.?Grant A. Fredericksen, Illinois Prairie Dist. P.L., *Metamora*Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.