One picks up a book entitled *The Delaware* with the expectation that he will find the story of a river and the influence of that river upon the land which it drains. This view is encouraged by Mr. Wildes' opening passages, in which he sketches a brave picture of loggers and boatmen and gives one a taste *par excellence* of the river itself. But the fluvial element wanes, and one reads rather of the region through which the Delaware happens to flow, with only an occasional reminder that there is a functional relationship between a river and its hinterland. Indeed, the author sometimes strays beyond the confines of the Delaware watershed to tell of colorful happenings in the Susquehanna valley. Nor does he mar his book by so doing, for this is no narrative held within strict bounds by consideration of unity and continuity. It is rather a succession of cameos, portraying a series of situations selected from the rich history of the region under consideration. The author's search for color is well rewarded, and the reader, charmed by Mr. Wildes' deft exposition, feels rewarded too. It is possible, however, that the unwary, disregarding the warnings which are judiciously dropped here and there, may be left with an impression at variance with actualities. Normal life along the Delaware has perhaps been less exuberant and, let us hope, somewhat less corrupt than these pages would seem to imply.

University of Pennsylvania

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This volume lists 1,141 items, ranging from single documents to collections of thousands of papers. Each numbered entry bears the inclusive dates of its contents and in many instances the name of the donor or the seller and the date of acquisition. Under most of the items there is a brief description, and sometimes a list of the principal correspondents in a given set of manuscripts is included.

For the first time a calendar of the great manuscript wealth of the Historical Society is made available to scholarship. There is a rich harvest, much of it waiting to be gathered. The society has wide interests, not only political but also economic and cultural. There is much of literary
and artistic interest. Large collections of early business records range from the battered accounts of farmers, millers, and blacksmiths to the voluminous correspondence of mercantile houses with connections all over the world. Corporation, club, and society records abound, and diaries and journals throw much light on all phases of Pennsylvania's past. Only those who study this inventory will realize how much of value there is for students of general American history. No serious researcher in the field can afford to omit a careful examination of this valuable finding list. University of Pennsylvania

ROY F. NICHOLS


Mr. Swanson, the editor of the Baltimore Sun, adds this volume to five historical novels previously written by him, and he plans to continue his writing, covering the history of the United States in historical fiction. Those that have appeared can all stand alone, and yet they are closely related. Some of the characters found in this volume are carried over from his previous novel, Judas Tree, and one ventures to guess that Frederick and "the brat" will become the hero and heroine in the author's next volume. The Silent Drum, therefore, is of more than ordinary interest to the teacher of history who likes to approach his subject by way of the historical novel.

The story covers the pre-Revolutionary period, beginning in 1764, when Fred, the Dutch indentured boy of Leslie, who had deserted from Fort Pitt to save his pet bear, is living with the Shawnees on the Muskingum River. The youth's braided scalp lock testifies to his adoption into the tribe. Released with other captives after Bouquet's expedition, he returns to civilization accompanied by a little girl, called simply "the brat." They find Leslie, the leader of the "black boys" of the Pennsylvania frontier, and with him the hero participates in the capture of Fort Loudoun from its British garrison in 1765. Though the captured men were almost immediately released, the incident is used to develop the theme that there was a clashing of interests between the pioneer settlers on the one hand and the Indian traders and British soldiers on the other. The settlers wanted no guns or rum sold to the Indians. Perhaps Mr. Swanson overemphasizes this conflict between traders and settlers. Often the same person was both trader and settler, and large traders, such as George Croghan, wanted to sell their extensive lands to settlers and hence wished them to prosper. A settler, however, could not understand that there was something to be said for letting the Indians have guns. If the Indians were not kept measurably contented, they would be thrown into the hands of the Spanish and French traders, who would gladly equip them with guns. This larger imperial—and later national—view the settler was seldom able to grasp.

The style in The Silent Drum is colorful, and dramatic incidents abound. The average reader, however, will be annoyed at times by the unnecessary use of eighteenth-century vernacular in other than the quoted lines of the various characters. This detracts from his interest and pleasure. Using
the vernacular only for quoted lines would present sufficiently the flavor of
the times. But especially noteworthy is the fact that Mr. Swanson's care
in research has produced a novel relatively free from historical errors. In
this respect his work compares favorably with Louis Zara's novel, This Land
Is Ours, which covers, in part, the same period. The reader will welcome
Mr. Swanson's next volume.
Ohio University

A. T. Volwiler