
One measure of the importance of this volume is the amount of discussion it has generated since its publication. Its tremendous scope has guaranteed that every reviewer would find in it something to praise, something to condemn, and much concerning which he of necessity must be ignorant. Indeed, America As A Civilization probably should—in keeping with a trend of the times—he reviewed not by individuals but by teams of social scientists. But in seeking an acceptable synthesis of their views, such teams might miss the volume's essential nature. For Lerner has essayed an examination and evaluation of the entire pattern of American life, an examination premised on his belief that, “For good or ill, America is what it is—a culture in its own right, with many characteristic lines of power and meaning of its own, ranking with Greece and Rome as one of the greatest distinctive civilizations of history” (p. 59). He writes:

The idea of American “exceptionalism” is valid if you take it in the sense that America has its own civilization pattern, which does not follow the pattern of others and is not linked by any inevitable destiny to their doom. This does not cut America off from the universal experience of other civilizations, nor does it make America immune to the age-old forces that have seen other civilizations rise and flourish, decay and die. It does, however, stress the ways in which America has been favored by geography and historical circumstance (p. 28).

In developing this thesis, Lerner has no single explanation but believes that, “The study of American civilization becomes thus the study of the polar pattern itself, not a search for some single key that will unlock causation” (p. 73). The necessity of using a wide-angle lens is obvious when he states:

If there is a figure-ground relation in American civilization it must be sought in the relation between power and ideas, science and conscience, the revolutionary machine and the conservative crust of tradition, mass production and social creativeness, individualist values and collective action, capitalist economics and democratic freedom, class structure and the image of prestige and success in the American mind, elite power and the popular arts, the growth of military power and the persistence of civilian control, the fact of an American imperium and the image of an open constitutional world (p. 73).

America As A Civilization stands in the tradition of other notable inter-
pretations of America, interpretations running from De Tocqueville through Laski, but to his effort Lerner as an American brings not only a breadth of learning equal to that of any of his predecessors but a sympathy and understanding—not a chauvinism—of which the earlier critics were probably incapable. To present his pluralistic interpretation of American civilization he discusses the American historical heritage, the nature of its civilization, its resources, regions, ways of living, technology, economy, political system, class and status structure, the “Life Cycle of the American,” “Character and Society,” “Belief and Opinion,” the arts, and, finally, America’s position in the world. Each chapter is prefaced by a brief prospectus wherein one may find a useful guide to the presentation which follows. These prefaces will be especially useful to those who will wish to read the volume by selecting certain chapters or sections, rather than by moving directly from start to finish. The same subject, it should be noted, is often examined from a variety of angles. The chief function of the footnotes is to provide useful cross references to assist in locating these angles.

Lerner writes with deep conviction about the uniqueness and the importance of the American experience. His approach is optimistic and liberal and indicative of a strong faith in the American way. Thus a review of the popular scorn which most Americans direct at their politicians and their ways is followed by a strong defense of the American political system and an expression of Lerner’s essentially Jeffersonian faith in the individual voter. While he is often, and quite properly, severely critical of many aspects of the America of the mid-1950’s, close upon the heels of a hard-hitting analysis there usually comes a clear statement of his belief in the fundamental soundness of the facet of American life under discussion.

To the historian this book will provide a good synthesis of materials drawn from many disciplines. From it both he and the general reader cannot fail to develop a deeper understanding of the revolution of our own times. On almost every page there are points worthy of reflection and discussion. This reviewer cannot agree for a moment with those who have designated Lerner’s style as “arid.” It is smooth, readable, epigrammatic, and often witty. (Examples: “The totalitarian spirit can come to reside in a culture no matter what the shell of its technology is” (p. 263). “Great architecture is based on belief. Americans have not yet developed a way of domestic life sharply enough differentiated so that a body of belief can be built on it and in turn give rise to a distinctive architecture” (p. 865). Of the products of the recording and sheet-music industry: “They are, in fact, all the poetry that most young Americans know. Their effect on American taste makes the juke boxes a greater danger to American life than the Jukes” (p. 850).

Such weaknesses as there are in Lerner’s book stem from the ambitious nature of the project. His “Notes for Further Reading” (pp. 955-998) lists the books and articles on which he has drawn, and the compilation is impressive. But it does raise the question as to whether any one scholar can speak with authority on such a vast array of subjects. Furthermore, despite the volume’s size it has often been impossible for the author to avoid over-
simplification. Some topics—for example, the place of organized religion in America—have been but briefly treated.

But *America As A Civilization* is both a sound analysis and a sensitive and thoughtful commentary. It is also a type of democratic manifesto—an expression of the creed of one of its notable citizen-scholars, one who understands his country's past, who has assayed its contemporary strengths and weaknesses, and who looks to the future with realistic confidence. Lerner believes that America's "great tests are still to come" (p. 948) but that these tests will be met successfully if America's creative forces are not first dried up. He thus concludes:

There are many who feel . . . that, whether through conformism, fanaticism or rigidity, American society will succumb to the final impersonality of the Age of the Insects. The long journey we have made through these pages should lead to a different conclusion. There is still in the American potential the plastic strength that has shaped a great civilization, and it shows itself in unexpected ways, at unpredictable moments, and in disguises that require some imaginative understanding to unveil. What Emerson said a century ago I would still hold to: "We think our civilization is near its meridian, but we are yet only at the cockcrow and the morning star" (p. 950).

*Muhlenberg College*

**JOHN J. REED**


With the appearance of the third and last volume of *The Journals of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg* a significant project of translating and of editing that has been under way for more than two decades has been magnificently completed. The first of these volumes appeared in 1942, the second in 1945, and the third in 1958. In sheer bulk the Journals, consisting of nearly 2,300 large, double-columned pages, are impressive. Beginning with the entry for January 2, 1742, and ending with the entry for September 29, 1787, Muhlenberg's journals cover the period of the French and Indian War, the movement for American independence, and the writing of the constitution of 1787. Although not a participant in political affairs, Muhlenberg could not remain unaware of the stirring events taking place during the time of his ministry in North America. His journals remind the reader that during most of these years he was in or near Philadelphia, the cultural capital of English America during the flowering period of our colonial culture. His own contribution to our cultural growth in that period was not insignificant. His journals, a voluminous record of his ministry and of his life in America, is his literary legacy to the American people.

To appreciate fully the third volume of Muhlenberg's *Journals*, one should, first of all, read (or re-read) the preceding volumes of this work. At the opening of the third volume, January 1, 1777, Muhlenberg's great work was completed; his years of achievement were behind him, and he
was living in seclusion. Now well advanced in his sixties, he was feeling older than his years, and he was troubled in spirit. He had not welcomed the break between Great Britain and her disaffected colonies in North America, and he was not comforted by the knowledge that his eldest son, contrary to his father's desire, was then serving as a brigadier general in the Continental Army. His difficult position on the eve of the War for Independence had become more difficult after independence had been declared.

A native of Hanover, he had lived under the three Georges, and, as he affirmed, "had been their loyal subject not for the sake of money, position, or pension, but for conscience' sake." Being "forcibly obliged," after independence had been declared, to pray publicly for the United States and its government, and being unwilling to change his oath of loyalty "except by compulsion," he left Philadelphia with his ailing wife to reside in New Providence, where he hoped to lead a solitary and quiet life. But for months to come he "continued to live in commotion" because of "all sorts of invasions and marchings through." He was suspected by both parties to the conflict. But he kept aloof from politics, and, as he affirmed in November, 1777, he retained the "liberty of praying for all men." As the years went by, however, there came peace, relative quiet, and even understanding. In 1784, three years before his death, Muhlenberg received from the University of Pennsylvania the degree of doctor of divinity.

Although he lived in relative seclusion, Muhlenberg was neither isolated nor inactive during the later years of his life. People in great numbers—some important and others of little significance—came to his home. Thanks to such visits and to newspapers which now and again came to his hand, he kept in touch with much that was happening in America and elsewhere. But a considerable part of his time was occupied with routine affairs of daily life, and his lot was not made easy by the war-time inflation. Moreover, his ministerial labors did not cease when he left Philadelphia. He remained the faithful pastor to the end. There were sermons to be preached, baptisms and marriages to be performed, funerals to be conducted, and petty squabbles to be settled. All such matters, and more, he faithfully recorded in his journal; and he continued his labors almost to the day of his death.

Fortunately for posterity, the keeping of his journals was one of Muhlenberg's major concerns throughout his life. Because he was methodical and thorough, he brought together a mass of information that helps to illumine more than forty years of our history. Muhlenberg himself believed that his journals were important. As late as September 24, 1781, when a rumor was afloat that the British were contemplating an attack upon Philadelphia, he expressed the "one wish" that his journals, "insignificant as they are," might be preserved so that "the fathers, patrons, and benefactors in Europe" might learn what had happened to those whom they had sent to spread the gospel in a distant part of the world. For other reasons later generations of Americans are grateful for the preservation of this record of the man who founded in America not only an important religious denomination, but also a highly distinguished family. It is a goodly heritage.

The translators and editors of this work deserve commendation for a
job well done. They deserve particular praise for appending to the third volume a useful index to all three volumes.

Bucknell University

J. ORIN OLIPHANT


Drums in the Forest is the contribution of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania to the Pittsburgh Bicentennial. The book contains two monographs, both of which view history through a microscope. In contrast to the grand scale of Toynbee and others who prefer to deal with masses of people and long epochs of time conveniently classified into civilizations, this is local history without apology. Yet it is local history properly placed in its contemporary world setting.

The first essay, by Alfred Proctor James, is entitled “Decision At the Forks.” Drawing upon his own earlier research as well as the latest findings of other scholars, Professor James narrates the historical background of the British triumph at the Forks of the Ohio in 1758. The fifty-three pages contain brief discussions of the physical setting, the Indians, and the European and American phases of Anglo-French rivalry. The treatment of the military action of the French and Indian War includes considerably more detail and contains a sketch of the contributions of significant leaders on both sides. Professor James has not exaggerated the importance of the English victory nor overlooked its tentative nature. He concluded that its most lasting effect may have been its “breach in the dam against settlement,” which later helped make possible the European occupation of the Ohio Valley.

“Decision at the Forks” is presented in a clear style, but lacks literary polish. It is a convenient summary of the material, although it offers little new information. A good textbook in American history would include much of the factual material without the special focus on the capture of Fort Duquesne.

Charles Morse Stotz’s essay, “Defense in the Wilderness,” nicely supplements the one by Professor James. The author is an architect and his study is mainly concerned with the design and construction of the five different forts which protected the Point at various times between 1754 and 1792. The material is placed in the setting of European military practice, including some discussion of contemporary literature on the construction and use of forts. The author also briefly describes other colonial American forts.

The five forts provide good examples of practically every type of frontier military construction, from the simplest to the most elaborate. Fort Pitt, with its dirt construction and brick fronting, was one of the largest British forts to be constructed in America. Yet before the British had completed it, several severe floods had damaged its structure, and within a few years it was in a state of disrepair. During Pontiac’s uprising the Indians attacked Fort Pitt; it was the only direct attack made against any of the forts on
this site. In a sense Fort Pitt was obsolete when it was built because such huge, strong forts were only useful during the wars between France and England.

Thirty-one illustrations add to the value of “Defense in the Wilderness.” The conjectural drawings of the five forts are based on extensive research and help the reader to visualize the original buildings. Other maps, contemporary drawings, and later drawings provide an excellent pictorial guide to eighteenth-century methods of fortification.

Despite his special interest in architecture the author does not neglect the human drama of life at the forts. Building the forts required a lot of muscle power; it was a difficult and back-breaking job which kept many soldiers busy at times when there was little else for them to do. Frontier military service was often monotonous and the colonials were sometimes insubordinate. There were frequent shortages of clothing, supplies, and weapons. Sharp traders and whiskey sellers infested the surrounding area. The forts were also fur-trading centers where the Indians exchanged their furs and pelts for the trinkets and kettles which were imported from England. The Indians were both a threat and a nuisance when they loitered around the fort demanding food and other handouts. The frontier soldiers feared disease and sudden attack. Social life at the fort brought in neighboring settlers as well as the women camp followers who, according to Colonel Henry Bouquet, seemed like “a Colony sprung from Hell for the scourge of this Place.”

The two essays constitute a meaningful summary of frontier military methods, with an emphasis on the special setting around Fort Pitt. They contain much useful information on these limited topics and are a fitting contribution to the Bicentennial. Yet the importance of Pittsburgh goes far beyond the eighteenth century. Much Pennsylvania history remains unwritten because of a preoccupation with the colonial period. It is regrettable that the city which was the Gateway to the West and became the backbone of an industrialized America has so often been overshadowed by the forts at the Point.

_Grove City College_  

_LARRY GARA_


Professor Balinky presents a somewhat devastating analysis of Albert Gallatin’s fiscal system in this brief, well-organized, and persuasive book. One may question the author’s command of some of the fine points of the history of the period, but most readers will be forced to agree with his conclusion that Gallatin’s fiscal policy was unsound because he “subordinated fiscal considerations and principles to the political and economic (though nonfiscal) objectives of his party.”

The book is divided into four parts: a lengthy introduction; a discussion of Gallatin’s views on the public debt, government revenue, and expenditures; an analysis of the actual fiscal operations while Gallatin was Secre-
The author finds that Gallatin shared the political and economic views of the Republicans, believing that the central government should be restricted to the preservation of order, protection from foreign aggression, and enforcement of contracts, and also that the economic development of the country was a matter to be left to private initiative and was not a proper concern of the government.

In the field of governmental finance Gallatin made the reduction of the debt his overriding objective, making no distinction between public and private borrowing, and holding that the public debt was an unmitigated evil. Despite this objective, Gallatin acceded to the elimination of direct taxes, leaving impost duties as the only significant source of revenue. Under such circumstances his only recourse was to cut expenditures if the debt was to be paid off as rapidly as he wished; and the only major savings that could be made were in military and naval expenditures.

For the period up to 1808, Gallatin made a remarkable record, reducing the debt by some $23,000,000 and building up a surplus of nearly $14,000,000 despite the purchase of Louisiana and the costs of the Barbary war. Balinky points out, however, that Gallatin was unsuccessful in reducing expenditures and that his success stemmed from the unprecedented volume of trade accruing to the United States as a neutral in the Napoleonic wars. The deficiencies of Gallatin's policies became more obvious in the years of embargo, nonintercourse, and war.

The author holds that Gallatin erred: 1) by making the reduction of the debt his primary objective and by failing to realize "that the pressure of events and the philosophy of government are the governing consideration in the size of a debt or the extent of its growth"; 2) by acceding to party views in the repeal of internal taxes and thereby failing "to provide for a more permanent and elastic revenue system"; and 3) by regulating expenditures in the light of his debt objective and expected revenues rather than by the actual needs of government under the existing world conditions. In his preface the author notes that the Eisenhower administration has experienced some of the same dilemmas, often finding itself "in conflict between the desire to pursue the so-called principles of 'sound finance' (Gallatin's principles) and the economic (nonfiscal) and political necessities confronting the nation."

Professor Balinky writes well and makes his point clearly, although there is considerable repetition arising from the organization of the book. The reviewer is doubtful that Gallatin ever represented "the whole political influence of the great Middle states" and he questions a few other statements, but none of these affect the validity of the main thesis. There are also a few minor errors in names, but these, too, are of little consequence.

The typography is excellent, but the overuse of reduced type for brief quotations is irritating. It likewise seems that in a book so brief and so expensive the notes could have been placed at the bottom of the page rather than at the back of the book.

*Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission* S. W. Higginbotham
In the early days of American publishing no firm was more prominent than the one founded in 1785 by Mathew Carey of Philadelphia and carried on after 1821 by his son and son-in-law, Henry C. Carey and Isaac Lea. Scholarly attention in the past has been focused more on the elder Carey's career, for which there is abundant documentary material, rather than on the later, and, in some respects, more significant history of the firm. The present study by David Kaser, of the Washington University Libraries, St. Louis, helps redress the balance. Through intelligent use of the scattered and far from complete business records of Carey & Lea, he has been able to describe in detail for the first time the methods which made this firm America's premier publishing house of the 1820's and 1830's.

The first third of this compact book is devoted to a chronological survey of the firm's history from 1822, when Mathew Carey & Son became Carey & Lea, until 1838, when Henry C. Carey retired to pursue his important studies in political economy. These seventeen years were the most productive of the firm's history, as reflected in the volume of sales and the number of titles published annually. Most of the credit for its phenomenal growth, Dr. Kaser shows, belongs to Henry C. Carey himself. Thanks to his driving energy and keen business sense, Carey & Lea for over a decade paced the booktrade not only in Philadelphia, but throughout the nation. Only after his retirement in 1838 did New York supersede Philadelphia as the publishing capital of the United States. With him, in the author's words, "ended a kind of second generation of the American booktrade, a transition generation that marked the change from the colonial printer-publisher to the modern publishing house."

In the remaining chapters Dr. Kaser analyzes certain aspects of Carey & Lea's operations which represented distinctive contributions to the American booktrade—their policy of encouraging native authors, including relative unknowns like Bird, Neal, and Kennedy, as well as the popular Irving and Cooper; their precedent-shattering policy of buying advance sheets of British publications and of making direct payments to British authors (Scott and Dickens); their heavy concentration on technical titles with a slow but sure sale, especially medical and legal works; their willingness to try new ideas (e.g., the Book Trade Sale, the Encyclopaedia Americana, and the literary annual); and their fairly consistent efforts to maintain high standards of ethics in a highly competitive field. The firm's pre-eminence in the booktrade, the author concludes, was a reflection not only of high technical competence, but of a truly progressive attitude toward the responsibilities of a publisher.

Brief though it is, this volume contributes significantly to our understanding of the development of the book trade in America. Specialists in American literary and business history will naturally find it particularly valuable, but its audience need not be limited to them. Anyone interested in the
roots of American culture will find this little book both readable and quietly fascinating.

*Independence National Historical Park*

**David H. Wallace**


The day may be coming when historians will rediscover American liberalism, but for the moment we are in the midst of a serious evaluation of the conservative tradition, its meaning, its history, and its proponents. Morton Keller's biography of James M. Beck is an admirable addition to this literature. The author sees Beck as a thoughtful, philosophically-oriented corporation lawyer who at times performed admirably "the ideal role of the conservative: the realistic critic of the reformers' dream" (p. 144). But in the final analysis Keller's picture is one of a man who failed in his attempts to commit his party to conservative doctrines.

Beck was born in Philadelphia and educated in Moravian schools at Lititz and at Bethlehem. After a brief training in the law, he began his career as an attorney in Philadelphia, and by the 1890's, he had arrived at a prominent place in public life. In 1900 he rejected his earlier affiliation with the Cleveland wing of the Democratic Party and joined the Republicans in search of a new political philosophy and a higher political office. The new affiliation took him to Washington, but after a brief tenure as Assistant Attorney General under William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt, Beck turned his great talents to the practice of corporate law. His attitude at that time towards big business and the trusts reflected the philosophy of the early Progressive movement. Both government and business accepted "big" business as inevitable and "big" government as "an inescapable corollary" (p. 57). But just as inevitable was Beck's disenchantment with the emerging reform movement that didn't maintain this static marriage of interests. By 1907, the "ideological retreat [of Beck] to limited government and constitutional restraints" (p. 79) had begun and the Taft and Wilsonian programs left him in almost complete exclusion from active politics. World War I, however, gave him new opportunities for practical political leadership.

From the beginning of the war, Beck defied the Wilsonian appeal for neutrality. With a long-standing attachment to England and France, and with the eagerness of a man hungry for a new cause, he plunged into a three-year campaign to get America to face its responsibilities in the war. Beck's criticism of Wilson's leadership in this era was constant but his nationalism and political expediency were what led him to fight against American membership in the League. And in 1919 he summarized the nationalists' conclusion that "the League issue was not, after all, the predominant one in America; the nation's labor unrest and the danger of radicalism were of greater import" (pp. 143-144).

But Republican domination of politics in the 'twenties didn't bring Beck the fulfillment he was seeking. Increasingly he began to criticize, even while
Solicitor General of the United States, 1921 to 1925, the seemingly permanent involvement of the government in the economy, the supremacy of national over state power, and the violation of personal liberty inherent in national Prohibition. Frustrated in his efforts to get appointed to higher office (to be Ambassador to Great Britain was one of his goals) he turned in 1929 to Congress and spent the next five years in vocal opposition to what he felt were critical aberrations in American values. The New Deal, he thought, merely confirmed his more dire predictions, and from his seat in the House (until 1934), and then from private life, he continuously hammered at the socialistic tendencies he saw in the Roosevelt program. One of the group that fostered Liberty League activities in the mid-thirties, Beck spent the last years of his life attempting to help in the construction of a new conservative force in American politics. He died in 1936.

This book is a political biography, but with more attention given to the ideology of the conservative tradition, and Beck's part in developing it, than to the personality and character of the man. What part his family life, his friendships, and his religion played in motivating him in his public life is never quite clear. A commentary on his father by James M. Beck, Jr. (pp. 19-32) in part compensates for this weakness. It also indicates that Beck, Jr., disagrees with a few of Keller's conclusions.

The explanation of why Beck failed to commit his party to his conservative principles is not entirely satisfactory. Was it, as Keller suggests, due to the inadequacy of the principles which he defines in his Preface as including nationalism, individualism, constitutionalism, laissez-faire, property rights, and opposition to reform? Or was it due, in part, to the inadequacy of the leadership of the conservative faction? A more complete study of the relationship of these conservatives to their party would help to answer the question.

But these criticisms cannot obscure the real merit of this book. Because Beck was such a profound exponent of the conservative tradition we get through this study a new and needed insight into the political thought of this century.

Moravian College

Daniel R. Gilbert


The story of the beginning, the early struggles, and the gradual development of our American colleges and universities makes fascinating reading for anyone who is really interested in the academic and cultural history of America. In the middle of the nineteenth century the origin of church-controlled institutions of higher learning formed a pattern, even though each one tried to maintain its individuality.

Susquehanna University celebrated its Centenary in 1958. It is quite fitting that an important feature of the celebration should consist in gathering and recording the facts as well as in interpreting the trends relating to the history of the institution during the past century. This has been done
in a creditable manner by William S. Clark who wrote Part One of the history covering 1858 to 1927, and by Arthur Herman Wilson who describes in detail the administration of President G. Morris Smith during the past thirty years. The authors were ably assisted by the General Editors, Russell Wieder Gilbert and William Adam Russ, Jr., historians well known to readers of Pennsylvania History.

According to the records, the founding of the institution grew out of a controversy known a century ago as the “‘breach’ between old Lutheranism and American Lutheranism”—a difference of opinion which has long since been resolved. It is also interesting to note how frequently the location of a college in those days was decided by competitive bidding on the part of ambitious communities which took great pride and a sense of satisfaction in becoming a college town.

Originally known as “The Missionary Institute,” fostered by the Melancthon Synod, this school was the outcome of a plan to prepare more ministers for the church. The devotion and zeal of the Rev. Benjamin Kurtz of Baltimore, “one of the outstanding leaders of Lutheranism in the United States,” brought the plan to fruition. New buildings, new faces in the faculty, and new curricula brought forth in 1893 a new idea and a new name. In the high hope of enlarging and extending the courses into various fields, the General Synod of the Lutheran Church felt that the name “Susquehanna University” represented its aims and purposes.

The second half of the book furnishes a detailed account of the administration of the Rev. Dr. G. Morris Smith, who has served as President of the University since 1928. It is a year-by-year narration of the life and labors of a highly esteemed and deservedly successful university president during one of the most difficult periods in American higher education. The story is worth telling and is well told. The whole volume leads to and is a significant part of the Centennial Celebration of Susquehanna University during 1958. The book is timely, and is a credit to its editors and authors.

Lancaster

H. M. J. Klein

Sayre and Early Valley History. Edited by Elizabeth G. Wilcox. (Philadelphia: Printed by Franklin Craftsmen, Inc. Pp. 57. $2.50.)

There have been several histories of Bradford County, but this little book is the first to concentrate on Sayre, and as such it is of considerable local interest. Miss Wilcox has compiled her information mainly from the memories of the older inhabitants of Sayre.

The first four chapters, dealing with the Indian background and the early history of the area, appear to be derived for the most part from earlier histories. The Andastes were not, of course, the first Indians who left any traces in this area, but they are the earliest mentioned in the historical records. Following some of the earlier publications, Miss Wilcox accepts the view that Spanish Hill is Brulé’s very dubious Carantouan.

The principal contribution of the book is in the latter part, which deals specifically with Sayre and its predecessor, the settlement of Milltown.
Sayre was founded in 1870 as a station on the Lehigh Valley Railroad. The development of its many features and institutions is briefly recorded: bridges, trolleys, lighting systems, the fire department, the public library, banks, schools, churches, newspapers, and what is today probably its best-known institution, the Robert Packer Hospital and Guthrie Clinic.

*Tioga Point Museum, Athens, Pa.*

*Catherine McCann*


A pleasant blend of subjects, all expertly edited by Mr. Boyer, characterizes the 1958 biennial publication of the Lehigh County Historical Society. There is something for everyone, and most of it well-written.

*Iron Mining in the Iron Area, North Whitehall Township, Lehigh County,* a technical contribution by David G. Williams, is an ambitious exposition of iron ore extracting techniques, including those employed at Ironton. Mr. Williams traces the geological developments of the area right down to the nineteenth century with the caution and accuracy of a competent scientist. Iron ore was first mined at Ironton about 1820; the date when the operations ceased is left unstated, but with the inference that mining was not economically profitable by the 1920's. The remainder of the essay is concerned with the mining of iron ore and all the mechanical details connected therewith. Technical minutiae presented by the essayist may not be interesting to the mechanically uninitiated, but such details have a valued place in a county history published for later reference. A number of clear and useful illustrations and maps accompany the Ironton essay. The story of Ironton is the story of many iron communities in Pennsylvania, and their abilities to deal with the economic and social impacts of their underground product.

Edward Hermany, a Pennsylvania German poet who was born in Lehigh County in 1832, is the subject of a biographical sketch by Dr. Preston A. Barba. "Edward Hermany's life was externally uneventful. There was little to indicate the rich inner life of this unassuming and reticent bachelor and his endeavors to find artistic expression." With this introduction to Hermany, Dr. Barba proceeds to open the lonely poet's inner life. Hermany wrote poetry in English which his biographer considers "not without beauty . . . for the most part pervaded by a deep gloom and melancholy, inherent in the poet's temperament . . . most nearly akin in spirit and in his style to Edgar Allan Poe." From writing English funereal verse and vigorous patriotic Civil War poems in Philadelphia, Hermany returned home to teach school and write in Pennsylvania German dialect verse. His subjects concerned the activities of his rural neighbors. Dr. Barba describes these efforts as executed with "masterful irony and satire, now gentle, now vitriolic." A few examples are quoted, but this reviewer has not learned the dialect of his forefathers and hence cannot savor Hermany's verse, dealing with his neighbors. We believe Dr. Barba's revelation of Edward Hermany is commendable, and well worth serious study by students of American lit-
erature. Dr. Barba is one of the most charmingly literate Germans to be found west of the Rhine.

As a reminder that the Civil War centennial is approaching, Corporal William J. Reichard's Civil War letters are included in this volume. The impressions of life on the battle-front, written by an enlisted volunteer, provide the human and oftentimes gory side of the struggle. Soldiers' letters to their loved ones and friends at home brought the war right into the parlors and hearthside to incite pride and prayer and fear. Veterans of recent wars will chuckle in disbelief at the homely little details which preoccupied the Civil War soldier. It would seem Corporal Reichard's peripatetic father spent nearly as much time in camp as did his son.

For those who find engineering, poetry, and Civil War letters a bit too heavy for their reading appetites, John Kohl, editor of the Allentown Sunday Call-Chronicle, has furnished a tasty morsel in the form of a debate on the icing of Christmas cookies. One soon gathers from the mouth-watering account of whether Pennsylvania Germans do ice or don't ice their Christmas cookies that cookie-baking in the Dutch Country is fraught with the same prejudices which attend the making of an authentic mint julep in Dixie.

An outstanding feature in the Proceedings of 1958 we believe to be David G. Williams' study of the Lehigh Canal System and the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company. The essay is short, interesting, and tells a story which fills a conspicuous void in our Pennsylvania canal literature. His illustrations are excellent, and the supplement containing seven plates relating to canal construction is invaluable. We wish Mr. Williams would have devoted as much space to the Lehigh Canal System as he did to the Ironton story.

The Proceedings are well printed in an offset process; the book is case-bound—an expensive proposition—which probably accounts for its issuance only once every two years. With the superior editing performed by Mr. Boyer and the worthwhile essays presented by his authors, we wonder how his loyal readers can wait for two years, when paper-cover editions have been accepted so widely. The publishing of local history can be and frequently is the primary object of a county historical society. More than one historical society is known by the quality of its publications. Quite clearly the Proceedings of The Lehigh County Historical Society establish that organization in the front ranks of local history publishing.

Lancaster County Historical Society

JOHN WARD WILLSON LOOSE


In Penn's Woods West the reader is taken on a backroads' tour of interesting wilderness areas in the western half of Pennsylvania. His guides, Mr. Peterson and photographer Thomas M. Jarrett, explain the purpose of the trip in these words:

We want to learn more about this beautiful part of Pennsylvania
we live in—the old mountains and green valleys, the bright rivers, the mountain laurel and rhododendron blooming in late spring, the wildflowers, the birds and animals and moths and butterflies and the peace that comes over the forest early of a summer evening. We want to know more about these things around us and about our relation to them.

Are they only luxuries, or are they important to us practically, psychologically, esthetically, philosophically and are we important to them? How long will they last, how long will we last if they go?

Author and reader travel backroads by automobile, streams by canoe, rivers by cruisers and boats; they fish the brooks and hike the trails of woodland and state forests. All the while, the reader enjoys, rather than studies, historical sites, scenery, wildflowers, trees, birdlife, animals, humans, and their environment. He is not asked to be a geologist, a botanist, or an ornithologist; he simply enjoys, with the author, the rocks, flowers, and birds, but before he finishes the tour, he has become an ecologist, for slowly, subtly, pleasantly, he becomes aware of the relationship of man and his environment, and how man, more than most other forms of life, has failed to adapt himself to his environment without destroying much of the source of his existence, welfare, and happiness.

He meets with man’s puny attempts to preserve or restore some of the natural resources which have made this country materially wealthy. Puny though they are, he realizes they represent a change in thinking, a trend toward the better, a reversal of destruction, a hope. Thoreau, at Walden Pond, propounded a philosophy. Peterson, in *Penn’s Woods West*, implements or applies that philosophy. With a slight degree of nostalgia he points out what could have been done in the past to preserve many of our natural resources; he also emphasizes what is being done, and can be done, to keep and improve what we have.

Most of *Penn’s Woods West* deals with the interesting natural or wildlife areas remaining in the western half of the state. To some extent the author avoids or detours much of the urban, artificial, sordid or defaced areas, but when necessary or convenient to include them, or when they are a part of the complete ecology of an area, a valley or a river basin, he is able to see beauty in the ugly, the unusual in the commonplace, and he develops this perception in the reader.

*Penn’s Woods West* could have been divided into sections or chapters geographically, or into topical divisions such as plant life, animal life, water, woods, or mountains, but the author wisely and effectively organizes his account into the four seasons—spring, summer, fall, and winter. This may or may not be a logical division, but it is an effective device for presenting the great variety of subject material in each one. The cover page of each section illustrates the appropriate constellation for each of the seasons: namely, Leo, Cygnus, Pegasus, and Orion. This is followed by a beautifully appropriate color print. In fact, much of the charm and value of *Penn’s Woods West* lies in the 300 unusual photographs, most of them by Thomas M. Jarrett, some by Raymond Christina, some by the author, and others from
various individuals, organizations, and state and federal agencies. Not only are the photographs of unusual quality, but each one tells its own story or conveys the mood or quality of the subject depicted.

This book brings the reader into closer rapport with part of the Pennsylvania environment. What a road map is to the tourist, *Penn's Woods West* is to the outdoors man. For the sportsman or the naturalist, *Penn's Woods W'west* is interesting and fascinating. For the conservationist it is a must.

*Wilmington, Del.*

Clayton M. Hoff