together with a picture of the mill as it was before it reached its present state of almost complete ruin. The appended roster of Virginia officers and privates in the battle of Fort Necessity in 1754 is also of interest to students of the early history of the region and of the nation.

McElhattan, Pennsylvania

Henry W. Shoemaker


Museums during the past decade or two have tended to become totally different institutions from those of the early twentieth century. As Dr. Harlow Lindley, curator of history of the Ohio State Museum, has said, "The day of the curiosity shop is over, and an educational institution with an aggressive and dynamic spirit must take its place." The older idea of a museum as a warehouse of curios, little relating to human life, still exists, yet there is a growing consciousness of the opportunity of a museum to make the past live in the present by adequate and educational presentation of its material. This opportunity, while presenting itself also to museums of art, of science, and of industry, is particularly open to museums of history. Of more than sixteen hundred museums of all kinds in the United States about six hundred are museums of history and fifty general museums include history as a major subject. The need, therefore, for a manual for history museums is not so limited as one might imagine, and the New York State Historical Association is to be commended for proposing and fostering the preparation and publication of such a guide. The choice of an author, declares Dr. Dixon Ryan Fox in the foreword, was not difficult, and Mr. Parker, who has made the Rochester museum a model for small cities to study, was happily selected.

The purpose of the manual is to encourage the founding of separate historical museums and to improve the administration of supplementary museums that now exist. As the author admits in his preface, the book is not an encyclopaedia, but a compendium, suggesting rather than completely describing. Separate chapters deal with organizing, housing, and financing museums, and other chapters deal with the technical problems of accessions, catalogues, labels, preparations, and exhibits. There are also chapters about research and other activities, mu-
seum libraries, and publications. A plea for internuseum coöperation is made, the growing importance of museum and school relations is discussed, and instructions are given for preparing lending collections to schools. Tests made on pupils indicate that with this stimulation marks will be raised; that "for an investment of one-half of one per cent, we are able to increase the value of the school output 10 per cent."

The introductory and concluding chapters are stimulating and worthy of careful consideration. It is a well-known axiom that to understand the present one must know the past, but reading of the past is not enough; one must experience it by contact with its artifacts. There is no virtue, the author states, in merely preserving things; "to institutionalize visible storage does not contribute to life's values." The purpose of the history museum, on the contrary, is this: "To create an institution housing exhibits so selected and correlated that there is a clear illustration of the culture history, social organization, the achievements and the ideals of our region, at the same time making this knowledge available in objective form both within and without our walls." In other words the purpose is to visualize the past for the whole community by bringing the people, adults and children, to the museum, or by bringing the museum to them. Teaching by visual methods, knowledge gained through experience, with history shown in a sequence of orderly exhibits, is the aim of the new museum. Historical museums thus occupy a unique place in education—that of a university requiring no credentials, where all who can may learn.

Of particular interest to regular readers of this magazine are Mr. Parker's frequent references to historical society museums. To him an historical society is an organization devoted to recording, preserving, interpreting, and publishing historical records, whereas an historical museum is devoted to an orderly exhibition of ideas by objects, classified and grouped in natural and logical relations. An historical society is concerned with records of and about men and events; an historical museum is concerned with exhibiting actual objects and explaining their relations and meanings. Although these two functions are separate they may be correlated, but if the museum is to remain an activity of the historical society it should be a major and not a minor part. Unfortunately only a few historical societies have museums worthy of the name. To thousands of members of historical societies, according to the author, the museum is a catchall for everything from everywhere, and all too frequently the museum of an historical society is merely a depository of things not related to one another or to
history. He argues rightly that "the historical society may best succeed by eliminating all that does not relate to the field of history embraced by the society, thereby making relevant history and its presentation in a logical manner the object of its museum," and to this end the present manual admirably points the way.

*Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania*  
*John W. Harpster*

*Over the Mountains: The Life of a First Settler in Fayette County; How He Came Here and What He Did While Turning the Wilderness into Peaceful Farmlands.* By **Evelyn Abraham.** (Uniontown, Pennsylvania, The Herald-Genius [1936]. 53 p.)

Pleasant to read, well balanced, and accurate in detail, this booklet gives what its author claims in her preface—"a picture of the life and environment of a typical settler in Western Pennsylvania" in the pioneer period. The politics, religion, marriage customs, cabin building and furnishing, the life about the fort and on the military roads, the movements of soldiers, and the pastimes of the pioneers are all here.

Miss Abraham writes simply, without rhetoric, and with a nice feeling for saying a thing freshly and in easy, rhythmic sentences. *Clichés* and the ordinary stilted historical language are not found in her pages. Although she has documented her work from established sources, she does not depend on footnotes to give authenticity and reality to her writing. She gets reality by such statements as: "He felt the warm clapboards of his house against his spine." Such writing brings history to life.

*Over the Mountains* makes available in handy and inexpensive form an authoritative and fairly complete account of pioneer life in the western section of the state. Even such an inexpensive edition might, however, be improved in format; the double-column newspaper page, for instance, might be remedied in another edition. One or two tantalizing omissions of references to sources occur, and the reference to the missionary, Heckewelder, as Hackenwelder is no doubt a typographical slip, as are the occasional odd bits of punctuation. These are unimportant, however. What is important is the validity, the scope, and the charm of the account. In a way *Over the Mountains* fills the place that Doddridge's *Notes* and Drake's *Pioneer Life in Kentucky* once filled for the general reader.

*Pittsburgh*  
*J. Ernest Wright*