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**