operation with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

In such a modestly-priced and ably-edited work complete with footnotes, line engravings, and excellent half-tone illustrations — especially portraits of General William Irvine, General Callender Irvine, and the Byronic young Dr. William A. Irvine — economies of production in a limited edition are doubtless responsible for its paperback format and, regrettably, lack of an index. But unless one is a genealogist, who believes that there is a special place in hell reserved for those responsible for books without indices?

_Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania_  
JOHN W. HARPSTER

*History of Hancock County — Virginia and West Virginia.* By JACK WELCH. (Wheeling, West Virginia: The Wheeling News Printing and Litho Co., 1963. 202 pp. Index, maps, illustrations. Sold for $5.00 by author at 509 South Capitol Street, Iowa City, Iowa.)

This book, issued for the West Virginia Centennial Year Celebration, was sponsored by the Hancock County Centennial Committee. It tends to be a journalistic production written for a special occasion, rather than a definitive history, and it should be evaluated in its intended context. The compact little volume digests much information into brief scope. It is well printed and bound, and contains valuable photographs and drawings. A foreword makes useful interpretations, and the index is rather complete. The interesting Beers 1871 map of the area is used on the endpapers. A two-page bibliography lists both primary and secondary reference materials, and a page of acknowledgments lists the names of source persons. This book will be of interest to many Western Pennsylvanians, because the relatively small county is bounded on its entire eastern side by Pennsylvania and to the north and west by the Ohio River. It lies in the angle where, at a point beyond East Liverpool and Wellsville, the stream which begins at Pittsburgh leaves its westerly course and turns southward.

Sections of the text are devoted to discussions of pre-history, Indian history, the French and English explorers, first settlers, and early Ohio Valley history in general. These materials provide interesting background, but they are perhaps disproportionately extensive, because relatively few of the items treated can be related directly with
Hancock County persons or places. In contrast, some of the more notable 19th century families and persons receive little or no mention.

This county lies in the portion of the old State of Virginia which after the Civil War became West Virginia. Through the years the county's agriculture and industry, towns and villages, family strains and personal careers have had their ups and downs.

Fifty-four pages are devoted to brief biographical paragraphs about present-day residents, and commendable restraint seems to have been exercised in limiting the amount of space given to these contributed statements.

The author's family now resides in the county. His sincere interest in the history of this northernmost West Virginia county is apparent on every page. There are some errors in the spelling of historic names, and it seems likely that some of the findings which have been accepted as facts could not be fully supported. This is understandable in a region where the systematic reporting of history has been much neglected, except where certain industries and families have had the resources to record their own backgrounds. Also, the problem of meeting a publication deadline in relation to the Centennial Celebration's time schedule may have contributed to these shortcomings in the manuscript.

With consistent editorial policy the author begins his story by observing that "Hancock County, like any other inhabited area of the world . . . , is a land that is built upon the labor, the ideals, the lives, and the deaths of those who have gone before. It is a forest turned into a farm, a farm turned into a town, and a town turned into an industrial site employing thousands of people . . . ," and he concludes by listing four things which will be necessary in addition to competent leadership in order to assure the continuing growth and development of the county. Diversified industries must be encouraged, new residential developments must promote the welfare of the people, tourism must be encouraged to attract visitors to these hills and valleys, and there must be continuing appreciation of the good earth, a feeling of obligation to the land which has provided a home for worthy citizens throughout the century just closed, and long before that.

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