

authentic, but not critical or heavily documented, account of the valley's history, though one may question an occasional statement of fact such as his reference to the first attempt at a fortification at the Forks of the Ohio as "Fort Trent" (p. 31) rather than Fort Prince George. The story opens with an excellent description of the Monongahela country, including an impressive list of the characteristics that have made and still make it notable, followed by accounts of the earliest visitors, the beginnings of settlement, the appearance of roads, ferries, and bridges, and the valley as the scene of events of the French and Indian War, the Revolution, the Pennsylvania-Virginia boundary controversy, and the Whiskey Insurrection. About half of the book is quite properly devoted to chapters on boat-building, the successive eras of the flatboat, keelboat, and steamboat, and on the production and shipment of the principal bulk products of the valley, coal and coke. Interspersed among the chapters are "close-ups" of life along the river, in the form of "Random Notes and Anecdotes," and the whole concludes with a chapter on "The River in Story and Song."

*The Allegheny River* by Mrs. Kussart—daughter of a former river steamboat captain and owner, and historian of the Allegheny River Improvement Association—is also the product of years of research. The result is an exceptionally detailed account of the river—its physiography, its early history, its boatmen, its uses, and its development for navigation and flood-control purposes. Accounts of the commerce borne by it and of the industries it has spawned or served naturally loom large—accounts of the building and evolution of river craft and of the manufacture or extraction and shipment of salt, iron, lumber, oil, sand and gravel, and aluminum. Two maps of the region, done by United States engineers of the Pittsburgh district, pictures of river craft, lists, and statistics add to the interest and usefulness of the work, but unfortunately it lacks an index.

F. F. H.

*Moccasins in the Wilderness.* By ELIZABETH HAWTHORN BUCK. (Philadelphia, The Penn Publishing Company, 1938. 238 p. Illustrations.)

*"Hello, the Boat!"* By PHYLLIS CRAWFORD. (New York, Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1938. 227 p. Illustrations.)

THESE books are of the kind that enthusiastic grownups write for children, with the result that grownups often enjoy them more than children. Their

romantic quality is one of background rather than plot. Both suffer from an uneven dialogue that is most apparent when the authors are striving to impress on their readers the veritableness and oftentimes the actual historical existence of their characters. Both books are conscientiously accurate, the results of careful research and writing. The Doak family of "*Hello, the Boat!*" is almost too ideal a group, especially for the early nineteenth century: three thousand dollars would have been more of a fortune in those days than Miss Crawford seems to consider it, and certainly the loss of such a sum would have caused more anger and heartbreak than calm Mother and Father Doak suffered.

In 1778 Mary and Angus McKenna lived with their parents and small brother in a log cabin near the Kiskiminetas River. Then their father went east to serve in the Continental Army, and Indian raiders carried off their mother and brother. This in outline is the story of *Moccasins in the Wilderness*. Adults are likely to consider the tale too slight, too improbable, but young people should find it, not thrilling perhaps, but interesting and full of stimulating suggestions. An imaginative lad and his friends will acquire valuable material for staging a successful Indian raid, for escaping detection by the enemy, for scouting, for hunting, for trail blazing; and their sisters will be able to aid and abet such activities with pioneer housekeeping. Mrs. Buck explains just how Mary and Angus contrived to walk through the grass without leaving a trail, how they could tell from the hoofprints when the soldiers had gone by, how they dried bits of apple for winter eating, why they knew the Indian raiders wouldn't attack during the winter. Important bits of homely information overlooked by less sympathetic story-tellers are included: the McKenna's dog knows better than to bark at strange things—he discreetly bristles; when frontier boys and girls grow too big for their stockings, the toes are unraveled and new feet are knitted; when the minister ignores the Indians to conduct a church service, the practical Presbyterian pioneer excuses himself to fight.

"*Hello, the Boat!*" is concerned with the journey of the three Doak children and their parents down the Ohio River from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati aboard a storeboat in 1817. Accurate and intelligible descriptions of their own and the other boats that were to be found on the river, simple but vivid pictures of Pittsburgh and the river towns on the way to Cincinnati create a frontier atmosphere for Mike Fink's exploits and Captain Henry Shreve's steamboats. The Widow Clarke who at sixty traveled alone on a horse from Steubenville to Philadelphia with only her umbrella for protection, and the hardy immigrants who were driving their cattle from Baltimore to northern

Indiana and didn't object to sleeping twenty in a room at the tavern are skillfully delineated ordinary people whose activities are as romantic to today's young readers as were the river captains to the young Doaks. The most delightful passages in the book are the flavorful conversations of Old Pappy, who knew every keelboatman on the Ohio. River-minded boys will find helpful and thoroughly enjoyable Father Doak's impractical way of teaching his family to navigate with a bed and mops and brooms. And young readers will take to their hearts a nineteenth-century expression of surprise used by the Doaks—"Mulligrubs!"

"*Hello, the Boat!*" won a national prize, the Julia Ellsworth Ford Foundation award for children's literature. The book is cleanly printed on good paper, it is vigorously illustrated with crayon sketches that fill the pages, an attractive endpaper map has been utilized, and the book is bound in a decorative linen cloth. The pictorial dust jacket is suitable and inviting. *Moccasins in the Wilderness*, on the other hand, is unimaginatively printed and bound. Given the tasteful clothes of the former, this reviewer feels it would have been even more deserving of an award.

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