and is offered at a price which permits it to qualify for practically every home library.

For those who fancy the "forward look" we feel that we can safely predict that 100 years from now, treasured copies of this book will be presented with pride to this or other historical societies.

We personally congratulate the editors and art director for their fascinating accomplishment and we especially thank sponsor William Block of the Post-Gazette for his encouragement and generous intentions toward the work of this society whether realized or not. To co-sponsors Radio Station WWSW, Television Station WHC and Herbick & Held Printing Company the whole city is indebted for a patriotic contribution to the record of Pittsburgh's past.

ROBERT D. CHRISTIE, Director
Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania


For nearly two decades it has been known to researchers in the history of eighteenth century Pennsylvania, that Nicholas B. Wainright was at work on a definitive biography of George Croghan. It was understood that important new materials, involving the main collection of Croghan papers, had come to light, that they were being carefully studied and fitted as rapidly as possible, but inevitably slowly, into the picture earlier established by Albert T. Volwiler in his George Croghan and the Westward Movement, 1741-1782, published in 1926, and by much printed documentation and historiography of later years.

There is much literature on the writing of biography. It is generally agreed that good biographies are scarce and masterpieces in the matter few and far between. It is difficult to meet the criteria of scholarship and critical comprehension necessary to write a definitive biography whether of well known or of almost unknown figures in history.
On merely cursory handling of this small book, one might wonder how it could possibly be a definitive life of George Croghan. But its 316 pages of text contain more than 125,000 words or twice the amount in any of the volumes of the first American Nation Series. And the author, admittedly and advisedly, hews narrowly to the life of Croghan.

The conditions and events of the times are, here, a part of the picture only when vital to an understanding of the life and activities of George Croghan.

On the formative years of the life of Croghan, before his arrival in America in 1741, it is impossible to be any more definitive than to state the almost complete lack of evidence. On his adult life 1741-1782 there is, however, voluminous data. He was a great Indian trader and a great land speculator. His personality and character were items of importance. Above all his role in Indian relations was of primary influence not only in Pennsylvania but everywhere east of the Mississippi and north of the Potomac.

The sub-title of the volume indicates its major emphasis. The dramatic personality of Croghan, his trading ventures, his greatly documented land speculations and other matters will in due time be considered as of less historical value than his role as "Wilderness Diplomat."

The student of regional history will find here not only the larger perspective but considerable detail. Inevitably some matters could not be determined and are left in suspense. Not all of the conclusions of this research are completely acceptable, as for example the alleged Croghan Indian land purchase of 1749.

While, very properly, there is in this narrowly channelled work much chronological arrangement of data, there is also some excellent exposition and descriptive statement about such matters as Croghan's style of living, his various house sites and estates, his extensive travels, and about such other matters as Braddock's arrival at Wills Creek, and Indian dances.

The general reader will find valuable a large end papers map and four smaller drawings or maps, seemingly prepared for this publication.

The consolidation of many references from one paragraph or page into one footnote, has the merit of good appearance but the
result of causing the reader some uncertainty about the exact location of a particular quotation.

References in the footnotes and the bibliographical essay give assurance that the available materials found in the better known depositories have been carefully surveyed and extensively used, though it is not impossible that random items found in outlying places may not have been located and consulted. As an illustration it is possible that the picture of Croghan as fur trader and as land speculator might be enlarged by the examination of courthouse records at Lancaster, Carlisle, Bedford, Greensburg and elsewhere in Pennsylvania and also in Frederick, Maryland, and Winchester, Virginia.

Persons interested in American history, 1741-1782, will welcome this publication and give much credit to the author, his sponsors, and his publishers, for a valuable contribution to local, regional and indeed, national and international history.

*Professor Emeritus, University of Pittsburgh*  
Alfred P. James

Davis & Warde, Inc., Pittsburgh, 1958, 559 pp., notes, appendices, bibliography, index, illustrations. $3.95.

It was with pardonable pride that two great religious denominations, each in its own book, reviewed phases of their past at the time of their historic union in late May, 1958 at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. There the resemblance largely ceases. The United Presbyterians in text covering 227 pages presented a church-wide survey by one author. The Presbyterians (U.S.A.) in 559 pages (prompted by the Pittsburgh Bicentennial of 1958-1959 as well as by the Church Union of 1958) used, as a symbol of world-wide narrative, the story of 200 years of Presbyterianism in the Upper Ohio Valley. And their story is told by seven authors writing twenty-one topical essays. Both techniques are very valid. However, it is the latter that is up for review here.

Even on extended reflection, it is difficult to think of anything very important omitted from *The Presbyterian Valley.* Unfortunately, the only exception is not the usual plethora of concluding