

Foundations of Pennsylvania Prehistory. Edited by BARRY C. KENT, IRA F. SMITH III, and CATHERINE MCCANN. (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1971. Pp. v, 615. Foreword, introduction, bibliography. \$10.00.)

The very first men we know in the Pittsylvania country roamed these hills and valleys a staggeringly long time ago. Our historic Indians, of course, were unthought of in that era. Monongahela Man, and even the Adena mound builders, was in the dim and distant future. Egypt's earliest civilization had not yet begun to develop the art of making pottery, and on the northern shores of the Mediterranean the earliest farmers would not begin to plant crops for centuries, perhaps millennia.

They came here so long ago that we don't know their name — if they had one. But we know a good deal about them, for all that. Some archeologists call them Paleo-Indian, though we have no proof that they were ancestors of, or related to, the later tribesmen. (What evidence is available would be in harmony with such an opinion, however.) Perhaps the most appropriate title yet proposed for this culture is early Hunter. For hunters they certainly were. Those who are interested in this period, and others, will find a world of good reading in *Foundations of Pennsylvania Prehistory* which contains over six-hundred pages of what has been written by experts in the field for the past forty years.

From what we can tell, these early people had no settled homes, nor even any definite range or territory to which their hunting and wandering were restricted. They may perhaps have built lean-tos or other brush houses, although we can't find any traces. All the evidence seems to indicate that they simply wandered through the valleys and over the hills, following herds or individuals of the large animals that were their principal prey. No other known groups of men seem to have lived in such a way. It has been suggested that almost the only animal we know which followed this unlimited range, pack-hunting way of life, was the now almost extinct lobo wolf.

The earliest Pittsylvanians probably ate some plants and seeds, but there is nothing to indicate they gathered and stored them. Since we have never found any identifiable skeletons of the early Hunter Man, we aren't sure of his size or appearance. Therefore, it is principally as a toolmaker that we know this early resident of the Pittsylvania country. And an amazing worker he was, for his day. His greatest invention, the fluted flint knife and a similar spear point,

had made it possible for him to kill large animals such as the mammoth and mastodon which formed his principal food.

This book is published as the first volume in the new Anthropological Series by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Others will be brought out as manuscripts and funds become available.

This review is part of an article originally
printed in the *Pittsburgh Press* of April
2, 1972.

GEORGE SWETNAM

The Historian's Handbook. By HELEN J. POULTON. (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972. Pp. xix, 304. Indices. \$4.95.)

Professors and students of history long have faced the problem of locating reference aids for their research projects. In particular, undergraduate and beginning graduate students often view the library as an inscrutable and forbidding place. Helen J. Poulton's purpose in preparing *The Historian's Handbook* is to alleviate this difficulty by listing and discussing the "major reference titles which can help the student and researcher select most efficiently from the thousands of titles the specific ones he needs." She is quite successful in this endeavor.

The author prefaces her discussion on reference works with a brief chapter on libraries and the use of card catalogs. Then she launches into a series of chapters under the following headings: "National Library Catalogs and National and Trade Bibliographies"; "Guides, Manuals, and Bibliographies of History"; "Encyclopedias and Dictionaries"; "Almanacs, Yearbooks, Statistical Handbooks"; "Serials and Newspapers"; "Geographical Aids"; "Biographical Materials"; "Primary Sources and Dissertations"; "Legal Sources"; and "Government Publications." Under each chapter attention is given first to sources relevant to American and British history, although titles useful to scholars interested in other areas also are discussed.

In addition to selecting and listing a significant number of reference materials, Poulton provides a valuable commentary on the usefulness of the various works. Her comments include an evaluation of scope, annotation, index, thoroughness, and accuracy. She also provides a general statement regarding the utility of the source for researchers and comments on the known strengths and weaknesses of