not detrimental to the book. Their avoidance undoubtedly makes its appeal wider.

In summary, the work is excellent. It is well worth the investment.

*Pittsburgh*  
DOUGLAS L. MAHRER


Radnor (Delaware County) is a township with limited natural resources, the birthplace of few renowned persons, and a place where little of historical impact has occurred. Hence, as might be expected, few works about it have been published. There are the usual church histories, several fox-hunting recollections, a four-page history in a 1951 issue of *The Township Commissioner*, and other miscellaneous short items.

This work, which is probably another publication on the long list of local histories spawned by “bicentennial fever,” wipes out all previously existing voids in the written history of Radnor’s first 160 years (1681-1843). It is based upon material gleaned from the 1798 United States Direct Tax returns with extensive documentation from other primary sources.

Cummin’s manuscript is divided into two sections. Part I, the more readable portion of the work, is a standard historical approach to a limited geographical area. Part II delves into property and genealogy. The former is subdivided into chapters focusing on Radnor before 1798, Radnor in 1798, the age of the turnpike, and Radnor after 1823. The chapter on Radnor in 1798 includes descriptions of the people, lands, houses, windows, barns and outbuildings, assessed valuation, the median age, and Radnor and its neighbors. Part I runs the gamut from abolitionists, birthright, and Conestoga wagons through inmates, national background, and pacifists to tobacco, woodlots, and zoning. It is replete with maps (47), charts (33), and photographs of notable structures (136).

Part II describes each of the properties enumerated on the 1798 Direct Tax returns. Subsequent descriptions from the 1802, 1805, 1823, and 1843 Delaware County Assessment Lists are also reported. The ownership of each property is traced from 1681 until the property
passed out of the hands of the offspring of the original owners. In addition to genealogical material — births, marriages, and deaths — related data are presented concerning academies, accidents, fetes, Quaker meetings, topographical features, weak children, and so forth.

Using the 1798 tax returns, road records, church records, deed books, mill records, poor books, burial records, will books, marriage records, license applications, assessment lists, and similar primary sources, the author has produced a monumental work on the first half of Radnor's history. It is difficult to envision the need for any further research on the period unless a more specialized work is desired, such as a commercial history of the township. Cummin's work substantially enlarges on our understanding of rural life of the period.

The book, "designed for browsing and research, answers the type of questions . . . most often asked of the local Historical Society" (p. xii). Taken as a whole, this well-illustrated, informative volume fulfills the author's objectives. It offers something for the general reader as well as providing a model for a scholar interested in a similar undertaking.

The title, *A Rare and Pleasing Thing*, is descriptive of both Radnor and the caliber of the book.

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This is the first volume in a projected five-volume history of Indiana County, Pennsylvania. The author's schedule calls for volume 3, a collection of documentary readings, to appear in 1979, to be followed a year later by volume 4 which will contain biographical sketches of Indiana Countians. Volume 2, which will extend the narrative from 1865 to the present, will appear next. Volume 5, a comprehensive index and bibliography, will be published last.

Stephenson disclaims any attempt to interpret history in his study of Indiana County. In his own words, "I have deliberately chosen not to explain in any detail 'why' anything happened. . . . I have elected to simply tell the story." In this vein he calls the major sections of his