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
book "chronicles," although, in fact, there is much more to this volume than the word suggests. Stephenson clearly recognizes that the history of Indiana County is only part of a larger historical picture, but he deliberately makes little effort to explain the connection between local and national history. That task he leaves to others. What we have here is Indiana County history pure and simple. And there is a lot of it in this volume, some 736 pages of closely-packed type. He has divided it into three major sections, "The Pioneer Period," "Early Developments, 1810-1844," and "Time of Crisis, 1845-1865." The last section takes up 330 pages, almost one-half the volume.

Although the titles of the author's major sections fall within traditional guidelines, there is much in this volume that is not commonly found in older, more traditional county histories. Stephenson's view is wide and ranges over many topics. Little in Indiana County has escaped his attention. He devotes a considerable number of pages to descriptive social history. In chapter three, for example, he deals with such diverse topics as domestic problems, the poor, sickness and health, and customs of death and burial. The author himself notes that his work, unlike many volumes by locals about locals, will not delight the genealogists. Family trees enter his account only where it is necessary for the telling of the story. Chapters dealing with economic activity and the development of transportation routes also suggest the breadth of Stephenson's material. In brief, this is county history broadly, not narrowly, conceived.

Perhaps the single most impressive thing about this volume is the author's knowledge of the sources of Indiana County history and his painstaking efforts to track them down. The full extent of his knowledge will not be seen until all five volumes have been published, but from this volume the reader can easily see that his history is a monument to a lifetime of reading and research in the history of Pennsylvania and Indiana County. He has relied especially on newspapers to build his story, and it would appear from volume 1 that he has read all of them that might have any connection with Indiana County. He has extensively used local public records, and his searches have also taken him into the State and National Archives as well as into such out-of-the-way records as those of the federal courts.

Stephenson's work is not, however, easy reading. This is not the kind of volume you can sit down with and race through on a cold winter's evening. Indeed, it was not the author's intention to write that kind of history. Stephenson's account is best taken in bits and
pieces, and many will use it more as a guide and reference source to Indiana County history. This volume is solidly bound and sturdy. It should last. The overall appearance of the book is, however, a bit stodgy. Some lengthy quotes could easily have been cut with no loss to the story. A good editor and a competent designer would have helped both the readability and appearance. There are 146 illustrations in volume 1, but only the skimpiest of maps. There is almost nothing on the makeup and distribution of the population of Indiana County.

These criticisms are, however, relatively minor, and some of them represent my wishes rather than the author's intentions. Moreover, since the author financed his own publication, appearance had to be sacrificed for the basics. A more lavish and eye-appealing publication simply was not possible. Taken on the whole, this is a solid work. Indiana County is fortunate to possess such a competent resident historian to tell its story. Stephenson's history of Indiana County will serve us well for many years.

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