

A century ago the American cut nail industry was centered in the upper Ohio River valley. Pittsburgh, Steubenville, and especially Wheeling benefited from this pursuit. With the enormous demand for nails, sparked in part by the boom in balloon-frame building construction during the mid-nineteenth century, shrewd businessmen saw a bright future for nail manufacturing. Inventors, too, met the challenges of high nail demand with a plethora of practical manufacturing devices.

By the 1880s Wheeling had emerged as the seat of the cut nail business. The abundance of cheap coal, superb transportation (both the Ohio River and the mainline of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad), eager investors, and an able work force contributed to Wheeling's newfound status. But the cut nail story was not a happy one. Nasty clashes between labor and management brought considerable suffering. And competition soon caused grave concerns. Not only did rivalry develop with new factories in the West and South, but the far superior wire nail appeared. Unfortunately for Wheeling operatives and owners, wire nail producers quickly gained dominance. Moreover, the Wheeling manufacturers did not promptly or adequately respond to this technological advance; no Wheeling firm launched a wire nail operation, but instead they started other product lines if they continued to exist at all. By the turn of the century some companies entered the orbit of the highly speculative and shady "tin-plate trust," the National Tin Plate Corporation.

Amos Loveday, Jr., has written a thoughtful and well-researched work on a largely unknown American business. This case study reveals in a splendid fashion the "organic" nature of many an American industry: gestation, growth, maturity, and death. This reviewer is reminded of a similar story of the electric interurban railways. Both endeavors took little account of the likelihood of technological obsolescence — the advent of the wire nail and the automobile.

The only obvious shortcoming of this important book is in its physical appearance. The "camera-ready copy" has unadjusted mar-
gins on the right and its tiny size causes immediate eye strain. The illustrations, though, are fine. The cost, however, is rather steep. Still, for the students of American business, technology, and even historic preservation, this is a title to acquire.

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Indiana County 175th Anniversary History.  
By Clarence D. Stephenson.  

Volume 4 is actually the third volume to be published in Clarence Stephenson's projected five-volume history of Indiana County. Volume 1, published in 1978, carried his account of Indiana County through the Civil War. He then skipped forward to Volume 3, a source book of documents and newspaper clippings, which was published in 1979. He has now produced the obligatory biographical volume. Next he plans to complete Volume 2, which will carry his narrative from the post-Civil War period to the present. The concluding fifth volume will contain a bibliography and master index.

Stephenson's purpose in this volume is not primarily genealogical. Rather, he has intended to produce a "kind of Indiana County Who's Who or roll of persons, past and present, who have achieved distinction in some way." His criteria — followed for the most part — for inclusion in this Indiana County honor roll provide no surprises. Political luminaries, leaders of major businesses, presidents of Indiana University of Pennsylvania and members of its board, early settlers, members of the medical and legal community — in brief, all of the established and accepted categories — qualify for inclusion. There are also a number of firsts and lasts as well as Indiana Countians who happened to be related to some more famous person. There are few women, about forty-five of the just over seven hundred people included. Surprisingly, there are few clergy, and I could turn up only