an inadequate sewerage system, a low tax base to support schools and city improvements, and an inability to attract new businesses to the area. The closing of the mines, which began almost imperceptibly in the late 1950s with the selling of company houses and the company policy of devaluing corporate property, brought, according to Oblinger, "the end of a whole way of life." Cornwall residents now faced the difficult transition from company paternalism to self-reliance.

There are some problems with this study. Foremost is the relatively small number of interviewed residents. A larger sampling of inhabitants would better help depict life in Cornwall, especially the readjustments made after the mines were closed. Furthermore, no Bethlehem Steel Corporation officials were interviewed regarding company policies, particularly the paternalistic practices and the decisions to devalue property and eventually close the mines. Since the company so effectively dominated the townspeople, it would be beneficial to note this point of view. Another problem is the complete reliance upon interviews to portray life in Cornwall. Some attempt should have been made to corroborate and/or supplement interview comments with other sources. A list of additional works could have been provided to perhaps stimulate further reading. A brief comparison with other mining communities in Pennsylvania would indicate how Cornwall's situation differed from other company towns. Despite these shortcomings, Oblinger has made a solid contribution to oral history in Pennsylvania and has provided a valuable source of information on life in Cornwall.

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Otis K. Rice’s West Virginia: A History will inevitably invite comparison with John Alexander Williams’ West Virginia: A Bicentennial History (Norton, 1976). However, they are comparable in only one respect — both are first-rate. The Williams book is essentially interpretive and analytical, concentrating on major themes in the state's development. Rice, on the other hand, has chosen an approach which
is "primarily narrative and rests upon the belief that most readers desire in a book such as this essential factual information and some re-creation of the past."

Rice, professor of history and dean of the School of Human Studies at West Virginia Institute of Technology, is a well-established and highly regarded scholar in the field of West Virginia and Appalachian history. He is the author of several important books, among them The Allegheny Frontier, and numerous articles. Rice’s mastery of the material becomes obvious in the first six chapters which take the reader from the prehistoric period through the revolution to independence. He presents a clear and interesting account of a very complex period. He then moves from an essentially chronological treatment to a splendid chapter on "The Quality of Mountain Life." In this chapter, Rice deals with such matters as folkways, health, and the role of religion. He points out that the common assumption that the pioneers were a race of supermen enjoying robust health and uncommon physical vigor is quite wrong. They persevered in spite of debilitating ailments and an almost complete lack of even the most rudimentary medical care.

Rice’s use of a mixture of chronological and "overview" chapters is entirely successful and is indeed one of the major strengths of the book. The chronology is always clear and well organized. Rice’s deep knowledge of the field enables him to determine what is important and what is not, and he thus avoids cluttering the text with unnecessary detail. The "overview" chapters dealing with such matters as agriculture and rural life and labor problems enable the reader to grasp broader themes. In this regard, special mention must be made of the author’s emphasis on social and cultural affairs. His chapters on education and "literary endeavors" are most interesting and add a dimension often lacking in works of this nature.

Those unfamiliar with West Virginia may find it hard to understand how difficult it is to write a frank and unbiased history of the state. The bitterness and suspicions engendered by labor strife and the absentee ownership of resources coupled with an extreme sensitivity to criticism have made it hard to deal honestly with basic issues. Indeed, until fairly recently, few even tried. Textbooks were excessively bland and avoided "sensitive" issues; some even managed to avoid any discussion of the mine wars or poverty. Until well after World War II there was an understandable if unfortunate tendency on the part of scholars to avoid public controversy by concentrating their efforts in areas likely to be of interest only to their colleagues.
In this work Professor Rice has departed from the traditional model and followed the lead of John A. Williams and other younger scholars in making the best of modern historical research available to a wide audience. In so doing, he will please neither the apologist nor the polemicist. He deals fairly with controversial issues and is without discernible prejudices. He points out, for example, that while industrialization of the state greatly increased per capita income and opportunities for advancement for many, it also "left a residue of scarred and ravaged lands and impoverished people." The treatment of other controversial matters, such as labor-management relations and absentee ownership of resources, is thoughtful and well balanced. *West Virginia: A History* is not only an excellent work but also one likely to have a major impact. Since it is both interesting and well written, it will doubtless be read by many laymen. Perhaps more important, it will almost certainly become the standard text for West Virginia history courses in the state's colleges and universities. As a result, future leaders of the state may be better able to cope with its problems and take advantages of its opportunities.

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*Latrobe’s View of America, 1795-1820: Selections from the Watercolors and Sketches (The Papers of Benjamin Henry Latrobe, III).* Edited by Edward C. Carter II, John C. Van Horne, and Charles E. Brownell; Tina H. Sheller, Associate Editor; and with the assistance of Stephen F. Lintner, J. Frederick Fansz, and Geraldine S. Vickers.


Nothing satisfies the needs of historical scholarship more than the publication of little-known documents that can provide new evidence for expanding and refining our understanding of the past. The collaborative effort of the Maryland Historical Society and Yale University Press to present *The Papers of Benjamin Henry Latrobe* is es-