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.

Robert F. Munn  
*Library Services*  
*West Virginia University*  
*Morgantown, West Virginia*

*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-
especially admirable; perhaps this series will help Latrobe attain the fame and respect he is due. This particular volume offers a selection of the most important of Latrobe's watercolors and sketches (excluding the architectural and engineering works, which will form part II of the series). Three short essays, including an excellent discussion of Latrobe by Edward C. Carter II, introduce 161 watercolors and sketches, a number of which are reproduced in excellent color plates. Accompanying the illustrations are explanations largely drawn from Latrobe's own writings or those of his contemporaries, and this combination of illustration and text quickly plunges the reader back to the days of the early republic — to Mt. Vernon in 1796 (cat. no. 22), for example, or New Orleans in 1819 (no. 149), or into the law courts (nos. 38, 48), the realm of scientific investigation (nos. 5, 20, 33-35, 46, 47, 50, 110, 153, 161), and even the world of early American humor (nos. 15, 21, 66, 109).

Latrobe made these works with no intent of publication; they functioned as his personal record of things and places which caught his attention. As an engineer, surveyor, architect, and naturalist with the encyclopedic education common to a late eighteenth-century gentleman, his interests spanned a tremendous range, and these watercolors and sketches offer more subjects than could be listed in this short review.

In style they are frankly realistic, profiting from Latrobe's training as engineer and architect, from his scientific dedication to the observation of fact, and from his profound, personal excitement in the world around him. They are in most cases genuine and unaffected renderings of what he saw before him, and are, therefore, of special interest to anyone wishing to reconstruct life and attitudes in the early republic. Only seldom did Latrobe allow the cultural baggage of his times to "correct" the observations of his fresh and innocent eye, as in a few idealized landscapes which follow the formulas of Claude Lorraine (nos. 84, 136, 137) or in several satirical works after Hogarth (nos. 38, 44, 48).

Latrobe was born in England to a mother born in Pennsylvania; he only emigrated to America at the age of twenty-nine, but he soon developed a special affection and respect for American scenery, and he was early to recognize its uniqueness: "... we have several species of landscape in infinite variety and of most grand and beautiful composition in which Europe does not abound" (p. 12). While such an attitude was not unprecedented, it was a part of the growing appreciation for our native landscape that led to the development of the Hudson
River School painters. It should be no surprise, then, that among the most impressive of Latrobe's works are the landscapes, with their delicately washed skies, sensitively observed lighting effects, and convincing perspectival recession (note nos. 2, 3, 14, 22, 49, 57, 67, 72, 74, 81, 107, 111, 129, 135). Appearance of the Sky, after Sunset . . . 1818 (no. 142) is a masterpiece that can rank with the most sublime and expressive marines in the history of watercolor painting.

Because Latrobe used the sketchbooks to preserve his impressions while traveling, there are few representations of those cities where he settled while working on specific projects — such as Pittsburgh, where he was in residence between 1813 and 1815. But of special interest to Western Pennsylvanians will be his early topographic views of Steubenville, Ohio (nos. 129, 130); Washington, Pennsylvania (no. 156); Wheeling, West Virginia (no. 157); Marietta, Ohio (no. 158); and other Pennsylvania spots (nos. 69-82, 127, 128, 132-37, 155).

In these days of increasing publication expenses and waning interest in specialized subjects, we must be grateful for publications such as this volume and the series to which it belongs; the extensive research efforts and the reasonable price were made possible through the generous support of the NEH, the J. Paul Getty Trust, and other donors.

David G. Wilkins  University Art Gallery  
University of Pittsburgh  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania