

blies was native-born and masculine; it masked the role of immigrant workers and activities, the connections between communities and workers, the cultural underpinnings of solidarity, and the substantial involvement of women — not only for historians but also for the participants.

Using these insights into I.W.W. culture could substantially enrich our understanding of key events like the steel strike of 1919 by focusing on contrasts between the Wobblies' self-perception and actions and workers' ideology. Organized by Foster, a syndicalist, the strike mobilized a diverse and largely immigrant and ethnic male labor force against the power of the steel barons. It depended on the cooperation and solidarity of entire ethnic communities. As heirs to the I.W.W. legacy, the syndicalist organizers embraced the ideal of the aggressive, isolated individual Wobbly, an image which contrasted sharply with the family orientation of immigrant steelworkers aptly portrayed in novels like Mary Heaton Vorse's *Strike!* and Thomas Bell's *Out of This Furnace*. The steel strike of 1919 foundered in the face of employer hostility, state intervention, ethnic factionalism and inter-union conflict. Inherent in this failure, as in the decline of the I.W.W. generally, was a failure of the Wobblies to comprehend their own powerful myths. If historians have been led astray in believing the I.W.W. was a product of indigenous radicalism, it was because Wobblies themselves helped to construct that myth.

I am willing to accept Salerno's argument that immigrant ideologies, tactics and cultural expression helped shape the social movement of labor in the I.W.W., but more evidence of alternative origins and patterns is needed. Despite the shortcomings of the book, Salerno points the way to a more vibrant history of labor unions as social movements. His

emphasis on the cultural history of the working class and use of iconographic texts like cartoons opens up the possibilities for a history of labor in which workers not only act, but think and express themselves in art and language. Salerno has opened the way for a reinterpretation of the I.W.W. that captures the diverse origins and cultural riches of working class organization. ■

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The Pittsburgh & West Virginia Railway: The Story of the High and Dry

By Howard V. Worley, Jr. and William N. Poellot, Jr.
Halifax, Pa.: Withers Publishing, 1989.
Introduction, illustrations, maps, appendix. Pp. 384. \$52

IN their history of the Pittsburgh & West Virginia Railway, the authors have assembled a veritable encyclopedia of information on the subject. The details of corporate history, the time table information, the equipment roster, and particularly the photographic coverage attest to the authors' years of research and dedicated interest.

Through its yearly summaries of corporate activities, the book details how the company's fortunes echoed those of the Pittsburgh area economy. The predecessors to the P&WV — the Little Saw Mill Run Railroad, the Pittsburgh Terminal Railroad & Coal Company, and the West Side Belt Railroad — all owed their existence to the growth of industry based on bituminous coal, a resource in which the area was rich.

By 1900, Pittsburgh, with the world's greatest bituminous coal fields, had also become the nucleus of related industries such as iron, glass, steel, coke and tinplate.

The combined industrial output made the Pittsburgh area first in the amount of originated freight tonnage of any city in the world. However, the supply of freight transportation to meet this demand was almost entirely under the control of the Pennsylvania Railroad and its allies. Even though the PRR could not meet the industrial demand due to shortages of cars and locomotives, it fiercely fought any competition. As a result, industry had to cut production, and the Pittsburgh economy suffered.

This set the scene for the entry of George Gould, who, while already controlling several major railroads, primarily west of the Mississippi, had dreams of controlling a unified rail system from coast to coast. Gould's interest in the rich Pittsburgh freight market and a transcontinental rail system led to the construction of the Wabash-Pittsburgh Terminal Railway to link Pittsburgh with the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad and Gould's Wabash Railroad. He reached an agreement with Andrew Carnegie, who had experienced difficulties with the Pennsylvania Railroad's service to his mills, that Gould's new road would connect with the Union Railroad, a Carnegie road serving mills in the Mon Valley.

After overcoming intense corporate and political opposition to the intrusion of another railroad into Pittsburgh, the Wabash proceeded to construct a railroad through the extremely difficult terrain southwest of the city, while maintaining a minimum of curves and grades. The result was a tribute to civil engineering, with many impressive bridges and tunnels. The crowning jewel of the railroad's entry into Pittsburgh was a lavish terminal in the heart of the city's business district. At the opposite end of Liberty Avenue from the adversarial Pennsylvania's station, the new building's beauty gained it the name the "Palace

Depot." But despite the grandeur of the Wabash's imposing new passenger terminal, the new line found very few customers for its few scheduled passenger trains. It was King Coal that was to provide the bulk of the local connecting road's traffic and hence its revenue.

Before the railroad opened to traffic, Carnegie sold his steel interests to the new United States Steel Corporation, which ironed out the previous freight problems with the Pennsylvania Railroad. Although the connection with the Union Railroad was built and used to carry iron ore from the Great Lakes via the Wabash and its West Side Belt to U.S. Steel mills, the proposed tonnage commitments were not kept. This proved disastrous for Gould's newcomer railroad in town.

In the railroad's early years, coal and mine products represented over 80 percent of the freight carried. However, the high expenses required to build the road, an inability to develop its freight business, and minimal passenger traffic combined with the effects of the business Panic of 1907 to force the Wabash into receivership by 1908. On January 29, 1917, it emerged from receivership as the Pittsburgh & West Virginia Railway Company. No longer part of the Gould empire, the new management set out to build the road's traffic.

Similarly, the authors follow the development of the railroad through the relative prosperity of the 1920s, when it built an extension to Connellsville, Pennsylvania, through the hard times of the Depression and beyond. After record freight volumes during World War II, the post-war decades called for new efforts by the P&WV to promote railroad traffic and industrial development along its route. But despite the railroad's best efforts, its business continued to erode.

Unable to turn a profit, the

P&WV began looking toward lease or merger with a larger road. In October 1964, it was absorbed into the Norfolk and Western Railway as a leased line. As the trucking industry made serious inroads into rail freight traffic in the 1970s and '80s, business on the N&W's former P&WV lines continued to decline. By 1988, the now parent Norfolk Southern applied to abandon the Connellsville line and the Clairton branch. The local railroad appeared to be headed for the same fate as Pittsburgh's once mighty coal and steel industries.

But the reader should be aware of an important development since the publication of this book. Just as employee buy-outs and new investors have brought new life to steel mills in Monessen and

The book is especially valuable for studying the impact of transportation on area development.

Youngstown, the transportation needs of small industries faced with railroad abandonments have led to the development of short-line railroads, usually backed by local investors. In January 1990, plans were announced for the Wheeling Acquisition Corporation to acquire the former Wheeling & Lake Erie and the Akron, Canton & Youngstown railroads, sublease the former P&WV, and purchase equipment from the Norfolk Southern to form 568 miles of railroad between Bellevue, Ohio, and Connellsville. It would appear that the P&WV may be a key element in forming another chapter in Western Pennsylvania's railroad history.

Pittsburgh area historians will find this book a valuable source for

studying the impact of transportation on area development. The background which led to the road's construction, the economic speculation and engineering skill involved, and the roller-coaster path of the railroad's fortunes are all covered. The P&WV's business history is depicted as closely mirroring the area's economic history, with the coal and steel industries providing the heartbeat of the region. As that pulse weakened, the railroad was forced to promote development of new industry in order to survive.

Readers could much more easily digest the financial and statistical data provided were it in tabular or graphic form. As is, the reader can only trace the railroad's freight volumes or financial trends by gathering the year-by-year data presented in the text. In fact, this annual report style of presentation results in a text so dry as to discourage the reader not deeply interested in the subject.

On the other hand, the reader discouraged by the style will no doubt enjoy the excellent photographic coverage. The work of Pittsburgh photographer Brady Stewart dramatically depicts the engineering and construction achievements involved. The book's photographs not only cover the evolution of P&WV locomotives and rolling stock, but portray the railroad in operation through the years. The P&WV Album section of the book, primarily featuring views by author Bill Poellot, Jr., his father William Sr., and George R. Poellot, shows most effectively daily life along the railroad. Scenes in such communities as Avella, Rea, Hickory, Venice, Bishop, Glad-den, Bridgeville, Rook, Fairhaven, Castle Shannon, and Longview capture a bygone era in which coal mining and railroads were keystones in Western Pennsylvania's economy.

There are some discrepancies in the book. For instance, whereas a photo of private business car

#300 (the "Westmoreland") is identified as having been taken on September 14, 1963, the notes to the rolling stock roster indicate that the car was dismantled and burned at Rook in 1959. There are also spelling and typographic errors. Inclusion of a more detailed map would have been welcomed. The reader could then better identify textual references to sidings, bridges, tunnels, and stations which don't appear on the end-paper maps.

Despite these shortcomings, the authors deserve great credit for producing a comprehensive history of the Pittsburgh & West Virginia Railway. While written primarily as a railroad history, the book offers much more by highlighting the role of this key local railroad in Western Pennsylvania's industrial and economic development, and in the lives of the region's people. ■

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Indiana County 175th Anniversary History, Volume II, 1866-1988

By Clarence D. Stephenson

Indiana, Pa.: A.G. Hallidin Publishing Company, Inc., 1989. Pp. xiii, 809. \$32.50 (paperback source notes for volume II, \$8.75). Four volume set, \$107.50

THIS is the fourth volume to appear in Stephenson's monumental history of Indiana County. Volume I, reaching through 1865, was published in 1978; Volume III, a source book, appeared in 1979, and Volume IV, biographical sketches, followed in 1983. Stephenson plans a fifth volume which will include an index, maps and gazetteer. (See reviews of earlier volumes in this journal's predecessor, *The Western*

Pennsylvania Historical Magazine, Vol. 67 [April 1984], 158-9; and Vol. 68 [July 1985], 271-3.)

The rules of modern historical scholarship dictate that seldom does a single author write a massive multi-volume history anymore (approximately 3,000 pages in this case) — much less a four volume county history. Stephenson has ignored the rules and taken us back to an historical style of the last century, a century which was more certain that facts embodied truth and spoke for themselves. It was also a century which liked its history long. Those readers who like their history in an old-fashioned mold and measure it by length, weight and facts will be pleased with this series and this volume. This is, then, traditional county history.

Nonetheless, the author has produced a work of some charm and value despite what are, from the professional historian's point of view, major flaws. The flaws in Volume II are much the same as noted in earlier reviews. There is an endless piling up of names and facts, as if the author feared discarding any piece of information he had so carefully gathered over the years. The massive quantity of information has not been digested into a central theme. There is little discrimination between major and minor events. Just about everybody and everything get mentioned — at least once. Names of all the churches are included, and there are regular sections on "Disaster and Tragedies" in which mine accidents, fires and floods are remembered. There is even one quaint section entitled "Miscellaneous Woes." In sum, this is not a critical and analytical history of Indiana County. As with earlier volumes, budget constraints made it impossible to produce a really handsome series. There are, however, over 70 illustrations which help capture the image of the Indiana County that was. I again lament the absence of maps, but

we can hope that this deficiency will be overcome in the fifth volume.

To be fair, it was not Stephenson's intention to write a modern, critical history. He identifies major divisions in his two narrative

In Stephenson's work, just about everybody and everything get mentioned — at least once.

volumes (I and II) as "Chronicles," and indeed there is in all of this something of the faithful medieval chronicler dutifully, even lovingly, recording events. There is also something of the collector and preservationist. That is, one senses that the author believes that in the act of collecting and recording information he has preserved parts of Indiana County which would otherwise be lost, and there is, of course, merit in that. Therein rests part of the attraction of this volume and series. Stephenson's work is strongest when he lets the past speak in its own idiom, and he does that regularly. There are frequent insertions of primary materials — in places the volume reads more as a source book — which transport the reader, rather nostalgically, to earlier moments in our history. For example, he includes a good number of letters from Indiana County doughboys who fought in France in World War I when all seemed much clearer and simpler and when war was the just against the unjust. When I read into the Vietnam era I yearned for some letters from Indiana County soldiers to point up the contrast. There is also some very flavorful material on the temperance movement, ethnic tensions rising out of the coal boom and immigration