of incompetence before the enemy. Generals Anthony Wayne, John Sullivan and James Maxwell were each brought before a court martial, but were exonerated. Ward finds no proof that the Virginian was unable to discharge his responsibilities at Germantown, but notes that the story about Stephen being "a sordid, boasting, cowardly sot" grew in its retelling.

The unfavorable recommendation of a court of inquiry alleged that Stephen was "seen in open view of all the soldiers very drunk" and taking snuff from prostitutes, and that he was temporarily absent from his division during its withdrawal from Germantown. Following his removal, a shocked and dismayed Stephen unwisely denounced Washington in writing, destroying any possible vindication by Congress.

One key to understanding Stephen can be found in his uneasy relationship with Washington which flared intermittently into open hostility. The insecure Washington of the 1750s may have felt inadequate beside his older, far better-educated deputy. In the Revolution, he tolerated Stephen to a point, but one gets the impression that the commander-in-chief would have rid himself of his old rival, whenever he deemed it expedient. After Stephen was cashiered, his division was quickly given to Washington's favorite, Marquis de Lafayette.

Ward also documents Stephen's little-noted political life. As early as 1761, Stephen dared to be a candidate (unsuccessfully) for election to the House of Burgesses, against Washington. He then competently held a variety of local offices such as justice of the peace, vestryman, county lieutenant and sheriff. He served rather half-heartedly in the Virginia House of Delegates (1780-1785), and was county overseer for the poor. Stephen retained enough respect to be selected as representative to the 1788 Virginia Ratification Convention for the new federal constitution. An ardent advocate of a powerful federal government, he spoke forcefully for the constitution's adoption. His stalwart support of Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton's controversial plan for federal assumption of state debts made him few friends in Virginia, but gave credence to his dedication to strong central authority. Displaying his quirky intellectual bent, he penned a broadside, _The Exposition of the Potomac_, which argued the case for locating the nation's capital on the banks of the Potomac River.

In this biography, Stephen stands out as a seasoned, mid-level military professional in a nation largely lacking a martial tradition. His experience with British regulars, provincials, militia, light infantry, riflemen, Continentals, Northern and Southern Native Americans and even seamen was superior to that of Washington. He grasped that tactical success in America could be realized only by a marriage of European and colonial modes of warfare. As he astutely put it to Washington in 1757, his Virginia forces were "well disciplin'd and have this advantage of all other troops in America that they know the parade as well as Prussians, and the fighting in a Close Country as well as Tartars."

Ward acknowledges that controversy was never far from Stephen. Contentious, boastful and probably an alcoholic, his combative personality led him sporadically into brawls and disputes with his superiors. The author believes that Stephen's primary weakness was his concern "with generalities of command," while ignoring military routine through over-reliance on junior officers and heavy delegation of authority to his brigade and regimental commanders. Such defects were rampant in the embryonic American service and not remedied until General von Steuben's reforms in 1778. An inept administrator, Stephen's reputation in both the Forbes Campaign and Pontiac's War was tarnished by allegations of conflict of interest improprieties. His revolutionary years were marked by rancorous questions of seniority for promotion in the Virginia Line by Congress. The demands of divisional command were perhaps beyond him, and his personal conduct could be offensive and unbecoming for that of a major general. On the other hand, after being sacked, Stephen conducted the balance of his days with decorum and a certain grace, displaying little permanent animus. Even his plan to publish a defense of his actions at Germantown never materialized. An apparent lifelong bachelor (a daughter, Ann, was born out of wedlock in 1761), Stephen had his failings and vices, but as presented by Ward, he emerges as a patriot devoted to the welfare of his adopted nation.

Although few of Stephen's personal papers survive, the author has done an outstanding job of locating the relevant primary sources, thereby permitting a balanced and revealing view of the Virginian's career. Professor Ward has effectively liberated Stephen from unjust obscurity in a museum case.

J. Martin West
Fort Ligonier Association

**Discoursing Sweet Music: Brass Bands and Community Life in Turn-of-the-Century Pennsylvania**

By Kenneth Kreitner

The publication of Kenneth Kreitner's study of brass bands in the life of selected eastern Pennsylvania communities coincides with a revitalization of the brass band movement in this country. As Kreitner points out, from the Mexican War to World War I the amateur band was arguably the most conspicuous and influential musical institution in the United States. Its music served a kind of "aural logo" for countless community events. This heyday was followed by such a marked decline that brass bands
reached the “endangered species” status among musical organizations.  But thanks in large part to the vision and determination of Pittsburgher Robert Bernat, who sparked a brass band revival with his launching of the River City Brass Band in 1981, a growing audience is once more able to enjoy the discoursing of sweet music by community brass bands. Kreitner’s book should be of particular interest to that readership, not to mention to the thousands of one-time high school band instrumentalists.

Kreitner approaches the subject from a case study basis using his hometown of Honesdale in Wayne County as a locus. Beyond its familiarity to him, Wayne County was eminently suited to his purpose; he describes it as entirely typical of the rural Northeast at the turn of the century, and as an area with a thriving musical tradition in both its villages and larger industrial towns. Kreitner briefly sketches the economic and social conditions that shaped Wayne County communities during the nineteenth century. He characterizes Honesdale as an essentially attractive and stable community whose citizens were proud of the town’s past, confident of the future and conscious that it was a good place to live.

For a detailed exploration of the role of town bands in community life, Kreitner chose the five-year period between 1897 and 1901. Local newspapers are his main source, and he effectively quotes from them throughout the book as a means of bringing his reader in closer contact with the ambience of the time. He reconstructs the membership, probable instrumentation, partial repertory, and representative performing schedules for some dozen bands in Wayne County. He makes clear the extent to which a band’s success, if not its very survival, depended on the capabilities of the bandmaster, who was not necessarily a trained professional. (The Equinunk band thrived under the leadership of the local Methodist minister.) The typical band was made up of males from various walks of life: schoolboys, tea salesmen, factory workers and bookbinders, to name a few. Often a band depended on one or two families to provide several skilled musicians, filling out its ranks with less experienced players. Uniforms and instruments were frequently paid for by the band’s treasury, which was derived from paid performances and general community support. Typical performance schedules included picnics, parades, dinners, receptions, dances, holiday celebrations and various commercial and civic events such as the laying of a cornerstone.

Kreitner is admittedly on less firm ground when he takes up the matter of the actual sounds that were produced by these ensembles. To begin with, a significant part of the repertory performed by the Wayne County band is known in name only. Unlike piano sheet music, which was published in abundance for the home market, very little music for bands was published; band directors would write their own arrangements and the musicians would copy them into their bland part books. Unfortunately, the actual part books of the Wayne County bands did not survive. Kreitner bases his suppositions on extant scores and part books from similar bands. He relies on even more tentative evidence when he speculates on the performance level the bands were able to achieve. He judiciously reads between the lines of the typical boosterism that characterized evaluations published by local newspapers, but perhaps Kreitner is too quick to discount the capabilities of amateur musicians. The twentieth century penchant for professionalism fails to take into account the time and energies devoted by many so called “amateurs” to musical development and the frequency with which they used their musical skills. Nevertheless, he probably paints an accurate picture in describing the overall repertory as naive, popular, uncomplicated music for musicians of modest gifts and an audience of simple tastes. Bands did not aspire to cultural self-righteousness; their concerts were (and are) supposed to be fun.

Kreitner accomplishes what he had set out to do: examine a small slice of the pie as minutely as possible in order to impart a more intimate understanding of the brass band tradition and its place in American history. By confining himself to a five-year period, he was able to avoid the murky waters of less well-documented histories of earlier bands in the area, some going back to the 1820s. But such an approach precludes an important element — that of the origins of the brass band tradition. Was it a purely American phenomenon, or was it imported from the British Isles, as is generally supposed but not conclusively demonstrated? Kreitner does not enlighten the reader on that subject. While he sets his Wayne County scene in terms of industry, transportation, and typical occupations, he fails to note the ethnic origins of the earlier nineteenth century residents, and he does not present evidence of ethnic musical traditions or organizations that preceded the bands. In his final chapter he refers only fleetingly to community fraternal organizations, such as the Liederkranz and Maennerchor singing societies. And who were the Red Men, a fraternal organization which was among the more frequent sponsors of Honesdale brass band appearances? The reader is left to wonder which of these contributed to the “thriving musical tradition.”

This caveat aside, Kreitner has illuminated an important aspect of the role of music in American life. He chronicles the relationship between band and community, including the sense of pride and accomplishment experienced on both sides.

Jean W. Thomas
(A Pittsburgh musicologist, Thomas served as a research consultant for the exhibition “Pittsburgh Rhythms: The Music of a Changing City, 1840-1930,” which opens this summer at the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania)