Indians and British Outposts in Eighteenth-Century America
By Daniel Ingram
Maps, $69.95 hardcover
Reviewed by Andrew Gaerte, Education Manager, Fort Pitt Museum

The topic of Daniel Ingram’s book *Indians and British Outposts in Eighteenth-Century America* is nothing new. For the past 250 years, historians have been writing about the interactions of the British military and Native Americans during the French and Indian War. Ingram’s book, however, delivers a new perspective on the topic by examining the localized experiences of both groups, centered around five British frontier forts of the 1750s and 1760s.

At the end of the French and Indian War, the British found themselves in possession of an expansive frontier populated by numerous groups of Native Americans. Scattered throughout this frontier were dozens of British forts used to regulate trade, protect settlers, and enforce British colonial policies. Often these policies were issued by government officials thousands of miles from the actual locations where they were to be implemented. The application of universal policies could (and did) have disastrous consequences, such as the 1763 Native American uprising popularly known as Pontiac’s Rebellion.

What policy makers in London did not appreciate was that each of these British forts was faced with unique situations. Each fort dealt with different Native American groups, different geography, and a different relationship with colonial governments. Ingram argues that these forts functioned as “their own little world” with vastly diverse experiences, and serve to illustrate the dynamic cross-cultural interactions that took place around these outposts of the Empire.

By focusing on a small sampling of forts, Ingram is able to provide a better understanding of the influence Native Americans had on the politics and cultural sharing experienced on the frontier. Historians in the past have often been quick to categorize Native Americans as helpless victims or bloodthirsty murderers. Both of these descriptions strip humanity from those being described. Ingram’s focused approach restores humanity to the Native American participants by showing them as self-determining players in the daily interactions with the soldiers, settlers, and officers of the British forts.

Readers with an interest in early Pennsylvania history will particularly enjoy Ingram’s chapter on one of the colony’s lesser known forts. Fort Allen, designed by Benjamin Franklin in 1756, was one of a handful of small forts built by the colony to protect the inhabitants of the Delaware Valley. Located on the west side of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Fort Allen was intended to be used to launch raids into Indian territory. Instead, a semi-permanent Native American village sprung up around the fort, used by Natives going to and from treaties in Bethlehem and Easton. This particular fort is used to illustrate the way other forts could be used to bring Native Americans and colonists together. The stories of the other four forts are as equally engaging and well researched, making this book a new standard in the study of the 18th century frontier.

Railroads of Pennsylvania: 2nd Edition
By Lorett Treese
352 pp., B&W illustrations, maps, bibliography, index
$19.95 softcover
Reviewed by Regina Brinza, Publications Intern, Senator John Heinz History Center

Railroads were critical to the economic and industrial development of the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries, and although they faced decline after World War II, their story is not over. The railroad industry is growing again, and tangible pieces of railroad history are still scattered across the land in both Pennsylvania’s cities and rural areas.

In *Railroads of Pennsylvania: 2nd Edition*, Lorett Treese blends history and travelogue by contextualizing railroad artifacts. She conveys a sense of nostalgia for things that no longer exist and celebrates those that still do, whether in original or adapted forms. Treese offers a brief history of Pennsylvania’s railroad achievements as well as eight regionally focused histories of local short line railroads, presenting notable accomplishments and events and giving succinct biographies of prominent railroad officials.

In a fresh approach, however, she traces each region’s railroad history up to present day, examining not only large, intermodal, long-distance carriers such as CSX and Norfolk & Southern, but also exploring the growth of many new short lines that have emerged in the past decade. Additionally, Treese examines surviving memorials and remnants, such as
rail trails, museums, and bridges, as well as the adaptive reuse of stations, tunnels, and other railroad infrastructure.

Treese has updated and expanded her 2003 volume, Railroads of Pennsylvania: Fragments of the Past in the Keystone Landscape, to better represent railroads still operating as well as highlight museums and adaptive reuse projects at historic railroad sites. While the 2003 edition focuses solely on pieces of railroad nostalgia that have left behind, the second edition contains a reflection on the past decade’s resurgence of rail transportation.

New to the second edition are detailed maps and extra photographs. Some of the photographs are dark and soft on focus, but they are illustrative nonetheless. The second edition also contains more analysis of modern rail company mergers and reorganizations. Treese proposes several factors, such as Marcellus shale drilling and the economic sustainability of intermodal freight transit, for the resurgence in short and main line railroad investments by private individuals and government. Treese has again organized the book by geographical regions of Pennsylvania but in the new edition has renamed them with VisitPA’s terminology to facilitate easier use, especially for those using the book as a guide for touring the state’s railroad heritage sites. A convenient list of contact information for some of the sites visited is also made available.

Treese gives “Pittsburgh and Its Countryside” significant coverage, but those seeking information about “Pennsylvania’s Great Lakes Region” will be disappointed to learn that chapter is only 20 pages. For all regions, though, the research is up to date—the Port Authority’s new T extension to Pittsburgh’s North Shore is mentioned, as is the National Gateway plan to raise bridge clearances and otherwise improve intermodal freight transit throughout Pennsylvania and surrounding states.

Railroads of Pennsylvania is an essential addition to any railfan’s library because it does not simply repeat the history of railroads or locomotives, and it is not just a tourist’s or rail traveler’s guide. It is a fusion of the two, connecting past and present. So much railroad literature exists already that encountering unique perspectives is rare. Treese’s book is an original contribution because her personal analysis combines the past stories of Pennsylvania’s railroads with the present story of development, and draws intriguing parallels between the two.

Treese infuses the work with anecdotes about her train rides and site visits, making it both entertaining and informative. Whether reading the book as a travel guide or as a historical reference, audiences will glean fresh insights. Railroads of Pennsylvania is a highly recommended read for railroad buffs, cyclists, rail travelers, and general tourists alike.