THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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THE second annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association was held at Harrisburg on May 4 and 5, 1934. The registered attendance was eighty-nine, while many others were present at some or all of the sessions. This attendance was indeed gratifying, but it should be pointed out that the larger portion of registered members was from outside the Harrisburg area, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and State College being especially well represented.

The program committee, under the leadership of Dr. A. E. Martin, had prepared a well diversified and timely group of papers and reports, all of which were exceedingly well received and led many to remark that the meetings compared favorably in scholarship and general interest with those of larger and older organizations. Much credit likewise should go to our president, Mr. A. Boyd Hamilton, for the admirable way in which the committee on local arrangements functioned. Particularly appreciated by the delegates were the tour through the State Education Building, the State Museum and the State Capitol, and the tea given by the members of the Dauphin County Historical Society at their headquarters building. Here the visitors were shown an inter-

1 The writer is under obligation to Dr. Blake McKelvey for assistance in preparing this account.
esting collection of exhibits dating from the early days of the founding of Harrisburg. Many of the visitors were surprised to find an extensive collection of books, newspapers and old deeds in the library of the society, which again suggests the need for a complete state-wide inventory of historical material.

The opening session was held in the Senate Caucus Room of the Capitol with President A. Boyd Hamilton in the chair. In his efficient, but genial manner he welcomed the members and then turned the meeting over to Dr. Curtis W. Garrison, State Archivist. The subject of the session was “The CWA Survey of Source Material in Pennsylvania History Within the State.” Dr. Garrison was well qualified to direct our consideration of the survey, for it was largely due to his efforts that the project was so widely organized in December and January.

To open the discussion, Professor Francis Philbrick outlined the procedure he had followed in undertaking, with the aid of CWA workers, to prepare a bibliography of the legal history of Pennsylvania. Any who had been under the impression that all CWA projects were little better than blind fumbling in the dark must have been enlightened, so far as Professor Philbrick's undertaking was concerned, by his account of the thorough procedure adopted for listing the names and works of the lawyers of Philadelphia since the city's earliest days and for locating books and pamphlets on the subject.

Dr. Garrison added some illuminating details concerning the trials of a director attempting, amid the uncertainties of federal appropriations, to carry forward a project that at one time enrolled 290 workers distributed over the entire state. But this vast project, Dr. Garrison explained, was fortunate in arousing the enthusiastic cooperation of unemployed executives, lawyers, librarians, teachers, and graduate students, who had enrolled in its ranks. It was brought out that the survey had practically completed the listing of the unpublished materials in the court-houses and had made considerable progress in the survey of newspaper files, church and business records, and private manuscripts.

Mr. Charles B. Montgomery then gave a paper on “The Importance of the Survey to Historical Depositories.” Referring to a large map prepared by the staff to show the location and character of the depositories surveyed, Mr. Montgomery commented on the
wealth of material found in several of the rarely used depositories and called attention to the need of a special depository for the preservation of materials relating to the economic history of the state. Mr. Ray Fasick followed with a forceful statement of the opportunities for improved historical instruction revealed by the survey. With pungent sentences, this former history teacher detailed several methods whereby some of the suggestions in modern educational manuals might be applied by interesting pupils in the collection and preservation of manuscripts and by acquainting them with their historical significance.

Dr. Blake McKelvey opened his remarks on "The Survey and the Graduate Student," with the pertinent observation that it had given him a position, and then proceeded to suggest, with a bit of sardonic humor, that the historical profession might well consider its obligation to devise a plan for handling its own unemployment problem. But the profession, he noted, had made an attempt to map out its field of research. Taking the booklet Historical Scholarship in America, Dr. McKelvey revealed how the survey had catalogued materials that presented attractive research projects along the lines indicated as desirable. Mr. Alfred Boerner concluded the analysis of the achievements of the survey by describing in detail the materials available for a study of land and transportation problems and religious developments.

At the dinner held on Friday evening at the Hotel Penn Harris, Dr. Edward Potts Cheyney was the speaker. Professor Cheyney considered the hills and the valleys, and the flowers of the fields, how they had not perished, as, with many a classical expression, he delighted his audience with an address on "Things Which Have Survived." The privilege of the historian as he conceived it, was not simply to trace out the life of man as it has expressed itself in the molding and shaping of material things, but is likewise to interpret the conditions and temperaments which, like the flowers, have continued to spring up in each successive generation. Professor Cheyney further invited us to ponder the slow changes that have appeared in man's personality and specifically noted the development of sentiment during recent centuries, concluding with a note of optimism as he suggested that this might enable mankind to eradicate war from the probabilities of the future. Professor Cheyney's sturdy serenity and benign detachment did not fail to impress his hearers with the realization that
the historical perspective of a mature life of scholarship was one of those priceless qualities of human culture that may still be listed among the survivals.

With these reflections in mind, Professor Solon J. Buck's brief remarks on the purposes and aspirations of the Pennsylvania Historical Association were especially helpful in bringing the delegates back to a realization of their own humble, and yet opportune place in the struggle for survival. Professor Roy F. Nichols then introduced to the new members those individuals who had been responsible for the organization of the association and the session was concluded.

On Saturday morning the convention divided into two sections, the first of which listened to papers on "Some Aspects of the American Revolution as Related to Pennsylvania." Dr. J. Paul Selsam presented a paper on "The Political Revolution in Pennsylvania in 1776." His scholarly analysis left us with no illusions as to the heroic idealism of the small faction of malcontents, who struggled to unseat the rival Quaker faction and who used the issue of independence and the support of the radicals in the Continental Congress to aid them in their struggle. Dr. Selsam showed how the undemocratic haste with which the revolutionary measures were adopted was motivated by a number of interests, and how some of these found expression in the extremely democratic character of the new constitution, which was, as a lively discussion brought out, to suffer failure and defeat because it did not represent and safeguard the more permanently influential elements in the state.

Mr. J. Bennett Nolan next spoke on "Lafayette in Pennsylvania." Mr. Nolan has undertaken the task of chronicling Lafayette's American career, and he has discovered that a substantial part of the time spent by this revolutionary hero in America was passed within the borders of our modest Commonwealth. Most interesting was the picture sketched by Mr. Nolan of an adventurous young nobleman risking his life in thankless efforts in behalf of the patriot's cause, and returning many years later, after matching his American career with similar services for the oppressed peoples of Europe, to receive tardy honors from the nation he helped to create.

The last paper in this section, "Bishop Ettwein and the American Revolution," was presented by Mrs. Colin Ward. Her pic-
ture of this patient shepherd attempting to guide his flock of quaint sheep through the bewildering trials of a revolution in a strange country was a fitting addition to the account of Lafayette's colorful experiences and the revolutionary party's greedy maneuvers. Those who remained to the end of the three hour session enjoyed a lucid survey of the Revolution in Pennsylvania.

The section on "The Teaching of Pennsylvania History in the Public Schools" was presided over by Professor W. F. Dunaway who, in his work at Pennsylvania State College, is interesting many future teachers in the history of the Commonwealth. The first speaker was Professor A. P. James who discussed the "Significance of State and Local History in the Public Schools." He stressed the opportunities to use local material in illustrating class room discussion. Following the paper of Professor James, there were shorter reports by three teachers of their experiences in supplementing their history courses. Miss Clara Deck discussed the historical dramatizations which have been developed, particularly for commencement purposes, at the Reading Senior High School. Mr. L. E. Davis described the project carried on by his history classes in relocating sections of the old Braddock Road. Mr. A. L. Pepperman told of the development of a Pennsylvania museum in the Curtin Junior High School at Williamsport. In this museum are collected all types of materials such as old textbooks, Indian relics, curios, documents and other pieces of historical interest. It was felt by some that a comprehensive analysis of such activities might well be prepared with a view to making it available to history teachers. The members of the program committee were keenly disappointed that history teachers in Harrisburg and vicinity did not attend this session in larger numbers.

At the luncheon meeting which followed, discussion centered around the social aspects of the history of Pennsylvania. Mr. George H. Genzmer gave an illuminating talk on the various cultural groups that settled in Penn's model Commonwealth and brief character sketches of the notable personalities of several of the religious sects. Contrasting our Commonwealth with New England, he claimed that it was not only more richly endowed by the variety of its cultural strains, but also a more liberal spirit prevailed by virtue of the broader intellectual horizon of its founders. Whether its tolerance in the realm of theology, its non-
sectarian democracy in the field of education, or its love of music in the world of art be considered, Pennsylvania certainly merits the attention of students of social history.

The paper of Professor Lawrence H. Gipson on "Early Pennsylvania Criminal Codes" called to mind that civilization has its dark as well as its light aspects. Nevertheless, dark as the practices described by Professor Gipson appear today, they were among the more creditable in the records of the period, for William Penn held many of the views of modern students of the criminal problem. Possibly the most significant point emphasized by Professor Gipson was the fact that the theoretically conceived, humane criminal code of Penn's early laws soon lost local favor owing to its failure to check the growth of crime that accompanied the rise of Pennsylvania to a leading place among England's colonies. Thus we had in the early eighteenth century in Pennsylvania the first of a long series of popular demands for harsh laws. The extension to the colony of a modified version of England's severe code was, it was demonstrated, in effect a response to local desires.

The final session on Saturday evening, in celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Common School Law of Pennsylvania, was a fitting climax to the convention. Major Frank W. Melvin as chairman, introduced the speakers with a sparkling wit that greatly enlivened the occasion. The first speaker, Dr. Frederic A. Godcharles, traced the development of education in the colony of Pennsylvania, beginning with the early Dutch and Swedes on the Delaware. He pointed out that the early educational system was devised for the purpose of retaining the members in the various religious denominations, this being especially true of the Germans. The work of Francis Daniel Pastorius was described and other early advocates of education were mentioned but, Dr. Godcharles declared, little real progress in building a democratic system of education was made in the eighteenth century. He concluded his discussion with the Lancasterian System and the Act of 1834, which he termed the foundation of our present system.

Dr. James Mulhern followed and traced the conflict over the establishment of a democratic system of education. The Act of 1834, he said, took education out of the field of charity and made it a public service. The attempts to establish a democratic system
of education were related to the growing labor movement which had come to be its champion. Benjamin Franklin was pictured as the champion of non-sectarian academies and as a result of his efforts the Philadelphia Academy was founded and a movement toward the secularization of existing academies developed.

The last feature of the session was a discussion by Mr. D. S. Crosley, substituting for Dr. James N. Rule, of the effects which panics and depressions have had and are having upon education. He began by mentioning some of the most alarming curtailments made necessary by the present decline in the current income of school districts and the picture he presented was blue indeed. The study of history, however, had led Mr. Crosley to adopt a more optimistic view of the situation, for after every previous depression has come some notable advance in education. Following the panic of 1857 came schools for training teachers and superintendents; after 1873 the state school appropriations were greatly increased; after 1893 came compulsory education; after 1907 came the school code and after the post war crash came the Edmunds Salary Act. This note of optimism was a fitting ending to the session.

The annual business meeting of the Association was held on Saturday morning. The editor of Pennsylvania History, Dr. A. C. Bining, reported briefly on the magazine, the success of which is already well assured. Miss Frances Dorrance, chairman of the Membership Committee, reported that 196 new members had been secured. In the absence of the treasurer, Mr. R. P. Wright, the secretary read his report which showed that the association had a balance on hand, after paying for the April number of the magazine, of $137.29.

The secretary, Dr. Paul W. Gates, reported that our total membership and subscription list had reached 306, including 270 annual members, twenty-three institutional members, two sustaining members, and eleven subscriber non-members. This is a great achievement in these days of depression when most societies are watching with deep dismay their declining membership rolls. Mention was made of the fall meeting in Williamsport which the

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3 Since the secretary's report was prepared and up to June 5, 1934, the membership and subscription list has been extended to a total of 328 members, including 284 annual members, twenty-seven institutional members, three sustaining members, and fourteen subscriber non-members.
association sponsored in connection with the Federation of Historical Societies. This meeting was well attended and an excellent program was presented. Another activity during the year was the distribution, through the courtesy of the Western Pennsylvania Historical Society, of reprints of an article by Dr. Russell J. Ferguson on “Albert Gallatin, Western Pennsylvania Politician.”

Professor A. P. James drew the attention of the association to the historical decorations, memorials and traditions of seventeen national groups which are being preserved in the Cathedral of Learning at the University of Pittsburgh and a vote of approval was extended to the Chancellor, Dr. John G. Bowman. Professor Solon J. Buck discussed the present status of the publishing of territorial papers by the United States government, showing how important the continuation of the project was for the western states as well as for Pennsylvania and moved the adoption of a resolution urging the continued support of the work by the government. The secretary was instructed to forward the resolution to the Secretary of State.

As the officers are elected for terms of three years, there were no changes to be made, but three members of the Council had to be elected to replace Dr. Frederic A. Godcharles, Professors A. P. James, and C. M. Sullivan, whose terms were expiring. To fill these vacancies, Messrs. Godcharles and James were reelected and Mr. John F. Brougher was newly elected, all for terms of three years. At a subsequent meeting of the Council Professor Orin Oliphant and Miss M. Atherton Leach were elected as members of the Editorial Board for terms of three years to fill the expiring terms of Mr. Brougher and Miss Dora Mae Clark. At the same time the Council accepted the invitation of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania and the University of Pittsburgh to meet with them in annual convention next year at Pittsburgh.