THE SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

BY J. PAUL SELSAM
Pennsylvania State College

The sixth annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association was undoubtedly the most successful in our history. The setting was perfect, for we were meeting in an historic town in conjunction with the sesqui-centennial celebration of the founding of Franklin and Marshall College and the dedication of Wheatland, the former home of James Buchanan, Pennsylvania's only President. The arrangements were complete and the program was excellent. Part of the enthusiasm was due to the fact that the attendance was large. The Association was given a very warm welcome to Lancaster by Mayor James M. Ross.

At the luncheon on Friday, October 15, Dr. H. M. J. Klein, professor of history at Franklin and Marshall, presided. We were greeted on behalf of the Lancaster County Historical Society by its president, Professor Herbert S. Beck. Dr. Roy F. Nichols, president of the Association, replied in a brief speech of appreciation. The general session on Friday afternoon was presided over by Professor Orin Oliphant of Bucknell University. The first paper was given by Mr. M. E. Illick, superintendent of the Hellertown public schools, on "George Wolf and His Time." George Wolf was a German immigrant who made great strides as a lawyer and politician, becoming governor of Pennsylvania in 1829. He was re-elected in 1832 and so served from 1829-1835. Mr. Illick showed that the passage of the school law of 1834 was largely due to the aggressive leadership of the governor. When the law seemed on the verge of repeal, Thaddeus Stevens made his great speech. Although Wolf and Stevens were political enemies, Mr. Illick stated that the governor called Stevens to his office and with tears in his eyes thanked him for his support. The next paper, presented by Dr. Amos A. Ettinger of Lehigh University, was entitled "A Bowlerized Diary in the Pennsylvania Ar-
chives.” Dr. Ettinger secured recently the manuscript diary of Lieutenant James McMichael, a Revolutionary soldier from Lancaster county. The speaker compared the original diary with the parts printed in the *Pennsylvania Archives*, and showed how the printed account omitted many choice passages of this philosophical and poetical soldier. The audience was often in an uproar over many of these, particularly the ones dealing with his “Dear Suzanna.” The last paper of the session was given by Victor L. Johnson of Muhlenberg College on “Robert Morris and the Provisioning of the American Army during the Campaign of 1781.” Mr. Johnson showed that Robert Morris, upon taking office as superintendent of finance, had no intention of assuming the responsibility of providing food for the American forces during the campaign of 1781. However, unable to withstand the many and urgent appeals that continually poured in upon him, he soon became deeply involved in the question of food supplies for the American and French forces. Largely as a result of his subsequent efforts in this phase of the campaign, the armed forces of the American states were able to accomplish their purpose at Yorktown. At the conclusion of the afternoon session one of our distinguished members, Dr. Dixon Ryan Fox, president of Union College, made a few brief remarks and complimented us on our achievements and particularly on our excellent magazine *Pennsylvania History*.

The evening session opened with dinner at the Hotel Brunswick, presided over by Mr. Arthur P. Mylin, superintendent of Lancaster county schools. In his remarks Mr. Mylin emphasized the importance of active cooperation between our Association and the social studies teachers. The address of the evening was given by our vice-president, J. Bennett Nolan, of Reading. He talked on “Benjamin Franklin in Scotland and Ireland.” In his inimitable way, and with his profound knowledge of Franklin, Mr. Nolan recounted most vividly the travels and experiences of Benjamin Franklin and his son William through Scotland and Ireland, emphasizing the popular acclaim which greeted Franklin everywhere on his journey. He also told about Benjamin Franklin’s visit to the University of Edinburgh. Here he met a young student who was later to become an eminent Pennsylvanian, James Wilson. While in Ireland Franklin was invited to sit in the Irish Parliament at Dublin. After the dinner meeting the members of
the Association were the guests of Franklin and Marshall College at the play "Poor Richard," presented by the College Green Room Club in the beautiful new little theatre on the college campus. The play was very entertaining and extremely well presented.

The Saturday morning session opened at nine o’clock in the new Liberal Arts Building of Franklin and Marshall College. It was presided over by Professor Alfred P. James of the University of Pittsburgh. The first paper was given by Dr. R. Wallace Brewster of Pennsylvania State College on "The Rise of the Anti-Slavery Movement in Southwestern Pennsylvania." Dr. Brewster showed how slow the movement was in growing and emphasized the opposition and violence which developed at first. Due to the proximity of Virginia there was much pro-slavery feeling in this section, particularly in Greene county. From old letters and newspapers Dr. Brewster told an interesting story of the underground railroad in southwestern Pennsylvania. Dr. E. Douglas Branch of the University of Pittsburgh followed with a paper on "Pittsburgh and the ‘Terrible Hempfield’." It was an interesting story of the economic and industrial development of Pittsburgh which emphasized the intense rivalry between that city and Philadelphia. The completion of the Pennsylvania Railroad to Pittsburgh was of great importance in the city’s history. "The Terrible Hempfield Humbug" as it was called by the Pittsburgh Gazette was to run from Greensburg to Wheeling, West Virginia, thus endangering the economic future of Pittsburgh. Dr. Branch traced the vehement protests against the building of this road and showed how the movement eventually collapsed partly because of this opposition, partly because of the enormity of the undertaking and the lack of funds. The last paper of the session was given by Professor Frederic S. Klein of Franklin and Marshall College who presented "The Spiritual and Educational Background of Franklin College." Professor Klein most interestingly sketched the background of the college in the philosophy and thought of Germany, particularly among the Pietists at the University of Halle. From this center missionaries came to Pennsylvania who were prominent in the early life of the college.

This session was followed by the dedication of the new Keiper Liberal Arts Building at Franklin and Marshall College. The brilliant dedicatory address was given by our president, Dr. Roy F. Nichols. The final session of the two-day meeting was the
luncheon on Saturday afternoon at the Seminary refectory, presided over by our former president, A. Boyd Hamilton. Major Frank W. Melvin, of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission, briefly discussed the plans to secure the Ephrata Cloisters for the state. Following these remarks, Mr. Philip S. Klein, of the University of Pennsylvania, gave a delightful account of the "History of Wheatland, Home of James Buchanan." At this meeting we had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Sargent B. Child tell of the work of the Federal Historical Records Survey.

Escorted by Lancaster and state motorcycle patrolmen, the members then formed a caravan and journeyed to the Cloisters at Ephrata. Many of the members had never before seen this remarkable place, one of the most important historical landmarks in Pennsylvania. Following the tour of the grounds and buildings the caravan returned to Lancaster where tea was served by the Lancaster Junior League at Wheatland, the new Pennsylvania shrine.

The officers of the Association were delighted with the large attendance, the excellent papers and the enthusiasm shown. At the business session Dr. Asa E. Martin told of the work of the membership committee and stated that almost one hundred new members had been secured. He urged every member to contact people in their own community who might be interested in furthering historical activities in the state by joining our Association. It is hoped that every member will secure at least one new member during the coming year. Resolutions of sympathy upon the death of one of our active members, Dr. Henry R. Mueller of Muhlenburg College, were adopted. The Association noted with regret the departure of one of our charter members, Dr. Curtis W. Garrison, former state archivist, for his new work as librarian and archivist of the Hayes Memorial Library, Fremont, Ohio. It was of interest to all the members to learn that Professor S. K. Stevens had been appointed historian of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission. Upon the motion of Professor H. H. Shenk, chairman of the nominating committee, the following were elected to the council: Eugene P. Bertin, Alfred P. James, and Frederic A. Godcharles. Dr. H. M. J. Klein was elected to fill the unexpired term of the late Henry R. Mueller. Upon the motion of Professor Lawrence H. Gipson, resolutions of thanks and appreciation were voted to Dr. H. M. J. Klein, chairman of the program.
committee; Frederic S. Klein, chairman of the arrangements com-
mittee; Mayor James M. Ross of Lancaster, for his cordial wel-
come; President John A. Schaeffer, of Franklin and Marshall
College; the Wheatland Foundation and the Lancaster Junior
League, and the Lancaster County Historical Society. The Asso-
ciation endorsed the work being done by the Federal Historical
Records Survey, headed in Pennsylvania by one of our members,
Karl Goedecke.