Our Altoona Senior High School with an enrollment that has nearly reached the 4,000 mark finds it essential to offer its students a much diversified curriculum. Since at least 75 per cent of our students do not enter college, we find it necessary to organize courses that will be helpful to them as citizens of our community, state and nation.

Realizing that the interests and thoughts of people today center chiefly on activities in Washington, D. C., Tokio, Shanghai, London, or Berlin, we must defend the place of a course of Pennsylvania history in our school curriculum. At the Altoona High School, Pennsylvania history is taught as an elective semester subject and was first included in the course of study in the spring of 1936. We believe that this course should enable many of our non-academic students to live richer and more worthwhile lives for having taken such work treating material that is familiar and tangible.

When statesmen of every nation face a critical world situation and, in many cases, find it impossible to solve these problems or properly understand them, we realize how utterly impossible it is for many of our students to comprehend world affairs. In many instances, teachers are incapable of guiding students to an unbiased comprehension of world trends or even national policies, so a survey of local and state policies which will give a fair cross section of our national set-up is certainly necessary. A course in Pennsylvania history is easily offered in the larger school systems, but in smaller schools with limited resources and established courses in ancient, medieval, and modern history, economics, problems of democracy, civics, and United States history, the
inclusion of a semester course in state history is not always possible.

I realize the worth-while arguments presented by leading educators which set forth the necessity of giving students a glimpse into the rich realms of ancient history, but it seems entirely possible that, in the majority of cases, many ancient battles and the deeds of ancient heroes could be curtailed, and in their stead could be inserted the accomplishments and struggles of our own Pennsylvania ancestors.

Few of our students are aware of the vast resources, the rich scenic treasures, the development of recreational facilities, and the advancement which has been made in art, architecture, literature and music in our state.

Certainly today's students are not sufficiently familiar with the development of our public schools. How many of the students in our local school systems can explain intelligently the financing of public education in their district? Few understand such problems as confront our state in reforestation, soil conservation, slum clearance, flood control, the migration of industries to other states, and in the anthracite coal problem, as well as in many other major issues.

Even in studying local problems, a civics course does not enable students to grasp properly and understand completely local situations, as this course is generally included in the junior high school curriculum and only minor elementary problems are presented. Not all high school curricula include problems of democracy, a course in present problems, which should logically be included in a semester course in state history if we consider the best interests of our students in planning a curriculum.

Setting up any number of objectives is possible in a course in Pennsylvania history and, frequently, these objectives will correlate closely with those of our national history. A complete list of objectives is suggested by Eugene P. Bertin in his article in Pennsylvania History, April, 1934.

A list of some of the objectives of our course is given below. From these objectives we have developed units of work:

1. To understand the aims, purposes, problems and contributions of the founders and early settlers.
2. To evaluate the contributions of the early government to our state and national democracy and to study how this democratic government has developed and has been maintained in our state.

3. To understand the importance of our colony in relationship with the other twelve colonies and the part it played in the struggle to gain national independence, and to secure an understanding of the part our state has played in national growth.

4. To understand the development of transportation in our state and the factors promoting migration of our people to the western areas of our state.

5. To gain a perspective of the natural resources and the development of industry from colonial days to the present including a study of the problems arising as a result of our industrial growth.

6. To understand the importance of religious freedom in our colonial and present day life. To survey the religious groups that settled in our state and evaluate their contributions.

7. To attain a complete understanding of the part that education has played in our social, political and cultural development.

8. To appreciate the cultural development of our state. To learn of past and present leaders in art, music, literature, and science and to have students emulate the example of the best men Pennsylvania has produced in every field of activity.

9. To arouse an interest in family, local, state and national history. To teach history by going from the known to the unknown.

10. To gain an understanding of the ever increasing activities of our governments, the costs, the magnitude of work attempted, and the benefits and evils arising as a result.

11. To gain a knowledge of our state recreational facilities.

12. To awaken in the students an interest in nature, travel, scenic areas, outdoor life and every type of wholesome activity that will enable them to spend worth-while leisure within our borders.

We have approximately one hundred reference books, including fiction dealing with our state, biographies, and general books descriptive of different sections of the state. As a student text we use *A History of Pennsylvania* by Dr. Wayland F. Dunaway.
Newspapers and magazines furnish an abundance of material for the study of many of our units. This material is placed in folders and filed for future reference. A collection of local, county, city, and state pamphlets, maps, booklets and other materials are valuable for our study.

It is always our aim to keep in touch with all state activities. When heads of the different departments speak in our city, students who are interested in this particular work are permitted to attend if the lecture occurs during school hours. At times it is possible to have these speakers appear in our school assembly programs. Local speakers who are interested in local and state history are invited to speak to our classes. Our regular work is also supplemented with moving pictures, slides, and field trips.

Special activities and projects include: 1. A survey of his own family history is the first project assigned each student as from this study the student learns to do research work that will increase his interest in the semester's study.

In this project the student attempts to determine the nationality of his ancestors, the time of their migration to America, the reasons for coming and the sections of our country where they settled. This study also includes types of work followed by their ancestors such as farming, milling, shoemaking, cabinet-making, and others, as well as the professions such as teaching, medicine, law, ministry, and statesmanship. The contributions made by members of their families to the community, state and nation are not neglected. The religious affiliations represented by their families are studied. Military records, special distinctions, and the education of their ancestors are not neglected.

This study induces students to visit grandparents, write letters, hunt up old chests and trunks in which are stored old family records, diaries, account books, military records, marriage certificates, old newspapers and any amount of similar valuable material. Many students developed an interest in their family history and expressed a desire to continue this research when no one had compiled any of this particular information before.

2. Students select special projects in which they are especially interested such as "recreational areas of our state," making a study of all available materials, maps, booklets and newspaper articles. Reports are given to the class with questions and discussions.
3. Local field trips are made to the Blair County Historical Museum, early homes of the county, old mills, industrial plants, historical markers, hikes along the Kittanning Trail and the Old Portage Railroad. The majority of the students state that they knew little or nothing about these places until these tours were made.

4. At the present time our classes are engaged in a project in which we will compose a form letter describing Blair county. This letter will contain facts about the early history of cities, industries, places of scenic and historic interest, prominent leaders who have gained state or national recognition, and a list of worthwhile places for tourists to visit and see in our county.

This letter together with descriptive booklets and pictures of Blair county furnished by our local Chamber of Commerce will be sent to a representative high school in each of the counties of our state. We will ask the principal in each school to hand this material to a social studies teacher who has a student interested in local and state history. We hope to have this student send us the same type of material. We will ask to have our letter printed in their local newspaper and we will do the same with the letters which we receive. It is hoped that we will arouse interest and enthusiasm not only among our own students, but among the students of many other sections of our state in the study about things of Pennsylvania.

5. The classes have worked out tours within a radius of fifty to one hundred miles of our city. Complete descriptions of scenic, historic, industrial, recreational, agricultural, and many other phases of interest are outlined for each tour. We believe in the theory of Russell Conwell’s *Acres of Diamonds*. With our great amount of leisure time, we think it worth while to explore thoroughly any section of our state.

6. A special committee keeps a daily file for all news articles pertaining to political, economical, social, educational, and cultural life of our state. These are placed in a large scrap book and form the basis for a semester’s review of the activities within the state.

These are just a few of the many activities of the classes during the semester. We believe that most of the students of our state would be benefited by a course in Pennsylvania history.
STIMULATING THE STUDY OF LOCAL HISTORY

By Paul W. Pritchard
Chester High School, Chester, Pa.

All over the Commonwealth are many secondary teachers who would like to bring more of the local background into the social studies classroom. As Mr. Koehler pointed out in the January, 1938, issue of Pennsylvania History there is a dearth of available material, and the teacher is insufficiently trained for the special task. These two wants are more closely related than we realize. If we furnish one, we automatically supply the other.

This article is primarily concerned with the question of making available suitable materials for the study of local history. Save as a director of the activities of the student, the teacher is pushed into the background of the picture, which, after all, is where he belongs. We are linking the youth to the materials and letting the absorption and thinking processes take their course.

The city of Chester is fortunate in its historical records, but the material has been no more available to high school students than that of any other town. The Delaware County Historical Society has housed many precious relics and antiques in its museum, but most students have to be taken there, few go otherwise. Letters in private hands are scarce. A request for pupils to bring in such has been rather fruitless. One collection in the local historical society has been copied and made available for classroom use. It will be mentioned later. Histories of both Chester and Delaware counties have been written, but are not very suitable for our purposes. The best single source is the "morgue" of the Chester Times. There are preserved the files of the Delaware County Republican and its successors to the present Chester Times, practically unbroken from 1833 to the present day. The management has cooperated to the utmost in permitting us to use the files.

During 1936 and 1937 the writer spent many hours in going over various volumes of the Delaware County Republican and marking in a notebook the passages which NYA workers and volunteers from history classes copied and typed in duplicate. Unfortunately the mimeograph was not used. In selecting the material, it was kept in mind that youths of about seventeen years...
of age were to use the finished product. The files abounded in political matters, but social, economic, and intellectual notations were by no means absent. Advertisements, as well as news items and editorials were included. A committee of students recently arranged and numbered the pages. Then members of history classes read various portions of the work and prepared the index. Many duplications appeared, but these were easily eliminated. The reading and indexing proved so interesting that the writer was swamped with requests for the privilege and allowed such a large number to join in that he feared the volumes would be worn out before completion. Just the other day, a local printer very kindly bound the pages into six volumes of about fifty pages each.

The reader is perhaps wondering just what material is contained in our local history, student-collected volumes and how it will be used. The transcriptions from the Delaware County Republican comprise four volumes. The copies of letters from the Papers of Edward Darlington, found in the Delaware County Historical Society, fill two small volumes. These are letters received by Darlington when a member of Congress. They furnish some interesting comments on the life of the community. Items of business are mingled with arrangements for exchanging "specimens" with societies of England in one direction and toward the southwest in the other. Snow falls, the Delaware freezes over, a workman is injured at the quarries, and business men fume at the withdrawal of the deposits. The student sees the Liberty Leaguer's opinion of Roosevelt in the tirade on Jackson:

Indeed sir there never was a period in the history of our country when it could be said with more truth, 'we are in the midst of a revolution' than the present period. . . . To look no farther than our own County we have seen very many melancholy proofs of the actual distress brought upon us by the Misgovernment of our Executive. If the present distress continues for another Month there will not be a manufacturer in the county who can continue to carry on business. Some of the factories have stopped already. The hands employed in the mills are suffering much, none of the employers now can pay their work people, the farmers likewise begin to feel the effects of the gathering storm, every person feels it
less or more except the men in office who are feasting upon the spoils wrung from the bleeding interests of their murdered Country—but there's a day coming—a day of terrible reaction. When the present actors of this fearful tragedy shall be driven from the stage upon which they have played such frightful such 'fantastic tricks' and amid the excreations [sic.] and curses of a much injured people their names and their memories shall be consigned to merited infamy.

The Delaware County Republican began publication at Darby in 1833, but soon moved to Chester. It was a typical small town progressive newspaper appearing each Friday. By degrees it grew from four to eight columns, as the pages increased in number. The advertisements, mostly personal at first, developed to resemble modern methods after the Civil War, when wood was no longer taken in exchange for hats, and safe kerosene could be purchased from several retailers. The political policy of the paper, according to present day standards, was conservative. The editorials slashed Van Buren as an Englishman who had English servants, and rode in an imported English carriage. Toward the end of Jackson's administration, the general, while faintly praised, was presented as the innocent victim of shrewd politicians, who would lead the people astray.

Drinking in gilded palaces was deplored, the temperance drive proceeded with little paid space but many free inches. The young were advised to spend and save wisely, to refrain from whiling away the hours in the billiard saloons, even though, according to one advertisement, "order will be preserved." When a feminine seminary advertised, the editor wrote a complimentary column. Lectures and writing classes were available for the adult when political meetings or church socials did not compete for attention.

In the 1850's new industries appeared and Chester began to develop. Advertising space grew. The Civil War increased the rate of progress. Old problems were solved, but new ones appeared. Chester was at last in the turbulence of a dynamic society.

Can the student be led to see the inevitability of change? When one considers that he knows more about his own community than the rest of the world where can such an appreciation be more easily obtained than in a survey of the progress of his own back-yard? Institutions develop before his eyes. Political questions
come and go, but he sees that human nature differs very little from that of Jackson's day. Living in an industrial community, the student can perceive that he must be prepared to adapt himself to a mutable industry.

If, through our project, the student sees and understands more clearly the inevitability of change, we will feel that our time has been well spent. Anyone who appreciates the necessity of adaptability is well on his way to being a good citizen.

Just a word as to technique. Under the conventional textbook method of teaching United States history, the material gathered by our students can be used to correlate national and local history, e.g., when one is studying Jackson's administration, the student can be asked to discover local opinion about the hero of New Orleans. Under a more "progressive" system, where perhaps the class is investigating how to earn a living, who would not like to have available some material showing exactly how persons in his own community made their living yesterday?

The materials for a study of local history cannot be published in the usual sense of the term. They must be "dug" out of the community and brought into the local classroom. Perhaps the above suggestions will help someone who has been seeking light on the subject.

THOMAS MIFFLIN

By HERBERT F. ARNOLD


LIMITED space permits merely a bare outline of one of the important early Pennsylvanians, of whom no adequate study has yet been made. From youth until death Thomas Mifflin labored in the service of his country, and was always in a prominent position.

Born of Quaker parents in Philadelphia, in 1744, he graduated from college, prepared for a mercantile career, visited Europe, and on his return entered a business partnership with his brother, which lasted until the outbreak of the Revolution. Then he became a champion of colonial rights and dedicated his energies to the cause of his country.
In 1772, he began his public career as one of the two burgesses representing Philadelphia in the Provincial Assembly of Pennsylvania, with Benjamin Franklin as his colleague. When the Boston patriots tried to arouse the other colonies shortly after the Tea Party, they found Thomas Mifflin an enthusiastic ally. At a public meeting in Philadelphia, early in 1774 he advocated sending an unequivocal answer to Boston. This same year he was chosen a delegate to the First Continental Congress.

On receiving news of Lexington, in 1775, another meeting was held in Philadelphia and resolutions were adopted. Mr. Mifflin, the youngest orator, concluded his speech with the admonition: “Let us not be bold in declarations and afterwards cold in action. Let not the patriotic feeling of today be forgotten tomorrow, nor have it said of Philadelphia she passed noble resolutions, slept upon them, and afterwards forgot them.”

He entered military service immediately, and was appointed a major. Consequently, this fighting Quaker lost his membership in the Society of Friends. Upon the formation of a continental army in 1775, he accompanied General Washington to Boston, and became his first aide-de-camp, with the rank of colonel. Two months later, when affairs were in a state of confusion, and order had to be established, he accepted the arduous position of quartermaster of the army.

In 1776 he was commissioned a brigadier-general by Congress and began active duty in the field in command of two Pennsylvania regiments. In the fall of that year the lack of troops caused leaders to despair about the prospects of victory. General Mifflin was sent to Congress by Washington to seek reinforcements. Congress sent him with a committee appointed by the Pennsylvania legislature, through the adjacent counties “to exhort and arouse the militia to come forth in defense of their country.” From pulpits and judicial benches, in meeting houses and all public places, he poured forth his spirit-stirring eloquence, and the ranks were strengthened. As a result he had the satisfaction of marching to New Jersey at the head of eighteen hundred men. The Battle of Princeton followed in January, 1777, and the victories of Trenton and Princeton helped to seal American independence.
Congress commissioned him major-general in February, 1777, and later appointed him to the War Board which was composed of three men. The responsibilities of his various offices impaired his health, and he resigned as quartermaster and major-general. Congress, however, refused to accept his resignation until February, 1779. This was during the darkest period of the entire war. The army suffered at Valley Forge in the winter of 1777-78, while the enemy enjoyed the comforts of Philadelphia. General Mifflin came in for a share of the blame. Congress voted an inquiry, but it seems no formal one was made.

After the Battle of Germantown he became identified with Washington's opponents. This step was probably the most serious mistake in his life. No charges were proved against him, but it was inevitable for anyone associated with Washington's enemies not to stand convicted in the eyes of those who revered the Commander-in-Chief. It is certain that Washington bore Mifflin no malice as indicated by their later public and private associations.

After the war ended he again turned to politics. In 1781 he was elected a member of Congress and the next year became president of that body. In 1785 he was chosen a member of the Pennsylvania legislature and served as speaker. In 1787 he became a member of the Constitutional Convention and a signer of the immortal document.

In 1788, by popular vote, he was elected to succeed Benjamin Franklin as a member of the Supreme Executive Council of the state, and soon became its president. In this capacity he served until the office was abolished by the Pennsylvania constitution of 1790 which provided for a governor instead of a committee.

In November, 1789, he was elected presiding officer of a convention which met in Philadelphia and adopted the state constitution of 1790. Under its provisions the governor, elected for three-year terms, could serve only nine years out of twelve. Mifflin was promptly elected the first governor and was re-elected in 1793 and 1796, thus serving the full constitutional period. He had the distinction of being chief executive of the state for nearly eleven years—two years as president of the council, and nine years as governor.

His term of office having expired he was not permitted to retire to private life, but was elected to the state legislature, which met
at Lancaster, the new seat of government. A few days after taking his oath he became ill and died January 20, 1800. In his later life he had borrowed excessively and spent lavishly. Consequently, he died penniless, and the state paid the expenses of his burial in the Lutheran cemetery at Lancaster.

He truly made an illustrious record after he left his Quaker home for the army. Although he never rose to statesmanship of the highest rank, he stood in the forefront with those whose influence promoted democracy in his state and nation—a distinguished patriot and zealous friend of liberty.