THE SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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THE hosts for the seventh annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association, held in Williamsport and Lewisburg on October 28 and 29, 1938, were the Lycoming Historical Society, the Muncy Historical Society and Museum of History, the Northumberland County Historical Society, the Union County Historical Society, the Snyder County Historical Society, and the Bucknell History Club. The arrangements were all that could be desired, the program was excellent, and the delightful historical tour conducted by Captain Frederic A. Godcharles on Saturday afternoon was a fitting climax to a splendid gathering of those interested in Pennsylvania history.

The meeting began with a luncheon on Friday, October 28, at the Lycoming Hotel, presided over by Colonel Herbert R. Laird, president of the Lycoming Historical Society, who welcomed the Association on behalf of his society. It was quite fitting that another hearty welcome should be extended by Mr. A. M. Weaver, Williamsport Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Roy F. Nichols, the president of the Association, expressed appreciation for the hospitality extended.

At the general session on Friday afternoon, presided over by Professor William A. Russ, Jr., of Susquehanna University, three
excellent papers on widely diversified topics were presented. Professor George D. Harmon of Lehigh University read the first paper on "The Pennsylvania Clergy and the Civil War." He stated that while there was a slight division within the ranks of the clergy, there was no anti-Union sentiment. From the beginning, he pointed out, the ministers of the Gospel rallied to the support of the government. "Faced with a stunned and divided North, it is doubtful if President Lincoln could have united the nation sufficiently to have won the war without the loyal support of the clergy. The Pennsylvania clergymen often faced congregations composed of many southern sympathizers, but they seldom failed to expound the doctrine of unity and patriotism. The ministers not only aided materially in uniting the northern people to preserve the Union, but also helped to pave the way for Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation."

The next paper was on "The Yellow Fever in Philadelphia, 1793," by Professor Mulford Stough of Dickinson College. He stated that Philadelphia, a city of 42,000 inhabitants, was stricken in August of that year by yellow fever and that more than 17,000 fled the city. All local, state and federal government ceased and other cities placed a quarantine against travel and commerce from Philadelphia. The audience was greatly amused by Professor Stough's recital of the remedies prescribed by the physicians. Dr. Benjamin Rush, the leading physician, caused a bitter controversy among the doctors by his heroic blood-letting and purges. No one knew what caused the fever and many remedies were tried, but the death toll continued to mount until the plague was stopped by the cold weather in October. Stephen Girard rendered fine service to the stricken through his superintendency of Bush Hill hospital. Professor Stough estimated that the death toll was over 4,000. The third paper was by Professor Paul H. Giddens of Allegheny College on "Speculation in Pennsylvania Petroleum, 1864-65." The speaker told of the frantic rush to the oil fields, the wildcat speculation which ensued leading to fantastic prices for farm lands which contained oil. His description of the rise of "boom" towns and their equally meteoric collapse was most interesting. Professor Giddens' book on the subject, The Birth of the Oil Industry, has just been published by the Macmillan Company.
The evening session was a dinner meeting held in the main ballroom of the Lycoming Hotel, presided over by Dr. R. F. Nichols. About seventy-five persons were present and heard Dr. Lester K. Ade, Superintendent of Public Instruction and an honorary member of our Association, praise our work in stimulating interest in teaching Pennsylvania history in the schools. He stated that the Department of Public Instruction was vitally interested in the matter and stressed the value of the growing use by students of the historical collections of the local historical societies and libraries. Dr. Ade urged our Association to give even greater aid in the program of adapting local history to school needs. His address was followed by an illustrated talk by Mr. Donald A. Cadzow, the archeologist of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission, on “The Field Work of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission.” This was a most interesting feature of the meeting, for Mr. Cadzow described the history of the excavation of Pennsbury, the Pennsylvania home of William Penn, and told of the plans for its complete restoration. This was followed by moving pictures and explanations by Mr. Cadzow of the work being done on Tinicum Island, the site of the first executive mansion of Pennsylvania at the time of the Swedes; of the restoration of the Daniel Boone homestead with the scout camps and youth hostels to be established there; and of Old Economy, turned over to the state in 1919, but neglected until the past year and a half when work on the restoration was begun. The last survivor of this utopian experiment turned over to the Commonwealth all the relics of the community. Mr. Cadzow concluded his talk with a description of the location and restoration of Fort Muncy and of the excellent work being done under a WPA project on the “Frontier Trail and Forts Survey” in the northwestern part of the state.

On Saturday morning two sessions were held. One was the session of the historical societies presided over by Captain Frederic A. Godcharles, president of the Northumberland County Historical Society. Many representatives of local societies gathered new ideas from the discussions led by Dr. F. F. Holbrook, Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, on the topic of “Coöperation with Other Organizations,” and by Mr. J. Bennett Nolan, Berks County Historical Society, on “Development of Resources
Within the Society." The other session for public school teachers' was presided over by Mr. Russell H. Rhoads, head of the Department of Social Studies of the Williamsport Senior High School. The first paper was given by Mr. Lloyd E. Davis of the East Huntingdon High School, Alverton, on "The History Club and State and Local History." Mr. Davis told of the work done in his school in stimulating interest in local history through the activities of the history clubs. Mr. Oliver S. Heckman, of the Department of Public Instruction, spoke on "The Proposed Social Studies Program in Relation to Local and State History," while the last speaker was Mr. S. K. Stevens, historian of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission. Both of the latter speakers stressed the importance of state and local history in the new curriculum and told what their respective organizations were doing and planning to do in the future.

After these interesting sessions the members started by automobiles for a visit to the Muncy Historical Society and Museum, stopping en route at the site of Fort Freeland and at the Warrior Run Presbyterian Church where brief historical remarks were made by Captain Godcharles. All were delighted with the splendid building of the Muncy Historical Society and the valuable collection of historical items gathered together by this most enthusiastic society. Of particular interest was the excellent model of Fort Muncy done by the Museum Extension Project of the Pennsylvania Works Progress Administration. The group then journeyed to Lewisburg where a delicious lunch was served at Bucknell University. President Arnaud C. Marts of Bucknell spoke on "An Unexploited Field of History" and Captain Godcharles talked about "Historic Highlights of Northumberland County." The historical tour then continued to Northumberland where a visit was paid to the house built by Dr. Joseph Priestley. Our hosts here were members of our Association, Mr. and Mrs. George H. Neff. The next visit was made to the excavations on the site of Fort Augusta, Sunbury, and the museum of the Northumberland County Historical Society. Many of the relics found during the excavations were on display and were explained by Captain Godcharles and Mr. Heber Gearhart, curator of the museum.

At the business session held Friday morning the proposed
amendments to the constitution were adopted and the following
new officers elected: Miss M. Atherton Leach, second vice presi-
dent; Dr. H. M. J. Klein, third vice president; Mr. Julian P. Boyd
and Dr. J. Orin Oliphant, members of the Council. For the newly
created Council positions the following were elected: Dr. Paul H.
Giddens, Allegheny College, Mr. Earl W. Dickey, Altoona High
School, and Professor Mulford Stough, Dickinson College. Two
important committees were appointed by the president. One
was the committee to study the possibility of publishing impor-
tant documents pertaining to Pennsylvania history with Dr. J.
Orin Oliphant, chairman. The other was a committee on Penn-
sylvania bibliography with Dr. Amos Ettinger, chairman. Several
important resolutions were also adopted. One commended the
work of the Federal Historical Records Survey and approved of
the efforts being made by the Pennsylvania Historical Commis-
sion to publish the material gathered. Another approved the
broad program of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission and
resolved that we "do hereby not only whole-heartedly commend
and endorse the plans of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission,
but urge that the General Assembly grant the increased appro-
priation requested by the Department of Public Instruction that
this splendid program may be carried toward realization." The
third resolution envisaged greater coöperation with the social
science sectional organizations of the Pennsylvania State Educa-
tional Association by our association.

It was an excellent meeting and thanks were voted to the
program committee, Dr. J. Orin Oliphant, chairman, and to the
committee on local arrangements, headed by Mr. Bruce A. Hunt.
The vacancies on the editorial board of Pennsylvania History
caused by the election of Miss Leach to the second vice presidency
and Dr. Oliphant to the Council were filled by the election of
Professor William A. Russ, Susquehanna University, and Pro-
fessor Richard H. Shryock, University of Pennsylvania. Many
new faces were seen at the meeting and it was obvious that these
annual gatherings are becoming more and more important in the
historical life of the state.