

## NEWS AND COMMENT

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### ASSOCIATION NEWS

**W**HILE not as well attended as last year, the annual meeting held in Harrisburg on November 11, was one of the most interesting and fruitful in recent years. Since the secretary has provided a full account elsewhere, we will content ourselves here with only a few comments. The illustrated talks on "Early Days in the Pennsylvania Oil Fields," by Paul H. Giddens and "Pennsylvania German Arts and Crafts," by G. Edwin Brumbaugh were especially attractive features for any program. The slides presented visually information which no formal paper could have summarized or set forth as effectively. This should be taken into consideration by those planning future programs.

The discussions in the afternoon were fruitful and demonstrate the value of such general consideration of important matters in the Pennsylvania historical field. The free exchange of ideas and information is encouraged by such a plan. Perhaps it is not too much to expect that in the future more of this type of program activity should be given consideration. The program for the 1944 meeting set a standard which will challenge the ingenuity of program chairmen for some time to come, if they hope to equal or to improve upon it for downright interest and profit to those in attendance. The discussions regarding the archives building project and requirements on certification and teaching Pennsylvania history and government revealed that members of the Association are alert to current problems, even when outside the strictly academic sphere.

The appointment of the seven member committee to investigate the possibilities for projecting a volume history of Pennsylvania will begin action on one of the most important proposals the association has ever considered. No one can deny the real need for such a history; a majority are conversant with the genuine difficulties which confront it. The principal one is the lack of

monographic studies on Pennsylvania history, especially in the all-important economic and social fields. Many papers which have never been published, however, are filed in college and university offices as prepared by students, especially those working for the master's degree. There are others in the files of historical societies throughout the state because the majority of papers thus presented are never published. This material varies greatly in quality, but it certainly should be brought to light and investigated as to content before researchers waste precious time in going over ground which already may have been covered, at least in part. It would be helpful if those who know of any such papers or reports on file anywhere would make the subject and location known to the committee.

The reports from membership committees were very encouraging. Dr. Rosenberger especially is entitled to credit for his work on the general membership committee. It is heartening also to note the action of Melville Boyer, secretary of the Lehigh County Historical Society and head of the social studies department in the Allentown High School, who circularized the society membership at some expense in time and money to himself. The writer is still convinced that if every one would look about among acquaintances and contacts a new member could be suggested. Some members have accounted for several new associates but more of us individually need to do something about it. The Association membership ought to be doubled easily and the individual contact is worth several letters which cost money and time. At the risk of wearisome repetition, we again urge that every member endeavor to secure at least one new member. Postal regulations made it impossible to include a membership blank with the magazine, but a blank is not needed necessarily. Take the name and the money and send both to the secretary; that is all that is necessary in order to clinch a new membership.

## HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

The fortieth anniversary edition of the *Proceedings of the Lehigh County Historical Society* was issued in October to the members. A handsomely illustrated, cloth bound volume of one hundred and forty-two pages, it contains considerable hitherto unpublished Pennsylvania German material. The Muhlenberg

Bicentennial Pageant is reproduced, an item of very real interest to those wishing to dramatize Pennsylvania history. It provides something of a model for this type of presentation. "Pennsylvania German Choral Books" is the subject of a special article by Oswald J. Seip. An inventory of the estate of Peter Alfred Gross and an article on indentures as a genealogical guide, accompanied by a listing of deeds in the society's possession, are contributions of Melville Boyer, who is also the editor. It is a very creditable publication and should be a library item of some value. Inquiries as to the purchase of copies should be addressed to the society in care of Mr. Boyer at Allentown. The Lehigh society's membership in October neared the six hundred mark, the largest in its history.

The Pennsylvania German Society held its annual meeting in Reading in October. One of the highlights of the luncheon meeting was a presentation on the humor of the Pennsylvania Germans by the Rev. Clarence R. Rahn of Temple, Pa. Miles Horst, secretary of agriculture for Pennsylvania, presented an address on Pennsylvania German agriculture, stressing their many contributions to improved agriculture methods. Henry W. Sharadin gave an illustrated address on Pennsylvania German folk art. As emeritus professor of art at the Kutztown State Teachers College, he is an authority on the subject. The meeting was one of the best attended in recent years. Henry S. Borneman of Philadelphia is president of the society.

The Blair County Historical Society held its annual meeting at the Penn Alto Hotel in Altoona on November 17. Mr. Stevens spoke on "William Penn and His Ideals in the Light of Today." The director's report presented by Floyd Hoenstine showed a very extensive use of the Baker Mansion museum during the summer months. The society has made encouraging progress toward reducing its indebtedness on this property. Plans for the celebration of the Blair County Centennial in 1946 are developing satisfactorily. Compilation of material for a centennial history of the county has progressed and organization of committees on a permanent basis to develop other phases of the projected program is under way. Nearly five thousand dollars has been raised to finance the centennial history. The money has been secured mainly

by selling space to business concerns which will use it not for ordinary advertising but for historical sketches. Bulletins 4, 5, 6 and 7 in the recently inaugurated mimeographed series have been issued and deal principally with bibliographies on Blair County. These are helpful in guiding the use of local materials both by schools and others. Outsiders interested in the bibliographies should contact Mr. Hoenstine, Box 20, Hollidaysburg.

The Columbia County Historical Society commemorated the Penn Tercentenary with a public meeting at the Court House in Bloomsburg on October 24. The Rev. Samuel W. Strain of the Methodist Church, Bloomsburg, delivered the oration on "William Penn and Pennsylvania." Hiester V. White spoke on the Quaker influence in Columbia County. Harry Barton, president of the society, reports that the room in the Court House containing its collections is being used increasingly by students and others. Mr. Barton has continued to present his distinctive color pictures on Columbia County. The society has arranged to cooperate with the County Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Ray Cole, in publishing a school history of Columbia County. Such histories appear to be meeting with increasing favor as a useful supplement to required work in Pennsylvania history. Texts written on the state level are unable to present local material and this lack can be supplied by a properly prepared school county history.

The Erie County Historical Society, we are very pleased to report, has taken a new lease on life. A reorganization has been completed which promises much for the future. Mr. Herbert Spencer is acting as president with Mr. Allyn Wright as secretary. Several vice-presidents have been selected with the understanding that each will take a turn in the presidency. Quite properly, the society has undertaken as a major project the recording of Erie County's war history. Especial attention is being paid to service records and the contribution of the many important manufactures of the section. Interestingly enough, the society minutes at its first meeting in December, 1862, note the intention of the organization to collect the biographies of Erie County Civil War soldiers. This should be proof that there really is nothing new under the sun in historical society activity. The society will also make a special drive to collect materials, both manuscripts and

objects, pertaining to the history of the "Niagara" and the U. S. gunboat "Michigan," perhaps better known as the "Wolverine." The society announcement declares aptly concerning its museum that "it should not be a repository of dead things, but an appeal to live and active imaginations, a genuine educative force in the community." Excellent models of the early French forts which were built by the WPA again have been placed on exhibit at the Custom House and are attracting much attention. The Erie region is so rich in significant historical associations that all will welcome what appears to be a marked renaissance of historical activity there.

As with many other societies, Montgomery County devoted its November meeting to honoring William Penn. Dr. William Wistar Comfort was the principal speaker on "Why Remember William Penn?" Montgomery County is making use of the abilities of the Rev. Wilmer E. Long of Norristown to photograph in color the many notable church edifices in the county. Another contribution to the local history of Montgomery County has been made by David K. Allebach who authored the *History of Hatfield* which appeared in July. A limited number of copies from the small edition are unsold and may be obtained from the author at Hatfield. The book contains one hundred and twenty pages and is well recommended.

The October issue of the *Historical Review of Berks County* was dedicated to William Penn. The cover contained a picture of the Penn statue on City Hall in Philadelphia and the leading article was "Some Thoughts on William Penn" by Stanley Yarnall, secretary of the Tercentenary Committee. Another article by Lt. Commander J. Bennett Nolan was in tribute to Thomas Penn and explained his association with Reading and Berks County. An article on "The Benevolent Society, Reading's Oldest Charity," by Edith White Birch and another on the early iron industry at Colebrookdale by George W. Schultz are also included with other interesting material. The society has begun to make available a series of packets containing visual aid material in the form of pictures with explanatory text designed for school use. There is a real need for this type of material and the society contribution is evidence of its continued forethought. The two packets thus

far issued are devoted to the early charcoal iron industry and Pennsylvania German folk art. While designed for Berks County they really have state-wide possibilities. The packets sell at twenty-five cents for the two plus five cents postage and may be secured from the society at Reading.

Pittsburghers are agog over the anniversary of the Big Fire of April 10, 1845, which destroyed one-half the city. From those ashes arose the Pittsburgh of today—a vital center of industry, education and culture. The centennial of the fire will be celebrated next year and The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania will take the lead. Loan exhibits of century old household and firefighting equipment, addresses and meetings will herald the occasion. To cooperate in arranging for the celebration a new association, Descendants of Pittsburghers of 1845, has been organized headed by Charles A. McClintock. Irrespective of present place of residence, any person whose ancestors lived in Allegheny County in 1845 or earlier may join for a fee of one dollar. Remittances will be accepted for relatives or friends who qualify. The secretary-treasurer is Franklin F. Holbrook at The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, 4338 Bigelow Boulevard, Pittsburgh 13.

Through the office of the Pennsylvania Federation of Historical Societies an appeal was made to all the county societies of the state to cooperate in leading countywide commemorations of the Penn Tercentenary. The response was excellent and indicates the growing feeling of public responsibility upon the part of these societies. Some of the programs already have been mentioned. Especially worthwhile leadership was assumed by several organizations which took the time and trouble to promote widespread observance by schools and civic organizations. Lehigh County's society did yeoman work, including a special radio broadcast presenting high school students in a dramatization of the life of Penn. The Snyder County Society had a county-wide pageant utilizing the schools. The Lawrence County Society spurred activity throughout the county. The Historical Society of Dauphin County sponsored a meeting in the Court House with Homer Kreider, local attorney, as orator. The Berwick Historical Society staged a special observance and important work was done by societies in Mifflin, Chester and Huntingdon counties.

The Museum of the Lycoming County Historical Society has become one of its principal activities. Effective use is being made of it as an educational institution through special exhibits. Mementoes of past presidential campaigns were exhibited in October and November. Special emphasis was placed upon Pennsylvania's state campaign material contained in the collections of the society. Newspapers exhibited included a copy of the *Independent*, published at Williamsport as a Greenback Party organ. The October 19 meeting of the society was devoted to William Penn with the Rev. Canon Stuart F. Gast speaking on "William Penn—Protagonist of the American Way of Life."

The eighty-seventh annual meeting of the Moravian Historical Society was held in the Nazareth Moravian Church on October 12. The restoration program now in progress in Canada through which the sites of two historic Moravian pioneer settlements at Fairfield and New Fairfield, Kent County, Ontario, will be returned to their original condition was described by the Hon. John R. MacNicol, Member of the Canadian Parliament. The connection of Ziesberger with these sites makes them of especial importance to Pennsylvanians. The work is under direction of the National Monuments Board of the Dominion of Canada and will be completed, it is expected, in 1950. Dr. W. N. Schwarze of Bethlehem has been re-elected president of the Moravian group and William E. Henry of Nazareth is secretary. Several new members were acquired during the past year.

The annual meeting of the Friends Historical Association was held at The Historical Society of Pennsylvania on November 27. Henry J. Cadbury spoke on "William Penn—Just Among Friends," and Elizabeth Gray Vining presented "On the Trail of William Penn." A special exhibit of Penn materials including books and manuscripts was available for inspection.

"Joseph Priestley and his Associations in Pennsylvania" was the subject of a special illustrated address by Joseph S. Hepburn, professor of chemistry at Hahnemann Medical College, at the November 15 meeting of the City History Society of Philadelphia. The program was arranged in special recognition of the sesqui-centennial of the Priestley's removal to Pennsylvania. His home

at Northumberland is maintained by the Pennsylvania State College. Several efforts have been made without success to turn it over to the state as a state historic shrine. Donald E. H. Frear of the research staff of the department of agricultural chemistry at the Pennsylvania State College is working on a biography of Priestley. His career is held in great esteem by modern chemists. The October meeting of the City History group was given over to a paper on "William Penn—a Reappraisal" by Samuel H. Brown of Temple University.

The program for the Muncy Historical Society for 1944-45 is even more outstanding than usual. At the opening meeting on October 13, Leo Wilt, president of the Bradford County Historical Society, spoke on French Azilum. On November 10 the history of Muncy Manor was set forth and on December 8 local church influences on the development of education and culture was the speaker's theme. The January 12 meeting was devoted to the history of the *Muncy Luminary*, founded in 1841 and recently ceasing publication due to war conditions. On March 9 the society will present what should be a very interesting program suggestive to other societies. It is entitled, "Old-time Photographs from Muncy Albums." The society issued recently another number of *Now and Then*. The passing of the *Luminary* will make necessary other arrangements for the publication of this valuable little quarterly but we are assured that it will be continued.

The regular October meeting of the Lancaster County Historical Society was addressed by Joseph T. Kingston, formerly research assistant with the Pennsylvania Historical Commission and now on the staff of the Lancaster *Intelligencer*, on the life and achievements of Francis Bailey, Lancaster printer of revolutionary war days.

The Kittochtinny Historical Society sponsored an illustrated lecture on William Penn by Albert Cook Myers in the Chambersburg High School on October 13. Gregg L. Neel, Insurance Commissioner, was a speaker before the society in connection with its William Penn observance.

The November 14 meeting of The Historical Society of Frankford presented an historical pageant "This Our Heritage," pre-

pared by the Flag House chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Francis R. Taylor was speaker at the October 17 meeting on "The Political Novelty of Penn's Holy Experiment." Exhibits of Penn items were on display.

A William Penn meeting was held by the Northampton County Historical Society at the St. John's Lutheran Parish House in Easton on September 22. Samuel Hulma Brown was the speaker on "William Penn, An Appreciation after 300 Years." The Rev. Dr. Veit, president of the society, presided and read the proclamation by Governor Martin setting aside October 24 as the anniversary.

The Valley Forge Historical Society Award has been established by the society for furthering competition among high school pupils in Chester and Montgomery counties, according to announcement of the society directors. "What Valley Forge Means to Me" was the subject selected for the contest, which ends on May 1, 1945. Essays are limited to between one thousand and fifteen hundred words and war bonds are offered as prizes. Mrs. John H. Halford is chairman of the committee in charge. The Valley Forge Society has added nearly seventy members in the last three months. Its quarterly publication is *The Picket Post* and contains a miscellany of articles and information of interest to anyone desirous of keeping in touch with the history of Valley Forge or present and future developments there. It is edited by Gilbert S. Jones, executive secretary of the Valley Forge Park Commission. *The Picket Post* is made possible through a judicious sale of advertising in its columns. This is a thought which might be given consideration by other societies seeking funds to make possible a publication.

The November 7 meeting of the Adams County Historical Society was held at the Court House, according to custom. Dr. Henry Stewart, well-known local historian, spoke on "James Gettys, a Bibliography and Anthology." The society rooms in the basement of the Court House are filling up with some limited but rather important historical and museum materials. The society is considering sponsorship of a county history for school use.

The Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation began recently a series of art exhibits in its galleries at the Custom House headquarters.

The first was devoted to the art of David Ellinger who has done much to capture the spirit and life of the Pennsylvania German country on canvas. Reproductions of some of his paintings may be found in the August issue of *The American German Review* published by the Foundation. The same issue contains a valuable article by Karl J. Arndt on "The Harmonists and the Hutterians." This is another of Doctor Arndt's valuable contributions to an understanding of the widespread influence of the Harmonists. In the June issue he discussed "The Harmonists and the Mormons." Another in the series of bibliographies prepared by the Foundation is entitled *The Ephrata Cloisters, an Annotated Bibliography*. It is compiled by Eugene E. Doll and Anneliese M. Funk. It is a splendid contribution and may be secured directly from the Foundation in Philadelphia.

The November meeting of the Dauphin County Historical Society was addressed by Mark T. Milnor, member of the Dauphin County bar and active in veteran's affairs, on "Veterans Organizations of the United States with Special Reference to Dauphin County." The society is planning to continue its policy of developing programs dealing with Dauphin County institutions and activities. The society was host at a reception for members of the American Association for State and Local History on November 10. Members of the society are much concerned over a proposition of army engineers for construction of a flood wall on the Susquehanna in South Harrisburg.

### OF MEN AND MANY THINGS

The Warren Library Association at Warren has been the recipient of an outstanding collection on the local history of the petroleum industry presented by Ernest C. Miller. Mr. Miller has been collecting and writing on this subject for some time and is now with the American Red Cross in war work. The collection contains several hundred books, magazines, pamphlets and copies of such items as sheet music composed about oil days. It is hoped that the material can be added to in the future and that it will become one of the important collections of its kind.

J. William Frey of Franklin and Marshall College is presenting a course on the Pennsylvania German language at that institution.

He also has resumed the issuance of his well-known *Der Pennsylvaniaanisch Deitsch EILISCHPIGGEL* which brings one all the news about the world of Pennsylvania German activity throughout the year. News items, book reviews, anecdotes and information on words and their meaning are all combined in a most delightful and informative miscellany. Subscription to this unusual little magazine is \$1.00 a year. Information concerning *EILESCHPIGGEL* may be obtained from Dr. Frey at Franklin and Marshall.

One of the highlights in recent historical activity in the state was certainly the joint meeting of the Society of American Archivists, the American Association for State and Local History and our own Pennsylvania Historical Association in Harrisburg from November 8 to 11 inclusive. The attendance the first date reached well over seventy and was considerably above the number present in previous war years, despite the fact that many people from Washington customarily present were unable to come due to government travel restrictions. The entire staff of the Colorado State Archives attended and other sections of the nation represented included Texas, Illinois, Iowa, Alabama, Wisconsin, Vermont, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. At least one person was registered from Canada and one representative from the Brazilian embassy in Washington. Sessions on such important general subjects as "State Archives and Historical Manuscripts," "Maps and Graphic Materials," "The Publication of Manuscripts," "Local Archives and History," "Corporation Archives and History," and "Church Record Depositories and State, Local and Regional History" were discussed by a variety of competent specialists in those fields. The sessions were so organized as to permit considerable time for free discussion and this was taken advantage of by those present to an unusual degree.

One of the really significant new developments in state and local history which was discussed at some length was the possibility of establishing internships for archives, libraries and historical agencies. This scheme would encourage graduate students to take up work in this field as a life occupation, competing with teaching as an objective of graduate study. It would provide practical training for such students and encourage a higher standard of achievement and more abundant and capable personnel to staff the growing number of important archival and historical depositories and

agencies in the United States. A committee has been appointed to study the problem.

J. Knox Milligan, whom many will recall as the capable head of the Pennsylvania Historical Survey, has organized a new publishing venture known as the Archives Publishing Company of Pennsylvania. One of the objectives of the new concern is to resume the publication of the inventories of the county archives in the State. County commissioners are being approached and contracts have already been negotiated in some counties. The Company will publish also selected materials for school use and will soon release a new text on Pennsylvania history for public schools and a variety of visual aid materials. Mr. Milligan informs us that he is interested also in other selected publications, especially in the field of Pennsylvania history and government, which would appeal to libraries and those with an interest in Pennsylvania. Persons who have authored manuscripts, including doctoral dissertations, are invited to consult Mr. Milligan, 312 Dauphin Building, Harrisburg, in regard to any publication which they might wish to submit for consideration. The renewed issue of the county record inventories should be very welcome news to those who appreciate the important contribution made by the Historical Records Survey in opening up the county records of the state for research and study. It appears that there were few if any states in which the field work was carried so nearly to completion as in Pennsylvania. Failure to complete the publication of the inventories, ninety per cent of which were virtually ready for the printer, would have been unfortunate indeed. The Archives Publishing Company will be performing a valuable service if it is able to complete this program.

*A Checklist of Pennsylvania Newspapers*, Volume I, Philadelphia County, at long last is available for distribution by the Pennsylvania Historical Commission. It is the first in what was hoped to be several volumes which would provide in published form the fruits of the WPA Survey of Pennsylvania newspapers. Since Philadelphia was by far the greatest publishing center in the State, the volume on the press of that county is in itself of great value. If some type of subsidy could be secured to publish the checklist for the remainder of the state, it would be a contribution of the utmost importance to the growing number of research aids in

Pennsylvania history. The field surveys were completed. Copies of the Philadelphia volume may be secured by librarians or individuals desirous of using it for research upon application to the Commission.

*Hill Country Tunes of Pennsylvania* is the title of a new book on the folk tunes of southwestern Pennsylvania compiled by Samuel P. Bayard of Pittsburgh and to be published shortly by the Archives Publishing Company of Pennsylvania for the American Folklore Society. The book is probably the first scholarly contribution that has been made to the folklore and folk music of southwestern Pennsylvania. Mr. Bayard has been a life long collector of this material and has a very extensive private collection of Pennsylvania folk tunes of the back country regions. He recently completed a field project in southwestern Pennsylvania with the aid of a grant from the American Philosophical Society. Some of the selected results of several years of work will be incorporated in this book which will contain transcriptions of the actual tunes as sung by mountain people in the remote sections of Pennsylvania. Inquiries regarding the volume should be directed to the Archives Publishing Company of Pennsylvania, 312 Dauphin Building, Harrisburg.

*The Scotch-Irish in Pennsylvania* is the title of a study by Wayland F. Dunaway, recently retired as a member of the faculty of the Pennsylvania State College, and published by the University of North Carolina Press. It is a comprehensive review of the influence of this unquestionably important racial group on the history of the state. It was prepared in part with the aid of a grant from The Historical Society of Pennsylvania. We understand also that Prentice-Hall, New York publishers, have reprinted the *History of Pennsylvania*, pioneer college text, prepared some years ago by Dr. Dunaway.

The Yorktown Chapter of the D.A.R. dedicated on October 10 a bronze tablet at York in tribute to the French Alliance ratified by Continental Congress on May 4, 1778, while that body was sitting at this Pennsylvania inland point of refuge from the British. The several D.A.R. chapters in this state have made many contributions of this type to the marking of important historic sites.

The municipality of Lewistown in Mifflin County hopes to celebrate fittingly in 1945 the centennial of its creation. Plans to that end are under consideration by the borough and the Mifflin County Historical Society.

*Local History—How to Gather It, Write It, And Publish It* is the rather involved title of a nearly two hundred page book by Donald Dean Parker, revised and edited by Miss Bertha E. Josephson of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, and published in October by the Social Science Research Council. The title rather well indicates the scope of its contents. It is a highly useful and practical volume, especially for those who have not had special training in methods of historical research. As a matter of fact, it was prepared as a guide for the so-called amateur, who might wish suggestions as to the orderly gathering, classification and organization of historical materials and their use in writing. The price of this worthwhile handbook is \$1.00 and it may be obtained from the Council at 230 Park Avenue, New York City, 17.