NEWS AND COMMENT

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ASSOCIATION NEWS

A MEETING of the council was held in the office of the state historian in the State Museum Building, following the sessions of the Pennsylvania Federation of Historical Societies, in Harrisburg, on May 15. Dr. Robert Fortenbaugh, president of the Association, called the meeting to order at four o'clock. Members of the council present, in addition to Dr. Fortenbaugh and Secretary Philip S. Klein, included Drs. Alfred P. James, Milton W. Hamilton, J. Orion Oliphant, William A. Russ, Jr., Homer T. Rosenberger and S. K. Stevens.

Secretary Klein presented a report on recent association affairs. All members present expressed gratification at the splendid success of the Association's venture in publishing a series of pamphlets of general interest in the field of Pennsylvania history. President Fortenbaugh exhibited the second in the series, Dr. William W. Comfort's fifty-seven page account of the Quakers and their influence. Plans for yet a third pamphlet, on the Scotch-Irish, were presented by Dr. Homer T. Rosenberger. Association finances are in a sound condition. A slow but respectable showing in increased membership was reported.

An invitation to the Association to hold its annual meeting in Erie in October was received from the Erie County Historical Society and Gannon College, of Erie. The co-operation of other northwestern Pennsylvania colleges is expected. The invitation was accepted and the meeting will be held in Erie, Friday and Saturday, October 22-23. Dr. Alfred P. James, University of Pittsburgh, was appointed chairman of the committee on program. Suggestions should be forwarded to Dr. James at an early date. All present welcomed the invitation to meet in northwestern Pennsylvania as most acceptable. The Association has never visited this section of the state, which is rich in history.
ANNUAL FEDERATION MEETING

The forty-first Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Federation of Historical Societies was held at the Penn-Harris Hotel, Harrisburg, on May 15. It was one of the best attended meetings in recent years with some one hundred and fifty registrants, representing historical societies from every quarter of the commonwealth. The morning session featured a highly successful and suggestive panel discussion led by Allen C. Harman, assistant county superintendent of schools for Montgomery County, on "The Historical Societies and the Schools." Participating were Miss Anita Conte, student of Divine Academy, Pittsburgh; Miss Elizabeth Morrow, State College Schools; Ira Kreider, Abington Schools; Leo Wilt, Bradford County Historical Society; Brother Joseph Panzar, S.M., principal of North Catholic High School, Pittsburgh; and W. Clay Burkholder, assistant county superintendent of schools of Mifflin County.

Many suggestions as to ways in which historical societies can be of assistance to the schools were brought out. The Mifflin County competitive, objective, local history examination received very favorable attention. The need for more material on local history for the use of teachers and students was stressed. It becomes more and more clear that this is a major need if the present requirement in Pennsylvania history is to be a success in the schools. Increased use of historical society museums, preparation of visual aids, and provision for speakers on local history are other ways in which the societies can help. Stress was placed on the fact that societies should endeavor to meet needs of the schools at the school level and in close co-operation with public school teachers rather than relying solely upon teacher or pupil membership in societies.

Following the luncheon, Frank M. Warner of New York City, one of the leading collectors and singers of American folk music, presented an hour of folk songs, many collected in neighboring New York. The importance of folk music and folklore as a part of the documentation of our history was emphasized by Mr. Warner. This program opened the way for the afternoon panel led by Col. Henry W. Shoemaker, recently appointed state folklorist under the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, on "Folklore and the Historical Societies." Noted Pennsylvania folklorists on the panel included Samuel P. Bayard of the Pennsylvania State College; George Korson, collector of songs of the Pennsyl-
vania mining folk and editor of the forthcoming anthology of Pennsylvania folklore; Dr. Alfred L. Shoemaker, of the Berks Historical Society; and Miss Edith Patterson, librarian of the Pottsville Public Library. From New York came Dr. Louis C. Jones, director of the New York State Historical Association and editor of the *New York Folklore Quarterly*. Accompanying him was Dr. Harold W. Thompson of Cornell University, president of the New York Folklore Society. The importance of folklore as a part of the body of American historical tradition, and suggestions as to ways in which historical societies might promote its preservation and collection were brought out in the discussion.

Mrs. Elizabeth Hensyl of Berwick was elected president of the Federation for the coming year, the first woman to occupy the office. Mrs. Marjorie Wendell of Pottstown was elected fourth vice-president. This is a tribute to the increasing activity of women in historical society work. Louis J. Heizman of Reading was designated as first vice-president; Charles F. Jenkins of Philadelphia was continued as second vice-president. Robert S. Bates of Meadville was returned to the office of third vice-president. Dr. S. K. Stevens was re-elected as executive secretary, and Merle H. Deardorff was chosen treasurer, with Miss Dolores J. Malloy as assistant treasurer. R. N. Williams, 2nd, director of The Historical Society of Philadelphia, and C. H. Martin of Lancaster, were re-elected to the executive committee.

Among several resolutions adopted at the meeting was one directed to Governor Duff, respectfully urging that the chief executive “reconsider the possibilities of planning and constructing an Archives, Museum, and History Building as a memorial to William Penn.” The need for such action is based upon “the urgent need for better facilities for the conservation of Pennsylvania’s priceless public records, historical manuscripts, and other evidences of its past greatness.” A resolution commending the governor upon his wise appointments to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission was adopted. Dr. Robert Fortenbaugh was chairman of the resolutions committee, and was aided by Dr. Frederic K. Miller and C. W. Lillibridge.

**HISTORICAL SOCIETIES**

The annual report of the Chester County Historical Society, recently issued, is another evidence of the high quality of local his-
torical society endeavor in this state. Total receipts of the society in 1947 amounted to $7,723.58. The county commissioners appropriated $1,500 of this amount. Contributions totaled $3,689.62; dues provided an income of $1,817. The curators, Miss Dorothy B. Lapp and Bart Anderson, report the acquisition of over two thousand manuscripts and maps and important additions to newspaper collections. Visitors during the year totaled sixteen hundred and thirty-four, including thirty-seven school and six club groups. Visitors came from seventeen different states, showing a wide use of collections. The membership of the society is now eight hundred and seventy-nine. The May 20 meeting of the society returned Dr. Francis Harvey Green to the presidency. Miss Dorothy B. Lapp continues as corresponding secretary and may be addressed at the society in West Chester. Incidentally, we note that the society has increased its dues from two to three dollars.

The Bradford County Historical Society membership drive continues to produce results. While the goal of a thousand members is a most ambitious one, we should not be surprised at its near attainment under the energetic leadership of President Leo Wilt. The society plan to hold meetings in key towns of the county has been worked out. The April meeting was at Canton in the Presbyterian Church, and the first of three such regional meetings. Papers were presented by Canton historians on subjects of interest. We feel that such a program of bringing the county historical society meetings to the people in various sections of the county is highly worthwhile and should be encouraged.

The Historical Society of Berks County is a literal beehive of activity in connection with its part in the Reading bicentennial. The annual public lecture series has been devoted to this theme. In April, Jan V. Deelman, Reading attorney, spoke on “Two Centuries of the Law in Berks County.” On May 14, Mrs. Frederick A. Muhlenberg discussed “The Medical Profession in Reading.” The society has announced the printing of Two Centuries of Reading, Pennsylvania, available on August 1, of this year. Its some three hundred pages have been written by Dr. Raymond W. Albright and constitute the official bicentennial history sponsored by the city’s bicentennial committee.

Dr. Alfred L. Shoemaker, curator of the Historical Society of
Berks County, has resigned his position with the society, to carry on his researches in folklore. Dr. Arthur D. Graeff of Philadelphia, known for his textbook in the field of Pennsylvania history and for his writings on the Pennsylvania Germans, is to become the new curator of the Berks society.

In Adams County the historical society is calling the attention of the Adams County commissioners to the fact that 1950 will mark the 150th anniversary of the founding of that county. Dr. Robert Fortenbaugh is chairman of a sesquicentennial committee appointed by the society to promote the idea with the county officials. Our Pennsylvania counties and towns are indeed reaching maturity. It is a hopeful sign that many are planning well in advance and along constructive lines to recognize these significant anniversary occasions. May they result in more and better county and local histories.

A meeting of the Potter County Historical Society was held on April 23. William Shear presented an interesting history of the old tannery once located in Coudersport on the east side of Woodlawn Avenue. It was first operated by water power and a typical example of the tanning industry which prevailed in this region in early days.

Fifty years of life and progress were celebrated by the Lebanon County Historical Society during the week of April 18. Representatives from neighboring counties were invited to participate in meetings at the Hauck Memorial Building, Lebanon headquarters of the society. Dr. Herbert Beck, president of the Lancaster County Historical Society, delivered the opening address on Monday evening, April 19. April 20 was Berks County Night. The Lebanon countians adopted an unusual method of observing the anniversary in thus inviting representatives of neighbor counties to speak on relationships with Lebanon County.

The sixty-seventh annual meeting of the Bucks County Historical Society was held at Doylestown on May 1. Paul Bleyden is engaged in cataloguing all of the society's rich and varied manuscripts. "Treasures of Our Manuscript Collections" was the subject of a paper presented before the meeting by Mr. Bleyden. Edward R. Barnsley of Newtown was re-elected president of the society.
In Clinton County, modern weapons of war will be used in an endeavor to locate historical records, strange as this may sound. The story stems from an effort to locate the strong box which may contain the legendary declaration of independence adopted under the Tiadaghton Elm, near present Jersey Shore, by the Fair Play men on July 4, 1776. A mine detector secured from the War Department will be used in the endeavor to find the box, supposed to have been buried in the vicinity of Fort Horn.

The May 18 meeting of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania was devoted to the annual "University of Pittsburgh Night" with Dr. John W. Oliver and the University department of history arranging the program. "David Dick, a pioneer inventor in Western Pennsylvania" was presented by Dr. Robert D. Duncan; while Selvin Schmidt spoke on "The Telephone Comes to Pittsburgh."

The annual meeting of the Pottstown Historical Society was held on May 24 in the Science Library at The Hill School. Two reels of motion picture film were shown, one of which narrated the story of "Our Constitution" and its Philadelphia setting.

"Old Inns of Delaware County" was the theme presented before the regular spring meeting of the Delaware County Historical Society on May 11 by Freas B. Snyder. Pennsylvania's historic inns and taverns, so many of which are still standing in all parts of the Commonwealth, deserve more attention.

The May meeting of the Muncy Historical Society featured a paper read by Daniel Little of Picture Rocks, on "The Chautauqua Movement in Lycoming County, with Special Reference to Picture Rocks." The story of Chautauqua is an important chapter in our cultural history and worthy of investigation on a local basis throughout Pennsylvania. It is a good subject for a paper.

Members of the Friends Historical Association were invited by Willistown Friends to join in commemorating the 150th anniversary of their Meetinghouse on May 22 at Willistown Meetinghouse, Chester County.
“The Story of Valley Forge” was presented by the Rev. John Robbins Hart at the regular April 21 meeting of the City History Society of Philadelphia held at the Atwater Kent Museum. The society’s series of Saturday excursions to points of interest in Philadelphia and vicinity was again inaugurated in April. A point of particular interest was the first Baptist Church at Sixteenth and Samsom in Philadelphia now celebrating its 250th anniversary.

“Something Old and Something New” was the subject of the talk by Homer Young before the April 6 meeting of the Adams County Historical Society. On May 4, the society engaged in an historical tour to the area of Two Taverns and Barlow.

“A History of the Frankford Athletic Association” was presented at the March 9 meeting of The Historical Society of Frankford. This is another field worthy of investigation by those seeking new topics for local historical studies. The history of sport has not received adequate attention either in the state or localities.

The April 24 meeting of The Historical Society of Montgomery County was held at the society building in Norristown. The two winners of the annual high school essay contest read their essays. J. Bennett Nolan then delivered an address entitled “Our River.” In it he portrayed, in his usual interesting manner, salient features of the history of the Schuylkill River, the story of which Mr. Nolan is writing for the “Rivers of America” series. Rudolf Hommel has been forced to tender his resignation as the society’s librarian and curator. Any person interested in this position is invited to contact Kirke Bryan, president of the society.

The Snyder County Historical Society has issued another of its publications known as The Snyder County Historical Society Bulletin. “Insurance Speculation in Snyder County” is covered in an article by Dr. George F. Dunkelberger. It was read before the society on April 18, 1947. Dr. William A. Russ, Jr., has an article on “The Coming of Electricity to Snyder County,” read to the society in 1945. The Snyder countians have announced plans for publication of the long-projected history of the county which has been in preparation the past several years. It promises to provide a well-
rounded and competent history of the county. Inquiries should be directed to Dr. George F. Dunkelberger at Selinsgrove.

Mr. Edwin B. Calloway, Honesdale newspaper man, has been forced by reason of ill health to resign his post as secretary of the Wayne County Historical Society. Mr. Calloway's service has extended over a period of twenty-three years, dating back to 1925. He is the author of Wayne County in Tabloid, a pioneer venture in streamlining county history. Mrs. Myrtle Newton has assumed the secretaryship. The May 28 meeting of the society was addressed by Dr. S. K. Stevens on "Conserving Pennsylvania's Historic Heritage."

"A Williamsport Forty-Niner" was the talk given before the Lycoming County Historical Society at its March 18 meeting by Bruce A. Hunt, managing editor of the Williamsport Sun. Mr. Hunt based his narrative upon an account of the personal experiences of the late Eber Culver, Williamsport architect. Russell H. Rhoads, head of the social studies department in the Williamsport Schools, has been elected president of the Lycoming society.

The Lehigh County Historical Society has received on loan an original Washington letter. It is the property of J. D. Shreve, department of industrial relations, Western Electric Company, and was written by Washington to Mr. Shreve's great-grandfather on July 28, 1794, from Philadelphia. The letter bears upon Washington's land interests in Fayette County.

Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach of Philadelphia has retired from the presidency of the American Jewish Historical Society, after twenty-seven years of service. Lee M. Friedman of Boston has been elected to the office. A Museum of American-Jewish historical material, to be located at Washington, D.C., has been projected by the society.

**OF MEN AND MANY THINGS**

The historic Hessian Guard House at Carlisle Barracks, built in 1775 by captured Hessians, will become a museum, serving the army post committee. Opened in April, it promises to constitute a valu-
The rich folk traditions of the upper Mahanoy Valley area in Northumberland County are being preserved and given new life by the Upper Mahanoy school and its Pennsylvania Dutch week programs. Each year a week-long program is devoted to this activity. It is an interesting example of what the schools can contribute to preserving local folklore and history.

Henry Howard Eddy assumed his duties as chief of the public records division of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission on June 1. His experience in public records administration in New York and North Carolina assures Pennsylvania of one of the leaders in the field as director of future plans and program. The appointment gives new life to the proposal for a suitable public records and history building at Harrisburg.

Dr. Marvin W. Schlegel has accepted a position as professor of history at the State Teachers College at Farmville, Virginia. His interest in Pennsylvania's history remains unabated and there have been rumors that Dr. Schlegel may undertake a history of the Reading Company. His work on Gowen provides an excellent background.

Dr. Roy F. Nichols is not only the author of two recently published major contributions to American historical literature, but also has been honored by appointment as visiting professor of American history at Cambridge for the coming year. Pennsylvanians should by this date be aware of the fact that in the person of Dr. Nichols the state has one of the nation's leading historians.

Senior Scholastic has conducted for many years a series of contests in various fields of public school endeavor leading to a series of awards for achievement. This year one of the fields was the writing of an original historical article, preferably on some phase of local history and utilizing source materials. Judges for the historical article contest were Drs. Harold U. Faulkner, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and S. K. Stevens. First prize went to Patricia J. Ingham of Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, by unanimous decision.
Miss Ingham's article was based upon original letters written to her great-grandfather during the Civil War, and was titled “U. S. Colored Troops in the Civil War.” Third prize in the contest went to Mary Ellen Berneski of Latrobe, Pennsylvania. Two Pennsylvania students were in the fourth prize group. This is quite a tribute to Pennsylvania's program of presenting local history in its public schools.

The *Annual Report* of the Ohio State Historical and Archaeological Society for 1947 has just been issued. The cover shows the beautiful new State Museum building projected at Columbus. Pennsylvania should take note. The research and publications program of the Ohio organization is ambitious and forward looking. Of particular interest is a state-wide newspaper microfilming project which involves over half a hundred Ohio newspapers.

Recently we heard a comment to the effect that Pennsylvania was somewhat behind comparable states in its historical program and activities, especially states with a strong state historical society. We believe this viewpoint overlooks entirely the fact that any comparison of historical activity in Pennsylvania with such states legitimately should include at least the work done by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Historical Association. These agencies combine the functions performed by the typical state historical organization in the Middle West. On such a basis of comparison Pennsylvania will appear to be a leader. Fortunately, the first time perhaps in the record of historical activity in the state, all three of the major Pennsylvania historical agencies, both governmental and private, are working in close accord and with a marked community of interest and sharing of leadership.

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission has made a grant of $1,500 to Mr. William A. Sullivan, Columbia University candidate for the Ph.D. degree, to complete a study of labor in Pennsylvania in the pre-Civil War era. The revision of *Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania*, work on the history of art and architecture, a study of the nineteenth-century iron industry, and the labor history project promise major contributions to Pennsylvania history.
from the Commission's subsidy for research. Several other less extensive projects are being aided in various ways.

Members of the Commission staff in Harrisburg are at work on equally significant projects. A carefully edited atlas of early Pennsylvania maps, an edited edition of the Papers of Colonel Henry Bouquet, the history of early Pennsylvania land companies, and a series of popular and informational bulletins constitute the staff projects now actively in progress.

The newly founded National Society of Autograph Collectors held its first annual meeting at Ann Arbor under auspices of the William L. Clements Library on May 17-18. A truly amazing amount of valuable historical documents are held by the hundreds of American collectors. When one considers that institutions of the calibre of the Clements Library, and various manuscript collections of major depositories through the nation represent the work of collectors, the importance of the rôle of the collector in conserving historical materials is quite evident. There is need for the professional and amateur historian to become better acquainted with the collectors. The newly organized society plans to prepare a guide to collectors and their fields of interest in order that historians may know and make use of collections. Dr. Joseph Field, M.D., of Joliet, Illinois, is president of the society. E. B. Long, 403 North Greenview Avenue, Chicago 13, Illinois, is secretary and editor. Information concerning the organization may best be obtained from Mrs. Otto Madlener, 874 Hill Road, Winnetka, Illinois; or Richard Maass, 285 Madison Avenue, New York City 17.

Work on the revision and bringing down to date of Writings on Pennsylvania History is nearly completed. It is hoped the Historical and Museum Commission will be able to put the bulletin to press not later than September, 1948.

"Theodore Presser, the Centenary of a Philadelphia Musical Pioneer," is the title of a most interesting article by Dr. James Francis Cooke in The Philadelphia Forum, for May. Dr. Cooke is editor of The Etude and president of Presser Foundation. The article is of more than ordinary importance.
Through University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, it is possible to obtain a microfilm print of the major periodicals of eighteenth-century America. Of course many of these periodicals were Philadelphia magazines. While a print of single periodicals is not available and the entire collection must be purchased, the cost is approximately $450. It is a valuable collection of material. Periodicals since 1800 are also being microfilmed. Detailed information may be obtained from University Microfilms.

The Pennylvania Historical and Museum Commission is anxious to secure access to acceptable master’s or doctoral theses, and other similar unpublished manuscripts on Pennsylvania history, with a view to creating a central microfilm file of such material as a part of its historical collections. Anyone knowing of unpublished but worthwhile manuscripts and articles would perform a service in calling attention to such material.

The Commission program for collecting source material is making progress. The file of photostat copies of early Pennsylvania maps already has reached proportions which justify the claim that it is the largest single collection available in any one depository. The entire Pennsylvania miscellaneous collection in the New York Public Library has been filmed and contains a miscellany of valuable material ranging from the colonial era to 1900. It is now being catalogued to make it more usable. From the Gage and Harmar Papers in the William L. Clements Library, every letter and document of any bearing upon Pennsylvania is being filmed. These collections are indispensable for the study of the Pennsylvania frontier between 1760 and 1792. The Chalmers Papers on Philadelphia and Pennsylvania from the New York Public Library, together with material from other collections in that library, are now available on film. From the New York Historical Society the Commission has secured a film of the Joseph Reed Papers, material from the O'Reilly Papers bearing on the frontier and Indian affairs, and other items. A survey of Canadian depositories has yielded outstanding results and arrangements are being made to secure by film or photostat a considerable quantity of significant maps and documents of the utmost importance. The search for material in out-of-state depositories is still under way. All material secured is being placed in the newly created library organization of the Com-
mission, situated in the State Museum Building. A new Recordak microfilm reader is available and those who wish to consult the material, even at this date, are free to do so.

The Commission is anxious to locate private collections of documents and papers either in or out of the state. Members of the Association could help materially by informing the writer of any such material which they may know about. An important collection of papers of Col. George Morgan was recently located in the hands of a descendant. A file of the very earliest issues of the *Western Telegraph*, important western Pennsylvania organ published at Washington, has been located in Kansas and will be filmed. There are many persons who hold highly treasured family papers, which they would not place in any depository but which they will consent to have microfilmed. Letters, diaries, documents, early newspapers, church and business records are especially important. Wherever the originals cannot be acquired, arrangements for microfilming or photostating can be made. But the Commission historians do need help in locating such materials.


The Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania is planning a history of the Bell system in Pennsylvania. Assisting in the project is the Historical Committee of the Telephone Pioneers. Three members of the committee are busily engaged in rounding up every bit of source material which can be located bearing on the history of the industry. J. S. Foster, Room 400, 416 Seventh Avenue, Pittsburgh; George Davey, Bell Telephone Building, Harrisburg; and W. K. Hoyer, 1835 Arch Street, Philadelphia, are in charge of this work for western, central, and eastern Pennsylvania. Any person acquainted with any type of records, directories, or any material bearing on local history of the telephone is urged to get in
touch with one of these men. All material collected will form a part of Bell Telephone Company permanent archives and be of aid in preparing the comprehensive history of the Bell in the state. The company is to be congratulated on the project.

John Witthoft has been appointed to direct the work in Pennsylvania archaeology under the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, replacing Dr. Claude Schaeffer, who resigned to accept a position with the National Park Service. Mr. Witthoft is a product of the University of Pennsylvania and University of Michigan graduate departments in archaeology and anthropology and is well equipped to develop this field of work in the state.

Dr. Milton W. Hamilton of Albright College will be a visiting professor of history at the summer session of the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Lawrence H. Gipson has been announced as the 1948 winner of the $1,000 Loubat first prize awarded every five years for the best works published in the English language bearing on the history, geography, archaeology, ethnology, philology, or numismatics of North America. Dr. Gipson's monumental history of the British Empire prior to the American Revolution has won for him this high honor.