THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

By Robert K. Murray, Secretary

The twenty-fifth annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association opened with a luncheon on Friday, October 26, 1956, in the Mirror Room, Yorktowne Hotel, York, Pennsylvania. William S. McClellan, President of the Historical Society of York County, welcomed the seventy-eight assembled members and guests and briefly explained the historical importance of the city of York in both Pennsylvania and United States history. He then introduced the two principal speakers at the luncheon session: Dr. Warren W. Hassler, Jr., of the Pennsylvania State University's History Department, and Dr. Harold E. Dickson, of the same university's Art History Department. Dr. Hassler's paper, entitled "George B. McClellan: A Revision," offered a challenging new interpretation of McClellan's role as a Civil War general. Dr. Dickson presented an illustrated paper, "The Pennsylvania Heritage in Painting," in which he underscored the need for local historians to pay more attention to cultural history. Both papers climaxed an opening luncheon meeting marked by conviviality and good food.

The Friday afternoon session convened at 2:30 o'clock in the Mirror Room and heard three papers on the general topic of Pennsylvania-Maryland relations. Francis C. Haber, editor of *Maryland Historical Magazine* and representing the Maryland Historical Society, served as chairman and introduced the session's three speakers: Dr. Arthur G. Tracey of Hampstead, Maryland, Dr. Stuart Bruchey of Dickinson College's History Department, and Prof. Frederic S. Klein of the History Department of Franklin and Marshall College. Dr. Tracey's paper on "The Monocacy Road" told the story of this important artery to settlement and social intercourse along the Pennsylvania-Maryland border. Dr. Bruchey's analysis of "The Business Relationship between Robert Oliver of Baltimore and John Craig of Philadelphia, 1787-
PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY

1807" not only displayed the early economic contact between citizens of Maryland and Pennsylvania, but also underlined the necessity for greater interest in business history and the preservation of business records and documents. Prof. Klein's paper, entitled "Jeffersonians in Local Politics along the Pennsylvania-Maryland Border," was a microscopic treatment of the rise of two local political leaders, Abraham and Andrew Shriver, in the rough-and-tumble political scene of the early nineteenth century.

At 4:30 p.m. the members and guests of the Association attended a tea in the Gold Room of the Yorktowne Hotel under the auspices of the York County Historical Society with Mrs. William C. Langston acting as hostess.

The annual dinner was held at 6:30 p.m. in the Ball Room. Dr. Philip S. Klein, President of the Association, introduced to the 140 members and guests the two speakers on the program: Dr. S. K. Stevens, Executive Director of the Historical and Museum Commission, and the Hon. Genevieve Blatt, Secretary of Internal Affairs of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Dr. Stevens opened his remarks by announcing that the annual award of the American Association for State and Local History for the best research publication in the year 1956 was to be given to PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY for publication of The Livingston Indian Records. This announcement received an enthusiastic ovation from the audience. Dr. Stevens then outlined "A New Look at Pennsylvania's Historical Program" by surveying the work and development of the Historical Commission since its founding in 1913. He concluded by warning that, although Pennsylvania's progress in the local historical field has been marked, her sister states are outstripping her. Among the current needs which Dr. Stevens mentioned as essential to reversing this trend were (1) a new historical and museum building, (2) an increase in historical publication and research, (3) the completion of the restoration of famous historical sites, (4) a more effective preservation program for historical materials, and (5) the establishment of closer ties between state and local historical groups.

Miss Blatt spoke on the topic "Sources for Pennsylvania History in the Department of Internal Affairs." She first described what her department has to do with history and then specifically concentrated on the importance to historians of the Bureau of
Land Records. For example, this bureau contains land records which date back to William Penn and are irreplaceable. Miss Blatt announced that these records are in the process of being catalogued and hence made more readily available to historians. Ultimately, in cooperation with the Historical Commission, these records will be inventoried and classified, completely indexed and systematized, and a catalogue published containing such information.

Friday ended with a reception for the members of the Association at 9:00 p.m. in the main rooms of the York County Historical Society at 225 East Market Street, York, Pennsylvania. Those who attended were greatly impressed with the Society’s fine library and its excellent exhibits.

Some twenty members of the Association began Saturday by being fêted with breakfast by Phi Alpha Theta, Donald Hoffman, executive secretary of that organization, acting as host. This affair has become an integral part of the Association’s annual convention and the Association wishes to express its thanks to Phi Alpha Theta and to Mr. Hoffman for it.

The annual business meeting of the Association convened in the Mirror Room, Saturday, October 27, at 9:00 a.m. The following action was taken: the secretary’s and treasurer’s reports were read and approved; the budget for 1957 was adopted; two committees, one on new memberships, and the other to investigate the feasibility of a twenty-five-year index for the magazine, were created; an announcement that next year’s convention would be held in Philadelphia was made; the editor’s report and the report of the Publications Committee were made and accepted; annual dues were raised to $5.00 beginning January 1, 1958; J. O. Oliphant, W. F. Workmaster, G. D. Harmon, and Donald Kent were elected to the Council for the term 1956-1959, and Dr. Ralph W. Cordier was reelected Vice-President for the term 1956-1959; finally, a series of resolutions was adopted thanking the York County Historical Society for its hospitality and Dr. Henry Young (chairman of the Program committee) and John D. Kilbourne (chairman of the local arrangements committee) for their fine work; a resolution of appreciation to Dr. Wallace was also passed for his excellent editing of The Livingston Indian Records.
At the Saturday morning session which followed immediately after the business meeting a panel was held on the general topic of Pennsylvania studies in the Commonwealth's schools and colleges. Dr. Ralph W. Cordier, Dean, Indiana State Teachers College, analyzed the coverage of Pennsylvania history in the elementary schools by describing the curriculum as established by the Department of Public Instruction's Bulletin 233B. Dr. Cordier discussed both the shortcomings and the strong points of the present curriculum, especially the Unit on "Social Living," and made the following recommendations: (1) that elementary school teachers be given history instruction with a strong social and cultural orientation; and (2) that historical organizations, such as the Pennsylvania Historical Association, aid elementary teachers to develop better instructional materials in local history, particularly visual aids. Melville Boyer, supervisor of Social Studies in the Allentown Public Schools, then discussed the secondary curriculum with respect to instruction in Pennsylvania history. Mr. Boyer claimed that history on the secondary level must be made meaningful; otherwise student interest is lost. Oftentimes, he reported, the students' lack of interest stems from the employment of teachers inadequately trained in history, especially temporary teachers. Local history, Mr. Boyer claimed, was also hurt by the increasing emphasis in high school on international history. Dr. C. M. Myers, Head of Social Studies, Millersville State Teachers College, spoke on Pennsylvania studies in the teachers colleges and described the basic history requirements for prospective elementary and secondary teachers. He complained specifically of the "shot-gun marriage" of Pennsylvania and United States history in the same course and indicated they should be divorced. His belief was that under such circumstances Pennsylvania history is slighted at the expense of national history. Dr. Robert L. Bloom, of the History Department, Gettysburg College, reported on Pennsylvania studies in the Liberal Arts colleges. As a result of a survey of representative liberal arts colleges, Dr. Bloom offered the following suggestions: (1) a new textbook is needed in Pennsylvania history; (2) more visual aids are required; (3) there should be better dissemination of information on new sources of local history materials; (4) the course on the History of the United States and Pennsylvania ought to be divided; (5) essay contests and cash prizes for work in local history should be estab-
lished; and (6) the Department of Public Instruction ought to clarify the history requirement for teacher certification.

Needless to say, a spirited discussion followed the presentation of these four papers.

The Saturday luncheon session got under way at 12:30 p.m. with seventy persons in attendance. The general topic was Pennsylvania politics in 1856. The chairman, Dr. William A. Russ, Jr., of the History Department, Susquehanna University, introduced the two speakers, both from the University of Pittsburgh's History Department: Dr. Robert E. Carlson and Dr. James A. Kehl. Dr. Carlson's paper, entitled "Buchanan and Western Pennsylvania," analyzed political sentiment in western Pennsylvania in 1856 and accounted for the success of the Democrats in that area. Dr. Kehl's paper, "The Republican Party in Pennsylvania," dealt with the other side of the coin and analyzed the emerging strength of Republicanism in the state in 1856.

Poor weather encouraged many members to leave for home immediately following this luncheon session. However, those thirty or more who stayed were well repaid by an excellent historical tour, conducted by the Rev. John P. Bolen, through the Pigeon Hills to Conewago Chapel, an eighteenth century Jesuit Mission church.