THE TWENTY-SEVENTH CONVENTION
OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION

BY H. TREVOR COLBOURN, Secretary

THE twenty-seventh annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association opened in Pittsburgh on October 10, 1958, under unusual circumstances: the leading hotels of the city were in the midst of a strike which had caused many other conventions to be cancelled, and occasioned many difficulties for Dr. James Kehl and the local arrangements committee. However, despite last-minute changes in meeting and dining locations, the convention proved one of the most successful held by the Association, and was well attended. The meeting was opened with a luncheon held in the Student Union building of Pittsburgh University, where Dr. A. C. Van Dusen, assistant chancellor, presided. Royal Daniel, Jr., director of the Pittsburgh Bicentennial Association, formally welcomed the Association to the city, and Dr. Ralph Cordier, President of the Association, expressed pleasure at the generous reception. The fifty-one assembled members and guests then were entertained by Stanton Belfour, director of the Pittsburgh Foundation, who spoke on “Lilies or the Cross of St. George,” a review of the French and British history of Pittsburgh, along with an outline of recent urban history.

Following the luncheon meeting, the convention adjourned to the Music Hall at Old Economy, where two papers were heard. Dr. John W. Oliver presided over the session and Dr. John W. Huston of the U. S. Naval Academy discussed “Pittsburgh in the French and Indian War.” Dr. Huston described the checkered history of early Pittsburgh, with its developing industry, currency problems, and large fish stories. Dr. Edward G. Everett of the West Chester State Teachers College then presented a paper on “Pittsburgh in the Civil War,” in which he told of the impact of invasion scares and the growth of heavy industry to support the Union war effort. The group was then entertained with coffee and cookies, followed by a brief but stimulating talk by Lawrence
S. Thurman, Curator of Old Economy. Mr. Thurman illustrated his comments with slides showing the various parts of the settlement and the complex business undertakings of the Harmony Society, with its investments in railroads, oil refining, and silk manufacturing. He welcomed scholars to the untapped documentary resources of the settlement.

The annual dinner of the Association was held at the Student Union, and was presided over by President Ralph W. Cordier, who introduced the officers of the Association to the sixty-five members and guests present. The principal speaker was Dr. Arnold R. Daum of Northwestern University who presented a scholarly paper on "The Critical Pioneer Years of the Petroleum Industry." He explained the environmental factors assisting the success of oil and the technical problems that had to be overcome, such as refining, marketing, and transportation. A smoker was held immediately after the dinner meeting, at which the University of Pittsburgh was host, but members of the Council had to depart early for a meeting at the Hotel Webster Hall at 10 o'clock that night.

The annual business meeting of the Association was held the next morning at 9 o'clock in the Hunt Room of the Hotel Webster Hall. The minutes of the last business meeting were read and accepted, as was the budget for the coming year. Mr. Ross Pier Wright presented the Treasurer's report, which was approved, and Dr. John M. Coleman reported on editorial plans for the magazine, including a competition for the Junior Historians Clubs. Homer T. Rosenberger reported for the Publications Committee, describing the plans for future pamphlets. The Resolutions Committee, headed by Mr. Wallace F. Workmaster, presented for approval resolutions of thanks to the sponsoring host institutions, namely the Pittsburgh Bicentennial Commission, the Carnegie Institute of Technology, Chatham College, Duquesne University, Mount Mercy College, University of Pittsburgh, and the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. In addition to approving these resolutions, the Association voiced its thanks to the Local Arrangements Committee "for its very commendable effort . . . despite the challenge of unusual and unique circumstances," and similar appreciation was recorded for the work of the Program Committee headed by Sanford W. Higginbotham, and the noble
efforts of the stricken Hotel Webster Hall. Dr. Philip S. Klein, chairman of the Nominating Committee recommended the re-election of Edwin B. Coddington, Alfred P. James, John H. Powell, and Louis J. Heizmann to the Council, and Cutler Andrews to the office of Vice President; the nominations were approved unanimously.

It was announced by President Cordier that the convention in 1959 would be held at Bethlehem on October 16 and 17. Dr. George Harmon of Lehigh University was named chairman of the Local Arrangements Committee, and Dr. Edwin Coddington chairman of the Program Committee. A fine convention was predicted to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Association's magazine, Pennsylvania History. Dr. Cordier announced that in the annual billing an invitation would be included to submit gift subscriptions to the magazine. The Association also voted to send greetings to two loyal members, Dr. Robert Fortenbaugh and Miss Caroline Smedley, and agreed to become a co-sponsor of the Pennsylvania Institute held in the summer at the Pennsylvania State University.

Two concurrent sessions were held at 10 o'clock Saturday morning. One was in the Hunt Room of the Hotel Webster Hall, with the Western Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies; George Allison of the McKeesport High School presided over this session which featured a panel discussion on "Methods of Teaching Pennsylvania History and Government"; on the same program was a paper entitled "Washington's Responsibility in the Death of Jumonville," given by Albert W. Schnupp of Carrick High School, Pittsburgh. The other session was held in the English Room of the Cathedral of Learning. With Dr. Frederick Binder, Dean of Thiel College, in the chair, two interesting papers were delivered: one by Dr. Edwin Fenton of the Carnegie Institute of Technology discussed "The Effect of Italian Immigration on the Labor Movement," and showed that where bargaining power existed, Italians could be organized, but in general they tended to enter industries with little such power. Dr. Hugh Cleland of the University of Pittsburgh presented the second paper on "The Effect of Radical Groups on the Labor Movement," and noted that both the I.W.W. and the Communists had played a large role in labor development. The comment was supplied by Emery Bacon,
educational director for the United Steelworkers, who disputed
Dr. Cleland's assertions concerning Communist influence in the
early C.I.O. Mr. Bacon observed that only by looking at the past
will future leaders find guidance for Americanism and good
trade unionism. In the subsequent questioning, Mr. Bacon con-
ceded that at present unions are not actively encouraging research
in labor history.

The final meeting of the 1958 convention was a luncheon ses-
son held at the University Club, where Charles A. McClintock,
President of the Western Pennsylvania Historical Society, intro-
duced E. Earl Moore, vice president of the U. S. Steel Corpora-
tion. Mr. Moore discussed "Pittsburgh and the Steel Industry," with particular attention to Andrew Carnegie, whom he described
as uniquely articulate and determined, with a thirst for knowledge.
The audience expressed its warm appreciation of the program,
and the convention was adjourned.