THE FORTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING

BY CHARLES H. GLATFELTER

THE forty-second annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association was held on October 19 and 20, 1973, at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The hosts were Dickinson College, The Cumberland County Historical Society, and the U. S. Army Military History Research Collection, Carlisle Barracks.

The opening session began at 12:15 p.m. on Friday in a dining room in the Holland Union, Dickinson College, with Robert E. Carlson, West Chester State College, presiding. Following the luncheon, President Howard L. Rubendall of Dickinson College extended greetings, in which he noted that the college was drawing to a close the observance of its bicentennial. Then Wallace E. Davies, University of Pennsylvania, read a paper entitled "Snobbery and Shame: The Horrors of Living North of Market Street as Reflected in Three Late Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia Novels." The three novels which he discussed were the anonymous _North of Market Street_ (1896); Charles Stokes Wayne, _The Lady and Her Tree_ (1895); and Katharine Bingham (pseudonym), _The Philadelphians_ (1903). All three works maintain that on certain levels of Philadelphia society around the turn of the century it really was regarded as socially disastrous to live north of Market street. Curiously, the novels do not really condemn this attitude. Each work involves the case of a woman from New York who comes to live in Philadelphia. Because of the accident of residence, a mistake is made as to the heroine's true top social standing. Almost certainly all three novels were written primarily for feminine consumption. None had any conception of the genuine sociological problems that developed north of Market street half a century later.

John B. Frantz, Pennsylvania State University, presided at the first afternoon session, devoted to economics and politics in Pennsylvania history. Jacob E. Cooke, Lafayette College, presented a paper on "Tench Coxe, American Economist: The Limitations of Economic Thought in the Early Nationalist Era." Centering on
Coxe’s voluminous writings of the 1790s, the author asserted that Coxe, in his day the foremost exponent of manufacturing and a balanced national economy, was representative of similarly persuaded political economists. But his writings also demonstrate the shortcomings of that abundant literature. Among these limitations were a preoccupation with statistics and “facts,” an uncritical belief in the doctrine of progress, the equating of progress with technological improvement, a superpatriotic bias that blinded him to many unpleasant realities of the era, and an emphasis on the dynamics rather than the dimensions of change.

The second paper at this session, entitled “Pennsylvania Jacksonians and the Bank War: The First Phase,” was read by G. Terry Madonna, Millersville State College. Presenting a revisionist view of the political struggle between Jacksonians and the Bank of the United States, the paper challenged the thesis that Pennsylvania Jacksonians were ardent supporters of the bank. Although many were economic nationalists, they never hesitated in their commitment to support Jackson. The paper traced the anti-bank attitudes of such Pennsylvania political leaders as George M. Dallas, Samuel Ingham, Joel Sutherland, and Henry Gilpin, as well as the development of Democratic newspaper opinion on the subject of the bank. The author concluded that newspaper comments support the thesis that Democrats had no unusual commitment to the bank and gave their overwhelming support to Jackson in 1832.

Robert K. Murray, Pennsylvania State University, presided at the second afternoon session, devoted to Pennsylvania politics in the 1920s. Lawrence L. Murray, State University College, Fredonia, New York, delivered a paper entitled “The Mellon Machine in Pennsylvania Politics: Myth or Reality.” Observers of all persuasions who followed Pennsylvania politics in the 1920s were nearly unanimous in believing that the Republican party, and thus the state, was dominated, at least in part, by a well-financed machine, with headquarters in Pittsburgh but directed from the Treasury Department in Washington. Journalists regularly reported the activities of this Mellon machine, invariably touting its strength and dominance. Opponents attacked it as a technique for coalescing support. So pervasive and persuasive was the general belief in the existence and operation of the Mellon machine that historians and others since the twenties have
unquestioningly recorded it as an integral part of the political history of Pennsylvania. Professor Murray has examined the career of Andrew W. Mellon, multimillionaire Pittsburgh investment banker and secretary of the treasury from 1921 to 1932, and the political machine that he supposedly directed during his governmental career. While not denying that the Mellons wielded considerable influence in Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania in the twenties, he concluded that no Mellon machine ever existed except in the minds of some newspapermen and political opponents. There is no evidence that any of the real power brokers in the state ever treated it as an equal, nor that the Mellons ever claimed to have a machine. William Larimer Mellon, the secretary’s nephew and political alter ego, once exclaimed in frustration to reporters that “what I would like to know is who and what is the Mellon organization.” Always more interested in politics from a national perspective, the Mellons preferred to bargain with the various factions within the state, and to accomplish their ends through artful persuasion and diplomacy. Never were they able to force any of the reigning Republican potentates to accede to their wishes, and when they directly challenged one of them, as in their 1926 contest with William S. Vare and the Philadelphia organization for the Senate seat of George Wharton Pepper, they invariably lost. The simple fact was that, never having done grass roots work, the Mellons controlled no block of votes which could be delivered—the ultimate test of a machine—and their massive financial resources were of limited value at the time. The Mellons were politically never much more than a name, and the Mellon machine, at best, was a hollow man.

Irwin F. Greenberg, Philadelphia, read the second paper at this session. Entitled “The Kept Minority: The Philadelphia Democratic Party, 1920-1928,” it described the long time Republican control of the city, which peaked in the 1920s. A bipartisan arrangement between the Vare machine and the small and feeble Democrats had mutual advantages. It guaranteed the minority a share of posts in the city government. It enabled the Republicans usually to insure that their opposite numbers would be pliable—a kept minority. In the previous decade, independent Democrats and disgruntled Republicans had tried on several occasions to gain power, but without success. In 1923, with obvious help from the Republican machine, John O’Donnell, head
of the Vare Democrats, was elected minority commissioner. His victory marked the nadir of the independent Democrats, who for some years thereafter remained aloof from city politics, reserving their efforts for participation on the state and national levels. Mr. Greenberg maintained that the kept minority resulted from Democratic impotency in Philadelphia, rather than causing it. To explain this assertion, he advanced the theory that in many similar situations there is a healthy rivalry among the city party organization, the party officeholders, and the electorate. Such rivalry did not exist in Philadelphia at this time, because the officeholders were beholden for their positions to the organization, which scarcely depended on the small and dispirited electorate. The weakness of that electorate can be traced to the strong Republican partisanship of Philadelphia voters, which enabled the Vare machine in the 1920s to rely for support at the polls on black, poor, and minority voters as well as wealthy and upper middle-class voters. Until that strong partisanship was changed, Philadelphia Democrats would remain a minority.

John F. Coleman, Saint Francis College, presided at the third afternoon session, which featured three papers on black history by doctoral candidates at Pennsylvania State University. The first, entitled "A Black Underground: The Underground Railroad in Philadelphia, 1836-1854," was by William D. Fergusson, Norristown. Inquiring into the dimensions of Negro membership in the Vigilance Committee of Philadelphia (1837-1844) and the General Vigilance Committee (1852-1854), Mr. Fergusson found that more Negroes participated in underground railroad activity than has been believed; that spasmodic institutional activity occurred between the decline of the first and the rise of the second organization; and that the antislavery movement was initially cool to the idea of fugitive aid, whether individual or organized. He concluded that the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society cared little about, or even opposed, aid to fugitives until after the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. The society antagonized Philadelphia's Negro community by its preference for rhetoric over practical fugitive aid work. Thus, after 1839 the blacks increasingly assumed leadership and management of the city underground railroad organizations. Even after the society finally recognized the importance of fugitive aid assistance to the antislavery movement,
blacks continued to dominate Philadelphia's Underground Railroad.

Ann G. Wilmoth, Lancaster, read a paper on "The Black Community in Ante-bellum Pittsburgh." The black population in Pittsburgh and Allegheny City between 1850 and 1860 was primarily mulatto, Pennsylvania-born, poor, and unskilled. There was evidence of racial segregation, but there did not appear to be a formal set of black codes. Blacks were not restricted in their movements and openly celebrated British Emancipation Day (August 1) as their Fourth of July. Led by such strong figures as Martin R. Delany, John Peck, John B. Vashon, George Vashon, and Lewis Woodson, Pittsburgh blacks were self-sufficient and not hindered by an overly oppressive white society. This situation allowed them the time and atmosphere in which to develop thoughts and actions that would speak to antislavery and civil rights.

Edward J. Price, Jr., delivered a paper on "School Segregation in Nineteenth-Century Pennsylvania." In it, he described the development of a network of public schools in the state and the legal segregation of the system. The protests of blacks both as individuals and in groups against the inferior segregated schools failed to end the policy of segregation. However, when blacks and their Republican allies went to court and to the legislature, they achieved a series of victories culminating in the 1881 school law which abolished legal segregation in the Commonwealth. Unfortunately, this law lacked penalty provisions and a de facto system of segregation continued in areas with large black populations.

The annual dinner meeting of the association was held on Friday evening in the Embers Room of the Quality Motel, with President Donald H. Kent, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission staff, presiding. Robert G. Crist, president of the Cumberland County Historical Society, extended greetings from his organization. Edwin Wolf 2nd, Library Company of Philadelphia, spoke on "The Terrible-Tempered Mr. Logan: Bookman Extraordinary." James Logan, a major political figure in Pennsylvania during the first half of the eighteenth century, collected the finest library which existed in colonial America. Competent in a dazzling variety of fields of knowledge, he bought his books with an eye to quality and price. As he often told the booksellers of
London from whom he got most of his works, he knew a book. Angrily in letters to many correspondents he complained of the inadequacies of authors and editors, and pedantically in the margins of his books he added, corrected, and inveighed. Logan’s memory of volumes he had seen was uncanny; after decades he remembered where he had seen a book and for how much it had been offered. By the time he died in 1751 he had gathered a collection of 2,651 volumes, over ninety percent of which survive in the Library Company of Philadelphia.

The meeting of the Council concluded the day’s program.

About twenty-five persons attended the Phi Alpha Theta breakfast in the Quality Motel on Saturday morning. Donald B. Hoffman, national secretary, was present and gave an informative talk on the membership and programs of the fraternity.

The annual business meeting of the association convened in Tuvin Auditorium, Dickinson College, at 9:35 Saturday morning, with about thirty-five members in attendance and with President Donald H. Kent presiding. The recording secretary read the minutes of the 1972 annual meeting, and they were approved as read.

Phillip E. Stebbins, business secretary, reported that there were 1,298 members in the association as of October 1, 1973. He urged all members to conduct their own membership drives, offering to help with mailings to the extent of his ability. Describing the inventory of association publications as better than adequate, he reported that the pressing space problem of the last several years has now been met. His report was adopted.

Treasurer Richard P. Wright described the financial condition of the association as an improving one. During the year from October 1, 1972, to September 30, 1973, receipts from all sources amounted to $12,647.61 and expenditures to $10,163.46. The cash balance at the end of the year was $14,513.69. He hastened to add that this last figure is deceptive, since it includes $8,415.78 in the investment fund and $5,839.15 in the publications fund. The balance in the general fund amounts to $258.76. With this sobering thought in mind, those present unanimously adopted the report.

Mr. Wright presented the following proposed amendment to the constitution: Article II, Section 6, of the constitution shall be amended to read in its entirety: Effective November 1, 1973, the dues of institutional members shall be ten dollars per year. Since
this proposed amendment was approved by the Council on April 27, 1973, and since its text was submitted to the membership in advance of this meeting, action upon it was in order, and it was unanimously approved.

The Council having neglected to adopt a budget for the 1974 calendar year, the members approved the proposed budget which President Kent presented. The president announced the resignation of William G. Shade as editor of Pennsylvania History and reported that the Council had designated H. Benjamin Powell, acting editor since August, 1972, to succeed him.

Editor H. Benjamin Powell stated that future issues of the journal would include notices of forthcoming association meetings and information concerning programs, as such information becomes available. He stated that participants in the annual meetings would be encouraged to submit their papers to be considered for publication by the journal. Last year about fifty articles were submitted, and about half of these were accepted. He expressed the belief that the quality of the journal was improving and could be further improved. An even wider variety of articles is desired. Most memberships are now institutional; thus the journal is widely available across this country and even abroad. The report was adopted.

For the publications committee, John M. Coleman reported on plans to reprint out-of-print numbers of the Study Series, and to issue a new one on the history of public education in Pennsylvania. He asked for suggestions for future publications.

For the nominations committee, Robert L. Bloom proposed the following slate of officers and Council members: for vice president, John M. Coleman; for business secretary, Phillip E. Stebbins; for recording secretary, Abram Foster; for the Council, William W. Hummel, James H. Kehl, George Swetnam, Arthur L. Jensen, and Charles H. Glatfelter. The report was accepted, and in proper form the slate was elected unanimously.

For the Council, Robert E. Carlson reported that in April that body had endorsed the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure approved by the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges, and had decided to present it to the annual business meeting for further action. He gave a brief history of the American Association of University Professors and listed some of the organi-
izations which have approved the statement. Upon motion duly presented and adopted, the meeting unanimously endorsed the statement.

Robert R. Clemmer reported for a committee of the Council (in which he was joined by Robert D. Duncan and Abram Foster) on the subject of certification in history and the emphasis on the teaching of history in the public schools. Persons in the Commonwealth are concerned about the decreasing interest in and emphasis on history in the schools. The history faculties of state colleges have already adopted resolutions. On behalf of his committee, Mr. Clemmer presented the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

Whereas the Pennsylvania Department of Education abolished certification in history without adequate and substantial consultation with representatives of the historical profession, Be it resolved that representatives of the Pennsylvania Historical Association, together with representatives of other interested historical organizations, seek to consult with the appropriate officials of the Department of Education, to review the status of history in the social studies curriculum in general, and the issue of history certification in particular.

Francis P. Jennings, chairman of the bicentennial committee, displayed a large file folder of correspondence concerning appropriate observance of the bicentennial but described the accomplishment of the effort as zero. He saw as extremely unlikely the prospects that the Pennsylvania Historical Association will be able to secure outside financial assistance for the observance. The Council, he concluded, will have to give its attention to a number of matters if the association is to contribute to the bicentennial.

President Kent reminded the members present of the next meeting, at New Wilmington, on October 25 and 26, 1974; of the 1975 meeting at Loretto; and of the 1976 meeting at Allentown. The meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Charles C. Sellers, Dickinson College, presided at the first Saturday morning session. Martha Calvert Slotten, Acting Curator of Special Collections, Dickinson College, read a paper on "The Fruits of Two Centuries of Manuscript Collecting: Manuscripts and Archives in the Undergraduate Teaching at Dickin-
son College." She reviewed some of the history of the acquisition of the college's fine collection of manuscripts and rare books and of the people who have been most responsible for its care and growth. The college's bicentennial has given added impetus to an active program of using primary source materials available in the special collections in the teaching of history to undergraduates. This has centered recently in projects used in the required introductory course for history majors. In a generation which has tended to be ahistorical, this course has seemed to speak uniquely to the "why" and "what" of history. Students in this course have been asked to transcribe and edit copies of manuscript letters in the collection. Others have worked in groups on a paleography project, transcribing a small portion of a sixteenth-century deed, encased in plastic for secure use. One class is editing letters to or from Simon Cameron and will later hold a miniseminar on this important politician. A more ambitious project concerning the use of biography as history involves the student's writing a biography of a prominent early Dickinson alumnus which reflects research in the collections for a study of his development while at Dickinson. Hopefully this may produce a published dictionary of Dickinson biography. Mrs. Slotten's paper was given in the Morris Room of the Spahr Library, where supporting exhibits were shown for these laboratory teaching projects which help the student to approach history at its source.

John B. B. Trussell, Jr., Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, presided at the second session on Saturday morning. John J. Snyder, Jr., Franklin and Marshall College, discussed "Architecture in Cumberland County, 1760-1810." Drawing his examples from all kinds of buildings, and illustrating them by using many slides during the reading of his paper, he discussed architecture in a period which began when the frontier line was close to the county and ended when it had moved far to the westward. He commented on the design of houses, barns, churches, and college buildings, most of which were in Carlisle and its vicinity. Most of the surviving examples were constructed of stone or brick, and most were designed by untrained architects. An outstanding exception was West College, on the campus of Dickinson College, designed by Benjamin Latrobe and built in 1803. The slides which were used showed both exterior and interior views of buildings. Professor Snyder concluded that Cumberland
County architecture in the period studied was representative of the architecture of many other areas.

John J. Reed, Muhlenberg College, presided at the third Saturday morning session. Anthony F. C. Wallace, University of Pennsylvania, read a paper on "Anthropological Uses of Historical Documents." "Anthropology," he asserted, "shares with history an interest in the past." While it is true that anthropologists have devoted most of their attention to the remote past, in which the usual sources employed by the historian do not exist, there is a field within the discipline called ethnohistory, which essentially is the study of non-Western peoples and others from about 1500 to the present century. A related study is ethnography, which Professor Wallace defined as "the description of culture based on residence, usually of a year or so, by an observer in a particular community of moderate size. . . ." A major difference between the ethnographer and ethnohistorian is that the latter must usually deal with large units, such as the tribe, because he cannot find enough information about a moderate-size community. Professor Wallace presented what he called "a tentative list of guiding assumptions and rules of thumb" for the historical ethnographer to employ, including the following: choose a period of about forty years, establish connections with outside events, find local evidence for every assertion made, review the full cultural spectrum, and take at least two years to gather data. He had an opportunity to use the list of assumptions and rules in his study of the cotton mills along Chester Creek, between Philadelphia and Wilmington. Selecting the period from 1825 to 1865, he found an abundance of sources: letters, business and other private records, public records, memoirs, newspapers, census schedules, maps, biographies, county histories, and many others. There were a number of gaps, including a lack of information about the mill machinery and who made it. Professor Wallace concluded by saying that he saw this method as the only way in which to test theories about the process of social and cultural change.

The luncheon session was held in the Officers' Open Mess at Carlisle Barracks, with Russell F. Weigley, visiting professor, U. S. Army Military History Research Collection, presiding. Major General Franklin M. Davis, Jr., Commander of the Research Collection, greeted the association members who were
present, after which Colonel George S. Pappas, Director of the Collection, spoke briefly. Colonel Pappas called for co-operation among professional and nonprofessional historians and institutions which have sources which the historians use. The Research Collection, he said, is open to high school students and university professors alike. If it is not used, then the efforts to bring it together will have failed in accomplishing their purposes. These efforts, which resulted in a collection of some 300,000 volumes in about six years, were themselves characterized by co-operation. Individuals, army libraries, academic institutions, and others joined together in making donations which resulted in the creation of an extremely useful collection.

A tour of the research collection in Upton Hall, conducted by Colonel Pappas and his staff, completed this session and marked the end of the forty-second annual meeting of the association.