THE FOR-TY-THIRD ANNUAL MEETING

By Abram J. Foster

THE forty-third annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association was held on October 25 and 26, 1974, at Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa.

The opening session began at 12:15 p.m. on Friday in a dining room of the Howard Johnson Motor Lodge, near Mercer, with John M. Coleman of Lafayette College presiding. Following the luncheon, Dean Phillip A. Lewis of Westminster College extended greetings. Then George Swetnam read a paper, "The Carnegie Nobody Knows." Andrew Carnegie was a well-traveled businessman and industrialist, who was not only known for the "Gospel of Wealth" but also for his prolific literary output. He was a liberal for his day, far ahead of contemporary industrialists. His 1889 article on wealth in the North American Review became the "Gospel of Wealth" in 1901. His biography of James Watt was his only significant failure. He wrote one-half dozen books, innumerable articles in journals of respect, and thousands of letters (including those to five presidents of the U.S.). His unfinished autobiography was not too factual.

Jerome Wood of Swarthmore College presided at the first afternoon session, "Divided Loyalties: Pennsylvania and the American Revolution." John Ferling of West Georgia College read a paper on Joseph Galloway. Galloway's belief that the revolutionary cause could not succeed was emphasized. The revolutionary leaders were not reliable; most colonists did not want independence, nor could they see any benefit in it. This was Galloway's sincere judgment, not a position he took to protect his personal interests or to further his career. Ferling explained details of Galloway's plan for the Anglo-American union which was defeated in the Continental Congress by one vote on September 29, 1774. His actions after this defeat were consistent with his earlier behavior, said Ferling. He remained anti-republican throughout the Revolution, going to England after the war. He became disenchanted with life in England and remained paranoid about conspiracies against him until he died in 1803, in England.

The second paper of this session, "The Pennsylvania Dutch: Partners in the War for Independence," was delivered by William
Parsons of Ursinus College. The Pennsylvania Dutch supplied the Continental Army with provisions, armaments, and money. They subverted the German mercenaries with the British army. There were many Pennsylvania Dutch officers. The Continental Army Baker-General was Christopher Ludwick; “Molly Pitcher” was Mary Ludwig Hays. Most of General Washington’s bodyguard troops were Pennsylvania Dutch. They had originated the Pennsylvania rifle and the Conestoga Wagon. The war even could be oversimplified as one of wagons (Americans) versus ships (British). Many supported the patriot side in order to keep their land. Some suffered extensive battle damage to their property.

Clary Settlemire of Slippery Rock College presided at the second afternoon session, devoted to “Women in Pennsylvania Life: Two Perspectives.” Robert Stinson of Moravian College read a paper, “Ida Tarbell: The Emergence of an Antifeminist.” Miss Tarbell was born in 1857 and died in 1944. She wrote more about women than about business after 1909. She believed that the two sexes had their natural roles to play; she privately opposed the Nineteenth Amendment. Her antifeminism, beginning about 1909, changed to ambivalence in the 1920s and 1930s. She believed in the “importance of being in the business of being a woman.”

John Furlow of Wilkes College offered an essay on “Cornelia Bryce Pinchot: Social Feminism in Pennsylvania in the 1920’s and 1930’s.” Cornelia Bryce was exposed to politics at an early age, as a friend and neighbor of the Oyster Bay Roosevelts. She played an active role in the campaign for woman suffrage and then had an active career as wife and political partner of Gifford Pinchot. Her importance as a public figure at times almost overshadowed that of her husband. She was a leader in feminist movements after the long-desired suffrage was gained; she believed in birth control as well as active female participation in politics and civic responsibility. She said once, “Politics is the best of all indoor sports.” She unsuccessfully sought the Republican nomination for U.S. Congress from the 15th District in northeastern Pennsylvania three times, beginning in 1928, and once tried to win the Republican nomination for governor. A member of the school board for many years, she served the community of Milford with dedication. A dry, and a pacifist, she also strongly favored labor unionism. She died in 1960, twelve years after her husband.

The annual dinner meeting of the PHA was held on Friday,
starting at 6:30 p.m., Donald Kent presiding. Hobart Cawood, superintendent, Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia, spoke on “A Look Toward the Bicentennial.” There was some dissatisfaction with the presentation, mainly because it was not made clear that the $20,000,000 being spent at Independence National Park was not diverted from other National Park service capital improvements nor was it any loss to research and publication projects more meaningful to historians. Few, if any, communities have the stage, site, or money that Philadelphia has for the bicentennial celebration. Privately, Cawood agreed that such projects as research and publications would have permanent results rather than just the enhancing of tourist attractions.

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

There was no Phi Alpha Theta breakfast on Saturday.

The annual business meeting of the PHA convened in Hoyt Science Center, Westminster College, at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, October 26, 1974, with about thirty members in attendance and President Donald H. Kent presiding. The recording secretary read the minutes of the 1973 business meeting, and they were approved as read.

Phillip Stebbins, business secretary, reported that there were 1,249 PHA members as of October 15, 1974. There are almost 4,000 back copies of Pennsylvania History in inventory. For copies of back journals write to him at 806 New Liberal Arts Tower, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Penna., 16802. His report was adopted as presented.

Treasurer Richard Wright reported that from October 1, 1973, to September 30, 1974, receipts from all sources amounted to $11,082.49; expenditures were $11,541.06. The cash balance was $14,055.12. With the economies implemented, as discussed at last night’s council meeting, the association will be in a sound financial condition without dipping into the reserve fund. All members were encouraged to sell pamphlets and secure more members. His report was soberly approved.

Editor H. Benjamin Powell reported that the news and comment section in Pennsylvania History will be reduced by about two-thirds, from twenty pages to about five. Costs have skyrocketed and membership is declining, thus the journal will be reduced in size from 120 pages to 96 pages. He has an eighteen-month backlog of articles and is receiving fifty to sixty articles a year. He insists that
there will be no reduction in scholarship. The new book review editor, Michael P. Weber of Carnegie-Mellon University, will replace Norman B. Wilkinson, book review editor for the past twenty years. The quality of the book reviews will be maintained. The report was accepted.

President Kent reported for the publications committee. It was decided that the new booklet on the history of the oil industry be $1.50 and that the prices of all other booklets be raised 25¢ each.

James Rodechko, new chairman of the research conference, asked for suggestions for the spring, 1975, meeting.

President Kent mentioned Pennsylvania Heritage, a new magazine, published by the PHMC. Initial copies can be had free upon request to Betty Seanor. The magazine will emphasize county historical society news.

For the nominations committee, Robert Bloom proposed the following slate of officers and council members: for vice president, Russell F. Weigley; for the council, re-election of John B. Frantz and Elizabeth M. Geffen; election of Francis Jennings, Ira Brown, and Harry Whipkey. The slate was elected without objection.

John F. Coleman, local arrangements chairman, reported on the place and date of the forty-fourth meeting at St. Francis College, Loretto, October 10-11, 1975. Harold Aurand will be program chairman.

Francis Jennings, local arrangements chairman, reported on the forty-fifth meeting at Cedar Crest College, Allentown, October, 1976. The meeting will probably extend from Thursday noon to Saturday noon.

Francis Jennings also reported for the bicentennial committee. President Kent, H. Benjamin Powell, and Francis Jennings will nominate an editorial board for approval by the council in April, 1975.

President Kent reported for the ad hoc committee on the status of history in the public schools. The Department of Education seems to believe that it is promoting history through “craft fairs,” “living history,” etc. These may very well arouse interest but should not be regarded as history itself. The high school curriculum has been reconstructed to the point of eliminating history. Philip Klein moved that President Kent be responsible for drafting a resolution or position paper to be disseminated to historical societies, PHA
members, newspaper editors, etc. The motion unanimously passed.

Homer Rosenberger recommended that a letter be drafted expressing appreciation to Norman Wilkinson for his diligent, devoted service as book review editor for the past twenty years.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

The first Saturday morning session on "Ethnicity and Assimilation" was chaired by John Bodnar of the Ethnic Studies Program, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Stephanie Grauman Wolf of Philadelphia read a paper on "Germantown, Pennsylvania: A Case Study in Eighteenth Century Heterogeneity and Assimilation." Robert Asher of the University of Connecticut, at Storrs, presented a paper on "The Steel Strike of 1919," an event which occurred in the U.S. Steel factory at Homestead, Penna.

Jay Luvaas of Allegheny College presided at the second morning session on "Gettysburg Remembered." Robert Bloom of Gettysburg College, who had consulted at least fifteen novels, read a paper on "The Battle of Gettysburg in Fiction." The battle of Gettysburg in July, 1863, the best-remembered Civil War engagement, was ready-made for storytelling. The melange of truth and romance surrounding it has irresistibly attracted historical novelists. Unfortunately, too many readers have derived their impressions of it from fiction writers and have neglected carefully constructed historical accounts. The novelist can contribute something of value to understanding what happened at Gettysburg. Whereas the historian portrays the scene, often from afar, the novelist paints it in a manner which enables the reader to grasp the human quality of events. Historical romances set at Gettysburg reveal both strengths and weaknesses of historical fiction, varying in their worth as literature and historical verisimilitude. Some reflect sectional bias, carelessness with historical fact, descent into mere sentimentality and readiness to toss off a potboiler. Others, such as MacKinlay Kantor's Long Remember (1934), Michael Shaara's The Killer Angels (1974), and Joseph S. Pennell's The History of Rome Hanks (1944), rise above such inferior standards. A comparison between the historian's and the novelist's version of the same event is provided in the two accounts by Edwin B. Coddington and Pennell of Pickett's charge. Each make a worthwhile contribution to the understanding of that famous moment. Novels dealing with the battle illustrate a general
difference between Southern and Northern writers, whether of history or fiction. The former tend to glorify military aspects, concentrating on the feelings, thoughts, and actions of the officer corps. Northern writers spotlight the rank and file and are more prone to realism and anti-war criticism. The superior novelist comes as close as the historian in presenting a creditable and truthful picture of what happened on that hallowed ground.

The second paper of the second session, "The Battlefield at Gettysburg: Reunions and Reactions," was presented by John Patterson of the Pennsylvania State University's Capitol Campus. He approached Gettysburg as an outsider. The quarrel between the commercializers and preservationists began immediately after the Civil War. Examples of early commercialization include the electric railway promoters, Houston's proposed tower of the late nineteenth century (unlike Ottenstein's, it was to be educational), self-serving guides, and the Philadelphia rumor about the Gettysburg "relic factory" (relics made to order). The federal government assumed supervision of the battlefield in 1895. Gettysburg remains a stereotype—a stable oasis in a turbulent world, a national symbol, a mecca. Extreme views range from "a landscape of hell to a placid monument," "a happy valley." The nation seemed to decide that there would be no change. The question remains: Is Gettysburg hemmed in by national park grounds? The dramatic upsurge in tourism since World War II has turned too much of the surrounding area into a pleasure ground.

Delber McKee of Westminster College chaired the third morning session on "The Beginnings of Higher Education in Western Pennsylvania: Two Case Studies." Paul Gamble's paper was titled "Westminster College." He made two major points: 1) Westminster's role as a pioneer in coeducation, the education of both sexes on an equal basis in the same classrooms; and 2) Westminster's participation in the revolution in college curricula which took place in the U.S. in the last half of the nineteenth century. Westminster College was founded in 1852 by the Ohio and Shenango Presbyteries of the Associate Presbyterian Church. Westminster awarded three women the Bachelor of Science degree in 1857; nine women were given certificates (later retroactively changed to Bachelor of Science degree); one woman received a Bachelor of Arts degree. This places Westminster in a three-way tie with Waynesburg and Antioch for second place among pioneers in
coeducation. (Three women had received B.A. degrees at Oberlin in 1841). The first residence hall for women was completed in January, 1885. The three-year English and scientific course was designed primarily for women students and for the preparation of teachers. It omitted the ancient languages, some Bible, natural sciences, and social science courses but included more English and mathematics than the classical course. A fair number of women took the classical course, and some men took the English and scientific course. In November, 1866, modern language and music chairs were added. The English and scientific course was lengthened to four years by 1870. A Bachelor of Music was first awarded in 1887. The real organization of a college library occurred in 1885. The most significant development in curriculum from the late 1880s to 1900 was in the natural sciences. The old three-year English or scientific course was renamed the literary course. Hebrew was eliminated finally in 1894 and offerings in Greek declined. The second paper of this third morning session was delivered by Samuel Farmerie on "Clarion State College."

The luncheon session was held at 1:00 p.m. in Galbreath Hall, Westminster College, with Robert Carlson, West Chester State College presiding. In a most entertaining and enlightening manner, Caroline Robbins of Rosemont, Penna., spoke on "Rights and Grievances at Carpenters' Hall, The First Continental Congress, 1774." Fifty-six men, representing twelve states, acted together and got things done. The choice of Carpenters' Hall was a liberal or patriot victory over the conservatives who favored the State House, offered by Speaker Joseph Galloway of the Pennsylvania Assembly. The first American decision was to print the Suffolk Resolves to break commercial relations with England. The one close vote of the Congress was on the Galloway resolution, which failed by one vote. The Declaration of Rights and Grievances was passed on October 14; religion was not a grievance. Most of the adopted grievances later appeared in the Declaration of Independence. The Quebec Act really angered Americans. Much attention was paid to natural rights. The deputies prepared the way for the developments of 1776, and their experience enriched the country. Union came out of this Congress; in fact the motto, "E Pluribus Unum," was devised by Charles Thomson, willing secretary at Carpenters' Hall, a resident of Pennsylvania but not a delegate to the convention.

The forty-third annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association adjourned at 2:30 p.m., October 26, 1974.