THE FORTY-FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING

By Abram J. Foster

The forty-fourth annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association was held on October 10 and 11, 1975, at Saint Francis College, Loretto, Pennsylvania. The Cambria County Historical Society was cosponsor of the meeting.

The opening session began at 12:15 p.m. on Friday in the dining room of the Friendship Inn, Ebensburg, with John F. Coleman of St. Francis College presiding. Following the invocation by the Reverend Donald E. Shamble, greetings from the Reverend Sean M. Sullivan, T.O.R., and the luncheon of the P.H.A., Donald Kent presented a paper, "Some Myths of Pennsylvania History." Such a subject could be expanded almost without end. After mentioning some myths which he and others have researched, Kent concentrated on the myth that Etienne Brûlé was the first white man to explore the Susquehanna River. Through internal and external criticism of the sources which began and continued the Brûlé myth, Kent reduced it to the status of legend.

James Kehl of the University of Pittsburgh was moderator of Session 1, at 2:30 p.m., on "The Teaching of History." The panelists were not those listed in the official program: John Frantz of The Pennsylvania State University substituted for Phillip Stebbins; and William Gilbert of North Clarion High School substituted for Donald Crownover. The two high school students were Lou Ann Mealy and Chris Vogelbacher of North Clarion, and two college students were Richard McMahon of St. Francis College and Fay Greenfield of Penn State. Donald Crownover could not attend because the policy of Hempfield School District, Lancaster County, prohibited his absence from school even though he would pay his expenses.

The basic purpose of the panel was to explore the classroom expectations of history teachers and history students at both college and secondary school levels. Besides the panelists, almost one-half of the fifty individuals in attendance joined the discussion.

The secondary school side of the issue emphasized three primary concerns in the teaching of history: 1) greater student involvement;
The general student attitude toward high school history courses today is not as enthusiastic as it should be in a democratic society because of the failure of some social studies teachers to make history a challenge. It is too often presented as simply an orientation course rather than an intricate part of the school curriculum and preparation for life in a democratic society. One of the disadvantages of the secondary school is that many of the history teachers are hired first as coaches, athletic directors, or other extracurricular advisors and, secondly, as teachers of history. History teachers recognize this fact of life and feel it will have to change before the teaching of history will reach the level that it should attain.

Professor Frantz summarized what he expects of undergraduate students. Professors attempt to relate to students who have different major interests, career goals, degrees of preparation, and personal problems. It is unrealistic for students to believe that they can be excited in all class sessions and assignments. Students should bring to class their own intellectual curiosity. Because few, if any, specific history courses are required at most institutions, students may select those that appeal to them. Professors should not have to create the students' initial motivation. Students are expected to have basic historical knowledge, including a definition of the discipline, awareness of significant developments, and chronology. At the college level students of history should be able to consider in depth selected topics. Students should be able to express their interests and conclusions clearly and effectively, verbally and in writing. Preferably students should be open-minded. College level history courses should not, in his opinion, necessarily reinforce previously conceived interpretations but should instead make students aware of other possibilities. Students should be receptive also to diverse methods of instruction which enable professors to reach more effectively different types of students.

The college students presented two views: 1) history as a profession; and 2) history as part of education for life—the liberal arts emphasis.

The moderator asked whether a high school teacher should have a different definition of history in mind when he presents his material than that forming the basis for college presentation. The discussion
never produced a direct answer, but students at both levels frequently came back to the currently popular notion that history should be made more relevant to their daily lives than most teachers make it. What they meant by this generalization varied from using history to become gainfully employed to identifying clearer linkages between the past and the present. In rebuttal faculty members, particularly those at the college level, emphasized that to an overwhelming majority of students history is not intended as an avenue to a job, but as an essential part of a liberal education.

Ronald Baumann of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission chaired Session II, 2:30 p.m., Friday, with the subject: "Terence V. Powderly: Pennsylvania Labor Leader." Vincent Falzone of Texas Eastern University read a paper, "Terence V. Powderly and Pennsylvania Politics, 1876-1889." Terence Vincent Powderly, chief executive officer of the Knights of Labor and three-term Scranton mayor, ranks as an important figure in Pennsylvania labor and political history. Though he achieved national prominence as a labor leader and Commissioner-General of Immigration, for twenty-three years he was concerned vitally with Pennsylvania political matters. His involvement in Pennsylvania politics evolved through four distinct phases: 1) Greenback-Labor phase, 1876-1880, in which he was exclusively aligned with this political union of farmers and laborers; 2) Cooperationist phase, 1880-1882, in which, to strengthen his Greenback-Labor mayoral base, he accepted political support from various factions of the Democratic party; 3) Democratic phase, 1882-1893, in which, after the demise of the Greenback-Labor party, he allied himself with, but never formally joined, the Democratic party; and 4) Republican phase, 1894-1899, in which he became an active and enthusiastic Republican partisan.

A paper, "'The Chinese Must Go!' Commissioner-General Powderly and Chinese Immigration, 1897-1902," was delivered by Delber McKee of Westminster College. The paper examined a neglected stage in the life of Terence V. Powderly, who served as Commissioner-General of Immigration from 1897 to 1902. The position was a sensitive and important one, since the public debate over limiting immigration had become noisy and politically explosive. Chinese immigration, one important area under his supervision, had been largely shutoff before Powderly's time, but he showed the influence of his labor background in attempting to develop an even tighter policy. By his use of such techniques as administrative rulings and the encouragement of anti-Chinese
subordinates, he was quite successful. The restrictive Exclusion Act of 1902 owed much to his strivings. In his government office, Powderly promoted labor interests and influenced immigration policy. While economic prejudice partly accounted for his anti-Chinese proclivities, racism was present too. His efforts helped to institutionalize on the federal level the racist postures of California.

Hugh Cleland, S.U.N.Y. at Stony Brook, commented on both papers.

The annual dinner meeting of the P.H.A. was held on Friday, starting at 6:30 p.m., presided over by William Parsons of Ursinus College. The Reverend Vincent Negerbohn, T.O.R., delivered the invocation. E. McClung Fleming of Winterthur Museum presented a first-rate slide-illustrated discussion of "Early Symbols of America: The Search for Identity." Man is a meaning seeker and therefore a symbol maker. Among the meanings most important to him are those which seek to convey a sense of the character and mission of his paramount social group, for modern man his nation state. Our fifteen most important national symbols were created by 1835. The raw material for five of them was present in the colonial mind before 1765—the Indian, the pine tree, the rattlesnake, Columbia, and Liberty. Between 1765 and 1815 Americans achieved political individuality as an emerging nation, but the sense of identity came slowly. Seven additional symbols arose to aid the process—Yankee Doodle, Brother Jonathan, the flag, the Great Seal, the eagle, George Washington, and Columbia-Minerva. Visual expression of the last two, Major Jack Downing and Uncle Sam, came in the 1830s. By this time the Indian and the pine tree had become secondary symbols; the rattlesnake had yielded to the eagle; and Columbia had absorbed Liberty and Minerva. Soon Uncle Sam would combine the elements of Yankee Doodle, Brother Jonathan, and Jack Downing. These symbols appeared on government seals, flags, coins, bank notes, medals, and public buildings as well as on banners, tavern signs, weather vanes, ship figureheads, stove plates, fire engines, circus wagons, and advertisements. They are an important part of the iconography of the American arts and a clue to stages in the growth of American nationality and to values associated with the genius of America.

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

The host of the Phi Alpha Theta breakfast in the Friendship Inn was Mahlon Hellerich (substituting for Donald Hoffman) of Lehigh County Historical Society.
The annual business meeting of the P.H.A. convened in Padua Hall, St. Francis College, at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, October 11, 1975, with about forty-five members in attendance and President Donald H. Kent presiding. The reading of the minutes of the 1974 business meeting was dispensed with, since they had been printed in the January, 1975, issue of *Pennsylvania History*.

President Kent read the report of Business Secretary Phillip Stebbins. There were 1234 members as of October 1, 1975, including seven honorary members and fifteen life members. This figure meant a net loss of fifteen members since October, 1974, but a gain of sixty-two since April, 1975. There are about 4000 back copies of *Pennsylvania History* on inventory. There is an adequate supply of booklets; the best seller is on the oil industry, the second best, the Pennsylvania Germans.

Treasurer Richard P. Wright reported that the P.H.A. is in a sound financial position. From October 1, 1974, to September 30, 1975, receipts from all sources were $14,352.05, while disbursements were $12,893.21. The cash balance, including the publication and investment funds, was $15,513.86. The treasurer urged that income from memberships and costs of *Pennsylvania History* be kept in balance.

H. Benjamin Powell, the editor of *Pennsylvania History*, reported that the October issue will be within the ninety-six-page limit. He is preparing an index. The issue should be ready in November, 1975. He made the unwelcome announcement that he will retire as editor no later than January 1, 1977. He cited personal reasons and retrenchment practices in the state colleges. He recommended the selecting of a co- or assistant editor by April, 1976, who would become editor by January, 1977. This would facilitate the transition.

President Kent thanked the council and members for their cooperation and help during his term in office. He stated that his greatest disappointment was not achieving a bicentennial publication. Appreciation was expressed to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for its continued cooperation.

Publications committee chairman, John M. Coleman, reported that the Pennsylvania Studies booklet inventory was in a very favorable condition. He said that there was no need to raise prices in the foreseeable future. There is the possibility of a booklet on education in Pennsylvania by Howard McCauley of Bloomsburg State College. He presented the idea of publishing a booklet on the Revolution in Pennsylvania. This was not received with enthusiasm.
because of the time factor, possible public ennui, and probably repetitiveness.

In the absence of James Rodechko, research conference chairman, William Hummel reported that he would accept any suggestions for the research conference to be held in April, 1976.

Robert Clemmer presented a progress report for the ad hoc Committee on the Status of History in the Secondary Schools. He reviewed the printed conclusions of the committee, which were made at Lock Haven on September 12, 1975. He emphasized the recommendations, page four, of the report:

1. That the President of the Pennsylvania Historical Association communicate in writing to the Department of Education expressing (A) the urgent concern of this Association that history continue to constitute the foundation of the social studies curriculum in the public schools, and (B) the urgent desire of this Association to be informed in the future concerning any proposed changes in the status of history in the social studies curriculum, in time for this Association to consider those proposed changes and to express its considered judgment concerning them.

2. That the Pennsylvania Historical Association establish contact with the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies for the purpose of conducting a dialogue concerning the place of history in the social studies curriculum and, hopefully, of enlisting the support of the Council in an effort to prevent the further erosion of history in the social studies curriculum of the public schools and in the preparation of social studies teachers.

3. That the Pennsylvania Historical Association send copies of this report and copies of the report by the Committee of the Organization of American Historians which appears in the September 1975 issue of the *Journal of American History* to each of the members of the education committee in both houses of the Pennsylvania Assembly; that these reports be accompanied by a covering letter from the President of the Association indicating the concern of the Association that the position of history should not be permitted to decline further in the social studies curriculum of the public schools of the Commonwealth.

4. That the Pennsylvania Historical Association appoint a committee (A) to study certification requirements for social studies teachers and to formulate a recommendation concerning minimum preparation in history for social studies certification, and (B) to formulate a recommendation con-
cerning the history component of the social studies curriculum in the public schools of the Commonwealth.

The report with the recommendations was adopted without objection.

Regarding the P.H.A. constitutional amendments, Article III, section 3, was changed to read, "the senior," instead of "a" before "vice-president," so that if a vacancy occurs in the office of president it shall be automatically filled by the senior vice-president, to serve until the next annual meeting. With only that one editing change, the proposed amendments passed.

President Kent, again in a substitute role, reported for the absent chairman, William G. Shade, of the program committee for the three-day forty-fifth annual meeting, October 21-23, 1975. Co-hosts will be Muhlenberg and Cedar Crest colleges, together with the Lehigh County Historical Society and, perhaps, Historic Bethlehem. Money is available and well-known speakers are being sought.

For the nominating committee, Robert Bloom presented a slate for officers and council members: President—Russell Weigley; Vice Presidents—Robert Carlson and Elizabeth Geffen; Council members (2nd term)—John F. Coleman, Robert Clemmer, John Reed, and Ernest Miller; (1st term)—William Shade, Irwin Richman, and Caroline Robbins (to complete the remaining two years of Elizabeth Geffen's term). The slate was unanimously elected.

Russell F. Weigley then assumed the office of president of the P.H.A. when Donald Kent handed him the gavel. Homer Rosenberger offered a resolution of appreciation to the retiring president which was accepted by acclamation.

Ex-president Kent thanked the assemblage again for their help and cooperation and expressed his pleasure for having had the opportunity to serve the P.H.A.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:00 a.m.

There were three Saturday morning sessions, beginning at about 11:00 a.m. Session I on "War Time Politics and Commerce" was chaired by Jacob Cooke of Lafayette College. The first paper, "Sir William Johnson and the Indian Uprising of 1763," was delivered by Milton Hamilton, former New York State Historian.

Randolph Klein of Connecticut College read the second paper, "The Shippen Family Kinship Network and the American Revolution." The functioning of the Allen-Hamilton-Shippen family
before 1776 and its experience during the Revolution supply ample evidence to substantiate the thesis that many Pennsylvanians were caught up in "a revolutionary situation, deeply alienated from existing sources of authority and vehemently involved in a basic reconstruction of their political and social order." Resentment of the high incidence of nepotism which characterized the system of government expressed before the Revolution received vindication in the Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776 and other acts of the Revolution. The radicals who drew that document did not simply seek to confirm the past. These men and their followers abhorred many characteristics of the old society and the way in which it functioned. The elaborate kinship network, covering three generations and lateral kinsmen, received extensive damage. Because the power, which this kinship network had wielded before the war, ceased and was not immediately replaced by another extensive family network by the descendants or their rivals, the Revolution in Pennsylvania brought about a meaningful change.

The third paper, "Thomas Willing: Reluctant Revolutionary," was presented by Eugene Slaski, of The Pennsylvania State University. Thomas Willing, a successful Philadelphia merchant, participated in the protests against British imperial policy between 1770 and 1775. As a member of the Second Continental Congress, he served on numerous committees which gathered military supplies and considered the merits of nonimportation and other colonial restrictions on British trade. When it came time to cast a vote for independence, however, Willing could not. Living in Philadelphia through the occupation and refusing to take the loyalty oath to Pennsylvania, though he also refused to take a British oath, made him a suspect among leading radicals. His conciliatory efforts to act as mediator between the Howes and Congress darkened his image. His failure to secure congressional interest in compromise, and the winning of French support by Congress, persuaded him to take the oath of loyalty to Pennsylvania. The potential threat to his property and the apparent hopelessness of reconciliation made him a reluctant revolutionary.

Session II on "Nineteenth Century Railroading" was presided over by James Sperry of Bloomsburg State College. The essay on "Promotion, Finance and Engineering: Moncure Robinson and Early Anthracite Railroads" was given by Darwin Stapleton, assistant editor of The Papers of Benjamin Henry Latrobe, Baltimore, Maryland.
Stapleton's paper focused on Moncure Robinson's engineering career with four Schuylkill County railroads in the late 1820s and 1830s. Robinson was born in Virginia, where he received some early engineering training. Two-years study and observation in France and Britain not only made him a knowledgeable railroad engineer but allowed him to meet influential Philadelphians residing in Paris. Provided with letters from them, Robinson was able to secure an appointment from the Pennsylvania Canal Commissioners to make railroad surveys between the Schuylkill and Susquehanna rivers. The surveys acquainted him with the promoters of the Danville and Pottsville Railroad and led to his appointment as the railroad's engineer. In locating the eastern division of the railroad, Robinson followed the promoter's desires rather than choosing the best technical alternative which contributed to the railroad's early demise. Robinson engineered with greater success three other railroads wholly or partly within Schuylkill County: the Mount Carbon; the Little Schuylkill; and the Philadelphia and Reading. His relationship with the Philadelphians who financed these lines was symbiotic, in that he was less than objective in his engineering reports on proposed railroads and, after he was hired as engineer, the Philadelphians allowed him absolute authority in technical decisions. Robinson's engineering activity in Schuylkill County suggests that his technology was not a lifeless set of theories but contained human components which allowed him to contribute to technologically irrational choices and to fill the role of a promoter as well as engineer.

Ronald Benson of Millersville State College delivered his paper on "'Our Cornerstone Is Temperance': Industrial Discipline and the Railroad Brotherhoods." The temperance ideal was consistently articulated by the railroad brotherhoods in the last half of the nineteenth century. The operating rail unions recognized the need for disciplining themselves in order to meet the demand for sober and efficient workers on the expanding rail systems. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen drafted constitutions which prohibited intemperance and regularly expelled members who violated these provisions, reporting their names to the companies for dismissal action. The temperance policies of the brotherhoods shaped the temperance regulations imposed on the Knights of Labor by Terence V. Powderly. This temperance enthusiasm reached its peak in the 1890s when L. S. Coffin of Iowa organized the Railroad
Temperance Association and enrolled more than 10,000 rail workers throughout the nation.

Session III was a fascinating audio-visual presentation on "Chapters in the History of Cambria County," chaired by Frances Shields, vice president of the Cambria County Historical Society. The slide-illustrated talks on the "Allegheny Portage Railroad and Johnstown Flood" were ably and interestingly performed by S. Paul Okey and Betsy Duncan-Clark, both of the National Park Service, Western Pennsylvania Group.

The luncheon session was held at St. Francis College, beginning at 12:45 p.m. William Hummel of Albright College, presided, and The Reverend Edmund Jenkins of United Church of Christ, Ebensburg, gave the invocation. Ralph Hazeltine, director emeritus of the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society, spoke on "The Early Years of Franz Kline." Kline was a native of the anthracite region who received much favorable attention as an artist, both in the United States and in Europe.

The forty-fourth annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association adjourned at 2:30 p.m. Those who wished to do so participated in a tour of the Allegheny Portage Railroad historical site.