

9. Darlene Miller-Lanning, "Early Depictions of Scranton and the Lackawanna Iron Furnaces." *The Miner's Lamp*, (Volume 24, Number 2, April-June 2007).
10. W. S. Merwin, *The Drunk in the Furnace* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1960).
11. Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964, 2000); Nicolai Cikovsky, "George Inness and the Hudson River School: 'The Lackawanna Valley,'" (*American Art Journal*, Number 2, Autumn 1970), 36–57.
12. Horace Hollister, *History of the Lackawanna Valley*, (New York: W. H. Tinson, 1857), 124.

"A VERY BUSY PART OF THE STATE LIBRARY:" GENEALOGY AT THE STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES OF PENNSYLVANIA

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While the number of family historians visiting archives has gone down in the past decade as a result of increasing resources available online, they still constitute the majority, or about 50–60 percent of archives patrons, says Jonathan Stayer, head of the reference section at the Pennsylvania State Archives. Before the advent of the internet, they made up about 80 percent of the patrons, estimates Stayer. Like at the Pennsylvania State Archives, genealogists comprise the majority of patrons in many archival facilities across the nation, including many NARA facilities. The observation by archivist Richard Cox that genealogy has emerged as "one of the most 'public' of all history"¹ forms remains accurate today.

During my Scholars in Residence project at the Pennsylvania State Archives in the summer of 2007, I researched how and why genealogy became such an important part of the work of the State Library of Pennsylvania and the State Archives. A particular focus was on the history of Pennsylvania German family history as facilitated by the Library and Archives. How and why have the State Library of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania State Archives facilitated and promoted research on family history from the late nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth century? In what ways have these institutions contributed to shaping and defining the popularity and public nature of genealogy over time? What were the personal, what were the institutional connections between the State Library and Archives and Pennsylvania State Archives and other historical and genealogical institutions in the state and beyond? What kind of historical narratives did the work of the Library and

Archives facilitate and encourage with the public resources and services that they provided?

The research was a key part of my dissertation-in-progress, in which I analyze the history of genealogical research among people who have identified themselves as descending from Pennsylvania German or Pennsylvania Dutch ancestors from the late nineteenth century until today. I hope to contribute with my study to a better historical understanding of the development of family history as a public and popular historical practice in the United States, and to highlight the important role of librarians and archivists as public historians and educators who have facilitated this development.

Based on my research, I found that support of genealogy became an important and popular part of the work of the Library from the late nineteenth century onwards. The library's archives division (Division of Public Records, established in 1903, which was later renamed Division of Archives and History) in particular, fostered genealogy.² Support of genealogy became an important part of the public outreach of the Library and Archives, and, at the same time, drew the public to the institution. Several librarians and archivists in the time period from the late nineteenth century until the mid 1940s were affiliated with historical, genealogical and patriotic societies, and merged their private interest in genealogy, local history, and biography with their work for the Library and Archives. State Librarian William H. Egle, M.D., a trained physician, local and state historian, promoter of genealogy and of the preservation of family records, and active member in a variety of historical and patriotic-hereditary societies, expanded the library's local history and genealogy collections during his tenure from 1887–1899. Luther Kelker, the first Custodian of Public Records, who was, like Egle, a member of the Pennsylvania-German Society, and also active as a genealogist and local historian,³ was hired in 1903 because of his "interest in Pennsylvania History and his familiarity with the muster rolls and marriage records."⁴ In reports to the Librarian during the first years of his tenure, Kelker mentioned that he burned the "midnight-oil" to fulfill his duties answering letters, many of them genealogical inquiries.⁵ The pressures on the Division of Public Records continued under Luther Kelker's successor, Hiram Shenk, who was appointed after Kelker's death in 1916. Shenk was a local historian, genealogist, and former professor of history and political science at Lebanon Valley College.⁶ Like Egle and Kelker, he was a member of the Pennsylvania-German Society. In the report from 1921/22, the State librarian George P. Donehoo reported that: "Much of the time of Dr. Shenk is taken up with genealogical research work (...)" Donehoo then suggested that the

library should hire a specialized genealogist, so Hiram Shenk could devote more time to working with historical documents, since genealogy "is of value to the individual seeking the information, but which has no value to the State."⁷

In 1924, possibly in response to Donehoo's request, all historical and reference correspondence was transferred to the Division of Archives and History (as the Division of Public Records was renamed), and a genealogist, Jessica Ferguson, was appointed to be in "charge of all the genealogical work. Under the undivided attention of a trained genealogist, the work has more than doubled," reported Hiram Shenk, the archivist, in the Biennial Report.⁸ Another assistant was appointed two years later. By 1928, the Archives Division, according to the annual report, answered to over 1700 "personal interviews" on genealogy, and answered about 3800 letters.⁹ Neither Shenk nor Ferguson did confine their work to the library. Shenk reported in 1926 that he gave addresses before "historical, patriotic, religious, and educational bodies," and that he represented the Department at a variety of state and national meetings. He also reported that Miss Ferguson represented the Department at the D.A.R meetings in Washington, D.C. in 1925 and 1926, as well as meetings of other organizations.¹⁰ In 1926, Shenk was given a leave of absence to serve as the Secretary of the Executive Committee of Pennsylvania's historical exhibit at the Sesqui-Centennial celebration and help prepare the historical exhibit for the Pennsylvania building.¹¹

While the Division of Archives and History expanded its reference service and reached out to hereditary, historical, and patriotic societies, the library continued to add hundreds of books annually to its Pennsylvania history and genealogy collection.¹² When the library moved to its new quarters in the newly dedicated Education Department in 1931, the neo-classical Forum building where it has remained until today, it created a dedicated Genealogy Section. While the volume of genealogical research services decreased slightly between 1929 and 1931,¹³ which was likely an effect of the Depression, the volume went up again in the mid 1930s. At the same time, the library continued to add family histories, either by purchase or by gift, to its large genealogy section, which again increased the efficiency of the section and contributed to the popularity of the genealogical resources among the library patrons.¹⁴ Overall, throughout the 1930s, the genealogy section continued to be "a very busy part" of the library providing services not only to patrons who came in person, but also to many correspondents from "almost every state in the Union" and from countries abroad, according to the report from 1937.¹⁵ Certainly, patrons visited or contacted the genealogy section for many

reasons, but many of them also seemed to have pursued family history. "This is due to the use of leisure time by adults who are anxious to learn something concerning their family histories, wrote the Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1937."¹⁶

In addition to expanding and organizing the genealogical collections, to responding to reference requests, and to providing certificates of military service, Hiram Shenk, in his position as archivist, provided critical support for the publication of the original lists of arrivals in the port of Philadelphia from 1727 to 1808, the originals of which were deposited in the Pennsylvania State Library (and subsequently in the Division of Public Records).¹⁷ Some of the correspondence between Shenk and William Hinke, who edited the publication of the ship lists, is preserved in the correspondence files of Shenk.¹⁸ The publication of these lists was sponsored by the president of the Pennsylvania-German Society, Ralph Beaver Strassburger, a wealthy publisher, businessman, horse-breeder, and aspiring Republican politician. The lists were an important resource for genealogists who traced their ancestors, whom nineteenth and twentieth genealogists classified as "Pennsylvania-German,"¹⁹ but who were classified as "Palatines" by provincial authorities. Many persons seeking membership in the Pennsylvania-German Society documented their "Pennsylvania German" ancestry based on these lists. "Pennsylvania-German Pioneers" was a key resource to support Pennsylvania-German genealogy, and the volumes, which were reprinted by the Genealogical Publishing Company in 1966, continue to be widely used and cited until today. The reproduction of the lists as photostats was discussed since the first meetings in the Advisory Commission of Public Records, and as part of its work, the Division of Public Records provided certified "tracings" of the signatures of arriving passengers on these lists.²⁰

Curtis Garrison, Shenk's successor, who was appointed in 1933 and who resigned in 1936, did not seem to have been that interested in facilitating genealogy. At the same time, he tried to find pragmatic ways to deal with the volume of incoming genealogical requests. At one point he contacted the D.A.R. to see if he could get help indexing the Pennsylvania Archives to make it easier to answer reference requests.²¹ Garrison was mostly focused on his work as supervisor of the C.W.A. (Civil Works Administration) and the subsequent Historical Records Survey that became part of the W.P.A. Pennsylvania, as one of the first states, had begun the survey of historical source materials in 1933 as an unemployment relief project of the Civil Works Administration under the supervision of Garrison at the Archives Division of the State Library.

The project surveyed a broad range of records and depositories, including state, county and church records and private manuscripts, in public as well as private depositories.²² In 1935, the program continued as part of the Federal Historical Records Survey, which initially operated under the Federal Writers' Project. In 1936, the Historical Records Survey (HRS), including the Pennsylvania Historical Records Survey, became an independent project under the W.P.A. On a much larger scale than the survey under the C.W.A., the Historical Records Survey prepared inventories of public records in state and county archives, as well as of private manuscript collections.²³ While supporting genealogical research was not one of the declared intentions of the H.R.S., the government sponsored survey nonetheless contributed to building critical resources that helped facilitate historical and genealogical research at the time, and in the future. Garrison, whose correspondence documents his tremendous workload and also his frustration with the bureaucracy of the administration of the H.R.S., resigned in 1936. Afterwards, Henry W. Shoemaker was hired as archivist.²⁴ Like Kelker and Shenk, Shoemaker was interested in genealogy, local history, and particularly in folklore, but his work seems to have been constrained by budget cuts during the Depression and World War II. While budget cuts and personnel shortages during the Depression and World War II, and state budget constraints after the war, have impacted the Library during different periods, the genealogy and local history section seems to have remained a popular section of the Library after the war.

The history of genealogy at the State Library and archives is particularly interesting, since it reflects the definition and the changing definition of the public and the people that the library and archives served. While the first generation of archivists and librarians, who promoted genealogy in the context of state history, were committed to promoting public education among ordinary citizens, they facilitated genealogy almost exclusively for those citizens, who traced their descent to ancestors to groups of white, Northern and Western European immigrants representing a broad variety of Protestant faiths, who had settled in Pennsylvania during the colonial period, such as groups of settlers who were defined as Pennsylvania German, Scotch-Irish, English, Welsh, and Huguenot. The public practice of genealogy supported a specific narrative of the history of Pennsylvania, which was promoted by many individuals and groups in the network of genealogical and historical organizations in the state. This narrative presented the history of Pennsylvania as pluralist, and yet this pluralism was limited to groups of white settlers from Northern and Western Europe, while groups of nineteenth century immigrants, and African Americans were largely

absent, or presented in marginal roles.²⁵ This also extended to the practice of genealogy, which, as a public practice, was almost exclusively promoted and supported for groups who traced their descent to white, colonial settlers. This changed, slowly, after World War II, when genealogy in the United States became more pluralistic, and less tied to essentialist conceptions of race. While my documentation for the post war period is limited, it appears as if in the post-war period, and particularly from the 1970s onwards, the State Library and Archives, just as many other libraries and archives in the nation, have actively participated in re-shaping and broadening the public and the people whom they served. The institutions expanded their resources and collections to serve those groups for whom resources for genealogical research had been previously less available, in particular African Americans and descendants of immigrants who had arrived in the United States during the nineteenth century and later. Thus, the history of genealogy at the State Library and Archives of Pennsylvania not only reflects its development as a popular, public practice, but also changing definition of the people and the public whom the institutions served.

Most of my research was based on the collection of institutional records of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (RG 13). I also worked with MG 171, Samuel W. Pennypacker Papers, and MG 44, William H. Egle collection, which, however, does not contain any records that document Egle's work as State Librarian. RG 13 includes the institutional records of the State Library until 1945 and the surviving records of the Pennsylvania State Archives, which began as the Division of Public Records in 1903 as an administrative unit of the State Library. RG 13 reflects the institutional changes and developments of the State Archives and the State Library: After the establishment of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in 1945 to consolidate the functions of the Pennsylvania Historical Commission, the State Museum and the State Archives, the State Archives became separated from the State Library. While the State Archives became part of the PHMC, the State Library continued to operate under the administrative umbrella of the Department of Public Instruction, which had administered the Library since 1923. The Department of Public Instruction became the Department of Education in 1969, which serves as the institutional umbrella of the State Library until today. Due to these institutional changes, RG 13 does not contain any records documenting the work of the State Library after 1945. Annual, biennial, and monthly reports of the State Library and the Division of Public Records in RG 13 helped me to get an overview of the development of the Library and the Division of Public Records until 1945 in general, and of the development of genealogy at

the Library and Archives in particular. In addition, correspondence from the Custodian of Public Records and later the Archivist (which is preserved very sparsely from the late nineteenth century until the early 1920s, but somewhat more completely beginning in the 1920s), gave me insights into the activities, interests, and connections of the archivists Luther Kelker (1903–1916), Hiram Shenk (1916–1933), Curtis Garrison (1933–1936), and Henry Shoemaker (1936–1945). Unfortunately, almost no reference correspondence between librarians and archivists at the State Library and State Archives, and genealogists and local historians has survived, so that the picture of the public contacts between the State Library and Archives that I was able to reconstruct remained limited. Unfortunately, besides a few printed reports that are available in the State Library, no records that document the work of the State Library under the umbrella of the Department of Public Instruction after 1945 seem to have been preserved in RG 22 (Department of Education Records), so I have not been able to document the development of the Library's genealogy division in the post-war period. Several pamphlets and fliers that document the impact of the genealogy boom on the Library during the 1970s are available in the library of the PHMC, though. While the State Archives have preserved many materials documenting its activities after it became part of the PHMC in 1945, I have also found it unexpectedly difficult to find materials on the development of genealogy at the State Archives for the period from 1945 until the late 1960s. After the 1970s, the documentation on the development and support of genealogy in the archives becomes easier to locate.

The records of the Pennsylvania Federation of Historical Societies, which are preserved for the time period from 1930–1974, and which are part of RG 13, offer a rich resource to study the network of public and private historical and genealogical societies in Pennsylvania, and the development of public history in the state. The records of the Federation are an extraordinary resource for researchers who are tracing the history of public history and state history in Pennsylvania, and who are analyzing the collective efforts to coordinate, collect, and preserve Pennsylvania State history and to promote regional pride.

Hundreds of letters of correspondence in the papers of Governor Pennypacker (MG 171), who served from 1903–1907, offer insights into his wide ranging activities and interests as a local historian and genealogist. The correspondence gives an idea of the public interest in family history in Pennsylvania during the Progressive era, since many correspondents addressed Pennypacker directly asking for his assistance in researching their family histories. Beyond my immediate research interests, I found that Pennypacker's vast and

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wide-ranging correspondence, which seems to be preserved almost completely (Pennypacker, after all, was an avid collector!), offers a fascinating glimpse of public life, concerns, and interests in the Progressive period in Pennsylvania, and that it offers materials for many interesting research projects.²⁶

The fellowship provided me with instrumental support for my dissertation research, and I thank the PHMC for giving me the opportunity to pursue my project, and particularly thank the staff of the Archives for their support and expertise.²⁷

NOTES

1. Richard J. Cox, "Genealogy and Public History: New Genealogical Guides and their Implications for Public Historians," *Public Historian* 6 (Spring 1984), 91–98, quote p. 92. See also on the interest in family history in the United States: Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* (New York and Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 1998).
2. On the history of the Pennsylvania State Archives from 1903–2003, see: Willis Shirk Jr. (ed.), *Documenting Pennsylvania's Past: the First Century of the Pennsylvania State Archives* (Harrisburg: PHMC, 2003). On the establishment of the Division of Public Records see the in-depth analysis by Louis Waddell, "The Emergence of an Archives in Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History* 73 (Spring 2006), 198–235.
3. Before his appointment as Custodian of Public Records, Kelker had worked in his family's hardware business in Harrisburg, had run his own insurance agency, and had retired with the intention to focus on his historical and genealogical work. See: Waddell, *Emergence of an Archives*, 213. Kelker was the author of: *History of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania: With Genealogical Memoirs*, 3 vol. (New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1907).
4. Thomas Montgomery reporting the death of Luther Kelker, in: *Report of the State Librarian*, 1915 (Harrisburg: Aughinbaugh, Printer to the State of Pennsylvania, 1916), 11–12.
5. Report by Luther Kelker, Custodian of the Public Records, Pennsylvania State Library to Thomas L. Montgomery, Nov. 16, 1904, Records of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (RG 13), Division of Public Records, 1903–1923 (Under the State Library), Reports; Report by Luther Kelker to Thomas Montgomery, February 2, 1906 and report to Thomas L. Montgomery, October 31, 1907, *ibid.*
6. See: "Hiram Herr Shenk," in: Frederic A. Godcharles, *Chronicles of Central Pennsylvania*, vol. 4: Personal and Family History (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1944), 11. On Shenk's appointment, see also: *Report of the State Librarian*, 1916 (Harrisburg, Pa.: Wm. Stanley Ray, State Printer, 1917), 11.
7. *Report of the State Librarian*, 1921–1922 (Harrisburg, Pa.: J.L.L. Kuhn, Printer to the Commonwealth, 1923), 12.
8. Hiram Shenk, "Division of Archives and History," *Biennial Report of the State Library and Museum from June 1st, 1924-May 31st, 1926*, 108.

9. It is unclear from the report how many of these letters were responses to genealogical inquiries.
10. Hiram Shenk, Division of Archives and History, *Biennial Report of the State Library and Museum from June 1st, 1924-May 31st, 1926*, 110.
11. Dr. Hiram H. Shenk, Archivist, 1924–1933, Administrative File, Sesquicentennial International Exposition, RG 13; Records of the Special Commissions, correspondence relating to exhibits, Sesquicentennial Commission of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, RG 25.
12. Margaret L. Waller, Librarian, *Biennial Report of the State Library and Museum from June 1st, 1924-May 31st, 1926*, 100.
13. During the fiscal year of 1930/1931, the Division conducted 523 genealogical interviews, prepared 241 certified military and genealogical records, and mailed 3,018 letters. Between 1931 and 1932, the Division conducted 386 interviews, provided 84 certified records, and mailed 2,263 letters. See: Biennial Report of Division of Archives and History, June 1st 1930 to May 31st 1932, Reports of the Division of Archives and History, 1926–1935 (under the Department of Public Instruction), RG 13.
14. Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Year Ending May 31st, 1937 to the Hon. George H. Earle, Governor of the Commonwealth by Lester K. Ade, Superintendent of Public Instruction, typescript, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1937, 173.
15. Biennial Report of Archives Division, June 1st, 1933 to May 31, 1935, Reports of the Division of Archives and History, 1926–1935, RG 13; Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Year Ending May 31st, 1937, 173.
16. Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Year Ending May 31st, 1937, 168.
17. William John Hinke and Ralph Beaver Strassburger (eds.), *Pennsylvania German Pioneers: A Publication of the Original Lists of Arrivals In the Port of Philadelphia From 1727 to 1808*, 3 Volumes (Norristown, Pa.: Pennsylvania German Society, 1934).
18. Dr. Hiram H. Shenk, Archivist, 1924–1933, General Correspondence, 1925–1933, correspondence with William Hinke, RG 13.
19. Pennsylvania German only seemed to have evolved as a category that defined people of the basis of descent in the late nineteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, Pennsylvania German described a language, but was rarely used as a category to describe a group of people.
20. See, for example, report by Luther Kelker to Thomas Montgomery, October 31, 1907, Division of Public Records, 1903–1923 (Under the State Library), Reports, RG 13.
21. Letter Garrison to Jean Stephenson from the D.A.R., Nov. 27, 1935 and subsequent correspondence. Dr. Curtis W. Garrison, Archivist, 1933–1936, General Correspondence, 1933–1936, RG 13.
22. Curtis W. Garrison, "The CWA Survey Of Historical Source Material In Pennsylvania," in: *Pennsylvania History*, 1 (October 1934), 217–31.
23. Ian Tyrrell, *Historians in Public: The Practice of American History, 1890–1970* (Chicago and London: the University of Chicago Press, 2005), 176 and "Pennsylvania Historical Records Survey: How it Works," memo by C. W. Garrison, April, 1937, in: Curtis W. Garrison, Administrative File, 1933–1936 (CWA survey of source material), RG 13.
24. On Shoemaker, see: Simon Bronner, *Popularizing Pennsylvania: Henry W. Shoemaker and the Progressive Uses of Folklore and History* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996).
25. On the history of "Pennsylvania pluralism," see: Russell A Kazal, "The Lost World of Pennsylvania Pluralism: Immigrants, Regions, and the Early Origins of Pluralist Ideologies in America," *Journal*

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of American Ethnic History 27 (Spring 2008): 55 pars. 1 Jun. 2009 <<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/jaeh/27.3/kazal.html>>.

26. An additional set of correspondence by Pennypacker is preserved in Pennypacker Mills, the site of Pennypacker's summer retreat, which Pennypacker created as a homestead site in 1900.
27. I thank, in particular, Linda Shopes, the administrator of the program, and the staff at the Archives: Jason Amico, Barbara Franco, Bill Gordon, David Haury, Paula Heiman, Judy Marcus, Cindy Margolis, Harry Parker, Brett Reigh, Linda Ries, Richard Sayer, Mike Sherbon, Willis Shirk, Jonathan Stayer, and Louis Waddell. I am indebted to the late Eric Ledell Smith, who shared his knowledge of the history of the PHMC, and I also thank Richard Lindberg of the State Library, as well as Paul Douglas Newman, Patrick Spero, Darlene Miller-Laning, Joshua Stahlman and the other participants at the roundtable at the PHA conference in 2008 for an interesting discussion of the fellowship program.