

# HISTORICAL SOCIETY NOTES

At the opening meeting of the 1948-49 season, on October 26, Frank W. Stonecipher, Esq., presented a paper on "Presidential Campaigns of the 1840's," and Mr. Thurman read a short paper by Mr. William Amon of Canonsburg, who could not attend, about the making of Mr. Amon's striking diorama of Rev. John McMillan's home and "log college," which he had recently presented to the society. Also on display on this occasion, and for some weeks later, was a unique exhibit of two collections of ornamental bootjacks loaned, respectively, by Mr. Charles F. Chubb of Pittsburgh and Mr. Charles H. Frantz, of Warren, Pa.; and another of paintings illustrative of Pittsburgh before the coming of smoke control, done by Mr. Robert R. Young.

The principal speakers at the meeting of November 23 were Mr. Sumner B. Ely, superintendent of the city bureau of smoke prevention, and Mr. Frank C. Harper, Pittsburgh historian, editor, and publisher. Mr. Ely outlined "Important Events in the History of Smoke Control," and Mr. Harper reviewed the history of "The Pennsylvania Turnpike and Its Forebears." An extensive collection of medals, ribbons, buttons, glassware, and other items relating to all the presidential campaigns from 1828 to date, loaned by Mr. Henry G. Wasson, Jr., of Mt. Lebanon, was unveiled on this occasion, and a brief description of it and its origin, written by Mr. Wasson, was read by Mr. Thurman. Before the unveiling of this exhibit, Mr. Thurman conducted a question period, after the fashion of the familiar radio quiz, with 64c as the top prize.

Chalk-talks, so to speak, were the order of the evening at the meeting of December 15: one, on "Pittsburgh's Rivers—Past and Present," by Capt. Frederick Way, Jr., of Sewickley, well-known riverman, author, and publisher; and the other about "The Rediscovery of Gilbert Stuart's Technique," by Mr. William V. Caldwell, Pittsburgh artist, and copyist of Stuart's portrait of Hugh Henry Brackenridge in the society's lecture hall.

The following new members were enrolled in the last six months of 1948: *contributing*, John N. Carr; *sustaining*, Frank W. McElroy; *annual*, Park J. Alexander, Edward M. Borger, Jacob A. Evanson, Charles A. Finley, Harry T. Foley, Mrs. B. D. Foster, John T. Fuhrman, Jr., John D. Grier, Fred S. Hastings, Mrs. Edward B. Heckel, Frank W. Judson, Eliza Keller, Durban A. McGraw, John F. McMahon, Torrence Miller, N. H. R. Moor, Augustus K. Oliver, Benjamin R. B. Townsend, Richard B. Tucker, Richard B. Tucker, Jr., Frederick Way, Jr., Kirke C. Wilson; *educational*, Ralph E. Bailey, Albert Deltondo, Alvin G. Faust, Marion J. Garland, Charles R. Stone. Enrolling as *sustaining institutional* members were: Beta Chapter, Phi Alpha Theta, honorary history fraternity, and the Diocesan History Honor Society.

In the same period word was received of the death of Leo Lehman, a sustaining member; Edmund W. Arthur, John F. Casey, James C. Chaplin, William B. Klee, Horace C. Moffet, Albert Baker Shaw, Mrs. William Thaw, Jr., Francis O. Torrens, Mrs. Elinor Hilliard Tucker, and Charles A. Woods, annual members.

President Evans spoke for the society on the afternoon of September 25 at the Hubbard Scout Reservation, Sample Road, Allison Park, when the Allegheny Council, Boy Scouts of America, conducted ceremonies in connection with the relaying of the corner log of the old Forsythe Log House, formerly located on Penn Avenue near Negley Avenue in Pittsburgh. This historic structure, long maintained by the late Thomas Mellon II, had been given by the executors of the latter's estate to the local Boy Scout organization, which had removed it, piece by piece, and was about to reconstruct it, with infinite care, at its Allison Park reservation.

The society had the honor of sponsoring, as it did ten years ago, elaborate ceremonies conducted by the Aluminum Company of America in celebration of an anniversary of the founding of the aluminum industry. This time it was the sixtieth anniversary, and the ceremonies were conducted on October 14 in a large tent set up for the occasion on a vacant lot on Smallman Street nearly opposite the site of the birthplace of aluminum, the Pittsburgh Reduction Company, with a facade simulating that of the original factory, and with a replica of its "potroom" on the stage inside. Presiding was Henry Oliver Evans, president of the society, who opened the proceedings with a short address, and then called upon the following for brief remarks or addresses: Mr. Roy A. Hunt, president of "Alcoa," and son of its founder, Capt. Alfred E. Hunt; Mr. George H. Clapp, another of the company's founders; and Mr. Arthur Vining Davis, chairman of the board, who had helped to pour the first aluminum ingot, and who now donned an apron and demonstrated how it was done.

Mr. Edward Crump, Jr., a vice president of the society, has provided funds for the purchase of electric directional signs, some fourteen fluorescent lights for museum cases, and other useful fixtures in the society's building.

#### ADDITIONS TO COLLECTIONS

Amon, William A., Canonsburg

A striking diorama made by the donor, representing, under both day and night lighting effects, the home of the pioneer Presbyterian minister, Rev. Dr. John McMillan, which once stood near Linden, Washington County, and beside it his famous Log College, which is still preserved on the old campus of its successor, Jefferson College, in Canonsburg; a broadax found at the site of the home; and a half-stock Kentucky rifle (a converted flintlock) of 1830.

Bainer, John D., president, Merchants National Bank and Trust Company, Meadville

Twenty-two checks on the Bank of Pittsburgh, and a promissory note, drawn by John Reynolds, grandfather of the late John E. Reynolds of Meadville, during the years 1823-25, and the elder Reynolds' passbook for the same bank and period.

Brereton, Mrs. H. E. H., Diamond Point on Lake George, New York

A substantially mounted facsimile of a petition, signed by several hundred Pittsburghers in 1817, for the establishment of a branch of the Bank of the United States in Pittsburgh.

Cowan, John P., Arlington, Va.

Through his courtesy, from the Department of the Army, a copy of the handsomely printed, bound, and complete history of *The Medal of Honor of the United States Army* (Washington, D. C., 1948).

Eavenson, Howard N., Pittsburgh

Photostatic copies of three maps in the Cumberland Collection of the Royal Archives at Windsor, England, illustrative of Braddock's movements before and during the Battle of the Monongahela on July 9, 1755.

Erb, Mrs. George A., Pittsburgh

An 1858 Remington chamber-load, nipple-tipped revolver; an 1845 Allen & Wheelock over-hammer derringer, one-shot pistol; a metal-dog decorated powder-flask; and several filled and unfilled bullets made within the last twenty years.

Guthrie, Mrs. Francis Sellers, Pittsburgh

Four large framed photographs: one of "Homewood," residence of William Wilkins; one of John Brandon Guthrie, a former mayor of Pittsburgh (1851-52); and two of his son, George Wilkins Guthrie, also once mayor of that city (1906-09).

Hawkins, Beatrice, Pittsburgh

A sheet of sketch-maps of lots in downtown Pittsburgh and old Allegheny owned by William Hays, Sr., drawn in 1848 by Richard Hays, the donor's maternal grandfather; a business letter, September 9, 1830, from Rees Hill, Mile Creek, Virginia, to W. G. Hawkins et al. at "Wanesburg, Green County, Pa."; five documents relating to court action, in the 1820's, by one John Heaton, Jr., vs William and James Morford; contract of William G. Hawkins as teacher in the Allentown School District, Lehigh County, Pa., 1861-62; old newspaper clippings and stamped envelopes; and a baby's cap once worn by Mrs. William G. Hawkins, Jr., the donor's mother. Most of these items will be incorporated in the collection of Hawkins Papers previously presented by Miss Hawkins.

MacWilliams, Dorothy, Pittsburgh

The converted percussion-cap rifle used by David Shaw when the Indians attacked and destroyed Hannastown in 1782.

Mason, Mrs. Leroy L., Portland, Ore.

An addition to the society's large collection of business records, in the form of a ledger of Iseman & Patterson, dealers in flour and mill feed, Freeport, Pa., for the years 1873-78; a number of old newspapers, including six 1814 issues of the *Pittsburgh Mercury*.

Miller, Maria Louisa, Blairsville

Desk used by an ancestor of hers, George Ludwig Anshutz (1753-1837), the first ironmaster of Pittsburgh, and later operator of the Huntingdon Furnace in Huntingdon County, Pa. It is made of cherry-wood, with mahogany veneer; it was so substantially constructed that it withstood the numerous movings of a Methodist minister's family in late years; and it now occupies a prominent place in the entrance hall of the Historical Building.

Nash, J. Linn, Minneapolis, Minn.

Gift, received through the Colonial Chapter, Minnesota Daughters of the American Revolution, of a daybook and a ledger (together embracing the years, 1820-21 and 1838-43) of Sylvan Forge, built in the early nineteenth century by Andrew (the donor's great-grandfather) and John Oliphant on Georges Creek near New Geneva in Fayette County, Pennsylvania.

Nevin, Mrs. Daniel E., Sewickley

A considerable collection of papers and mementos of her late husband's father, Col. John Irwin Nevin (1837-1884), who served as an officer in the Civil War, and later as editor and part owner of the *Pittsburgh Leader*. Included are: a 73-page handwritten account by Col. Nevin, then a major of the 93rd Pennsylvania Volunteers, of the campaign of the Army of the Potomac in 1863; accounts of quartermaster and ordnance stores supplied to Nevin's Independent Battery, 1862-64;

articles of agreement, July 25, 1870, relating to the launching of the *Pittsburgh Leader*; maps of the battlefields of Antietam and Gettysburg; photographs and other portraits of Col. Nevin and officers of his battery; and battlefield relics gathered by Col. Nevin in 1881.

Pearson, Mrs. George, Pittsburgh

A bound typewritten copy of a compilation made by her husband in 1910, from the diary of his great-grandfather, John Pearson of Darby, Pa. (1740-1829). The diary records events of the years 1786 to 1812, and includes, among other special sections, "The Narrative of a Journey to Western Pennsylvania made by John Pearson and George, His Son, in 1803"; and "A Genealogy of the Blumston and Pearson Families and Some of Their Connections."

Rees, Mrs. James Irwin, Bridgeport, Montgomery County, Pa.

A framed slip of paper, dated Pittsburgh, April 1, 1816, and signed by her great-grandfather, James Cunningham, who thereby promised to pay Joseph McClaskey (lower ferry) a dollar a year for "ferriages."

Scully, Mrs. Cornelius D., Shepardstown, W. Va.

Through Miss Mary E. Bakewell, the handsomely-boxed remnants of the champagne bottle used by Mrs. Scully in the christening of the "U. S. S. Pittsburgh" at Quincy, Mass., on February 22, 1944.

Siebeneck, Henry King, Pittsburgh

Framed oil portraits of Oliver Hazard Perry, Stephen C. Foster, Albert Gallatin, John Armstrong, Ebenezer Denny, and Hugh Henry Brackenridge; new frames for several portraits; a half-tone cut and prints of the General John Forbes portrait, several printed lists of the principal portraits and other exhibits in the society's museum; repairs to a "grandfather" clock made by Samuel Davis in 1815 or before, and supposedly the oldest existing piece of cabinetmaker-built furniture made in Pittsburgh; a gold beribboned watch fob of the 1880's; an original letter written by the donor's ancestor, Robert King, at the "Kings Garden," Pittsburgh, on March 24, 1800, to one Charles Huston of "Lecoming" County, Pa.; a promissory note dated August 26, 1773, and signed by Hawkins Boone, putative relative or connection of Daniel Boone; and some eight books and pamphlets, including London or Dublin imprints of the years 1620, 1685, 1759, 1763, and C. F. Straube's *Rise and Fall of Harmony Society—Economy, Pa., and Other Poems* (Pittsburgh, c.1911).

Smith, Miss Gertrude, Pittsburgh

Book entitled, "*Ocean Waves in Lyric Strains, a Requiem, and Other Poems*," by the Hermit of St. Eirene (Pittsburgh, W. S. Haven, 1856).

Smith, Katharine, Pittsburgh

Additional items from the effects of her father, the late Edwin Z. Smith, including a number of documents relating to the Artisans' Deposit Bank of Pittsburgh in the years from 1870 to 1883; a certificate of non-liability for military service given to one William S. Jackson of Pittsburgh on December 24, 1864, who had furnished a substitute named Alfred Sanders; and a "true copy" of a notice sent by David Redick, prothonotary of Washington County, Pa., on December 9, 1799, to Joshua Cannon, Jr., directing him and his creditors to appear in court at a specified date.

Sneathen, Mrs. Lillian Riggs, Pittsburgh

A portfolio of excellent portraits of some forty-eight prominent Pittsburghers of the early 1900's, including such men as Henry C. Frick, Henry W. Oliver, Henry J. Heinz, Oliver McClintock, Judge Thomas Mellon, John A. Brashear, William Flinn, and Victor Herbert.

Walter, Charles L., Tarentum

A musket-type gun of 1855 to 1870 vintage, and an 1812 sword.