Now and again during our husky frontier years, an itinerant painter struggled with his sketch pad or palette up the uncertain path to the top of Coal Hill and put down what he saw of Pittsburgh snuggling cozily against her rivers.

It was not until David Blythe and Trevor McClurg began painting Pittsburgh people of a hundred years ago that a man hereabouts took on a pictorial interest equal to a clump of willow trees, or a local female resident could be sure that her artistic rival was not inelegantly, a neat row of red brick houses.

This lack of genre painting for the years 1758 to 1858 complicated the task assigned to Stefan Lorant, historian and scholar, of compiling a pictorial history of Pittsburgh.

In order that Pittsburgh's early years might not go unillustrated in the proposed Bicentennial history a competition among artists of Western Pennsylvania was announced in May 1955, together with a list of fifty possible historic subjects and documented titles.

More than a hundred artists painted "Scenes from the First Hundred Years of Pittsburgh History" and all paintings were exhibited in the lecture hall, galleries and the library of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania.

Originally planned for the month of November the exhibition was held over in the Historical Society for four additional months because of popular interest in the varied subjects, media and treatment of historic scenes.

Selected paintings will be reproduced by Stefan Lorant in the "Bicentennial History of Pittsburgh."

Judges Dr. Stanton Belfour, Dr. Walter R. Hovey, Dean Norman Rice and Gordon Bailey Washburn awarded the first prize of $300 to William Libby, president of the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh, for his pencil on chalk sketch of young George Washington at "The Point."

Edwin R. Anderson's painting of General Forbes taking Fort Duquesne was awarded second prize of $200. A Monongahela river scene by Kay Smith won the third prize of $100.

Dorothy Adams received an award of fifty dollars and honorable
mention for her study of Abraham Lincoln speaking in the rain from the balcony of the Monongahela House. A similar cash prize and honorable mention was awarded to Walter A. Gasowski for his water color of the Anshutz iron furnace in what is now Shadyside. Dr. Walter E. Brown also won honorable mention and fifty dollars for a colorful 'primitive' painting of "Passavant Hospital."

Other paintings from the exhibition almost certain to be selected by Mr. Lorant for reproduction in the Bicentennial History of Pittsburgh are Roy Hilton's "Monongahela Wharf"; "The Railroad" by Isabelle Kleinhans; "The Flood" by Stephen Kubisak; and "The First Newspaper" by Renee Claus.

A number of paintings were purchased. It is likely that Mr. Lorant may use the services of certain of these artists to illustrate other events he may wish to depict.

Attendance records for the Exhibition, the first of its kind ever to be held in Western Pennsylvania, indicate widespread interest in the backward glance to our First Hundred Years, and a conscious enthusiasm for Pittsburgh's Bicentennial Celebration in the future.

"NOW AND THEN"

Of special interest has been a series of twenty-one programs on WQED, Channel 13, sponsored by the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania and produced by Dorothy Daniel. Entitled "Now and Then" this series, which began January 2, 1956, has been a pleasing part of the Station's offering.

The programs have been varied, emphasizing anecdotes, personalities, pictures, and documents of Pittsburgh's first two hundred years.

Mrs. Daniel presided over these programs with graciousness and charm. She spoke interestingly on several topics, outstanding was the talk on Pittsburgh glass, on which she is an authority.

Guest speakers have been Robert D. Christie who spoke on three occasions, first on the story of the Historical Society; next on the Society's Collection of Early American Weapons; and last upon one of its most prized possessions, The Fort Pitt Day Book of 1765; Mimi and James Stevenson reminisced about their grandfather, William H. Stevenson, one of the Society's outstanding leaders; Prudence Trimble presented material on the Library and Manuscript Collection; Dorothy English told of the work of the Pennsylvania Room at Carnegie Library; Lawrence Thurman spoke on Old Economy; Myrl Eakin, on "Day to
Day Aspects of History Making”; Betsy, John, and Stephen Ward appeared on programs of interest to the young.

Three half-hour programs scheduled for June 3, 10, and 17 from 8:30-9:00 bear the intriguing title “Aspects of Historical Pilgrimages and Antiquing in Western Pennsylvania.”

1. These three programs had not been given at the time the Magazine went to the printer.—Ed.

MEMBERSHIP


Members lost by death were: O. D. Robinson, patron member since 1950; E. M. Foster, sustaining member since 1926; John Chambers Thomas, sustaining member since 1932; Dr. William Leo Mullins, annual member since 1940; Mrs. John W. Schreiber, annual member since 1942.

FOOTNOTES TO WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY

A Personal Message From the Editor

There are many quaint and interesting things contained in the volumes of our library and the manuscripts of our record room which the editor would like to share with the readers of the Magazine from time to time as space permits. They might be called “Footnotes to Western Pennsylvania History.”

1796 - 1828 - 1837 - 1841

TRANSPORTATION—WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA—1796

as seen through the ledgers of General James O’Hara

James O’Hara Contr

to Edward O’Hara Dr.
For his services as Boat Master on the Ohio and assisting in transporting the ox waggons to Presque isle from the 7th day of May to the 7th day of Aug 1796 three months at 15 dollars—45 dollars

James O'Hara Contr

Bought of John Cocke

One Keel Boat fifty nine foot long, long foot side and twenty-two inches deep at two and two thirds of a dollar for each foot of the length of said Boat.

James O'Hara Contr

To James White Dr

For his services as Boat Master on the Ohio having charge of two Boats and two Hundred Barrels Flour from the 19th May to the 22nd June 1796 incl. at 15 dollars per month - - - - dollars 17

James O'Hara Contr

Bought of Jer Sturgeon

One travelling waggon complete L35.00. Received 2nd July 1796 from James O'Hara Contr by the hand of John Park Ninety three dollars and 33 1/3 cents in full of the above a/c

Jeremiah Sturgeon

James O'Hara Contr

To Levi Morris dr

For two months and three days service as Ox Team driver between Le Boeuf and Presque Isle from the 27th July to the 30th Sep 1796 at twenty dollars per month - - - - 42 dolls.

Pittsburgh 4th Oct 1796 Received of James O'Hara Contractor by the hands of John Park forty two dollars being in full of the above a/c

Levi Morris (Mark)

James O'Hara Contr

To Nathan Chalfant Dr.

For one Kentucky Boat thirty eight feet long and 12 feet wide

Dols Cents

at 8/4 per foot 41 80

1 All of the above accounts were marked paid in full by John Park, General O'Hara's superintendent.—Ed.

August 31, 1828, Neville B. Craig writes a fatherly letter to his two oldest daughters, Isabella (aged 16) and Emily (aged 14) who are in school in Baltimore.
Thursday night

My Dear Daughters

I do not recollect to whom we wrote last week but it is very unimportant whether the letter was directed to Isabella or to Emily it was like all our letters intended for both of you, and so is this one.

We were disappointed in not receiving a letter from one of you this morning, but hope we will receive one tomorrow. This letter I expect will find you at Miss Turnbull's engaged in your studies again. You will perhaps find it difficult to turn your attention at once to study, your minds have no doubt been much relaxed by your visit at Mr. Gray's, but you must determine to attend to your studies, and persevere in that determination. (Your mother has a most excellent girl named Rosanna).

We have not much news here, Mr. Backhouse died on Tuesday last and was buried on Wednesday, old Joseph McClurg is also dead, so is Joe Evans. Mr. Davis across the street lost his infant child on Tuesday last.

We have a company of Circus riders or Equestrians here. I took Mary, Matilda, Mina and Isaac there last Friday night. They were all delighted, particularly Isaac, he asked me to take him every night, when I had no business to do.

Isaac has got very well indeed.

You will miss getting the Gazette, will you not regret it very much?

On Monday afternoon at half past two o'clock your mother presented me with another dear little daughter, and you with another sister. It is very small, has beautiful black eyes and a fair complexion. They say it is very like Emily. We have not given her a name yet and as you will not see her for some time, we have determined to let you select a name from among the following, if you can agree, viz—Eliza Gray, Anne, Martha, Elizabeth, and Susan.

I received a letter from your uncle Pressly a few days ago, he was well. I have just heard that your uncle Harry would be ordered to this place to take command of the Arsenal.

Mary Hemphill and Miss Lyons return to Beaver tomorrow.

We have never had such an abundance of fruit and melons as we now have. Mosquitoes are beginning to plague us a little.

Having told you all the news I must conclude, but will not close
my letter until after the mail comes tomorrow morning.
       Yours most affectionately
       my dear daughters
       Neville B. Craig

1 Neville B. Craig was born on the 29th of March, 1787 in one of the Redoubts of Fort Pitt. He was the oldest son of Isaac Craig and Amelia Neville.

Mr. Craig was educated at Princeton, N. J. He read law with Judge Addison; was at one time Deputy Attorney General for Allegheny. At another period he represented this county in the State Legislature. As the editor, for some years, of the Pittsburgh Gazette, his opinions had much weight with the yeomanry of Allegheny County, who confided in the accuracy of his information, his sincerity and honor.

As the chronicler of Olden Time, he made invaluable contributions to history . . . .

It was in his domestic life, those who knew him best appreciated him most—the loyal son—the attached brother, the true friend; above all, the kindest and most affectionate father.

Excerpts from the Pittsburgh Gazette Friday Morning, March 6, 1863.

Note: Mr. Craig was corresponding secretary of the second historical society organized in 1843 which first adopted the name "Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania."

1837

Some interesting entries from Day Book by John Moffett1 1837

Pittsburgh April 12th 1837

2 James Wilson schoolmaster Dr
   to 1/2 dor buttons bookkeepings at 5.50 2 50
"  1 thousand quils — — 2 25
"  3 dor copy books at 1.25 3 75
"  3 quires thin post at 0.25 0 75
"  1 Murrays english grammer 0 75

Pittsburgh May 11 1837

10 Samuel sinpson Dr.
   14 171\(\frac{1}{4}\) lb of Malaya riasons at 12 2 07
"  17\(\frac{3}{4}\) of figs at 16 3 16
"  17 lb of rice at 06\(\frac{1}{2}\) 0 73
"  8\(\frac{1}{4}\) lb of peper at 24 1 78
"  13 oz of cloves at 12 1 56 9 00

2 James Wilson schoolmaster
   by cash in full 13 50
Robert McKnight\footnote{1} spends a pleasant day with his friends in June, 1841.

Pittsburg Saturday June 5th

I rose at \(\frac{1}{2}\) past 6, came down, and breakfasted—After which went to the office, and read the Gazette, went to the Monongahela House and read the papers. Came to the office, read law for three hours, and \(\frac{1}{2}\), and at \(\frac{1}{4}\) of 1 came home, and dined. After which—conversed went to the office, and at Mr. Biddle’s request, copied Causes for Arrest of Judgment in case of U. S. vs Braddee. At 3 went to Judge Patton’s and played 3 games of Bills. with Helfenstein; when Mess. Patton and Von Bonhorst came to play. Sat and conversed for an hour. Accompanied Helf. on a search for C. B. S. (Scully) whom we found at home, went with him to Eichbaum’s. Came home, supped in \(\frac{1}{4}\) of an hour. Conversed for \(\frac{1}{2}\) hour. Accompanied W. Darlington and Helf. to the mouth of Penn St. where we entered a skiff and I rowed over the river above the ferry, where we bathed, water pleasant and mud knee deep. After dressing as best we could, we crossed in the rocking skiff, Chained our bateaus, stowed away the oars, and came
home with Helfenstein, conversed, read letters etc. for an hour and 1/2 during which a slight shower arose Wrote journal, read a chapter in the Bible, and went to bed at 11

1 Robert McKnight at the time this Diary was written was a young law student. Seventeen years later on November 26, 1858, at a reorganization meeting he was chosen temporary vice president of "The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania." The day before had been celebrated on a large scale in Pittsburgh as the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the city.—Ed.

TO OUR VISITORS

Welcome to the Historical Society. We are glad to have you come to see our Pittsburgh glass, our early American furniture, our paintings, our firearms, our library, and our ancient documents.

It is good sometimes to see and appreciate the contributions of our forefathers and to turn back our thoughts to the more leisurely pace of an earlier day.