reconstruction of Dock’s chronology from the great teacher’s own words, which all the rest of us had read for years without realizing the treasures of information contained there.

Educators may yet learn important things from the dedicated and capable schoolmaster of Skippack and Salford. Every Pennsylvanian should know his story. Historians — especially those concerned with the Keystone State, education and religion — will welcome this book. Members of the Pennsylvania German Society will wonder why their group didn’t publish it.

Added to Mr. Studer’s study in this beautifully designed and printed work is a new translation of Dock’s writings, made by Elizabeth Horsch Bender, of Goshen, Indiana. The book design and decoration are by Oliver Wendell Schenk of Jennerstown.

All of those who have taken part, and especially Mr. Studer, are deserving of the thanks of Pennsylvania for a splendid achievement.

_Pittsburgh_  
GEORGE SWETNAM


Mary Cassatt began to be written about in a serious manner as early as 1890, when Y. Rambaud praised her genius and its fruits in *L’Art dans les Deux-Mondes*. However, it was not until 1929 that she was appreciated adequately by a professional historian — Helen Wright, writing in *The Dictionary of American Biography*, Volume III. The artist had died as recently as June 14, 1926, and still was considered a contemporary. Only now, ninety-nine years after she returned to Paris at twenty-three and “decided definitely to be a painter,” is she more than a casual theme. Writers about art only recently have begun to realize that it no longer is necessary to refer to her as an “impressionist.” She herself had accepted the label of a mannerism when she said she “detested conventional art” and exhibited with Manet, Courbet and her friend Degas between 1879 and 1886.

What is happening to Mary Cassatt currently, though, is historical in the best sense of the word. She may not be “the world’s most famous woman artist,” but certainly she has ceased to need the apology of being promoted as a member of a militant reform school of painters.
Her importance now is not limited to even a defensible revolutionary formula.

Mary Cassatt has special meaning to Western Pennsylvania as a native of Allegheny, a daughter of a family of French Huguenot origin but American adaptation. She came of stock and represented a preference similar to those of Albert Gallatin. Her brother, Alexander Johnston Cassatt, was a civil engineer who was one of the principal creators of the Pennsylvania Railroad system. Mary was taken back to France as a small child and was a resident of France from 1874 or possibly 1877 until the end of her life. But she was not exclusively French at any time. The quality of her was that of the New World. True enough, she was influenced by Italy and Spain, even by Japan; but her sources and the conditions of her life — including notably her independent wealth — were American.

This fact was understood by Frederick A. Sweet, who, in his biography, Miss Mary Cassatt, Impressionist from Pennsylvania, published by the University of Oklahoma Press in 1966, demonstrated the influence of her contacts with humane and artistic values in the United States. Also, it is established in the volume presently under review, the author explaining:

She wanted to see a group of discriminating people in her own country who would understand what her colleagues were doing. Most of all she wanted to help develop in the United States a more widespread appreciation of art generally. She knew this would take time; still she would do what she could to make paintings available... She believed that several private collections, then in process of building, would eventually find their way into galleries open to the public. Her role, as she saw it, was to induce as many wealthy friends as possible to purchase art.

The theory upon which Mary Cassatt was predicking her own activities as a painter and as a judge of painting was shown to be sound by events which still are in progress. She illustrated in her own personal endeavor, her achievement and her influence the practical worth of the axiom: "Every great institution is the lengthened shadow of a great personality."

Books about Mary Cassatt will continue to appear as her impact on the world expands. She is one with the land and the people from which and whom she sprung. Mrs. Carson herself is realistic in her appraisals. For example, she cites with approval Mary Cassatt's pronouncement that: "No sound artist ever looked except with scorn at these cubists and Matisse." Then she quotes André Mellario's recognition of "the American woman she was" and adds his opinion:
She is wholly original and belongs to her own race. Her art expresses her nation, young, full of new force; she is without prejudice, vital; although she is familiar with the culture of the old world, there is the freshness of a new nation in her art. Her inspiration is from her own race. She expresses the character of the American people, a people awakening to all that is best in art and eager to possess it in abundance.

The philosophy reflected here may be seen at its noblest in Young Woman Sewing in the Louvre Musée in Paris and in Young Women Picking Fruit in the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh. Both pictures are true and beautiful.

The background of Mary Cassatt, meanwhile, is identical with that of the two Pittsburghers — H. C. Frick and A. W. Mellon — who, each in his own time and way, made her dream of art for the people come true. In any case, these books in tribute to her were earned and deserved.

The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania

James Waldo Fawcett


William Henry Seward is a thorough biography of Lincoln's controversial Secretary of State, by Glyndon G. Van Deusen, Research Professor of History Emeritus at the University of Rochester. The study is based largely upon the Seward Papers, a collection of some 150,000 items which Professor Van Deusen helped the University of Rochester to acquire.

He has written a book that will appeal both to laymen and to professional historians and students. The book at times, however, burdens the layman with mounds of unnecessary detail that tend to obscure Seward. For example, the average reader may object to the minutiae of political campaigns, fly-by-night political parties, and the clever maneuvering in smoke-filled rooms of Thurlow Weed, New York state political mentor and friend of Seward.

Professor Van Deusen paints Seward, Cromwellian "warts and all," pointing out that the Secretary of State was a vain politician who loved to sway crowds, an equivocator or at least a stretcher of the truth when he was sparring for time, a man who could modify his beliefs for his career, an egotistical man who loved to run the show