HELEN Elizabeth Crombie was the daughter of Hance (Hans) Boggs Crombie and his second wife, Eliza Arthur Henry. She attended the State Normal School in Edinboro and for several years taught in the Fifth Ward School in Allegheny. She also studied at Drexel Institute in Philadelphia, taught for several years in Rock Hill, North Carolina, and in 1901 or 1902 became the first teacher of domestic science in Allegheny. She was born in 1862, married Thomas Logan (of an Old Allegheny family) in 1908, and died April 20, 1950.

Helen Crombie and her parents were living in Beaver Falls in 1877 when she began her diary, July 1, 1877. She was in her fifteenth year when she went to visit an aunt in Old Allegheny on July 13. Her comments on the Pennsylvania Railroad Riots in her diary follow:

* The year 1877 saw a good deal of labor unrest in the railroad industry throughout the country. Particularly violent was the Pittsburgh strike in the July of that year. The trouble was initiated by a reduction in wages, coupled with a management plan to "doublehead" freight trains by using two locomotives for hauling, doubling the workload. Management blamed these economy measures on losses suffered in the panic of 1873, while labor stated that they had already taken a reduction in pay at that time and, if anything, should now have their wages raised.

The strikers had a great deal of public sympathy, and, in addition, the size of the existing police force was totally inadequate for handling the masses of people involved in the rioting. County officials had to call in the Philadelphia National Guard finally because it was feared that the local guard would not stand up to a mob which might be composed of friends and relatives.

Actual strikers in the mob were outnumbered by drifters and by the criminal element of the city who turned out to see what profit could be made from the trouble. The Union Depot and many other buildings, including the roundhouse, were burned, and railroad cars were looted during the two-day disturbances. Losses went into the millions of dollars, and Allegheny County was forced to pay the cost of damages because of its inability to protect the property of the railroad company and that of private property owners.
CHAP XV  SATURDAY 21 (JULY)

Lizzie Craig was here for dinner. She staid all night. Aunt\(^1\) finished my dress to day. In the evening Lizzie went to choir meeting. Sam\(^2\) and she were coming home in a street car. Its progress was stopped on account of the crowd collected in the way. Lizzie and Sam saw the mob and heard the firing of the guns. They were right in the midst. One woman when the cars were stopped by the crowd jumped up and was about to leave the cars she was so badly scared and rush right in the face of danger. Sam caught her by the arm and sat her down again.

This was the first of the war that I heard of although I saw aunt reading the papers to. I think I did hear a faint rumor of it two or three days before. They had stopped the cars but had no fiting. Saturday evening the mob was wild with excitement burning the cars trying to roast the Philadelphia soldiers out of the round house. The round house was burnt. All this happened on Saturday night.

CHAP (X) VI  SABBATH JULY 22

Great excitement. On Saturday afternoon there was a war between the soldiers and mob. Many persons killed and wounded. I went to church\(^3\) on Sabbath morning. Aunt R and I started to go in the afternoon but never got there. We went to the upper part of Allegheny to see the fire and to see all that could be seen. We could see better here than any where else except in Pittsburg itself. Got on the railroad bridge to see it better. Watched the burning of the Union depot and Grain Elevator. Saw many people go by with plunder from the cars. We got home about five or six oclock. I helped get supper. After supper we had worship. In the evening watched the burning of the elevator from the seminary\(^4\) windows. While on the bridge I saw many people pass by carrying ham, bacon, tobacoo, furs and different things plunder from the cars. I was standing on the bridge when some men crossed the bridge carrying guns. A policeman took a gun from one of the men. Sam went to Pittsburg to see if all was safe near his office. He was afraid of the fire spredding and burning their office. Over there the mob was furious. They broke into tobacco stores and different stores. Plenty of people drunk. This ends this days excitement.

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1 Rachel Jane Henry McKee.
2 Samuel Henry McKee, son of Rachel and examiner of real estate titles in Pittsburgh.
3 The Reformed Presbyterian Church.
4 The Reformed Presbyterian Church Seminary.
Chap XVII  Monday 23

Today the mob was quiet I hear nothing new. Aunt and I went to see the ruins. Aunt while going down Federal Street lost some keys belonging to the Seminary. While we were over in Pittsburg she had an advertisement put in the paper inquiring for them. The ruins were ruins indeed nothing but bricks and charred bits of wood laying around. Oh! how hot it was it was hot enough to make you sweat; as the ruins were still burning and smoking. I saw the ruins of the Round house the place where the Philadelphia soldiers stayed. The ruins of Union depot that beautiful building. I stood in the park Sabbath and watched it burning. Every person felt very sorry to see [it] go for they do not know when they shall have such another again. I have a few relics of the war. I will tell what they are. A bit of iron casting found on the hill over looking the battle field. A piece of a cigar box with a picture on found on the battle ground where the Philadelphia soldiers stood, three nails melted together found on the car track near the round house where the soldiers were confined. Last of all but not least a nail from one of the burnt cars. These things I picked up as I went along. I would have liked very much to have had a bullet that had been shot into something but did not succeed in getting one. After visiting the ruins we went to see Mr Mc Knight’s folks and Mrs Martins’. Also went to see Mrs Cacity. She gave me a half open cotton pod when I showed my curiosities. This pod has a history about it I think for she wanted Mr. Cacity to tell me about it but he would not. She told me when she gave it to me that Mr. had plucked it in passing through a southern cotton field during the war.

Chapter XVIII  Wednesday 25

Today was wash day. Mrs. Charlton came to see us and staid all day. I got a letter from mother and Maggie. John’s⁵ certificate came today.

Chapter XIX  Thursday 26

Mr and Mrs Cacity came to see us this afternoon about four o clock staid until ten o clock.

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⁵ John Bates Crombie, son of Hans Boggs Crombie by his first wife.
Chapter XX  Friday 27

Aunt and I went to see all China men today. I saw Lee Gung, Lee Yow, Charlie Buckup, Sick Wah, Keop Shing, Wong Lunn and Wong Loons brother or what he calls so. Wang Foak and a new one from California. Aunt asked them all up. They said they would be up on Sabbath evening. The Californian said I come to. I said all right. In the evening we went to see Lee Quay and On Ming. They said they would be up Sabbath evening. In the afternoon before we started to see the China men. We went past the post office in the afternoon. We saw the soldiers camping out went into the yard to look at them. I saw four cannons. While we stood looking at the soldiers and cannons a minute or so a soldier stepped up to aunt and asked her if there was any thing she wished to see. Aunt said no we were only looking at the tents and cannons. We went to Pittsburg and looked at some carpets. We went to see all the China boys as I said before. While in Pittsburg walking near the Standard store there came on a heavy rain. We took shelter in the store. While there we looked at some tidy pattern books. Aunt bought one and gave it to me. We came home in the street cars. Had a great surprise. John came in the same car that we were in. He had walked twenty miles that day. I got off the car at the Allegheny market house and bought some cooking apples for Aunt. John came up to Aunts he got his certificate and then went to Wilkinsburg.

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[The diary records nothing more concerning the soldiers until August 8. It is concerned with family, the Chinese, a funeral, a visit to the Indian grave at Trinity Church and incidentals of the day.]

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Chapter XXXII  Wednesday (Aug) 8

I arose early this morning so as to have an early start on my journey. We had all the work done about nine oclock. I began to get ready. Aunt wrote a letter to Mira today. We started on our journey to Pittsburg about half past nine. Aunt called in several stores before she got to Pittsburg. We walked down to Stockton Avenue. Came to a

6 The Reformed Presbyterian Church long sponsored teaching of the Chinese in Allegheny. Small groups of two or more were taught in the homes of church members. Apparently this centered on English, probably also Christianity. The school for Chinese continued at least to 1896.
7 Eliza Elmira McKee, daughter of Rachel.
cross street turned down it and came to the street leading to the Hand Street bridge. Crossing the bridge we found our selves in Pittsburg. We went past the Union Depot or the ruins of it. They were building it up again. A little shanty near the rail road received the honorable name of the Western ticket office. The waiting room is a front room in the St. Charles Hotell. This room was nicely furnished some right nice paintings were hung around the room. A piano at which some ladies who were waiting for the cars I suppose were practicing. A stand on which there was a pitcher of water stood in the middle of the room. Other things beside these were in the room but I did not pay any attention to them. We did not stay more than five minutes if that. We went to see Sam aunt gave him the letter she had received from Mira. We went to the ticket office got our tickets had a very dusty walk from that to the cars. A good many soldiers were in the cars. Two in the car we were in. Before the car started two gentlemen came in a sat in the seat right back of mine. I did not look at them. In a few minutes aunt said those were Japanese did you see them? I did not like to look around at them. In a short time she said how do you like your new neighbors? I have not seen them yet said I. At every station there were soldiers some times we would pass woody places there we would see plenty of them. Some would be lying on the ground sleeping, others on logs and boards, some would be smoking and talking some were preparing to wash their clothes. On the whole as some one remarked, It looked like regular camp life. The train sped on so swiftly I caught only slight glimpses of their rural homes . . .
LECTURE SERIES, 1971-1972

The 1971-1972 lecture series of the Society was inaugurated Wednesday, October 6, when Mr. Lowell Innes, author and authority on glass, spoke on "Early Western Pennsylvania Glass." Members, friends, and other interested persons are invited to attend the remaining five lectures in the series, which will be held the first Wednesday of each month, omitting January. Meetings in Stevenson Hall, our auditorium, begin at 8:00 p.m.

The lectures will be: November 3, Sister Kathleen Healy on the story of Carlow College; December 1, Dr. Van Beck Hall on his research in Virginia; February 2, Clifford Ball on early aviation in this area; March 1, Jacob Grimes on the lost village of Hannastown; April 5, Joseph G. Smith on colorful characters whose exploits earned them more notoriety than historic fame.