

## PRUDENCE B. TRIMBLE

### A MEMORIAL

LATE on a sunny Friday afternoon in June, my thoughts drifted away from the routine of putting out a historical journal to anticipation of a weekend raft trip on the Youghiogheny River. A telephone call informing me of the death that morning, the fifteenth, of Miss Prudence B. Trimble suddenly changed that pleasant mood of expectation to one of sadness. I recalled having tea and cookies in Miss Trimble's apartment shortly after I took over as editor of the *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* in June 1975. Anxious about the responsibilities of my new position, I felt reassured by the confidence Miss Trimble seemed to have in my abilities. Afterwards, she referred to me in conversation as "Cousin Bill," even though we had quickly established that we were not in any way related.

Miss Trimble was part of the old breed of public school teachers who placed a premium on scholarship. Born on March 25, 1892, she attended Brockwayville High School in Brockway, Pennsylvania, graduating in 1905. She went on to the Southwestern State Normal School (now California State College), spent one year at Columbia University, and graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 1917 with an A.B. degree. Twelve years later, she earned a masters degree in history at Pitt, her thesis on "The Presbyterian Church and Temperance in the United States, 1811-1919, with Particular Reference to Western Pennsylvania." Miss Trimble's teaching career spanned thirty-eight years. At Carrick Junior High School, she taught for three years before receiving an appointment to Schenley High School on September 7, 1920. There she instructed students in English and English literature until her retirement on July 1, 1955.

Her retirement from public school teaching marked the beginning of a second career at the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. Named editor-librarian in 1955, Miss Trimble immediately assumed responsibility for the Spring-Summer issue of the *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*. In 1956, she started a new section in the journal, "Footnotes to Western Pennsylvania History," which evolved into the present "Notes and Documents." Augmenting her regular duties were editing four books and a comprehensive forty-three-year

index to the *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*. She handled occasional scuffles with authors with a polish only the skilled diplomat could truly appreciate. In 1971, Miss Trimble retired for the second and last time and was honored at a testimonial dinner on October 6 at the Twentieth Century Club.

We mourn Miss Trimble's death, but more important, we cherish remembrances of her many accomplishments as a teacher, editor, and historian.

WILLIAM F. TRIMBLE