

No. 4.

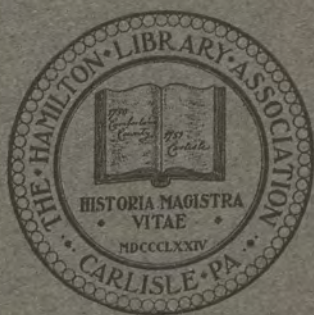
Annual Report

TO THE

HAMILTON LIBRARY ASSOCIATION.

OF

Carlisle, Pennsylvania,
for the year 1903.



The Historical Organization of
Cumberland County, Pa.



Decorated Stove Plate, 1764.

(See page 3.)

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE
Hamilton Library Association,
OF CARLISLE, PA.
FOR THE YEAR ENDING DEC. 31, 1903.

According to custom, I beg to report as follows, the general operations of the Association for the year 1903 and its present condition.

In the report of last year, on account of the large number of new members elected during that year, it was thought advisable to present a brief statement of the origin and work of the association. The interest manifested in that account would almost seem to justify the preparation for publication at an early date, of a fuller historical sketch, as furnished by the minutes of the board of directors, and the proceedings of the Association.

MEMBERSHIP.

During the past year the active membership has increased, and but few have failed to continue their connection with the Association. As the success of the Association depends largely upon the number and character of its membership, this is matter of congratulation.

FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITION.

Next to membership, and closely connected with it, is the financial condition. As the detailed report of the Treasurer shows, this is at least satisfactory. The small indebtedness remaining at close of the last year, mainly due to the introduction of a furnace of a capacity to heat the whole building and to some internal alterations and additions, has been paid. During the past year some additional gas fixtures have been put in, a new

case for the preservation of objects and documents of historical interest has been provided, various appliances for the library have been purchased, the large accumulated files of newspapers, as well as others presented to the library, have been bound, the grounds have been put in creditable condition, and the current expenses, mainly for janitor, fuel, light, and incidentals, have been met.

LIBRARY.

The expenditure for the library has been restricted by the other necessary expenditures enumerated, and increase has been dependent mainly upon the interest and generosity of friends. Especially to be noted is the completion of the series of "Notes and Queries" by Dr. Egle, by the accession of some of the volumes, which had been wanting, and which are rapidly taking their place in the list of rare books. Among the volumes of the Pennsylvania Archives presented are some that have been most difficult to obtain for the completion of the set, and others almost equally valuable for exchange. Some early volumes of local newspapers have been presented, other files have been rendered more complete, and present files have been continued up to date. All of these have been bound in volumes of convenient size for reference with the least wear and tear in use. Monographs and pamphlets on various historical subjects have been stored, as received, in suitable cases, with such classification, that they may be bound as volumes as they accumulate upon any subject. Scrap-books have been provided for newspaper clippings, as received or made, suitably indexed for reference.

HISTORICAL COLLECTION.

Numerous additions have been made to the collection of objects and documents of local interest. Many of these would be worthy of particular mention, and it is a matter for consideration, whether the publication of a list of such additions with the names of those who have presented them, at the close of each year, might not repay the Association by the increased interest it might create, aside from the information it would give. It may not, however, be out of place to call attention to several placed in the vestibule.

*The decorated Stove-plate placed in the wall, bearing the date, 1764, and the name "Carlisle Furnace," among the very earliest castings made west of the Susquehanna, was presented by Miss Emma Aberly, and the wall-map of Carlisle, of sixty years ago, with its interesting marginal illustrations was presented by Miss Emeline Parker. A pitcher once owned by Molly Pitcher, about to be acquired by a distant historical society, was secured for the Association, and a suitable case provided for it, by the contributions of members and others for the purpose, seconded by the disposition of her descendants to favor its retention here. It is a matter of gratification that this relic of so much local interest has been kept where it naturally belongs, on account of the appeal which a romantic incident makes to popular sentiment, whilst at the same time there is no less appreciation of the historical incidents of larger importance connected with our county, and the influential characters that connect its history so creditably with that of our country. But there are yet among these many almost forgotten heroes, as far as public recognition goes.

The Library Room has been comfortably heated, and accessible at all times upon application to any of the officers of the Association, and through the presence of Captain Wm. E. Miller, of the Historical Committee, for some portion of each day, and his assistance cheerfully given to the investigation of historical subjects, the use of the library has been much facilitated. To the active interest of the same gentleman is also due, in great part the accessions to the historical objects, and other resources of the library. It would doubtless aid much in encouraging the use of the library by the general public, if provision could be made for having it open at definite hours, duly announced, on certain days of the week, even if limited to one afternoon and evening in the week, in charge of some suitable responsible person. The pamphlets, reports, etc., received from time to time by the Association, with such addition of pertinent periodical literature as might be made, would soon cause it to fill a place of its own in the community.

*See Frontispiece.

PHOTO-RECORD WORK.

A committee on Photo-Record Work was added during the past year to the other standing committees, consisting of Professor Charles F. Himes, Chairman; John M. Rhey, Esq., J. Webster Henderson, Esq., Geo. S. Comstock and W. M. Henderson. A circular was issued by the committee, setting forth the nature of the work in some detail, and the objects to which it is more particularly applicable and requesting co-operation. The results may be regarded as encouraging. In soliciting photographs for such a collection RECORD VALUE has been especially emphasized, and mere pictorial effect kept subordinate, pictures being desired that tell as much as possible, as well as possible, of what may be of historical value and interest. Amateurs, and those who have sufficient interest in the subject to have the photographs taken, are, for the most part, to be depended on for a collection of this kind, in which the pictures frequently have little commercial value. The photographs, as received, are mounted, classified, catalogued, and stored in such a way that reference may be as direct as possible, with avoidance of unnecessary handling. The work, from the nature of the pictures, requires care and time, but it is believed that with proper attention the collection will have a continuous growth, and become of great interest and value. The range of subjects is very varried, embracing every object possessing a political, religious, educational, or social interest in connection with the history of the county. Photographs of great assistance in historical research could often be obtained of old documents, public and private, letters, sketches, maps, plans, imprints, etc., when the owners might be indisposed to part with the originals, or when they might be deposited elsewhere. Such facsimiles in most essential features are equal in authenticity to the originals, and are, at least, more satisfactory than transcripts, upon points of difficult and doubtful rendering. In many cases, too, gaps in an interesting documentary chain could be filled up, and a separated record be rendered complete. Many documents bearing on our early history are to be found in other collections, and by a system of exchanges with other historical societies all might be benefitted. The measure

of protection, thus incidentally given, from accidental loss of the originals, and from deterioration with time and improper treatment is also worthy of consideration.

Without remitting attention to other objects, it was thought well to begin a complete photographic survey of the public school buildings of the county, which should include every building of the kind, and its immediate surroundings, together with such data in regard to it, including historical, as might be desirable, and also including, as far as obtainable, photographs of buildings, or of sketches of them, that have passed away.

The old log school-houses of the past generation, in which the earliest strenuous work of popular education was successfully carried on, have entirely passed out of existence, leaving scarcely a trace except in the recollections of some who were trained in them, and it is not assuming too much to say, that in the progress to be made in popular education, as great changes in many of the school-houses of today, and their surroundings, will occur, and that they will be to the next generation as much a thing of the past, with only a historical interest attached. The matter was brought to the attention of the County Teachers' Institute, and the Convention of the Directors of the County. The plan seemed so novel, as well as promising of good results from an educational point of view, that the State Superintendent, Doctor Schaeffer, called the attention of Professor Addison Jones, the Director of the Educational Exhibit of the State, at the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition to it, who at once urgently requested it for exhibition, with statement that a place would be reserved for it. A collection of such pictures, however, can not be produced to order in a limited time, especially at the unfavorable season of the year for such work. But, although it looked impossible of accomplishment by date named, February 1st, I am encouraged to believe that Volume I, of the Public School Buildings of Cumberland County will be ready by the time specified, and that the whole will be completed within a reasonable time.

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PAPERS.

Monthly meetings have been held regularly, to which others, than members interested, have been invited. The program of

papers for these meetings has been prepared with much care with view to the promotion of greater interest in our local history, and its elucidation. Printed copies were sent to each member at the beginning of the year, with invitation and request to take part in the discussion of the subjects following the reading of the papers. The general interest in these meetings has been fully maintained. Papers involving much careful research have been followed by discussions equally interesting, eliciting fuller facts. These papers have, for the most part, been filed with the Association, but others equally valuable delivered from copious notes have not yet been placed on file, whilst the discussions following have not been as fully reported as their value would merit. A committee has been appointed to edit these papers and discussions, with a view to publication, and it is hoped that in this matter a more satisfactory report may be made hereafter. As suggested in last report, many papers could be made much more effective in their presentation, with great relief to the speaker from lengthy statement and descriptions, at best often unsatisfactory, by means of diagrams, maps, etc., exhibited by means of a small suitable projecting lantern. Such a lantern has been kindly placed for the use of the Association in the future.

In looking back over the reports for the past several years a steady advance along many lines may be noted, and the outlook for the coming year is encouraging. The Association is in the enjoyment of a building of its own, well adapted to its present purposes, in complete repair, with ample ground for expansion as its needs may demand, which may be earlier than seems at present apparent. But this ownership of property, though to be regarded as very good fortune, involves necessary expenditures for keeping it in order, heating, etc., which absorb much of its limited income from dues, and which societies in other counties in the State, doing a similar work, are free from, besides, in some cases, receiving an appropriation in addition to rooms.

Whilst enlargement of the library, and, to some extent, the acquisition of articles of historic value are restricted by want of adequate funds for the purpose, after all, the work of the Association in "the elucidation and preservation of the history of the

county," and in fostering an interest in our local history will depend in the future, as it has in the past, largely upon the active interest of its membership, and the judicious expenditure of the funds at its disposal.

During the past year the work this Association has accomplished, and is at present carrying out, has been recognized by the appropriation of one hundred and fifty dollars, which has been of great service in promoting the work of the Association, and rendering its resources more accessible to the public and secure, and its continuance will enable it to add materially to its library and historical collections. The permission to the Civic Club, composed of ladies, to occupy the small room adjoining the Library Room, on Saturday morning each week, for the work of its Saving Fund department has been continued during the past year without serious inconvenience to the work of the library, and permission has also been given for the use of the Hall for its monthly meetings.

Respectfully Submitted,
CHARLES F. HIMES.

January 19, 1904.

