



THE
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OF THE
LYCOMING HISTORICAL SOCIETY

the JOURNAL of the
LYCOMING HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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*"History is the memory of time, the
life of the dead, and the happiness
of the living."*

—Captain John Smith

Local historical societies have for their purpose the finding, preserving and making available of materials about the past of small geographic units, such as counties or municipalities.

Throughout the length and breadth of the United States and Canada, institutions small and large are preserving priceless records of the past. Their holdings personify and bring to life the objectives of the pioneers who settled this wide continent. They reflect an earlier struggle for the very liberties for which we have gone to war. Like our liberties, our archives and other records of the past are beyond price. We cannot value them in dollars and cents. Once gone, they cannot be replaced. They are unique, and so there is no substitute for them. While there is yet time, every community should set up a local historical organization to preserve its heritage of hand-written and printed records and to gather up and care for objects that were once in daily use by the pioneers. Such objects are now historical treasures.

The local historical society is the most democratic of all cultural institutions. Anyone of normal intelligence can take part in its activities, enjoy its exhibits, and understand its objectives. Unlike the public school, it is not subject to age limitations. Since its activities and interests are confined to a small geographic area, it is able to reach all the people, whatever their occupation, race, creed or social standing. Its very limitations enable it to get in touch with people outside the sphere of influence of the larger state and national

societies. It has been said that "History is the least mysterious and least cloistered branch of learning," lacking in secret techniques, needing no special vocabulary, unpretentious, open to all. That applies, above all, to local history, for local history in a very special sense is everybody's history.

The publication committee of the Lycoming Historical Society is to be commended for its efforts to issue a publication in which historical records of our community can be preserved. Most of our members, no doubt, have records of historical value which should be preserved. The committee is anxious for any contributions which our members can furnish. Many of our members come from pioneer families that undoubtedly have museum objects, old letters, and diaries from which they can select valuable material.

Although the backbone of any historical society is usually the older members, it is very important that an effort be made to interest young people in the organization or it is apt to become a purely antiquarian organization. And if it does, it will die out with the passing of the pioneers. It is desirable to draw people of all types including newcomers to America—those who fled from political and racial persecution abroad and other recent immigrants—into the local society. They must be made to understand that they are a part of the community and that their own lives are being influenced by its past. Every member should realize that the success of our publication will depend on the efforts of each and everyone of us.

L. E. Wurster, M. D.
President

Lycoming Historical Society

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THE JOURNAL

March 1955

JOHN WESLEY LITTLE

by Mrs. John Little

When asked to tell something about the life and work of John Wesley Little, I must say that what I know of his early life is what I learned from him and his family, for I knew him only the last twenty-five years of his life.

He was born in Sullivan County near Forksville, August 24, 1867—the youngest of nine children of John and Martha Edkin Little. When he was six years of age, the family moved to Picture Rocks, where his father was engaged in business then called the "Home Rule Binding Works" now the "Lycoming Ladder Company." He attended public school until about sixteen, and during vacations worked in the factory. In his spare hours he read and studied, taking a correspondence course in art. After a few years of study, he began some outdoor sketching, choosing for his subject a wood interior, a subject he always loved, though soon learning it was a difficult one. At the age of twenty-one with his small earnings, but with plenty of courage and ambition, he decided to go to New York for study at the National Academy of Design.

In those days this was more of an undertaking than we know today. A genius in any art may sometimes live a lonely life if he were not happy in his work. The breaking of home ties was very real to the young man. The privations and sacrifice of those years could only be made by one like him—who had the earnest desire for more knowledge and a great love of his chosen work. But he kept that part a closed book, always during his entire life told only the bright side of his work and experience.

He took his completed sketch for criticism to the teachers of the Academy, one of whom was Will H. Low, who said—"Young man, if you choose subjects like that and do them as well, there is promise for your future." So he sent it to a current exhibition and it was sold. Quoting his own words he "walked on air" for a few days and the thirty-five dollars was a fortune to him.

Sitting in a small room on Lexington Avenue he started classes in the Academy and sometimes night classes at the Y. M. C. A., where he met painters and illustrators who were friends for many years. He did enough crayon portraits to help himself through.

While a student in New York, Mr. Little

carried out the family custom of attending church on the Sabbath Day and went one day to a Friend's meeting where strangely enough, he found they were having a memorial service for his Aunt Catharine Foulke. He met several leaders of the meeting, who, learning of his work, gave him orders from time to time, thus helping him to help himself and as he expressed it—"kept the pot boiling" until spring when he returned to his home to work until he had earned enough to go on. So for six years, until about 1896, he went to Eagles Mere where he conducted classes and what was then Eagles Mere Chautauqua.

On one of his sketching trips in the autumn of 1898, Mr. Little went to Lewisburg where he found many interesting things to paint along the Susquehanna and Buffalo Valley. One rainy day he went to Bucknell University Library and met the librarian, Dr. William E. Martin. There began a life-long friendship. In looking over his little sketches, Dr. Martin became so interested that he insisted the artist must go to Europe in 1899. Calling in his friends around Bucknell, Dr. Martin sold sketches enough to make the trip possible. Mr. Little visited England, Paris and Holland, studying in the famous galleries and painting. At this point, he visited the country, Forest of Fontenbleau, where men like Millet, Dabigny and Corot painted. In Holland he studied in the Country of Rembrandt and Manve, the sheep painter. When Mr. Little returned to Eagles Mere with the results of his first trip, again Dr. Martin came and became salesman. A number of paintings of that period are still owned in Williamsport, Harrisburg and Washington..

The next year, spring of 1900 found the artist in Italy and Switzerland. The six weeks in Venice and three in Florence were to him a great inspiration.

In December 1900, after his marriage, he moved to Fort Washington near Philadelphia where the artist colony consisted of some of the best instructors of their day, at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. He made many trips afield or discussed methods of work with Thomas P. Anshutz, Hugh N. Breckenridge, Gen. Spencer Morris and J. H. Chadewick, all like Mr. Little, now passed away. At this time he joined the Philadelphia

Water Color Club, The Sketch Club, New York Water Color Society and Washington Water Color Club, and was a regular contributor to their yearly exhibitions. He also sent to the Chicago Art Institute—exhibited at San Francisco World's Fair, and St. Louis.

Another trip abroad, took the Little's for a six months stay in England, most of the time in beautiful Devonshire and the Wye Valley. Here he made a study of the English landscape painters. Especially was he interested in the work of Alfred East and from this study he seems to have developed that soft fine method shown in much of his later work.

He made a trip to Quebec, and another time to the cattle ranches in South Dakota. The large cattle picture painted there is owned by the Zimmerman Family in Somerset, Pennsylvania. He attended the Worlds Fair in California and always along the way he visited and studied important galleries of our country.

But he was always glad to come back to Pennsylvania which he said was like the people, "best on earth to him". Although he made many trips abroad making sketches and studies of foreign landscapes, yet his art and his heart were true to his homeland. So in the spring of 1906, the family moved to Picture Rocks. There he built his studio and there he found the kind of landscapes suited for his chosen medium—water color. Especially was he successful with his sheep and cattle pictures, and living in the valley near Muncy Creek, not far from the beautiful Susquehanna, he had every opportunity to study the early morning mists which he interpreted so well in his paintings.

What promises to be one of the most interesting social events of the season is the contemplated visit of the Cornell Glee, Banjo and Mandolin clubs on Friday next. In the afternoon Miss Beeber of West Fourth Street, will give a tea in their honor, and after the concert they go in a body to the charity ball, and leave for Pittsburg early Saturday morning. A list of patronesses include: Mrs. H. C. Parsons, Mrs. E. R. Payne, Mrs. H. C. McCormick, Mrs. J. Henry Cochran, Mrs. James S. Lawson, Mrs. R. P. Allen, Mrs. James Gibson, Mrs. S. T. McCormick,

Not alone was he successful in water color but the black and white drawings have been much admired. His fellow artists of the Sketch Club wrote of him: "We consider no man of his time did better work than Little's black and white." So good a draftsman was he that an artist friend referring to some small sketches, only a few inches square, said; "You know even on that small scale you could tell what kind of a tree it is. Every small line means something."

Again quoting from an artist friend; "I have every confidence in the thought that as time goes by his splendid works will be more appreciated by those for whom they were made and whose neighborhood and environment they portray—the people of Pennsylvania."

So he seems to belong here and it is very fitting that many of his paintings are owned here; some by private collectors in Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey. One is in the Bucknell Library, one in the Lycoming County Historical Society, one in the Brown Library and others are in several local high schools.

Mr. Little's death occurred in September, 1923 at the age of fifty-six. His works live on. We must judge them by quality rather than quantity.

He often quoted Kipling's poem:

"When earth's last picture is painted"—

Only the Master shall praise us
And only the Master shall blame
Uo one shall work for money
No one shall work for fame."

Mrs. E. A. Lyon, Mrs. Fletcher Coleman, Mrs. John T. Fredericks, Mrs. A. D. Lundy, Mrs. Brua C. Keefer, Mrs. A. Neimeyer, Mrs. Elias Deemer, Mrs. John M. Young, Mrs. J. V. Brown, Mrs. Henry Mosser, Mrs. C. E. Sprout, Mrs. D. T. Mahaffey, Mrs. Addison Candor, Mrs. Roscoe Huff, Mrs. Charles Stearns, Mrs. John K. Hayes, Mrs. J. K. Heilman, Mrs. N. B. Bubb, Mrs. Frank Parsons, Mrs. John Heilman, Mrs. James B. Coryell.

Williamsport Saturday Evening Review
Saturday, December 22, 1894

CRIME ON THE CANAL

by Dr. Lewis E. Theiss

As traditional paintings such as that of Washington crossing the Delaware create a false illusion, so it is suspected the pictures of idyllic, quiet, delightful stretches of the canal give us fallacious ideas about the Pennsylvania Canal in the early days and tell us nothing of the crime, dangers, and deaths on that artificial waterway. Yet these things constitute a part of the true history of the Pennsylvania Canal.

We all know that frontier life was a hard, desperate struggle. Only hardy and tough persons could endure it. Boating on the early canal was a pioneering experience in an absolutely new field and was no different from pioneering elsewhere. Intended to connect towns and cities lying far apart, the canal necessarily traversed great stretches of country almost as wild as virgin territory. As this artificial waterway pursued its way through the mountains and forests of the new country, it crossed wide areas where crime could flourish and criminals live almost undisturbed. Desperate men took full advantage of this situation.

The canal in this immediate region was completed about 1834. It had been several years in the building. The West Branch region, first opened for settlement as late as 1769, had been sadly held back in its development. First, there were Indian war-fares. Then came the Revolution, which produced the terrifying Wyoming Massacre, the Great Runaway, and the second Runaway. Thus all inhabitants were driven back from the frontier. Many never returned. Indian depredations continued. So it was not until a few years before 1800 that local settlements began in real earnest. Land speculators were another delaying factor. Buying land in great parcels, the speculator aimed to dispose of his holdings in one great sale, if possible, and get out. This hindered the division of the land into small parcels for genuine settlers.

Furthermore, the building of the canal had brought into the area great numbers of characters of the roughest sort. They came, in the main, to work. They got jobs and dug the canal. But they were rough beyond belief. It was a day when men showed their prowess by

doing battle. So these men fought as individuals and in gangs. Strife was to them as natural as existence. Unfortunately, many of them were so attracted to the countryside that they remained after the canal was completed. Some became boatmen. Some continued as laborers. Some started small businesses. And some became pirates.

In a way the Pennsylvania canal must have been as attractive to pirates as the Spanish main was to those earlier pirates of the sea. For here were rich cargoes to be looted. There had never been anything like it before. A Conestoga wagon, with a few tons of goods, had previously been about the biggest prize obtainable. But here were canal boats, loaded with booty—vast quantities of it. Even if the cargo were something unattractive, like coal or lumber, nevertheless the captain of the canal boat had money enough to make it worthwhile to rob him. He had to carry cash to pay canal tolls, buy provisions, pay wages, and so on.

The very construction of the canal facilitated robbery. When a sea pirate tried to rob another ship, he first had to catch that ship, then board it. And usually a sailing vessel had quite a crew to defend it. A canal boat crew consisted of the captain, the bowsman, and the mule driver, who was usually a lad of seven to ten years. They could put up little opposition to a gang. But the things that most facilitated robbery on the canal was the vast number of low bridges that spanned it. When a farmer had land on both sides of the canal, he had to have a bridge. There were hundreds of these bridges, just high enough to allow a canal boat to pass safely underneath. The phrase "low bridge" comes to us from canal days. The mule driver had to call out when he approached a bridge, so that the men on the boat would duck and not be knocked overboard by the bridge. These bridges were so low that a person could drop easily from them to the deck of a passing boat. Thus robbers would drop on a boat, sit passively until the craft reached some secluded bit of woodland or mountain, then beat the crew to death and rob them and the craft. It was an ideal set-up for crime.

Existing photographs of the canal give us the impression of peaceful beauty. We should remember however that photography did not become common until about 1876, almost half a century after they began to dig canals in America. There probably were no really accurate pictures of our canal in its earliest days. Those that have been seen were necessarily taken years after the canal was dug. Nature, meanwhile, had smoothed up the rough areas and produced that lovely landscape that seems typical of the canal. No doubt the canal was originally as rough as the men who dug it.

About one thousand miles of canals, the greatest canal system in the world, were dug in Pennsylvania. Much of this system was unnecessary and had resulted from log rolling in the legislatures. Every waterway of any size in the entire state had a canal beside it, and consequently these canals wound through hundreds of miles of remote isolated countryside and dense forest.

There was much beside isolated and rugged landscapes to promote crime. There was whiskey. In those days men drank it as freely as they drink water today. Whiskey sold for as little as a fip (6¼ cents) a half pint. The deadly stuff that we call applejack sold for 25 cents a gallon. A favorite drink was "black strap," a mixture of rum and molasses, which sold for three or four cents a glass. Boatmen drank endlessly. They could hardly avoid doing so. At every canal basin and dock, and even at some locks, drink could be had, and there were also floating saloons.

In this atmosphere all the evil in men came out. They fought almost continuously. Canal battles were savage affairs—fingers and ears were bitten off, eyes were gouged out, men were kicked brutally in the body and face. Any man who fell during a fight might be beaten almost to death by his victorious opponent. Fighting was endless. One boat crew fought another. One individual battled a second. Canal boat bullies were always picking quarrels in order to have an opportunity to exhibit their prowess. Many a man was killed in these senseless battles; and the number of injured and maimed was amazing. If two boats approached a lock at the same time, the crews fought to win first passage through the lock. If one canal boat managed to overtake and pass another, a battle was the inevitable result. Lasting hatreds grew from such battles, so that one boat crew held a grudge against

another crew. They fought every time they came near each other. At the docks, where boats might have to wait for days before they could be loaded, terrific battles occurred and almost always when the men were inflamed by drink. Many were naturally pugnacious. Again and again they were sneered at, egged on by wily comrades who wanted to be amused by a good fight. For one reason or another, idle boatmen were always fighting.

Perhaps all this will give us some idea of the rough, tough, brutal, almost barbarous days of the early canal. It goes without saying that such rough characters were more than willing to acquire property by theft. Once they started to commit a robbery, they stopped at nothing. Murder was commonplace with them.

Thefts along the canal differed as they do elsewhere. There were sneakthieves, who wanted to get something by stealth. There were boatmen who stopped at nothing in their efforts to steal. And there were some so brutal that they seemed to take delight in mutilating, beating, and even killing victims. It seems incredible.

The canal, of course, passed through countless farms. Here robbery was easy. Farmers were more or less defenseless, and fruit trees, henhouses, gardens, and so on, were easy prey. Further, for many years after the canal was opened, boats ran twenty-four hours a day. In the middle of the night, there was nothing to prevent a light-fingered boatman from helping himself to whatever he fancied. The farmer was sound asleep.

Thus orchards were robbed. Rail fences disappeared with appalling rapidity, for chestnut rails made the best firewood for cabin stoves. It is said that many farmers who lived beside the canal made a practice of planting three extra rows of sweet corn along the canal, because they knew the boatmen would strip about that number of rows during the corn season. Henhouses near the canal suffered sadly. Nothing was easier than for a boatman to step ashore and run ahead—canal boats averaged about three miles an hour—rifle a henhouse and overtake his boat.

Thefts of this kind, although they were criminal, were really of little importance. What mattered was the constant recurrence of robbery, often accompanied by brutal assaults, and even murder.

One of the roughest sections of the canal was the Schuylkill division, where so much

coal was shipped to market in canal boats. There canal robbers traveled in packs, attacking anything that appeared easy to capture. These organized pirates created a reign of terror throughout that entire region. They became known as the Schuylkill Rangers.

In a paper presented to the Schuylkill County Historical Society, Mr. M. T. Fellweiler said that these canal pirates came principally from Philadelphia. They lived in a rough region at the east side of the Schuylkill River, between Market and Shippen Streets. He said that their leaders were William Katen and "Red" Larry Carrol. They and their associates were organized for crime along the canal, just as in recent years the Capone gang and like organizations have been created to plunder in the cities.

It was, ordinarily, useless to resist them. The three members of a boat crew were of course no match for a gang of desperadoes. Yet on occasion some fearless boat captain did defy them successfully. For instance, one Peter Berger, captain of the boat "Rattlesnake," was one time attacked after he had tied his boat up to the Philadelphia wharf. Instantly Berger drew an old pistol from his pocket. He shot the leader of the gang dead, then drove the remainder of the attackers in wild flight from his boat. This brave act was noised abroad, and the Mayor of Philadelphia not only praised Berger but gave him a new revolver.

Captain Henry Boyer, of Reading, had a desperate battle with pirates. He was taking his boat through the Fairmount Dam in Philadelphia, at night. Well acquainted with the situation there, he felt sure that pirates would attack him. So he told his boy mule driver to signal him if pirates appeared. Then Boyer lay down on the deck with a sharp axe in his hand. After some time he heard his driver's warning signal. Boyer rose and stood ready. Presently a boat bumped into the side of his craft and gangsters started to swarm up on the deck. Boyer laid about him violently with the axe. He had the men at a disadvantage, and was able to rout them. Cut, bleeding, and battered, they dropped hastily back into their boat and pulled for the shore. That was the last Boyer saw of them.

A boat captain named John Hesser, whose crew was composed of a bowsman named Heiser and a boy mule skinner, came to a point on the canal a little below Dauberville. Here Hesser passed several boats belonging

to the Rangers. From one of the rear boats of the pirates, a Ranger called out "How are you going to vote?" Hesser did not reply. Thereupon, the pirate leaped to the canal bank and began to curse Hesser. The latter was quite equal to the occasion. He also jumped to the bank. What was more, he gave the pirate a terrific beating. But Hesser's situation was now precarious. The Rangers on the boats that had passed now stopped their boats, grabbed their guns—which, fortunately, needed caps for firing—and mounting their mules raced back to the scene of the strife. But by this time Hesser had his boat underway again and well off shore. So the mounted pirates pushed on ahead to Dauberville, to cut Hesser off. They tried to secure gun caps in the town but could get none. Hesser, meantime, had steered his craft to the opposite bank of the canal, and with his crew sought refuge in a stout farm house. The Rangers prepared to scuttle Hesser's boat. But the townsfolk came to Hesser's rescue. Rushing out with their guns and clubs, they drove the pirates off. Hesser got his boat back unharmed and was subsequently able to continue his voyage.

As time passed, these pirates became more successful. They also became bolder. Not content with robbing boats, they now planned to raid towns. On one occasion they even tried to take possession of Schuylkill Haven. That town was then a very considerable center. Undoubtedly news of their coming preceded them, for the men of Schuylkill Haven were organized and determined to crush the pirates. There were perhaps a dozen of the latter who reached the town. Meeting unsuspected resistance, they fled to a covered bridge. Here in the dark, they thought they could hold out. But the townsmen separated into two groups, and a group attacked from either side of the bridge. They poured in a deadly fire from both ends. One Ranger was killed. No doubt others were wounded. Somehow they managed to creep silently away. But when daylight came, the angry townsmen took up the trail. They found three of the gangsters in an old scow below the bridge and captured them. Four more were captured at a canal landing. Tied hand and foot, they were thrown into jail to await trial.

Repeated successes made the Rangers bold to the point of folly. On one occasion they even tried to capture Pottsville. The robber gang now numbered between 200 and

300. They believed that nothing could withstand them. But by this time the robbers had committed such awful crimes that folks were determined to wipe them out. The men of Pottsville prepared themselves. The sheriff called out a large posse of men, well armed. The militia was called out. The town defenders were a formidable group. When the pirates discovered what was ahead of them, they fled. Nevertheless, the soldiers were kept under arms for a considerable period, ready to march at a moment's notice.

No doubt the pirates were informed as to this continued state of preparedness. They made no further effort to take over Pottsville. Nor did they ever again make another effort on such a large scale. The public was becoming too thoroughly aroused. Eventually the pirates declined and disappeared. So ended the piracy on the Pennsylvania Canal.

But the passing of the pirates did not end roughness on the canal. Like anything else, the canal also had to go through the usual distinctive stages—birth, infancy, adolescence, and maturity. Any pioneer settlement is rough, just as the canal was in its early days. But as towns grew, they became more civilized, attain more culture, grow better in innumerable ways. It was so with the canal. Before it went out of existence, early in this century, it was truly a place of quiet and peace. Its navigators were men of standing and consequence. To be a canal captain and the owner of a canal boat gave a man standing.

To me, the interesting thing is how the

change from crude roughness to a smooth, peaceful existence came about. I may be wrong, but I believe it was due to the women. Just as women swarmed into airplane factories and other workshops during the late war, so, when the Civil War caused a grave shortage of men, the women became canalers. Canal boat captains took their wives with them on their trips. The wife substituted for the bowman. She took the place of one man. In short time the canal saw hundreds of women on its sunny waters.

And they cleaned up. They made the boats physically clean. They made them morally better. With their children aboard, for hundreds of families took to the canal, the women saw to it that decency reigned. There are many stories showing how these women became a scourge to the men of evil habits. They would not allow profanity on their boats. They were working all the time to make their new homes just as decent and comfortable and pleasant as their homes ashore had been. Flowers blossomed in the cabins, curtains waved at the open windows. The family wash fluttered above the deck on washdays. Men were better fed than they had ever been on canal boats. Little by little the standard of life on the canal rose.

It is gratifying to realize that it did. Perhaps we can better value the final condition of life on the canal when we recall its beginnings, and look back to those dark and fearsome days when pirates sailed the Pennsylvania Canal.

THE WILLIAMSPORT SATURDAY EVENING REVIEW — 1893

It has been noticed at the Lycoming Opera House the past week especially, that a larger number of women than usual have been taking off their hats during the performance. This is to be commended. We regret that it is impossible for them to take off their balloon sleeves. A woman who wears both a big hat and big sleeves should be cut dead by all civilized people.

The Williamsport Saturday Evening Review

It was our pleasure a few days ago to visit the club rooms of the Williamsport Wheel Club, and we found them located in very cozy and home-like quarters. They have four rooms, three of which are very handsomely furnished, while the fourth is used for a billiard room and entertainment hall. The boys have everything to make themselves comfortable, and they thoroughly enjoy being there.

The Williamsport Saturday Evening Review

EDITOR'S PAGE

PROGRESS

Without a knowledge of the past, there can be no real understanding of the present, and no informed guidance for the future. As the deeds of the day rapidly pass from remembrance with the passing of those who performed them, there can be no continuing knowledge of the past unless it is properly recorded and set forth in detail. This, in relatively recent years, local historical societies have been trying to do. Our own society, organized in 1907, has made an admirable effort to ferret out and present to its members many of these forgotten things of the past. In this respect it has done a valuable work.

But it is not enough to dig up these happenings of the past and present them only to the few. These valuable materials should be preserved for the use of all persons throughout the future. Because it has lacked funds, our society has not hitherto been able to print many of the manuscripts that have been prepared for its members, although it has printed a few papers. The only way to preserve all of these valuable materials is by printing them in a regular publication.

With regard to physical things—relics of the past, such as the implements and instruments of life in former days, the dishes and utensils used in the home, the things or machines or processes whereby our predecessors made this or did that, the clothes they wore, the things they used in both ordinary occupations and on special occasions—in collecting and preserving these articles our society has done an important and excellent job through our museum. Outstanding—and appropriately so—is our display relating to lumbering; for Williamsport was once the lumber capital of the globe. For here, students of the past can come, through the future, to see, to check, to learn, to become truly informed. But it has strained our resources to make our museum what it is and to keep it up. So we had no funds for a publication.

Nevertheless, the directors of the society feel that the day has come when we must ride two horses at once. In addition to the physical articles that we collect and preserve in the museum, we must see that hereafter none of the valuable written material that comes to us is lost. And that means that we must have a periodical of our own in which to record, at the least, the best and most valuable of the contributions that notable speakers have brought to us, and on which they have spent so many hours in research. This will be truly a service to posterity. If our society needs any justification, this will complete that justification. This will round out our work.

How important such an accomplishment may be, we of today cannot know. But we do know full well that history repeats itself. If any one doubts that, let him consider life. All human beings—like towns and nations—pass through the same stages of development—birth, infancy, youth, adolescence, maturity, and decay. Who would know enough to warn a child not to play with gasoline and matches if experience had not shown us the folly, and if such illuminating experience had not been preserved for our guidance? It is the same with matters of the spirit and in the realm of the mind. An indispensable guide to future safety is past experience.

Therefore, to complete our work, we can say to our members only that all progress has been accomplished at some cost, and that those who brought about that progress often achieved it in the face of what looked like insurmountable obstacles. We can hardly lag behind. So our officials feel that this society can no longer delay in making a start in the matter of recording permanently, for posterity the helpful and enlightening matter that is brought before it. Somehow the way will be found. What your officers ask is your whole-hearted cooperation.

Lewis E. Theiss

PANTHERS OF THE LOYALSOCK

by Henry W. Shoemaker

"THERE is no bigger sporting area in the eastern states than the Loyalsock Valleys, the waters of the 'Big' and 'Little' Socks of Central Pennsylvania. It is the recognized paradise of anglers, grouse shooters, and big game hunters, and scenically from the Flat Top to the Susquehanna it is the most stately beautiful region in the Keystone State. Time spent there brings a double profit, the wealth of sport, and the rich memories of the historic which linger for the rest of our lives: after a visit there, one can rightly say, "He who has not visited the Loyalsock Valleys has not seen Pennsylvania" 1.

The panther, wolf and bobcat were a constant menace and many narrow escapes were experienced by the settlers of this region.

Grandmother Rogers was one day going into the cellar of the old log house, her home in Forksville, when looking up she saw a large rattlesnake watching her from the wall. She hastily called one of the family and the snake was killed.

On another occasion Grandmother Rogers narrowly escaped from being carried off by a large panther. Hearing a loud call as if someone was in distress, she went through the woods along a trail towards a field where her husband was felling trees. On reaching him, she told him what she had heard. Grandfather Rogers asked her to give a loud call which she did, and immediately the panther which was secreted in the woods nearby, answered her. The John Warren hounds were secured and took the trail of the panther and drove him into a tree near Hillsgrove late in the night where he was shot by one of the settlers. When measured he was found to be eleven feet from the tip of his nose to the tip of his tail.

Fred W. Rink, formerly of Potter County, now the well-known knife maker of Allenwood, says that with a pal, Fred Ayers, they batched it in a shed near Raymond's Corners, Potter County, and got their drinking water every night from the spring within a mile of the Genessee and Pine Creek. They would hear a panther roar in the great hardwood forest north of the spring, nearly every wintry night. Other nights when they got to the spring they would let out bloodcurdling

howls, which the hidden "painter" would quickly answer. After that date panthers were heard in various parts of Potter, Tioga, and Lycoming Counties.

"The wolves were long gone in Potter County in my day", said Mr. Rink", but there were some in McKean county as late as 1888 or 1889 and a stray one here and there after that."

While George Cunningham, a Bedford County truckman was returning from the Altoona market in 1893, a full grown panther leaped from a tree along the mountain road and landed on the back of one of his horses. Cunningham was dozing at the time and the sudden scream of his horses as the animal leaped from the tree, scared him so badly that he almost fell from the wagon. The panther was evidently frenzied with hunger for it immediately began gnawing on the neck of the horse upon which it landed. Cunningham, still nervous from fright, seized his revolver and fired at the beast on the horse's back. In his excitement he missed the panther but shot his horse in the head. The horse fell in its tracks and the panther escaped to the forest. This is the fourth panther which had been seen on the mountain roads in this locality during the summer. Cunningham left his dead horse on the mountain and managed to get to a nearby house with the other horse. Evidently the panther was frightened by the revolver shot as it did not return to finish the slain work horse.

A female panther with two cubs was seen by several hunters crossing the roads in the summer of 1953 near the sources of the "Little" Sock.

It was in the Loyalsock Country near Wright's View on an evening in the fall of 1952 when Dr. Donald Cadzow, head of the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission, noted Arctic explorer and naturalist, saw a huge black panther on the highway. This giant cat may be the "outlaw" which terrorized residents of Bobst Mountain, Lycoming County during the spring of 1954, and was two weeks later seen in the Northumberland County Mountains near Mount Carmel.

1. Quotation from U. S. Senator Boise Penrose.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A BOOM RAT

by James Myers

Prior to the year 1846 it is doubtful that the idea of locating a boom on the West branch of the Susquehanna River ever occurred to any one other than James H. Perkins; if so, there is no record of it. In December 1845, he came to Williamsport with John Leighton for the purpose of engaging in the manufacture of lumber and soon realized the advisability of building a boom at or near Williamsport. Soon after their arrival here, they directed their attention to the matter of location and settled upon what is known as Long Reach.

The mountains on the south side of the river afforded a strong barrier to the overflowing of the logs after they would once be inside the boom, and the bend in the river at this point and for miles above would draw the logs to the south side of the river.

In 1846, there was but one sawmill in Williamsport. It was known as the Big Water Mill and was built by a Philadelphia Company in 1838-1839. The company failed and the property was purchased at Sheriff's sale by Abraham Updegraff, James Armstrong and Mr. Perkins. Mr. Perkins soon became the sole owner and it was he who became interested in obtaining a charter for the incorporation of a boom company.

The Susquehanna Boom Company was incorporated by an act of the General Assembly of the State of Pennsylvania and approved by Governor Francis R. Shunk on the twenty-sixth of March, 1848. The original stock consisted of one-hundred shares at \$100 a share. It was sold to the following stockholders: John Leighton, one share; John DuBois, Jr., twenty-five shares; Matthias DuBois, Twenty-five shares; James H. Perkins, twenty-four shares; Isaac Smith, twenty shares; and Elias S. Lowe, five shares.

Prior to the erection of the boom great difficulty was encountered in getting the logs to the sawmills. They had to be watched all the time for fear of getting away and going down the river. In those early days the lumbermen used small boats to pick out and fasten the logs together in the form of rafts. To prevent these logs from escaping in the night, men were stationed at several points in and along the river to catch the logs as

they came down. To enable them to see a large fire was built on the river bank and another on a flat boat in the middle of the river. This primitive method of securing the logs was continued until the spring of 1849 when J. H. Perkins, the pioneer of the boom movement put in two temporary booms. Constructed with sunken cribs, one was located at Goose Island and another at the lower end of the location of the latter boom or in the vicinity of the present Maynard Street bridge. These temporary booms however, proved to be only partially effective when it came to catching any great number of the logs as they came down the river. From the day after the organization of the Susquehanna Boom Company arrangements were made to accept proposals for building twelve cribs, five to be completed in the spring and the remaining seven in the fall. More piers were put in under contract of December 8th and the structure was complete enough to hold all the logs that came down the following spring. The Loyalsock Boom Company was organized several months after the building of the Susquehanna Bom Co. to take care of the handling of the logs for the mills below the dam. Trouble soon arose between the two companies caused mainly by logs of the lower company passing through the boom of the upper company. In the winter of 1857 the two companies petitioned the legislature to consolidate and this was done. The officers of both companies met and adopted measures for the proposed consolidation. Commissioners were appointed who appraised the property value of the two corporations. Each stockholder in the new company received an equal number of shares corresponding to his previous holdings; thus a specified number of shares to cover the amount agreed upon as the monetary value of their boom property.

The first notable event in the history of the new company was the flood of 1860. Up to this point there had been only ordinary high waters causing little or no damage. In 1860 however, many of the logs were lost. The boom had been hung and was ready for the next flood. The first logs had been brought into the boom on very low water with little or no racking, the logs just covering the sur-

face for the full length of the boom. While the boom was in this condition, a later flood brought in a large addition of logs which increased the pressure from the high water and caused a violent surging of the whole mass. As the logs settled down the pressure was so great as to rupture the portion of the boom known as the "sheer" or "fly" where there were no cribs to resist the pressure caused by the jamming of the logs.

Owing to the breaking of the sheer and its failure to direct logs into the boom at this point, more than fifty million feet of logs were driven with irresistible force down the river and into the Chesapeake Bay.

During the summer of 1860 a contract was made with Crisswell and Day to build fifty-four cribs up the middle of the river. These were to be about twenty feet wide, forty feet long and twenty feet high. They were like huge crates formed by heavy timbers crossing each other at the ends and spiked together with large oak pins. At the bottom heavy timbers were laid side by side through the entire length forming a floor. The cribs were then filled with stones and acted as monstrous anchors on the bottom of the river. Inch and one-quarter cable was then used to secure the floating boom rather than the less substantial buoys.

In the month of September 1861 there occurred another of those disastrous floods almost as damaging as the one in 1860. There had been only light waters during the early part of the summer necessitating the holding back of most of the logs. During the height of this flood the Lock Haven Boom broke. The logs held there were carried by the violent current down the river crushing everything in their way, tearing board rafts loose from their fastenings and hurling the whole mass upon our boom with such sudden force as to tear out the sheer boom and one of the large cribs. This flood meant another loss of many millions of feet of logs. The boom was repaired and hung in time to catch the first logs of the next season.

The experience gained by the boom company during the first few years of operation convinced them that the boom could be very much stronger by reducing the distance between the old cribs from two-hundred feet to one-hundred feet. The contract was then given to Mr. John J. Berry to build forty-one new cribs beginning at the upper end of the boom and working down constructing one new

crib between each two of the old ones. This was the last contract made by the boom company for extending or repairing of their booms.

The following spring occurred the great St. Patrick's Day flood when the river was twenty-six feet above low water mark. The entire boom was under water yet there was very little damage done to the boom itself and no damage to the cribs. However, when the water had subsided the company added from four to six feet to the height of all the cribs in order to guard against a similar flood in the future.

The company erected its boom at Linden by connecting the two islands at that point and built a new dam to replace the old one in 1867. The dam was a vital part of the boom which must take the greatest amount of pressure in the event of extremely high water.

The operation of the boom itself was based primarily on controlling the logs as the current brought them down the stream. The mechanics of the operation was simple but the control of the water level itself was impossible. Extremely high water or extremely low water forestalled any efforts at handling the logs. The essential parts of the boom were the cribs, the sheer boom, the fly boom and the rafting channel. The cribs which have been described extended from the dam to a point about six miles up the river. These were nothing more than huge anchoring places to which were fastened the logs making up the side boom. These logs were fastened to the cribs by inch and one-half iron rings and cleaves. When in place the side boom was a continual chain of logs anchored every one-hundred feet to one of the cribs. The sheer boom was constructed the same as the side boom running from the upper end of the main boom at an angle of about ten degrees, four-hundred feet to a crib about two-hundred feet from shore. This two-hundred foot opening was left to take care of the rafts and other timber not to go through the boom. This space could be closed at will with a device known as a fly boom similar in construction to the sheer boom. Thus one can see that the upper end of the boom acted as a gigantic funnel designed to bring the logs into a position where they could be controlled. The rafting channel at the lower end of the boom was the place where the sorting was done. There the logs were taken as they came, sorted into

rafts according to the owner's stamp, scaled for the quantity of lumber contained and made ready to be run to the many mills below.

The cribs were the only permanent fixtures of the boom. All floating timbers were removed at the close of the rafting season and harbored in the winter to be replaced the following spring.

One of the largest and most efficient booms in the country in its day, The Susquehanna Boom employed from one-hundred and fifty to two-hundred men and boys. Boys went to work on the boom rafting logs together when they were eleven to thirteen years old. Because of their agility in scurrying around, they were soon termed "boom rats" by the older men. The following is a list of jobs to which some of these "boom rats" might attain if they stayed in the business: Wedge-drivers, shovers, plankmen, pullers, cornermen, checkers, channel rushers, wedge-makers, cant hook maker, log runners, log scalers, hacker rope men, blacksmith, pikepole makers, footbook makers, and channel boss. The men on these different jobs in the years 1862-1882 rafted out over 18,738,000 logs. This meant a board foot measure of 3,536,741,000 feet. Though this is a tremendous figure it must be realized that in those days of wasteful cutting and careless manufacturing many, many millions of board feet must have been wasted.

As the boom was finally constructed it was as efficient a method possible for handling the large volume of logs that came down the river. But efficient as it was it was not able to cope with the river in the years 1889 and 1894. In those two years no boom ever built by man would have held back the logs that were thrown down the Susquehanna by that raging torrent. On June 1, 1889 when the river crested at thirty-three and one-half feet, there were over three hundred million feet of logs in the boom. These logs were jammed toward the lower end of the boom and racked twelve to sixteen deep. When the boom broke, the logs spread out into a single layer and covered the city from Arch Street in Newberry to the Pennsylvania Railroad bridge east of the city. Logs, lumber, lath, pickets, sidewalks, chicken houses and hog pens were strewn from Williamsport to the Atlantic Ocean. A sawmill that was built at Sparrow's Point, Md. sawed the logs that had settled on farms nearby. That mill was sawing logs for four years that had come down in the 1889 flood. After lying idle one year the mill was

repaired in order to take care of the logs that came down in the flood of 1894. When the boom broke on those two occasions a large number of logs finally landed where there were no mills to saw them into lumber. These logs were loaded on to flatcars and hauled by the Pennsylvania Railroad back to the boom above Duboistown where they were rolled down the bank and put into the same boom from which they had escaped three months before. John F. Wahl of the Pennsylvania Railroad said that he fired the engine that brought the first train-load of logs back to the boom. When the boom broke in the year 1889, the men were lustily enjoying the spectacle aided by the consumption of many gallons of whiskey. They composed a song and sang all day for the boss' benefit:

"Boom Boss Dinehart Stood on the Bank,
But there was a hole in the bottom of the boom.
There's a hole in the bottom of the boom,
There's a hole in the bottom of the boom,
There's a hole in the bottom,
There's a hole in the bottom,
There's a hole in the bottom of the boom".

The year 1909 marked the end of the boom days. All but a few of the forest giants had been felled, and the industry had moved to new fields in the northwest. Insufficient water in 1908 allowed only half the logs to be brought in, the other half to be held until 1909. That year marked not only the blight on a great industry in Williamsport but also a blight on our native chestnut trees and the end of a national pastime—chestnut picking in the autumn.

Bowman and Foresman Company contracted with the Susquehanna Boom Company to buy all the usable timber of the boom. This usable timber was made up primarily of the boom sticks which ranged anywhere from forty to seventy feet long. The boom crew collected and towed these sticks from the upper end to the harbour behind Goose Island just above the Newberry-Duboistown bridge. The few logs left in the boom had to be floated by constructing a splash dam because of low water. In the final rafting there were only three marks to be sorted; Brown, Clark and Howe, Central Pennsylvania Lumber Company and the Star Mill.

So passed an industry that made the name of Williamsport synonymous with millionaires and sawdust.

WE HONOR

DR. LEWIS E. THEISS

Past President

Lycoming Historical Society

Presented Lewisburg D. A. R. Merit Award

At the meeting of the Shikelimo Chapter, DAR, at Lewisburg, Dr. Lewis E. Theiss was presented the award of merit in recognition of his outstanding contributions through his writings and through service. This annual award is presented to a man or woman in a community who has made outstanding contributions either to the community, to youth or to both. The citation follows:

"As author of forty-five books for boys which have been called (An Orientation Course in the Life of Boys) in which loyalty, truth, integrity and knowledge are emphasized, he has had a definite influence on the American Way of Life. A descendent of many ancestors who fought in the Revolutionary War, he comes honestly by his interest in American History, where he has worked extensively especially with Susquehanna historical tales.

"He is a charter member of the William Maclay Chapter, SAR, Past State Historian and now a director of the SAR. Long active in Boy Scout work, he was a member of the original Susquehanna Valley Area Council of Boy Scouts, and its second president. In recognition of this work he was awarded the Silver Beaver Badge, the highest honor a local council can bestow.

The Lycoming Historical Society congratulates Dr. Theiss on this award.

In Memoriam

COL. HERBERT R. LAIRD

Past President

Lycoming Historical Society

To no single member in its history is the Lycoming Historical Society more deeply indebted than to Col. Herbert R. Laird, whose death occurred on Feb. 12, 1955. He had marked his 88th birthday anniversary on the preceding Feb. 7.

His was the leadership which founded the society, the vision which planned the broad base of its continuing usefulness, and the energy which made the museum property a reality.

It is a strange coincidence that the issue of the Sun which announced Colonel Laird's death also published elsewhere in its columns the fact that 15 years earlier (in February, 1940) he had just completed raising by personal subscriptions the sum of \$6,000 for the museum. This money was used to purchase the home of the late J. Roman Way on West Fourth Street, opposite Maynard Street, which property was converted for museum purposes.

While Colonel Laird was the moving spirit behind the formation of a historical society, he was not its first president. He yielded that honor to C. LaRue Munson, gifted attorney of this city. However, in later years, Colonel Laird served two periods as president.

Both of these were marked by unusual accomplishments. During one term, as mentioned, he led the campaign for a permanent home. During the other, he inaugurated a campaign which multiplied the society's membership.

His labors in behalf of this society, and in the interests of this community, will keep his memory green for long years to come.

-Paul G. Gilmore

ACCESSIONS TO THE MUSEUM

Books, Frontier Forts of Pennsylvania. Two volumes; Gift of Miles Sucher; Second Edition.

Pamphlet, Pennsylvania Federation of Junior Historians, Volume X, Number 1, December, 1953; Gift of Miss Mary Hill, Nisbet, Penna.

Golden Anniversary (1904-1954) Year Book; Gift of Pennsylvania Association, Harrisburg, Pa.

Board of Trade Bulletin for Williamsport, Penna.; Gift of George R. Lamade.

Business Ledgers, Johnston and Gibson Store, (Probably located in Linden, Penna.) 1843, 1845; Gift of Mrs. John C. Hays, Nisbet, Penna.

Four Kitchen Utensils Used on Canal Boat. Five Tools used by Abraham Clemens in making Canal Boats; Gift Unknown.

Metal Cherry-Seeder; Gift of Myles Santchi, Salladasburg, Penna.

Black Ribbon Necklace, Three Etched Silver Dimes, one dated 1885; Loan.

Lace Collar and Handkerchief, Lace Edge; Loan.

Blue Beaded Purse with Vanity Case and Chain; Loan.

Three Tortoise Shell Combs; Loan.

Light Blue and Silver Round Purse; Loan.

Mother-of-Pearl Hat Buckle; Loan.

Hand Painted Pin; Loan

Gold Ladies Pencil and Ribbon; Loan. These loans were all made by Miss Catharine Thompson, Williamsport, Penna.

White Dress, Lace and Embroidery, worn in the Gay 90's; Gift of Miss Lillian Hyman, Williamsport, Pa.

Large Black Velvet Hat with Plume; Gift of the Misses Cady.

Red Paisley Shawl; Gift—In memory of Joseph Smith Ault by her Cousin, Mrs. A. W. Baird, New York, N. Y.

Log Piece, Marked A/C; Gift

Sewing Machine; Gift of Mrs. Jalsnia, South Williamsport, Penna.

One Collection of Ten Manuscripts; Gift of Mrs. Walter McVeagle, Williamsport, Penna.

One Collection of Twelve Manuscripts; Gift of Ralph Gibson, Williamsport, Penna.

Two Pictures—Fort Freeland and Fort Rice; Gift of Ralph Gibson, Williamsport, Penna.

Hypodermic Syringe, Carried by Doctor Reinwald when killed by a Panther on Block House Creek in 1864; Gift of Mrs. Fae C. Yeatman, Wellsboro, Penna.

Baton, Presented in 1874 to George M. Repasz by Members of His Band and Friends; Gift of Mrs. C. W. Witlirow, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Juke Box and Records; Gift of Charles A. Hinkal, Williamsport, Penna.

Paintings—An Early Market Street Bridge; Gift of Mrs. Margaret Schults, Williamsport, R. D., Penna.

Lycoming Gazette, Extra, 1861; Gift of Mr. Lewis W. Bluemle, Williamsport, Penna.

Number of Edison Cylinder Records for Phonograph; Gift of Mr. W. Bluemle, Williamsport, Penna.

Picture of One of Two Sprinklers First Used on Streets of Williamsport, Penna.; Gift of Miss Casey, Williamsport, Penna.

Script, Two Pieces, Issued by Williamsport, Penna.; Gift of Mr. Patrick A. McGowan, Williamsport, Penna.

Script, One Piece, Issued by Borough of Williamsport, January 27, 1863; Gift of V. Bowman, Marietta, Penna.

Stuffed Squirrel for Museum and Empty Squirrel Cage; Gift of W. H. Corson, Williamsport, Penna.

Two Locomotive Engineer Torches; Gift.

Navy Uniform Worn by First County Woman Enlisted in World War I. Served as a Yeoman, Second Class Under Navy Colors, August 23, 1918, until August 14, 1919; Gift of Mrs. Dorothy Palmateer London, formerly of Williamsport, now of Florida.

World War I Uniform, Red Cross Motor Corp Unit, Organized and Served in Lycoming County. Cap, Sam Brown Belt and Lapel Pins part of Uniform of this Unit; Gift of Mrs. John C. Hays, Nisbet, Penna.

Canteen Worker's Red Cross Veil, worn during World War I serving in Williamsport; Gift of Mrs. John C. Hays, Nisbet, Penna.

Two Bibles—One German and One English; Gift of Miss Charlotte Zahn, Williamsport, Penna.

Indian Stone War Club; Loan of Mr. Will F. Myers, Williamsport, Penna.

Indian Hatchet; Loan of Mr. Will Myers, Williamsport, Penna.

Model Maple Syrup Processing Equipment; Gift of Mr. William Sechrist, Williamsport, Penna.

Model Applebutter Boiling Equipment; Gift of Mr. William Sechrist, Williamsport, Penna. Charcoal Iron; Gift of Doctor L. E. Wurster, Williamsport, Penna.

C. S. CORYELL NAMED NEW PRESIDENT

C. Stewart Coryell was elected president of the Lycoming Historical Society at the organization's final meeting of the season Thursday night at the Woman's Club.

Dr. L. E. Wurster, outgoing president, presided at the meeting.

Other officers elected were:

Morris H. Housel, first vice president; Gibson G. Antes, second vice president; James P. Bressler, third vice president; A. Roy Flannagan, treasurer; Miss Della G. Dodson, secretary.

Directors chosen for a two-year term, are:

Mrs. Catherine W. Cochran, Mrs. Frieda Coleman and Joseph G. Winton.

Speaker for the Meeting

Dr. Wurster introduced the speaker, Carl W. Drepperd director of the Pennsylvania Farm Museum of Landis Valley, Lancaster.

Dr. Drepperd spoke briefly on the pioneer history of the Conestoga Valley and told at length about the Landis brothers whose collecting antiquities of all descriptions made possible the founding of the present Pennsylvania Farm Museum. Gathering such things as tools, furniture, china, and books from 1888 until 1938, the Landis brothers left to the State of Pennsylvania over 500,000 separate items.

Although several persons have been cataloguing all items during the past winter, only five per cent of the pieces have been listed, so involved is the task; each piece must be thoroughly cleaned, researched, and checked for authenticity and duplication.

Dr. Drepperd stated that the Landis Brothers with their indiscriminate collecting had inadvertently saved for posterity many invaluable objects that would otherwise have been lost or destroyed.

In referring to county historical societies and local museums the speaker, author of 12 books and consulting editor of "Spinning Wheel", advised that a museum should extend itself. A museum that does not continue to grow soon becomes a mausoleum, he said adding that every local businessman and industrialist should be interested in the welfare of his local historical society and museum because they can mean actual money profits to him.

Citing the Hamilton Watch Company as an example, Mr. Drepperd said that a business man who has at his fingertips the history of his particular organization or field gains prestige through which he can realize a real profit.

Remarks on Book

Remarking on his forthcoming book, "How to Furnish Your Home in Good Taste at No Cost," Mr. Drepperd avowed that he was serious. He admitted that a certain cash outlay was necessary but claimed that the inevitable increase in the value of the antiques will more than balance the original cost.

His own furnishings are worth five-hundred per cent more today than they were 25 years ago. He advised young couples to study books on antiques so that they can learn to recognize bargains and collect intelligently.

Following the talk by Mr. Drepperd, Mr. Coryell, the incoming president announced that the annual pilgrimage of the historical society will be held on June 15 or in case of rain June 22. Members will go by bus to the Muncy home of Dr. Lewis E. Theiss, author historian and former professor at Bucknell University.

At the conclusion of the meeting cake and coffee were served to members and guests. Mrs. Ferd Coleman was in charge of the refreshments.

Dear Reader:

Do you like the first edition of your "JOURNAL"? This publication has been prepared from the materials submitted by members of this society.

Your Publication Committee wishes to make the next issue an account of your memories. What do you remember of your childhood? What was Williamsport and the surrounding area like 20-30-40 years ago? Will you write us a note about an event, an incident, your childhood furniture or dolls or toys, your schooldays, your chores -- anything you can remember? Please send this to:

Miss Della G. Dodson, Secretary

Lycoming Historical Society

723 W. Fourth St.

Williamsport, Pa.

Will you do this within the next few weeks? We'd like to have a big "JOURNAL" next time. Each of you must send us a memory if we are to have the contents interesting and pleasing to you.

The future success of the "JOURNAL" depends on a continuing supply of material coming to the editors. We want, for consideration, original manuscripts on subjects of historical interest with preferably a Lycoming County setting. We will also consider reprints now in public domain of especially unusual items. You are invited to send any material you feel would be of interest to the members of the Lycoming Historical Society.

Sincerely yours,

The Editors