CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

125 years ago Thomas Bell, the President of the Linnean Society of London, had the opportunity to review that society's activities for 1858. He concluded that the year had not "been marked by any of those striking discoveries which at once revolutionize, so to speak, the department of science on which they bear." Poor Thomas Bell. His oversight gives pause to anyone whose duty it is to comment on a year's activities by a community of scholars. It was at the Linnean Society's July 1, 1858 meeting, in a pair of papers by Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace, that the theory of evolution by natural selection, the most important development in the biological sciences in the nineteenth century, was first publicly announced.

The problem that confronted Thomas Bell (even if he did not realize it was confronting him) is one that the Nobel Prize committees have sought to evade, though they have had to ignore one of the stipulations of Alfred Nobel's to do so. Specifically, the prize committees have balked at the task of awarding the prizes to achievements made during "the preceding year." They have found, in general, that more time is needed to put in perspective achievements in those areas which the inventor of dynamite wanted most to encourage: physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, and the promotion of peace.

With the above examples as an excuse, the present columnist has opted to leave to the readers of History at Illinois the pleasure of contemplating which of the many scholarly contributions reported in the following pages might in time be regarded as revolutionary with respect to the particular fields of history on which they bear. There are numerous achievements listed below—publications, honors, prestigious grants for research, important professional services—which are both a great credit to individual members of the faculty and a source of pride for the department. The reader is invited to consider these and the other items reported in the faculty news section.

Several other items regarding the department deserve mention here and promise to look as important in retrospect as they do now:

(1.) During the past year the Department of History had its first occasion in more than a decade to hold a retirement party. When Robert Sutton, Professor of History and Director of the Illinois Historical Survey, retired in the spring, a host of well-wishers from near and far gathered to honor Bob and his family. To the retirement of Bob Sutton was added the resignation of Professor Benett Hill, who has become a member of St. Anselm's Abbey in Washington, D.C., and anticipates being ordained in 1984. Professors Sutton and Hill each served as Chairman of the Department of History. They were valued as scholars and teachers as well. Their services will be greatly missed. At the beginning of the fall 1983 semester, Professor J. Leonard Bates announced his decision to take an early retirement at the end of the 1983-84 academic year. The department as a result has had all the more reason to reflect on the very special contributions made by long-time members of the faculty and on the extent of the changes that are likely to take place in the department within the next decade.

(2.) A General History Endowment Fund, made possible by thoughtful and generous gifts from alumni and friends, has been established for the department through the University of Illinois Foundation. The fund will enable the department to continue to award annually certain special prizes to meritorious undergraduate and graduate students in history. As the fund grows, it should be able to help support additional worthwhile departmental endeavors as well. Special thanks are due to the anonymous benefactor whose donations have created a solid financial base for the Joseph Ward Swain Prize, which is awarded for the best graduate student paper each year. Continued thanks are also due to the other generous benefactors who have established other faculty and student awards for the department.

ROBERT SUTTON RETIRES

The department as it has been known to most readers of History at Illinois has been altered significantly, owing to the retirement of Robert M. Sutton. Few people have served the department on p. 2

(3.) While there is no denying that most of the great works of history to date have been written with pen, pencil, or typewriter, it is probably worthy of note that the department has added two microcomputers to its technological armamentarium. The departmental secretaries are using the new machines for word-processing. By the end of the year we hope to have at least two additional machines, primarily for faculty use in research and writing. Like many technological developments, these new machines are drawing mixed reactions from humanists. Some scholars see salvation in them; others regard them as they would an electric heater perched on the rim of a bathtub. During the course of the year we will be learning more about the various opportunities and constraints the microcomputers provide or impose upon us.

We look forward very much to hearing from alumni and friends, and we hope that this annual newsletter will continue to stimulate contact. Again this year it is to Professor Wallace Farnham that we owe thanks for editing History at Illinois.

Richard W. Burkhardt, Chair
PAUL DRACKE LYNNY TOPPY PROMOTED

Three historians have received promotions in 1986. Paul Drake, to the rank of professor, and John Lynn and Ronald Topp to the rank of associate professor, will work with"..."...

Drake's promotion comes in recognition of his work on the development of the department, and his contributions to the study of American history. His research on the history of the South has been particularly influential, and he has published extensively on the subject. In addition to his research, he has also played an important role in the education of historians, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

John Lynn's promotion is a reflection of his contributions to the history of the Pacific Northwest. His research on the history of the region has been widely praised, and he has written several books on the subject. His work has helped to shape our understanding of the region's history.

Ronald Topp's promotion is a recognition of his work on the history of the Midwest. His research on the history of the region has been particularly influential, and he has published extensively on the subject. In addition to his research, he has also played an important role in the education of historians, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

The department is grateful for the contributions of these three historians, and we look forward to seeing them continue to make important contributions to the field of history.

PAUL DRACKE LYNNY TOPPY PROMOTED

Three historians have received promotions in 1986. Paul Drake, to the rank of professor, and John Lynn and Ronald Topp to the rank of associate professor, will work with...
A SABBATICAL REPORT

by Ann Nichols

The sabbatical year was spent in Europe, largely in France. The main purpose was to continue research on the history of childhood in the 19th century, with a particular focus on the role of philanthropy in the development of child welfare policies. The sabbatical was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, which allowed me to work on my research in a more focused and intensive manner. I also had the opportunity to travel extensively in Europe, visiting archives, libraries, and museums to conduct research on the subject.

During my sabbatical, I spent several months in Paris, where I had the opportunity to work at the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Musée de l'Armée. I also visited the archives of the Mauguio and the Musée de l'Histoire de l'Enfance, which were instrumental in my research. In addition, I spent time in London, where I worked at the British Library and the National Portrait Gallery.

I also had the opportunity to participate in several conferences and workshops, including the International Conference on the History of Childhood, held in Paris, and the Conference on the History of Childhood in Europe, held in Amsterdam. These events provided me with valuable opportunities to discuss my research with other scholars and to learn about the latest developments in the field.

Overall, my sabbatical was a productive and rewarding experience, and I am grateful for the support of my colleagues and the funding agencies that made it possible.
1975

RONALD C. BROWN crossed the great divide into tenured territory and an associate professorship of history at Southwest Texas State University; he serves also as director of the honors program. His “Western Miners in the Twentieth Century” appeared in Natural Resources in Colorado and Wyoming, edited by Duane A. Smith, in 1982, and he discussed “Our Students Need to Write” at a meeting of the Southwestern Social Science Association. He was on leave during the spring of 1983 with a grant from the American Philosophical Society.

HARRY BUTWICKY has been promoted to the grade of GS-13 historian in the National Park Service. He is engaged in a study of national historic landmarks related to the theme “Man in Space,” in connection with which he has lectured and written on the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, and other historic landmarks, for the Park Service. He continues to teach part-time at George Mason University and in April visited Urbana to discuss opportunities for historians in the Park Service with Illinois graduate students.

PARK M. COBLE, associate professor of history at the University of Nebraska, spent the past year as a research associate at the Fairbank Center for East Asian Research at Harvard, aided by an SSRC grant. He presented papers at China Seminars at Harvard, Columbia, and in Chicago. Currently he is finishing a manuscript on Japanese imperialism and Chinese politics, 1931-1937.

DAN M. HOCKMAN, associate professor of history at Eastern Illinois University, has focused on the teaching of history with a paper on “Why Teach History” at a meeting of the Illinois Council for the Social Studies along with two new courses and his sponsorship of local chapters of Phi Alpha Theta and the History Club.

JOHN D. KLIER has been promoted to a full professorship of history at Fort Hays State University. He delivered papers at meetings of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, the Central Slavic Conference, and the Rocky Mountain Slavic Studies Association.

JAMES A. SCHMIECHEN has achieved both tenure and a University Research Professorship for the year, the latter to work on art and politics in nineteenth-century Britain. His book Sweated Trades: Industrialized Sweated Labor, The London Clothing Trades, 1867-1914 is to be published in the very near future by the University of Illinois Press.

1976

PHILIP VANDER MEER has moved to San Antonio as an assistant professor of history on tenure track at the University of Texas. He has published “Congressional Decision-Making and World War I: A Case Study of Illinois’ Congressional Opponents” in Congressional Studies 8 (1981), along with several book reviews. He spoke on “Religion and Politics” at Notre Dame and “Hoosier Politics in the Progressive Era” at Purdue and continues his varied activities in the Social Science History Association.

1977

DIMITRO D. LAZO, assistant professor of history and coordinator at Alverno College (Milwaukee), delivered papers on "Protestant Home Missions to the Immigrant: The Work of Paul Fox in Chicago’s Pilsen," "The Illinois History Symposium, and "Teaching Family History: Strategies and Sources," at the Wisconsin Council for the Social Studies. He serves the Wisconsin Association for the Promotion of History on its board of directors as and editor of its newsletter.

1978

GERALD W. DAY, assistant professor of history at the University of Miami, is the author of “Genoese Prosopography (12th-13th Centuries): The State of the Question and Suggestions for Research,” Medieval Prosopography 4 (1983) and of a paper, “The Crusading Alliance between Genoa and the Marquises of Montferrat” delivered at the annual conference of the Institute for Medieval Studies. He is faculty advisor for Phi Alpha Theta and the History Club.

FRANCIS R. SWIETEK, assistant professor of history at the University of Dallas, published several book reviews and the article “Conversio et Passio Sancte Acre: A Poem by Alkmann of St. Florian, Pupil of Rahewin of Freising,” Mittelalterliches Jahrbuch 17 (1982). During the summer, 1982, he took part in an NEH seminar at the University of Iowa.

JEFFREY P. BROWN is in his second year as a visiting assistant professor of history at Lake Forest College. He has recently published “Timothy Pickering and the Northwest Territory,” Northwest Ohio Quarterly and “The Ohio Federalists, 1803-1815,” Journal of the Early Republic 3 (1983).

RANDALL E. McGOWEN is in his second year teaching British history at the University of Oregon (Eugene).

1980


JAMES J. FARRELL, assistant professor of history at St. Olaf College, published “The Dying of Death: Historical Perspectives,” in Death Education 6 (1982). He has finished a term as executive secretary of the Upper Midwest Conference and delivered a paper “The Bomb That Fell on America” at its 1983 meeting.