

G-Miller-Tamara-20050311130002

To: Julie L. Sigall
Associate Register for Policy & International Affairs

Date: 03/11/2005

From: Tamara G. Miller
Title: Editor
Org: Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Comment:

I am the editor of the Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, which has been published by The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP) since 1877. Beginning in 2006 we will be putting our journal online. We would like to put our back issues online as well, but hesitate because of copyright concerns. Before 2000, HSP did not routinely obtain copyright from authors whose works we published. While we can go back and find authors for works published in the last couple of decades and ask their permission to put their articles online, for our older issues, that is an impossibility. We can put from 1877 through 1923 online because that material is now in the public domain, but for much of the 20th century, we are stuck. We have no idea who now holds the copyright for much of the material, and finding the copyright holders for much of it would be prohibitive in terms of time and money. Yet, we think it would be a tremendous public service to make this material available to the general public online. There is much genealogical material in these early issues, as well as transcripts of primary sources, which are frequently requested by researchers and teachers. Resolving the problem of orphan works, thus, is of tremendous interest to the publishing and academic community. Making this material available hurts no one and benefits many.