

The Report of the Council

October 15, 1969

THE OTHER DAY I saw a seventeenth-century sermon title which read, 'Old Men's Tears for their own Declensions.' It conjured up a vision of a wood engraving in the manner of Leonard Baskin of the executive officer of an educational institution viewing the present and the future. His loyal staff members need increased salaries to keep abreast of inflation as well as having earned real advances in emoluments. The prices of goods and services are rising. The stock market is falling and the Congress is attacking the well-springs of financial support for his institution through a madcap tax-reform bill. Even so, to misquote Pollyanna, things could be worse. In fact AAS made progress during the past year.

Our members gave more for current needs than ever before. Nearly \$27,000 was received from one hundred and thirty-one Antiquarians. Never before have so many given so much. Your Director and the Council are indeed grateful for this support. The gifts and pledges for the long-range development program now stand at over \$580,000. Our readers come in increasing numbers. We are acquiring books of high quality in considerable quantity. The Society's publications are a credit to our traditions. In short, although we are beset, as are all institutions, we are not despairing.

To turn first to the Development Program we can report that most of the work of forming our committees is completed. Mr. Wiggins' National Advisory Committee and Mr. Fletcher's Special Gifts Committee both have outstanding members. We are grateful to AAS members and other interested persons

who have consented to give us their assistance. Indeed it gives me a good deal of pleasure to inform you that Samuel Eliot Morison has accepted Honorary Chairmanship of the Development Program. As you know, Professor Morison was president of the Society from 1938 until 1952 and is at present our senior member. You have received copies of our brochure which was prepared by Mr. Knowlton of our staff and printed by our long time friends at the Davis Press.

The Council notes with gratitude the receipt of a major bequest from Russell S. Paine. Mr. Paine was a member from 1926 until his death in 1959. His ancestors, Nathaniel and William Paine, were both founding members of this Society. A trust fund was established through his will from which we will derive a most helpful annual benefit.

As you are aware we have participated in two out-of-town exhibitions. Between April 15th and May 31st the Grolier Club show was viewed by about a thousand visitors, apparently something of a record. We have received enthusiastic comments about it. A selection of books from the same exhibit is presently on view at the Newberry Library in Chicago. A happy group of approximately one hundred and fifty Newberry Associates greeted us at the opening on September 30th. In addition we had the books on exhibition here at the Society for a short time in mid-June for the pleasure of our Worcester friends.

Regarding our current financial situation we budgeted a deficit of \$16,000 and wound up the year with a deficit of but \$10,000. The saving element was the outstanding increase in giving by our members as well as increased income from investments. The budget for the ensuing year carries the possibility of a deficit of \$3,000 but we are holding our expenditures to a bare minimum with no increase in the book purchasing budget. As we improve our financial resources through the development program we assume that such deficits will not prevail.

At its last meeting the Council re-elected Walter Muir Whitehill as delegate of AAS to the American Council of Learned Societies. Mr. Whitehill will serve until December 31, 1973. Mr. Whitehill has ably represented us before that body for a number of years and also serves on its board of directors.

Only last week we received a copy of the Atheneum Publishers' edition of *Paul Revere's Engravings* by Clarence S. Brigham. This brings the book back into print and should provide some additional resources for the Society's Publications Fund. *The National Index of American Imprints Through 1800* is presently at the printers and will be published within a relatively short time. This massive project which will provide an alphabetical listing of all American imprints which appear in the Readex Microprint edition of Evans, was edited by Clifford K. Shipton and was seen through the press by our Editor, James E. Mooney. It is being published for AAS by the Barre Publishing Company.

Readers come in increasing numbers. They arrived from such diverse places as the University of London and the University of New Mexico. And it is entertaining to have the descendant of a famous firm of New York printers bearing the name of Swords at AAS to use our splendid collection of his ancestors' imprints.

The Director and the Council take pride in the faithfulness of our staff. Without the loyal and excellent service of each member our work would come to a standstill. I am sure that the members of the Society join us in thanking them. During the past year there have been two changes in the staff. Louise Scheide Marshall resigned on the fifteenth of August. She was replaced in the Print and Map Collection by Georgia Brady Bumgardner who has been on the staff since 1968. In addition, Dorothy M. Gleason, formerly on the staff of the Worcester Free Public Library, officially joined us on September first. She had been serving on a volunteer, part-time basis since the first of July.

Mr. Mooney continues to serve on the international executive committee of the Program for Loyalist Studies and Publications, the Loyalist Papers, while Mr. Knowlton has recently been named president of the Worcester Heritage Society, a group dedicated to the preservation of selected, notable buildings in Worcester.

In 1968 the Society was selected by the United States National Parks Service as a Registered National Historic Landmark. The presentation of the certificate and plaque was made on May 20, 1969, by Park Service Representative Edwin W. Small.

It is with a great deal of regret that we note the deaths of Harry G. Stoddard and Henry R. Viets. Both were enthusiastic helpers of the Society, each in his own way, and Dr. Viets bequeathed a portion of his estate to the Society. We shall miss them.

And so we find ourselves at the brink of another year. I trust we are attending to the Society's business in a way acceptable to you, changing what must be altered, but adhering to our first principles. Barbara Ward Jackson, the British economist, wrote that 'the environment of the twentieth century is not designed for the static, the stagnant, the complacent, or the smug. It is designed for men and women who dare greatly and dream greatly and let their work catch up with their dreams.' This is well and good, but for effective change we must have the active help of all of you, the members of the Society, who have willingly accepted not only the honor of membership but also the responsibilities of that office.

M. A. McC.

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