

The Report of the Council

April 19, 1972

MEMBERS of the Development Committee continue to work to the good advantage of the Society. The Council is happy to announce a gift of \$50,000 from The Kresge Foundation which is to help defray the costs of construction. Further, the Council reports the gift of \$50,000 from the George I. Alden Trust which is an addition to an earlier grant. To these foundations and to all other givers the Council, in behalf of all AAS members, offers profound thanks. We report that the Development Funds stand at \$1,625,000, a gain of \$388,000 since the October meeting.

Among other gifts received was \$4,000 from the estate of Gerald Doan McDonald which will be applied toward the publication of his check-list of New Years' addresses. This work is being carried forward by Stuart C. Sherman of Brown University. The Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities has made another grant to AAS for the restoration of the Society's portraits. This is the fourth annual grant from the Council whose help has been crucial in this important enterprise. By the way, we were relieved though not too surprised to receive notification by the Internal Revenue Service early in December that the American Antiquarian Society is not defined as a private foundation and that gifts to the Society may be made under the provision of Section 509(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue code.

The construction of the building goes on (and on, and on, and on). We entertain hopes that the E. J. Cross Company will complete the addition within a few weeks, at which time

we move out of the rotunda, after which that portion of the building will be renovated. As a result of the delay in completion, our ability to serve readers this summer will be severely inhibited. Should you and acquaintances be planning to come to AAS we urge you to write or telephone ahead.

The Council has taken advantage of a modest grant from the United States Steel Foundation given to fund short-term visiting fellowship grants. We take pleasure in announcing that the following scholars have been selected from nearly sixty applicants:

Professor Gaylord P. Albaugh of McMaster University, Canada, who will be completing research on a forthcoming book on the history of American religious periodicals. Professor Albaugh will make extensive use of AAS newspaper and periodical collections dating from 1640.

Professor Richard Crawford of the University of Michigan will be working on his book, entitled 'A Bibliography of American Sacred Music Imprints through 1810,' to be published in 1973. Professor Crawford states that he will rely heavily on the Society's collection of early American tunebooks, which is the best collection known.

Professor Michael H. Harris of the University of Kentucky will be looking into books and the book trades in the Ohio Valley between 1800 and 1850, and depending on the library's extensive holdings in frontier history.

Professor Mason I. Lowance, Jr., of the University of Massachusetts, whose subject will be symbolic expression in Puritan writings, will concentrate on the period from 1620 to 1776, and his research here will be based in large part on the Society's unique collection of Mather material.

Professor Georgianne McVay of PMC Colleges, Chester, Pennsylvania, whose topic will deal with the verbal humor in the caricatures of David Claypoole Johnston, will use our pre-eminent collections of early cartoons and caricatures.

Professor Perry Viles of Lyndon State College, Vermont,

will be gathering material on adolescence in America since 1790. Professor Viles's research will result in the establishment of curriculum content for undergraduate seminars in social history. He will make use of the library's holdings of diaries, letters, manuscripts and newspapers.

The Publications Committee and their chief agent, Editor Mooney, have paid close attention to their duties. Pierce W. Gaines' bibliography, *William Cobbett and the United States, 1792-1835*, was published in December, 1971. J. A. Leo Lemay's *Calendar of American Poetry ... Through 1765* was published last month, d'Alté Welch's *Bibliography of American Children's Books* is in page proof, while Eleanor Lowenstein Goldwater's *Bibliography of American Cookery Books* is in galley proof. So also is *Chronological Tables of American Newspapers, 1690-1820* which has been compiled by Edward Connery Lathem. Thus, the Society continues to disseminate knowledge as well as to collect it.

Of a very substantial number of acquisitions made this past six months there is little doubt that among the most interesting are two eight-page pamphlets addressed in 1793 by Citizen Edmond Genêt to the French inhabitants of Canada and Louisiana. Genêt urged his fellow Frenchmen still under the rule of England or Spain in those places to cast their yokes aside and become free even as did the Americans in the United States and the French at home. For his pains, President Washington asked the French Government for Genêt's recall, and Genêt's popular influence waned rapidly, thereafter. The two pamphlets were given to the Society by H. Bradley Martin.

Other acquisitions of particular interest were two unrecorded Worcester imprints. Isaiah Thomas printed and published *The Renowned History of Giles Gingerbread* in 1786 for himself. He sold some copies to Ebenezer Battelle and in the imprint of those examples Thomas added that Battelle had them for sale in Boston. No copy of this variant had previously come to our attention. William Perry's *Only Sure Guide to the Eng-*

lish Tongue was a very popular textbook in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. We recently acquired a copy of the Twentieth, Improved Edition which Isaiah Thomas, Jr., published in June of 1817.

Teachers of penmanship and their publications have long been an interest of AAS. In 1969, for example, we published Ray Nash's *American Penmanship, 1800-1850*. Chauncey Bascom introduced *A System of Penmanship* through a book published in 1826 at Brattleboro, Vermont. We obtained a Boston broadside advertisement [of True and Green] for that book dated November 19, 1830. One of Bascom's peripatetic competitors was J. Palmer Webster who not only taught penmanship but stylographic card drawing as well. Furthermore, Mr. Webster was a practical phrenologist. We have broadsides prepared by this versatile traveller dated at Columbus, Ohio, February 11, 1842, and at Lynchburg, Virginia, August 4, 1842.

Always eager to add to our collections material which will enlarge our knowledge of printers and printing, I am glad to report that we have acquired a printed indenture dated September 18, 1794, between William W. Woodward, a printer of Philadelphia, and his apprentice, Thomas C. Porter. Samuel Burr Johnston was a journeyman printer who travelled farther than most. He went to Chile during the years of the revolution. In 1816 his *Letters Written during a Residence of Three Years in Chili* were published in Erie, Pennsylvania. The book is well-known but very scarce and we are fortunate to have obtained a good copy of this excellent narrative. *The Constitution and By-Laws of the New-York Typographical Society*, adopted on February 27, 1818, were printed by Benjamin G. Jansen of New York City. The pamphlet is not recorded in Shaw & Shoemaker's checklist. Mr. and Mrs. Howard S. Congdon presented to the Society a manuscript memorandum book which belonged to James B. Syme, the Assistant Editor of the *Worcester Spy*. The first entry is dated March 31, 1848.

I hope that this fragmentary report will give some assurance that despite the distractions of architects, builders, and all, we still are hunting for books. To all those who support the Society's library through gifts or in other ways, thank you.

Finally, the Council extends its thanks to the staff of the Society who loyally labors to further knowledge and to serve their colleagues in the pursuit of wisdom.

M. A. McC.

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