

The Report of the Council

April 19, 1978

THESE REPORTS of the Council come to you like clock-work at six-month intervals each year. To me, and no doubt to you, they have taken on a familiar character. As I think back over the last several years, it seems to me that I begin the reports by saying that the past six months have been extremely busy ones for AAS. Actually, I believe that each six-month period has gotten busier than the last and the changes seem to become more momentous. One would think that at some time all of this must come to a point of equilibrium, but as yet this has not happened. Perhaps it will do so when our staff and Councillors run out of steam.

To begin on an unhappy note, we must mention the deaths of three Councillors who were important in the life of the Society. Arthur Tourtellot passed away on October 18, after a valiant struggle against disease. Everett DeGolyer died of cancer on December 17. Your reporter and a few friends were fortunate in having had lunch with Everett and his wife, Helen, on October 29 in Dallas. Walter Whitehill died on March 5. Mr. Whitehill had been associated closely with Ted Shipton and many other active members of our Society over many years. In a sense, his passing marks a watershed between a previous generation and later ones. Each of these good friends, in his own particular way, was an avid supporter of the Society and we shall miss each very much. Still another loss must be mentioned, the death of Mary Gage Rice. Mrs. Rice was the granddaughter, on both sides of her family, of former members of the Society. Her grandfather, father, and husband all served on the Council for many years.

Thus, Mary had a very strong identification with the Society and felt a great sense of responsibility toward its work. She left a handsome, unrestricted gift of funds that will be used to support the Society's programs. Also she left sums of money to increase the endowments left by her husband and her father. Finally, she left to the Society her lovely home which is to be used as a residence for the director. The passing of these dear friends of the Society is a sore loss, indeed.

Yet, life goes on. Again, I am able to report a substantial increase in the assets of the Society. Since September 1, the beginning of our fiscal year, we have received more than \$150,000 for the increase of endowment funds and another pledge of \$100,000 for endowment. To the George I. Alden Trust, the Fred Harris Daniels Foundation, and the CBS Foundation (which gave a fine gift in memory of Arthur Bernon Tourtellot for the manuscript endowment) we are grateful. The George F. and Sybil H. Fuller Foundation gave the Society a magnificent gift to provide basic support for a number of the Society's ongoing scholarly and library-based programs. We are thankful, indeed, for that substantial help. Bequests were received from William Davis Miller of Providence, Rhode Island, a member of the Society from 1930 until 1959, who left the Society \$15,000. Milton Halsey Thomas, another faithful member, left a bequest of \$1,000.

Annual giving during the first seven months of the fiscal year has been remarkably generous, with \$42,938 being received. Included in that sum is more than \$12,500 from various corporations, \$5,850 from commercial publishers and printers, and year-end gifts totaling \$19,000.

While reporting on financial matters, we take pleasure in noting that budget management by the staff has been outstanding. Expenditures were below authorized amounts, while the income was above expectation. Thus, for the first seven months of the fiscal year, the Society ran a modest surplus in the operating budget.

In library activities, we must take notice of the sobering fact that before this body meets again in October our long-time colleague and faithful friend, Mary E. Brown, will retire from her post of Head of Readers' Services. Mary Brown, who is known to many of you, has served the Society with loyalty, responsibility, and affection since 1937. She will leave her post at the end of August of this year. Her departure marks the end of a major link with former staff members and with Director Clarence S. Brigham. Your reporter came to the Society in the summer of 1960, somewhat more than a year after Mr. Brigham retired. At that time he was still coming to the library on a daily basis and, in fact, I displaced him from his office, an event I now regard with dismay. At that time Mary Brown had already served AAS for twenty-three years. Now, after more than forty years of service, Mary is the last of that old guard! Avis Clarke retired several years ago. C. K. Shipton died more than four years ago.

To get on to more cheerful thoughts, the use of the library increased slightly, compared with a year ago. This can be considered a bit surprising because a good many institutions have noticed some falling off of readership in the post-bicentennial months. Indeed, a respite would have been welcome, for our staff was so frazzled by the frenzy of the last year's activities that some relaxation was in order so that long-deferred departmental work might get done. We have had particularly interesting visitors at the library, including people from the American Studies Center at Warsaw University, the Library of the National University, Canberra, Australia, and the University Library, Cambridge, England.

Our staff has been augmented by two CETA workers. Dennis R. Laurie is an assistant to Miss Tracy in the Newspaper Department. Our conservator, Mr. Desautels, until last week had an apprentice named James McKeon. Unfortunately for us, Mr. McKeon left to become a wheat inspector in New Orleans for the federal government. Just how one connects

these two disparate skills leaves your reporter puzzled. Nevertheless, we wish him well in his new calling, a deeply ingrained one, no doubt. The staff has also been augmented by the presence of ten volunteers. They have our warmest gratitude for providing us with invaluable assistance in many ways. For example, Elizabeth Norwood has spent the past many months compiling a checklist of our collection of children's books published during the years 1821-76. Mrs. Norwood's work is now completed and it makes available for the first time adequate knowledge of what is located in this collection, numbering more than 8,000 pieces.

Mr. Bauer reports that the conservation of energy continues at a satisfactory level. Over the past five years we have cut our use of heating oil and electricity by more than twenty-eight percent. We have in train studies to improve insulation of the building and are studying ways to improve our heating and air conditioning equipment. Also, Mr. Bauer and the Committee on the Hall, under the leadership of Philip Beals, have investigated improved fire and burglary detection systems. We should have them in place within the next few months.

The six-year effort to reorganize and to catalogue the materials in the Manuscript Department is nearly complete. Funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the project will be concluded in September. Plans are now underway to publish this catalogue in book form, a tool that shall fully inform scholars of the riches in that portion of our collections.

Another NEH project designed to increase availability of AAS resources is that of a nineteenth-century pamphlet catalogue. We have all but finished dealing with formerly uncatalogued materials dated from 1821 through 1830. Some 3,300 pamphlets have been described and categorized and the record placed into machine-readable form. This work will be concluded at the end of August. We anticipate that it will be

followed by another cataloguing project which will describe the Society's eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century broadsides.

The United States Newspaper Project of the Organization of American Historians, led by Gale Peterson, held a meeting at the Society on December 2, 1977. Representatives from libraries in all New England states and New York met with staff members from the Library of Congress and the New England Library Board to discuss ways to initiate work on bringing under bibliographical control the newspapers published within each state. AAS, whose director serves on the national advisory committee of USNP, was one of the co-hosts.

Also, AAS is an active partner in the scheme to list publications issued from English presses in all parts of the world during the eighteenth century. Mr. McCorison serves on the North American Advisory Committee for this enormous project, called in the trade the ESTC (Eighteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue).

AAS continues to have opportunities to acquire outstanding library materials. In fact, they seem to be so numerous that we find it difficult, if not impossible, to hold our acquisitions budget within bounds. We shall not report purchases at this time but we should like to acknowledge a signal gift from Herbert H. Hosmer of South Lancaster, Massachusetts. He has pledged to the Society his collection of children's literature and toys published by the firm of John McLaughlin as well as those of McLaughlin's colleagues and competitors. The first portion of Mr. Hosmer's gift was received late in 1977 and other segments will arrive in due course. With Mr. Hosmer's assistance, we plan to compile a comprehensive catalogue of McLaughlin publications and related materials. Mr. Hosmer's collection, which was formed to honor his ancestor John Greene Chandler, joins the Society's already superb collection of children's literature published in the

United States before the year 1877. To Mr. Hosmer the Council is grateful indeed.

Passing on to the education program, which is supervised by William L. Joyce, who doubles in brass as our Curator of Manuscripts, we are pleased to report that Stephen Nissenbaum, associate professor of history at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, will present an honors seminar entitled 'Literature and Society in Jacksonian America: Writers Confront the Marketplace.' The course, which is our most recent formal educational enterprise, will be held at the Society during the months of September through December and will be open to selected students from five Worcester colleges: Clark University, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, The College of the Holy Cross, Assumption College, and Worcester State College. Each college participates in the program through the appointment of a faculty member to our advisory committee and through a modest financial contribution to the program. The major share of the cost of the seminar is being borne by a grant to AAS from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Mr. Nissenbaum is author, with Paul Boyer, of *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft*, which was published by Harvard University Press in 1974 and was awarded the Dunning Prize by the American Historical Association.

John B. Hench, our Research and Publication Officer, reports that the index to our *Proceedings* compiled by the late Clifford K. Shipton is about to go to the printer. Professor Bailyn is beyond the halfway point in editing essays for our bicentennial volume, *The Press and the American Revolution*. Mr. Hench is preparing copy for Robert B. Winans's *Descriptive Checklist of Separately Printed Eighteenth-Century American Catalogues of Books, 1693-1800*. Also, Richard Crawford has submitted the manuscript of his bibliography of pre-1811 American publications of sacred music. Further, Mr. Hench reports that soon the Society will issue the first in a series of

occasional pamphlets. We expect that these will be facsimile reprints of materials from our collections.

The Committee on Fellowships, chaired by Cecelia M. Kenyon and assisted by John D. Seelye and Neil MacNeil, recommended, and the Council ratified, the selection of the following fellows for the forthcoming year:

National Endowment for the Humanities Fellows

James F. Beard, professor of English, Clark University, 'James Fenimore Cooper: A Critical Biography'; A. Gregg Roeber, instructor in history, Princeton University, 'Religion and Law in British North America, 1690-1790'; Gloria T. Main, Setauket, New York, 'The Massachusetts Farmer and His Family.'

Fred Harris Daniels Fellows

John Bidwell, assistant professor and librarian of the Cary Collection, Rochester Institute of Technology, 'A Biographical Directory of American Papermakers, 1690-1830'; Paul Echols, Ph.D. candidate in music, New York University, 'The Development of Revival Music in the U.S., 1830-60'; Rudy J. Favretti, professor of landscape architecture, University of Connecticut, 'Landscape Use of Trees in New England'; John Fondersmith, chief, Special Projects Section, District of Columbia Municipal Planning Office, 'History of American Travel Guidebooks'; Kay House, professor of English literature, San Francisco State University, 'Editing Cooper's *The Pilot*'; Mary Quinlivan, associate professor of history, University of Texas of the Permian Basin, 'Social Significance of the Children's Literature of Jacob Abbott'; Charles Wetherell, graduate assistant in history, University of New Hampshire, 'A Social History of the Early American Press'; Louis Winkler, astronomer, Pennsylvania State University, 'Popular Astronomical and Astrological Thought in New

England before 1800'; Jean Fagan Yellin, associate professor of English, Pace University, 'Iconography of Anti-Slavery.'

Fred Harris Daniels American Studies Fellow

Stephen Nissenbaum, associate professor of history, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 'Literature and Society in Jacksonian America: Writers Confront the Marketplace.'

Really, there is much more to report, but I shall forebear except to say that a number of lectures were held during the fall and winter months. Neil MacNeil in December addressed a good-sized audience on the case of Thomas Maule, a Salem Quaker, whose trial for libel had repercussions in establishing a tradition of freedom of expression. Mr. McCorison in March gave a talk, accompanied by a confusing array of photographic slides, on an obscure book collector named Capt. Salmon White. One lecture, by Professor Mary Beth Norton of Cornell University, was scheduled to be held on February 7, the day following the Great Blizzard of 1978. Miss Norton spent several hours in a snowbound bus in Southboro. Following rescue by a daredevil on a snowmobile, she spent the night with hospitable people near the Worcester Turnpike, and on the next day our intrepid Councillor Philip C. Beals brought her to the Beals's homestead where Miss Norton spent the next two days. Finally, she made it to Worcester, but not to the American Antiquarian Society. Rather, she departed by bus for New York City and Princeton, New Jersey.

Let me close this brief recital of events of what has been an exciting half year by thanking all of you—staff, members, and friends of the Society—for making it so.

Marcus A. McCorison

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