

## *Report of the Council*

APRIL 19, 1989

THE SOCIETY began the year in September with a serious fiscal problem. Although our budgeted annual operating expenditures have remained relatively stable since fiscal 1986 (in fact, the personnel budget has actually diminished), our sources of income in fiscal year 1988 fell below our projections. To counter that situation we have instituted several remedial actions. Requests in support of the Annual Fund have been intensified. The treasurer's year-end appeal was less modest than previous ones, prompting a generous response from many AAS members and from members of the Worcester Association of Mutual Aid in Detecting Thieves. At present, the Annual Fund stands at \$144,515, compared to \$91,190 a year ago. To widen our approach to people whose interests are congenial with the Society's work, the Council has established the Alliance for the American Antiquarian Society. Two successful events, organized by our development officer, Lynnette P. Sodha, have been held at Antiquarian Hall—one in December, the other in March—to introduce AAS to a large local group of potential friends. The March 4 affair, 'Welcome Home, President Coolidge,' was not only delightful, it added \$26,000 to the 1989 Annual Fund. This success was the result of a great deal of hard work generously performed by a score of volunteers, led by their chairman, Karson Aubuchon. Informational material on the Alliance has been prepared for mailing to our friends as well as to our members.

On other fronts in the fiscal battle, we have made progress also. The Charles E. Culpeper Foundation has provided support for the Program in the History of the Book in American Culture for three

years through a grant of \$79,500. The Surdna Foundation has established the Robert H. Taylor Publication Fund of \$100,000 in memory of our late member and their late trustee. The Bank of Boston has added \$4,000 to the acquisition fund that was begun a few years since. Marion S. Fletcher provided the means to purchase an expensive Minolta reader-printer for use with microform publications. An endowed book fund, The Greenroad Fund for Canadiana, has been established through the agency of Mr. and Mrs. B. A. King. The Boston Globe Foundation, the Jockey Hollow Foundation, and Jane Frost Anderson have given timely and generous help for endowments or for current projects. The Society received a bequest of \$15,000 from our late centenarian member Harold E. Woodward. In addition, the portfolio has risen from the depths of November 1987 and, although the yield on invested funds is not quite as robust as it was a few years ago, the income level has improved, thereby lightening the financial burden.

However, AAS has a difficult path to follow before we get out of the woods. It is my observation that funding from national sources for the humanities in general, and independent research libraries in particular is essentially flat. If true, then the purchasing value of the foundation support available to us is actually diminishing. The National Endowment for the Humanities holds a crucial position in this situation. For example, grants made by the thirty largest foundations (those that even consider grants to the humanities) amount to only 40 percent of the total grants made by NEH. Thus, the level of funding, the attitudes, and the philosophical postures of the NEH chairman and appointed NEH councillors have significant impact upon the financial support of research libraries. Furthermore, the preponderance of the funding (from whatever source) directed toward the humanities goes to the universities. Although the NEH budget for the Research Division has been slightly increased for the next fiscal year, the Access Program from which grants for cataloguing collections, etc., come, received a mere \$215,000 increase—about the amount needed to fund a single, multiyear project. Yet, NEH chairmen

have contended, in explaining why NEH did not need increases in appropriations, that the Endowment could fund all applications ranked 'Excellent.' Another ill wind issued from an NEH councillor, who asked why the Endowment should annually support the operations of certain institutions, e.g., the New York Public Library (which, despite its undisputed place as an internationally important resource, *was* pushed out of the challenge-grant program) or a portion of the ACLS fellowship program (which ACLS itself suspended). Ought not the Endowment get out of the regrant business, thereby putting NEH-designated Centers for Advanced Studies on their own? If the answer is 'yes,' the long-term fellowships at the AAS, Newberry, Folger, and Huntington libraries that are funded through that program are in trouble.

Another trend that I perceive to be a difficulty is represented by the National Humanities Center in North Carolina. That center was established several years ago through the advocacy of the American Council of Learned Societies and funded by several large grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, NEH, etc. Some of us who are in the business of finding support for humanities centers linked to research libraries, like AAS, believe rightly or wrongly that the center, along with its proliferating university offspring, may well distract both attention and funds (already insufficient) from institutions that may be more effective centers for *research* in the humanities than the operation in the Research Triangle, dependent as it is upon the resources of the libraries of the universities that surround it. A conference is being planned at the National Humanities Center with ACLS concerning the direction of humanities in the 1990s. I hope that independent research institutions will be included in the deliberations of the conferees—not only universities.

There is nothing like bad news to focus one's attention on realities. Our fiscal situation did just that. The Council has discussed topics ranging from the condition of our bylaws (now under revision), fiscal planning, budget analysis, and the nature of the *Proceedings*, to the meaning of membership in the Society—the

expectations of members from AAS and the responsibilities of members to AAS. Our neighbor on the Fenway has proposed to solve the latter by imposing dues. Although we are reluctant to do that, members of the Council have responded to our situation by significantly increasing their own financial commitments to the Society, and the president's appeal to the membership for the 1989 annual fund will be a frank statement to all members that membership entails a commitment to the well-being of the Society and its great research library.

With regard to the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, it is quite likely that the business matter of the Society—the reports, obituaries, lists of members, and the like—will be separated from the scholarly matter, thereby attempting to eliminate some confusion over function and to sharpen the focus of the journal. Final decision is reserved until fully developed plans for such a change are submitted by the Committee on Publications.

The Committee on Fellowships is chaired by Pauline Maier. Two members of her committee, James Henretta and Leo Marx, completed three-year terms as committeemen and the Council thanks them for important service to the Society. Sixteen fellows and three research associates were appointed for the 1989–90 year.

*AAS-National Endowment for the Humanities Fellows*

William W. Freehling, professor of history, Johns Hopkins University, 'The Road to Disunion, Volume 2: *Secessionists Triumphant, 1854-61*'; Lee Ellen Heller, assistant professor of English, Mercer University, 'The Family and the Novel in Context: The Historical Origins of the Novel in England and America'; Alan Shaw Taylor, assistant professor of history, Boston University, 'William Cooper's Town'; and Mark Valeri, assistant professor of religious studies, Lewis & Clark College, 'The Eighteenth-Century Clergy and Economics in New England.'

*Kate B. and Hall James Peterson Fellows*

Robert D. Friedel, associate professor of history, University of

Maryland, 'Documenting Changes in Household Materials, 1800-87'; Philip F. Gura, professor of English and American studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 'The Reverend Nathan Fiske and the Cultural Transformation of Central Massachusetts'; Mason I. Lowance, professor of English, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, '*Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the New England Sermon Tradition'; Franciszek Lyra, senior lecturer in English, M. Curie-Sklodowska University, Poland, 'Revising the Canon of the First Two Centuries of American Literature'; Michael B. Winship, editor, *Bibliography of American Literature*, 'Publishers' Trade Sales in the Nineteenth-Century United States'; and David A. Zonderman, assistant professor of history, University of Wisconsin at Madison, 'Uneasy Allies: Working-Class Activists and Middle-Class Reformers in Nineteenth-Century Boston and New York.'

*Frances Hiatt Fellows*

Vivian Bruce Conger, Ph.D. candidate in history, Cornell University, 'Being Weak of Body but Firm of Mind and Memory: Widowhood in Colonial America, 1630-1750'; Alan Gibson, Ph.D. candidate in government, University of Notre Dame, 'The Development of the Concept of Public Opinion in the American Enlightenment, 1760-1800'; and Mark A. Mastromarino, Ph.D. candidate in history, College of William & Mary, 'Elkanah Watson and Massachusetts Agricultural Fairs.'

*AAS-Northeast Modern Language Association Fellow*

James G. Basker, associate professor of English, Barnard College, 'Samuel Johnson and His American Readers.'

*AAS-American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Fellow*

Bruce R. Greenfield, assistant professor of English, Dalhousie University, 'Plotting the Mississippi: A Comparative Study of Eighteenth-Century Discovery Rhetoric.'

*Stephen Botein Fellow*

James N. Green, curator of printed books, Library Company of Philadelphia, 'The Transformation of the American Book Trade, 1785-1825.'

*Research Associates*

Gaylord P. Albaugh, professor emeritus of Christian history, McMaster University, 'American Religious Periodicals and Newspapers, 1730-1830'; Louis R. Bisceglia, professor of history, San Jose State University, 'The Origins and Pacifism of Abby Kelley'; and Harry S. Stout, professor of American religious history, Yale University, 'A Biography of George Whitefield' and 'A History of the Sermon in Early America.'

The principal members of the library staff have spent much time on thinking through their responsibilities and the requirements for rehousing their collections in an addition to Antiquarian Hall. It has been apparent for some time that we have been pushing all our facilities to the limit. However, even more important in our thinking has been the security of the collections. Our book stacks are sturdily constructed. Unfortunately, they are constructed in a manner that assures extensive damage to great portions of the collections if fire or flood should ever occur. To exacerbate that danger, staff work spaces have been carved out of the corners in the stacks, thereby introducing other possibilities for accident. In short, the rationales for planning new library facilities are several: more secure protection and housing of collections; improved accommodations for readers and fellows; efficient access to catalogues and bibliographical tools; provision of office and work space for curatorial, acquisition, cataloguing, and maintenance departments; improved facilities for the conservation laboratory; reintegration of the research and publication department with administrative staff; and improved facilities for the educational and public programs.

A milestone was reached at the end of March with the comple-

tion of the project led by Alan N. Degutis to assign subject headings to some 13,000 North American Imprints Program records that describe materials not held by AAS. In turn, those and other NAIP records were used to create computerized descriptions of 36,300 titles in our microform publication *Early American Imprints, First Series (Evans)*. The end result of the work is to lodge those records in the Research Libraries Information Network, where they will be available to libraries nationally. The two-year-long project was funded by a grant made under Title II-C of the Higher Education Act of the United States Department of Education.

The collections have grown at a much slower pace than has been the norm in past years, determined as we are to remain within the budget. Even so, some 1,850 items have been added, including a number of excellent resources for research. The Johnson Family Collection of manuscripts has been processed and is now ready for use. The collection is made up of the personal papers of Winifred Channing Johnson Chrisman and those of her ancestors, particularly members of the Roosevelt and Bard families of Sag Harbor and New York City. The collection was given to the Society by Mrs. Chrisman, who provided us with the means for its arrangement at AAS. Mr. and Mrs. Henry B. Dewey have given the Society an extensive collection of the papers of the Dewey and related families. The family was prominent in the history of Williams College as well as that of Worcester, and the collection reflects the family's commitments from the late eighteenth century until the early twentieth. We have also received word from the executors of the estate of our late member Paul Fenimore Cooper, Jr., that the Society will receive the manuscripts of James Fenimore Cooper that had descended through the family of the donor, the great-grandson of the author.

Among the notable printed acquisitions are *Sketches of the Higher Classes of Colored Society in Philadelphia*, by a Southerner (Philadelphia, 1841), the gift of the members of the Worcester Association of Mutual Aid in Detecting Thieves; *The History of Pithole by "Crocus"* (Pithole City, Pa., 1867), purchased on the John Thomas

Lee Fund. (Pithole City was the scene of one of the nation's first oil rushes, but like so many other enterprises, the oil wells dried up; in 1893 Pithole City was described as a 'decayed post-borough'). Another acquisition was an unrecorded children's book, *The History of Tommy Careless*, in the second Worcester edition, printed by Isaiah Thomas, Jr., in 1796, obtained, appropriately enough, on the Isaiah Thomas Fund.

At its April meeting, the Council took note of the fiftieth anniversary of the membership of Hamilton Vaughan Bail, by adopting the following resolution:

WHEREAS HAMILTON VAUGHAN BAIL, the senior member of this Society, was elected to its membership on April 19, 1939; and whereas

HAMILTON VAUGHAN BAIL has been a faithful friend of learning through his scholarship; and whereas

HAMILTON VAUGHAN BAIL has enriched the life of this Society, as well as those of many others, through his generous gifts of friendship, service, thought, and financial help; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the American Antiquarian Society, in behalf of all members, extends hearty gratitude to HAMILTON VAUGHAN BAIL for his past, present, and future services and to him offers congratulations for a life well lived, as well as expectations for an extended future — for, when the Hartland, Vermont, farmer was asked if he had lived there all his life, he responded, 'Not yet!' — and upon the records of the Society let this Resolution be inscribed and to HAMILTON VAUGHAN BAIL let these sentiments be made known.

Agreed to this nineteenth day of April, in the year of our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and eighty-nine in the City of New York, State of New York.

The Society continues along its way, determined to provide the resources that will illuminate the course of humanity upon this great land. Only by understanding that course will we and our successors learn at what cost we have arrived at this point in our



history and be reminded of our own duties as the stewards of our heritage. The Council thanks our marvelous staff, our loyal members, and our faithful friends for the vital help that each gives in this noble cause.

Marcus A. McGorison

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