

## *Report of the Librarian*

**D**URING the year 1959-1960, the Society added 3626 pieces to the collections by acquiring 1805 bound volumes, 1832 pamphlets and 989 miscellaneous pieces. The total collection numbers just over 751,000 bibliographical units.

As Mr. Shipton remarked in his nineteenth annual report as Librarian, there has been a decrease over the years in the number of important rarities added to the collections. This has been due, to a large extent, to the activities of himself and his predecessors, who obtained many of them in an earlier day. Secondly, the real rarities which we do lack are frequently of such great price that we must pass them by, hopeful that sometime in the future we can obtain them through gift, or by chance at bargain price. This, of course, presents the danger that we will miss them altogether. The only alternative to this policy appears to be a "beefed" up book budget from sources as yet undisclosed to the stewards of your Library. Nevertheless, we have acquired some important and interesting items this year past, and it is now my pleasant duty to enumerate them.

The Society has always been indebted to its members and friends for gifts of books and funds with which to purchase books. This year was no exception.

On the morning of the annual meeting, Mark Bortman brought to us the only located copy of the notification of a meeting of the Relief Society of Boston. It is an engraved form, executed by Paul Revere. The Relief Society was instituted in 1773 for the purpose of fire protection for its members. It continued until 1807, if not longer, as the

Boston Public Library has the manuscript minutes covering the years, 1773 to 1807. Revere apparently engraved a plate for membership tickets, a headpiece for a broadside printing of the *Rules and Orders for the Relief Society*, located in the Boston Public Library, and the plate for the notification of meetings. No copy of the membership ticket is known at this time.

The present engraving is adorned with the illustration of a pumper and other fire fighting equipment, under which appears the motto of the Society, "*In Augustiis Amici.*" The notice is addressed to Andrew Brimmer and was dated on March 4, 1782, by Eben Oliver, Clerk.

From Edwin Wolf, 2nd, we received a group of early American imprints. We, in turn, sold off the duplicates and purchased a number of duplicates from the Library Company of Philadelphia. Mrs. Charlotte A. Hunt presented a collection of American medical books of the years 1811 to 1859, in memory of Dr. Ernest L. Hunt. D'Alté A. Welch gave us a copy of *The Wonderful History of an Enchanted Castle*, a unique copy of the Albany, 1806, edition. Bradley Gilman gave a superb copy of Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, in the first edition. Miss Beulah Lewis presented a miscellany, collected by Miss Helen E. Greenwood, among which was the only located copy of the 1793, Windsor, Vermont, edition of *A Very Remarkable Account of the Vision of Nathan Culver* and the second recorded copy of *The Peaceful End of the Perfect and Upright Man*, a sermon preached by John Barnard at the funeral of John Atwood, Boston, 1714.

Thomas W. Streeter made four significant gifts this past year. The first involved the major portion of his collection of separately printed Indian treaties. The treaties were printed by the Government at the time that each was ratified in the Senate, but apparently they were never dis-

tributed for, strangely enough, these bibliographical items were unknown until a cache of them was discovered in 1937 or 1938 in a lot of discards from the Smithsonian Institution. Secondly, Mr. Streeter gave a large number of books and pamphlets concerned with the Canadian prairie provinces, which own a history not at all dissimilar to our Great Plains states. Thirdly, he gave us our choice of his post 1800 material on early New York canals. Among the pamphlets was *A Letter to the Inhabitants of the City and State of New-York on the Subject of the Commerce of the Western Waters*, New York [1807], which is an early proposal to utilize the route which became the Erie Canal. Also present and of considerable scarcity is Edmund Genet's *Memorial on the Obstructions at the Head of the Navigation of the River Hudson*, Albany, 1818. Finally, though first in point of presentation, was a copy of the almost unknown novel by Henry Boernstein, *The Mysteries of St. Louis*, or *the Jesuits on the Prairie*, St. Louis, 1851.

Among purchased acquisitions, the most delightful to our eyes was a *Catalogue of Books (American Editions), For Sale at the Book Store of Thomas & Andrews*, Boston, 1799. The only other known copy is at the Essex Institute. Our copy is in fine condition and is a most important and appropriate addition to our collection of bookseller's catalogues. Incidentally, we must thank Walter Whitehill for pointing it in our direction. We obtained a late Northampton imprint unknown to Gilmore, that city's bibliographer, entitled, *A Sermon, preached at Chester, on the death of William B. Campbell*, by E. W., whose identity has so far escaped our ardent search. He may have been Ezra Witter of Wilbraham. The pamphlet was printed in 1803 in Northampton.

We also acquired through purchase, a pamphlet relating to the Union Canal Company of Pennsylvania, entitled: *Observations on the Application for a Law to Incorporate "The*

*Union Canal Company*," by Charles G. Paleske, Philadelphia, 1808, which is both early and scarce.

We have purchased a number of items of Western Americana, probably the most notable being Silas Weston's *Life in the Mountains*, Providence, 1854 (Weston was a Rhode Island school teacher, turned adventurer), and Albert Lyman's *Journal of a Voyage to California*, Hartford, 1852.

Among the newspapers acquired during the year, Goodspeed's Book Shop gave us a unique copy of the September 23, 1817, issue of the [Bath, New York] *Steuben and Allegany Patriot*. We purchased the only complete file of the [New Bedford] *Old Colony Gazette*, October 21, 1808, through October 11, 1811. Also acquired by purchase was the scarce file of volume one of the [Natchez, Mississippi] *Ariel*, of July 20, 1825, through January 20, 1826.

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