

## *Report of the Council*

**D**URING the last six months the Library has been used considerably by researchers, although the gasoline shortage and restricted travelling conditions have somewhat lessened the number of visitors from distant parts of the country. The accessions to the Library have been important and numerous, but an account of these must await the report of the Librarian in October.

A few additions to our book space have been made during the winter. The Map and Print Room has long needed more shelving, with many folio volumes and portfolios of prints placed on the tables for want of shelves. As a result, roller shelving has been extended to the ceiling, around the entire room, above the former print drawers and cases. This has doubled the capacity of the room, providing sufficient space for the overflow of Atlases and large books, and for many collections of prints, photographs, and broadsides, which can be shelved in specially constructed cardboard cases. The Library has a very large collection of such material, much of which illustrates the graphic history of the country, and the new shelving will make it conveniently arranged and accessible. This change was mentioned in the October report, but it has now been completed.

In the nearby Almanac Room two new bookcases have been erected, which will relieve the crowded condition in that room for many years to come.

The interior of the Library building badly needs repainting, and this is something which must be taken into consideration as soon as the close of the war permits the purchase of needed material and the use of regular channels of labor.

A new superintendent for the Library building, Mr. Mathew J. Mathews, was engaged last fall, and he has rearranged much of the material in the basement, consisting chiefly of duplicates and the stock of the Society's publications. The room devoted to the latter collection has been completely cleaned and reorganized, the process resulting in providing sufficient space for the stock publications for several years to come. Also, Mr. Mathews has effected economies in our heating problems, so that we have used a minimum amount of coal and oil, and yet the building has been kept comfortably warm. Because of the comparative difficulty of obtaining coal, we did not change over one of the two boilers from oil to coal, so that we have used both forms of heat this past winter.

In the rearrangement of the Proceedings Room and the relisting of our stock, it is noticed that many of our semi-annual issues, even in recent years, are represented by a comparatively small number of copies. Within a short time a communication will be sent to all members, suggesting that they return to the Society any issues of our Proceedings which they may not wish to keep in their own libraries.

The heirs of the John W. Farwell estate have now made final arrangements in turning over to this Library the valuable collection of books which constituted the library of our former member. Therefore a more accurate and detailed account of this notable gift will appear in the Librarian's Report next October.

The Director's Bibliography of Newspapers, which was described at length in the Council Report one year ago, is now awaiting publication, and figures for the printing are being obtained. The American Council of Learned Societies, at its annual meeting in January last, took action upon this Bibliography in the following words:

The American Council of Learned Societies has learned with much satisfaction of the completion by Mr. Clarence S. Brigham of his historical and descriptive bibliography of American newspapers to 1820, which is an indispensable aid and guide for research in all fields of early American history. The Council congratulates Mr. Brigham and the American Antiquarian Society on the achievement of a monumental task, and expresses the hope that means for the publication of his work may soon be found.

The problem of the cost of printing was solved by two of our own members, Mr. George F. Booth and Mr. Harry G. Stoddard, who, acting as publishers of the *Worcester Telegram and Gazette*, donated to the Society the sum of five thousand dollars to cover the cost of publication. This generous action had made possible the printing of a work which redounds to the credit of this Society and spreads its prestige. From no source could the gift come better than from the publishers of one of New England's leading newspapers, published in the very city where the largest existing collection of early American newspapers is located. It is only another example of the munificence and public spirit of two of Worcester's citizens who have always been in the forefront of service to their fellow men.

Two deaths of resident members should be recorded. Alexander George McAdie died at Hampton, Virginia, November 1, 1943. Mr. McAdie was long Director of the Blue Hill Observatory and a close friend of our former Council member, Henry W. Cunningham. He taught at Clark University in 1889, was elected to this Society in 1915, and throughout his active life was much interested in the historical side of meteorology. Alexander James Wall, Librarian and Director of the New York Historical Society since 1921, died April 15, 1944. We have lost one foreign member, William Searle Holdsworth, who died January 2, 1944. He was professor in English Law at the University of

Oxford, and the author of numerous works on English legal history. He was elected to the Society in 1928. Sketches of these members will appear in the printed Proceedings of this meeting.

For the past ten years only the generosity of members has made possible the purchase of needed books and the remarkable growth of the Library. The present endowment produces scarcely sufficient income to maintain the operation of the Society's work and its publications, leaving but little income—about thirteen hundred dollars—for the purchase of books. Members have realized this condition and because of their interest in the Society and their faith in its usefulness, have each year given to it an average of about eight thousand dollars, intended for the purchase of books to aid in completing our collections.

Occasionally in previous years the appeal for funds has been sent out in December, but more often it has been sent in January, or at least early in the year. It should be remembered that our fiscal year covers from October 1 to September 30. This year whatever appeal is made will be sent toward the end of April. Several members have already contributed. As in previous years it will be made entirely clear in the letter of appeal that any gift is strictly voluntary, is not the result of solicitation, and does not involve future commitment.

Only recently I have re-read all the reports of this Society as printed in the Proceedings from 1849 to 1908, and I am impressed by the intense interest in the Society on the part of its members and by the fact that so large a proportion of its annual income came from occasional, or even frequent, gifts. I know that in the last few years about one-fifth of the income has come from gifts. Perhaps some day this Society will have a sufficiently large endowment to permit an ade-

quate income for the purchase of books. But until that time has come, we shall have to rely upon private donations for the increase of the Library's collections.

Respectfully submitted,

CLARENCE S. BRIGHAM,

*For the Council*

Copyright of Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society is the property of American Antiquarian Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.