

ALMANAC

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AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

NUMBER 95

Acquiring the Unexpected: *Donation Stories from the Stacks*

One of the most frequent questions from visitors to the American Antiquarian Society is, “Where do your new acquisitions come from?” The answer can be as varied as the collection itself. Recently, the curators got together to recall and recount some of the most unusual and unexpected ways donations of collection materials have found their way to AAS. The stories below are based on those recollections.

In 2015 Susan Pike Corcoran was having some family books rebound. Over a friendly cup of tea with the bookbinder, she mentioned that she was clearing out her home in preparation to sell it and had several antique items she wasn't sure what to do with, including daguerreotypes and photographs (fig. 1). Upon hearing this, the bookbinder, who also happened to be the husband of the Society's chief conservator, phoned Lauren Hewes, curator of graphic arts,
(continued on pages 4–5)



Fig. 1. Framed Pike-Wright family photographs.

An Interview with the Librarian

At the end of August 2018, long-time Marcus A. McCorison Librarian and Curator of Manuscripts Thomas G. Knoles will be retiring from AAS. After almost twenty-nine years at the Society, we wanted to be sure to tap Knoles's long institutional knowledge and his experiences in the library world. There was none better to do this than the incoming Marcus A. McCorison Librarian, Megan Hahn Fraser, who will begin that position in April (see page 7). Included here is an excerpt of the interview; see AAS's blog, pastispresent.org, for the full interview.

MHF: *What was your career path before coming to the American Antiquarian Society?*

TGK: Slightly crooked, I guess. When I was in college I was interested in the classics but also in library work. I've always been fascinated by libraries. Approaching graduation, I was torn about going to grad school in classics or library school. I decided on classics and went to Rutgers for graduate school. While I was working on my dissertation, I got a work study job in the special collections department at Rutgers, and it didn't take long for me to realize that this was what I wanted to do.

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A Closer Look at the Plans for Antiquarian Hall

Part III: Multipurpose Room

In the two previous issues of *Almanac* we discussed the plans for upgraded HVAC in Antiquarian Hall and a modern conservation lab on the top floor of the library's new building addition. In this issue we describe how the new multipurpose room, which will also be part of the addition, will transform how the Society interacts with many of its constituents.



Over the past twenty years, the Society has greatly diversified and expanded the number and types of people we serve. In addition to serving our core constituency of scholars at every level of the academy, we now offer programs that reach all kinds of people, from grade-school students to senior adults. On the ground floor of the new building addition there will be a 1,192-square-foot multipurpose room that will allow us to serve all

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Antiquarian Hall Construction Update

Construction work on the renovation and addition to Antiquarian Hall has made great progress in the last several months, and the new structure is starting to take shape! Some highlights include:

- The steel frame of the addition has been completed.
- Concrete foundation walls have been poured.
- Excavation for new underground utilities has been finished.
- Concrete floor slabs have been poured for the addition.
- The Conservation Department moved to its temporary quarters.
- Demolition and abatement in the basement is ongoing.
- Roof replacement on the rest of Antiquarian Hall is well underway.
- Ductwork installation has begun in the existing stacks.

All of the crews have continued to work on the project throughout the winter weather, and the project is still on target to be completed this October in time for the grand opening at the annual meeting (see below).

Save the Date!

Annual Meeting and Grand Opening of the
Antiquarian Hall Addition

Friday, October 26

The annual meeting of the Society will take place on Friday, October 26, and will mark the grand opening of our new building addition. Tours of the new conservation lab, mechanical rooms, and multipurpose twenty-first-century learning lab will all be featured. Additionally, we will use the new interactive video technology in the multipurpose room to engage with our far-flung members and former fellows. The annual Robert C. Baron Lecture will also take place on Thursday, October 25, and will be delivered by Mary Beth Norton (elected 1976).

Please mark your calendars and plan to join us
either in person or remotely!



Safeguarding the American Story Campaign Update

As of January 2018, the Society had raised commitments totaling \$12.2 million, 61 percent of our \$20 million goal, for the renovation and expansion of Antiquarian Hall. The total raised is already well on course to surpass any previous campaign we have had in our history, and it is a testament to the belief that individuals, foundations, and government agencies have in the Society, its mission, and its ability to follow through on its plans. So far, we have focused our solicitations on those organizations and individuals that have the greatest capacity and inclination to help us reach our fundraising goal. We have been very pleased with this initial response, and we look forward to working with everyone who supports AAS, **yourself included**, to raise the remaining \$7.8 million (39 percent) in advance of the October 26, 2018, dedication of the new facilities. This is an ambitious goal, to be sure, and we will soon be reaching out to everyone for help in achieving it. Please join with us and be as generous as you can as we all strengthen and transform the Society with this new building project.

Improvements at the Goddard-Daniels House

Antiquarian Hall is not the only AAS building getting a facelift—the Goddard-Daniels House has also been undergoing repairs and updates during this past fall and winter. The repairs pertain mostly to the exterior of the house, where the dormers were reshingled and the roof was replaced, complete with heat trace designed to eliminate ice dams and icicles. The entire house is also receiving an electrical upgrade, beginning with moving the electrical service from the adjacent Carriage House to a new location with the help of National Grid. We are also working with an electrical engineer to redesign the interior electrical wiring and lighting at the Goddard-Daniels House. Other repairs that we plan on continuing this year include replacing shutters, repairing or replacing columns and capitals as needed, replacing wood siding where necessary, and repainting the exterior. Much of this work has been underwritten by the very generous community of Worcester-based foundations. The Worcester Historical Commission has informally approved all planned repairs, and we will be delivering a formal presentation to the commission this spring.



Left page: Steel erection for the library addition in November 2017. Right, from top: The finished roof on the Goddard-Daniels House; copper edging on the awnings.

Evaluating for a New Era at AAS

While construction of the new building addition is underway, we are suspending many of our various programs and concentrating our efforts on evaluating all of our initiatives and developing a comprehensive strategic plan for them. We anticipate completing this process with formal Council approval at the annual meeting in October. Leading this effort is an ad hoc committee composed of AAS councilors and staff. Council members serving on the committee include Robert Bachelder (elected 2013), Richard D. Brown (elected 1981), James Donnelly (elected 1991), Robert Gross (elected 1982), Margaretta Lovell (elected 2001), Carla Peterson (elected 2001), Elizabeth Reilly (elected 1998), and Craig Wilder (elected 2013). Staff members include Ellen Dunlap, Megan Fraser, Molly Hardy, Kayla Hopper, Jim Moran, and Nan Wolverton.

We are engaging in a three-pronged approach to gathering data. This spring we are asking AAS members and program participants to respond to an electronic survey, focusing on those programs with which they have had the most experience. The survey was developed and analyzed by Lonnie Kaufman, founder of Evaluation for Action. We have also conducted individual interviews with

various leaders in the fields of the history of the book and in K–12 education. Finally, in the spring we will conduct a series of needs and opportunities mini-conferences to explore in greater depth our academic and K–12 programs as well as our print and digital publications, including our signature online journal, *Common-place* (common-place.org).

We encourage all of our members and constituents to participate in this process. Please contact James David Moran, vice president for programs and outreach, at jmoran@mwa.org with any ideas or thoughts you may have.



Please Note:

Due to the building project and our comprehensive program evaluation process, we are suspending all CHAViC, PHBAC, and K–12 summer seminars in 2018. We will resume such programming in the summer of 2019.

(continued from page 1)

encouraging her to take a look at what Corcoran had to offer. When Hewes arrived for her first visit, she inquired about the identities of the individuals depicted in the photographs. From under the bed came a full genealogical chart and a large trunk containing books, ledgers, medical tools, and the complete family history. After two years and two trips out to Corcoran's home, more than seventy items were added to the collection, enhancing the offerings of the manuscripts, books, graphic arts, and children's literature departments. The donation even included a mid-nineteenth-century copy of *Cinderella* that was featured in the recent AAS exhibition at the Grolier Club in New York City, *Radiant with Color & Art: McLoughlin Brothers and the Business of Picture Books, 1858-1920* (fig. 2).

Susan Pike Corcoran's donations in 2015 and 2016 were notable not only for the items they contained, but also because they represented the extremely varied ways collections can come to AAS. Two years may seem like a long time to wait, but it is less than one-fifth of the time it took for another donation to fully make its way to AAS. In 1990, Frederick Johnson contacted Tom Knoles, curator of manuscripts, about donating some items that would eventually become the foundation for the Allen-Johnson Family Papers. These items were a wonderful bit of local history, as the Allen family spent much of their lives in Northborough, Massachusetts. But much more significant was a set of diaries Knoles learned about that were written by Mary Ware Allen (later Johnson) when she was a student at the Greene Street School, studying under noted woman of letters Margaret Fuller. These diaries, however, belonged to Frederick Johnson's brother Leonard and were not part of the original donation. Tragically, Leonard died unexpectedly in a car accident shortly after this. Years later Knoles reconnected with family members when they were cleaning out Leonard's house, and they donated the rest of the collection, including Mary Ware Allen's diaries—more than ten years after the initial contact (fig. 3).

Vincent Golden, curator of newspapers, also recalled a donation that was many years in the making, starting off as a sales offer and ending up as a donation. A gentleman had contacted Golden about a potential sale of newspapers from Greenfield, Massachusetts. The man's father had come across them on a sidewalk in the 1930s and each contained the publisher's own bookplate inside (fig. 4). The man was hoping to sell them to help with the cost of medical bills. Due to the man's poor health, he and Golden lost touch before a deal could be arranged. After several attempts at contacting the man, only to receive no reply, Golden gave up on the purchase. Seven years later the man reached out to Golden once more, only this time he wished to donate the papers. His health and circumstances had improved, and he was no longer in need of the money. An astonishing turn of events!

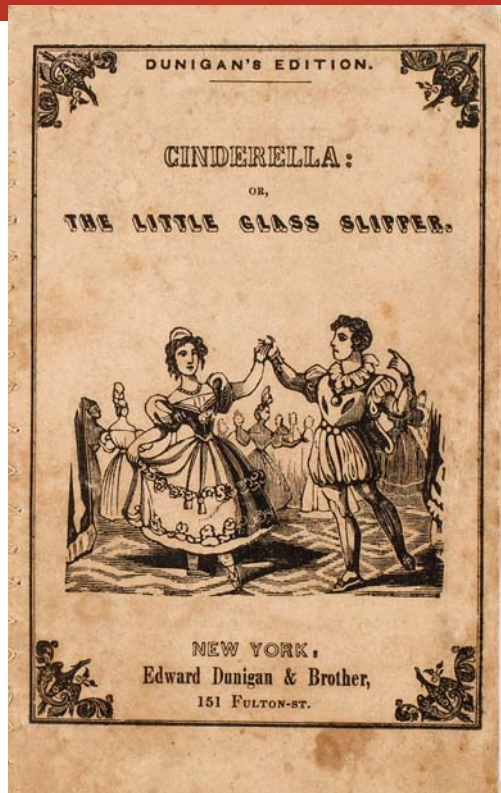


Fig. 2. *Cinderella: or, The Little Glass Slipper.*

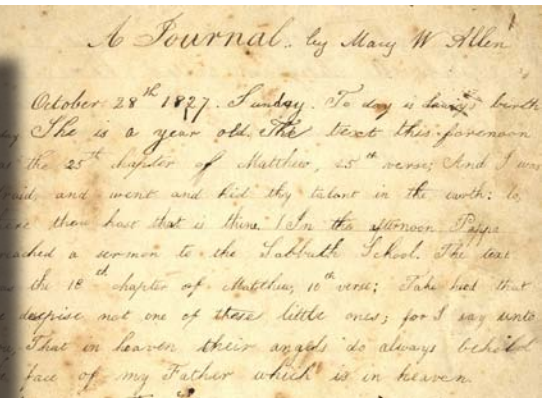
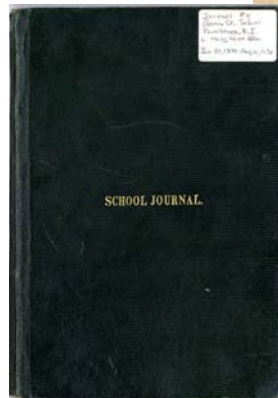


Fig. 3. Diary entry of Mary Ware Allen.

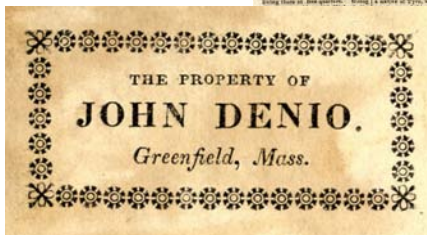


Fig. 4. Bookplate of John Denio on his copy of the *Franklin Herald*.



Fig. 5. Page from the Joseph H. Meredith botanical scrapbook.

Donations often require patience and compassion from the curators. There is always a desire to ensure that the Society is the proper home for items that may have been with an individual or family for a very long time. Recently a gentleman in upstate New York came across the article “Flowers Found in Centuries-Old Books at Antiquarian Society,” written for a November 2016 issue of the *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*, and was inspired to donate a magnificent botanical travel journal complete with plant specimens and a binding covered in juniper wood from France. It was extremely important to him that the journal would not simply be put away uncataloged on a shelf, inaccessible to researchers and easily lost. To assuage his fears, he spent time discussing the acquisitions process with our head of acquisitions, Peg Lesinski, and the collection development and retention policies with the assistant curator of manuscripts, Ashley Cataldo. From the journal’s first moments at AAS it was met with great interest from one of our long-term fellows, who was researching representations of nature in pre-nineteenth-century texts. She was thrilled to see it, and the donor was comforted to know it was being used (fig. 5).



Fig. 6. Pieces from the game about Nellie Bly.

Spontaneous donations inspired by a news article may be increasingly common. After the publication of a recent article about the Society’s Hawaiiana collection, Curator of Books Elizabeth Pope received two unsolicited secondary-source publications from their author, Susanna Moore, and even received an inquiry via Facebook about funding a cataloging project to create records for the yet uncataloged portion of the collection—a definite first for AAS social media. Similarly, a woman in Virginia had her daughter contact Lauren Hewes to offer her a complete *Game of Round the World with Nellie Bly* upon reading that we had only the game board and were missing the accompanying pieces. Each little piece was accounted for, including the instructions

and spinner (fig. 6)! These types of unexpected donations are especially delightful because they reflect the Society’s ever-expanding reach.

Donations may come from people who have never visited AAS, but occasionally individuals are inspired to donate collection materials after entering the building. In 2016 and again in 2017, public tours of the library conducted by Laura Wasowicz, curator of children’s literature, resulted in unexpected donations. One tour-taker, Susan Stafford, revealed herself to be a relative of Clara Barton and donated to AAS a manuscript poem by the Red Cross founder that was in her possession (fig. 7). One year later, Nancy Orlando decided to donate a handful of items to AAS after her tour experience. Remarkably, within the six items she donated, there was something for every curator and even something they had never seen before—periodical subscription records from a Vermont post office. Clearly Wasowicz’s passion for building the AAS collections resonated with these tour participants.

Indeed, it is amazing what a tour, a newspaper article, or even a casual chat over tea—with the right champion of AAS—can yield.

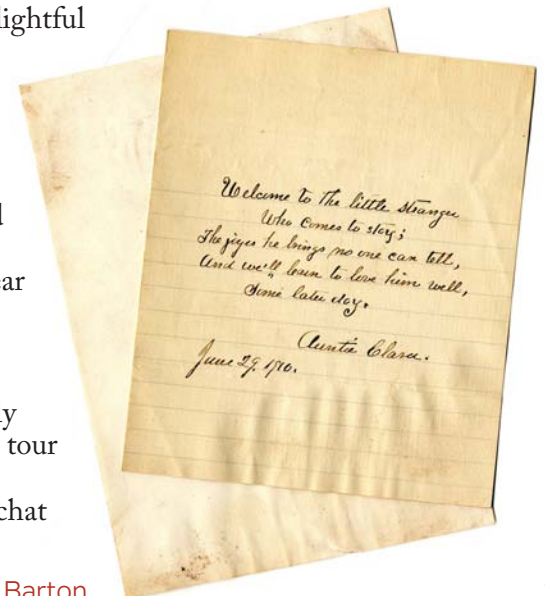


Fig. 7. Poem by Clara Barton.

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While I was finishing my dissertation, I also got a master's in library science and started thinking about library jobs in general. About a year after that, my wife got a job teaching at Assumption College in Worcester. We agreed that whoever got a job first, that was where we would go. I worked for about five years in the reference department at the Worcester Public Library. It was not the sort of work that I thought I wanted to do, but it was great experience. Having to work in a busy reference environment with a diverse population was good for learning interpersonal skills and helping readers find what it is they're actually looking for. I applied for the job of curator of manuscripts at AAS when it came along in 1990, got the job, and have been here almost twenty-nine years.



better for people than they used to be. A knowledgeable researcher can glean a lot more without ever coming into the building. The negative side is that if a person looks in the catalog and doesn't find something, they may too quickly assume that we don't have it, but it may be because of the way they looked or because it's not cataloged.

MHF: *Since your arrival at AAS in 1990, what would you say is the biggest change that you've led or observed?*

TGK: The two biggest—number one: computers. When I started to work here there was not a personal computer in the whole building. I don't think we got our first set of computers institution-wide until 1992. We all spend our whole days at computers now, and they are absolutely indispensable. They are such terrific tools for searching in the collections. And having the internet and the entire catalog and all of the related material available to the whole world online has been a huge change.

The other thing is the progress we've made in terms of access to the materials. When I came there were dozens of collections that were completely uncataloged. That number has dwindled dramatically. There is still a lot of work to be done that will keep us busy for a while, but the ability for non-staff people to be able to find material using the online catalog has changed dramatically. When I came there was no online catalog—we were still using just the card catalog—so it was impossible for anyone offsite to know much about what we had or didn't have.

MHF: *How do you think research might have changed due to increased access?*

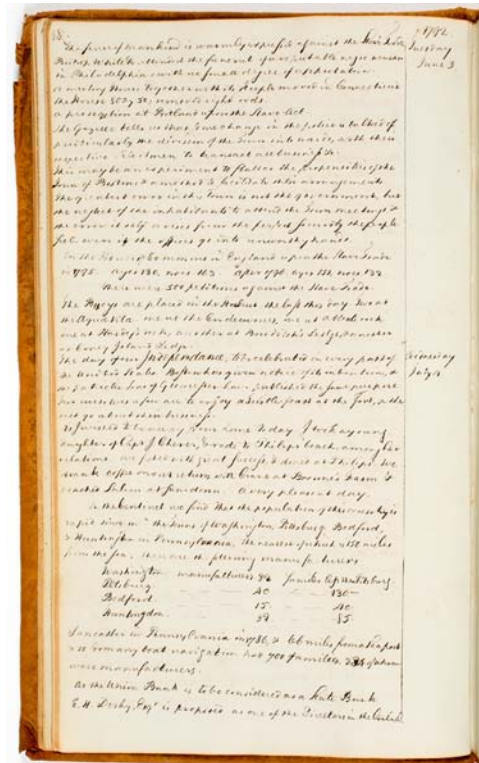
TGK: On the positive side, research tools are much

MHF: *I dread when people ask me this, because it is always so hard to choose, but if you had to say, do you have a favorite collection and why?*

TGK: I actually have an answer to that question: our William Bentley papers. He was a minister in Salem from the 1780s until his death in 1819. Soon after I started working here I recognized that not only was there his wonderful diary, but this incredible record of his book world, the collecting he did, his network of exchanges and gifts in both directions, lending and borrowing books, so well recorded and scarcely looked at by anybody in the 150 years the papers have been here at AAS. I started getting quite interested in his book accounts in the early '90s, but other things intervened. A few years ago, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts asked me if I was interested in doing a new edition of the diaries, and by then I had realized that the edition of a century ago had left out about half the original material. I'm so excited about working on this project in the years to come.

MHF: *What are some projects or accomplishments that you hope to be remembered for?*

TGK: I could point at collections I've processed, or readers I've helped, and it is always nice to see your name in acknowledgements, but the things I'm proudest of have happened since I've



been librarian and they have to do with the staff.

An example is the curators. Until I became librarian, curators needed approval before purchasing anything. I wanted to give them more agency, so now each of the curators has a defined budget every year and autonomy in spending it. The curators have also been very successful at working collegially to make major decisions.

It has also meant a lot to me to look for opportunities for staff to grow professionally and to further their careers. We have a wonderful group of people working here, and I'm always trying to sustain the idea of what we're trying to accomplish, but that's not difficult because of the shared sense of excitement about the work of the Society and about the materials we're handling all the time. It's really quite remarkable.

MHF: *It's easy to become jaded in this business and the fact that we all still find something to find wonder in is great.*

TGK: This is a great institution for that because things to wonder at are all around us every day, and are continually coming in, being discovered as things get cataloged, or as staff comes across them, or as readers use them. I've said to so many people here you will never get bored working here, and if you do, you really don't belong here.

MHF: *Do you have any words of wisdom for the staff?*

TGK: The thing about AAS is that the shared sense of mission here is just incredible. People have different approaches, but we all understand why we're here and value the same things. The advice to the staff is just keep doing the great stuff you're doing and hand it on to the next generation. None of this is really ours. The place and the collection is here—we're just passing through—and it's going to keep going.

MHF: *There's something comforting about that.*

TGK: There is. It's not like you build up this thing that's going to go away when you're not there anymore.

Opposite page: Photo of Thomas Knoles by Lucia Z. Knoles; an entry from the June 1792 diary of William Bentley.

AAS Welcomes Megan Fraser

Succeeding Tom Knoles in April 2018 as the Marcus A. McCorison Librarian is Megan Hahn Fraser, who joined AAS as associate librarian in September 2017. She received her B.A. in history from New York University and an M.L.I.S. from Pratt Institute, and brings to the AAS position more than twenty years of experience in libraries, including the New-York Historical Society (1993–2001), Independence Seaport Museum, Philadelphia (2001–2007), and UCLA Library Special Collections (2008–2017). With a strong grounding in American history, literature, the arts, book arts, and printing history, Fraser's curatorial reach has even extended to the development of a major archive relating to Southern California punk rock music and culture. In her letter to the search committee, she wrote that the AAS position captured her interest for many reasons: "The collections, the staff, the researchers, and the challenge to be a creative and innovative leader. The chance to learn from the head librarian during an orientation period is especially appealing, and I appreciate the Society's thoughtful succession planning. I am a passionate advocate not just for rare materials, but also for the diverse constituents who use them." She will be the eleventh head librarian of the Society since Christopher Columbus Baldwin was appointed to the post in 1831, and thus has accepted stewardship of a rich legacy of collection building and access that now also encompasses a wide array of innovative digital tools and resources. AAS President Ellen Dunlap recently noted, "While we're perhaps not as iconoclastic as punk, we are nonetheless pleased that Megan found the AAS scene cool enough to join. I know she will make a great contribution."





At present, participants in the Society's varied programs utilize a makeshift A/V space in the Goddard-Daniels House (*left*) and the cramped quarters of the Thomas Room (*right*) to explore collection materials.



Left: Samuel Anderson Architects' rendering of the multipurpose room.

(continued from page 1)

these populations better. Designed to be extremely flexible, the space can be turned into a meeting space; a state-of-the-art, twenty-first century classroom; or a multimedia lecture hall. Located directly off the library reading room, the new public engagement space will be completely handicapped accessible (including two handicapped bathrooms) and will give staff direct access to the library stacks so that collection materials can be easily, quickly, and safely brought in and out of the space.

Perhaps the most exciting feature of this new multipurpose room is that it will contain video and audio production equipment with the capacity for interactive long-distance communication. The space will be soundproof so that we can create video and audio presentations of staff, AAS members, visiting scholars, and educators working with collection materials and engaging with participants who are both in the room and at locations around the world. Large screens mounted on the wall will allow for video display of people participating from a distance, as well as the safe projection and filming of collection materials in the room through document cameras. In this way, all participants, both those in the room and those joining the conversation from remote locations, will be able to examine, study, and discuss objects together. The room will also contain wall displays where collection materials can be safely mounted for examination and discussion during workshop sessions, as well as built-in, glass-enclosed exhibition cases that will allow for the secure display of fragile and rare library materials.

“We see this space as being truly transformative in the ways we conduct and deliver our programs,” said James David Moran, vice president for programs and outreach. “At the heart of many of our programs is connecting people to printed artifacts—books, prints, ephemera, maps, newspapers, periodicals, and manuscripts. We engage people in the study of both the content of these resources and their materiality as objects. Increasingly we are also using our remarkable catalog metadata to engage in digital humanities projects that both analyze vast amounts of data and explore singular texts. This space will allow us to do all of this work more effectively, both with those in the room and with others joining us from anywhere in the world.”

The furniture in the room will be portable and able to be arranged in a number of configurations, from seating in rows facing a technology-enhanced podium to tables clustered in workgroups. The room will also contain ample technology hookups to ensure that participants can use their own digital devices to take notes and to create digital humanities projects. This flexibility will encourage group discussions and workgroups.

Technology is not the only feature of this room that will invite new audiences into the Society. The east wall of the new space will be dominated by a large window with specially treated glass to protect library materials from UV light and a shade to control light in the room. This window will not only allow participants in the room to enjoy a view of the outside world, but it will also provide a way for the outside world to see into the workings of the Society. As it faces Park Avenue, one of the busiest thoroughfares in the city, pedestrians and drivers traversing the street will be able to look in and see people engaging with the AAS collections. “By letting people see into the Society for themselves, we can answer the question so many Worcesterites ask: ‘What goes on in that big, stately building?’ And we hope some of them will be inspired to engage further with us,” said Moran.

This new space will not only increase the number of people who come to AAS physically, but it will also allow us to virtually bring our collections and the expertise of AAS staff and members to the world. We can, for instance, conduct K–12 teacher training programs in school districts in Texas or provide workshops on research methods, visual culture, and book history directly to undergraduate and graduate students on the west coast. Our regional seminars, which have been limited to scholars in New England, may now include scholars from around the world. Many of our own AAS members often have difficulty coming to Worcester to engage in Society functions. Now we can ask them to join us virtually and take full advantage of their interests and expertise. These are just a few of the ways this new program space may transform how we engage with people interested in AAS and its collections.

“This new section of Antiquarian Hall will be a history discovery lab where all kinds of people can explore and be challenged by and inspired from the American past,” said Moran.

Spring Programs Explore America's Origin, Historical Hymns, and Medical Imagination

This spring's series of public programs will feature a variety of subjects by leading scholars of history, literature, and music. We begin on April 10, when Andrew O'Shaughnessy, vice president of Monticello and an AAS member (elected 2008), will talk about his book *The Men Who Lost America* (2014). Concentrating on the personal biographies of the British military leaders of the American Revolution, O'Shaughnessy dispels the myths that these men were incompetent while explaining how the rebellious colonials were able to achieve their surprising victory.

On April 24, Sari Altschuler will discuss her recently published book, *The Medical Imagination: Literature and Health in the Early United States* (2018), which describes how during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, doctors understood the imagination to be directly connected to health, intimately involved in healing, and central to medical discovery. Altschuler conducted her research for *The Medical Imagination* while a Hench Post-Dissertation Fellow at the Society in 2013–14. Her lecture this spring will be cosponsored by the Franklin M. Loew Lecture Series at Becker College.

On May 1, our current AAS–Mellon Distinguished Scholar in Residence Peter S. Onuf (elected 1994) will deliver a lecture titled “Antiquarian America: Isaiah Thomas and the Ends of History.” Onuf will describe how AAS was intended to play a critical role in promoting the future progress of the new American nation's epochal experiment in republican government. He will also explore how the founders of the Society were influenced by the diffusion of knowledge in the “print public sphere” and the democratization of Enlightenment ideas through the “republic of letters.”

Eighteenth-century choral music will be the subject of our next program on May 15, when musician and AAS member Nym Cooke (elected 2016) and his musical group, American Harmony, perform a concert called “‘Slices of Time Past’: Choral Music from Eighteenth-Century America.” All the pieces in this program will be taken from Cooke's recently published choral collection, *American Harmony* (2018).

And finally, we will conclude on May 31 with a panel discussion on the Declaration of Independence featuring AAS members Peter Onuf (elected 1994), David Blight (elected 1997), and Annette Gordon-Reed (elected 2000). This interactive conversation among these three esteemed scholars and the audience will examine the meanings and influences over time of this seminal American document. This event is part of “Declaring Independence: Then and Now,” a region-wide commemoration and exploration of the Declaration of Independence. Presented by Freedom's Way National Heritage Area and AAS, “Declaring Independence” features a forty-minute public performance piece in which a narrator and five costumed reenactors bring to life the Declaration of Independence, followed by an audience discussion. Performances will take place throughout Massachusetts from April through the Fourth of July. For more information on these performances, please see www.freedomsway.org.



Please Note:

Due to the building project we will not be offering any Hands-On History Workshops this spring. We will resume the workshops in the fall.

Top: Engraving by James Akin, “Dress,” in *Advice to the Officers of the Army* (Philadelphia, 1813). Bottom: Detail from “A New Tune to Dr. Watts Sapphic Ode,” *The New-England Psalm-Singer*. By W. Billings, 1770.



Full Calendar of Events for Spring 2018

Please see the key for event classifications and details.

APRIL

- 10 “The Men Who Lost America” by Andrew O’Shaughnessy *
- 13 2018 Semiannual Meeting for AAS members in New York, featuring a lecture by Peter S. Onuf, “Finding the Future in the Past: Isaiah Thomas’s Antiquarian Vision” ±
- 24 “The Medical Imagination in the Early United States” by Sari Altschuler (*cosponsored by the Franklin M. Loew Lecture Series at Becker College*) *

MAY

- 1 “Antiquarian America: Isaiah Thomas and the Ends of History” by Peter S. Onuf *
- 15 “Slices of Time Past’: Choral Music from Eighteenth-Century America,” a musical performance by American Harmony with commentary by Nym Cooke *
- 31 “Holding These Truths: A Panel Discussion about the Declaration of Independence,” with Peter S. Onuf, David W. Blight, and Annette Gordon-Reed (*presented in collaboration with Freedom’s Way National Heritage Area*) *

KEY:

* *Public Programs: All 7 p.m. at AAS, free of charge*
 ± *Requires registration (please see our website)*

McCALLA & STAVELY'S
 PRINTING HOUSE
 237-9 Dock Street,
 PHILADELPHIA.

1877.						
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Underlay: Trade card, McCalla & Stavelly, Philadelphia, ca. 1877. Bottom: Liberty Enlightening the World. Chromolithograph, New York, ca. 1883.



2018 Semiannual Meeting in New York Friday, April 13

The 206th semiannual meeting of the Society will take place at 6 p.m. on Friday, April 13, at the Century Association Clubhouse, 7 West Forty-Seventh Street in New York City. The meeting will contain reports from the president and officers of the corporation as well as the election of new members. Peter Onuf, the current AAS–Mellon Distinguished Scholar in Residence and AAS member (elected 1994), will also deliver a lecture entitled “Finding the Future in the Past: Isaiah Thomas’s Antiquarian Vision.” Onuf’s lecture is based upon research he is conducting at AAS on Isaiah Thomas and his social networks, the founding of the Society, and the eighteenth-century concept of antiquarianism. The reception following the semiannual meeting will also be held at the Century Association and is hosted by AAS member Paul Sperry (elected 2013), who has recently joined the Council.

AAS Heritage: Programs at AAS

A little more than forty years ago, AAS director and librarian Marcus A. McCorison wrote, “There can be no doubt in anyone’s mind that the primary activity of the Society has been and always will be the support of its research library. The library is the focus of our work.” But he added, “In 1977, in order to bring our great resources to bear upon the common aims of cultural enrichment with our fellow citizens, we have taken a first step toward developing an integrated program of research and publication, as well as starting an educational effort, both of which will complement the strengths of the library.” With this statement, AAS announced what would be the beginning of a new era of opening the Society and its collections to a broader range of audiences.

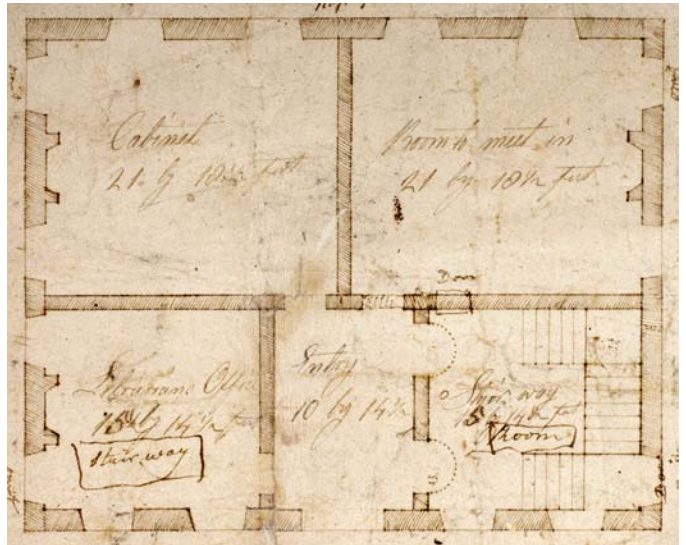
Although in the nineteenth century visitors were allowed into the first two Antiquarian Halls to see the museum objects in the “cabinet,” access to the 1910 building was long limited to readers. In 1969, after the end of the run of the AAS exhibition *A Society’s Chief Joys* at the Grolier Club in New York, the Society opened its doors for seven weekdays to show the exhibition in Antiquarian Hall, followed by an open house. Over 350 people attended the latter, which a local newspaper noted was the Society’s first open house in 157 years.

Recognizing that even among readers there was room for broadening audiences, in 1972 AAS began awarding research fellowships to increase use of the library by readers living at places distant from Worcester. Forty-five years later, the fellowships have brought hundreds of scholars to Worcester.

In 1977, the year of McCorison’s statement, the Society opened an Education Office “in an effort to open its historic resources to a more diverse public.” An annual American Studies Seminar for undergraduates from the Worcester colleges and a schedule of public lectures and other programs were established soon after. Both have continued to the present. Capitalizing on the Society’s preeminent collections, the Program in the History of the Book in America (PHBAC) was established in 1983. Annual summer seminars followed, as did, eventually, the five-volume *A History of the Book in America*.

Not long after the arrival of Ellen S. Dunlap as president in 1992, the Society received a Lila Wallace–Reader’s Digest grant to “broaden public awareness, appreciation, and support of the Society, its collections, and programs.” James David Moran soon came on board as program coordinator and, in 1997, was named director of outreach. Moran oversaw a variety of new initiatives, ranging from radio shows to creative artists’ fellowships to K–12 programs. Then, in 2005, the Society established the Center for Historic American Visual Culture (CHAViC), which has its own annual summer seminars and well-attended conferences.

Through all of these efforts to make our collections available to broader and more diverse audiences we have been hampered by space limitations, particularly for programs that encourage participants to interact with original materials. The new multipurpose room currently under construction (see pages 8–9) will be a natural continuation of the Society’s history with programming, expanding the number of people and types of audiences that are able to engage with the collections, both within Antiquarian Hall and at a distance through remote communication technology.



From the top: Preliminary plan of the first Antiquarian Hall from 1818 by Peter Banner. The “Cabinet” is located at the back left behind the librarian’s office; participants at the 1990 History of the Book summer seminar; a recent program in the reading room of Antiquarian Hall.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS, FELLOWS & STAFF

Members

PATRICIA CRAIN (elected 2002) received the 2017 *Early American Literature* Book Prize for her newest book, *Reading Children: Literacy, Property, and the Dilemmas of Childhood in Nineteenth-Century America*.

CATHERINE E. KELLY (elected 2009) has been appointed editor of books for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History & Culture.

MANISHA SINHA (elected 2006) received the 2017 Frederick Douglass Book Prize for her book *The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition* (2016). The prize is awarded by the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale University's MacMillan Center and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History in New York City for the best book written in English on slavery or abolition.

Fellows

CHRISTINE DeLUCIA (AAS-NEH, 2015–16) was recently promoted to associate professor of history at Mount Holyoke College.

SAMANTHA HARVEY (AAS-NEH, 2017–18) was featured in January 2018 on a BBC World Service radio broadcast about Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem "Kubla Khan" and its legacy.

KATHLEEN WALKUP (Botein, 2014–15) has been named the first endowed faculty chair for the Book Art Program at Mills College.

Staff

We recently said goodbye to cataloger **BRENNA BYCHOWSKI**, who took a position in the Rare Book Cataloging Unit at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, and photographer **NIKKI GRDINICH**, who moved to a new job with the online home décor site Wayfair.

We were happy to welcome in November **AMANDA KONDEK** as a new library assistant. **CAROLINE STOFFEL**, online services librarian, has also added the responsibilities of digitizing coordinator to her duties.

Congratulations to those staff members who reached significant milestones in their tenures at AAS with the close of 2017: **S. J. WOLFE**, thirty-five years; **LAURA WASOWICZ**, thirty years; **ELLEN DUNLAP**, twenty-five years; **NICK CONTI**, twenty years; **VINCENT GOLDEN** and **ANDY CARIGLIA**, fifteen years; **SUSAN FORGIT**, ten years; and **NAN WOLVERTON** and **AMY TIMS**, five years.

Recent Acquisition: *Here Goes Orders for the Propeller Printing Office*



The Propeller Printing Office was started by twenty-two-year-old Horace Nutting Hastings (1829–1904) in Boston around 1850. The Propeller was essentially a job-printing business, producing circulars, broadsides, and trade cards for local customers. In April of 1851, Hastings took out an advertisement in the *Boston Herald* stating, "Printing in Perfection: A large portion of the posters around the city and vicinity come from the Propeller Printing Office, 142 Washington Street. Propeller has fast type-setters, fast boys to run fast presses—and it takes a fast man to beat his time." The Society's collection includes several ephemeral items printed by Propeller Press, including a trade card for a local restaurant and a broadside announcing a Boston appearance of the temperance reformer John B. Gough.

Hastings occupied the second floor of 142 Washington Street, an area of the city full of print shops and booksellers. This eye-catching broadside, dating from about 1851, features an oversized woodcut of a top-hatted man running to bring his order to the press and exemplifies the shop's ability to print large, showy sheets. Copies of the broadside would likely have been posted around the city in an effort to drum up customers. The firm operated for more than five years. In 1855, Hastings sold the press to Davis & Brazier and moved to Woburn, where he founded the *Woburn Budget* and worked as a printer until 1862 when he enlisted with the Massachusetts 5th Regiment. After the war he settled in Lynn, Massachusetts, and published the *Swampscott Enterprise*. This broadside from his younger days as a printer suggests the hustle and bustle of an urban job-printing business, for which faster and cheaper was a main objective and competition meant capturing and retaining steady customers.

New Members

Fifteen new members were elected at the annual meeting on October 27, 2017.

Michael J. Barsanti

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Michael Barsanti is the Edwin Wolf 2nd Director of the Library Company of Philadelphia. He has also served in leadership positions at the Rosenbach Museum and Library, the Pew Center for Arts and Heritage, and the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation. He has taught in the English Department at the University of Pennsylvania and is currently an adjunct professor at Drexel University.

H. Paul Buckingham III

Worcester, Massachusetts

Paul Buckingham is a retired educational consultant. He and his family have been great supporters of nearly all of Worcester's cultural institutions and many of its important community service organizations for decades. He also bears the distinction of having had a "research office" at AAS when he was in college.

Katherine "Kate" Capshaw

Storrs, Connecticut

Kate Capshaw is professor of English at the University of Connecticut. She serves as an officer on the board of directors of the *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*. Her works include *Civil Rights Childhood: Picturing Liberation in African American Photobooks* (2014) and *Children's Literature of the Harlem Renaissance* (2006).

Bridget Carr

Boston, Massachusetts

Bridget Carr is director of archives and digital collections for the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO). As manager of the development of the BSO archives initiative, she has facilitated advancements in access to the material for scholars and the public. Her archival displays in the corridors of Symphony Hall and at Tanglewood attract favorable public attention, and she regularly presents important archival material in the BSO concert program books.

James P. "Trey" Cassidy III

Worcester, Massachusetts

Trey Cassidy is head of Bancroft School in Worcester. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania with a degree in history, he taught in the Philadelphia schools and served in the classroom and administrative offices of independent schools in Michigan and Maryland before returning to his roots in New England.

Matt Cohen

Lincoln, Nebraska

Matt Cohen is associate professor of English at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. His publications include *The Networked Wilderness: Communicating in Early New England* (2010), *Colonial Mediascapes: Sensory Worlds of the Early Americas* (with Jeffrey Glover, editors, 2014), and

Whitman's Drift: Imagining Literary Distribution (2017).

A contributing editor at the Walt Whitman Archive, he is actively involved with a number of digital humanities projects about Whitman.

Scott DeWolfe

Alfred, Maine

Scott DeWolfe is an antiquarian bookseller and proprietor of DeWolfe and Wood in Alfred, Maine. Early in his career, his interest in antiquities led him to a position living and working at the Fairbanks House in Dedham, Massachusetts, the oldest surviving timber-frame house in North America. He also formerly worked with the Sabbathday Lake Shaker community in Maine and began selling Shaker books, ephemera, photographs, and manuscripts in 1989.

Eileen "Ellie" Donovan

Plymouth, Massachusetts

Ellie Donovan is executive director of Plimoth Plantation. She began working there in high school as an interpreter and over the course of decades has gone on to serve in many positions, including associate director and acting executive director. She is a champion of living history as one of the most engaging and enriching methods of teaching about America's primitive beginnings.

Lillian Fraker

Lanesboro, Massachusetts

Lillian Fraker is an antiquarian bookseller based in western Massachusetts. With her late husband, Bob, she established Savoy Books in 1971, offering books, pamphlets, broadsides, and manuscripts on a wide variety of topics. As collectors, over the course of twenty-five years she and Bob amassed more than four thousand examples of what they refer to as the "democratization of poetry" in America from 1789 to 1900.

Lisa Kirby-Gibbs

Worcester, Massachusetts

Lisa Kirby-Gibbs is a Worcester business owner, business consultant, and philanthropist. She is currently the president of the Worcester Art Museum Board of Trustees and chair of the board of the Boynton Angels, a network of private equity investors who invest in early-stage companies in New England, particularly in Worcester County.

Edward J. Larkin

Wilmington, Delaware

Edward Larkin is professor of English at the University of Delaware. At AAS, he was coleader of the 2011 Summer Seminar in the History of the Book and was the recipient of an AAS-National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship in 2006-7. His publications include *Thomas Paine and the Literature of Revolution* (2005) and *The American School of Empire* (2016). He also edited *Common*

Sense by Thomas Paine (2004) and is the coeditor, with Ed Cahill, of a special issue of *Early American Literature* on the topic of aesthetics in early America.

Jennifer L. Morgan
New York, New York

Jennifer Morgan is professor of history in New York University's Department of Social and Cultural Analysis, where she also serves as chair. She is the author of *Laboring Women: Gender and Reproduction in the Making of New World Slavery* (2004) and the coeditor of *Connexions: Histories of Race and Sex in America* (2016).

Elizabeth A. Ševčenko
Brooklyn, New York

Elizabeth Ševčenko is a fifth-generation great-granddaughter of Isaiah Thomas. A founding director of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (ICSC), whose focus is the preservation of sites impacted by trauma, she currently directs the Humanities Action Lab, a coalition of universities, issue organizations, and public spaces in twenty cities that collaborate to produce community-curated public humanities projects on urgent social issues. She is a recipient of the Booth Family Rome Prize administered by the American Academy in Rome.

Earle G. Shettleworth
Portland, Maine

Earle Shettleworth recently retired as director of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, having served longer than any state preservation officer in the country. He cocurated the first comprehensive exhibition on Maine's architecture with a three-part series, *The Maine Perspective*, at the Portland Museum of Art, which examined the state's evolving building tradition as well as the development of the architectural profession within Maine.

Geoffrey C. Ward
New York, New York

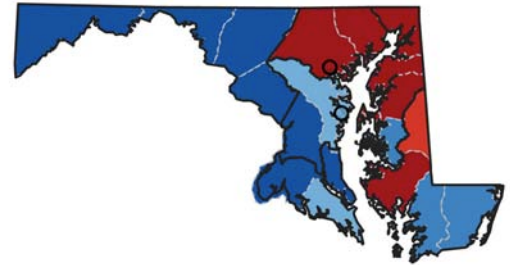
Geoffrey Ward is a historian, screenwriter, and former editor of *American Heritage*. He was principal writer for the scripts of the documentaries *The Civil War* (1990) and *Baseball* (1994), and cowriter, with Dayton Duncan, of *The West* (1996)—all collaborative projects with Ken Burns. Among his many books is *A First-Class Temperament: The Emergence of Franklin Roosevelt*, which won the 1989 National Book Critics Circle Award for biography and the 1990 Francis Parkman Prize awarded by the Society of American Historians.

AAS Data in Action

In 2016, George Mason University's Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media received funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities to enhance the data stored in the database A New Nation Votes (elections.lib.tufts.edu), a project of AAS and Tufts University and the result of fifty-four years of research by Philip Lampi. This new resource, Mapping Early American Elections (earlyamericanelections.org), transforms the election returns Lampi collected from newspapers, state archives, and local repositories into a dataset with a spatial component. Under the direction of Sheila Brennan and Lincoln Mullen (Peterson Fellow 2013–14), the project has released over seventy maps visually presenting voting returns by state from the first five U.S. Congressional elections. The project is not only producing these illuminating maps illustrating changes in voting patterns using AAS data, but it also makes it possible for others to use the enhanced data for additional innovative projects.

Speaking of innovative uses of AAS data, we are now partners on two recently funded planning grants from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. These Digital Edition Publishing Cooperatives Grants provide opportunities for collectives to develop technical and human infrastructures to support the digital publication of documentary and scholarly editions and to provide for their long-term preservation, discovery, and use. The first of these, "ARCScholar Digital Publishing Cooperative," will gather together digital editions and publishers of digital editions to determine how to share tools, submit editions to libraries for archiving, and maximize their findability; AAS's Just Teach One (jto.common-place.org), Just Teach One: Early African American Print (jtoaa.common-place.org), and the Isaiah Thomas Broadside Ballads project (americanantiquarian.org/thomasballads) are part of this cooperative. The second, "Digital Editions Publishing Cooperative for Historical Accounts," aims to offer publication and access services to a wide range of institutions and individual scholars who want to publish information contained in historical accounting records. AAS's Mathew Carey Papers (1785–1859), which the Society digitized in 2010 and transformed into a database to search the index of names in 2015 (americanantiquarian.org/careydatabase), is a part of this collaborative. AAS looks forward to participating in these conversations in the coming year!

2nd Congress: Maryland 1790





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Cataloging “Finds”: John Taylor Hughes’s *Doniphan’s Expedition*

With an over two-hundred-year-old history, it’s not surprising that some collection items at AAS have slipped through the proverbial cracks, safe in the stacks but inaccessible to researchers. The Cataloging Department seeks to remedy these oversights, which often result in a kind of “new acquisition” from within our own holdings.

John Taylor Hughes’s *Doniphan’s Expedition: Containing an Account of the Conquest of New Mexico* is one such example. It was first published in Cincinnati in 1847. J. A. and U. P. James published two editions—a duodecimo edition in cloth and an octavo “cheap edition” in paper wrappers. There are multiple impressions of each edition. AAS holds 1848 and 1850 impressions of the duodecimo edition (but not, alas, the 1847 impression). AAS also holds the 1848 impression of the octavo “cheap edition,” as well as an undated impression published by U. P. James alone, probably no earlier than 1855.

Though the four copies are recorded in the old AAS card catalog, until last summer none of them were recorded in our online catalog. A confusing single card entry describing all four (seen below) may suggest why retrospective

conversion of the card catalog to machine-readable form in the 1990s failed to provide records for them. Alan Degutis, head of cataloging, discovered the missing entries while checking AAS holdings of titles recorded in AAS Councilor William S. Reese’s (elected 1981) recently published *The Best of the West: 250 Classic Works of Western Americana* (2017).

