

# *Report of the Council*

*April 16, 1986*

THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY of the founding of our Society falls on October 24, 1987. Next year we shall celebrate that event on October 21 and 22 in Mechanics Hall in Worcester with programs that, for such a grand occasion, we intend to be academically, intellectually, and festively appropriate, as well as enjoyable.

An important aspect of the celebration will be the publication of a descriptive guide to our collections and programs, the outline of which is well advanced and on which writers from our staff are at work. We shall issue, also, a comprehensive listing of AAS members and officers dating from 1812 to 1987.

These activities are under the guidance of the committee chaired by Robert C. Achorn, who succeeded in that post the late and lamented John William Ward. Other members of the committee are President Jeppson, Frederick E. Bauer, Robert Cushman, Robert P. Hallock, Hope H. Spear, and staff members Burkett, Callahan, Hench, and McCorison.

Because the year 1987 marks the bicentennial of the writing of the Constitution of the United States, we are planning—with our friends at the Massachusetts Historical Society and the Boston Public Library—an event suitable to the occasion, to be held at the time of our semiannual meeting on April 14–15, 1987, in Boston. So, a very full schedule is being prepared for our 175th-anniversary year.

A major component of that year will be the successful attainment of our goal of \$8,750,000, for the Isaiah Thomas Fund. Of that sum, \$8,000,000 is designed to enlarge the Society's endowment funds for the support of our library and research

work. Under the leadership of Messrs. Jeppson and Cushman, \$5,760,000 has been raised thus far, \$5,000,000 having been directed to endowment and the remainder to meet certain capital needs. Thus, we have a balance of \$3,000,000 to be raised, although \$1,000,000 of that amount is targeted for deferred gifts. In short, we have \$2,000,000 in cash or pledges to accumulate in the next eighteen months, a very large order indeed. A catalytic element in this effort is the half-million-dollar challenge grant that the National Endowment for the Humanities awarded us late in 1985. The purposes of the challenge grant are the same as those of our Isaiah Thomas Fund: endowment for curatorial needs, acquisitions, conservation, and research and education. To earn that \$500,000 we must raise \$1,500,000 from private sources. We urge loyal members of the Society to help meet this extraordinary opportunity by responding to the challenge laid down before us by our peers in the humanities research community and by the staff and National Council of the Endowment for the Humanities.

Before leaving this subject, we should point out that this is the second, formal challenge grant that AAS has received from NEH—a most unusual occurrence from which we can derive much satisfaction. Such satisfaction, however, cannot blind us to the fact that soon we must raise \$1,500,000. If we do, we not only earn the \$500,000 from NEH, but we also achieve our goal for the Isaiah Thomas Fund. Let's do it!

The NEH challenge grant brings to our attention the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Endowment. The rationale for the important place of the humanities in American life, and for a federal role in fostering excellence in the humanities, remains as persuasive and urgent now as it was in 1966. The NEH has been notably successful in the quality of the programs that it has supported, in the diversity of the constituencies that it has served, in its efforts to encourage the highest standards of excellence, in the effectiveness of its staff, and in its independence in establishing highly successful programs.

From our perspective, NEH has succeeded in encouraging and assisting the important work that lies at the heart of every research library: to arrange and make available for use the raw materials of scholarship; to create tools for scholarly research; and to encourage and support scholarship based on those materials and tools. NEH has been receptive to the needs of independent research libraries, including AAS, at a time when it was not always easy for these institutions, without university connections and disciplinary bases, to obtain a hearing for their needs.

We acknowledge the leadership of chairmen Ronald Berman, Joseph Duffey, William Bennett, and the present acting chairman, John Agresto, and their staff members, all of whom have consistently recognized the central part played by independent research libraries in encouraging humanistic scholarship—despite demands that more NEH funds be dispersed to TV programs, blockbuster exhibitions of art, and trendy talk programs. The NEH challenge grant is only the most recent NEH grant that the Society has received since 1972. These grants total an astonishing \$4,171,287. NEH has helped fund projects to catalogue large and distinguished collections of manuscripts, children's literature, newspapers, nineteenth-century pamphlets, broadsides, a long-term program to catalogue our preeminent collection of materials printed in our country before 1801. In addition, NEH grants have provided for a catalogue of early American engravings, fellowships at this center for advanced study, a motion-picture film based on our nineteenth-century lithographs, and public lecture programs. Thus, we at AAS have good reason to thank our fellow citizens for their support of our work through the NEH. Hail to the National Endowment for the Humanities!

This recitation of support from the National Endowment for the Humanities leads me to related library activities. The North American Imprints Program, under the direction of Alan Degutis, our head of cataloguing services, is about two-

thirds along the way in completing a computerized inventory of forty thousand books, pamphlets, and broadsides printed in North America before the year 1801. Our work is related to that of the Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue, the other partners in which are located at the British Museum and, in this country, now at the University of California (Riverside)—to which desert place Henry Snyder has just removed his operations at, according to his report, great advantage over those at Louisiana State University (another unlikely institutional host). Be those factors as they may, ESTC and NAIP go forward, thanks to Judith Singleton, now of California, and Alan Degutis, fortunately still at AAS.

The work of the NEH-funded project to catalogue our fourteen thousand American newspaper titles is also well advanced. Well over half of the work is completed, and we should finish up in another year and a half. Joyce Tracy our curator of newspapers supervises this work.

In fact, we have other good news to report. We have received a grant of \$81,000 from the Glenmede Trust Company, in behalf of the Pew Memorial Trust, to establish a computerized editing program that provides direct access for correction and improvement to the Society's nearly thirty thousand machine-readable catalogue records of materials printed in America in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries. When edited, those records will be distributed to the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN), through which they will be available to libraries throughout this country and in England.

While dwelling on our efforts to improve access to our collections, we are happy to report that the U.S. Department of Education has just approved a grant of \$90,000 to AAS under Title II-C of the Higher Education Act. The grant will enable us to convert computerized records for early American books into records pertaining to microform copies of the same—an arcane topic that I shall not attempt to explain or describe.

Acquisitions, which provide the raw materials for these cataloguing projects, continue at a highly satisfactory pace under the guidance of your librarian. A full disclosure will appear six months hence in our annual report.

If we have books, newspapers, manuscripts, who is to use them? A most effective way to ensure their most productive use is through our fellowship competitions. The committee charged to select funded visiting scholars is chaired by William H. Bond, librarian emeritus of the Houghton Library, and is served by Barbara Miller Solomon of Harvard University, Linda K. Kerber of the University of Iowa, and Stephen Botein of Michigan State University. They recommended the following individuals to our Council, who approved them:

On funds derived from the  
National Endowment for the Humanities:

Sacvan Bercovitch, professor of English, Harvard University, 'Literary Market in Nineteenth-Century America, 1820-1890'; Deborah Bingham Van Broekhoven, associate professor of women's studies, Brown University, 'Rhode Island Women in the Antislavery Network'; and Michael D. Warner, assistant professor of English, Northwestern University, 'The Letters of the Republic.'

On funds derived from the Society's endowment on the  
Kate B. and Hall James Peterson Fund:

Michael L. Carlebach, assistant professor of photocommunication, University of Miami, 'The Origins of Photojournalism in America'; Karen Halttunen, associate professor of history, Northwestern University, 'Printed Accounts of Murders in America, 1650-1850'; Curtis M. Hinsley, associate professor of history, Colgate University, 'Anthropology in Boston, 1860-1920'; Li Yan, Ph.D. candidate in history, University of Connecticut, 'Transformation of Massachusetts Constitution, 1780-1860'; Andrew J. O'Shaughnessy, Ph.D. candidate in history, Oriel College (Oxford), 'The British West Indies

and the American Revolution'; Paula E. Petrik, associate professor of history and philosophy, Montana State University, 'Paraphernalia of Childhood: Advice on Toys and Play, 1844-1900'; Katherine K. Preston, Ph.D. candidate in musicology, City University of New York, 'Traveling Opera Troupes in the United States, 1830-1860'; Leslie J. Reagan, Ph.D. candidate in history, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 'Women in Eighteenth-Century Worcester County'; Anne Dhu Shapiro, assistant professor of musicology, Harvard University, 'Connection between American Folk Song and Theatre.'

On funds given in memory of the late Albert Boni  
by members of his family:

James N. Green, curator of printed books, Library Company of Philadelphia, 'The Book Distribution Network of Mathew Carey, 1785-1820'; Michael Hackenberg, assistant professor of librarianship, University of Chicago, 'New England Origins of Nineteenth-Century Subscription Publishing.'

On funds given in memory of the late Frances Hiatt  
by Jacob Hiatt:

Dona Brown, Ph.D. candidate in history, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 'Commerce and Culture: The Growth of New England Tourism'; Richard R. John, Jr., Ph.D. candidate in history, Harvard University, 'The Post Office, the Press, and Public Opinion in Jacksonian America.'

It may be of interest to note that of 106 completed applications in all categories, fifty-four percent came from males, eight percent from full or associate professors, sixteen percent from assistant professors, and fifty-six percent from candidates for the Ph.D. Forty-nine percent of the applicants were historians or American Studies scholars, another eleven percent were historians of journalism, ten percent were literati, and seven percent were musicologists. Forty-seven percent of the applicants came from three states: Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania. All the others were 'other,' except for five

applicants from mainland China, one of whom was successful. We were able to make one award per 8.3 applicants, compared to one in thirteen or fourteen in the ACLS or Guggenheim competitions. Whatever the case, we received more than a sufficiency of first-rate applicants who deserved acceptances. In fact, we appointed nine alternates whose applications were acceptable, should any of the front runners not accept their fellowships. In the end, all but one of the appointees did accept.

In mid-January the Society published two handsome books on American bookbindings—a second edition, improved, of the illustrated catalogue of an exhibit of Michael Papantonio's bookbindings that was first issued in 1972, and a volume of illustrated essays by Hannah Dustin French entitled *Bookbinding in Early America: Seven Essays on Masters and Methods*. Both volumes are available through our distributor, The University Press of Virginia.

Two more books are in the process of publication—a volume of essays delivered at the 1976 gathering of the North American Print Conference held at AAS, edited by Georgia Bumgardner, and Richard Crawford's great work on American musicology, *American Sacred Music Imprints, 1698-1810*, which is based on the work of Alan Britten and the late Irving Lowens.

Plans are well forward on a two-volume work on the history of the book in America to be edited by David D. Hall, chairman of our Program in the History of the Book in American Culture. Scheduled for 1990, or 1991, the publication will coincide with the 350th anniversary of the establishment of the printing press in British North America.

On the administrative front, changes have occurred in the past six months. After an exceptionally useful career at AAS, Joseph E. Macmanus resigned as senior cataloguer of our United States Newspaper Cataloguing Project to join the United States Information Agency of the State Department. Georgia B. Bumgardner has been granted the Society's first re-

search sabbatical of three months. And, on Eleanor S. Adams's recommendation, we have acquired three Compaq personal computers as a first step in automating our office procedures. (We have been using computers to catalogue books since 1974. We wanted to be sure they worked before moving into office automation!)

The development officer reports that gifts to our annual fund stand at a very gratifying \$83,840; that 125 donors have given \$24,000 to a book fund honoring their late friend, Harold Hugo; that two endowed book funds have been established to honor Thomas W. Streeter and Herbert Lombard, and yet another has been funded by Henry B. Dewey, our chairman of the Committee on Deferred Giving. In addition, the Society has established its first Unitrust, through the generous gift of Ruth E. Adomeit.

In closing, permit me to thank all members of the Society's staff, Society members, the members of the Worcester Association of Mutual Aid in Detecting Thieves, and all other friends of learning, who make our work not only possible but so gratifying.

Marcus A. McCorison



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