



REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

SINCE its last meeting in April, the Society has lost four members through death.

Samuel L. Munson, elected in 1918, died May 19, 1930, in his eighty-sixth year. Mr. Munson, who had been a member of the Council since 1922, was a constant friend to the Society and one of its greatest benefactors. In his will he bequeathed the sum of \$10,000 to the Society. The feelings of the Council regarding Mr. Munson cannot be better told than by quoting the record of its meeting on May 20 last when the following was spread upon its minutes:

The Council of the American Antiquarian Society has learned with sorrow of the death of one of its members, Samuel Lyman Munson of Albany, New York. For twelve years a member of the Society and for eight years a member of its governing body, the Council, Mr. Munson has long been one of the most interested and active of our supporters. Always constructive in his counsels, stimulating in his enthusiasms and generous in his material contributions, he has constantly acted for the best interests of the Society and for the increase of its usefulness. His gift to the Library of his nationally notable collection of almanacs was one of the most helpful benefactions that we have ever received, and was followed by continuous gifts to add to the prestige of this collection.

The Council will miss his cheerful attendance at its meetings, the wisdom of his counsel and his spirit of cheerfulness and of friendship. It begs to extend to his family its sincere sympathy for their loss and desires to spread this resolve on its records, in recognition of an associate who has faithfully discharged all his duties of membership in this Society and has honored the Council with his fellowship.

J. Walter Fewkes of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, elected in 1914, died May 31, 1930, in his eightieth year. Although distance from New England

prevented his frequent attendance at the meetings, he came to Boston in 1917 and read a paper on "Pre-historic Southwestern Architecture."

Ira Nelson Hollis, elected in 1915, died August 15, 1930, at the age of seventy-four. As President of the Worcester Polytechnic Institute, he was interested in the Society and was present at many of its meetings.

William Eaton Foster, elected in 1889 and one of the senior members of the Society, died at the age of seventy-nine, September 10, 1930. For fifty-three years the efficient Librarian of the Providence Public Library, he was also a historian of ability. For over forty years he was an almost constant attendant at the meetings of this Society. Obituary sketches of these members will appear in the printed proceedings of this meeting.

The library building is in excellent condition and the repairs made last winter to the roof and marble coping have apparently stopped all leaks. Although some sections of the Library seem crowded, the Librarian states that there is sufficient space for a few years at least, unless unexpected accessions are received beyond the present rate of growth. The total shelf mileage in the Library is about eleven miles, with two-thirds devoted to books and one-third to newspapers. Since there are now in the Library nearly half a million titles—two-fifths books and three-fifths pamphlets—it is calculated that there is room left for about a fifteen per cent increase.

In the Council Report last October, it was stated that the Society owned oil portraits of all its past Presidents except that of Senator Hoar, 1884-1887, Edward Everett Hale, 1906-1907 and Waldo Lincoln, 1907-1927. One of these gaps has now been filled by the acquisition of a fine portrait of Mr. Lincoln by the English artist, Frank O. Salisbury. This portrait was presented by a group of Mr. Lincoln's friends and is a worthy addition to the Society's gallery.

During the year the President has made two appointments, both confirmed by action of the Council.

In December 1929 Mr. Brigham was appointed as delegate for four years to the American Council of Learned Societies, and on June 4 last, Max Farrand was appointed as delegate to the semi-centennial of the University of Southern California. The President of the Society, upon invitation from the Governor of the Commonwealth, served as delegate from the Society at the Tercentenary exercises at Boston on July 15.

Since 1908 Mr. Clarence S. Brigham has served this Society as its Librarian. He has been the active and directing force in the selection and purchase of the books, pamphlets and newspapers in the Library since that date. Through his efforts also, very considerable amounts of money have been raised for the purposes of the Society. While he has had the hearty co-operation of many others, the success of the Society for almost a quarter of a century has been due to him more than to any of its other members. He is not retiring from the work and will still be connected with the institution in an executive capacity as Director of the Library.

Mr. Robert W. G. Vail, of the New York Public Library, has been chosen by the Council Librarian for the ensuing year. Mr. Vail was born in 1890, was graduated from Cornell in 1914, attended the Library School, 1914-1916, was assistant in New York Public Library except when on leave in the service in the World War, Librarian of the Minnesota Historical Society in 1920-1921, Librarian of Roosevelt Memorial Association, 1921-1928, chosen editor of Sabin's Dictionary of Books relating to America in 1930. He has written many monographs and articles for periodicals on bibliographical and historical subjects.

The funds of the Society have been increased during the year by the bequest of \$5,000 from John W. Farwell, the gift of \$5,000 from the James B. Wilbur Estate, the gift of \$5,000 from our fellow member, Mr. Clarence W. Bowen, and gifts of \$500 each from A. S. W. Rosenbach and Thomas B. Lawler. Mr.

Bowen's efforts to raise funds for the Society among the New York members, have begun to bear fruit, and his zeal in the interest of the Society, not to mention his own generosity, are hereby acknowledged. To the Special Gifts Fund, for book purchases during the year, have been contributed the following sums: \$1,550 from Charles H. Taylor, \$1,000 from Herbert E. Lombard, \$500 from Henry W. Cunningham, \$500 from George S. Eddy, \$250 from Mrs. Roswell Skeel and \$150 from Matt B. Jones.

An institution of this nature is always in need of funds if it is to continue to serve the public in an adequate way. The income from the present endowment is only about \$33,000 a year and from other sources about \$5,000. The expenditures each year just about balance the income. There are constantly coming on the market books and records that ought to be added to the Library. Oftentimes if they are not purchased when offered, the opportunity to secure them passes forever, for there are no duplicates. Besides the land and buildings which are carried at about \$300,000, there is an endowment fund of about \$650,000 so that the total property of the Society is around \$950,000. This has been secured from a very large number of small contributions and a few large donations. The residents of Worcester have been especially generous in their support of the Society and have contributed a major portion of its present property. But this is a national institution and deserves national support.

The value of a national reference library such as the Society maintains is apparent to all historical students and writers. It contains a vast collection of the sources of history as they appear in printed form for every State in the nation. Being assembled in this manner it is much more convenient for those engaged in research than local collections would be because it is all under one roof where various different authorities may be easily studied and compared.

CALVIN COOLIDGE,

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.