

## REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

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THE Council has to report the deaths of four resident members and of one foreign member. Thomas McAdory Owen, LL.D., of Montgomery, Alabama, died at Montgomery, March 25, 1920, but the fact of his death was not known to the Council until after the April meeting. James Schouler, LL.D., of Intervale, New Hampshire, died at his home, April 16, 1920. Both these gentlemen were elected to membership in the Society in October, 1907. William Denison Lyman, A.M., of Walla Walla, Washington, who was elected to the Society in April 1902, died June 21, 1920. Franklin Bowditch Dexter, Litt.D., of New Haven, Connecticut, who has been a member since April, 1879, and was at the time of his death the senior member of the Society, died in New Haven, August 13. From 1885 to 1897, he was a councillor and from 1897 to 1912 he was secretary of foreign correspondence, thus serving as a member of the Council for twenty-seven years and always a faithful attendant of its meetings. He withdrew from office to the great regret of his fellow councillors, but maintained his interest in the Society to the last. During his long membership he furnished seven papers to the Society's Proceedings, the last in 1917. Brief memoirs of these members will be prepared for publication in the Proceedings. The only death of a foreign member which has been reported is that of Samuel Alexander Lafone Quevedo, M. A., of La Plata, Argentine Republic, which occurred June 18, last. Señor Quevedo was Director of the Museum and Professor of Languages in the Faculty of Natural Sciences in the University of La Plata, and Professor

of Languages and American Archaeology in the University of Buenos Aires. He received the degree of M. A. at St. John's College, Cambridge, in 1858 and was elected to this Society in 1910.

The death of Franklin Pierce Rice, chairman of the committee of publication threw much additional work on our already overburdened librarian, and this with the labor troubles common to all printing offices caused a much regretted but unavoidable delay in the publication of the Proceedings. In this emergency Mr. George Henry Haynes, the senior member of the committee, consented to take charge of the printing for a time at least, and the result is such that it is hoped that Mr. Haynes will continue in this important work. The number for last October has already been distributed to the members and that for last April is so far advanced that it will be ready for distribution before the end of the year.

Under the authority granted by the Society at the April meeting the dome of the building has been covered with copper and the interior of the dome has been repainted at a cost of \$4,389.30 which has been added to the cost of the building. The work was well and satisfactorily done by the Clason Architectural Metal Works of Providence, Rhode Island, upon the recommendation of the J. W. Bishop Company of Worcester, the original contractors for the building. At the same time it was discovered that the whole roof, on which no repairs had been made for ten years, needed immediate attention, and that the upper part of the walls and all the joints in the marble trimmings needed repointing to save the walls from disintegration which had already begun. A contract was made with the Clason company to cover all the flat roofs with two thicknesses of tarred paper and a top coating of broken slag and the J. W. Bishop Company were ordered to do the necessary repointing. All this work was completed early in the summer at a total cost of \$2,278.74. Of this \$1,031.40 has been met from this

year's income and the balance temporarily charged to Building Account. The whole roof is in consequence completely water tight for the first time since the completion of the building and in better condition than ever, and in consequence of the covering of light colored slag, which reflects the sun's heat rays, all the upper rooms are much cooler in summer than heretofore.

The attention of the Society has been repeatedly called by the Council to the pressing need for an addition to the stack, especially to that part devoted to newspapers. Of course with every year the need becomes more urgent and a beginning has at last been made towards satisfying it by the establishment of a Building Fund which already amounts to over ten thousand dollars and to which all members are earnestly invited to contribute. It is designed to let this Fund accumulate by the addition of gifts and annual interest until sufficient to pay the cost of the proposed addition. This cost now, it is estimated, would require one hundred thousand dollars, but it is hoped that the expense of building will be so far reduced in the course of a year or two that a much smaller sum will suffice and the work will be commenced as soon as the Fund is large enough to warrant it. The Fund was started by the liberality of a citizen of Worcester, not a member of the Society, Mr. David Hale Fanning who, on the presentation of the Society's needs by Mr. Clarence W. Bowen, generously gave five thousand dollars to be devoted to the preservation and maintenance of the newspaper collection, Mr. Bowen agreeing to raise an equal amount from other friends and members of the Society. Your president in acknowledging Mr. Fanning's gift stated that the whole ten thousand dollars would form the nucleus of a building fund for an addition to the stack, to enable the Society to house and preserve its collection of newspapers. Mr. Bowen reports that he has already received subscriptions for the five thousand

dollars which he agreed to raise, part of which has already been paid and the rest will be paid next year, and all members will be asked to contribute to this fund during the coming year, making the payments to suit their own convenience either in full or by installments. It is proper to state that Mr. Fanning's gift is the largest sum of money ever given to the Society by a non-member.

This being the three hundredth anniversary of the Landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, it may be interesting and profitable to recall what was done by this Society one hundred years ago to commemorate the two hundredth anniversary. The records of the sub-council contain the report of a committee which shows that that body had the subject in mind as early as January 15, 1819, when the committee was appointed, but the attention of the Society was not called to it until the annual meeting in 1820. The report is as follows:

Your committee, appointed to take into consideration the expediency of a publick commemoration of the landing of our Forefathers at the close of the second century since that auspicious event, have attended to that service, & beg leave to report.

The close of the second century since the landing of our Forefathers is a period, which peculiarly invites to a review of the rise, progress and final establishment of our Commonwealth. The little band of Pilgrims has become a numerous & powerful people. We are now in the possession of every blessing which renders a country dear, and life valuable. Our present state of high prosperity cannot be traced to any extraneous assistance which the first settlers of our country received from foreign nations; nor will it be found to originate in any peculiar qualities of our country itself. Our ancestors were persecuted refugees from the old world; and they without assistance encountered with the dangers of the wilderness, & the difficulties of a severe climate & a stubborn soil. To the discriminative characters of our forefathers, and to the institutions & habits which they transmitted are we to look for the causes of our present situation. The series of events thro' the last two hundred years fully display the legitimate effects of the principles of the men who laid the foundation of our Commonwealth.

Plymouth bears the traces of the first footsteps of our venerated ancestors; *there*, our retrospection of past events may be made with the most delightful emotion; *there*, the debt of gratitude to the fathers of our country will be felt with the greatest animation & warmth.

Therefore resolved,

That a committee be appointed to write to the Society of the Pilgrims in Plymouth, proposing an united celebration of the 20th of December 1820 in that town, by them and the American Antiquarian Society, in commemoration of the landing of our Forefathers.

All which is humbly submitted

(signed) Aaron Bancroft

Worcester February 1st 1819.

The minutes of the sub-council, which have never been printed, furnish the following:

Feb. 1, 1819. Voted: that the President and Rev. Dr. Bancroft, vice-president with the Hon. Levi Lincoln, Jun., be a committee to make a communication to the Society (of the Pilgrims) at Plymouth on the subject.

March 2, 1819. Voted: that the President be requested to address a note to Barnabas Hedge Esq<sup>r</sup> of Plymouth desiring him to transfer to the selectmen of that town the communication of this board, recently made, proposing to unite with the Pilgrim Society in celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of the Landing of our Ancestors.

June 7, 1819. The President reported that—he had addressed the following letter to Barnabas Hedge of Plymouth:

Worcester June 3<sup>d</sup> 1819

The government of the American Antiquarian Society have been favoured with your answer to a Letter addressed to you by their Committee respecting a union with the Gentlemen in Plymouth in the Celebration of the two hundredth anniversary or fourth jubilee, of the Landing of our Ancestors in New England; and as you have informed the said Committee that there is no particular Society which conducts the proceedings on such anniversaries, but that they are usually regulated by the Selectmen of Plymouth; and, as the Government of the American Antiquarian Society have not the pleasure of an acquaintance with those gentlemen, I am requested by the Officers of said Society to desire you to have the goodness to transfer the Letter, some time since address'd to you by the Committee before mentioned, to your board of Selectmen, who are respectfully requested to consider said letter as addressed

to them, and when convenient to favour the officers of this Institution with their opinion on this highly interesting subject.

I am Sir  
Barnabas Hedge, Esq.

Your obedient servant  
Isaiah Thomas

No reply to this letter is on file or mentioned in the minutes, and nothing further was done about the celebration until July 24, 1820, when two letters were communicated from the Corresponding Secretary of the Pilgrim Society at Plymouth and it was voted that the Corresponding Secretary acknowledge the receipt of the above letters and communicate the following vote:

At a meeting of the President, first vice-president and sub-council of the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, July 24, 1820, Voted: that the Corresponding Secretary acknowledge the receipt of the late communication from the Corresponding Secy of the Pilgrim Society, and express the congratulations of the officers of this institution upon the occasion of the organization of that Society; and cordial approbation of their proposed arrangements for the celebration at Plymouth of the completion of the Second Century from the landing of our Forefathers; and our confident expectations that the American Antiquarian Society will have the honor of participating in the pleasure of the Festival, by a delegation of its members duly authorized at the annual meeting in October next.

Only one of the two letters mentioned in the foregoing record is on file, but it is quite evident that the other one was an announcement of the organization of the Pilgrim Society. The letter on file is as follows:

Isaiah Thomas Esq<sup>r</sup>.  
Rev<sup>d</sup> Aaron Bancroft, D.D.  
Levi Lincoln Esq<sup>r</sup>.

} Plymouth, July 10, 1820

Gentlemen,

The completion of the second century since the first permanent settlement of New England, by the Pilgrims, will be commemorated at Plymouth, by the Pilgrim Society, on the twenty-second of December next.

An address before the Society, may be expected on this interesting occasion, by the Hon-Daniel Webster of Boston.

It is a vote of the trustees, "that the government of the American Antiquarian Society, be duly notified of these arrangements"—

I have the honor to be, gentlemen,

Isaiah Thomas Esq <sup>r</sup> . & others, a Com- mittee of A-A-S	{	very respectfully, Samuel Davis Cor. Secy of the Pilgrim Society
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At the annual meeting of the Society held Oct. 23, 1820, all the members were requested to attend the meeting of the Pilgrim Society on the 22nd of December if possible and the following gentlemen were appointed delegates: the President and Vice-Presidents, Hon. Edward H. Robbins, Rev. William Jenks, Rev. Charles Lowell, Benjamin Russell, Esq., Isaac Goodwin, Esq., Hon. Levi Lincoln, Hon. Oliver Fiske, Hon. Nathaniel Paine, Rev. Thaddeus M. Harris, Samuel Jennison, Esq., and Edward D. Bangs, Esq. From the minutes of the sub-council it is learned that the President, one of the Vice-Presidents, several members of the Council, other Officers and many members of the Society, met at Plymouth, and joined the Pilgrim Society of the place, and the officers and a number of the members of the Massachusetts Historical Society, in celebrating the anniversary of the landing of our Forefathers in Plymouth "Two Hundred Years Ago."

This was the first celebration under the auspices of the Pilgrim Society which was incorporated Feb. 24, 1820, and the exercises consisted of a public meeting at the meeting-house at which an address was delivered by Hon. Daniel Webster, a dinner at the Court House when Hon. Levi Lincoln offered the congratulations of the American Antiquarian Society, and a ball in the evening at the same place. Mr. Thomas records in his Diary: "A number of respectable Gentlemen from various towns, assembled at Plymouth, as well as many Ladies on this occasion—more than 300 Gentlemen dined together in the Court house built this year, and at a ball in the Evening, at the same place more than

400 Ladies and Gentlemen were present—Tickets for dinner 2 dols. tickets for the ball 3 dols.—Everything well conducted.”

The first building owned by the Society was dedicated one hundred years ago on the 24th of last August, with appropriate ceremonies. It was erected by Isaiah Thomas, the founder and first President entirely at his own expense and remained his property until his death, but in his will he gave the land and buildings to the Society on the express condition, that if the Society should at any time cease to use the building for its library and cabinet, then the whole estate should revert to Mr. Thomas's grandchildren and their heirs, a condition which proved very troublesome about twenty years later, when it became necessary for the Society to acquire a more commodious building. The lot whereon the building stood contained about one acre and was situated on the east side of Summer street, at the corner of what is now Belmont street but was then known as the Boston turnpike. Ground was broken for the building, May 31, 1819, and the work was finished August 9, 1820, when Mr. Thomas says in his Diary that he settled with the master workmen for the building. The total cost of the structure, without the land or fences or grading of the grounds, was \$6,763.84. There seems to have been no general contractor employed. Mr. Thomas speaks of visiting the lot with the master builders and several gentlemen to lay out the ground for the building, and he settled for the building with the master workmen as previously stated. These master workmen are nowhere named in Mr. Thomas's Diary nor in his cash accounts, unless Calvin Darby, to whom he paid \$227 in March, 1821, for stone work for the building, was the master mason.

Descriptions of the building are very meagre and unsatisfactory. No statement of its dimensions has been found, but from the engraving of it, first published on the map of Worcester in 1829, and from photo-



graphs of what remained of the front in 1910, it is seen to have been of brick, about fifty by thirty feet, of two stories, with a hip roof surmounted by a cupola. By counting the courses of bricks in the photograph it is estimated to have been twenty-three feet high between the stone underpinning and the roof, and the rooms were therefore about eleven feet in the clear. The front was relieved by two doric pilasters and four columns, all of wood, the four columns in advance of the face of the building by their diameters and upholding a doric entablature and pediment. This front furnished the motif of the classical façade of the present building. The following letter leaves little doubt that the building was designed by Peter Banner of Boston, but the plans could not have been very elaborate, judging from the modest sum asked for them.

Boston, Oct. 21, 1820.

Sir: I have expected you would have ordered the small Bill for Drawing the plan of a Building for the Antiquarian Society. I wrote the Treasurer about a month since at the desire of Mr. Andrews but have not received any answer the amount is six dollars & you will please oblige by sending an order by return of Post.

I am S<sup>r</sup> yours,

Isaiah Thomas, Esq.

Peter Banner

Peter Banner's name appears in the Boston directories from 1805 to 1828 as an architect and builder. He is described as "an ingenious architect" of English birth of whom little is remembered. The Park Street Meeting-House was built from his designs and he is said to have done the carpenter work on it. He was also the builder of the Old South parsonage house in 1809, and the mansion of Eben Crafts on the northerly slope of Parker Hill in Roxbury was his work. A son of his is said to have been born in Worcester in 1834, so the father must have been living here then, but his name does not appear in the vital records. His father is said to have come to Boston from London in 1794 and Peter probably came at this same time.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hist. of the the Old South Church, vol. ii, p. 343; Memorial Hist. of Boston, vol. iv, p. 476; Hist. of Washington, N. H., p. 293.

There are no floor plans of the building in existence and the following account which was first printed in the *New York Daily Advertiser* and copied in the *Rhode Island American* of August 20, 1824 furnishes the only available description of the interior.

"The building \* \* \* is planned with great judgment and taste. It is situated on a broad street, a little removed from the centre of the town, where it is seen to great advantage, the view being obstructed by no neighbouring buildings; and the neat and chaste style in which it is constructed, together with the handsome access through a courtyard, give it an air well corresponding with the important literary objects to which it is devoted. On the first floor are several apartments intended for the reception of pamphlets, manuscripts, &c., for the use of the society which are already the depositaries of such documents as have been collected since its formation. A large hall in the rear of the second story is devoted to the valuable library of curious and ancient books presented by Mr. Thomas, amounting to between 7 and 8000 volumes. \* \* \* On requesting a view of the cabinet of curiosities and antiques, the stranger is informed that no admission has been allowed for more than a year. There are collected all the interesting specimens of minerals, arms, utensils, dresses, ornaments, &c. which have been forwarded to the society from different parts of the country, with which the world have been made acquainted through their publications; but on account of the confused situation in which they are allowed to remain, they are considered unfit for exhibition."

Presumably this cabinet was kept in one or more of the small rooms on the first floor, but it may have been kept in the front of the second floor. The large hall on the second floor where the "curious and ancient books presented by Mr. Thomas" were kept had alcoves on the east wall, for the construction of which Mr. Thomas contracted May 18, 1820, for \$300. Additional alcoves were constructed the following May, but no information is given as to their number or against which wall or walls they were built. This room was apparently used by the Society for its meetings and as the Worcester meetings until 1832 were usually held in summer no difficulty could have been found until then over the heating arrangements. That

these were unsatisfactory is evident from Mr. Thomas' will by which he leaves to the Society \$1,000 on condition that it erects a fireproof wing to the building. The cut shows three chimneys and another is concealed by the roof, and it is probable that there were open fireplaces in some of the rooms, but if there were they were evidently a source of worry to Mr. Thomas. Until Mr. Thomas's death there was no permanent attendant at the library and visitors were obliged to seek some member who could admit them to the building and, of course, remain with them during the visit. In 1826 the librarian, Mr. William Lincoln, reports: "the books are now disposed in appropriate and separate departments \* \* \* specimens illustrating the antiquities and history of the country \* \* \* have been placed in order on the shelves of cabinets previously procured for their reception. The whole collection is so placed in the rooms of the building \* \* \* that each volume may be conveniently found \* \* \* ."

After Mr. Thomas's death, the building being already too small for the collections, and Mr. Thomas's bequests to the Society furnishing the means, it was decided to erect two wings to the building, one of which was to be as fireproof as would meet Mr. Thomas's conditions. The wings were completed in 1831 and the committee in charge (Governor Levi Lincoln and Frederick W. Paine) reported on October 24:

"Your committee \* \* \* have erected two wings each 28 feet long and 21 feet wide, and two stories high. The rooms will finish about nine feet in the clear. It would have been desirable to have had the rooms higher but the building would have been disfigured if the roof of the wings had been so high as to have run into the main roof. The wings are both covered with zinc. The rooms of the north wing communicate with the main building, by a wooden door in each floor. The lower floor of the south wing has access to the main building by an iron door. The chamber of that wing has no communication with it. One outside door of the main building will be closed up [this was presumably on the south side as no door

shows on the north side in the cut] and there will be only one outside door in the south wing."

The committee considered the south wing, while not strictly fire-proof more so than Mr. Thomas contemplated. They advised that a vane be place on the cupola. They thought that the whole expense would be \$1,400. In the following May the council authorized the building of fences and finishing the grounds and in October, 1832 the council reported that the cost of the two wings "will be about nineteen hundred and fifty dollars; one thousand dollars of which is provided for by the aforesaid legacy. The remainder must be met in such way as the Society shall direct." The report continues "the Council have the satisfaction to announce to the Society that the design of their late benefactor, Mr. Thomas, has been fulfilled in giving to the Librarian an apartment which is considered to be fire-proof, and by adding to the Hall a large apartment for books, which is already, in part, filled." On May 29, 1833, it was reported that "changes of the surface of the earth and of the fences \* \* \* have been completed. The grounds have been surrounded with belts and groves of forest trees." The result of these changes is shown in the cut of the building which first appeared on the map of Worcester, dated 1833. A wood cut, which shows the iron fence and the "groves of forest trees" was printed in the Worcester Directory for 1858 with an advertisement of the Worcester Academy, which was then occupying the building, but an earlier wood-cut, showing a wooden fence and the belts of trees still immature, was printed in the "American Magazine of Useful Knowledge" for November, 1834. These wood-cuts show a chimney at the end of each wing and, like the late photograph, two chimneys on the south side of the main building.

The land on which the building was built proved to be full of springs and in consequence the books and papers suffered much from dampness, which in 1848, the librarian complained, pervaded the whole structure,

so that not only were the books injured but his own health was becoming seriously impaired. At the same time the shelves were overcrowded and the building in such a state of disrepair that a new structure in a different location seemed the only proper remedy. Through the generosity of Stephen Salisbury, Senior, this was finally accomplished and in 1853 the Society installed its collections in its second building, on the opposite side of Lincoln Square, next to the Court House, which it continued to occupy until its removal to the present building in 1910.

The land with the old Hall was sold in 1854 to the Worcester Academy and was occupied by it for school purposes until 1869. It then passed into private hands and the building remained intact until about 1890 when the north wing was torn down to make room for a four story apartment house which covered the whole north end of the lot. The rest of the building was used as a boarding house for some years, but gradually fell into ruin and was torn down about 1911, soon after the Society removed to its present location.

WALDO LINCOLN,

*For the Council*

## APPENDIX

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 CHRONOLOGY OF THE FIRST BUILDING OF THE  
 AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

June 1, 1814. Voted, that a committee be appointed to devise ways and means for raising funds to erect a suitable edifice to contain the Library and Museum, and that the President and Professor Peck be requested to prepare a nomination list of five members as suitable persons to serve on said committee (Proceedings, 1812-1849, p. 44).

Sept. 27, 1814. "Wrote the Subscription paper for an Edifice for the Antiqu So<sup>y</sup>." (Diary of Isaiah Thomas, vol. i, p. 247).

Oct. 24, 1814. "As our original objects are to *collect* and *preserve*—that which demands our first attention, and on which the prosperity, if not the existence of this institution depends, is to provide means for, and to erect a suitable edifice for deposits. At a late meeting we voted to chose a Committee of Ways and Means to effect these purposes. As much depends on the choice of this Committee, it has been deferred till this time." (From a Communication from the President, Proceedings, 1812-1849, p. 58.) The committee was chosen at this meeting as follows:—William Paine, M. D., Samuel J. Prescott, Esq., Benjamin Russell, Esq., Rev. William Bentley, Hon. Edward Bangs together with such others as the President and Council shall appoint. (Ibid).

May 9, 1817. "Whereas the President has very generously offered to contribute towards the erection of a building for the accommodation of the Society, a site suitable for this purpose, 150,000 Bricks and \$2000 in cash. Voted: that the Committee of Ways and Means be requested to issue a subscription paper and present it to those who may be disposed to aid in the attainment of the object" (Records of the Sub-Council, unpublished).

June 26, 1817. "That part of the Committee of Ways and Means residing in Worcester made a report, that it is expedient that a subscription be opened to procure a sum in order to enable the Society to build a suitable edifice for a library and Cabinet &c.; to elect a proper person to apply to the members &c., in the United States for this purpose, and that this person be furnished with 500 Dollars to enable him to proceed on his mission" (Proceedings, 1812-1849, p. 125).

Jan. 19, 1818. Unpublished letter of Isaiah Thomas.

Worcester, Jan<sup>y</sup>. 19<sup>th</sup>. 1818.

Sir,

I am favoured with yours of the 16<sup>th</sup> inst. and thank you for your attention to my request.

I fully intended to have been in Boston this week, and to have met the Am. Antiq<sup>n</sup> Society on Wednesday next; but attending a Chemical Lecture a few Evenings since I took a violent cold which has confined me indoors, and will prevent my journey to town; which I much regret.

Among the Communications which I am desirous to make to the Society, are the following, viz.

1. That the Donations in Books, for the last year, amount to 550 Volumes (many of which are valuable) and about 200 pamphlets. Several articles have also been presented for the Cabinet.

2. That it is very important, a Building of some kind should be erected for the safe keeping of the Library and the articles for the Cabinet.

3. That a handsome Lot of Land, nearly an acre, in a good situation, 100,000 Bricks, and 2000 dollars in Cash, is offered by a member of the Society towards the erecting an Edifice for the purpose mentioned in the preceding article, provided an additional and an adequate sum is added, by subscription, or otherwise, to complete the Edifice,—(The additional sum wanted may be about 7000 dollars.)

4. That it seems expedient that a new Com.<sup>ee</sup> of Ways and Means should be speedily chosen.

5. That a Seal for the Society is much wanted.

6. That the Librarian has, agreeably to a Vote of the Society, made out a Catalogue of the Library excepting the Books which have been added since August last, when he finished his labour, which required much time and attention, and for which he is intitled to reasonable compensation.

7. That Letters have been received from many eminent men (some of them residing in Europe) highly approbating of the Institution.

8. That it is my wish, at the next election of Officers, not to be considered as a Candidate for the Presidency. My regard for the Institution is not, nor will it be diminished. I shall ever be as ready to promote the interest of the Society as a private member as I have been since I have had the honour of being elected President.

I have but little time to write as the Mail is near closing. Be so good as to submit the foregoing to the Society. If agreeable to them, I should be glad to have the meeting again adjourned,—say to the 2<sup>d</sup> or 3<sup>d</sup> Wednesday in April next—or to such time as the Society shall judge to be best.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,

Mr. N. G. Snelling,

A. S. Recording Sec<sup>y</sup>.

Am. Antiq<sup>n</sup>. So<sup>y</sup>.

Your, and the Society's,

Most obedient, ser<sup>vt</sup>,

Isaiah Thomas.

April 15, 1818. "The President communicated to the Society the present state of the library and cabinet, and suggested the propriety of taking some order relative to the erection of a building for the arrangement and preservation of the Society's collections." "Voted that this subject be referred to an adjournment of the present meeting to be held at this place at the day afternamed" (Ibid. p. 131).

June 2, 1818. "Voted, That the further consideration of the location of the building, etc., be postponed to the annual meeting in October." (Ibid. p. 133).

June 25, 1818. "Sundry concerns of the Society were discussed, and more particularly, the means and measures proper to be adopted to erect a suitable building for the use of the Society, on which subject it was—Voted, That a committee be chosen to investigate the subject and to report at an adjournment of the meeting. Hon. Nathaniel Paine, Hon. Abijah Bigelow and Rejoice Newton were chosen" (Ibid. p. 133).

July 16, 1818. "That committee appointed to consider and report on the subject of erecting a suitable building for the use of the Society, made report which was recommitted to the same committee" (Ibid. p. 134).

July 20, 1818. "Voted, That the committee who made report at the meeting holden on the 16<sup>th</sup> inst. be excused from any further consideration thereof, and that the same report and the subject on which the same was made, be committed to a new committee to consist of Levi Lincoln, Jun., and Rejoice Newton" (Ibid. p. 134).

July 23, 1818. "The committee appointed at the last meeting not having been able to make any definite report on the subject referred to them, Voted that this meeting be dissolved" (Ibid.).

Feb. 1, 1819. In an address of this date "to the members," published the following March, it is stated: "By the liberality of the President, a suitable building will speedily be erected in Worcester. A site sufficiently spacious and commodious has been obtained, and the materials for building are nearly prepared."

May 17, 1819. "Went with several gentlemen and the master builders, to view and lay out the ground whereon to erect a building for the American Antiquarian Library" (Diary of Isaiah Thomas, vol. ii, p. 15).

May 31, 1819. "This day the workmen broke ground to lay the foundation of a building for the Library of the American Antiquarian Society, in a lot which belongs to me and which I have appropriated for that purpose." (Ibid. p. 18.)

June 12, 1819. "The workmen began laying the cellar wall of the intended Building for a Library, &c. for the American Antiquarian Society" (Ibid. pp. 19-20).

Aug. 5, 1819. "Voted, that at the request of the President, a committee be appointed to superintend the building, now erecting by him for the use of the Society. Levi Lincoln, Jun., Nathaniel Maccarty and Rejoice Newton, Esqs. chosen" (Proceedings, 1812-1849, pp. 143-4).



Oct. 23, 1819. From the Report of the Committee on General Progress and State of the Society: "Within the last year our venerable and enterprising President, in praise of whose munificence too much cannot be said, has erected at great expense, a handsome, commodious and substantial building for the use and benefit of the Society. It will probably be ready for the reception of the Library and Cabinet at some time during the next season. It is sufficiently large to answer all the purposes of the Society for many years, and is so constructed, that whenever more room shall be wanted, additions may be made without disfiguring, but would rather increase the elegance of the edifice" (Ibid. p. 147).

April 4, 1820. "Voted, That there be a public Dedication of the building intended for the use of the Society when the same shall be ready, and the Library and Cabinet are placed therein—

"Voted, that a Committee be chosen for the purpose of making suitable arrangements for the same, and that the Committee consist of three.

Rev. Doct<sup>r</sup> Bancroft  
Levi Lincoln, Jun<sup>r</sup> Esq.  
Abijah Bigelow, Esq.

} were chosen."

(Minutes of the Sub-Council).

April 16, 1820. The foregoing committee made the following report: "Your Committee, appointed to take into consideration what measures it is expedient to adopt, on opening the Building erected by the munificence of our President for the use of the Society, have attended that service, and in their report beg leave to recommend the subsequent arrangements in the public celebration of an event so auspicious to the interests of the Institution. That the Society, on the day of their semi-annual meeting in June next, assemble in the North Church in Worcester and attend the following exercises:

1. Public Prayer and praise to God, the Author of all good.
2. An address from the President.
3. An Oration from a member of the Society.

That the Singers and Musicians of the Town be desired to give their attendance on the occasion, and perform appropriate pieces of musick—and that on the close of the publick solemnities, the Society dine in publick at the Inn of Col. R. Sikes.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

Worcester, April 10, 1820.

A. Bancroft, per order.

Voted to accept the above report.

Voted that the above committee be also a Committee to apply to some gentleman of the Society to deliver an Oration or an Address as above mentioned" (Minutes of the Sub-Council).

May 8, 1820. "The Committee appointed to make arrangements for the dedication of the building to be appropriated to the use of the Society, reported that they had applied to Isaac Goodwin, Esq. of Sterling to deliver an address on the occasion, and that he had complied with their request.

Voted, To choose a Committee to determine on a place of arranging and preparing the room for the reception of the Library and Cabinet.

Doct Oliver Fiske }  
Hon. Abijah Bigelow } Committee chosen.

Voted, To choose a Committee to devise ways and means for furnishing the interior of the building for the Library and Cabinet with proper furniture, and for fixing the grounds &c. about the building intended for the use of the Society.

Levi Lincoln }  
Edward D. Bangs }  
Benjamin Russell } Committee chosen.  
Stephen Codman }  
Nath<sup>l</sup> Maccarty, Esq<sup>rs</sup> }

N. B. This Committee did not report."

(Minutes of the Sub-Council).

May 18, 1820. "Agreed with the workmen to build the Alcoves on the East Wall of the Library Room for the American Antiquarian Society for 300 dollars" (Diary of Isaiah Thomas, vol. ii, p. 53).

June 26, 1820. "Voted, That Thursday the 24<sup>th</sup> of August next be the day on which to dedicate the building appropriated for the use of the Society, agreeably to report of the Committee made April 10<sup>th</sup>" (Sub-Council Minutes).

July 24, 1820. "Voted, That the President, Secretaries, and Librarian be a Committee to agree upon a plan for the arrangement and placing the Library and Cabinet in the new building" (Ibid).

Aug. 9, 1820. "Settled with the Master Workmen for building the American Antiquarian Society Library. This building cost—the mere building cost, without Land, or fences, of fixing the grounds, &c. 6752 dollars 84 cents. The building only. Extra Labour on the Cellar, 11 dollars in all 6763 dollars 84 cents" (Diary of Isaiah Thomas, vol. ii, p.59).

Aug. 15-23, 1820. Mr. Thomas says in his Diary that he "was very busily and laboriously engaged in removing Library &c. to the new building."

Aug. 24, 1820. "On this day the President, vice President Bancroft, sub-council, and other officers of the Society, met in the new building for the Library, &c. together with a number of the members, and went in procession to the church of the north parish, where the Dedication was performed agreeably to the order on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April last. A large number of people visited the Library after the Exercises were over" (Minutes of the Sub-Council).

From the "Massachusetts Spy" of Aug. 30.

#### DEDICATION

On Thursday last the elegant and commodious building lately erected in this town for the accommodation of the American Antiquarian Society was dedicated to their use with suitable solemnities. The Society

assembled at their new Hall at 10 o'clock and at 11, moved in procession to the North Meeting-house. The services were opened by prayer, from the Rev. Dr. Bancroft, who also read select passages from the Sacred Volume. The Address, by Isaac Goodwin, Esq. was learned and ingenious, and was received with much satisfaction by a numerous audience. Sacred Musick was performed by a choir of singers from the various religious societies in this town. After the services, the Society returned to their Hall; and, from thence, repaired to *Sike's* Coffee-House, where a most sumptuous entertainment was provided for the occasion. Mr. Goodwin's address will soon be submitted to the publick."

March 10, 1821. "Paid Calvin Darby 227 dollars in rent, for stone work for the Am. Antiq<sup>n</sup> Library" (Diary of Isaiah Thomas, vol. ii, p. 65).

May 28, 1821. "Carpenters began to finish the new alcoves in the American Antiq<sup>n</sup> Library Room" (Ibid. p. 87).

June 7, 1821. "Carpenters finished the additional alcoves in the Hall of the Am. Antiquarian So<sup>y</sup>" (Ibid. p. 88).

Sept. 6, 1821. "Began putting up front fences at Antiq<sup>n</sup> Hall" (Ibid. p. 95).

Sept. 13, 1821. "Put up the side wooden fences at Antiquarian Hall" (Ibid. p. 96).

Sept. 15, 1821. "Finished putting up the Iron fence in front of Antiquarian Hall" (Ibid. p. 96).

Oct. 23, 1821. From a report of the committee on the state of the Society: "The building erected for the use of the Society is now completed and enclosed in manner displaying at once the taste and liberality of the donor. This building which is highly ornamental as a public edifice and well calculated to give respectability and permanency to the Institution, we are informed, has been thus finished at the expense of eight thousand dollars. \* \* \* In the meantime it has become necessary, for the proper distribution and preservation of the books, that an additional room be fitted for their reception. The Cabinet, also, is but imperfectly arranged, and to place it in a condition suitable for the inspection of visitors, it is important that other rooms should be prepared" (Proceeding 1812-1849, p. 170).

Dec. 29, 1821. Voted, That a committee be chosen to construct such alcoves and other accommodations, in Antiquarian Hall, for the use of the Library and Cabinet, as they shall think proper. \* \* \* Abijah Bigelow and Rejoice Newton Esqs., were chosen" (Ibid. p. 175).

Mr. Thomas died April 4, 1831 and in his will he made the following devise:

"I give to said Society" (the American Antiquarian) (provided I shall not before my death execute a deed thereof) and their successors forever, that tract of land in Worcester whereon is now erected a building for the use of said Society, which land I purchsed of Samuel Chandler's heirs, containing about one acre near the Second Parish, with the said building thereon; which building is to be forever sacredly appropriated as long as

said Society shall exist, for the library, cabinet, &c., of said Society; and the house and building are accordingly devised upon this express condition. And in case said Society shall at any time cease to use said building for said purpose, then the whole of this estate is to revert to my grandchildren generally and their heirs."

Mr. Thomas also gave to the Society a legacy of one thousand dollars for the purpose and on condition, that the Society erect a fire-proof wing or wings to Antiquarian Hall.

June 30, 1831. "Frederick W. Paine, Isaac Goodwin and Rejoice Newton, a committee appointed by the Sub-Council to consider and report on the subject of erecting a fire-proof wing or wings to Antiquarian Hall under the provisions of the will of the late Dr. Thomas made report:

\* \* \* "Your committee recommend the erection of two wings as soon as may be convenient. Each wing to be twenty-five feet long and twenty deep, two stories high and covered with slate or zinc. One of the wings to have the floors covered with stone or brick and to communicate with the main building by means of an iron door. The expense will not exceed, we think, \$1200.

"Your committee would suggest the propriety of painting the main building where it is wood, the expense of which they estimate at less than \$35, including the cupola, which latter, however, your committee consider neither useful nor ornamental, but on the contrary, as defacing the building, and being difficult to render tight, and they therefore would suggest the propriety of taking it away. I. G., however, objects to that part of the report which recommends removing the cupola" (Proceedings, 1812-1849, p. 239).

Oct. 24, 1831. Report of the Building Committee (Gov. L. Lincoln and F. W. Paine). \* \* \* "Your committee \* \* \* have erected two wings each twenty-eight feet long and twenty-one feet wide, and two stories high. The rooms will finish about nine feet in the clear. It would have been desirable to have had the rooms higher but the building would have been disfigured if the roof of the wings had been so high as to have run onto the main roof. \* \* \* The wings are both covered with zinc. \* \* \* The rooms of the north wing communicate with the main building, by a wooden door in each floor. The lower floor of the south wing has access to the main building by an iron door. The chamber of that wing has no communication with it. One outside door of the main building will be closed up and there will be only one outside door in the south wing. Your committee are aware a building of the description of this south wing cannot be termed in strictness a fire-proof building, but they have every reason to believe it is more so than Mr. Thomas contemplated and it is in their opinion entirely fire-proof against all ordinary internal accidents, while the location removes any danger which would arise from contiguous buildings being on fire. Against the incendiary or lightning, no building is fire-proof. Perhaps in prudence a lightning rod should be placed on the main building, and it certainly would add much to

the appearance of the cupola if the Society would direct a vane to be placed on it.

"The Society will probably expect some account of the expense of these wings but owing \* \* \* to the building not being finished, it is out of their power at this time to make a correct statement. The first proposition was to have the wings 25 x 20, but your Committee \* \* \* increased the dimensions to those before stated, and if they have anything to regret it is not having made them larger. It was supposed that \$1200 would have been nearly sufficient for defraying the expense. The enlargement of the size will of course add to that amount, and some work has been done which was not contemplated at first. Of some items no estimate could be formed, such as the expense of preparing and finishing the ground and altering the fences. If your committee ventured to guess any sum, it would be about \$1400 \* \* \* and they cannot think the Society will blame them for extravagance should the sum of \$1400 be exceeded by a small amount" (Ibid. pp. 251-2).

May 30, 1832. From the Report of the Secretary: "The Council have also authorized the building of fences and finishing the grounds about the Hall, which work is now in operation."

Oct. 24, 1832. From Report of the Council. "Two wings to their Hall have been erected and are now finished. Repairs and some alterations have been made in the main body of the building rendered necessary by the additions: the want of proper ventilation and the rot occasioned by damp and leakage. The grounds and fences have also undergone considerable change, it being desirable to drain the land more effectually and to make it, as well as the fences, conform to the building in its present shape. \* \* \* the expense \* \* \* will be about nineteen hundred and fifty dollars \* \* \* the design of their late benefactor has been fulfilled in giving to the Librarian an apartment which is considered fire-proof, and by adding to the Hall a large apartment for books, which is already in part filled."

From the Report of the Building Committee. "If the funds of the Society would admit of it, the addition of a portico would much improve the appearance of the building." (Ibid. pp. 257-260).

May 29, 1833. From Report of the Council. "Changes of the surface of the earth and of the fences \* \* \* have \* \* \* been completed. The grounds have been surrounded with belts and groves of forest trees planted by the Librarian. The good taste of arrangement will render them objects of beauty, and, on maturity, the green enclosure will afford no inconsiderable protection from the fires of the dense population fast closing around, in near vicinity" (Ibid, p. 265).

May 31, 1848. From Report of the Council. "It becomes necessary to advert to the location and condition of the Society's building. Its limited capacity for affording the desired accommodation for all the purposes of the Society, its unfavorable location, when considered as an object of public interest in its exterior character, and in regard to the

convenience of access, has long been regretted. \* \* \* although" [its contents] "are safe from the element which most rapidly destroys, they are yet exposed to \* \* \* a certain degree of injury from the exceeding dampness which it has been found impracticable effectually to prevent, while the health of those engaged within its walls \* \* \* is liable to be seriously affected" (Ibid. pp. 356-7).

From the Librarian's Report. "The excessive dampness that pervades the entire structure is deleterious to everything that is exposed to its influence. He [the librarian] has reason to believe that his own health has thus been gradually but seriously impaired. Great caution has continually to be exercised by himself, and even to be inculcated upon those who casually visit the rooms" (Ibid. p. 546).

May 30, 1849. From Report of the Council. "The Council would call the attention of the Society to the condition of the Antiquarian Hall. The building, as the Society is aware, is but illy fitted for the purpose of a library. The distribution of the books into some half dozen different apartments, renders the use of the library less convenient and its appearance less imposing and attractive. The building is not fire-proof and being near to the railroad depot and to a large school house is exposed to loss by fire. The dampness of the rooms is such as to be very detrimental to the books and papers and to render resort to the Library, except at mid-summer, uncomfortable and unhealthy. The building itself is going to decay; the sills and floors rotting, the walls cracking and the plastering becoming loose and falling. Large expense must be incurred in another attempt to drain the ground and to put the building in thorough repair or a new lot, etc., procured and a new building erected. The only difficulty with the latter, which is undoubtedly the wiser course, grows out of the will of the grantor of the estate, by a provision of which the Hall, when it ceases to be used for the purposes of the library, reverts to certain of the heirs of the testator. To remove this difficulty, releases from heirs who would be entitled to one-half of the estate have already been obtained and may, it is believed, be procured from the rest" (Ibid. p. 558).

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