ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Society the afternoon of December 3 attracted to Laws Auditorium 150 members and guests to attend the business session, to hear Dr. Thomas D. Clark on the Ohio Valley Frontier in Historical Literature, and to gather for tea and talk in the dining room.

Mr. Chalmers Hadley, president, announced that the fiscal year of the Society had been changed to correspond to the calendar year; and that in consequence the treasurer's report would be deferred, for publication later in the January Bulletin. (See next page). The director's annual report on the general affairs of the Society was read and ordered printed in the Bulletin.

Dr. Clark's paper described the frontiersmen of this valley as they are depicted by themselves and their contemporaries, drawing on the works of Filson, Metcalfe, Timothy Flint, Atwater, Imlay, Doddridge, and many others. Dr. Clark showed that the frontiersmen were clearly aware of the historical importance of their battles and labors. They "wanted no one to forget their services in combatting the Indians and destroying the woods. They were inordinately proud of their accomplishments". And again, "he looked upon his conquest of the western country as a holy crusade and represented this in his chronicles." In the April Bulletin Dr. Clarke's paper will be printed in full.

Arrangements for the highly enjoyable tea were in charge of Mrs. Lee Shepard and her committee composed of Mrs. Charles Eha, Mrs. Virginius C. Hall, Mrs. Dwight Hinckley, Mrs. W. Orville Ramey, and Mrs. Herbert H. Schroth.

The annual election of officers and curators resulted in the nomination and election of the following: President, Chalmers Hadley; Vice-Presidents, John J. Rowe, Lucien Wulsin and Lee Shepard; Recording Secretary, Joseph C. Dinsmore; Corresponding Secretary, Cornelius J. Hauck; Treasurer, Lawrence C. Bucher; Director, Virginius C. Hall; Curators, Mrs. William T. Buckner, William T. Earls, Herbert F. Koch, Mrs. John H. Skavlem and Mrs. Russell Wilson; Curators Emeritus, Harry F. Woods, Beverley W. Bond, Jr., Robert L. Black, and Joseph S. Graydon.

The nominating committee consisted of E. Webster Harrison, Joseph H. Head and Henry Lyman Greer, Chairman.
TREASURER’S REPORT
(Here reproduced in skeleton form)

Balance on hand January 1, 1951 $13,398.94
Less Transfer to Book Fund, January 1, 1951 $5,000.00
$8,398.00

Receipts from all sources 23,723.81
$32,122.75

Expenditures $20,928.71
$11,194.04

Book Fund
Transfer from General Fund, January 1, 1951 $5,000.00
Received from sale of books, etc. 357.69
$5,357.69

Purchases of books, manuscripts, etc. $2,560.69
Balance on hand December 31, 1951 $2,797.00

Recapitulation of Investment Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Book Value</th>
<th>Market Value</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States Securities</td>
<td>$80,000.00</td>
<td>$80,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Bonds</td>
<td>14,833.25</td>
<td>10,800.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stocks</td>
<td>180,342.37</td>
<td>261,198.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$275,175.62</td>
<td>$351,998.00</td>
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Cash on hand in Investment Account, December 31, 1951 863.70
Cash income from Investment Account for year 1951 $16,043.56
Average rate of return based of book value 5.83
Average rate of return based on market value 4.56

Lawrence C. Bucher, Treasurer.
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

In this world of demonic speed and dreadful agitation it is perhaps unwise of me to talk about increased tempo and greater activity, even in a library. My defense is this: speed in the Historical Society is not supersonic, and its activities are devoted to making life more tolerable (and possibly more understandable) for people who are not really very obnoxious—historians and those interested in history. Hence the accelerations recorded here seem to me reasonable in degree and benevolent in purpose. So, we report (without regret) more books, more members, more exhibits, more money, and more needs. Suppose we go over our affairs very briefly.

Our constant concern, like a squirrel's in autumn, is collecting and preserving. In general, it has been a good season. You may be willing to hear something about a half dozen acquisitions, with a little of their back-drop.

Four manuscript letters: Arthur St. Clair, Governor of the Northwest Territory, was plagued by hard luck. Most of his family inherited their father's allergy, and nothing more. His daughter Elizabeth was not exempt. She first married John Lawrence, who died under distressing circumstances, then James Dill. Three of these letters from Arthur St. Clair in Cincinnati are addressed to "Betsy" at the Hermitage near Ligonier, Pennsylvania. The other is written from Greensburgh, Pennsylvania to Betsy in Cincinnati. The dates are from 1798 to 1804. The subjects, family matters and commiserations.

A broadside.

During the 1820's the famous Western Museum of Cincinnati was devoted to collecting and displaying specimens from "the several kingdoms of nature", including monsters and malformations. When public interest began to droop, Joseph Dorfeuille, the director, resorted to wax works and mechanical devices to revive it, among these devices the Infernal Regions, alias Dorfeuille's Hell. A broadside advertising this attraction was acquired during the year. It is a colored wood-cut, gothic in style and dating from about 1829.
Two manuscript journals.

In 1830 Congress passed a bill authorizing a subscription of stock in the Maysville, Washington, Paris, and Lexington Turnpike Road Company. President Jackson vetoed it, pointing out that such works, to receive Federal aid, should be national, not local, in character. Thereafter the Maysville veto was used as a battle-cry by the opposition — a political shillalah, for want of a rational argument. The books of the private enterprise company that took over the project and operated it for forty years (1832-1873) are important; and therefore, when given the chance recently, we bought them.

A scarce book:

Henri de Tonti, an Italian in the service of France, is one of the neglected heroes of the Western Waters. As an associate of Sieur de la Salle, and on his own account, he spent his life opening up interior America to French settlement and trade. With the aid of an iron claw for a hand, he went about his business as Indian fighter and leader, explorer, historian, linguist, scout, guide, fur trader, and business man. For twenty-five years he poured out his energy in operations that affected our own regional history; therefore we have bought with satisfaction the English edition of *An account of Monsieur de la Salle's last expedition and discoveries in North America, presented to the French King and published by Chevalier Tonti, Governor of Fort St. Louis, in the Province of Illinois... London, 1698*. It is a suitable companion to our French edition of 1697 — in fine condition and scarcer than its colleague.

A map

It seems far-fetched, the notion that we Middle Westerners might be speaking something like French instead of something like English. Yet the possibility was there in 1755, when the decisive dispute between England and France reached the official shooting stage in the Ohio Valley. Maps as well as munitions are needed for expansion into disputed territory. "This map", according to Pownall, "was taken with the approbation and at the request of the lords commissioners for trade and plantations", which evidently included fur trade and plantations beyond the mountains. The title reads in part, *A map of the British and French dominions in North America, with*
Everybody has noticed how pictures are increasingly used as a means of communication. As a protest, many people in the academic world, especially in the more literate branches, have raised the alarm, saying that the United States is coming to the end of reading as a skill and the letter-press as an apparatus. At the library, being less apprehensive, we continue to collect pictures and to arrange them for use: Three oil portraits (of the desirable kind) have recently been given to the Society. The subjects are Major General Daniel Gano (1794-1873); Dr. John Aston Warder, physician, horticulturist, and forester (1812-1888); Joseph T. Bodley (1829-1868) of the firm of Lane and Bodley, makers of fire engines. A charcoal drawing of Samuel W. Davies, mayor of Cincinnati from 1833 to 1843; and a colored lithograph of U. S. Grant, when he was still young and defeated, are worth reporting as interesting acquisitions by purchase.

These few are mentioned because of special qualities of one sort or another; actually by the generosity of members and friends, and by going to market we have made additions to the library's resources that amount to the following statistics up to November 19, 1951: Books 193, pamphlets 439, periodicals 28, pictures 171, maps 20, manuscript items 452, manuscript volumes 49.

Our notion of preserving at the library, however, implies keeping for suitable use, not pickling and storing in a dark closet. Mrs. Alice P. Hook, librarian, and Miss Lillian C. Wuest, assistant librarian, are ready to bring out the preserves for customers — cordially, even sweetly. It has its effect, too. The library is being used more extensively than ever before, by historians, novelists, newspaper-writers, and graduate students.

Taking further steps beyond the stacks, we prepared exhibits for the Cincinnati Biennial, the Society's Spring meeting at the Taft Museum, the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, the Hillsdale School, and the annual meeting of
this Society. Under the heading of “society” in the ultrapolite sense we gave a tea for members of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association at the Taft Museum the afternoon of April 19th, and offered hospitality in the reading room the following day. In November the Nomad Club met here, heard a paper, and served themselves tea. Recently the Denison Theatre, under our sponsorship, revived The Poor Soldier, the first theatrical production given in the Northwest Territory, with the prologue as delivered on October 1, 1801 in the artificer's yard of Fort Washington (Cincinnati). The three hundred and fifty who saw it, at the Art Museum, liked it.

To these excursions can be added various talks by members of the staff; loans of historical displays to museums, libraries, schools, and business houses; and visits to other historical societies by staff, members, including especially Mrs. Hook's visits to New Orleans, Chicago, and Detroit. The quarterly Bulletin under the guiding hand of Mr. Shepard, and fed by interested contributors, has reached a size suitable to our needs. Volume 9, for 1951, numbers 328 pages. More contributors and a wider variety of subjects are wanted in order to bring further improvement. And let me say again that this region of ours has not, like many others, been drowned in ink. It is very susceptible to historical and literary cultivation. The resources for it are in the library, and we suggest that you come and use them for any purpose that appeals to you, but especially for possible contributions to the Bulletin.

New members continue to join the Society, adding their interest, their gifts, and their dues. This development is, of course, very gratifying to all of us. The total membership at this time is 743, of which 717 are annual paying members. Your dues are now a considerable item in the total income; they amount to about 7,000 dollars. The other source of income is the endowment fund, under the management of Messrs. Bucher, Koch, and Rowe. Their management of the investment account has produced larger income to meet rising prices and greater expenses. We keep expenditures within the budget and the budget within the annual income. In order to do so, we live modestly. But we have the satisfaction of remaining solvent, without passing the hat. It is a way of life that has become a rarity, and perhaps of only antiquarian interest in the contemporary world.
Actually I do not feel very modest and I dislike living in the manner of that adverb (or adjective). In the ideal republic (now deferred again) this Society will be sitting in a grand twin house, one part gracious residence the other utilitarian library. In the residence oil portraits and hospitality will prevail; in the library: all newspapers will lie flat on rollers on their shelves, the rarest books will be found in original covers and in mint condition, every manuscript will be adequately catalogued and indexed, each pamphlet will rest in its appropriate slip case, every framed picture will be available with a twist of the wrist. That functional library building will be fitted out in glass and chromium to display our beauties, air conditioning will preserve them. A bindery, a photostat room, a microfilm studio, and a sufficient staff will complete that small but perfect Historical Society established in the ideal republic.

At this point I can hear the historical and philosophical voice of my good friend Chalmers Hadley: “The achievement of perfection”, it is saying, “would put an end to the historical process, and you would find yourself unemployed.” There is something in that. But I still think we ought to keep trying.

Virginius C. Hall, 
Director.