THE ANNUAL MEETING

On December 7 the usual annual meeting of the Society was held in the Laws Auditorium of the University of Cincinnati, with probably the best attendance we have ever had at such a meeting, the count being well over two hundred. The business meeting was called to order at 3:15 by Joseph C. Dinsmore, Vice-President, in the absence of our President Lucien Wulsin, who was detained at home with illness. The Treasurer's report was deferred for later publication because the financial records of the Society follow the calendar year. The Director's report for the fiscal year read by Mr. Hall is given here in full:

ANNUAL REPORT — 1953

In rounding off last year's Annual Report, we became involved in a nautical metaphor, saying, "I do not know where we are going in 1953; but, as we prepare to cast off, the barometer reading is high." So, here we are twelve months later, ready to report on events that were only expectations when last we met here.

The dominant undertone of 1953 in Ohio was, of course, the celebration of the State's sesquicentennial birthday. In Columbus the question had been how best to manage a state-wide program of large dimensions and many participants. Either by choice or necessity, it was decided to decentralize the celebration, and to give over the task to county committees. In Hamilton County several members of this Society served on committees and aided in the successful operation of the program as organized by Judge Chase M. Davies and his associates.

In co-operation with Mr. J. Richard Lawwill, director of the Anthony Wayne Parkway Board, I served on the Historic Sites Committee, charged with marking appropriate locations in the County. Such an undertaking requires more than a single year to complete or even to put into satisfactory operation; therefore the installation of additional historic markers will be continued into next year and beyond.

The Society as a unit made two specific contributions to the sesquicentennial year. On April 7 at the Taft Museum we opened our Buckeye Birthday Exhibition, with Mr. Lucien Wulsin presiding and the late Dr. Edward N. Clopper as principal speaker. Between the opening and June 21 over 8,000 visitors
saw the display of paintings, prints, books, manuscripts, documents, and museum objects. As a second contribution, we published William E. and Ophia D. Smith's *A Buckeye Titan*, based on the papers of the James family of Cincinnati and Urbana, Ohio. Dr. and Mrs. Smith were awarded the Ohioana Fellowship for 1949–50, offered by the Martha Kinney Cooper Ohioana Library Association, and thus were enabled to do the extensive research required in the production of this work. As previously reported in a News Letter, more than half the edition of the *Titan* has been sold, and orders continue to come in. Favorable reviews of the book have appeared in many newspapers and periodicals.

Residents of the State were uncommonly aware of their history this year; and for that reason many requests for speakers came in from schools, clubs, and similar groups. In line of duty (and even for pleasure), the Director and the Librarian responded to such requests. In addition, collections of the Society were drawn on by organizations preparing historical exhibitions, including the American Association of the History of Medicine through Dr. David A. Tucker; the Cleveland Woman's Club sesquicentennial exhibit; the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society manuscript exhibit in Columbus.

Under the head of keeping the grass green, representatives of this Society visited other historical societies and attended out-of-town meetings. These included the Mississippi Valley Historical Association meeting in Lexington, Kentucky; the annual meeting of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society; the Ohio Sesquicentennial Exhibition of the Library of Congress; the Institute of Early American History and Culture, at Williamsburg, Virginia; the Chicago Historical Society; the Ohio Valley Historic Indian Conference at Columbus.

But the most effective way of reaching the public and performing the Society's obligation to teach regional history is through the quarterly *Bulletin*. For eleven years Mr. Lee Shepard, editor, has watched over each number all the way from original manuscripts to the United States mail. As heretofore, the aim is to print accurate historical information relating to this region, in a form attractive to the reading public, and at the same time academically respectable. Experience and application to that
aim have produced a *Bulletin* that is still in process of improvement. Among recent improvements are the pictorial covers, most of them by Mr. Maurice R. Rhoades.

By definition a society requires members (no members, no society); therefore, it is a pleasure to report that we have some — 877 at present. Your interest, your attendance at the meetings, your membership dues, provide the food that keeps the Society on its feet. You comprise a very choice mailing list, one that is not for sale. The membership committee, composed of Mr. John J. Rowe, Mrs. William T. Buckner, Mrs. John H. Skavlem, Mr. William T. Earls, and Mr. Walter R. Keagy, are glad to have the names of suitable prospects for membership. In the January Bulletin the roster for 1953 will be printed.

During the year the board of directors meet once a month, except in July and August. Between meetings their assistance is required in making decisions and in putting those decisions into execution. Some of those duties make considerable demands upon their time. With the possible exception of the publishing program, no duty requires more time than that of the treasurer's. In December, 1942, Mr. Lawrence C. Bucher became treasurer; and since that time has attended to the many details of dollars and cents entailed in the office. In addition, with Messrs. Herbert F. Koch and John J. Rowe, he is serving on the investment and finance committee. That committee, with the consent and assistance of the other directors ten years ago, made fundamental changes in the investment program. Proceeds from the sale of securities held at that time (and they were almost entirely of the fixed income class) were re-invested in common and preferred stocks and bonds. As a result of that reinvestment program, and continued vigilance since, the income and the market value of our holdings have kept pace with the inflation. Thus the Society has been enabled to perform its functions without going on an annual safari, stalking game that already feels itself overhunted.

The general policies of the Board of Directors are put into execution by the library staff. This staff consists of a director, a librarian, an assistant librarian, a part-time indexer of manuscripts, and a part-time stenographer. In addition, students at the University are employed from time to time for clerical work. This arrangement of three full time and three part-time members
of the library staff enables us to carry on the duties with a salary budget of $15,500. It is not a perfect arrangement, but it is the most effective way of getting the work accomplished without too much strain upon the financial resources of the treasury.

Possibly a few details may not be out of place at this point: Under the supervision of Mrs. Alice P. Hook, Librarian, the manuscript collections are being collated and indexed by Mr. Robert C. Herron, who is now finishing his second year as a part-time worker in the library. Recently-acquired manuscripts as well as old collections are thus made more accessible. In response to the frequent demand for pictures, Mrs. Hook is also enlarging our index of book illustrations. It is obviously easier to consult a card catalogue than to thumb through 34,000 printed volumes looking for what you want. Among the various duties devolving upon Miss Lillian C. Wuest, Assistant Librarian, is the preparation of periodicals for the bindery, indexing the pamphlet collection, keeping the accession ledger, keeping the mailing list up to date, and repairing old book bindings. This year with the aid of Miss Virginia Bucher the leather bindings of our rare and fine books were anointed, unsightly labels were removed, and a new and more appropriate book plate was introduced. Mrs. Juanita Nelson, part-time stenographer, completes the library force, with the exception of occasional student workers.

The value of this library to researchers in the academic world and among the general public continues to grow yearly — without regard for the figure in dollars and cents shown as our expenditure for library acquisitions. To those figures must be added gifts of considerable value in manuscripts, pamphlets, maps, and books.

Here are a number of manuscript collections acquired during the year: Eleven volumes of the Joseph Gest surveys of lands in Cincinnati, dating from 1802 to 1847. As an indication of the value of this collection, it may be noted that there are over three thousand entries included in the index. In the same collection are the field notes of surveys made in the Miami Purchase, from 1780 to 1789, by John Cleves Symmes; ours being an early copy of the original notes by Thomas Henderson in 1814.

Papers of the Honorable Judson Harmon, Governor of Ohio from 1909 to 1913 and a candidate for the Democratic nomination for President in 1912. Most of the papers are letters from his
constituents and political friends and his replies to them. The letters date from 1908 to 1912, with a few earlier letters included.

In the field of economic history, we have acquired minutes of the Board of Directors' meetings of the Ohio Insurance Company from 1826 to 1840, in one volume. The secretaries of the company during this period were George Graham, Morgan Neville, and Samuel E. Foote. Another volume in this field comprises the earliest accounts of the Sandman and Lackman Brewery (1855–58).

Church records are often consulted, and frequently because of names in the baptismal records and other vital data. We list under this head the minutes of the Central Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati from 1861 to 1905.

Last year, it will be remembered, marked the one hundredth anniversary of the death of Dr. Daniel Drake. Twenty letters of Dr. Drake to his daughter-in-law, Margaret Cross Drake, the letters dating from 1848 to 1852, have been given to the Society.

The book most consulted in the library, day in and day out, is probably the Centennial History of Charles Theodore Greve. This is one of the reasons that it is a satisfaction to add to the manuscript collection letters, papers, and miscellaneous material from the author's estate. These have been recently donated and, therefore, are not yet arranged or indexed.

Eighty-eight years after Appomattox, the War Between the States remains a cause with a passionate following, if we can judge by the interest shown in letters and diaries of that period. Under this classification we list three recent acquisitions: the Civil War Diaries of Albert M. Palmer (1862–1865), corporal in the 115th Ohio Volunteer Infantry; letters of Clason Miller (1862–1865), and his diaries, kept as a soldier in Company I, 79th Regiment, Ohio Volunteer Infantry; letters, papers, and miscellaneous items of Robert Charlton Mitchell. In addition to personal and family letters, this collection includes a large section of letters written by Col. Mitchell during the Civil War. A resident of Aurora, Indiana, he was Brevet Colonel of the 51st New York Volunteers. The collection is now indexed.

Of an earlier period are the eight letters of Noah Crane to James Ross, written from Cincinnati in 1802 to 1804 and containing accounts of frontier life in this region.
General Braddock's defeat on the Monongahela River (1755) brought on the Seven Years' War between England and France. Thomas Jefferys in London, and very likely that same year, published six large contemporary plans relating to Braddock's disposition of the British army. These plans, supposedly drawn by an aide-de-camp to the General, consist of six pictorial plates, and are a useful source of information on that critical battle. The plates bear neither the name of the publisher nor the imprint date, but the plates appear in a Jefferys printed price list a few years later.

A topographical map of Ohio, published by Houghton Howard in 1828 and engraved by the well-known Cincinnati engraver, W. Woodruff.

A wall map of Clermont County, Ohio, 1858, with names, dates, and original patents, and names of the succeeding land owners. The map is in fragile condition.

Supplementing previous notices we record the acquisition of John Filson's *The Discovery, Settlement, and Present State of Kentucke...* 1784. This beautiful copy of Filson's rare and essential work contains the folding map, and is in every respect a highly desirable addition to the library.

Thus the Society continues to operate and to add to its resources. In this year of Ohio's sesquicentennial of statehood the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio has arrived at the seasoned age of one hundred and twenty-two years. Since 1831 it has persistently laid up treasures for the use of research scholars and the intelligent public. More frequently than I can remember out-of-town authors and historians have commented on our happy lot here in Cincinnati; happy Cincinnatians, having not only a history worth writing about, but also a historical library where the written and printed documents are ready at hand for the industrious researcher. And my reply is, Yes! But! Yes, this is the capital of the old Northwest Territory, this is the old frontier, this is the place where winds of doctrine blew a gale around every corner, where the publishing business flourished. In 1835: five daily newspapers, two tri-weeklies, one semi-weekly, nine weeklies. This is the "Queen of the West." Yes! But, we are apparently only half awake to our history and its implications. Have you seen what they do with their regional history in Cleveland, in
Richmond, in Chicago, in Indianapolis, in a score of counties in Pennsylvania?

A society such as ours has at least three general purposes: (1) to encourage and assist people working in the history of this region, (2) to publish articles and books on this subject, (3) to display attractively for the edification of the public relics of that history.

As for the first two duties, we are performing them reasonably well. A courteous and willing library staff and a competent publishing committee are the best assurance of that performance. But, showing our wares to the public conveniently and attractively, making the most of the dramatic elements in our history by permanent exhibits and displays, can come only with the erection of a building designed for that purpose. Pericles celebrated Athens in marble, and thus achieved an immortal name. A more modest, but very substantial, fame awaits any citizen who will celebrate Cincinnati by building an edifice devoted to the old Northwest Territory, the Miami country, and the Queen of the West. The board of directors are not adamant on the building material. If marble is difficult, we will compromise on a good grade of brick.

The annual election resulted in the following officers being chosen to direct the affairs of the Society for the coming year: President, Lucien Wulsin; Vice-President, John J. Rowe; Vice-President, Lee Shepard; Vice-President, Joseph C. Dinsmore; Recording Secretary, Mrs. John H. Skavlem; 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. Russell Wilson and Robert M. Galbraith; Curators Emeritus, Harry F. Woods, Beverley W. Bond, Jr., Robert L. Black, Joseph S. Graydon and Chalmers Hadley. The Library staff will remain the same, Virginius C. Hall, Director; Mrs. Alice P. Hook, Librarian; Miss Lillian C. Wuest, Assistant Librarian.

Joseph S. Graydon was elected an honorary member of the Society by unanimous vote.
John J. Rowe, Vice-President, conducted the second part of the meeting, and introduced Dr. Abernethy, who made the address on the subject “Aaron Burr at Blennerhassett Island and in Ohio.”

As a happy conclusion to the afternoon’s program Mrs. Howard C. Ives and the hospitality committee welcomed members and guests to tea in the dining room of the Laws Memorial Building.