

## THE MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY IN 1936<sup>1</sup>

The Minnesota Historical Society is a living and growing institution, and its annual report must therefore be more than a mere chronicle of happenings or tabulation of work done. It must appraise life and growth, take stock of the service of the society to the people of the state, test the effectiveness with which it is meeting opportunities and challenges, gauge its alertness to new trends, and demonstrate the continuity of its emphasis upon old and fundamental tasks. In this spirit we contemplate a year marked by an increased tempo of effort and progress and by unusual expansion of service—a year of long-range planning, co-operation with the national government and with local communities, broad surveys, and a drive toward a better organization of resources and knowledge.

A lively popular interest, excellent attendance, and programs of good quality have characterized the society's several meetings. The program of the eighty-seventh annual meeting, held on January 16, ranged in its several sessions from a conference on local history problems to an address on "Our National Archives," delivered by Dr. R. D. W. Connor, the archivist of the United States. The annual "peripatetic seminar," as someone has aptly called the summer tour and convention, was a one-day trip, on June 27, exploiting the historical backgrounds and scenic beauties of the St. Croix Valley, with program sessions at Hastings, Stillwater, Interstate Park, and Marine. The "motorcade" included three chartered busses and a half-hundred cars, and one of the sessions attracted an audience

<sup>1</sup>A report presented at the afternoon session of the eighty-eighth annual meeting of the Minnesota Historical Society in the Historical Building, St. Paul, on January 18, 1937. *Ed.*

of nearly five hundred people. The autumn meeting of the society, held on October 12, was devoted to the story of old Grand Portage. One of the speakers, Mr. Ralph D. Brown, reported on what the spade has brought to light at the spot where once stood the palisaded post of the Northwest Company.

An interested membership is the lifeblood of the society. The problem, as usual, is how to reach those hundreds of Minnesotans who would gladly join as members, if invited to do so, and here the co-operation of the present membership is urgently needed. Not that a dark picture emerges from the record for 1936. The society enrolled 91 new members and reinstated 3, and there were 34 lost by death and 79 by withdrawal. At the end of the year there were 1,351 active members, 187 subscribing schools and libraries, and 44 institutional members—a grand total of 1,582, whereas a year ago the total was 1,598. In the light of these figures it may be argued that the membership has substantially held its own, but it is clear that an extension of the membership would both spread the gospel of state history and add strength to the society.

A vital bond between the society and its membership is the quarterly magazine, *MINNESOTA HISTORY*, which completed its seventeenth volume in 1936. Each year this periodical makes interesting and worthwhile additions to the history of Minnesota and the Northwest, and as the volumes are added, one after the other, the total takes on a certain impressiveness. The range of subject matter for a given year is perhaps a reflection of the varied aspects of Minnesota history and life. Last year the magazine contained articles on such topics as Ignatius Donnelly's faded metropolis, the Kensington rune stone, the St. Croix Valley, Mark Twain in Minnesota, the Finnish culture in Minnesota, the John Lind Papers, and the national archives of America. Cheering to the editors, and perhaps gratifying to the society itself, is a recent letter from Professor Allan

Nevins of Columbia University, the noted historian and biographer, who wrote to say "how much instruction and enjoyment" he receives from the magazine, adding that in his opinion it is a "model for publications of the kind."

A magazine contribution of unusual flavor, a pioneer artist's diary which appeared in several installments under the title "Making a Motion Picture in 1848," aroused so much interest and comment that it was reprinted in the form of a small book, attractively bound in boards. Other publications of the year include two additional numbers in the series of *Special Bulletins* inaugurated in 1935. A manual on the *Care and Cataloguing of Manuscripts* may properly be described as a pioneering piece of work, a "long step," according to Professor Binkley, "in the direction of doing for manuscript resources what Dewey and Cutter did for book resources." A *Bibliography of Minnesota Territorial Documents*, compiled by Esther Jerabek, will serve as an open sesame to the treasures of official printed materials relating to pioneer Minnesota. This analytical, indexed guide was a task, to quote Professor Anderson, "well worth the doing" and "done exceedingly well." Every year sees some progress on editorial enterprises that are being planned for the future.<sup>2</sup> Among those advanced during the year 1936 may be mentioned the travel diary of an English hunter on the northwestern frontier in 1847, a document found by Dr. Nute in England; a volume of selections from the writings of James M. Goodhue, personal journalist of pioneer Minnesota; a book of Red River Valley missionary documents; a check list of Minnesota fic-

<sup>2</sup> It is evident that the society will have to issue a supplement to the volume entitled *With Pen and Pencil on the Frontier in 1851*, edited by Bertha L. Heilbron and published in 1932 as volume 1 in the *Narratives and Documents* series. A portion of Frank B. Mayer's diary, hitherto missing, including accounts of the treaties of Traverse des Sioux and Mendota, has recently been located in the American Museum of Natural History in New York. The newly found material was charred by the Baltimore fire of 1904, but most of the text can be deciphered.

tion; and a bibliography of the writings of the late Warren Upham. Twelve numbers of the *Minnesota Historical News*, carrying more than seventy brief articles to the press of the state, have appeared during the year; as have the four numbers of the quarterly *Check List of Minnesota Public Documents*.

Appalling and bewildering are the amount and variety of historical treasures garnered by the society during the year. The momentum of an established institution, the interest stirred by meetings and other popular activities, a vigilant staff, and the impetus of WPA projects—these have all played parts in enlarging the harvest. The library was enriched by the addition of 3,346 books, pamphlets, and newspaper volumes, bringing the total count officially to 188,360. Fifty-seven per cent of the year's accessions were gifts. Currently received periodicals total 1,347, of which no fewer than 653 are published in Minnesota; and the society is filing 561 current newspapers, 490 of which are published in Minnesota.

A dramatic gift of the year was a group of thirty-three single issues of as many different newspapers, all printed in the summer of 1857 and deposited that year in a tightly sealed, lead box that was fitted into the cornerstone of the Minnesota Central University building at Hastings. Seventy-nine years later the box was opened and the treasure trove, perfectly preserved, was presented to this society. Seven of the papers, including the *Oronoco Courier* and the *Republican Advocate* of Shakopee, were not hitherto represented in our collection, and fifteen others fitted neatly into gaps in our files. During the year the society received a priceless collection of pamphlets originally collected by Alexander Ramsey and now presented by his granddaughters, the Misses Anita and Laura Furness. From far-off Stockholm came a large group of rare books and pamphlets relating to Scandinavian migration to America. Among

hundreds of other interesting additions to the library, only four will be mentioned: a narrative of Indian captivity by Mary Butler Renville, published at Minneapolis in 1863, of which heretofore no copy had been known to us; Dutch and Italian editions of Lahontan's famous narrative of travel and exploration; and a copy of Father Belcourt's rare work on the Ojibway language, published in 1839.

During the year the Old Trails chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution inaugurated a book memorial in honor of the late Mrs. James T. Morris. Preliminary gifts of fifty dollars were made toward the building up of a special collection in colonial history, the field of Mrs. Morris' major interest. A somewhat similar memorial was established some years ago by the Monument chapter in honor of Mrs. Marshall H. Coolidge, and a new gift was added to that collection during the past year. A number of special organizations and individuals have generously aided the society's library in its basic task of collecting. Thus Dr. Francis L. Palmer, registrar and historiographer of the diocese of Minnesota, has been tireless in his efforts to build up the Seabury-Tanner collection of Protestant Episcopal church records.

In no year since the society was founded have the accessions of manuscripts been so numerous as they were in 1936. In this banner year there were 272 accessions, some of them representing thousands of papers and documents. The number of new collections may be compared with 186 in 1935, with 146 in 1934, and with 112 in 1922. Perhaps the outstanding single addition was a collection of seven filing boxes of the papers of James Manahan, a prominent figure in the progressive movement in Minnesota. These manuscripts take their place alongside the Lind and Donnelly and Lindbergh papers and enhance the value of the society's treasures in the important field of the liberal and progressive political movements in state history.

In contrast to the experience of all previous years, how-

ever, the most noticeable growth has been, not in the domain of personal papers, but in that of the records of churches, clubs, other organizations and institutions, and local government units. Some examples are the records of the St. Paul Turnverein, the Cigar Makers' Union of St. Paul, the Minnesota Woman Suffrage Association, the Northfield Lyceum, the Litchfield Livestock Shipping Association, the Cokato Elevator Company, the League of Minnesota Poets, and the St. Paul Municipal Chorus. The papers of eighteen churches and church societies have been received, including copies of the minutes of the mission church at La Pointe on Madeline Island, running as far back as 1833; and the records of the Congregational Church of Excelsior, dating from 1853. Supplementing such archives are the semiofficial papers of missionaries and pastors, including James Peet, Methodist, Ole Nilsen, Lutheran, and Charles C. Rollitt, Episcopalian.

Newly acquired diaries, either originals or copies, have a wide range of interest, representing, for example, such persons and periods as the following: William Cross, who wrote of agriculture and social conditions in Martin County from 1881 to 1916; James H. Bell, whose diary tells of conditions in Winona from 1889 to 1892; Charles Brewster, surveyor in Sibley County in the fifties; John H. Macomber, soldier and Methodist preacher in the sixties; James Wickes Taylor, whose diary, recording experiences and events at Cincinnati in the forties, is a valuable addition to the society's great collection of Taylor Papers; William R. Brown, pioneer farmer near Newport in the middle forties; Cornelius Janzen, Russian Mennonite, a farmer near Mountain Lake, 1862 to 1913; Jeremiah Porter, missionary at Sault Ste. Marie in the thirties; Mrs. Sarah G. Baird, member of the Edina Grange in Hennepin County, 1882 to 1918; Jennette Pond, daughter of Samuel Pond, from 1850 to 1856; and Gideon Pond himself, one of the famous missionary brothers.

Not less interesting than the diaries are the recollections of Henry H. Snelling, a son of the noted Colonel Josiah Snelling, and the autobiography of Thomas Pederson, Norwegian-American pioneer of Wisconsin and Minnesota, who surveys in his fascinating narrative experiences from the sixties to the present. Personal papers and letters are represented by the collections of Professor Gisle Bothne of the University of Minnesota; Michael Dresbach, a Civil War soldier; Twiford Hughes, a postal official of Minneapolis; Eli K. Pickett, a soldier in the Civil and Sioux wars; Timothy Sheehan, well-known officer at Fort Ridgely in Sioux War days and agent for the Chippewa at White Earth in the eighties; and Leonard W. Dibble, whose more than fifty letters tell of travel in southern Minnesota from 1865 to 1873.

The avalanche of new manuscript material is matched by the record of the society's museum, which has also experienced a banner year. Notwithstanding the fact that problems of space and of duplication have made necessary a highly selective policy in the acceptance of museum objects, it seemed advisable to receive in 1936 a total of 978 gifts in the historical, ethnological, numismatic, and archaeological fields, exactly 350 more than in 1935. The number of pictures was 4,331, a thousand more than were obtained in 1935; today the picture collection as a whole totals 55,554. In 1936 there were also 2,119 negatives and 111 slides added. However tempting it may be to mention and describe scores of recent museum gifts, only three can be alluded to in this report: a notable collection of furniture, china, silver, glassware, and other objects presented by Miss Mary H. Folwell and other members of the Folwell family as a memorial to Dr. and Mrs. William Watts Folwell; a gold watch once used by Governor Ramsey, presented by his granddaughters; and a Red Cross flag made by Miss Theresa Ericksen when a nurse in the Philippines and re-

cently presented by her at a memorable ceremony held in the society's auditorium.

Some of the outstanding achievements of the society during the year center about WPA projects under its sponsorship and direction. The society's policy of co-operation with the national and state relief administrations has placed an extraordinary strain upon the regular staff, but the rewards have been rich, both in the easing of unemployment distress and in the accomplishment of enterprises outside the sphere of routine tasks, enterprises that seem to be turning old dreams into present realities. As a by-product of its initiative, sustained effort, and insistence upon high standards of work, the society appears to have won a position of recognized national leadership in this field.

Recently the National Archives announced that Minnesota was the first state in the Union to complete an inventory of federal archives preserved within a state area. That sounds like a short and sweet story, but behind it is a vast project directed from the society's building by Mr. Jacob Hodnefield, who co-operated closely with a national director, Dr. P. M. Hamer. It employed at one time as many as seventy-four workers, all engaged in answering this question: What federal records are preserved in Minnesota? The project has answered the question with an inventory of the records of 1,033 different agencies located in 701 different buildings in this state, records that would fill twenty-three miles of continuous shelves. The answer is now filed in detailed reports, but it is being brought together in a systematic guide to the federal archives in Minnesota which will be of state as well as of national historical interest.

Another ambitious project is a broad survey of historical records in Minnesota, launched by the society late in 1935 as a continuation of CWA and FERA undertakings and integrated as far as circumstances permitted, early in 1936,



with a federal survey directed from Washington by Dr. Luther H. Evans. The entire affair has been an adventure in co-operation, for it has also involved working in harmony with state and local history organizations, while on top of this the state director, Mr. Ralph D. Brown, has been obliged to manage and correlate the efforts of 135 workers stationed in as many as sixty counties, adjusting all personnel procedures to the administrative machinery of state and local relief administrations.

The important question is this: Have the results been commensurate with the effort? Let us look briefly at the record. The surveys have substantially completed the inventorying of both the state and county archives of Minnesota. Inventories have also been made of the records of more than eight hundred townships, more than four hundred municipalities, and some nineteen hundred school districts and schools. These WPA projects have also listed the records kept by nearly seventeen hundred organizations, thirteen hundred churches, and seven hundred cemeteries throughout Minnesota. As the enterprise closes in upon its final objectives, it is attempting, with the collaboration of the society's editorial staff, the preparation of a comprehensive report, county by county, on the local archives of Minnesota, utilizing information assembled since the first county archival inventories were made nearly two decades ago. It is also drawing up similar reports upon other categories of material, notably the church records. So we are trying to take stock of the wealth of record material, up and down the state, that exists today.

Even this is not the full story of the records surveys, for the projects have supplied supervision for significant archaeological enterprises; a photographer has taken or reproduced some three thousand photographs of historical interest; a draftsman has drawn an impressive series of maps showing the early growth of St. Paul; field agents like sleuths have followed clues leading to the discovery of

diaries and other manuscript treasures; workers on church records have compiled brief histories of hundreds of churches; a stream of books and pamphlets and museum objects has poured in upon the society; and county and municipal officers as well as church officials have been given practical aid in putting their records in order. A comprehensive report is being assembled on the actual conditions attending the filing and preservation of state and county archives, and suggestions and recommendations looking toward the raising of standards will soon be made. The projects are still going forward, though with reduced personnel, and much remains to be done in consolidating the gains that have been made. There have been many complex problems of administration, and, naturally enough, considerable unevenness in the quality of the work done. It is clear, however, that the historical records surveys have made worth-while contributions to the society and the state.

Closely related to the records surveys are two interesting archaeological projects of the past year, the one at the site of the old Northwest Company post at Grand Portage, strategic fur-trade center in the late eighteenth century, and the other at Fort Ridgely, famous nucleus of frontier defense in the Minnesota River Valley. Co-operating with the United States Indian Service in one enterprise, and with the state and national park services in the other, the society and the records survey furnished expert field supervision, notably on the part of Mr. Brown and Mr. G. H. Smith, for extensive and carefully conducted excavations at these two places. Mr. Babcock acted as general advisor and representative of the society. The work at Grand Portage brought to light the line of the ancient stockade, several building foundations, and not a few special objects, and in general made available information that will prove invaluable if, as is hoped by many, the historic post should be reconstructed. The excavation at Fort Ridgely laid bare eight building foundations, solved many puzzling problems,

and resulted in the finding of nearly nine hundred articles, such as pipes, candle molds, glassware, coins, and buttons.

The society's special WPA project for forwarding important nonroutine undertakings at the Historical Building has been continued throughout the year and now has a staff of thirty-four, with Mr. Babcock as general supervisor and many staff members directing particular phases of the work. Expert state observers have pronounced this project a model one, both on the side of administration and on that of its concrete results, especially the amazing amount and variety of work accomplished through it. This is part of the record: notable progress on a long overdue inventory of the general library collection, with approximately 140,000 items handled and checked during the year; an index of the names of Minnesota men in the Civil and Indian wars nearing completion; the enlargement of the biographical card index by 7,630 new entry cards instead of the usual 1,500; progress on a comprehensive check list of Minnesota public documents from 1858 to 1925 and a cumulation for the decade following 1925; advance in the arranging and listing of the pamphlet collection; enlargement of the bibliography of Minnesota fiction; steady progress on a name index to the Minnesota entries in the census of 1860, with 40,000 cards already filed; and much work in transcribing documents and arranging, sorting, and photographing manuscripts. But this is not the whole story. With project assistance, the newspaper bibliography and inventory, one of the largest undertakings of the society, has been advanced to the stage of putting several divisions into final form. The miniature models of historical scenes, now so striking a feature of our museum exhibits, have been brought to a total of nine, and two additional groups are nearing completion. And notable progress has been made on such enterprises as the analytical catalogue of the picture collection, the mapping of the Red River trails, the typing of interesting travel accounts in pioneer Minnesota news-

papers, and sundry other jobs. Supplementing all this has been a vast amount of work by WPA cabinetmakers, painters, electricians, and other craftsmen. They have built cases for the miniature models; they have made reading stands, tables, trucks, and other furniture and equipment; and they have refinished cases, desks, and chairs, varnished floors, and done many other jobs.

There remains to be mentioned one of the largest of the WPA enterprises affecting the society—a series of notable improvements and additions to the Historical Building planned in co-operation with the custodian's office and by special authorization of the executive council. The main work of constructing the new newspaper and archives filing hall along the lower terrace was completed last summer. This huge reservoir of space has already been put to excellent storage use, but it is hoped that legislative appropriations will open the way to installing steel filing equipment so that it can serve the basic purposes for which it was designed. Meanwhile, another great construction project was launched in September in the upper terrace area. This involves the excavation of the broad area around the upper terrace and the building of a series of rooms, with concrete floors and steel columns suitable for stack support, on the levels of the present basement and ground floor. A doorway for delivery purposes will be provided on the rear driveway and there will be a wide stairway descending from the floor level to the basement. Thus we can look forward to solving a pressing problem, that of museum, library, and general storage and filing. At the same time, upon the initiative of the Capitol authorities, a passenger tunnel is being built from the Historical Building to the Capitol, with an entrance from our basement corridor. The passageway follows the sidewalk and then cuts diagonally under the street, entering the Capitol at the end of its newly completed terrace storage room.

The members of the society's staff have cheerfully and

efficiently met the unusual demands made upon their time and effort by the supervision and counsel needed in special projects, but they have not neglected the homely routine work of handling incoming materials and serving the public. In the library 3,220 items were catalogued during the year, and 20,489 cards were added to the various card index files. Owing in part to some additional catalogue assistance, the items catalogued ran well ahead of the number of current accessions for cataloguing. Gratifying is the special progress made under the direction of the head cataloguer in reorganizing and classifying the pamphlet collection. She has also supervised a thorough revision of the public catalogue guide cards, which involved the printing and filing of forty-five hundred new cards. Plans for the book stacks on tier B of the main library were worked out during the year and the installation will take place early in 1937. In the newspaper department a special newspaper press was secured through the labor of WPA workers; a special section on floor D was set apart by wire grating for the accommodation of rare materials; and the staff, in addition to keeping up with current routine, sorted and listed various miscellaneous collections of papers.

Thirty-six special exhibits have been arranged by the museum; among the WPA miniature models installed are scenes depicting a pioneer homestead in the timber country and a sodhouse and prairie scene; and dioramas now being made include a Red River cart train scene, a Minnesota lumber camp, and a frontier main street. The year has witnessed a large amount of arranging and repairing of manuscripts. Among the papers arranged may be mentioned the Lind, Manahan, Sheehan, and Bothne collections. Interest in micro-photography has been continued and during the summer Dr. Charles Ritchey of Drake University was engaged to do special photographic work. The unusual volume of accessions put extra burdens upon the manuscript division, as well as upon the library and museum staff.

One WPA worker, Miss Irene Persons, acted as a field worker for the society in interviewing Minnesota people with a view to securing gifts of manuscripts; and one of the vice presidents of the society, Mr. Ira C. Oehler, took an active interest throughout the year in suggesting possible sources of manuscript gifts. Occasionally, the society lent its efforts to special manuscript collecting enterprises, for example, the building up of a Dr. Alfred Owre collection as an aid to a biographer of the distinguished leader in the field of dental education. Though perhaps outside the immediate scope of this report, mention must be made of the completion, by Mrs. Walter Hyde and other members of the Keewaydin chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, of a name index to the Minnesota portion of the census of 1850.

Numbers are not the only significant measure of the use made of the collections of historical societies, but they have a certain interest, perhaps especially if considered comparatively. During 1936 the society received more than 38,000 visitors in its museum and served 5,040 patrons of its general library, 3,138 readers of its newspapers, and 1,102 users of its manuscripts. In every branch there was a rise over last year, notably in the general library, where the increase was 21 per cent, in the newspaper department, where it was 37 per cent, and in the manuscript division, where it was 127 per cent. This extraordinary increase in the use of manuscripts was due in part to the circumstance that our manuscript census schedules were extensively employed for verifying the ages of applicants for old age assistance. In fact, the board of control, through its old age assistance division, has placed temporarily in the manuscript division a full-time worker, Mrs. Sara D. Boyce, who already has utilized our materials in checking the records on seven thousand applications. For more than four thousand she has succeeded in finding pertinent data. In the library reading room there was a notable increase in the use of materials

for historical purposes. There was no lessening of interest in the genealogical field, but readers in that field constituted only 28 per cent, whereas a year ago they were 40 per cent, of the total. The WPA writers' project, which is preparing what promises to be an extremely useful and interesting Minnesota guidebook, sent many workers daily to explore historical material in the society's custody. It may be of interest to note that in the newspaper department the number of readers during each of the first three quarters of 1936 exceeded the total for the entire year of 1926.

As usual, not a few of the society's activities fell directly within the sphere of public education. Staff members, for example, responded to some sixty or more invitations to give talks and papers before clubs, local historical societies, and regional and national associations. The reference librarian, who continues to conduct the society's "Information Bureau," sent out 330 reports and letters in response to inquiries coming from Minnesota and twenty-two other states, besides answering innumerable questions by telephone. Staff members made numerous field trips to points outside the Twin Cities, Mr. Babcock on no fewer than nineteen occasions. One of Miss Nute's nine field trips was a journey to California and Oregon made in quest of materials for the growing Lindbergh Collection.

The superintendent, with the assistance of Mr. Lewis Beeson, brought out toward the close of the year a topical study outline entitled *Minnesota: Its History and Its People*, with a view to encouraging the study of state history in the schools of the state and by clubs and individuals. Such encouragement has its place, but it is worth noting that there is a rising tide of historical interest throughout the state. One of its most significant manifestations is the local history movement, which continues to show force and vitality. It is not merely that three new local historical societies have come into existence during 1936, bringing the total to forty-nine active local organizations, but that

the younger generation is stepping into the leadership of the movement, that local museums are being rapidly developed and better housed with each passing year, and that constructive local programs and projects are being formulated and carried through, some of them with WPA aid,<sup>3</sup> others as independent enterprises. These and other tendencies point to increasing momentum in that movement for organizing local history effort and interest that was launched a little more than a decade and a half ago by the Minnesota Historical Society. Of great interest also are the vigor and activity of certain special historical societies, notably the Catholic Historical Society of St. Paul and the Norwegian-American Historical Association, with headquarters at Northfield.

It is proof indeed of the strong professional interests of staff members that amid the stir and bustle of this busy year they have somehow managed to find time and energy to carry on special activities. Dr. Nute has made notable progress on her biography of Radisson and Groseilliers and completed the editing of an important travel diary. Miss Krausnick attended the Richmond meeting of the American Library Association. Mr. Larsen continued his research on the history of the road system of Minnesota, and, with Mrs. Larsen, made important progress on the bibliography of Minnesota newspapers. Mr. Babcock wrote an interesting article on St. Croix Valley history and continued to build up his collection of transcripts of pioneer travel narratives. Miss Ackermann made a careful study of the career of the frontier scout, George Northrup. Miss Jera-bek completed and saw published her *Bibliography of Min-*

<sup>3</sup>Local history and museum projects are under way in about fifteen Minnesota counties. Recently there has been a tendency toward re-organizing and co-ordinating such projects on a district basis under the general sponsorship of the Minnesota Historical Society. Two such districts have been created in areas centering at Detroit Lakes and Brainerd. Mr. Richard Sackett of the society's general records survey staff is acting as state WPA adviser on the local and regional projects.



*nesota Territorial Documents*. Miss Ingram took time for further library studies at the University of Chicago, served as chairman of the cataloguers' section of the Minnesota Library Association, and made many additions to her bibliography of Minnesota fiction. Miss Fawcett made her annual survey of Minnesota publications for the state library association. Mrs. Berthel devoted much time to supervising the editing of county archives inventories, and also advanced the preparation of her volume on Goodhue. Mrs. Warming did the annual revision of the Minnesota section in the *Statesman's Yearbook*. The superintendent brought out, with Professor Ruud of the University of Minnesota, a volume of *Norwegian Emigrant Songs and Ballads*; was the author of a bulletin on *Problems of American Archivists*, published by the National Archives; and in December was elected to membership in the council of the new Society of American Archivists.

This report indicates that the central problem of the staff has been that of carrying on routine duties without diminution of efficiency while undertaking the many difficult and time-consuming duties that special projects have placed upon us. I will say simply that the staff has risen nobly to the occasion, with competence, hard work, and devotion to the best interests of the society. I should like to name the staff members, one after another, tell of their service to the society, and express the thanks of the society and of myself for what they have done, but in lieu of that, I will only say that they have merited such appreciation and that I cherish the unselfish, co-operative, and handsome spirit in which they have carried on our common tasks. My expression of gratitude on behalf of myself and the society is also extended to the directors, assistant supervisors, and workers on the many WPA projects. It may be added that there were only a few changes in the society's staff during the year. Mr. Charles Boeck resigned as newspaper assistant in August and was succeeded by Mr. Edward Werneke.

In mid-October Mrs. Elizabeth Barry resigned as accessions assistant, and her place was taken by Miss Mary Fitz-Gibbon. Both Mr. Boeck and Mrs. Barry had given long and devoted service to the society, and their resignations were received with genuine regret. Mrs. Robert Beveridge served as a part-time assistant in the manuscript division from February until July, when she resigned and Miss Julia Meyer was employed in her place. Miss Gertrude Ackermann was promoted on July 1 to the position of assistant curator of manuscripts. Mrs. Gudrun A. Jensen, a trained cataloguer, was employed on a part-time basis in the catalogue department, beginning November 15.

The budget for the biennium 1937-39 was duly submitted to the budget commission after having been approved by the society's executive committee. The requests were based upon a very careful study of actual problems and needs. A special appropriation of \$10,000 was asked for the purposes of installing stacks and shelves in a portion of the new filing hall in the lower terrace. In the matter of salaries, the restoration of the levels preceding the emergency reductions was proposed. At the same time it was suggested that three minor positions be established in order to meet some of the urgent problems created by the society's growth and expansion in recent years, the positions, namely, of newspaper, manuscript, and museum assistants. The total request for salaries and wages was \$34,980 annually and for supplies and expenses, \$17,500. In the state budget as submitted by the governor and the budget commission to the legislature, the figure for stacks and shelves is reduced to \$9,000, that for salaries and wages to \$32,500, and that for supplies and expenses to \$15,000. The amounts recommended would permit a salary readjustment, but of the three new positions proposed, only one is endorsed; and in the matter of supplies and expenses, the society, confronted by generally rising prices and costs, would encounter a difficult situation.

The general condition of the society, however, does not warrant a closing note of pessimism. In the light of the present report it must be clear that the Minnesota Historical Society is straining every effort and resource to serve the people of the state efficiently and well. It has its eyes open to both the opportunities and the new trends of the time. The record demonstrates not only that the spirit of the society's staff is professional and its standards high, but that the institution is in tune with an age that is emphasizing planning, careful organization, and intelligent co-operation. And it also proves that the fundamental purposes of collecting Minnesota records, of making the society's resources readily available, of administering the institution on a sound basis, and of reaching out to the citizens and communities of the state in a practical program of education are being faithfully upheld and carried forward.

THEODORE C. BLEGEN

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
ST. PAUL



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