

THE MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY IN 1937¹

PUBLIC INTEREST in the work of the society and in the domain of history was stimulated by a series of unusually successful meetings held during 1937. They were opened with the eighty-eighth annual meeting, held on January 18, arranged in four sessions, rich in new contributions and interpretations, and climaxed with a searching annual address by Professor Robert C. Binkley of Western Reserve University. Dr. Binkley expounded a "long-range program in cultural strategy" and asked for "history of the people, by the people, and for the people." The spring meeting, held on April 12, centered about the historical value of diaries. Perhaps the most ambitious effort in promoting popular interest in state history was the society's fifteenth annual summer tour and convention, held from June 18 to 21, with sessions at Little Falls, Detroit Lakes, and Roseau, a tour on Lake of the Woods to the Northwest Angle, and a closing meeting at Bemidji. The quality of the papers and addresses was uniformly high; one session attracted an audience of a thousand people; and as many as 175 persons participated in the day's trip on Lake of the Woods. The fourth meeting of the year was held in the society's auditorium on November 30, when Miss Marjorie Edgar gave a highly interesting lecture recital on "Finnish Folk Songs and Folklore in Minnesota."

Perhaps the most encouraging feature of the society's effort to build up its membership during the year is the fact that thirty-three new members were enrolled during the last quarter. The total number added during the year was

¹ A report presented at the afternoon session of the eighty-ninth annual meeting of the Minnesota Historical Society in the Historical Building, St. Paul, on January 10, 1938. *Ed.*

eighty-two, including two reinstatements, but unhappily thirty-four members were lost by death and fifty-eight by withdrawal. At the end of the year there were 1,341 active members, 186 subscribing schools and libraries, and 43 institutional members, making a total of 1,570, as compared with a total of 1,580 a year ago. The rise in interest during the fall and early winter gives hope that during the coming year the society will more than hold its own in membership. Vital to its membership work is the active co-operation of present members.

The principal publication of the year consisted of the four issues of the quarterly magazine, MINNESOTA HISTORY, making, with an index, a volume of more than five hundred pages of Minnesota historical materials. Thus has been completed the eighteenth volume in the magazine series which, taken as a whole, now constitutes a rich and varied repository of history. The volume for 1937, representing the work of more than forty writers, has a wide range of interest, with articles on such topics as lumbering in the St. Croix Valley, the Quakers in Minnesota, the "Hoosier Schoolmaster in Minnesota," "Fort St. Charles and the Northwest Angle," the newly discovered diary of Colonel Josiah Snelling, farmers' diaries, agricultural periodicals, the Itasca question, and a diary of the late Judge Charles B. Elliott. A leading authority on agricultural history, after reading Mr. Loehr's paper on farmers' diaries, wrote that he considered it the "best analysis of one specific kind of source of special interest to agricultural historians that has been made."

Other publications of the year included the four issues of the society's *Check List of Minnesota Public Documents* and the twelve regular numbers of the *Minnesota Historical News*, the latter carrying more than sixty articles about state history and the society to the press of the state. It proved impossible to publish the index to the Minnesota rosters for the Civil and Indian wars, completed through

the society's WPA project, but this valuable and bulky work of nearly five hundred pages was typed, with as many carbons as possible, and bound for distribution to a few selected libraries and institutions. The Henry Lewis narrative, reprinted from the quarterly as a small book late in 1936, was well received by reviewers in this country and abroad. Various projects for special publications have made notable progress during the year, but lack of funds has made their immediate publication impossible. A bulletin on the records of organizations, which will prove an important new contribution to the science of manuscript cataloguing, is virtually completed. So also is the Graham travel diary, edited by Dr. Nute, the narrative of an English traveler and hunter who visited the northwestern frontier in 1847. Yet another potential publication is a bibliography of the writings of Dr. Warren Upham, compiled by Miss Jerabek. Considerable progress, too, has been made on a volume of early missionary documents relating to the Red River Valley, a volume of selections from the writings of the pioneer editor, James M. Goodhue, a cumulative check list of Minnesota public documents for the period 1925-35, and a number of other interesting works.

One of the great needs of the society is an endowment fund for the publication of valuable and interesting historical materials, such as diaries, collections of letters, special narratives, and other sources drawn from its rich accumulations of records, as well as histories and biographies based upon these records. Such an endowment would open up the possibility, for example, of publishing the fascinating Taliaferro journals; selections from such basic Minnesota collections as the papers of Henry H. Sibley, Alexander Ramsey, Ignatius Donnelly, and Bishop Henry B. Whipple; and many other records that would throw new and interesting light upon the story of Minnesota and the Northwest. Here, to my mind, is a remarkable opportunity for friends of the Minnesota Historical Society who love the North

Star State and are deeply interested in its history to rally to the support of a cause that stirs the imagination with its promise of worth-while results. I can think of no finer monument, no worthier service to the best interests of this state, than the setting up of an endowment that would make possible the realization of such objectives.

One of the measures of the society's success in making its objectives understood is the growth each year of its collections. An active membership, popular interest in meetings and tours, a steady program of education in state history, the influence of the quarterly magazine and other publications—all these play a role in the development of the society as a collecting institution, re-enforced always by persistent and vigilant staff work. Thus, of 3,058 books, pamphlets, and newspaper volumes added to the library in 1937, nearly fifty-nine per cent were received as gifts. The official total of the library stands at 191,271, but an unofficial count would add several thousand pamphlets not yet formally accessioned. The keynote in newspaper collecting is the filing of current newspapers, of which 534 were received regularly in 1937; of these 464 are Minnesota publications.

Perhaps the most interesting recent addition to the newspaper collection, however, was not a current publication, but a film copy of an extensive file of the *Nor'-Wester*, a pioneer newspaper which appeared in the Red River settlement of the Canadian Northwest beginning in 1859. The films added some sixteen hundred pages of issues of this rare paper to the few original numbers owned by the society, and it is now possible to consult here more copies than in any other library. The file is of special Minnesota interest because the *Nor'-Wester* reflects the close relationship that existed between the Canadian settlements and this state. Among numerous other library treasures received during the year, mention can be made of only a selected few. One of these is a Dutch translation of Father Hennepin's *De-*

scription of Louisiana, published at Amsterdam in 1688. Another is a photostatic copy of a little-known Hennepin book on the subject of Jansenism, issued at Utrecht in 1698. The president of the society has presented an interesting and rare history, in French, of the Belgian village of Ath, where Hennepin was born. There is interest in the English and Dutch texts, secured in photostat, of the descriptive account that accompanied Henry Lewis' panorama of the Mississippi Valley. As in other years various organizations and individuals have aided the society in enlarging its library, through gifts of either books or money for book purchases. Thus the Old Trails chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution made a generous addition to its fund for the Mrs. James T. Morris colonial history collection. Similarly the Minnesota Society of Mayflower Descendants kindly undertook to place in the society's library an expensive and important book on New England genealogy which the society could not have acquired through its own funds. To Dr. Francis L. Palmer, registrar and historiographer of the diocese of Minnesota, the society is indebted, as in former years, for much help in building up the Seabury-Tanner collection of Protestant Episcopal church records.

Accessions of manuscripts, though somewhat less numerous than in 1936, nevertheless surpassed in number any previous year in the history of the society. There were 209 accessions, some of them representing large collections of papers. These accessions range from personal papers and diaries to church records and the archives of organizations. It is interesting to note that the society is accumulating one of the best collections in the country of the papers of liberal leaders. Alongside the manuscripts of such figures as Ignatius Donnelly, John Lind, and James Manahan may now be found those of Congressman Charles A. Lindbergh, Lynn Haines, and various other notable men. A large and very important collection of the papers of the elder Lind-

bergh is in process of being assembled for the society, with the co-operation of Colonel Lindbergh and other members of the Lindbergh family. The papers come from many sources and are an example of what can be done in manuscript collecting by careful planning over a long period. The papers of Lynn Haines, presented by his widow, contain a wealth of material assembled while Haines served as editor of the *Searchlight on Congress*. Another recently received collection is that of the late Jean Spielman, which contains much valuable material relating to the labor movement.

The richness of the new manuscripts acquired by the society in many fields can only be suggested in a brief summary. There are, for example, the personal letters of Captain John Jones, who participated in the defense of Fort Ridgely and the Sibley expedition of 1863; some papers of Senator Moses E. Clapp; thirty-five volumes from the papers of Truman M. Smith, a pioneer St. Paul banker; twelve boxes of papers of Isaac Crowe, lumberman, banker, and miller in the fifties and sixties; a collection of the papers of Matthias N. Koll, a leader in business and community life in northern Minnesota; and the manuscripts of Emerson Cole, a Minneapolis lumber manufacturer for the period from 1877 to 1903.

The year's accessions also are rich in diaries, either originals or copies, and notable among them are some throwing light upon agricultural history. There are, for example, the diaries of a Le Sueur County farmer, Lewis Stowe, from 1856 to 1908; those of John S. Harris, who experimented with the culture of fruits and vegetables in southeastern Minnesota as early as 1858 and was actively interested in the Minnesota Horticultural Society; those of John Becker and Mrs. Hermann J. Fast, telling of conditions in the Mennonite colony of Mountain Lake; and those kept by Philemon M. Tuttle from 1856 to 1881 while farming near High Forest. Somewhat different in scope and interest are

the diaries of Daniel Hunt, who was engaged as a trader in western Minnesota in the fifties, and of Judge Charles B. Elliott of Minneapolis for the period from 1886 to 1901 and for the year 1912.

Of particular interest from the point of view of agricultural history are the records of the Pomona and Minnehaha granges. It will be recalled that the society received some years ago the minutes of the North Star Grange, the first grange in Minnesota. A state-wide canvass of granges and grangers, sponsored by the state grange with the aid of the society, is being launched, and it is hoped that this valuable collection will be much expanded. Other special collecting projects center about the papers of labor unions, several of which have turned over their archives to the society, and pioneer hotel registers, two of which have been secured.

The collection of church records continues to grow. Among the accessions of 1937 are records of the First Baptist Church of Waseca, the First Presbyterian Church of Two Harbors, the Wesley Methodist Episcopal Chapel of St. Paul, St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Lake Elmo, the First Presbyterian Church of Hastings, and the Congregational Church of Lake Benton. The Congregational church is continuing its program of encouraging congregations of that denomination to turn over their records to the society.

State archives and the papers of organizations are among the records that have enriched the society's collections during the year. Examples are archives of the Minnesota game and fish commission and the forestry division of the state department of conservation and the papers of the Tourist Club of Minneapolis, the St. Paul Protestant Orphan Asylum, and an engine house of the St. Paul fire department. Among miscellaneous manuscript additions may be mentioned a valuable collection of "America letters" copied for the society in Norway; a history of the Minneapolis Municipal Airport; a Chippewa grammar compiled

by the Reverend Ottmar Cloeter in the sixties; and copies of more than fifty documents relating to Forts Ridgely and Ripley.

The museum collections were enlarged in 1937 by 889 gifts of a historical, ethnological, archaeological, or numismatic character. The number of pictures received was 5,560—larger by 1,200 than the number in 1936. The picture collection as a whole has now reached a grand total of 61,105. There were also numerous additions of negatives, cuts, and slides. One of the outstanding gifts of the year in the museum field was a collection of sixty-five pieces of telephone equipment assembled and presented by Mr. George W. Johnson of St. Paul, long in the service of the Tri-State Telephone Company. It forms a notable display, throwing light upon the history of the telephone from the eighties to the present and including switchboards, transmitters, receivers, and complete instruments, both manual and automatic. Plans have been made to add other items to the collection as they become available. Items of firemen's equipment used in an earlier day were received from Chief William J. Sudeith and other members of the St. Paul fire department. Many handsome pieces of silver that were used in the home of Dr. and Mrs. William W. Folwell were added by Miss Mary H. Folwell to the society's Folwell collection. An item in the picture collection worthy of note is a series of pencil sketches of Minnesota and Wisconsin scenes made by W. E. Slosson of New York while on a visit to the West in 1883.

Two unique collections of historical materials have been received during the year. The first, presented through the generosity and interest of the Burlington, Milwaukee, and Northwestern railroads, as represented by Mr. Ralph Budd, Mr. Henry A. Scandrett, and Mr. Carl R. Gray, Jr., consists of records of streamline trains and other forms of fast passenger service which have been a revolutionary feature of the recent progress of railroad transportation. Photo-

graphs, blueprints, reports, advertising folders, leaflets, and letters form a part of this collection, which it is hoped will be enlarged in the future to include additional types of material and other railroads.² The second collection consists of mimeographed reports, printed forms, cards, announcements, pictures of hospitals and individuals, and other materials, all relating to the Minnesota Hospital Service Association, a modern pioneering organization which in only a few years has achieved a colossal membership. These records have been assembled and presented to the society by the executive secretary, Mr. E. A. Van Steenwyck.

The year 1937 witnessed considerable progress in the work of the WPA projects under the sponsorship and direction of the society. The field surveys for a comprehensive inventory of federal archives in Minnesota were completed in 1936, but there remained the formidable task of preparing a final inventory to be submitted to the federal authorities at Washington. This report, totaling nearly four thousand pages of compact information about the records of more than a thousand federal depositories and agencies in Minnesota, was drawn up in final form during the first half of the year under the supervision of Mr. Jacob Hodnefield. One copy was sent to Washington and one retained by the society. It may be of interest to note that both in completing the field surveys and in submitting its final report, Minnesota stood first among the states. The inventory constitutes a detailed analytical guide to rich treasures of archival material. In sponsoring its compilation, the society unquestionably has done a service to the cause of history, both state and national.

Considerable attention was devoted in last year's report to the state-wide survey of historical records organized as part of a federal project directed by Dr. Luther H. Evans

² Since this report was drafted an important collection of similar materials for the Union Pacific has been received through the courtesy of Mr. Carl R. Gray, Sr.

of Washington and operated in correlation with the special survey project sponsored by the society. One of the major objectives of this undertaking has been that of compiling inventories of county and state archives and various other classes of historical material. Substantial progress toward this goal was made during the past year. For purposes of verification and completeness of detail, the national director called for a recheck of the county archives. This field work has now been completed in sixty counties and is in progress in most of the others. Meanwhile, inventories for two counties—Freeborn and Blue Earth—and a survey of *General Legislation concerning Counties in Minnesota* have been published; and it is expected that not a few additional county archival inventories will appear during the coming year. The presentation of such inventories in compact form, with historical introductions and information not only about the scope and contents of the records but also about their housing, care, and accessibility, should prove a boon to local history workers and to county officials throughout the state. The process is one of taking stock of official records, and this is of practical value to both groups. Such a systematization of information about Minnesota local records long seemed an unattainable dream, if only because of the sheer magnitude of the task. Fortunately, that dream is now being realized. As a Minnesota newspaper recently observed, "One of the developments of the last few years which has been most encouraging to those interested in the study of local history has been the rapid expansion of archival inventories of local government offices."

The survey projects have made possible much more than a state-wide inventory of county archives, however. By the end of 1937 inventories of the records of nearly twenty-five hundred Minnesota churches had been compiled. Similar data have been assembled for some twenty-seven hundred societies and organizations, for more than a thousand townships, for more than five hundred municipalities,

for nearly twenty-eight hundred school districts, and for about sixteen hundred cemeteries, including about four hundred and fifty whose forlorn fate it has been to be abandoned. The surveys also have on hand tabulated information about fourteen hundred private collections of historical material; eight hundred historic sites, some of them marked, some not; approximately two hundred and fifty buildings of special historical interest; and a number of historic trails. During the year, moreover, the surveys have gathered for the society nearly fifty thousand photographic negatives secured from Minneapolis newspapers; more than three thousand pictures; and about ten thousand manuscript, library, and museum items of various kinds. Though this summary is incomplete, it leaves no doubt of the value for Minnesota of these projects.

Closely allied to the records surveys are archaeological projects. They are in fact surveys of records disclosed by the spade. A second campaign was carried on at Grand Portage in the late summer. The United States Indian Service, Mr. Ralph D. Brown of the Historical Records Survey, and Mr. Willoughby M. Babcock of the society cooperated in the management of the enterprise. The front area of the Northwest Company stockade site was carefully examined, the stone foundations of one very large and several small structures were uncovered, several fireplaces and a cistern were explored, and many interesting special finds were made, including firesteels, flints, locks, hinges, beads, glassware, parts of pipes, a door, and an example of a shingle used on one of the eighteenth-century buildings. Thus knowledge of the old establishment on the North Shore of Lake Superior is gradually coming to light. The society has simultaneously undertaken an exhaustive study of written and printed records of Grand Portage, and the way is being cleared for building a replica of the famous fur-trading post by the Indian service.

A project for the excavation of old Fort Ridgely, under-

taken last year in co-operation with the state and national park services, became wholly a park service project with the appointment of Mr. G. Hubert Smith as its archaeologist. Most of the foundations under the old parade have been laid bare, and the historic commissary building is being reconstructed and will doubtless be utilized as a Fort Ridgely museum.

The special WPA project, centering about important non-routine undertakings at the society, was continued throughout the year with a personnel of approximately thirty. The general supervision was in the capable hands of the curator of the museum, with various staff members directing particular phases of the enterprise. Five new miniature groups, representing a Red River cart camp, a frontier town, a lumber camp, an open-pit mine, and an ore dock scene, have been built and installed. A total of fourteen such colorful and interesting groups are now on exhibit at the society. The mapping of the Red River trails has been brought near completion. Some twenty Chippewa birch-bark scrolls have been copied in tracings. The picture index has been advanced to a total of thirty-three thousand cards. The name index to the 1860 census for Minnesota was enlarged by eighty-two thousand cards during the year and is nearing completion. Skilled craftsmen have constructed five double group cases, three large wall cases, work tables, reading racks, cabinets, and filing cases.

Virtually the entire collection of bound newspaper volumes was shifted during the year in order to accommodate incoming materials, and much work was done in cleaning, checking, and mending newspapers. The inventory of the catalogued library collection was completed. Similarly, an inventory of the document collection, begun last year, was carried to completion, a task that involved the handling of more than twenty-five thousand items, mainly unbound pamphlets. Another collection inventoried consisted of some fifteen thousand periodicals. Much progress was made in

arranging, cataloguing, and filing pamphlets and miscellaneous material. As an aid to genealogists, an index was made to coats of arms, as recorded in more than seven thousand books. Transcripts of Minnesota travel accounts, drawn from early newspapers, have run to approximately twenty-five hundred typewritten pages. The project has also given aid to the great task of carrying forward the newspaper bibliography and inventory of files. Here are many concrete achievements, unspectacular but of lasting value. They have supplemented routine staff work. They are undertakings that, in the ordinary course of things, it would be impossible for a busy and hard-pressed staff to do.

One other set of projects remains to be mentioned—the building improvements and additions planned in co-operation with the custodian's office and the state executive council. The hope of installing stacks and shelves for newspaper filing in the lower terrace room went unfulfilled, but considerable progress was made in the projects affecting the upper terrace area. The tunnel from the Historical Building to the Capitol was completed and is now in use. Perhaps the most notable development is the completion of the general construction of the upper terrace rooms, which give promise of easing the pressing problem of museum, library, and general storage and filing. The interior finishing in these rooms has not yet been done, and it will be necessary to install heating and ventilating equipment.

In the long run the unspectacular work of accessioning and cataloguing materials and of meeting problems of arrangement, equipment, and administration is more important than spectacular achievements. Homely routine is the foundation of efficiency in performing most fundamental tasks. Cataloguing, for example, must be kept up, or the society would face chaos. Last year the library catalogued 2,769 items and added 19,317 cards to the various card index files. The Minnesota biographical index was enlarged by 1,373 cards. In classifying more than twenty-

two hundred pamphlets, the staff made a substantial attack upon a perplexing library problem. Bookstacks were installed last spring on floor B of the main library, leaving only the basement level unfinished of the original eight levels in the general library.

Although the newspaper department has devoted special attention to repairing and rebinding worn newspaper volumes, nearly seven hundred new volumes have been bound. The problem of preserving newspapers in the face of wear and deterioration is becoming serious, and it seems probable that films will furnish the final solution. A modest experiment in this technique was made during the year when the society reproduced on films the issues of the *Minnesota Pioneer* for the first five years of its existence. Much progress was made in enclosing single issues of newspapers, or small sequences of issues, in Gaylord binders. The department also listed all newspapers in its collection for the period prior to 1820 and began a listing of all non-Minnesota newspapers preserved by the society. The comprehensive bibliography and inventory of Minnesota newspapers has been completed for twenty-six counties.

Every division reports great expansion and is confronted with space problems. This is particularly true of the museum, which during the year arranged thirty-five special exhibits, including a remarkable display of telephones and telephone equipment; installed five additional miniature models; added many pieces of equipment, most of them made by WPA carpenters and mechanics; handled incoming materials; and advanced the analytical picture index. In the manuscript division notable progress was made in rearranging the large and important collection of Minnesota War Records Commission archives. Steadily throughout the year the work of cleaning, arranging, and filing manuscripts has progressed. Some idea of the magnitude of this work may be gained by noting that two hundred and fifty manuscript boxes were filed, each containing approximately

five hundred manuscript pieces. Two new oak tables were installed in the division; a file was secured for the 1860 census index cards; much new camera equipment was obtained, including a copying camera and film projectors; a vast amount of manuscript material was recorded on films; and several special manuscript exhibits were arranged. A notable adventure in intersociety co-operation was the transfer of the Winchell collection of Michigania to the Clements Library at the University of Michigan. A normal part of manuscript procedure is the pursuing of clues to manuscripts, the writing of innumerable letters inviting donations and the making of field trips. On one such trip Dr. Nute spent three weeks in the East searching for letters and documents pertaining to the career of Congressman Lindbergh.

There is always a temptation to employ the statistical method in appraising the importance of the use made of the society's collections during a given year, but it is well to remember that sometimes one single user, probing into important records in order to write a novel or a biography or a special article, may turn out to be more significant than a score of other users. Nevertheless, numbers have a certain interest. In 1937, for example, the society received 42,000 visitors in its museum, a considerable increase over 1936; served 5,502 patrons in its main library, nearly five hundred more than last year; assisted 2,685 readers in the newspaper department, who consulted more than ten thousand volumes and ninety thousand separate issues; and served 1,469 readers in the manuscript division, the greatest number for a single year in the history of that division and more than four times the number for 1927.

The census records have again served a highly practical purpose, for Mrs. Sara D. Boyce used them during the year to verify more than five thousand age records for applicants for old age assistance. From all divisions come reports of use of society records by scholars, novelists, state officials, professional men and women, businessmen, jour-

nalists, genealogists, and many others. One's imagination is stirred at the thought of the fruits of all this use. To give one example, Professor Lester B. Shippee took one manuscript preserved by the society, edited it, and had it published as a beautiful volume under the imprint of the University of Minnesota Press. It bears the title *Bishop Whipple's Southern Diary, 1843-1844*. To give another example, more than three hundred school classes visited the society's museum during the year, nearly half of them consisting of rural school groups. The classes comprised 9,300 school children, whereas the largest number recorded in any previous year was 7,073.

Most of the society's activities have a public educational value; some are directly within that sphere. There are more and more demands upon the time and effort of staff members for the giving of talks and papers before clubs, local historical groups, and regional and national associations. During the past year approximately eighty such addresses and papers have been delivered, including several radio broadcasts, one of them in the nature of an informal tour of the museum, with several staff members participating. The "Information Bureau" sent out more than three hundred and fifty reports during the year in response to inquiries on a startling variety of subjects. It is interesting to note that the favorite topics of inquiry are the Northwest Angle, the Minnesota Indians, and the Kensington rune stone. Staff members made more than thirty field trips to points outside the Twin Cities.

Some of the local historical societies throughout the state report new or enlarged quarters for their museums; and there are many signs of a mounting interest in local history. Fifty regional, county, and municipal societies, including one new county organization, are active, holding meetings, developing their museums, co-operating with the schools, and in many other ways promoting local interest. Throughout the nation, as a matter of fact, there is an increasing aware-

ness of the value of local history, and it is no coincidence that the Social Science Research Council held a conference in the East last fall to consider the problem of how to promote vital local historical work throughout the country and to make plans for a manual of local historical procedure. The superintendent of the society was privileged to participate in this national conference.

Minnesotans are awaiting with keen interest the publication by the Federal Writers' Project of a Minnesota guide, prepared under the direction of Dr. Mabel Ulrich. It is encouraging to know that the "Federal Writers" have embarked upon the supplementary task of studying and writing the histories of counties throughout the state, with emphasis upon the possible use of such histories by schools. Another development of great interest is the Northwest Territory Celebration. A Minnesota commission, with Senator Victor E. Lawson, a member of this society's executive council, as chairman, and its superintendent as secretary and treasurer, is planning Minnesota's participation. A high point of the celebration will be the Minnesota tour of a pioneer caravan which, with Marietta, Ohio, as its base, will travel through the Old Northwest presenting historical pageants. Seventeen performances will be given in Minnesota next summer, beginning at Duluth late in July. Senator Lawson also is secretary of a state commission which is making plans for Minnesota's participation in the Swedish-American Tercentenary celebration late in June. Another development that should be mentioned is the creation, under a law passed by the last legislature, of the State Geographic Board, which will cope with the problem of duplications of place names in the state. The superintendent was appointed a member of this board and is serving as its secretary.

Many staff members, in addition to carrying their routine duties, have expressed their professional interests in research and a variety of other activities. Mr. Babcock has

prepared a number of notable addresses and papers and has also continued to build up his collection of early Minnesota travel accounts. Dr. Nute has completed the rough draft of her book on Radisson and Groseilliers, written an introduction for a new translation of Father Hennepin's *Description of Louisiana*, published several articles and reviews, and carried forward some large editorial enterprises. She was honored last spring by election to the editorial board of the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*. Mr. Larsen has completed an important monograph on the history of the Minnesota road system. Mrs. Berthel has made considerable progress on her volume of selected writings of James M. Goodhue. Miss Heilbron has continued her researches in the history of the panorama in America. Miss Fawcett read an interesting essay on early Minnesota bells before the Minnesota Public Health Association and published it in the society's quarterly. Mrs. Warming prepared the Minnesota section for the *Statesman's Year Book*. Mrs. Brower has continued her work on a comprehensive bibliography of Minnesota fiction. Miss Jerabek is serving as secretary-treasurer of the Twin City Cataloguers' Round Table. The superintendent has been promoted to a professorship in the University of Minnesota, elected to membership in the executive council of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, and is serving on the advisory editorial board for the *Dictionary of American History*, now being edited by James Truslow Adams. He has also published various historical articles and has completed the manuscript of a high-school textbook entitled "Building Minnesota."

The expansion of the society's collections, the increasing public use of the institution, the many and varied activities that have been carried on, and the supervision of special projects have placed a heavy burden upon the members of the staff during the year. They have met their tasks cheerfully and willingly and, I believe, have performed them with

efficiency, never forgetting the responsibility that rests upon them for maintaining high standards. I wish to express not only my own appreciation but also that of the society for the devoted service given by the staff throughout the year. To the directors, supervisors, and workers on the many WPA projects with which the society has been associated, I desire also to voice the thanks of the society and myself for faithful and good work. Finally, I may be permitted to express my deep appreciation of the support and counsel of the officers, the executive committee, and the executive council of the society. There were few changes in the society's staff during the year. Mr. Edward Werneke was given a regular appointment as newspaper assistant, beginning July 1. Miss Helen McCann was appointed in the early summer to serve as a special assistant in the manuscript division. Cecil Davies has been appointed page in the general office. Mrs. Gudrun Jensen served until May as a part-time assistant in the catalogue division of the library, working especially, under the chief cataloguer's supervision, on the classification and filing of pamphlets.

The appropriations made by the last legislature for the regular activities of the society during the biennium that began last July amount to \$47,500 a year, with \$15,000 allotted for supplies and expenses and \$32,500 for salaries and wages. A special grant of \$4,000 was also allowed for installing stacks and shelves for newspaper filing. These appropriations made possible the restoration of salaries to their levels prior to the economy reductions and also enabled the society to establish one new position, that of newspaper assistant. The need for additional personnel in other divisions created by the society's rapid expansion in recent years could not, however, be met. The total allowed for supplies and expenses was the same as that in the preceding biennium and was \$2,500 under the figure requested by the executive committee in the budget as submitted by the society. In a period of mounting costs, the society therefore is faced with

the problem of very rigid economy and curtailment of some of its program, particularly in the field of publication, in order to operate within the limits of the appropriation. The figure for newspaper stacks and shelves as requested by the society was \$10,000. This was reduced to \$9,000 by the budget commission and to \$4,000 by the legislature. A possible solution of the problem now confronting the society would be a grant from the state executive council that would permit a special construction project, utilizing federal emergency labor, for equipping the lower terrace room with stacks and shelves.

With a record of achievement in the year that has passed, the society faces the future. There is much to be done. Minnesota is a great state with a great history. Let us join hands in the task of serving its interests with clearly defined purpose and sincere devotion. Our watchwords are planning, organization, co-operation. The objectives are the collection and preservation of the records of the people of Minnesota, sound administration, public service, and a democratic program of education. Of this society we may say, as Governor Olson once said of Minnesota, that it is a "trust to be passed on to our children and our children's children, not impaired but improved and further developed to the coming generations."

THEODORE C. BLEGEN

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ST. PAUL



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