

Maine Historical Society Quarterly

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THE SOCIETY

A heavy, fog shrouded day failed to discourage attendance at the 153rd Annual Meeting of the Society in Portland. Even the afternoon boat ride on Casco Bay attracted 120 brave members and their guests. Dr. Robert G. Albion's entertaining narrative prevented any potential gloom, and the fog even lifted a bit on the way back revealing a few of the islands and Portland's new profile.

An autograph reception for author Gordon E. Kershaw began the day. June 14th marked the official publication date for his book *The Kennebeck Proprietors, 1749-1775*, published by the Society in collaboration with the New Hampshire Publishing Company. A key book for the study of the early settlement of the Kennebec River region, the manuscript was selected for sponsorship by the Society's Publications Committee five years ago because of the author's depth and originality of research. If the book is not available at your bookstore, it may be ordered from the New Hampshire Publishing Company.

Winner of the Society's sixth annual Prize Essay Contest was announced at the close of the business meeting by Roger C. Taylor, Chairman of the Publications Committee. The winner was Donald A. Yerxa of Orono for his essay *The State of Maine and the New Navy, 1889-1893*, published in this issue of the *Quarterly*. Mem-

bers will be familiar, of course, with Yerxa's work on the *Burning of Falmouth*. Prize essays are evaluated without the judges' knowledge of the author's identity, so that the unusual situation of the *Quarterly* featuring two articles by the same author is based upon merit rather than recent renown. Of the twelve other entrants, one half were from the state of Maine. In addition to Chairman, Roger C. Taylor, the other judges for this year were Dr. James S. Leamon of Bates College and Dr. Roger L. Grindle of the University of Maine at Fort Kent.

At the business meeting, Herbert T. Silsby, II of Ellsworth, was elected to a third term as President of the Society. Vice President, Martial D. Maling, Secretary, Harry W. Rowe, and Treasurer, Arthur T. Forrestall were all elected to another term in their respective offices. Elected to the Standing Committee for third terms (of three years) were: Dr. Edith L. Hary of Hallowell, Dr. H. Draper Hunt, III of South Portland, William B. Jordan, Jr. of Portland, Mrs. William J. Murphy of Gorham, James H. Mundy of Augusta, Miss Elizabeth Ring of Portland, and James B. Vickery, III, of Brewer.

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am pleased to present my second report as President of the Maine Historical Society.

I am not sure that it serves any real purpose under our modern administrative arrangements for the President to report, except loyalty to an ancient custom. Our day to day operations are handled with great efficiency by our Director and his staff. Our policy decisions are discussed, first in committees, and their recommendations again discussed and finally decided by the Standing Committee. I am very happy to report it all works well, and unlike most organizations, there is nothing much for the President to do except preside at meetings and give an annual report.

This is the way it should be. Several years ago the decision was made to put the operation of the Society on a professional level, and I'm sure that all of you are fully aware of the wisdom of that decision. Mr. Morris runs a splendid shop, and all the administrative duties of the Society have been removed to his shoulders from the President and Standing Committee. All of this has been the major contributing factor to the growth in size and prestige of the Society over the past several years.

Later in the program you will hear reports giving the details of the activities of the Society. As I told you last year, I can guarantee that the affairs of the Society are in good hands.

The most pressing problem we have is that of money. Over the past four years we have had a deficit in three of them. Our net deficit for the four years was \$17,207.00 or an average of \$4302.00 per year. Our deficit for the past year was \$12,018.00. In studying our current level of services and dues structure for our next year's budget, the Finance Committee soon confirmed

that drastic action would have to be taken. It is obvious to all that no institution (private, that is) can continue to spend 15 to 20 per cent over its income. A small deficit is tolerable and so a limit was imposed upon the budget of not more than \$6000.00. Even with this deficit, other steps had to be taken. It was recommended to increase dues, and reduce the staff. By these means the budget deficit has been kept down to \$6000.00. With good luck on the income side and no significant disasters on the expense side, we hope to make it through the year — on budget.

I should say now that our budget is based on the assumption that the contribution of the State will remain the same. We have requested an increase in order to maintain current operations, but have little hope of an increase this biennium.

In a sense, I'm sure we all regret so much time and effort must be put into budgetary problems. There is so much we would all like the Society to do. But economics like the tide is an unconquerable foe. We can only guide it here and there for it will rise and fall inexorably. Right now our economy is at low tide. It is not a time for setting out on bold adventures. We will wait. The tide will surely rise again, and our fortunes with it.

The Maine Historical Society is one of Maine's oldest and most loyal institutions. The Society deserves support. The people of Maine deserve the Society. We must insure that it keeps afloat.

All is not glum. In spite of our financial problems, and frustrated desires to do more and better things for the historiography of Maine, we are doing more than ever before. We can be proud of our publications program, our collections program, our essay contest, which has contributed so much to the study and writing of Maine history, and our great progress in arranging and catalogu-

ing our manuscript collections. We have also made a very great contribution to the various Bicentennial programs. This fall we will have a program on the anniversary of bombardment of Portland, and the *Quarterly* will carry Stephen Jones' eye witness account of the first naval battle of the Revolution at Machias. There are many other activities you already know about or will learn about over the next year.

The Standing Committee is always glad to hear from the members of the Society. We solicit your comments. If some of our policies or activities displease you — say so. If you are pleased with some of them — say so.

Let me thank you for your attendance, and wish you a good boat ride this afternoon. There is as you know, nothing new about a Maine Historical Society excursion. Years ago the Society made trips to St. Croix Island in Passamaquoddy Bay, Popham, and Castine, to name a few. There is no substitute for viewing the premises of an event in history. For you who have not sailed around in Portland Harbor, this afternoon's trip will be extremely worthwhile, and doubly so since a running historical account will be provided. Besides all this, Portland Harbor must be one of the most interesting and beautiful harbors in the United States.

Please let us know how you like this sort of thing for our Annual Meetings. We could always try it again.

THE TREASURER'S REPORT

The annual audited financial report for the year ended March 31, 1975 (you have a three year comparative Income and Expense statement in the material handed to you) shows an operating and transfer deficit of \$12,081. Since a deficit of \$16,364 was anticipated, the actual loss was less than budgeted by approximately one third.

The year end balance sheet shows assets of:

Cash	\$ 10,346
Savings Accounts	38,920
Investments	610,194
Due from Other Funds	6,049
Land, Buildings and Equipment	1
Deferred Debts, Building Addition	40,151
	\$705,651

Current Liabilities were:

Accounts Payable	\$ 3,151
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Collateral Loan for Building Addition:

Balance	\$ 37,000
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On the recommendation of our auditor, fixed assets (land, buildings, etc.) are now to be capitalized in the financial records at the assessed valuation of 1973 which will add \$286,850 to recorded assets.

The Longfellow House, which was budgeted to be self-supporting, incurred a deficit of \$1,034 which has led the Finance Committee to recommend an expected deficit of \$1,000 in the current year's budget.

With a suggested dues increase and an adjustment in staff positions it has been possible to recommend a budget which projects an income of \$82,000 in the current

year and expenses of \$88,000. The resulting expected deficit of \$6,000 is approximately one half that incurred in fiscal 74-75 and only one third the budgeted loss for that year.

While no deficit can be considered healthy, it is perhaps encouraging that in a period when most institutions of our type are struggling to keep afloat, our financial position remains strong and our financial operating trend is toward a balanced position.

MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSE
for the years ended March 31, 1975, 1974 and 1973

	1975	1974	1973
Income:			
Interest and dividends	\$ 32,430	\$ 31,683	\$ 28,745
Dues	13,999	12,588	10,461
Gifts	2,564	3,011	10,005
Grants	27,600	29,200	42,900
Longfellow House	6,529	6,730	7,765
Other	337	—	—
	83,459	83,212	99,876
Expenses:			
Salaries			
(including pension)	56,332	55,579	50,140
Insurance	2,946	1,246	642
Utilities	2,974	1,070	1,641
Repairs	596	3,759	1,384
Supplies	3,091	2,291	2,785
Payroll taxes	3,486	3,373	2,775
Telephone	1,300	896	878
Newsletter and printing	6,663	6,670	2,564
Postage and			
mailing service	1,924	1,820	1,444
Professional services	3,440	2,802	2,445
Custodian fee	2,174	2,350	2,303
Equipment rental	1,012	3,573	842
Miscellaneous	1,447	1,726	1,644
Equipment purchased	—	2,494	630
Deposit for			
unemployment compensation	—	—	1,006
Restoration			
of paintings	—	—	1,500
Longfellow House:			
Salaries	4,462	3,287	5,394
Repairs	746	421	975
Other	2,682	3,366	6,049
	95,275	96,723	87,041
Transfers to principal	265	245	227
Excess (deficiency) of income over expenses and transfers	\$(12,081)	\$(13,756)	\$ 12,608

THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In my Annual Report for 1973-74, after noting that the 1970's were likely to be remembered for the number of private cultural institutions which failed altogether, I observed: "To feel that the Maine Historical Society can somehow remain aloof from such broad economic considerations is illusory." That prophetic (though hardly surprising) statement became the literal situation this year when the Finance Committee met to assess last year's record and adopt a budget for 1975-76.

Even though, as noted by the Treasurer, we avoided the anticipated operating deficit of \$16,364 by \$4,283 this year, it was the conviction of both the Finance Committee and the Director that to continue running deficits of about 15% of income was a risky business given our slim endowment resources and the current bleak economic situation — bleak for non-profit cultural institutions, that is. It was deemed prudent to strive for a deficit of no larger than 5% of income. In addition to normal operating costs contained in physical needs and services (all of which have inflated over the past year) the Director exerted considerable pressure to achieve a minimal 10% across-the-board salary raise for all staff members.

No significant changes were expected on the income side of the ledger for 1975-76: Grants (State and municipal) were expected to bring in the customary 35% of income; Endowment would probably hold at about 40%; and Dues, if left unchanged, could be expected to yield about 18% of our total income. Gifts to the Society would be needed, as they were last year, for interest payments on the Nichols Hall project. How then to meet the pressures of inflated goods and services, salaries, and still keep within a deficit range of 5% for the 1975-76 budget?

Two rather severe measures would be taken: (1) On

the Income side, Annual Dues would be raised (effective January, 1976) according to the following schedule: Active, \$15.00; Sustaining, \$20.00; Life, \$250; and Student, \$7.50. (2) On the Expense side, the Staff would be reduced from eight full-time, to six full-time and one half-time positions effective in the Fall of 1975. For the time being, the Library operation would remain open on a five-day, forty-hour week; however, the Director could not guarantee the Standing Committee that this would be possible for the full year. The imperative need is to avoid regressing seriously in the area of cataloging and library preparation. Neither members nor the public benefit if the materials in the Society's collections cannot be retrieved.

The Building Project

The great focus of the past two years has been upon the addition to the Society's manuscript stacks. The Library was closed last year from May through July in order to accommodate the building operation. The combined schedules of the architect and the contractor held with remarkable precision. The physical demands and frustrations on the Staff, first moving the collections out, and then reassembling them again, were enormous. Two volunteers who fully shared in all miseries of the struggle, Richard F. Dole of South Portland and Kenneth E. Thompson, Jr., of Portland, were regarded by the staff as national heroes.

At last, the Collections, both manuscripts and books, are now reassembled from all over the building (including parts unknown) in contiguous, classified, order. The climate control systems work perfectly, and we have reasserted our vitality as an active collecting agency.

Despite our unusually fancy Annual Appeal mailing to the membership and friends in January, we netted a dis-

appointing \$3,204 from 139 donors for the project. On June 2, 1975, that figure was increased by a thousand dollars, thanks to a single contribution by a loyal member and friend of the Society.

Membership

	1974-75	1973-74
New members:	214	117
Dropped:	227	43
Died:	20	17
Net:	-33	+57
As of April 30, 1975:		
Individual Members:	1510	
Corporate Members:	21	
Institutions:	109	

From the foregoing statistics it will be seen that our membership attrition hit a record 227 this year. Had it not been partially offset by a banner year (for us) gaining 214 members, we would now be presiding over a moribund society. (Normal attrition for us is about 100 per year.) The sudden peak this year has a logical explanation in the fact that the Bylaws were changed at the 1974 Annual Meeting providing that members in arrears of their dues payments be carried one year as opposed to two. Hence, two years of members in arrears were dropped in one fiscal year. Indeed, by May 30, 1975, Personal Memberships were 1537 making a total of 1667 on the mailing list. Nevertheless, it seems important to reiterate what the Membership Chairman, Roger B. Ray, constantly tells us: in this particular kind of Society we are peculiarly dependent upon our own membership to replenish and enlarge the Society through individual efforts.

A new Category of membership for Students was added this Spring. It was long overdue and the response has been enthusiastic. The dollar-a-day Library Use Fee for non-members adopted last Fall has also had a salutary effect in gaining new members.

Library Operations

Library Users:	2,071	2,186
Exhibit Attendance	1,312	1,510
Manuscript Users:	177	210
Reference Questions:		
(Mail & phone)	869	1,298
Books Used:	13,907	15,302
Manuscript Collections Used:	305	376

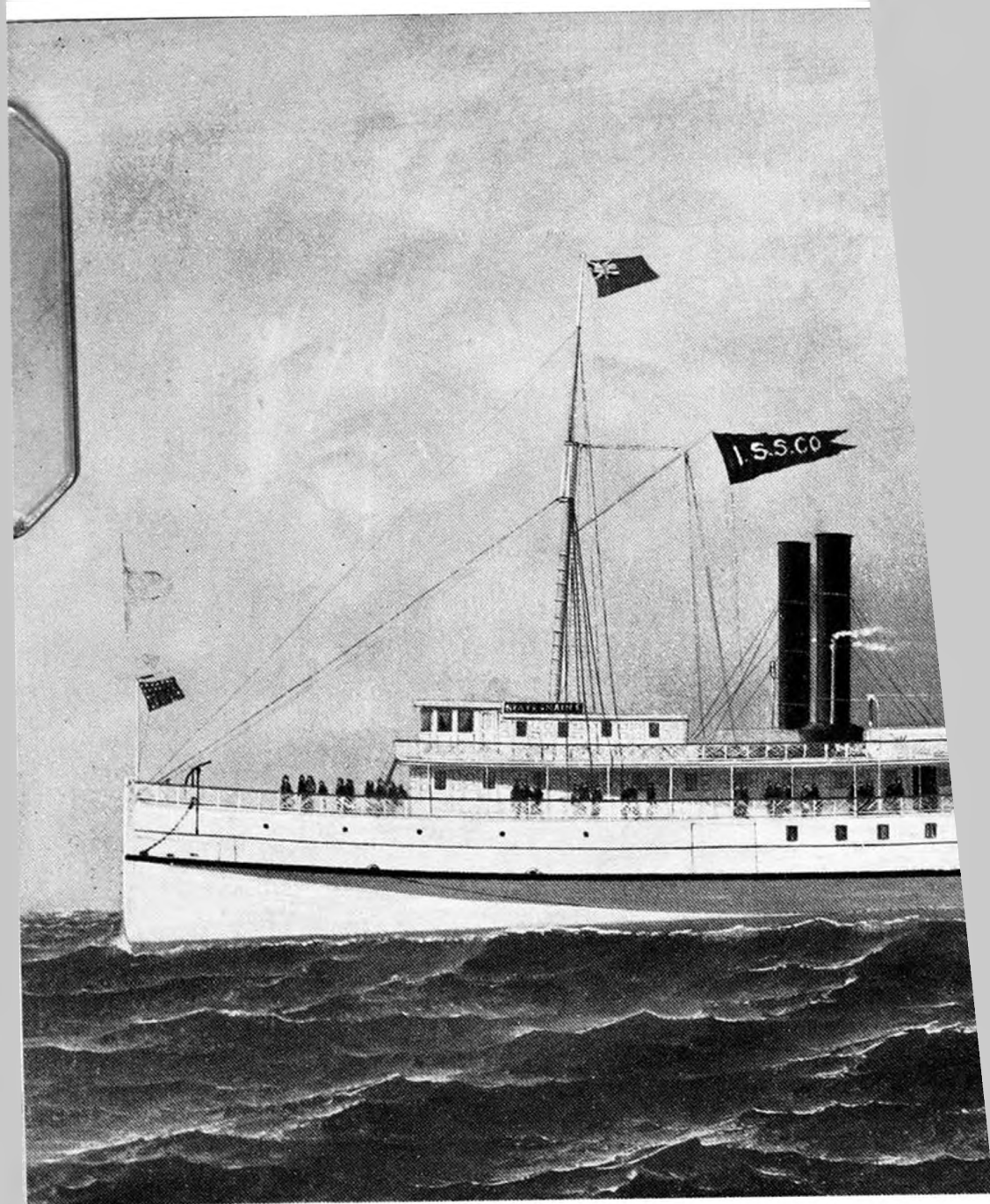
When one reviews the statistics shown above, it seems amazing that the figures for Library use and exhibits dropped as little as they did, considering the fact that the Library was closed for three months for building alterations. Nevertheless, it must be recalled that the previous year (1973-74) was not a particularly good one for attendance owing to street repairs which made access to the Society building resemble an obstacle course at times.

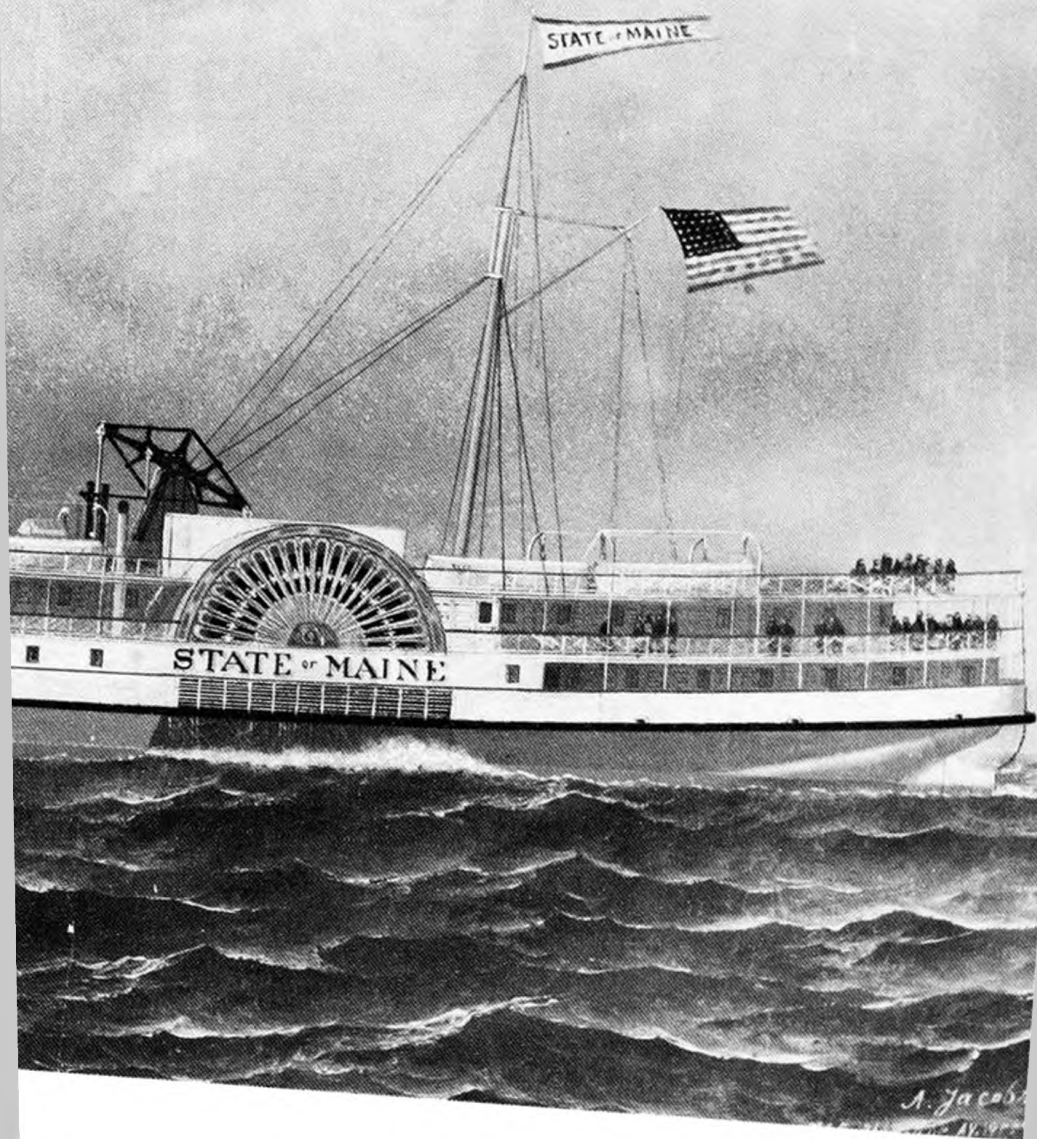
Wadsworth-Longfellow House

Attendance at the Wadsworth-Longfellow House, June through September, last year totalled 6,418. Certainly it was not the disaster anticipated due to the fuel crisis; however, there were 1000 fewer visitors than normal. The Staff operating under the guidance of Mrs. William J. Murphy, House Committee Chairman, and Miss Hannah Adams, Registrar/Curator, was superb and enthusiastic in handling the public.

Acquisitions

The Collections of the Society were considerably enriched this year through the unfailing generosity of its members and friends. Some of the highlights of the year were: A fine painting of the Steamer *State of Maine* by noted marine artist Antonio Jacobsen, was given by Charles A. Holden of Portland. Mr. and Mrs. William E. Clark of Falmouth presented an exact and exquisite reproduction of the Old Bedford Flag, carried at Concord





on April 19, 1775. Another Queen Anne side chair belonging in the Wadsworth-Longfellow House was presented by Mrs. Franklin McCamey of Philadelphia. A delightful scrimshaw powder horn, inscribed, "Samuel Libbee His horn 1723" was given by Miss Dorothy Plummer of Portland. Political materials from the 1974 campaigns were solicited and received from: William Cohen, George Mitchell, James Longley, and James Erwin. Through the kind offices of Mrs. Frances Peabody of Portland, 48 books were received from the National Society of Colonial Dames in Maine.

It was an important year in manuscripts with a record number of collections, 78, reported to the *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections*, Library of Congress. In manuscript preservation, a record number of documents, 1,858, were unglued from highly acidic scrapbooks. The primary collection saved from destruction this year was the Stephen Longfellow manuscripts. Highlights of manuscript acquisitions were: The William Burleigh papers (Maine politician, 1785-1827) containing 48 items, 1823-1828, from the New Hampshire Historical Society. The immensely rich records of the Chase, Leavitt & Company, 1860-1953, contained in 144 volumes, presented by Ralph Leavitt and William Leavitt of Portland. Drawings and plans by the Hallowell Granite Works consisting of some 700 items; and architectural plans and drawings (579 pieces) of Portland architect, Frederick A. Thompson, both presented by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. of Augusta. Two manuscript maps, of Mount Desert Island, dated *ca* 1823, and one of the Plan of the Kennebec Million Acres, dated Hallowell, Maine, 17 October 1823, were presented by Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence M.C. Smith. Part of the Henry Sweetser Burrage (1837-1926) papers were presented by Miss Mildred G. and Miss Madeleine Burrage. The papers range from 1885-1922 including unpublished manuscripts by Dr. Burrage. Philip Sherry of Portland presented 22 volumes, 3 manuscript boxes of records of the Central Maine Power

Company, ranging from 1912-1950. Mrs. John Rand of Cundy's Harbor presented the papers of Freeport merchant captain, John G. Dillingham (d. 1869). The records of Adde & Company of Portland, 33 linear feet, ranging from 1899-1969 were presented by Arthur E. Ek of Portland. The records of the Congregational Church in Cumberland, 1791-1965, in 31 volumes were presented by the Church through the offices of Mrs. Hope Foster. A rich and varied fare indeed, of which this is only a partial listing.

Publications

Four issues of the *Quarterly* were published this year. We trust that quality continues to improve with each passing year. In addition to the *Journal of American History* where the *Quarterly's* articles have been listed in the past, the key bibliography *America: History and Life* will begin noting *Quarterly* articles, and they will be abstracted in *Historical Abstracts*. The Special Edition of the *Quarterly* containing Donald A. Yerxa's article on the *Burning of Falmouth* was transformed into a monograph for sales through the Society and through the Portland Bicentennial Committee. In addition, a facsimile reproduction of Captain Mowat's report on the burning of Falmouth, written on October 19, 1775 was published for the benefit of the Portland Bicentennial Committee and the Society.

Two new titles were published in the Maine History Bibliography Series this year: William A. Baker's *Maine Shipbuilding* and Ronald F. Banks' *Maine During the Federal and Jeffersonian Period*.

Under the joint publication and distribution agreement with the New Hampshire Publishing Company, 485 Maine Historical Society books were sold, and 913 joint imprints, for a total of 1,371 books sold for the year. 6,400 copies of the *Quarterly* were printed, plus the special edition of 5000 for the Bicentennial.

NEW MEMBERS

FROM MAINE Alfred: Mrs. Henrietta F. Evans *Augusta:* Mr. Donald D. Hathaway, Mrs. Alice G. Nute, Mr. Floyd T. Nute, Mrs. Sylvester L. Poor, Miss Vivian Russell, Mrs. Florence Winter *Bar Harbor:* Miss Barbara Ellen Joy *Bethel:* Mrs. Eleanor B. Conary *Brunswick:* Mrs. Elisabeth D. Odiorne, Miss Mary Ann Villari *Camden:* Mr. George C. Houston *Cape Elizabeth:* Mr. William F. Armstrong, Mrs. Barbara B. Doherty, Mrs. Freda P. Holman, Mr. Allen Quimby, Jr. *Columbia Falls:* Ms. Sally Morrill *Cumberland Center:* Mrs. Henry A. Fountain *Cumberland Foreside:* Mr. Richard J. Davis, Mrs. Elizabeth C. Wheeler *Dixfield:* Mrs. Phyllis W. Williamson *East Gray:* Ms. Charlotte B. Wallace *Ellsworth:* Mr. Raymond L. Williams *Falmouth:* Mr. Peter T.C. Bramhall, Mrs. Nancy A. Cragin, Mrs. John E. King, Mr. Thomas A. Power, Mrs. Howard Reiche, Jr. *Falmouth Foreside:* Mr. Stephen W. Woodberry *Freeport:* Mrs. Mary Chaney *Gardiner:* Mr. Charles M. Berdan, Jr. *Gorham:* Mrs. Evelyn R. Adams, Mr. Ronald F. Cole, Mrs. Doris R. Conners, Mrs. Doris R. Mann *Harpswell Center:* Mr. Richard Moseley *Hebron:* Mr. Roger Mellen Bearce, Mrs. Ella M. Funk *Houlton:* Mr. Myrick T. Cross *Kennebunk:* Mrs. Joyce Butler, Dr. David W. Fassett *Kittery:* Mrs. Arthur W. Peverly *Lewiston:* Mr. Raymond W. LeBrun *Lincoln:* Mrs. Dorothy A. Harding *Machiasport:* Mrs. Lee H. Armstrong *Ogunquit:* Mrs. Dorothy Keyes *Old Orchard Beach:* Miss Iona E. Tate *Orland:* Mr. Leland L. Tolman *Orono:* Mr. Donald Yerxa *Oxford:* Mrs. Barbara D. Thurber *Paris Hill:* Mr. Warren W. Stearns *Portland:* Mr. Douglas P. Adams, Mrs. Diana Allen, Mrs. Marjorie Bell, Mr. Robert Bucher, Mr. Robert C. Dutton, Mrs. Anne B. Foote, Mrs. Berta C. Gray, Miss Catherine M. Harkness, Mrs. Helena L. Mallett, Mrs. Eugene W. McNeally, Mr. George W.R. Sykes, Mr. Daniel L. Wilson *Rangeley:* Mrs. Shelton C. Noyes *Rockport:* Mrs. James A. Pratt *Rumford:* Mr. Randy L. Bennett, Mr. Peter A.

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Miss Mary D. Merrill
Saco, Maine

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Mr. Theodore K. Thurston, Portland
Miss Margaret J. Tibbetts, Bethel
Mrs. Ernest Town, Peaks Island
Mrs. Irene Tuttle, Scarborough
Mrs. Gertrude B. Weir, Biddeford
Mrs. Mahlon E. Welch, Gorham
Mrs. Bradford S. Wellman, Bangor
Miss Margaret A. Whalen, Augusta
J.R. Wiggins, Brooklin
Miss Helen M. Williams, Portland
Mr. & Mrs. Robert B. Williamson, Augusta
Miss Esther E. Wood, Gorham
W.P. Woodman, Cape Elizabeth
Gary W. Woolson, Hampden Highlands

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The telephone number at the *Maine Historical Society Library* has been changed to: (207) 774-1822. Since 1822 is the year in which the Society was Chartered, it should be an easy number to remember.

The *Wadsworth-Longfellow House* is open June through September, Mondays through Fridays, 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Adults \$1.00, Children 25¢. Members admitted free with their Membership Cards.

A special meeting of the *Society* on Friday, October 17, 1975, will be held at the *First Parish Church* in Portland to commemorate the burning of Falmouth by the British two hundred years ago. William B. Jordan, Jr. will be the principal speaker. The meeting will be open to the public and will start at 7:00 p.m.

The *Maine League of Historical Societies and Museums* will hold their Annual Meeting on Saturday, September 20, 1975 at Monmouth, the Monmouth Museums Association acting as host. The League's comprehensive guidebook for the Bicentennial, *Adventures in Maine History*, will be available at the end of this summer. This pocket-sized guide book is being published under a grant from the Maine State Bicentennial Commission.

The *Maine Academic Historians* will meet jointly with the *New England Historical Association* in Portland this year on Saturday, October 4, 1975. Donald A. Yerxa will deliver a paper on the Burning of Falmouth, 1775, and William B. Jordan, Jr. will offer the critique.

This year's *Convention for Social Studies Teachers* will be conducted by the *Maine Council for the Social Studies* and will be held at Cony High School in Augusta on Friday, October 3, 1975.