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## ADE Newsletter: News of the Association for Documentary Editing, Volume 1, Numbers 1, March 1979

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# ADE NEWSLETTER

## News of the Association For Documentary Editing

Volume 1, Number 1

March 1979

### Letter from the President

Dear Members of the ADE:

I am very glad to be able to report that our new Association, founded only on November 10, 1978, now has more than one hundred members. This gratifying response is largely the result of the hard work of Charlene N. Bickford and Linda G. De Pauw, and we are grateful to them for it.

The main purpose of this initial letter is to appeal to each member to constitute himself or herself as an informal member of the Membership Committee in pressing a drive for new members. Charlene Bickford can supply you with all the materials that you need if you only write to her at

Charlene N. Bickford  
Secretary-Treasurer  
The Association for Documentary Editing  
First Federal Congress Project  
George Washington University  
Washington, D. C. 20052.

I also want to emphasize that the Association for Documentary Editing is interested in having among its membership persons doing documentary editing in all fields, including persons who work in texts of ancient history, Arabic texts, medieval manuscripts, literary texts, and so on down to the documents of our own time. In my course in documentary editing here at Princeton University, I have been fortunate to have had the collaboration of scholars who work in various fields and kinds of editing. Their lectures and our class discussions have brought home to me, very forcefully indeed, that, even though we all have particular problems, all documentary editors face common problems and have much to learn from each other.

I think that I should add that all of us presently associated in the leadership of the ADE feel very strongly that we should not try to become a high-powered organization with a multitude of activities and committees. Above all, we do not intend to become involved in controversies over political issues. Our main goal is to bring the entire community of documentary editors together with the single purpose of improving quality in documentary editing. We propose to devote all our energies -- through conferences, symposia, sessions, the Newsletter, etc. -- to this great end.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our luncheon session at the meeting of the Organization of American Historians in New Orleans in April. There is a special announcement about this session in our Newsletter.

Meanwhile, let's all get together to increase our membership.

Sincerely yours,  
Arthur S. Link  
President

### HOW AND WHY ADE WAS BORN

In April 1978 a group of editors meeting at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library in Hyde Park, New York, heard John Simon, editor of the U. S. Grant Papers, explain the possible benefits that might result from a national association of documentary editors.

These advantages included annual meetings for a discussion of common problems, the occasional issuance of a newsletter, and the selection of officers who might act as spokesmen at professional meetings, congressional hearings, and elsewhere. Simon's report was discussed by the assembled editors who then voted informally to invite all interested parties to a meeting at the Southern Historical Association convention in St. Louis to consider a constitution for the organization. Simon, Linda Grant De Pauw, Merrill Jensen, and Donald Jackson were charged with preparing a constitution and presenting a slate of recommended officers for this organizational meeting to consider.

The outcome of these efforts was a meeting held last fall where Arthur Link of the Woodrow Wilson Papers acted as temporary chairman. The proposed constitution was presented, debated, amended, and finally ratified by the editors present. Thus the Association for Documentary Editing was born on November 10, with Link elected as the first president. Lester Cappon, now of the Newberry Library, was chosen as president-elect. Charlene Bickford of the First Federal Congress project at George Washington University was elected secretary-treasurer. The constitutional provision for an elected director of publications (to edit the newsletter) was filled by the selection of R. A. Rutland of the James Madison Papers. Thirty-six editors present in St. Louis paid the \$15 dues set at the meeting as the initial fee. If the expenses can justify a reduction, a year's trial will reveal the situation and a subsequent adjustment can be made in 1980.

After the St. Louis organizational meeting, President Link appointed John Simon and W. W. Abbot of the George Washington Papers to the ADE Advisory Board, and named Don Higginbotham (Iredell Papers), Don Cook (Indiana University), and Leo Lemay (University of Delaware) to the publications board. The newsletter was founded to provide current information on all documentary projects, to carry news of grants or other funding that might be available to editors, and to give editors a sounding board for suggestions or ideas that might benefit the profession generally. At St. Louis the broad call for membership among literary editors and scholars concerned with all kinds of editorial endeavors was emphasized. The consensus favored the use of a newsletter to carry ADE messages rather than the establishment of a scholarly journal. Whether the newsletter will carry brief articles and reviews, letters to the editor, and similar items will depend on the expectations and expressed desires of the membership. With total membership nearing 120 in February 1979 it seems likely that our rolls will soon include every project known to the NHPRC and the Center for Scholarly Editions, and an interdisciplinary organization now exists to serve the purposes expressed in President Link's letter on page 1.

The Publications Board expects members will help determine the format of the newsletter, and possibly suggest other publications (manuals, bibliographies, archival guides) which the ADE should sponsor. Letters to Cook, Lemay, and Higginbotham will serve this end, while news items and commentaries for a "letters" column should be sent to the editor. Ideas on ways for professional improvement, suggested topics for panels at conventions, and similar expressions are welcomed by President Link. Future issues of the Newsletter will reflect the concerns and indicate the commitment of editors everywhere to improving scholarly editions and broadening their usage.

#### LUNCHEON MEETING IN NEW ORLEANS

The Association will hold a luncheon-program meeting during the OAH convention in New Orleans at the Hyatt Regency Hotel at 12 noon on April 12. The program, which will start at around 1 p.m., will include reports from the ADE officers and a talk by George Farr of the National Endowment for the Humanities on NEH's new grants-in-aid for documentary editing programs.

Members of ADE and other interested persons should order their tickets (which cost \$9.75) when registering for the OAH convention, or by sending a check to the Organization of American Historians, 112 N. Bryan St., Bloomington, Indiana 47401. Since only a limited

number of tickets will be available at the convention, please pre-register if at all possible.

#### NPHRC BUDGET CUT LOOMS

As a part of the budget submitted to Congress by President Carter on January 21, the NPHRC grant funds would be reduced from the 1979 total of \$4 million to a proposed 1980 figure of \$3.5 million. The 12.5 percent reduction would be effective with the fiscal year beginning October 1, 1979, and could affect both the records program and the publications program.

The budget figure is, of course, subject to congressional review. Hearings on the proposal, as part of the General Services Administration and National Archives budget, will probably be held in April or May by the House and Senate Subcommittees on Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government.

#### A NEW GENERATION OF EDITORS

By Lester J. Cappon  
Newberry Library

The historical editor merits professional status. What are his prospects?

During the early years of the reactivated National Historical Publications Commission after 1950, its financial support of documentary editorial projects was limited by conservative appropriations from Congress until the Ford Foundation's generous grant in 1964. When these funds were running low, the Act of Congress of 1974 enlarged the Commission's function to include preservation and description of public archives and manuscript collections and increased the level of appropriation from \$2 million to \$4 million annually. This legislation guaranteed further proliferation of projects supported by the renamed National Historical Publications and Records Commission. By 1967 some fifty projects were engaged in editing for letterpress editions alone.

As the number of projects increased, more editors were needed; and young historians were gradually attracted toward editing, to some degree impelled by the crisis in the educational marketplace. Editors of the 1950s and '60s had "learned to do by doing," applying their knowledge of historical methods to the task. By and large, they were seasoned historians who responded to the challenge of comprehensive editing and its potential contribution to scholarship. By the 1970s the multiplication of projects raised serious questions about the supply of editors and the training of neophytes. An interesting correlation during the quarter-century 1950-1975 can be traced between the archivist, untrained except by experience, and the historical editor, in the lack of professional recognition of both by their fellow historians who, ironically enough, are dependent upon the archivist's and the editor's processing and elucidation of the documents.

Early attempts at formal training of archivists were sporadic, arising from local initiative rather than from concerted action. The best established course on archival administration became that given at American University in conjunction with the National Archives. But archivists, having formed a separate profession, have sought (as yet in vain) to achieve an effective certification program (through the Society of American Archivists) that would be comparable to a degree in library science and which would assure professional status and confirm standards of achievement.

For historical editors the annual Institute for Editing of Historical Documents, offered since 1972 by the NPHRC in cooperation with a university or a historical agency, has provided formal instruction along with practical experience with original documents. Meanwhile the Commission has made available a limited number of one-year fellowships for

on-the-job training in selected projects. In recent years the SAA has given the Hamer Award to outstanding junior editors. Princeton University now offers a three-year program in historical editing for graduate students in history, including an internship with the Woodrow Wilson Papers. And in Historical Editing for Undergraduates (Worcester, Mass., 1977), Ross W. Beales, Jr., and Randall K. Burkett have described an experimental seminar at the College of the Holy Cross.

The fledgling historical editor, in contrast to the archivist, is not involved in another profession. He remains a historian, expecting to win recognition by fellow historians. Fulfillment of this expectation presents an opportunity to the new Association for Documentary Editing.

The 1940s, which witnessed the launching of the Jefferson Papers and unwittingly the advent of a new era of historical editing, also was the period when the new generation of editors now coming on stage was born. Some of the older generation have died; others have retired; still others continue at work (Is historical editing conducive to longevity?), along with the "middle generation" in command today. Up to a point, achievement can be measured by number of volumes published and their editorial-documentary substance. It is an impressive achievement of a quarter-century plus.

Accompanying this achievement, however, are numerous unsolved problems confronting the new generation of editors and the ADE. It is worth noting that some of these problems will remain open questions, not to be solved once for all time. Instead, they will continue to test the individual editor's judgment and his historical perspective as he "makes haste slowly" toward his goal.

#### FREDERICK ANDERSON DIES

We regret to report the death in January of Frederick Anderson, editor of the Mark Twain Papers at the University of California, Berkeley. Anderson, who maintained the Mark Twain project offices at the Bancroft Library in Berkeley, was one of the first literary editors to join the ADE.

#### SHOULD THE ADE TAKE OVER THE HAMER AWARDS?

Since the inception of the Philip M. Hamer Award to an outstanding junior editor the prize has been offered annually by the Society of American Archivists. Dr. Hamer was for many years a co-editor of the Henry Laurens Papers and was the first executive director of the National Historical Publications Commission in the National Archives. The award is now made through a nominating process conducted by a committee formed by the SAA. Members who favor exploratory discussions of a possible takeover with the SAA should let President Link know their views prior to the April steering committee meeting in New Orleans.

#### THE VICISSITUDES OF SOLO EDITING

By Don Higginbotham  
University of North Carolina

To be the chief cook and bottle-washer for a project in historical editing -- literally, a one-person enterprise -- invariably results in problems and circumstances quite foreign to many of you. This editor is surely a jack-of-all-trades and master of none. He cannot assign to others specific responsibilities for periods of time or types of letters. It means, as is the case with the Iredell Papers, that the lone editor does it all -- searches for manuscripts, transcribes, edits, and so on. Indeed, during the initial years of the undertaking, I taught at Louisiana State University, which was far removed from the Iredell materials in the state of North Carolina.

This is not to say that I was totally without assistance. Modest NHPRC grants lightened my teaching responsibilities at crucial times and provided funds for microfilm and photostats. Moreover, secretaries in the History Department at the University of North Carolina and in the Division of Archives and History in Raleigh -- the sponsoring institution -- transcribed perhaps a third of the documents. Even so, I performed most of the labor at every level of the enterprise, and I did so in my own faculty office since there was no extra space available.

It was, and is, a valuable experience, even though the system has its price. It meant trying to train departmental secretaries who had little time (and cared less) about mastering the mysteries of eighteenth-century spelling and penmanship. It meant there was no one but me to proofread the bulk of the Iredell letters, which I myself had usually transcribed! It meant, in the absence of assistant editors, making all the decisions about collateral correspondence, identifications, and headnotes. Many (if not most) of you have not only staffs but advisory boards as well. The opportunity for outside consultation may be even more important to the editor who lacks a staff.

Whatever the deficiencies of the Iredell Papers and similar ventures, they are still worth doing. It is hardly realistic to expect that sizable funding will be available for projects that anticipate only a very few volumes and are devoted to so-called secondary figures. The work goes slowly, but the rewards can be great, particularly, as is true of the Iredell project, when the initial volumes cast significant light on North Carolina during the years of imperial controversy and independence. In fact, there are extant only three really major manuscript collections for the half-century of North Carolina history after 1750; and there is not yet a first-rate monograph on the American Revolution in that state. Consequently, I hope that the publication of the first installment of the Iredell Papers will help stimulate more serious study of a neglected area of Revolutionary history.

#### MICRO-EDITIONS FOR DUBOIS, JOHN PAUL JONES

The complete correspondence of the Negro scholar W. E. B. DuBois housed at the University of Massachusetts is being placed on microfilm and will be available sometime in 1979, according to Robert W. McDonnell. A selection from the papers is now available in a letterpress edition edited by Herbert Aptheker. The third volume, containing a selection of DuBois's correspondence between 1944 and 1963, can be purchased from the University of Massachusetts Press (\$22.50).

James C. Bradford has been named editor of the Papers of John Paul Jones, an editorial project jointly sponsored by the U. S. Naval Academy and the NHPRC. A single volume of selected letters will supplement the complete collection, which is being placed on microform. Bradford is anxious to learn the whereabouts of Jones materials and asks that information on letters to and from Jones be sent to him at the Department of History, U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. 21402.

#### REVIEWING THE REVIEWERS

By William B. Willcox  
Yale University

The present level of reviewing for our editions is, to my mind, lower than that of the editing itself. Leave aside the occasional critics, high priests of ipsissima verba, who bemoan our textual impurities; look at the average, run-of-the-mill review. It normally contains a paragraph of mild praise for the editing, a paragraph on what the editee, if there is such a word, was doing in the period covered (this can often be written from the jacket blurb), and a paragraph that points out a few errors or, for lack of them, challenges a few specific editorial comments. The result is a balanced concoction that

in my opinion is as worthless for readers as it is for us editors. We need to have errors noted and particular judgments questioned whenever (which is not always) the reviewer knows enough about the subject. But what we need much more is an informed opinion about how we are doing our job. Are the standards of selection defensible? Is our annotation uniform or does it vary, perhaps unwittingly, with our view of the document's importance? What are the main editorial problems in the volume, and how have we met them?

This kind of reviewing is not child's play. It requires reading most of the texts, some of which -- let's face it -- are almost unreadable. It requires careful analysis of what we are doing and perhaps, perish the thought, some reflection on whether that is worth doing. How do we find such thoughtful and conscientious critics? Although many established scholars have familiarized themselves with the techniques of modern editing, not many can spare the time that a good review demands. They do, however, have promising students, fledgling Ph.D.'s and possibly some not yet fledged, and could be asked to select and even take some responsibility for such talented youngsters as reviewers. Academics on the threshold of their careers need the chance to appear in print, and many are willing to work hard for it; the best of them, I would argue, have at least as sound judgment as those who now review us. Would the learned journals dare to experiment with such an equal opportunity program?

#### BOOKS AND ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Directory of Archives and Manuscript Repositories. 1979 ed. \$25. Order from Public Sales Branch, The National Archives, Washington, D. C. 20408. Lists 2,700 sources of manuscripts with statements of current holdings, copying facilities, and special solicitations.

The Historian's Handbook: A Descriptive Guide to Reference Works, by Helen J. Poulton. \$14.50. University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Ave., Norman, Okla. 73019. Choice says: "A useful, inexpensive, selective guide to reference works . . . artful and worthy of recommendation to the novice."

"The Editing of Historical Documents," by G. Thomas Tanselle. 56 pp. \$2.50. University Press of Virginia, Box 3608, University Station, Charlottesville, Va. 22903. This reprint of Tanselle's provocative critique of the major historical editing projects now in progress provides plenty of fuel for fireside discussions of the editor's function, his discretionary powers, and the possibility of a more rigid adherence to literal texts.

#### A "FIND" OF HENRY FIELDING LETTERS

Until 1975 only 20 Henry Fielding (1707-1754) letters were known to exist, but the efforts of Martin C. Battestin, William R. Kenan, Jr., Professor of English at the University of Virginia, have led to the discovery of 40 additional letters in recent years. Working with his wife, Ruthe, who specializes in documentary research, Battestin has systematically searched the major and minor British libraries and archives for Fielding materials. In the summer of 1978 the husband-wife team found the only literary prose manuscripts in Fielding's hand. Battestin says the essay, written in 1738, "will fill a huge gap in the Fielding biography." The manuscript was in a box of confiscated papers taken when the British government seized the radical journal, Common Sense.

The Battestins are now on academic leave in London, continuing their search. "When we leave the archives at the end of each day of research," Mrs. Battestin reports, "we are shocked back into the modern world." They hope to complete a full-length biography of Fielding in the next five years.

#### ELIZABETH HAMER KEGAN DIES

Longtime Assistant Librarian of Congress Elizabeth Hamer Kegan died at 4 a.m. on March 9 at her home in Alexandria, Virginia. Betty's career at the National Archives and Library spanned more than 30 years, and she was instrumental in expanding the Library's publications program, founding the American Folklife Center, and the Library's American Revolution Bicentennial Office. She also represented the Library in the NHPRC and was a founding member of the Society of American Archivists.

A native Tennessean, she married Lawrence Kegan in 1973. Her first husband, who died in 1971, was Philip Hamer, the former executive director of the NHPC. She had recently retired from her post at the Library. Friends wishing to contribute to a memorial established in her name can send contributions to the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. 20540, made out to the "Elizabeth Hamer Kegan Memorial Fund."

#### HENRY ADAMS LETTERS READY FOR PRESS

A new and comprehensive edition of the letters of Henry Adams will be published in six volumes by Harvard University Press, in cooperation with the Massachusetts Historical Society. The first three volumes (letters 1858-1891) will go to press this spring, with publication date not yet set.

Editors J. C. Levenson, Ernest Samuels, Charles Vandersee, and Viola H. Winner seek word of additional letters, especially in uncatalogued collections and private hands. Correspondents whose letters from Adams have not been located include: Senator James Donald Cameron of Pennsylvania, Sir Francis Doyle, the historian John Richard Green, the French archaeologist Henri Hubert, Clarence King, Rudyard Kipling, John La Farge, Sir Charles Lyell, the theatrical agent Elisabeth Marbury, Francis Turner Palgrave, Tati Salmon of Tahiti, Mrs. Russell Sturgis, Sir George Otto Trevelyan, Edith Wharton, the interior decorator Elsie de Wolfe, and the Pre-Raphaelite painter Thomas Woolner. Information on the Adams letters should be addressed to the editors at the Department of English, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va. 22903.

#### RECENT AND NOTABLE

The Papers of Ezra Stiles (1727-1795), seventh president of Yale University, have been edited for microfilm by Harold E. Selesky. A 224-page guide and the 22 reels of the entire Stiles collection at Yale sell for \$440 and may be purchased from the Yale library publications office, 1603 A Yale Station, New Haven, Conn. 06520.

The Letters of Delegates to Congress, 1774-1789, edited by Paul H. Smith and his staff at the Library of Congress, recently published volume 3 covering the period from January 1, 1776, to May 15, 1776. Handsomely printed with a stitched binding, endpapers, and a useful index, the 734-page book sells for \$10.25 and may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402.

#### EDITORS AND THEIR WORK

CHARLES CULLEN, who has been editor of the Papers of John Marshall at William and Mary, will become the co-editor of the Papers of Thomas Jefferson at Princeton University this fall. . . . DONALD JACKSON, former editor of the George Washington Papers, has a mountain retreat near Colorado Springs and is working on a narrative history centered around Thomas Jefferson's role in western development. . . . DIANE CAMPBELL, who was one of the compilers (with HELEN CRIPE) of the valuable Index to Prominent Americans, published as American Manuscripts, 1763-1815, has joined the staff of the William Livingston Papers



at New York University. . . . FRANK MEVERS, editor of the Josiah Bartlett Papers, has been recommended for advancement to the New Hampshire state archivist's position. . . . C. M. HARRIS has been selected to edit the William Thornton papers for the American Institute of Architects. Harris will use the AIA offices, adjoining the Octagon House in Washington, for his base. . . . HAROLD MOSER, formerly with the Daniel Webster Papers at Dartmouth, has been named co-editor of the Andrew Jackson Papers. . . . FREDSON BOWERS, textual editor of the Works of William James (published by Harvard, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities), reports that the sixth volume is now out and completes the philosophy series. The first volume of the new series, Principles of Psychology, will soon be sent to the press, and editorial work on both Psychology: Briefer Course and Talks to Teachers in Psychology is nearing completion. The James project is sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies, and former ACLS president FREDERICK H. BURKHARDT is general editor of the series.

PROGRESS REPORT

Projects in press February 28, 1979:

Letters of Delegates to Congress, vols. 4, 5, and 6 (Library of Congress).

Papers of George Washington, Diaries, vols. 5 and 6 (University Press of Virginia).

Papers of James Madison, vol. 12 (University Press of Virginia).