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## How and Why ADE was Born

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# ADE NEWSLETTER

News of the Association For Documentary Editing

Volume 1, Number 1

March 1979

## 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.