



The Colonial Society of Massachusetts

October 1998 Volume 3, Number 1

The President's Corner

SUMMER is a time for refreshment and renewal. Now that fall has arrived the time has come to focus our energies on the work of the Society. As you will read in this newsletter there is much underway. In Publications Linda S. Rhoads and John Tyler have set an ambitious agenda. This year, with Linda's guidance, we will be trying a new venture—sponsoring a graduate student seminar. New conferences are also being discussed, and of course, new volumes are on the way. The Society can also take pride in its continuing sponsorship of NEQ. The Massachusetts Cultural Council has recently provided a grant to the journal and in their review the Council's referees had very nice things to say about the organizations supporting NEQ. Nor are we neglecting 87 Mount Vernon Street. Work will begin on the street face of our building bringing much needed repairs. Yes, the Society thrives as it begins its 107th year. I look forward to seeing you at our stated meetings, and particularly at the annual dinner on November 19.

W. M. FOWLER, JR.
Director
Massachusetts Historical Society
1154 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02215



Graduate Student Forum to be Held on

15 April 1999

Who can ever forget Ed Morgan's address to the Society on the occasion of its glorious centennial celebration. (To refresh your memory of its particulars, consult the September 1993 issue of *The New England Quarterly*, where the address is reprinted.) Reflecting on what the Society has meant to him, especially how its members both supported and challenged him when

he was a young scholar, Ed went on to charge the Society to hold fast to its mission of "discovering and singling out young persons of promise, persons whose intellectual growth may profit by early recognition."

Toward that end, on 15 April 1999, exactly six years after Ed issued his challenge, the Colonial Society will sponsor a forum for graduate students. The intent of the meeting is to provide a comfortable setting in which nine students at various stages of research and dissertation writing will be encouraged to present their work in process, share their victories and dilemmas, and learn from each other.

The forum will be capped by an overview of current work in colonial New England history, with reference to the presentations earlier in the day. It will be offered by a distinguished scholar to the Society's membership, along with the participating students, during the time slot for the April stated meeting.

Committee members Linda Smith Rhoads, Len Travers, and Patrick Leehey solicit your advice in helping us to identify graduate students who might want to participate. If you know of a worthy candidate, please share that information with us. Lynn Rhoads can be reached at *The New England Quarterly*, 239 Meserve Hall, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115 or by e-mail at neq@lynx.neu.edu.

LINDA SMITH RHOADS
Chair, Publications Committee



Colonial Society Embarks on Long Range Planning Process

by NINA ZANNIERI

In September, the Colonial Society will launch its first strategic planning effort. This initiative will provide the Colonial Society and its members with a wonderful opportunity to examine what we currently

do, to look to the needs of the future, and, we hope, to uncover areas of untapped potential. In particular, our recent success with new programs (workshops for teachers, for example) tells us that there is an unfulfilled demand for the work we do: publishing historical material, encouraging research, and sharing information. This planning process will help us to decide how to move forward in ways that preserve the spirit of what we do, while allowing us to move gracefully and energetically into the next century.

The committee is comprised of: Nina Zannieri, chair, Rodney Armstrong; Helen Breen; Jonathan Chu, Jeannine Falino; Maurice Frye; and Anne Grimes Rand. We will be assisted in our work by William Perkins, Assistant Treasurer; Elton Hall, Curator; and John Tyler, Editor of Publications; all of whom will serve as resources in the areas of budget, collections and properties, and programs. The Committee welcomes members' comments, observations, and suggestions. This is your organization, and we need to hear from you! Please send your thoughts to Nina Zannieri, Paul Revere Memorial Association, 19 North Square, Boston, MA 02113 (E-mail: nina@paulreverehouse.org).



Gifts in Kind

Members who are closing up large houses and moving to smaller quarters should consider making tax-deductible gifts to the Society of antique furniture. A particular pressing need at the moment is for room-sized (indeed palace-sized!) Oriental rugs in good condition. Please check with Elton Hall, Curator, Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 87 Mount Vernon Street, Boston, MA 02108, concerning the suitability of such items.



Nominations for Membership

Members should be aware that we are rapidly reaching our constitutional limit for the number of resident members. Letters of nomination listing the candidate's home address and qualifications should be sent to Nathaniel Shipton, Registrar, 1 Whitney Road, Shirley Center, MA 01464.



Save These Dates!

November 12, 1998—Third Annual K-12 Teachers Workshop

November 19, 1998—Annual Meeting and Dinner

December 17, 1998—Stated Meeting, David Cannadine, Director, Institute of Historical Research, London

February 18, 1999—Stated Meeting, Hugh Amory, Former Senior Cataloguer, Houghton Library, Harvard University

April 15, 1999—First Annual Graduate Students Forum (see article elsewhere)



What's Wrong with the New Framework for Teaching American History in Massachusetts?

This past March, CSM Editor of Publications John W. Tyler, received the Kidger Award given by the New England History Teachers Association for distinguished teaching and his contributions to the profession (many of which were closely associated with his work as head of the CSM Education Committee). In accepting the award, Tyler chose to draw attention to the poor treatment accorded early American history in the new Massachusetts Framework for History and Social Science. Since this topic should concern all CSM members, his remarks are reprinted here. Members with further thoughts on the subject should write: Linda V. Beardsley, Instruction and Curriculum Services, Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148. Fax: (617) 388-3396.

I would like to use my privileged position today to comment briefly on the new Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework. I do not intend to make any observations on their political correctness or lack thereof. Nor do I intend to editorialize on the process by which they were drafted and adopted. Instead I intend to limit my remarks to just one aspect of their scope and sequence: the decision to confine the study of early America primarily to the K-8 level.

The justification given for such a decision is that too many American history courses begin at the beginning and never make it past the Civil War. Thus, students who are forced to repeat the same material over and over again come to the conclusion that history is boring. That such courses are a problem, I would not deny. But if students find early American history

boring that must surely have something to do with what they were *not* taught, since no aspect of American history during the last thirty years has produced more exciting or more imaginative new research than the study of colonial America (with the possible exception of a flurry of creative books on slave culture during the 1970s).

The idea that American history, like Gaul, should be divided into thirds and each bit be studied separately at the fourth, eighth, and eleventh grade levels first entered curricular discussion when California adopted its new framework in 1987. Because of its size and policy of state-wide adoption of textbooks, where California goes, publishers and ed school professors are sure to follow. (I'm reminded of the way Carl Schorske used to describe California as the "Thuringia of America," a reference to that troubled central German province out of which all sorts of ideas, from Protestantism to fascism, would arise to trouble the peace of Europe.)

The great fallacy of the California curriculum, of course, is the presumption that eighth graders remember everything they learned in fourth grade and eleventh graders remember everything they studied in the eighth. Perhaps Californians are better at this than the rest of us—the effect of so much sunshine and vitamin C? When did educational theorists come to the conclusion that repetition is bad? My own experience suggests that it is a necessary part of fixing information in one's mind in a way that it can be retained.

Even those willing to acknowledge that repetition is occasionally a useful educational device usually excuse the California way of doing things by pleading that American history has simply become "too long" to treat in one year. That excuse strikes me as little more than intellectual laziness. Writing history has always involved the judicious selection (and exclusion) of information. That's surely one of the reasons why we constantly rewrite the history of long ago events, since different aspects of the past will have different resonances for each new generation. Surely every teacher of the American history survey worth his or her salt spends some time reflecting each year about what to cut from the old course in order to make room for new material.

What students lose in this chopped-up version of American history is a sense of the interconnectedness of the past. Is the seventeen-year-old evaluating the post Cold War role of the United States as policeman and peace-keeper to the world likely to pick up on the theme of the "special election" of this country as an instrument of divine will, especially if he hasn't read John Winthrop's "Model of Christian Charity" since he was thirteen (assuming he could make much out of

Winthrop's sermon at that age)? Is he as likely to connect either Winthrop or Madeline Albright with Manifest Destiny or the Spanish-American War as a student who has looked at the whole sweep of American history?

Apologists for the California scope and sequence usually point to the fact that the eighth and eleventh grade years both include a brief review of previous material. Having helped write those review chapters for Houghton-Mifflin's best-selling series of textbooks tailored for the California market, I can assure you it's pretty superficial, designed mainly to assuage the concerns of Bill Bennett and other similarly-minded folks that what happened to Winthrop and William Bradford won't happen to the Declaration of Independence and Federalist No. 10. The reformers have taken pains to make sure students will have a repeated look at the U.S. Constitution for precisely the one reason they can't admit: students forget what they learn from year to year.

What bothers me most is that Massachusetts students will never have the opportunity to study so many crucial issues with all the intelligence and intellectual sophistication that an eleventh grader can bring to bear. Let's look at four examples to illustrate the point: Puritanism; this country's treatment of its aboriginal peoples; racial slavery; and the origins of American politics. Each of these topics can be dealt with in some way at the fourth to eighth-grade level. Indeed, I applaud the efforts of the Massachusetts framework to introduce more explicitly historical content in elementary schools. Young children will respond favorably to well-told narratives of dramatic events in the American past. We've talked down to grade-school children for far too long.

But there are inherent complications involved in presenting some subjects at that level, *especially if it is the only time that story will be told*. For instance, Anne Hutchinson makes a brief appearance in most American history texts. How fully can her story be told? What are middle schoolers to make of the distinction between a covenant of grace and a covenant of works? But unless one understands why the founders of the Bay Colony saw Antinomianism as such a dangerous heresy, Anne Hutchinson becomes a caricature, a early advocate of women's liberation in Puritan garb. That she was an outspoken woman is undoubtedly a part of the story, but only a part.

Too many students are taught that slavery in America began with the arrival of the first shipload of Africans in 1619. Somehow the ambiguous status of blacks in early Virginia never becomes part of the story. The reason, of course, is that that ambiguity must be teased out of early court decisions and laws

passed by the House of Burgesses. The language of such documents is understandably hard for young students, which brings us to a paradox that has always confronted good history teachers: students can study the present armed with little more than the vocabulary they hear on the evening news, but the further back in time one travels, the more opaque the texts. But if students never read these documents for themselves, they will fail to see that racial slavery was made in America. It is our own creation, a fact one needs to keep in mind as we carry the story forward through the coming of the Civil War, the strange career of Jim Crow, and the heroic life of Martin Luther King.

A recent book by Boston University Professor Jill Lepore reminds us how many of our ideas of what constitutes "civilized" and "savage" behavior grow out of the searing intensity of King Philip's War, America's bloodiest conflict if casualties are counted as a percentage of the white population. Who can deny that the application of the name "savage" to the aboriginal inhabitants of North America added to the zeal and fervency over the next two hundred years with which whites drove Indians from their homelands to distant reservations in the Far West ever decreasing in size?

Theodore White in his delightful autobiography, *In Search of History*, recalls the annual Thanksgiving Pageant at his elementary school in Dorchester near the beginning of the century. It was a time when the offspring of eastern European immigrants filled the schools. Thanks to the cultural sensitivity of his Yankee schoolmarm, all Yiddish-speaking children were cast as Indians (since they could speak in a foreign tongue) and Dorchester's last surviving Anglo's were assigned the roles of Pilgrims. White allegedly convulsed the audience when he curled his nose at a trencher full of comestibles offered him by a generous Pilgrim and asked disdainfully in Yiddish, "What are these? pigs' feet?" How is our appreciation of the delicate intercultural exchange between Indians and whites likely to advance if we limit our study of the contact period solely to elementary and middle schools?

Some of the loudest critics of the U.S. history standards and the Massachusetts history framework speak of the need to keep the evolution of American institutions of government in the forefront of our students' attention. Consider the answers to the following questions: Why did Americans come to believe in direct rather than virtual representation by our elected officials? Why do Americans place so little trust in our governors and are ever-suspicious of conspiracy and corruption, what Richard Hofstadter once described as *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*? Why are Americans so insistent about the necessity for written constitutions? Why do Americans look to the more

populous lower houses of our legislatures as the guardians of our liberties and repositories of civic virtue? The answers to all these questions lie not in the Revolutionary and Confederation periods which will be studied three times over under the new framework but earlier in the colonial period which will be covered only once in grades one to eight.

Yes, elementary school students can study more explicit historical content than we have tended to assume in recent years. But do they have the developmental skills to ferret out all the richness and meaning the colonial period has to offer? Will our students have a truly integrated understanding of American history when they study it in three separate chunks, some separated by intervals as long as three and four years? How ironic that in Massachusetts of all places, where dramatic scenes of American history surround us at every turn, we should opt for a scope and sequence devised in California? I hope you will join me in petitioning for a reconsideration of the scope and sequence provisions of the new Massachusetts framework. Thank you.



News of Members

For this edition of the Newsletter, the Society solicited news from members at the beginning of the alphabet. Late arriving news will be held for later editions. Those at the end of the alphabet will have their moment in the limelight in the future.

THOMAS R. ADAMS, Librarian Emeritus of the John Carter Brown Library and John Hay Professor of Bibliography Emeritus, Brown University—Adams recently published *English Maritime Books Printed Before 1800* and continues to calendar the archives of the John Carter Brown Library.

CHARLES W. AKERS, Professor Emeritus, Oakland University—Addison Wesley Longman will publish in 1999 a new edition of his *Abigail Adams: An American Woman* (1980).

ROBERT ALLISON, Assistant Professor of History, Suffolk University—Allison edited *American Eras, 1754-1783: The Revolutionary Era* published by Gale Research in 1998.

PEGGY M. BAKER, Director of the Pilgrim Society—Baker has recently completed the Pilgrim Society website: www.pilgrimhall.org.

F. L. BERKELEY of Charlottesville, Virginia—Berkeley reports no publications or honors, but we find his eighty-eighth birthday and fifty-fourth year of membership cause enough for celebration.

W. H. BOND, Librarian Emeritus, Houghton Library and Past President of the CSM—Bond recently wrote two memoirs of CSM members: “George Talbot Goodspeed,” *The Book Collector*, 47 (1998), 118–124 and “George William Cottrell, Jr.” in Annette B. Cottrell, *Off We Go* (Concord, N.H., 1998), 74–85. The Goodspeed memoir will be republished in the autumn *Proceedings* of the American Antiquarian Society, and the Cottrell piece will reappear in a forthcoming *Harvard Library Bulletin*.

HELEN BREEN, Lynn Public Schools—After thirty years as an English teacher, Breen was recently appointed instructional facilitator for the Lynn School District. She also attended an eight-day summer institute in August on “The Media and American Democracy” sponsored by the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Kennedy School of Government.

RICHARD D. BROWN, Professor of History, University of Connecticut—Brown published *The Strength of a People: The Idea of an Informed Citizenry in America, 1650–1870* (Chapel Hill, 1996). A paperback edition appeared in 1997. Brown also received a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, 1998–1999, to work on “Rape, Incest, and the Gallows: A Microhistory of Family Violence and Community Justice in the Early Republic.”

DANIEL J. BOORSTIN, Librarian of Congress—September 1998 saw the publication by Random House of *The Seekers*, the final volume of his trilogy that began with *The Discoverers* and *The Creators*.

RICHARD M. CANDEE, Professor of American and New England Studies, Boston University—Candee has recently written “The ‘Shaker Sock’” in *Historical New Hampshire*, “Domestic Industry in the Factory Age” in *Textile History*, and “Social Conflict and Urban Rebuilding” in *Winterthur Portfolio*. In 1997, he was a Senior Fellow at the Lemuelson Center for the Study of Innovation at the Smithsonian Institution and was curator for an exhibit entitled, “Those Inventive Aikens” at the Belknap Mill in Laconia, N.H. during the summer of 1998.

RICHARD S. CARROLL of Boston, Massachusetts—Carroll volunteers his services at the Simmons College Archives and is writing a history of the Badminton and Tennis Club in the Back Bay, which was founded as a riding club in 1891 before becoming an indoor tennis club in 1934.

THEODORE CHASE of Dover, Massachusetts—Chase, together with Laurel Gabel, completed the editing of *Gravestone Chronicles*, volumes I and II, for the New England Historic and Genealogical Society in 1997.

JONATHAN CHU, Associate Professor of History, University of Massachusetts, Boston—Chu served on

the Test Development Committee for the Advanced Placement United States History Exam and wrote “Debt and Taxes: Public Finance and Private Economic Behavior in Post-Revolutionary America” in *Entrepreneurs: The Boston Business Community, 1700–1850*, ed. Conrad E. Wright and Katheryn P. Viens (Boston, 1997). Chu received an American Antiquarian Society National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship in 1998.

CHARLES E. CLARK, Professor of History Emeritus, University of New Hampshire—Clark wrote *The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture, 1665–1740* (New York, 1994) and *The Meetinghouse Tragedy: An Episode in the Life of a New England Town* (Hanover, 1998). While still at UNH, he was appointed the first incumbent of the James H. Hayes and Claire Short Hayes Chair in the Humanities from 1993 until 1997.

SHELDON S. COHEN, Professor of History, Loyola University of Chicago—Cohen wrote “William Hodgson: An English Merchant and American Captives during the Revolutionary War,” which will appear in a forthcoming edition of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*. He received a scholarship award from the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution in May 1997 and chaired a session at the U.S. Naval History Symposium in Annapolis, Maryland in October 1997.

NYM COOKE, Assistant Professor of Music History, College of the Holy Cross—Cooke is the author of *Timothy Swan: Psalmody and Secular Songs* (Madison, 1997) and “Sacred Music to 1800” in *The Cambridge History of American Music* (Cambridge, 1999). Cooke is Member-at-Large on the Board of the Sonneck Society for American Music and Music Director of the “Band of Voices.”

DANIEL COQUILLETTE, J. Donald Monan, S.J. University Professor, Boston College and Senior Vice-President of the CSM—Coquillette authored, together with W. C. Donahue and others, *Lex Mercatoria* published by the Ames Foundation at Harvard and also wrote *The Anglo-American Legal Heritage* to be published by Carolina Academic Press in December 1998. Coquillette was a member of the Sutherland Committee, which awards a prize for the best article on English Legal History, and served as Reporter for the Committee of Rules of Practice and Procedure of the Judicial Conference of the United States and as a member of the Special Committee on Ethical Rules for the Supreme Court of Massachusetts.

ABBOTT LOWELL CUMMINGS of South Deerfield, Massachusetts—In June 1998, Cummings received the Henry Francis DuPont Award in the Decorative Arts given by the Winterthur Museum. The citation notes

that, "For fifty years, he has championed causes of historic preservation and interpretation of both domestic architecture and the decorative arts and has stimulated students with the energy, enthusiasm, and delight that he brought to his entire career."

JERE DANIELL, Class of 1925 Professor of History, Dartmouth College—Daniell edited and wrote an introduction and afterword for Daniel Doan's *Indian Stream Republic: Settling a New England Frontier, 1785-1842* (Hanover, 1997). Daniell also gave a number of public lectures on the early history of northern New England.

DAVID DAY of Quincy, Massachusetts—Day is Personnel Management Specialist for the National Park Service/Boston Support Office and serves on the Boston Federal Executive Board Personnel Group and the Labor and Employee Relations Group.

JEANNINE FALINO, Assistant Curator, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston—Falino wrote a number of entries for Yale's *Colonial Massachusetts Silversmiths: A Biographical Dictionary . . .* and received an AIA International Architecture Book Award for *Inspiring Reform: Boston's Arts and Crafts Movement*, first published in 1997. She also gave guest lectures at the Chicago Art Institute and the American Decorative Arts Forum in San Francisco.

WILLIAM FOWLER, Director of the Massachusetts Historical Society and President of the CSM—Fowler is coauthor of *America and the Sea: A Maritime History* published by Mystic Seaport.

JOSEPH R. FRESE, S.J. of New York—Frese writes that he is now retired.



New Members

December 1997

Resident

MARY S. BILDER, Cambridge, Massachusetts—Bilder is an Assistant Professor at Boston College Law School. She earned a B.A. from the University of Wisconsin and M.A. and J.D. degrees from Harvard, where she is also completing work on a Ph.D. in history. Her publications have earned recognition from both historians and the legal community. Nominated by Daniel R. Coquillette.

SHARON H. O'CONNOR, Watertown, Massachusetts—O'Connor is Librarian and Associate Professor at Boston College Law School. She holds a B.A. from Southern Methodist University, a M.L.S. from Columbia, a J.D. from Harvard and a M.E.S.

from Yale. Her publications include *A Guide to the Early Reports of the Supreme Court of the United States*, written together with Morris Cohen of Yale Law School. Nominated by Daniel R. Coquillette.

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Resident

ROBERT G. ALLISON, South Boston, Massachusetts—Allison is Assistant Professor of History and Director of the American Studies Program at Suffolk University. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard and is the author of *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776-1815* (New York, 1995). Nominated by John W. Tyler.

JOHN G. L. CABOT, Manchester, Massachusetts—Cabot is President of the New England Historic Genealogical Society and the Boston Athenæum, as well as a former Council Member of the Massachusetts Historical Society. The retired Vice Chairman of the Cabot Corporation, he is the author of *The George Cabots: Vermont Descendants of George Cabot of Salem and Boston*. Nominated by William M. Fowler, Jr.

JANE KAMENSKY, Cambridge, Massachusetts—Kamensky is Assistant Professor of History at Brandeis. She received her B.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Yale. She is the author of *The Colonial Mosaic: American Women, 1600-1760* (New York, 1995) and *Governing the Tongue: The Politics of Speech in Early New England* (New York, 1997). Nominated by Mark Peterson.

WILLIAM FROHLICH, Boston, Massachusetts—Frohlich is the founding Director of Northeastern University Press. He received his B.A. from Swarthmore and did graduate work at Columbia. He began his publishing career with Alfred Knopf and later worked with Ginn & Company. Nominated by William M. Fowler, Jr.

DONALD S. YERXA, Weymouth, Massachusetts—Yerxa is Professor of History at Eastern Nazarene College, where he was also an undergraduate. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Maine and writes widely on Anglo-American military and naval history during the colonial and Revolutionary periods. Nominated by William M. Fowler, Jr.

Non-Resident

MICHAEL ZUCKERMAN, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—Zuckerman, the author of *Peaceable Kingdoms: New England Towns in the Eighteenth Century*, is Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard. Nominated by William M. Fowler, Jr.

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Resident

ANNE M. DONAGHY, Boston, Massachusetts—Donaghy is the Curator and a Council Member of the Cambridge Historical Society. She is also Registrar for the Fidelity Corporation art collection. She is a graduate of Hiram College and the Simmons School of Library and Information Science. Nominated by Peter Drumme.

CHERYL ROBERTSON, Cambridge, Massachusetts—Robertson is Director of Exhibitions and Public Programs at the Museum of Our National Heritage. Her degrees include a B.A. from Oberlin and a M.A. from the Winterthur Program at the University of Delaware. She has worked at Winterthur, Sotheby's, and the Milwaukee Art Museum. She is the author of *Frank Lloyd Wright and George Mann Niedecker, Prairie School Collaborators*. Nominated by Thomas J. Leavitt.

PATRICK LEEHEY, Wellesley, Massachusetts—Leehey is Director of Research at the Paul Revere House and is Editor of the Revere Association's newsletter. He was Co-curator of "Paul Revere: Artisan and Patriot—The Man Behind the Myth." Nominated by Linda S. Rhoads.

Non-Resident

NICHOLAS WESTBROOK, Ticonderoga, New York—Westbrook is Executive Director of Fort Ticonderoga and edits *The Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum*. He received a M.A. from the University of Connecticut and has worked at New York's Saratoga County Historical Society, Old Sturbridge Village, and the Minnesota Historical Society. Nominated by Thomas W. Leavitt.



A Brief Report on Publications

At a late September meeting, the Publications Committee tentatively approved and recommended to the Council two ideas for new conferences. The first proposal outlined a conference on "New Directions in the Study of New England Indians" to be held sometime in the year 2000. Colin Calloway of Dartmouth College, Barry O'Connell of Amherst College, and Neal Salisbury of Smith College have all agreed to help in the planning for the event. Among the topics to be considered are: new interpretations of King Philip's War; relations between Indians and blacks, immigrants, and lower-class whites; the portrayal of Indians by early New England town historians; Indian political and intellectual life; the development of col-

lections of Indian artifacts of dubious authenticity; Indian archaeology; and the concerns of ethno-historians and anthropologists.

For the purposes of this conference, the Colonial Society will consider topics dating as late as the 1820s and will broaden its usual geographical focus to include not just New England but also adjacent parts of Canada and New York. Calls for papers will be appearing shortly, and members with proposals and/or suggestions for the conference should contact John W. Tyler, Editor of Publications, 87 Mount Vernon Street, Boston, MA 02108 (E-mail: jtyler@groton.org). Following the model so successfully employed in the conference on New England Silver, this conference will be open to the interested public.

The second idea considered by the Publications Committee concerned "New England Slavery and the Slave Trade." Topics under consideration for this event will encompass: emancipation and the undoing of slavery in New England; Puritanism and slavery; aspects of the slave trade in New England; a comparative study of the enslavement of Indians and blacks; a comparative analysis of the character of New England slavery with the Chesapeake and other regions; the question of whether or not there was a "New England slave community;" and aspects of gender and New England slavery. This conference will also be open to the public and is tentatively scheduled for 2000 or 2001.

At its fall meeting, the Publications Committee also gave a nod of approval to a printed version of the collected letters of John Cotton, Jr., edited by Fellow Member Len Travers of the Center for the Study of New England History at the Massachusetts Historical Society and Sheila McIntyre, an independent scholar living in Ottawa, Canada. As the correspondence of the well connected son of one of the Puritan Migration's leading ministers, Cotton's letters possess a certain innate interest. Cotton's tumultuous personal life (he was a clergyman twice accused of adultery) also adds color to the story. But McIntyre and Travers argue that it is the character of letter writing in the seventeenth century that gives this collection its special significance.

Seventeenth-century New Englanders often shared the letters they received, making them much less private and personal than we are accustomed to think of them today. They were, in effect, "newsletters" whose authors expected them to be widely read and discussed. As a resident of Plymouth Colony with important Boston connections, Cotton was a pivotal link in the transmission of news, and many of the most important events and issues of his day make their way into his letters. Cotton also wrote with a heart-felt sincerity and vibrancy that make his letters attractive even at this distance in time.

The Publications Committee is eager to make clear to CSM members that they are actively seeking new documentary collections for publication, as well as new ideas for conferences. Editor of Publications John Tyler would welcome members' suggestions at either of the addresses listed above. In recent years, the Colonial Society has not published book-length monographs.

At the same time that the Colonial Society has been considering new publications and conferences, work has been continuing on a variety of established projects. Robert Dunkle, whose work for the New England Historic Genealogical Society members may well have consulted in the past, is transcribing the eighteenth-century records of the Boston Overseers of the Poor, which will eventually be combined with a lengthy scholarly introduction and footnotes provided by Fellow Member Eric Nellis of Okanagan University College in British Columbia. Editors Jeannine Falino and Gerry Ward of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, continue to press the various contributors to the New England Silver Conference for the revised versions of the papers given there.

Editors John Tyler and Elizabeth Dubrulle, with the help of David Sewell, verified this summer the transcriptions for over 350 letters that will eventually

constitute volume one of the *Select Correspondence of Thomas Hutchinson* covering the years 1737 to 1768. A number of "new" letters will appear in this collection not part of the familiar transcripts at the Massachusetts Historical Society prepared by Fellow Member Malcolm Freiberg in the 1950s and 1960s. Although the work of transcription is now nearly done, much of the annotation needs to be carefully reworked before the volume can go to print.

Finally, the Society looks forward to receiving just about a year from now the completed manuscript of Vice-President Daniel R. Coquillette's newly-annotated version of Josiah Quincy's *Reports of Cases Argued and Adjudged in the Superior Court . . . , 1761-1772*. The new version of Quincy's *Reports* will appear simultaneously with transcripts of two of Quincy's manuscript commonplace books prepared by Fellow Members Neil York of Brigham Young University and Mark Walsh of Boston.

In all its publication efforts in 1998, the Society has been greatly aided by the talents of Anne Decker, who became Assistant Editor of Publications in January. Decker gained her first experience at editorial work on the staff of the *New England Quarterly*, before moving in 1993 to the Massachusetts Historical Society, where she is an Assistant Editor of the Adams Papers.



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