

# AMERICAN ANTIQUITY

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## EDITORIAL

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE . . . An issue-by-issue study of the first two volumes of AMERICAN ANTIQUITY cannot fail to bring the comforting conviction that our young society is successfully fulfilling one of its most important functions. Even casual reading impresses one with the high average quality of the contributions; but only careful analysis makes fully clear the remarkable diversity of subject matter, the wide geographical range of the papers, and the wise apportionment of space between the several specialized departments. Such scrutiny brings increased realization of how faithfully, intelligently, and efficiently we have been served by our Editor. And this is particularly fortunate because of this Society's unique dependence upon its journal.

Most organizations representing the smaller disciplines content themselves with publication of a quarterly and the holding of an annual meeting. Its journal, indeed, is in many cases the only real excuse for a group's existence. But we have been more ambitious in electing to take over the many important activities of the Committee on State Archaeological Surveys of the National Research Council. This body, under Dr. Guthe's able chairmanship, exercised very significant influence upon the development of archaeology in the United States by supplying information, by encouragement of isolated students, by breaking down artificial barriers between the states, and, perhaps most useful of all, by promoting a series of regional conferences. Grants from Carnegie Corporation enabled the Committee to perform these services. However, it is the probably wise policy both of the Research Council and of the Corporation not to continue indefinitely to subsidize such projects. Aided through the teething stage, they are supposed, if worth their salt, to be able to elicit support from the disciplines they benefit. Sponsorship for the Committee's work was accordingly made one of the primary objectives of the Society for American Archaeology.

To carry on, of course, requires money. Backing for further conferences should not, however, be difficult to obtain. These gatherings have so brilliantly demonstrated their value that one can appeal with

some confidence to the research councils and foundations. But for more routine, though no less essential requirements: postage, stationery, circulars, clerical assistance, travel for personal interviews—all the thousand-and-one duties which a correlative and informational agency must undertake—for all these things funds are also needed, and even though not large they are, as we all know, extremely hard to get. Apparently they can only be drawn at present from membership dues.

This brings us back to our journal, for solely through it can we increase our membership. AMERICAN ANTIQUITY is the only *quid* we can give for our members' most indispensable financial *quo*. It is our meal-ticket. It must be maintained at its present high level of excellence, and constant thought must be given to the needs and the wants of our non-professional affiliates, who greatly outnumber the professionals, and whose support makes possible the existence of the Society.

Thanks to the devoted efforts of Dr. Guthe and Mr. McKern, we have weathered the difficult early years, and it has been proved that there are enough interested amateurs to permit the inauguration of a first-rate scientific organ. But there is inevitably an annual loss of members, which must be made good by new enlistments; and a very considerable increase in subscriptions will have to be achieved if we are to continue and develop the work of the State Surveys Committee. This should not be left to the unaided efforts of the Secretary-Treasurer and the Editor. To require them to carry the entire load is manifestly unfair to these busy men as well as to the institutions which are already donating to the Society so large a share of their time. It is primarily the duty of the Fellows to lend a hand, for in AMERICAN ANTIQUITY they are provided with an invaluable professional tool; they will profit most by increased popular interest in archaeology; and it is they who will be the principal gainers by discouragement of random digging and more effective protection of ancient remains. But the affiliates (I would much prefer to have them called members) can also be of enormous assistance.

How can we all help? Most obviously, of course, by prompt payment of dues and by securing new members. There is no one of us who could not bring in at least one. Fellows, who often make contact in the field and in museums with potential subscribers could, with a little effort, secure many more. A really active committee on membership would greatly lighten the burden of the Secretary-Treasurer. In view of the very general interest in archaeology, there seems to be no reason why our roster should not quickly be doubled or trebled.

Chickens doubtless ought not to be counted before they are hatched, but it is only common sense to have at least a small brooder ready. So we should be giving forethought to the use of such new funds as might accrue. One naturally thinks of increasing the size of the journal, or of the publication of memoirs; next, of carrying forward this or that worthy part of the State Survey program. But we are a very young society, we hope there lies before us a long and useful career, and we should devote all our immediate resources to the strengthening of our permanent organization by supplying our "working" officers, the Secretary-Treasurer and the Editor, with high-grade, adequately remunerated assistants, who can not only relieve them of all routine but who can carry an increasing share of responsibility. One of the weaknesses all such bodies as ours lies in the difficulty of enlisting their ablest members for the really important executive, editorial, and policy-directing positions. We have been extraordinarily fortunate in having launched our ship with such men as Mr. McKern and Dr. Guthe on the quarterdeck. But even should their institutions allow it, these gentlemen presumably would not feel able to serve indefinitely. However, if they can be given reasonable aid, and if it be made clear that they have not received, so to speak, life-sentences, they can perhaps be persuaded to see us through the period of our adolescence; and with similar assurances we should in future be able to draft for our more important offices the ablest and most energetic of the younger archaeologists.

A. V. KIDDER, *President*