of Thomas Jefferson (p. 8, column 2, top and p. 9, column 1, bottom). "Basrtrop" (p. 19, footnote 57) should be "Bastrop." "James Meason" (p. 20, footnote 3) probably should be "Isaac Meason." "Raymond Chandler Downes" (p. 125) seems to be a reference to "Randolph Chandler Downes."

The "Sources Consulted," a selective bibliography, is of great value.

The Index may be classified as both comprehensive and elaborate, though annotation is drastically concise.

This volume must prove of importance not only to advanced historical scholars but to geographers, genealogists, sociologists and others of many types. It fills a place in the history of the American frontier, notably in the Mississippi Valley.

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Alfred P. James

Independent Historical Societies. By Walter Muir Whitehill.

The author, director and librarian of the Boston Athenaeum, admits to a "curious muddle of occupations" in addition to the writing of history, which he conceives to be his profession. He has "also been involved in the affairs of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, the American Antiquarian Society, the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, and . . . served on the boards of the New England Quarterly, the William and Mary Quarterly, and the Adams and Franklin papers"; in addition, he is "a trustee of one college, four museums, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and a number of corporations that own historic sites on a beat extending from Vermont to Virginia . . ." Apart from his biography of Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King, he has written engagingly on local history, as witness his topographical history of Boston and his centennial history of the Boston Public Library, also published by the Harvard University Press. These credentials do not necessarily indicate a Brahmin approach to the subject of this book on independent historical societies, subtitled "An enquiry into their research and publication functions and their financial future."
Working under a grant from The Council on Library Resources, Inc., a subsidiary of the Ford Foundation, Dr. Whitehill spent more than a year, and traveled through most of the United States, visiting and investigating historical societies and allied institutions. Inasmuch as a study of the financial crisis was an informal, joint proposal of the Massachusetts Historical Society, the American Antiquarian Society, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the Virginia Historical Society, it is not surprising that separate chapters are devoted to each. Neither is it surprising that the author's wit and grace make these historical sketches fascinating. With one exception other historical societies are grouped geographically in an equal number of chapters crammed with facts and figures. The only other society accorded treatment in any detail is the New-York Historical Society, and its biography makes lively reading; its early records sound like those of a drinking society, and at one time it contemplated selling its library to pay off its debts.

These five major Eastern societies discussed in more detail than others have certain similarities. They are the oldest in this country (the Massachusetts Historical Society was founded in 1791 and the others between 1804 and 1831), they possess rich and extensive library, newspaper, and manuscript collections (not a necessary concomitant of age), and their publications are models of format, editing, and content. These similarities depend not on the size of their membership — although the Virginia and Pennsylvania societies each have more than 2,000 members, both Massachusetts societies are limited to less than 250 — but on financial resources, particularly endowments, which range up to $5,000,000, though averaging only $3,000,000; Virginia got about that amount from the Weddell bequests, and New-York received more than that from the Thompson bequests. From data given elsewhere, only the Chicago Historical Society — another $5,000,000 institution — is in quite the same class.

Such attention to financial affairs is pertinent to the author's major thesis which is, in simplified form, that independent historical societies must have large endowments in order to function properly and that such funds can only be supplied by private benefactors or foundations; certainly membership dues are inadequate and rarely account for the costs of publications issued to members. His comments on the "new look" of certain publications have not endeared the author to some neighboring societies. Neither has his corollary thesis, that publications and providing facilities for scholarly research are more
properly the functions of independent historical societies than are
museum exhibits, pilgrimages, and paraphernalia of "popular" appeal,
been enthusiastically acclaimed by all such societies.

There are separate chapters on state-supported historical societies,
local historical societies, and historical associations; also, under in-
triguing titles, additional chapters on reconstructions and restorations,
libraries, and many other subjects, including Mormons and genealo-
gists. None are dull and most are a delight to reread. This book should
be required reading for directors and officers of historical institutions
and particularly for philanthropists.

However, readers of this magazine may be disappointed because
for Dr. Whitehill the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania
does not, apparently, exist.

*The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania*  
John W. Harpster

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**PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED FROM OTHER HISTORICAL SOCIETIES**

The Norwegian-American Historical Association, Northfield,
Authors Series, Volume 1. Bibliography and Index. $5.50

The Ohio Historical Society: *Inventory and Calendar of the
Charles L. Kurtz Papers, 1873-1899*. 1963

Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society: Vol. 73,  
Part I. 1963

Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society: Vol. 107,  
Number 6, *Cuneiform Studies and the History of Civilization*. 1963

The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill: The James  
Sprunt Studies in History and Political Science, Volume 44, *Demo-
ocratic Party Dissension in North Carolina, 1928-1936*, by Elmer L.  
Puryear. 1962; Volume 45, *Political Factions in Aleppo, 1760-1826*
by Herbert L. Bodman, Jr. 1963