

History of
the American Physiological Society:
The Third Quarter Century
1937-1962

WALLACE O. FENN

 Springer

*HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PHYSIOLOGICAL SOCIETY:
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BEAUMONT HOUSE

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Contents

Foreword	vii
1. Introduction	1
2. Chronological Account of the Presidents of the Society	4
16. W. E. Garrey	4
17. A. C. Ivy	5
18. Philip Bard	8
19. W. O. Fenn	14
20. M. B. Visscher	16
21. C. J. Wiggers	18
22. H. C. Bazett	20
23. D. B. Dill	21
24. R. W. Gerard	23
25. E. M. Landis	26
26. E. F. Adolph	30
27. H. E. Essex	32
28. W. F. Hamilton	34
29. A. C. Burton	37
30. L. N. Katz	42
31. Hallowell Davis	44
32. R. F. Pitts	47
33. J. H. Comroe, Jr.	48
34. H. W. Davenport	51
35. H. S. Mayerson	53
36. Hermann Rahn	54
3. Membership	.56
4. Publications	70

vi CONTENTS

5. Fall Meetings	85
6. Ancillary Groups	92
7. Organization of the Society	113
8. Some Changes in the Character of the Society	116
9. Relations with Other Organizations	121
10. Use and Care of Laboratory Animals	128
11. Porter Fellowship	132
12. Early Reminiscences	136
13. Educational Activities in the Society	146
14. Summary of Financial Growth of the Society	155

Appendixes

1. List of Meetings, Officers, and New Members	159
2. Members Deceased, 1937–1962	178
Index	181

Foreword

The writing of this History has been an onerous but in many ways a rewarding task for one with so many treasured memories of the earlier days of The American Physiological Society. The Society has meant a great deal to me and I hope that this record of other days will enhance the meaning of the Society for any younger members who take the time to peruse these pages.

There are many opportunities for errors in a volume of this sort, and verification of the facts is not always easy. There is no index to the Minutes of the Society and most of the bound volumes have been available to me only in Washington. There is also no index to *The Physiologist* and a blind search for an elusive fact proves often very time-consuming indeed and well-nigh prohibitive with a firm deadline fast approaching. It is often especially difficult to decide who should receive credit for some particular innovation. Frequently, the same idea occurs to several people quite independently and they all claim credit, much to the dismay of the historian. Various parts of the manuscript have been read by a few kind friends for verification but mostly I have had to take full responsibility without firm support. I request, then, that the pages be read with these limitations in mind.

Moreover, it is obvious that all the facts are set in a background of personal opinion which makes it unacceptable to many. This is to be expected and a history without some attempt at interpretation would certainly give no pleasure, either to the writer or the reader. One of my chapters was kindly reviewed by a good friend who cheerfully disagreed "without rancour" with practically every opinion I had expressed. In some controversies, a middle of the road historian can please no one.

This History has been compiled amid the pressures of a number of other demanding responsibilities in about three months of fairly intensive work. Many important points have been omitted but the manuscript is already too long and time is up. I must close the story here, therefore, with confidence that the obvious gaps will be filled in later by others, perhaps in the pages of *The Physiologist*.

I shall not enjoy the privilege of reading the history of the next twenty-five years which may prove to be even more revolutionary and exciting than the last. I might express the pious hope, however, that it will rather be a time for more or less calm

adjustment to the many dramatic changes which have occurred in the last quarter century. On the whole I feel well pleased with the present status of the Society and believe that it is well prepared to cope with all the problems which may come before it. We should remember, however, that the Society is not an end in itself but exists only to serve the physiological sciences, and the most important way to do this is for each member to make his own contribution to his science as effective and illuminating as possible, whether it be in teaching or research. No scientific society can professionally be better than the members of which it is composed.

Compared to the maintenance of this standard of excellence, all administrative disputes within the Society pale into insignificance. The important effort must be to make sure that the American Physiological Society is not outranked in high scientific quality by any other similar group.

Without this high quality, the recruitment of graduate students will be a problem in spite of all the career brochures or other publicity devices that money can buy. More Nobel Prizes in Physiology offer the surest guarantee for the future of the Society and emphasis in the next quarter century should be put on activities that best serve that objective.

In the task of preparing this History, I have had the generous help of many friends. Each one of the nineteen ex-presidents (of this period) still living has kindly read over my account of his presidential term in order to verify the facts. The statements made concerning them are my own. There were many "nice" things I was tempted to say about these friends of mine, but I hesitated to embarrass them, or me, by putting them down in black and white. To the Executive Secretary of the Society, Dr. Ray G. Daggs, I am indebted for access to the Minutes and for tables of data and, particularly, for his chapter on "Finances" which have become too complicated even for an ex-Treasurer of the Society. My colleague E. F. Adolph has relieved me of a large burden by writing the chapter on "Educational Activities" for which he has been so largely responsible. Dr. Horace Davenport has supplied me with many photographs and he rates appointment as the official photographer of the Society. There should be a Society Historian whose duty it would be to collect not only data but also photographs of Society activities. Perhaps this responsibility belongs to the Executive Secretary because otherwise it is not likely to be done systematically. Many other friends have helped me in many ways and without all this assistance, the task would never have been completed.

Rochester, N. Y.
April 1, 1963

Wallace O. Fenn

CHAPTER 1 Introduction

The end of the first quarter century of The American Physiological Society was not marked by any special celebration but it did happen to coincide with the founding of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) which held its first meeting in Philadelphia, December 28, 1913. This indeed was an epoch-making event for our Society but it preceded by only a few years the outbreak of World War I. Likewise, the celebration of the end of the second quarter century of The American Physiological Society preceded by only a few years the outbreak of World War II. Now at the end of the third quarter century of our history we find ourselves again scanning the crystal ball and searching for enough wisdom to forestall another catastrophe to mankind which might be even more disastrous than the other two.

The last quarter century has witnessed more dramatic changes than any similar period in our history. These include chiefly the dreadful war with Hitler and Mussolini, the war with Japan, and a small but serious war in Korea. All this military effort brought about a tremendous increase in the federal financing of science and drastically revolutionized the whole financial basis of physiological research. Many members of the Society were occupied in scientific research of military importance on a scale never dreamed of before. The physiologist like all other scientists has become heavily involved in public affairs, and the cloistered university atmosphere has become obscured by a host of committee meetings, project-site visits, and conferences and symposia, not only in this country but also in foreign parts.

Travel is now mostly by air, and railroads for passenger use are having a hard time surviving. Loud speakers everywhere are rudely violating the peace and quiet which is necessary for connected thinking, and television brings countless uninvited strangers into our homes ostensibly to provide education and information for the people but mostly to serve the whims of (often dishonest) advertisers. The atomic bomb was unheard of before this period and all the work with radioactive isotopes is confined to the last 25 years. The biologists have started their "revolution" also with the work on DNA and RNA, the deciphering of the genetic code, the antibiotics and the electron microscope. Finally, the Space Age has dawned and man has been in orbit around the earth and will soon be paying visits to Mars, Venus,

and the moon. It is hard to imagine that the next 25 years can be any more exciting or worthy of celebration than those we have just been through.

Yet in spite of all these vast changes The American Physiological Society seems to maintain the same essential spirit that it had 25, 50, or more years ago. There are some striking differences in the subjects of most concern at annual meetings and much progress has been made in understanding many physiological processes. Nevertheless, members still come to meetings, as before, with a set of lantern slides in the pocket and a very personal story of research effort ready for presentation. Some papers are excellent and open up new avenues of investigation and new concepts; some are fundamentally good science but are poorly presented with letters on slides too small to see and masses of data inadequately digested and explained. Some papers are just routine with no really new scientific contribution. Yet all represent a sincere and honest effort to advance physiology and are presented with some show of pride and enthusiasm. Most of them also are received with friendly courtesy even when some criticism is called for. The American Physiological Society, in short, represents a professional family for most of its members and offers to them a forum for the exercise of such talents as they possess in the special field to which they are seriously devoting a lifetime of effort. On the whole, the Society comprises a very friendly group with a remarkably free and uninhibited exchange of ideas. Foreign students often miss this spirit of comradeship when they leave our shores and return to the inter-laboratory rivalries of their home environment. This friendly spirit is something we can be very proud of for it is not present to a similar degree in all countries. This spirit has endured in spite of drastic changes in our organization and environment and there is no reason to fear that it is not here to stay.

The last period of 25 years may be said to have begun with the memorable banquet held April 1, 1938, in Baltimore, under the presidency of Walter E. Garrey with Dr. Porter, honorary president, as toastmaster. This banquet was described in great detail in the last installment of the *History of the Society* by Charles W. Greene and no repetition here is necessary. All those who attended that dinner, however, will remember it very well. Dr. Garrey summed up the evening later by remarking "it is safe to say that never in the history of the Society had the membership ever listened to such eloquent and finished speeches. From the literary remarks of Dr. Porter, which were filled with humor, to the vigorous words of Dr. Carlson who closed the program, there was not an instant when the audience did not give rapt attention." Such was the occasion which celebrated not only the closing of one epoch but the opening of another. Now in its turn, the third quarter century has come to an end and needs to be memorialized in this volume.

Noting the dearth of historical material available in the preparation of the History of the first 50 years, the Council (about 1938) appointed Walter J. Meek as historian. He reported at this meeting that he had collected the biographies of two of the members of the Society. It is unfortunate that Dr. Meek resigned his duties as historian in 1954. Sometime later, John Field accepted the responsibilities of historian but found it necessary to resign in 1961. Thereafter, in desperation an appeal was made to the present writer who, in a rash moment, accepted the diffi-

cult assignment. The labor has not been much facilitated by any effort of previous historians—the only real sources of information being the Minutes of the Society, the pages of *The Physiologist*, and the kind help of the Executive Secretary, Dr. Daggs, and of many sympathetic and loyal friends, supplemented by my own faulty memory of events in which I participated. I was an officer of the Society for 10 of the first 11 years of the period to be covered and was chairman of the Board of Publication Trustees and as such an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Council for another 6 years. This record does provide me with some advantages for the task which may help to compensate for my more important inadequacies.

Since the history of a society is chiefly the history of its individual members and especially of its presidents, it will be convenient to consider first the individual presidential terms. These will be followed by sections devoted to special subjects which cover the terms of many presidents. The History is, therefore, considered first chronologically and then by subject matter.

CHAPTER 2 **Chronological Account of the Presidents of the Society**

Honorary President, William T. Porter

Dr. Porter was made honorary president during the presidency of Walter E. Garrey for the special purpose of honoring him at the time of the Semicentennial Celebration of the founding of the Society. A full account of Dr. Porter's career and his many generous contributions to the Society are given in the Semicentennial History and also in *The Physiologist* (4(2): 28, 1961).

Dr. Garrey was the sixteenth individual to serve as President of the Society, not counting Dr. Porter as Honorary President. All other Presidents in this History will be numbered according to the same rule.



16

Walter E. Garrey (1937–1939)

Dr. Garrey served two years as President and the main events of his term had not yet happened when the last period was written up. The Secretary of the Society was A. C. Ivy and the writer of this History was the Treasurer; the members of the Council were Gasser, Luckhardt, Best, and Bard. The Minutes record some items of routine interest: the annual dues were set at \$2.00, E. R. Lowe was appointed Porter Fellow to work with Ivy, Comroe was selected for a fellowship to attend the International Physiological Congress in Zurich. The *Annual Review of*

Physiology had just been set up under joint control by Annual Reviews and the Society, and Dr. Hooker was trying hard to get the Federation to establish *Federation Proceedings* so that he could remove the abstracts (of the papers presented at the annual meeting of the Society) from "his" *American Journal of Physiology*. He did not think it was quite fair to make the subscribers to the *Journal* pay for the publication of so much material of somewhat transient importance. A copy of the *History of the Society* was sent to the British Physiological Society and L. J. Henderson was asked to organize a symposium on "Anoxia."

At the following meeting held in Toronto in April 1939, the Society voted \$25 for the recently formed Union of Biological Societies and \$1,021 for Biological Abstracts. Both of these worthy organizations were struggling to survive and the Society as usual lent a sympathetic ear to their difficulties. It is significant that at this meeting the Council voted, as usual, an honorarium of \$2,500 for Dr. Hooker as Managing Editor of the publications and \$100 for his assistant, Miss Laura Campen, and also voted to pay half the railroad expenses of the editors of *Physiological Reviews* to attend a meeting to plan the next volume. These items to be sure were recommendations of the Board of Publication Trustees, but they were actually voted by the Council before they were regarded as really official.

An account of Dr. Garrey's career up to 1938 is given in the Semicentennial History of the Society. He was Professor of Physiology and Chairman of the Department at Vanderbilt from 1925 until he retired in 1944. He died June 15, 1951. An obituary by F. P. Knowlton was published in the *Biological Bulletin* (103: 13, 1952): "An athlete in his younger days, he remained tall and erect. With his head of white hair he was a noteworthy figure at any gathering."

Dr. Garrey assisted Prof. Jacques Loeb in organizing the first physiology course at Woods Hole in 1899 and he continued as instructor in the course until 1925. The writer had the good fortune to be a student in that course in 1915 and profitted greatly from his contacts with Dr. Garrey at that time. He was an inspiring teacher and a warm friend. It was a privilege to serve on the Council with him.



17

Andrew C. Ivy (1939–1941)

At the fifty-first Meeting of the Society in Toronto in 1939, Dr. Andrew Conway Ivy was elected President after serving as Secretary for the previous five years.

He was born February 25, 1893, in Farmington, Missouri, and attended the University of Chicago which granted him, in rapid succession, a B.S. in 1916, an M.S. in 1917, and a Ph.D. in 1918. His doctoral thesis was supervised by Prof. A. J. Carlson. He obtained his M.D. degree from Rush Medical College in 1922 while holding an appointment as Associate Professor of Physiology at the University of Chicago from 1919 to 1925. He was made Head of the Division of Physiology and Pharmacology of Northwestern University Medical School in 1926 and remained in that position until 1945 when he became Vice-President in charge of the Professional Colleges at the University of Illinois (1946-53) and Distinguished Professor of Physiology and Head of the Department of Clinical Science. He was Executive Director of the National Advisory Cancer Council from 1947 to 1951, Scientific Director of the Naval Medical Research Institute from 1942 to 1943, and consultant to the Secretary of War during the War Crimes Trials in Germany after World War II. In 1962 he left the University of Illinois and was given an appointment and laboratory at Roosevelt University in Chicago.

Dr. Ivy is a rather short man in stature but has a very rugged physique and much determination and courage. He once told the writer that during his first night at camp as 2nd Lieutenant in the National Guard (1912-13), he was treated with scant respect by his much bigger companions until he had fought and defeated four of them, one after another. An amusing story also comes from Dr. Carl A. Dragstedt, who is as tall as Dr. Ivy is short. They both turned up at a Society meeting at Ann Arbor in 1928 with new suits made of exactly the same material and by the same firm. During the night at the fraternity house where they both stayed, some joker exchanged their trousers, much to their consternation when they came to dress for the banquet in the evening.

Dr. Ivy is reported to have published 1,500 scientific articles, mostly in the field of gastroenterology, which is something of a record. He has also worked on cardiac pain, preparation of fresh water from salt water, protection from flash burns, cure of typhoid carriers, and artificial respiration. Unknown to many physiologists, Dr. Ivy has worked on the physiological aspects of cancer since 1917. As a result of observations on dogs with cancer of the thyroid, he developed the hypothesis that the body of multicellular animals contains an "anticancer substance" (or substances) which is involved in the prevention of cancer and body resistance to cancer, and that it should be possible to concentrate and isolate the substance. He believes the substance to be present in all cells and especially in reticuloendothelial cells. Recently, he has been interested in testing the use of Krebiozen on mouse and human cancer. (The preparation of this substance from horses has been fully described and it "is believed to be the natural growth controlling substance responsible for the natural immunity and defense of an organism against cancer.") He discovered two hormones, enterogastrone and cholecystokinin. In addition to his scientific papers, his many articles on the philosophy of life and education, and his chapters contributed to six books, he has published two books, *Peptic Ulcer* in 1950 and *Observations on Krebiozen in the Management of Cancer* in 1956

Dr. Ivy is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians and an honorary member of the Harvey Society, the Gorgas Medical Society, and the Des Moines Academy of Medicine. He has held the office of President of the Society of Internal Medicine (1941-42) and of President of the American Gastroenterological Society (1940-41) and was the founder and, subsequently, the managing editor of *Gastroenterology* (1942-52). He was a member of other editorial boards and Chairman of the Board of Publication Trustees of our Society from 1945 to 1948. In the latter capacity, he was responsible for "discovering" Dr. Milton O. Lee and persuading him in 1947 to take Dr. Donald Hooker's place as Managing Editor of the journals of the Society. In Chicago, he was particularly vigorous and effective in the defense of the use of animals for medical research.

Those of us who have worked with him closely in Society committees have a warm friendship with him and know him as a man of high ideals and broad vision, with a wide knowledge of physiology and much wisdom and skill as an executive. He attends meetings of the Society, at least whenever one of his students or associates is presenting a paper, and has worked long and faithfully for the Society and its publications and for the advancement of physiology.

Ivy's term as President was the last undisturbed prewar period. He presided at the meetings in New Orleans in 1940 and in Chicago in 1941. During that time, Dr. Hooker was still the Managing Editor of the Society journals (and also Executive Secretary of the Federation) and was voted an honorarium of \$3,500. This amount was steadily increased during the years to prepare the way for the time when a full-time paid secretary would be required. The time had not yet come simply because of Dr. Hooker's generosity with his own volunteer services.

At New Orleans the Society voted \$250 per year for five years to the Committee on Antivivisection Activities, a cause which never had a more vigorous champion than Ivy. The Union of Biological Societies was voted \$25, the Federation Placement Service \$10, and the dues were set at \$1—one whole dollar!

At the Chicago meeting (1941), the creation of *Federation Proceedings* was approved, councilors were declared ineligible for a second term until two years had elapsed, and the Federation banquet was discontinued because only 365 tickets were sold for the 800 places guaranteed. It was at this meeting also that John Fulton created such a furor by his proposal to use publication funds for a gift of \$20,000 to the (British) Physiological Society for their publication problems.



18

Philip Bard (1941–1946)

Philip Bard was elected President in 1941 at the meeting in Chicago and was re-elected in Boston in 1942, the last meeting before the no-meeting war interval. He was born in Heuneme, California, in 1898 and received his A.B. degree from Princeton in 1923 and his A.M. and Ph.D. from Harvard in 1925 and 1927, respectively. His doctoral thesis was prepared under the supervision of Dr. Cannon. After obtaining his degree, he held various appointments at Harvard and Princeton until he was appointed Professor of Physiology at Hopkins in 1933 where he is now. From 1953 to 1957, he was also Dean of the Medical Faculty. He has honorary D.Sc. degrees from Princeton and from Washington and Lee Universities and honorary doctorates (1951) from Universidad Catolica de Chile and from Universidad Mayor de San Marcos, Lima, Peru. Dr. Bard is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, the National Academy of Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in this country. He holds a long record of service to the American Physiological Society—a Councilor for four years, Secretary for three, President for five, a total of twelve years on the Council. He revised the 8th and 9th editions of Macleod's *Physiology in Modern Medicine* and edited his own *Medical Physiology* as the 10th edition. He was Chairman of the Editorial Board of *Physiological Reviews* (1950–53), Chairman of the Board of Publication Trustees (1959–60), and the initial Chairman of the Publications Committee (1960–61). He has also been President of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine and of the Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Diseases.

Philip Bard has always been one of the stalwart members of the Society—reliable, trustworthy, wise, and never guilty of hasty or ill-considered action. He is a friendly, outgoing person, large in stature both physically and mentally, and in general a great asset to the profession.

He is well known for his work on the brain-stem mechanisms involved in various forms of emotional excitement, the role of the hypothalamic area in endotoxin fever, and the demonstration of the necessity of the vestibular portions of the cerebellum (uvula and nodulus) in the development of motion sickness in dogs. With Drs. Wade Marshall and Clinton Woolsey, he also made the first mapping

of the somatic sensory cortex by means of the evoked potential technique. Other distinguished persons who have been associated with Dr. Bard as postdoctoral fellows or graduate students are Drs. Chandler Brooks, Ray Snider, H. W. Magoun, and Elwood Henneman.

Dr. Bard remained in office as President throughout the war years, an account of which follows.

The War Years

The last meeting before the war interval took place in Boston, March 30–April 4, 1942, with President Bard in the chair. The annual dues were set at \$3, a tax of 5 cents per member was levied for the defense of biological research, and Biological Abstracts was voted 50 cents per member (\$398). It was reported that the Council had collected \$1,392 in individual contributions as a gift for British physiological journals. This was increased to \$5,000 from publication funds and sent to the Royal Society. This gift was warmly acknowledged by Sir Henry Dale. He also wrote to Dr. Wiggers and included the statement: “Meanwhile, however, I definitely feel that your society has done all that it should for us.” The original vote of the Society was to send “up to \$20,000” and some members were critical because the full amount was not included. The Council, however, was probably wiser than the membership because the British did not use the full amount at once, and later Prof. A. V. Hill, as Secretary of the Royal Society, proposed that the \$932.75 remaining in the fund be used to help devastated libraries on the continent. This was approved by the Society. One gets the impression that the British were grateful for the spirit which prompted the gift but they were slightly embarrassed by the whole affair. Anyway, this event precipitated a lot of serious discussion concerning the control and disposal of publication funds.

At this 1942 meeting, President Bard gave notice of the need of the Air Force for physiologists to manage the high altitude oxygen indoctrination units for pilots and urged the recruitment of younger members in order to avoid depleting the physiology departments where future physicians were in training. It was voted that “the Secretary or Dr. Lewis (in charge of the Federation Placement Service) draft a letter looking for immature physiologists or women physiologists to replace physiologists working with the medical services.”

The next three meetings of the Society were canceled after much discussion, post-card votes, and violent differences of opinion. The 1943 meeting was canceled by the Federation Executive Committee at the instigation of the Pharmacologists and in response to requests of the Office of Defense Transportation which sought to spare the railroads the additional burden of transportation which a meeting would require. Abstracts of papers were nevertheless collected and published as usual in order to keep members reasonably well informed of the progress of science. The APS Council also voted to receive applications for membership as usual. These applications were submitted to members of the Council by mail

and all those approved were notified that they were "tentatively elected" and would enjoy the privileges of membership until the Society could legally elect them at the next annual meeting. This practice was continued during 1944 and 1945.

The Annual Notice in 1943 announced cancellation of the meeting. It mentioned the fact that one former meeting of the Society had been postponed for a few months in 1918 on account of the war, but that this was the first Society meeting that had ever been definitely canceled. In a post-card canvass only 10 of 525 cards returned disapproved of this action or voted against the continuation of the officers until another meeting could be held. A similar canvass in 1944 showed 406 in favor and 107 against cancellation. Nevertheless, this cancellation aroused a great cry of protest. Similar meetings were canceled by the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, but the American Chemical Society held its meeting as usual. Some felt that physiology was just as important for the war effort as chemistry but grudgingly conceded that "the present officers might just as well serve on during our somnolence." In favor of cancellation were the request of the Office of Defense Transportation and the fact that everyone was unusually busy either with extra heavy teaching loads due to a depleted staff or with some other form of war effort. There was, however, the possibility of holding regional meetings and, as Secretary of the Society, the writer of this history corresponded with Society members in many parts of the country to investigate the possibilities. In most places there was no interest, but a petition was received from 87 members in Cleveland and others in Berkeley, California. The Cleveland meeting was authorized by the Council but was given up after a release from the Office of Defense Transportation stating that "no such gathering would be justified in view of the war burdens on transportation unless they would help to shorten the war." The Berkeley meeting, however, with Dr. Weymouth as Chairman, was eventually held as a joint meeting with the Society of Experimental Biology and Medicine. This was the one and only regional meeting ever held by the Society.

The Federation did vote to hold a regular meeting in Cleveland in 1945 and notices were sent out. The National Research Council had advised that all societies that were members of the Division of Biology and Agriculture should hold their meetings as usual. The ODT, however, "ordered the cancellation of all meetings for which special permission had not been obtained." Drs. Hooker and Bard made formal application for such a permit but this was denied February 17, 1945, and the meeting was per force canceled for the third time.

Throughout all this war period, the business of the Society and of the Federation went on as usual, but was conducted entirely by mail. Finally, a meeting of the Council of the American Physiological Society was actually held in Rochester, New York, May 18-19, 1945, and was attended by Bard, Essex, Best, Hamilton, Visscher, and Fenn; Davis was absent on account of illness. At this meeting the usual routine business of electing members and appointing representatives was carried on and there was, in addition, much discussion of long-range plans for

the Society. Among the latter items was a letter from Dr. Chauncey Leake requesting admission of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine as a regular member of the Federation. The Council saw some long-range value in a



To the Society Business Meeting, Atlantic City, 1946. Philip Bard (center), President, with the Secretary W. O. Fenn carrying the papers, and a future President, R. W. Gerard (photo by Fred Hess & Son)

coalition of this sort, but the Federation Executive Committee saw little advantage and contented itself with an offer to discuss the matter further "if the SEBM is willing to contemplate some loss of autonomy in this cause." To the writer of this history, it appears that these long-range advantages are still valid and it is high time that some action was taken to realize them.

At this meeting, and in response to a request for symposium suggestions, Dr. E. F. Adolph proposed a Symposium on the "Future of Physiology." This aroused considerable discussion with the result that Dr. Adolph, together with Philip Dow, T. E. Boyd, and J. H. Comroe, Jr., was asked to conduct a survey of the present status of physiology. Such was the beginning of the First Survey of Physiology.

At the first postwar meeting held in Atlantic City, March 12, 1946, the officers elected in 1942 were still in office, although they realized that it was both illegal