

## A CENTURY OF THE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST\*

*Abstract: The first 100 years of CAPN have seen its horizons widen, but its connections to local classics communities weaken. Intended both to imitate the other regional classics associations and to provide an intimate association with its center in Oregon and Washington, CAPN has expanded hesitantly, and at the price of weakening its connections with high-school faculty, as changes in the composition of the organization's senior officers and its conference programs show.*

In 2011 the Classical Association of the Pacific Northwest, or CAPN, will reach its centenary, the last of the regional classics associations in the United States to do so: the Classical Association of the Middle West and South (CAMWS) was founded in 1905, the Classical Association of New England (CANE) in 1906, and the Classical Association of the Middle States and Maryland (later CAAS, the Classical Association of the Atlantic States) in 1907. CAPN is comfortably the smallest of these organizations, in membership if not territory—it has about 40 members who pay their dues regularly, and maybe another 60 or 70 who are less conscientious—and so has never maintained a journal that might record its transactions nor commissioned a history.<sup>1</sup> But now that it is reaching its centenary this history should be told. CAPN's basic story is perhaps familiar—expanding borders, widening horizons and a reduction in the quantity and quality of its connections with local communities—but the details are surprising. Expansion was not always smooth or universally welcome, and there were retreats as well as advances, as the organization sought to increase its weight while maintaining its center of gravity in the Northwest.

CAPN's first meeting took place on June 16<sup>th</sup> 1911, at the Portland Academy in Portland, Oregon, with 14 classicists from Oregon and Washington in attendance. Its goal was "to further by contact, mu-

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<sup>1</sup> *CJ* provided this service for CAPN in its early years. CAPN Bulletins since 1994 are available on-line at <http://uoregon.edu/~classics/capn/>

tual criticism, and discussion, the effectiveness and spirit of classical teachers, and promote the general state of Classical Studies"; its declared stimulus was the recent foundation of the three other regional classics associations "now flourishing in other sections of the United States." There was real hubris here. The other regional associations covered significantly more states and included many more classics teachers than the infant CAPN: in 1911 CAAS covered five states, CANE six, and CAMWS 28, which brought it 1700 members.<sup>2</sup> CAPN, by contrast, initially included only two states, and its membership began at 37 and never reached much over 100; in the first 40 years, membership peaked at 104, in 1922.<sup>3</sup> That CAPN dared to emulate the other regional organizations is remarkable. Indeed, given that Idaho had joined CAMWS in 1908, it was surely more likely that Oregon and Washington would apply to do the same. Yet CAPN's founders had no interest in being a distant appendage of CAMWS; they wanted their own society, and they wanted to meet where they lived.

This desire was informed by the recent unhappy experience of several founders with another larger regional body, the Philological Association of the Pacific Coast (PAPC)—an experience unmentioned in the minutes. A branch of the APA, PAPC had been founded in 1899 to provide a more convenient organ for intellectual exchange for academics on the West coast. Its prime movers were faculty at the University of California at Berkeley and Stanford, who felt "virtually cut off from personal contact with their former associates and their former places of inspiration and study," as Jefferson Elmore, a Stanford professor and past President of PAPC, reported in 1919.<sup>4</sup> Their remedy was a West-coast version of the APA that "for active membership ... could count not only on the University of California and Stanford University, but also on the adjacent state universities and several small colleges."<sup>5</sup> PAPC held a conference every year, with between 13 and 29 papers.

The initial intention of drawing on resources from Oregon and Washington produced some participation at the early meetings. At the first four meetings, a total of seven papers were from the Northwest, including contributions by two of CAPN's founders, Louis Anderson of Whitman College, the second President, and Frederic Dunn of the University of Oregon, the first Secretary-Treasurer and third President; and at the third meeting two Northwest members were elected to PAPC's Executive Committee for 1902. In that year,

<sup>2</sup> Benario (1989) 17–29.

<sup>3</sup> The first membership roll is from 1914–15. Membership reached its peak in 1966, with 130 members, of whom 25 were associate members, a reduced-fee category created in 1952.

<sup>4</sup> Elmore (1919) 84.

<sup>5</sup> Elmore (1919) 85.

another CAPN founder, David Thomson of the University of Washington, joined.<sup>6</sup> But these first four years were the high point of Northwest representation; Northwest membership never reached significant levels, and during the rest of the decade there was only one more paper and no more officers.<sup>7</sup>

PAPC seems to be largely to blame here, since it never embraced the states to the north. Indeed, PAPC turned out to be a Berkeley–Stanford club: all the Presidents came from those institutions, and the first 12 meetings, from 1899–1910, were all in San Francisco or Berkeley, except for that of 1907, which ventured as far as Stanford. It thus appears that CAPN’s founders, having experienced life on the margins of PAPC, foresaw a similar fate if they joined CAMWS, and decided to form a smaller association centered on and controlled by the Northwest. As their prior participation in PAPC indicates, the founders were not seeking to insulate themselves from other academic communities. Rather, their biographies suggest that they saw themselves as part of the larger North American academic map. Many had been educated or had taught outside the Northwest, for example Frederic Dunn, a native Oregonian, at Harvard,<sup>8</sup> and David Thomson at the Universities of Toronto and Chicago, and many would later move away from the area: Arthur Patch McKinlay moved from the Portland Academy to UCLA, J.C. Hazzard moved to Louisiana State Normal College and Otis Todd moved from Whitman to Carleton and then to the University of British Columbia (where he served as the President of the Canadian Football Association).<sup>9</sup> These men were not hiding their heads in the sand, but staking a claim for the significance of Northwest academic institutions. Such assertiveness was much in the air in this period. As the Lewis and Clark and the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Expositions of 1905 and 1909 show, Portland and Seattle thought their time was coming and wanted the rest of the continent to know.

The early CAPN was focused on Oregon and Washington; the first meeting outside these states was in 1940. At the same time, CAPN clearly felt a need to expand, presumably both to strengthen its finances and to increase its prestige. This led to three major expansions, the first two (to the east and the south) within the first decade of the Association’s existence. But both conflicted with the founders’

<sup>6</sup> *TAPA* 31 (1900) xlvi–lxv; *TAPA* 32 (1901) xlvi–lxvi; *TAPA* 33 (1902) lxxix–cviii; *TAPA* 34 (1903) lxiv–cvii. A list of CAPN meetings and officers can be found on the CAPN website at <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~mwilson/capn/Officerslist.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> In 1904; see *TAPA* 35 (1904) lxxv–xcvii. There may also have been dissatisfaction with how the conference papers were selected for publication in *TAPA*; see Elmore (1919) 85–6.

<sup>8</sup> See the obituary in *CJ* 33 (1937) 63–4.

<sup>9</sup> Todd (2001) 8–10.

desire to keep the association local and soon ran into trouble—in one case, so much trouble that the decision was reversed.

Idaho and Montana were added without notice in the minutes: the announcement for the fifth meeting, in 1914, invited members from Idaho, and the notice for the sixth invited members from Montana as well. Idaho was a logical addition: while it had to leave CAMWS to join CAPN, the universities of eastern Washington are close to the University of Idaho in Moscow, and there seem to have been strong personal connections between professors at these institutions. In particular, Harold Axtell of the University of Idaho appears to have been a close friend of Louis Anderson of Whitman, CAPN's second President. As the first Vice-President of CAMWS for Idaho, Axtell had clearly been key to that state joining CAMWS in 1908, but in 1914 he delivered a paper at the CAPN meeting, and was President of the organization in 1921. When he was president, CAPN met not in Moscow, but at Whitman, Anderson's college. If the eastward expansion was initiated by this connection, this would explain why no debate was recorded in the minutes. Montana was perhaps added as an afterthought: while five members from Montana joined at once, no one from the state presented a paper at a meeting until 1922.<sup>10</sup>

A year after Montana was added, in 1916, CAPN agreed to merge with the two sections of the California Classical Association (CCA), founded in 1909, to form a Regional Classical Association that covered the Pacific coast and an inland penumbra. Montana and Idaho came with CAPN, Nevada with the north section of CCA, and soon (if not immediately) Arizona with the southern section.<sup>11</sup> The association was called the Classical Association of the Pacific States (CAPS). CAPS was not a simple merger. There were three sections, southern, central and northern, which continued to have officers and annual meetings of their own, although in strict rotation one annual meeting was denominated the combined CAPS meeting. Presidents of the three sections served as Vice-Presidents of CAPS, while the overall President and Secretary-Treasurer were elected annually. At its seventh meeting, CAPN became "The Classical Association of the Pacific States, Northern Section."

Despite earlier negative experiences with the San-Francisco-based PAPC, these expansions had obvious attractions: with seven states, including California, CAPS had the size and prestige to rival and perhaps surpass CANE and CAAS. At the same time, CAPN's leaders presumably felt that the organization's size, together with the federal structure of CAPS, would prevent the marginalization they had experienced in PAPC. Both expansions ran into difficulties,

<sup>10</sup> CAPN never sought to expand further east, even when a few residents of Utah and Wyoming (both CAMWS states) began to join during World War II.

<sup>11</sup> By 1918, Arizona was part of the South section of CCA.

however, since CAPN failed to commit itself to these new regions; its leaders' desire for greater prestige conflicted with their desire to meet where they lived.

Problems with the eastward expansion crystallized around Spokane, which had a large community of Latin teachers. At the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting in 1915, these teachers petitioned that the next annual meeting be held in Spokane, and the next meeting but one did so. It looks as though CAPN committed informally to meeting in eastern Washington every three years; certainly, such a rotation was formally suggested at the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting in 1921. But these good intentions did not last. While the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting was a success, the 11<sup>th</sup>, held at Whitman, had to be supplemented by a special meeting one month later in Portland that reprised many of the papers; the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting in 1925, which should have been held in the east, was held in Seattle, meaning that the east missed out in that rotation; and the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting in Spokane in 1927 never really happened—a joint meeting had been planned with the Inland Empire Education Association, but notice of the CAPN meeting “did not reach there in time to be included in the program.” Instead an informal gathering was held to elect officers. After that, there were no more meetings east of the Cascades until 1939, at Whitman.

Eastern Washington did well compared to Idaho and Montana. No meeting was held in either state before the 65<sup>th</sup> in 1977. This reached comic proportions in 1949, when W.P. Clark of Montana State presided over a meeting in Spokane, even though the previous year an official resolution had been passed that meetings be held “in the territory” of the President. In all, 25 of the first 28 meetings were held in Portland, Seattle or Tacoma. Ironically, while seeking relief from the Berkeley–Stanford club of PAPC, CAPN's founders had set up a Portland–Seattle club.

This desire to remain local also explains why CAPN and the CCAs federated, rather than merging. But maintaining separate annual meetings doomed CAPS; few Californians traveled up to the Northern Section meetings, and few from the Northwest traveled down. Travel expenses were clearly a problem. In 1945 it was suggested that the sections contribute \$25 to the travel expenses of the CAPS Secretary-Treasurer, A.E. Gordon. But when he came to the 1946 CAPN meeting, the association had no funds to cover this. Consequently, “the hat (of Professor [Otis] Todd, U. of B.C.) was passed and a total of \$19 was contributed.” More importantly, however, CAPN simply never identified with the larger association. It maintained a separate identity, recording its name and the numbers of its meetings on its programs alongside those of CAPS, while, by contrast, the central section got rid of its numbers as well as its name. After the first few joint meetings, CAPS officers were rarely recog-

nized. The 1945 program for the combined meeting spoke of the 33<sup>rd</sup> meeting of CAPS, but that was actually the number of the northern section's meeting. Finally the program for the 1948 meeting did not mention that the 36<sup>th</sup> meeting of the northern section was the combined meeting of CAPS.

CAPS failed not because CAPN drifted away from California, but because it never committed to the merger in the first place. The name endured for over 50 years. But after 1955 the Northern section ceased to host the combined meetings, and in 1969 a formal proposal was made to dissociate. The final meeting of CAPN under the rubric of CAPS took place in 1970.

By this time, CAPN's third and most successful expansion, into Canada, was well under way. Of all the regional associations, CAPN is the least inhibited by the national border. Other regional associations include Canadian provinces, but none has had near the number of Canadian presidents or met in Canada nearly so frequently as CAPN. Ten meetings have been held at the University of British Columbia; in addition, since 1969 six meetings have been hosted by the University of Victoria. A second province, Alberta, was formally incorporated into CAPN in 1978,<sup>12</sup> and the University of Calgary has hosted three meetings. The five most recent meetings in Canada have been joint meetings with the Classical Association of the Canadian West (CACW), founded in 1993, so that CAPN meetings regularly host Canadians from provinces further east as well.<sup>13</sup>

But while including Vancouver in the Portland–Seattle axis seems an obvious step, it again took a personal connection to initiate the relationship. At the 29<sup>th</sup> meeting in 1939, held in Louis Anderson's house in Walla Walla, a paper was presented by Otis Todd of the University of British Columbia, the owner of the hat passed around a few years later for the CAPS Secretary-Treasurer. Todd was presumably there at Anderson's invitation, for he had taught at Whitman with Anderson from 1906 to 1912, when he was, in fact, among the founders of CAPN in 1911. This time Todd was elected President, and the next year CAPN met at his home university, thus beginning its close relationship with that institution, and with western Canada more generally.

CAPN's relationship with Canada has, however, experienced some tension since the foundation of CACW in 1993. While the regular joint meetings with CACW have offered CAPN members meetings of a size and focus that CAPN cannot hope to match on its own, their larger size, lesser intimacy and earlier deadlines have proved unat-

<sup>12</sup> CAPN's articles do not specify what incorporation entails, but its intent is clear.

<sup>13</sup> A 1999 definition of CAPN's territory includes Saskatchewan, although members from there have not been active in CAPN, and the province joined CAMWS in 1986.

tractive to many. At the same time, many previous members of CAPN from Canada have shifted their focus and membership to CACW.

North of Canada, CAPN also briefly wooed Alaska. There had been a smattering of members from the territory from 1925–26, and so, when the State of Alaska was established in 1959, CAPN responded with a membership drive. Commitment was lacking, however, and only two or three Alaskan members appear in the rolls from the 1960s and 1970s. Hawaii too appears in the records. The state had joined the Southern Section of CAPS, but in 1966, the chair of the classics department at the University of Hawaii, Alfred Burns, an alumnus of the University of Washington, created a link by speaking at a CAPN meeting and then regularly reporting his department's news. This seems to have created the false impression that Hawaii was part of CAPN, and in 1988 a proposal to hold a meeting in Hawaii on the grounds that it was within CAPN's territory was discussed.

As CAPN expanded, its links with local communities attenuated. In its first 40 years CAPN shared meetings with a wide variety of local organizations, such as the Inland Empire Education Association, centered around Spokane (1918, 1927, 1950), the Oregon State Teachers' Association (1925, 1930, 1932, 1934, 1936, 1938) and the Portland Classical Club, which sponsored CAPN's teas (1936, 1938). Through such links, CAPN was tied closely into the classics communities of the Northwest, while members of those societies were also brought into CAPN's orbit. But after 1950, CAPN ceased to make such links and connected instead with larger, regional societies, such as the Pacific Northwest Renaissance Conference (1957, 1958), CAMWS (2001) and CACW (1995, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2007). At the same time, members looked more to the APA: from 1954 reports appeared in the bulletins of members attending the annual meeting and delivering papers, and by 1968 CAPN had its first APA President, Frederic Combella of the University of Oregon, followed shortly after, in 1970, by Malcolm McGregor of the University of British Columbia.

The local classics communities did not disappear but flourished, as CAPN's old role as a place of exchange for them was performed by other organizations (often run in part by individual CAPN members). These organizations fell into two categories. For interested amateurs, chapters of the Archaeological Institute of America were established (or re-established) in the major urban areas of Oregon and Washington, in Spokane in 1948, Seattle in 1956, Eugene in 1964, Salem in 1995 and Portland in 1997.<sup>14</sup> These were very popular: one year after

<sup>14</sup> There had previously been a Washington State affiliate with branches in Seattle, Spokane and Walla Walla, from 1906–13, and then separate affiliates in Seattle (1913–32) and Spokane (1926–36), as well as a Portland affiliate (1909–36). See Allen, Herbert and O'Brien (2002).

its foundation, the Seattle chapter alone had 129 members, more members than CAPN. For teachers, there was the Idaho Language Teachers' Forum, founded in 1948; the Washington State Federation of the Junior Classical League, founded in 1949; the Classical Association of Oregon, founded in 1965; and the British Columbia Association of Teachers of Classics and the Washington Latin Teachers' Conference, both of which seem to have started in the early 1960s.

Accordingly, high-school faculty increasingly disengaged from CAPN. During the middle decades of the century, they gradually ceased to hold CAPN's senior offices: president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer, (from 1954) bulletin editor and membership on the executive committee. From 1911 to 1932, high-school teachers filled 35% of the top three offices, and provided 51–58% of the executive committee; from 1933 to 1970, when there are no records of membership on the executive committee, they filled 18% of the top offices; and, from 1971 to 2008, they filled none of the top four offices and provided only 8% of the membership of the executive committee. Similarly, high schools ceased to serve as venues for the meetings. From 1911 to 1940, ten meetings were hosted by high schools, and two more were co-hosted with a university,<sup>15</sup> while after 1940, only the 1950 meeting in Spokane was hosted by a high school. The conference programs also reveal a growing separation between CAPN and high-school interests. During every decade from 1911 to 1970, papers on pedagogy constituted about a quarter of the offerings, but in the three decades after that they fell to 2.5%. Along with this change came a decline in the number of comparative papers on the debt to classical sources of figures such as Tennyson, Gladstone, Dryden, Walter Pater, Wordsworth and Francis Bacon. From 1911 to 1960 such papers constituted about 12.5% of the program, but only around 3% during the rest of the century.

These changes in the program catered to the new realities of classics at the university level: a greater focus on research, a tighter definition of what constitutes classics and a general turning away from the concerns of the larger classics community. Most emblematic is the almost complete disappearance after 1940 of papers that argue for the utility of classics: "What our department can do for good taste in the community" (1912); "Teaching morals through Latin" (1926); papers on the value of classics for ministers (1922), lawyers (1923) and laymen (1934); and this from Louis Anderson in 1937, "Professors and teachers of the classics, teach thoroughly both the language and its literature: Let your training prove that the language you love has value both as a science and as an art." Such papers constituted about an eighth of the papers of the first three decades, and when

<sup>15</sup> The irregular meetings of 1917 and 1921 were also hosted by high schools.

they are added to the comparative and pedagogical papers, the full extent of the narrowing of CAPN's programs becomes clear. Pedagogical, comparative and proselytizing papers made up about 45% of the program from 1911 to 1940, and about 36% of the program from 1941 to 1970, but only about 5% from 1971 to 2000.

While high-school faculty looked elsewhere than CAPN, the proportion of active women members remained roughly constant, despite the fact that women constitute around 88% of the high school faculty who have held CAPN offices. From 1911 to 1932, women held 40% of the top three offices and provided 42% of the other members of the executive board; from 1933 to 1970 women held 31% of the top offices; and from 1971 to the present they have held 30% of the top offices and have provided 33% of the other members of the executive board. Two qualifications should be noted. First, between 1911 and 1970, the post of secretary-treasurer was clearly deemed appropriate for women; it was occupied by women 81% of the time, meaning that only 13% of the presidents and vice-presidents in this period were women. Second, the overall figures for female participation represent not a large number of individual women, but a smaller number of women who held office repeatedly: six women have served as secretary-treasurer for a total of 41 years between them (as well as serving as president or vice-president for another 6 years).

As CAPN enters its second century, how it caters to the various constituencies within its territory will clearly be its major concern. As this brief history indicates, the organization spent much of its first century expanding its territory. But while this expansion brought greater prestige to CAPN and larger networks to its members, it also weakened the organization's links to local communities and eventually, through its relationship with CACW, diluted the hard-won intimacy of its annual meetings. The two most pressing questions facing CAPN at this time are, then, how (and whether) to make itself attractive again to high-school faculty, and how to make its relationship with its Canadian provinces more satisfying to members and potential members, both above and below the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel. Initial steps have already been taken on both issues—the 2004 meeting in Seattle featured a pedagogy panel, while the 2010 meeting in Seattle, the first joint meeting with CACW south of the border, will hopefully bring the members of the two organizations closer together. There promises to be plenty of material for future CAPN historians.

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