#### A STATEMENT OF POLICY

The editor of a scholarly journal, rather like a lion tamer, is in danger of being consumed by his work, and surely he will know at once whether he is doing his job badly or well. He has certain authority over his subjects; likewise they have power over him. Hence, understanding on both sides is imperative and ought to be arrived at as soon as possible. In case some old lions think they know already the rules of their trade, what follows is addressed to the younger ones who do not. And even old lions sometimes forget.

The most important fact about *The Journal of British Studies'* editorial policy has always been that it seeks articles from serious students in all fields concerned with British culture, politics, and history. But while remaining eclectic in scope, it must look for articles that are comprehensible to a wide range of readers. This means that an author should endeavor to explain at the beginning precisely what is important and new about his study and how it fits into the general context of his discipline. A good author tells in the first few paragraphs what the conventional wisdom about the topic is, in what way the author's discoveries depart from this, and why it is significant. In this way, the general reader knows what to look for within the narrative. The narrative itself presents only the evidence necessary to prove the point the author has already made and makes clear what is crucial and what is secondary. The conclusion should explain that the author has indeed shown what he said he would show at the beginning.

A good scholarly article, then, is not a short book, a mini-biography, or a report on research, still less a chapter from a longer work. It must be original in point of view or evidence and above all must contain its own reason for being. It does not follow that *JBS* will never print articles of a polemic or bibliographic nature, but potential authors should be warned that the principal business of this journal is to keep its readers abreast of the most recent trends in interpretations and research in British studies.

A second point to be made, allied to the first, is that as a major journal with a large international circulation, which receives nearly a dozen submissions for every available space—a figure, by the way, which is growing—JBS looks for articles of the widest possible interest. For instance, a single, newly discovered letter from a literary or historical figure, no matter how important the person, does not justify publication unless the document also provides the basis for some major revision in the interpretation of the person's career or works. There is a large and increasing number of specialized journals for which such studies are appropriate.

None of this is intended to discourage the submission of articles. While the *Journal* receives many more manuscripts than it can use, it does not receive many more *good* manuscripts than it needs, and its managers hope within the next year to expand its size. Anyone, therefore, with an idea, the evidence to back it up, a knowledge of English, and a typewriter is a possible author for *JBS*. He need not write first to ask whether we would be interested in the topic. We always are.

Bentley B. Gilbert

#### THE JOURNAL OF BRITISH STUDIES

#### UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO CIRCLE CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The Journal of British Studies, founded in 1961, is published at the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle under the auspices of the Conference on British Studies. It was the result of the imaginative generosity of a Trinity College alumnus, Frederick E. Hasler (Hon. LL.D. 1957) who contributed funds to the College for the specific purpose of establishing a learned periodical in the field of British history. Several Trinity alumni subsequently contributed to the fund. The University of Illinois at Chicago Circle now supports the publication of the Journal.

The Conference on British Studies is the official organization in the United States and Canada of scholars working in the field of British history and culture; its status as such is recognized by the American Historical Association, of which it is an affiliate. Its nearly 800 members are drawn from fifty states and five provinces. The national Conference convenes once each year, in the autumn, usually with one of the regional Conferences.

The Conference awards a prize every five years for the best first book by an American or Canadian scholar.

The Conference sponsors a considerable publications program. It publishes The Journal of British Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle; Archives in British History and Culture, a series devoted to the publication of documents, at West Virginia University, Morgantown; and Current Research in British Studies, a quadrennial survey of research in progress in the United States and Canada, published at Kansas State University, Manhattan, and edited at Western Washington State College. The Conference also sponsors a series of short monographs, Studies in British History and Culture, edited at Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio, and published by the Shoe-String Press, Hamden, Connecticut. Under the aegis of the Conference, Cambridge University Press continues to publish a bibliographical series. Albion prints the proceedings of the Conference in its regional and national meetings. Published four times a year at Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina, Albion is sent to all members of the Conference. The national Conference on British Studies has fostered the growth of a number of regional conferences: the Pacific Coast Conference, the Pacific Northwest Conference, the Rocky Mountain Conference, the Midwest Conference, the Southern Conference, the Mid-Mountain Conference, the Mid-Atlantic Conference, and the New England Conference. Each of these active and autonomous associations has its own officers, programs, and other activities.

The Journal of British Studies appears twice in the academic year, in the Fall and in the Spring. Inquiries about subscriptions should be directed to Bentley B. Gilbert, Editor, The Journal of British Studies, Department of History, University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, Box 4348, Chicago, Illinois 60680.

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