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## Bob to Jim, 21 January 1957

Robert H. Spiro Jr.

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**MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE**  
**CLINTON, MISSISSIPPI**

FOUNDED 1826

21 January 1957

Professor James Silver  
Chairman, Department of History  
University of Mississippi  
University, Mississippi

Dear Jim:

Well, the program has been read in proof, and will be off the press perhaps tomorrow. I hope no one drops dead or otherwise fails to make a scheduled appearance! I recall your statement (was it not at the Peabody in Memphis?) that as program chairman you had written a thousand letters for the Southern Historical Association. I thought at the time you were speaking hyperbolically—now I consider your statement was stark literalism! I haven't written a thousand, but almost a hundred.

What I say now I say in strict confidence. I only write it because I believe you can help remedy the problem. Both Charlotte and Mrs. Davis are quite upset about the quality of the Journal. Hig, of course, was a perfectionist, and made himself an expert in form, type, style, and other areas of editorial competence. And it is not fair to compare John's work at this stage. But Charlotte and Mrs. Davis find the copy coming in piecemeal and tardily; spelling, capitalization, form, and style are only hastily checked; errors in manuscript and then in proof are unnoticed. Both feel they do not want the Journal to come out in this manner, to decline in quality. Charlotte's name is on the masthead, and of course, mine, too, as assistant editor. And Mrs. Davis as printer feels her reputation is also involved.

You, of course, had much to do with John's being named editor, and are his department chairman. Can you, indirectly, encourage him to greater effort and punctuality? I have high



Professor James Silver

p. 2

regard for John and Margaret, and am not writing as critic but as friend. Margaret can doubtless help in proof reading, and aid in getting the copy in promptly and in good form. And the Journal can maintain its standards.

Enclosed are several copies of a broadside I wrote for Dawson Phelps' Committee on Membership. He has a thousand copies for wholesale distribution to schools, colleges, libraries, and other likely places. Our aim is twofold: new members and a large attendance at the Natchez meeting. The Jackson libraries, the Mississippi College library, and others, plan an exhibit of Mississippiana publicizing our meeting. They will use the broadsides and programs. Can your library possibly plan a similar exhibit? It may stimulate interest. Of course, in your case, I know you are publicizing Freidel's visit earlier.

Regards to John, Margaret, Harris, and other friends at the University.

Cardially yours,



Robert H. Spiro, Jr.