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Summer Activities

DURING the months of July and August, several members of the staff of The Business Historical Society, Inc., found it possible to combine business with vacations and to make a number of connections of national and international importance.

Late in June the Librarian, Charles C. Eaton, went to England and the Continent, to investigate the possibility of acquiring historical business material of which he had information. He found a great amount of data which, if secured, will add greatly to the business information now in the archives of the Baker Library. He made lists of some three thousand items which are now being checked and appraised by the owners, and it is hoped that in time considerable material may be thus acquired.

In connection with this work he made contact with the owners of several private collections which it would be most advantageous to acquire, if purchase arrangements can be effected. These range from a comprehensive library on French Economics, costing upwards of four thousand dollars, to a very large and valuable collection of books on the history of economics, which is held at a price beyond our present means.

On the other hand, he received as gifts from the Suez Canal Company much statistical data and information relating to the inception and growth of the company; and from the Crédit Lyonnais a series of statistical reports and other material of interest. Ways and means are now being considered for the acquisition of other collections which can be obtained only by purchase.

The middle of July found the Executive Secretary, Frank C. Ayres, en route to England, France and Switzerland. During his spare time in London, he secured a new member for the Society and followed up a number of possible connections which had previously been started by correspondence.

His experience with the Federation of British Industries was most satisfactory, and the future active coöperation of this organization is assured. Through the courtesy of its officers, Mr. Ayres received letters of introduction to a number of important men and organizations in London. Among these may be mentioned a contact made with Mr. G. I. H. Lloyd, Chief of the Department of Overseas Trade of the British Empire. This governmental department is in a position to give us valuable assistance, and this coöperation, together with that of other individuals and societies approached, should help us in many directions.

In Paris Mr. Ayres established very satisfactory relations with the Bank of France through its Deputy Governor, Mr. Charles Rist; with the American Chamber of Commerce in France through its Secretary, Mr. Frank A. Boole; and with the American Consul General, whose interest was readily secured when the purposes and plans of the Society were explained to him.

Among the recent additions to our membership, listed elsewhere, is that of Mr. James Hazen Hyde, a resident of Paris, upon whom Mr. Ayres called. He is very much in sympathy with our project, and made a number of valuable suggestions which should assist materially in building up our organization in France, and result in the acquisition of desirable material.

In conversation with M. Roland Marcel, L'Administrateur Général of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Mr. Ayres received a proposition of unusual interest. M. Marcel would like to devote a magnificent room, which was at one time the reception room of the Cardinal for whom the building was designed, to an American Library exhibit. This might be maintained jointly by the American Library Association and The Business Historical Society. The details of the plan are now under consideration and if it becomes a fact, this library will go far toward establishing a better mutual understanding of policies between the two countries.

Encouraging as are the tangible aspects of this trip, the intangible ones are even more so. It has put the Society in touch with foreign interests in a way which could not have been accomplished for years, through the less personal medium of correspondence.

Mr. Howard Corning's paper entitled "The First Iron Works in America," which he delivered, on the invitation of the American Iron and Steel Institute, at their semi-annual meeting in May, excited so much favorable comment that it was determined early in July to make an effort to secure additional information on the subject. To this end Mr. Corning spent a part of his vacation in the iron and steel district of the Middle West, with very gratifying results.

One of the purposes of the trip was to bring the Society to the people of the section visited in such manner as to ensure the future preservation of business material wherever it might exist, and to obtain information as to its character and whereabouts, so that students might use it when necessary. In many instances he found valuable collections of data, which were in danger of destruction, due to lack of housing facilities or the indifference of the owners, and these were acquired and will be carefully collated and catalogued. He found, however, that much historical data relating to the iron and steel, lumber and transportation interests had already been collected by individuals and organizations and had been deposited in various historical Societies. The knowledge of where these collections are and what they contain will help the Society when giving assistance to inquirers. By continuing this policy, in various parts of the country, it is expected that in time material will be available which will give a clear picture of early activities, and full information on file as to where it may be found.

As examples of the information acquired from the section of the country visited by Mr. Corning, the following collections are of outstanding importance:

At Buffalo. *Buffalo Historical Society*, Mr. Bingham, Curator, Mr. Severance, Secretary and Treasurer. They specialize on lake transportation and early newspapers.

At Cleveland. *The Western Reserve Historical Society*, Wallace H. Cathart, Curator. They have the records and correspondence of the Connecticut Land Company, the Zoah Community, the Shaker settlements in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee. They have also nine cases of the papers of Elisha Whittlesey, who was first Comptroller of the Treasury, also the records of the First Bank in Cleveland.

At Detroit. *The Burton Collection*, a collection the result of fifty-five years' work by Mr. Clarence E. Burton of Detroit and covering a very wide range of subjects and time. It is housed in the Detroit Public Library and Mrs. L. Oughtred Woltz is in charge.

At Ann Arbor. *Clements Library*, Mr. Randolph Adams, Librarian. The papers of Lord Shelburne of England, and many other early American manuscript collections.

At Mackinac Island. Six volumes of old *Astor* records relating to the American Fur Company.

At Ishpeming, Mich. The records of the *Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Company*, a very complete collection of the papers of this company and its predecessors back to about 1850.

At Madison, Wis. The Wisconsin Historical Society has the records of the first Internationale, the papers of Senator Vilas, and the early records of the Kentucky and Tennessee immigrants.

While at Buffalo and Cleveland, Mr. Corning received promises of coöperation on the part of the respective Chambers of Commerce and in the latter city received full information regarding records of the Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Company, which are unusually complete. These are now carefully protected from possible damage and will, without doubt, be available for research if any serious work is contemplated.

Much historical data relating to the lumber industry was found in Detroit, some of which may come to the Society later. Certain material relating to the early banking situation and iron development of this section is still in existence, and worthy of the attention of students.

A short call at Ann Arbor resulted in closer relations with the Clements Library. Here are housed the "Shelburne Papers," recently acquired from England, dealing with colonial commerce. A week end spent at Mackinac Island resulted in the study of some of the Astor records of the American Fur Company, running from 1816 to 1850. These are not available for permanent deposit in the Baker Library, but may be loaned to us during the winter months when the headquarters are closed. At Marquette, much interesting material relating to the iron industry was found, some of which will eventually find its way to the Baker Library.

Mr. Corning had similar experiences in Milwaukee and Madison, Wisconsin, while in Chicago an impetus was gained in our affairs which is timely and of far-reaching importance.

It will be difficult to estimate the advantages to be derived from this series of visits in the Middle West. By means of newspaper publicity and personal interviews the business men of this section are made keenly alive to the necessity of preserving business records even at the expense of some personal inconvenience. Guidance

for future activities will be sought from the experiences of the past, and the Society has obtained valuable information required by men engaged in research and study.

ILLUMINATED LOG OF THE GOOD SHIP "CROWN POINT"

A VERY amusing picture of an East India voyage in the early 'sixties is left us in one of a small collection of log books recently presented to the Society. By the time of the Civil War the importance of sailing craft was already on the wane, but it was not until after the war that the real change from sails to steam power began, and in 1862 a fleet of vessels still made profit of New England handicaps by carrying ice to the tropical ports.

The mate of the *Crown Point*, "from Boston with a cargo of ice by Frederic Tudor, bound for Bombay or Calcutta in the East Indies," had a sense of humor, and considerable talent in drawing ships. The usual "remarks on board," about the wind and weather, and the setting or reefing of sails, are illustrated with ships, sitting on neatly scalloped waves.

In the middle of the seventh day out, they "bent a fore sail and set him reefed, having for the first time an opportunity to bend him since blown away in Boston Bay." The *Crown Point* is shown below, plunging through black and blue waves under reefed topsails.

More sails are set progressively, until she appears running before the wind, with studdingsails set. The mate is a master hand at drawing one vessel at a time, but his picture of the *Crown Point* passing an "English ship bound home" is rather rickety. And his attempts at portraying the various occupations of the crew belong to the kindergarten school of drawing.

On the twenty-third of January begin "Calms, Calms, Calms and very warm weather. Made a finish of unbending all the new Sails and bent old ones. One of the men that had frozen fingers at work on duty."

The next day the same weather continues, and his comment is a double head, progressing both ways from the mouth, which is saying, "calm, calm," upside down. Underneath the picture he says that "strong breezes would be quite, acceptable, as it would be good for hard looks and Sore Eyes."