

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC HISTORY
PAPERS PRESENTED AT
THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE BUSINESS HISTORY CONFERENCE

Paul Uselding, ed.

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edited by Paul Uselding

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Preface

On 1 and 2 March 1979, the 25th annual meeting of the Business History Conference was held at the Monteleone Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana. Local arrangements were provided by Professors Herman Freudenberger and Fred Bateman. The International Trade Mart generously supported this year's banquet held at the Plimsoil Club, and hosted a prebanquet reception. On behalf of the membership and trustees of the Business History Conference I would like to thank the International Trade Mart and Herman and Fred for making our 25th annual meeting so rewarding and enjoyable.

The papers presented at the 25th annual meeting -- printed in their entirety herein, with one or two exceptions -- were selected by Professor Thomas Cochran, our president-elect and program chairman. Professor Cochran arranged the program with exceptional dispatch, and did so in a fashion consistent with the quality that has come to characterize the endeavors of the BHC. The papers in this volume were grouped around several themes: case studies in American business history, comparative business history, railroad leadership in the 20th century, women in business and economic history, and the teaching of business history, in addition to the presentation of dissertation summaries. A number of these themes have formed the focus of Professor Cochran's own research over the course of a long and distinguished career.

Over the course of this year, as he has done so consistently in the past, Fred Bateman orchestrated the organizational and financial requirements of our organization. Fred contributes to every aspect of the operation of the BHC, and we are grateful for the important services he provides. For several years Albro Martin has lent his considerable talents to recruiting new members. Many new members have come into our organization as a result of Albro's diligent efforts. I am sure all our members would endorse a heartfelt "thank you" to both of these fine scholars and good citizens to our profession.

The publication of the annual *Proceedings* of the BHC under the title *Business and Economic History* is made possible by the support of Dean Vernon K. Zimmerman of the College of Commerce

and Business Administration and Robert Resek, Director of the Bureau of Economic and Business Research, both of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. We gratefully acknowledge their assistance.

This volume, which is the fifth under the present title, marks the retirement of Nelle Wagner, who has provided indispensable technical assistance on editorial matters. In the past Nelle has diligently excised any favorable mention on my part of her excellent contribution to our publication. It is time to tell the truth: the handsome appearance and timely completion of these volumes has been the result of Nelle's expert assistance. It is also time to assert my editorial prerogative to express, on behalf of the BHC, our admiration and gratitude for all she has done.

Paul Uselding
University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign

Memorial

Older members of the once united discipline of economic history have been alarmed by the rift that was opened in the last two decades between the approaches of theoretical economists and social historians. The people who have helped to hold the groups together have been the scholars with an interest in both camps, particularly the business historians.

It is in this role that I see Ralph Hidy as particularly effective. In his books, in his relations as Straus Professor at Harvard Business School, in his editorship of the *Business History Review*, and in his service to the Economic History Association as secretary and president, he was an effective mediator between disruptive points of view. He and Muriel wrote literate, narrative history informed by a background of economic theory and showing a willingness to quantify when the data available justified it. They demonstrated that business history should be a broad social discipline.

Ralph's catholic point of view had other virtues. Born in Portland, Indiana, educated in Ohio and Massachusetts, and for some time a citizen of New York City, he was equally at home in all the areas where business history was then developing. He joined in the founding of the Business History Conference, was its president, and did much to create a nationwide interest in the discipline.

Delivered by

Thomas C. Cochran, Benjamin
Franklin Professor of History,
emeritus, University of
Pennsylvania and Senior
Resident Scholar, Eleutherian
Mills Historical Library on
24 February 1978

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