

Records of the Hamilton Woolen Company, 1831-1935

THANKS to the efforts of several officers of the Business Historical Society and members of the Faculty of the Harvard Business School, Baker Library has been given ten cases of records relating to the Hamilton Woolen Company of Southbridge, Massachusetts. This firm was incorporated in 1831 and operated continuously until 1935 when the stockholders decided to dispose of its assets. Its history therefore extends over more than a century, and, while not all of its records have been preserved, a few date from the opening of the business, and the account books for the period since 1845 are available. The collection stored, therefore, throws much light upon the history of woolen manufacture in New England.

A complete list of the items in the collection is not yet available, but the following list gives some idea of its contents:

- Minutes of Stockholders' Meetings, 1831-99
- Minutes of Directors' Meetings, 1845-99
- Treasurer's Reports to Stockholders, 1851-97
- Journals and Ledgers, 1845-1927
- Mill Journals, 1853-86
- Treasurer's Journals, 1864-1927
- Day Books, 1913-27
- Monthly Trial Balances, 1846-1935
- Cost Ledgers and Labor Records, 1913-27
- Vouchers Register, 1886-1935
- Stock Transfers
- Summary of Goods Sold, 1910-29
- Comparison of Costs, 1911-20
- Inventories, 1915-28
- Auditor's Reports, 1928-35
- Photographs
- Samples of delaines
- Federal Tax Returns
- Plant Appraisals
- Miscellaneous Papers and Memoranda

Certain records relating to the firm's recent history have been retained temporarily by the Ames Worsted Company, which purchased part of the assets of the Hamilton Woolen Company. These records, however, will eventually be turned over to Baker Library,

thereby enabling a future business historian to trace the firm's history down to its termination in 1935. The collection constitutes a valuable addition to the material on Business History now assembled at the Harvard Business School.

Wanted: Material on the History of Marketing

SEVERAL officers of the Society recently interviewed members of the Faculty of the Harvard Business School in order to ascertain to what extent historical material would be of special value in the course work of the School. This inquiry had a two-fold purpose: (1) to discover wherein those working in the field of Business History might be of greatest immediate service to current teaching and research in business subjects; and (2) to obtain guidance in the collection and preservation of documentary material pertaining to Business History. It was, in short, an attempt to survey some of the current needs of Business History.

It is evident from the results of the inquiry that there is an immediate need to collect and study historical material on many particular phases of business. The one topic on which information is especially wanted is a history of marketing. Despite the importance of the distribution of commodities in modern society, there is a surprising lack of factual data regarding the major historical developments in the field, and there is reason to believe that an adequate history of marketing in America would not only be of general interest but would also be of direct value in solving some of the distribution problems which confront business today.

The Business Historical Society desires to be of service in the preparation of a history of marketing, and members of the Society are urged to assist in the collection of material. We want to know, for example, when and where wholesalers split off from the importers in eastern and southern ports, leaving the latter to specialize in foreign trade; when and why retailing and wholesaling became generally divorced; how wholesalers established connections with new markets as the nation expanded to the west; and what the circumstances were which led to the emergence of such specialists as brokers, selling agents, jobbers, commission dealers, warehousemen, credit houses like Dun and Bradstreet, and the ubiquitous traveling salesman. We also want