

Not Just Business as Usual: Evolving Trends in Historical Research at Baker Library

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Abstract: Since its founding, Baker Library has collected rare and unique materials to support the curriculum of the Harvard Business School. Today, Baker Library holds one of the preeminent collections of historical materials on business history and economic philosophy in the world. Included in the collections are manuscripts, rare books, pamphlets, broadsides, photographs, prints, trade catalogs, trade cards, and annual reports. The earliest records extend back to the banking and patronage activities of the Medici family in the fifteenth century. Harvard Business School students and faculty as well as leaders in the field have used this resource material to learn from the experiences of the past and to understand the historical development of business functions. More recently, however, the material has also been drawing ever-increasing numbers of international students and scholars from a broad range of disciplines, such as cultural anthropology, ethnic and gender studies, industrial archaeology, sociology, fine and decorative arts, maritime history, and engineering. This essay presents an overview of the Baker Library collection, traces changing uses and users, and reviews current plans for the future of the collection and its place within the Harvard Business School and the wider world of American business history.

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FOR OVER SEVENTY YEARS, Baker Library of the Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University has actively collected and encouraged the use of business manuscript materials. Given Baker Library's significant role both in the development of business history as an academic discipline and business records as a collecting focus, the study of the historic and current usage of these resources offers a rare opportunity to note general trends in the usage of business manuscript materials and predict future courses. Baker Library has come to hold one of the preeminent collections of historical materials on business history and economic history and philosophy in the world. Included in the collections are manuscripts, rare books, pamphlets, broadsides, photographs, prints, trade catalogs, trade cards, and corporate annual reports.

In February 1908, Charles W. Eliot, President of Harvard University, made the first public announcement of the plans to create a Graduate School of Business Administration when addressing the Harvard Club of Connecticut in New Haven:

What leads us to that new undertaking? In the first place, the prodigious development of many corporate businesses in our country; in the next place, the fact that more than half the recent graduates of Harvard College have gone immediately into business....The explanation of that new phenomenon is that business in its upper walks has become a highly intellectual calling, requiring knowledge of languages, economics, industrial organization, and commercial law, and wide reading concerning the resources and habits of the different nations. In all these directions we propose to give professional graduate education.¹

In the early twentieth century, there were several undergraduate schools of commerce and business such as the Wharton School of Finance and Economy at the University of Pennsylvania, the College of Commerce and Politics at the University of Chicago, and the Amos Tuck School of Administration and Finance at Dartmouth College. It was with the formal vote of the Harvard University Corporation on March 30, 1908, establishing the Graduate School of Business Administration, which marked the creation of the first graduate business school in the United States. Everything had to be created; there were no standard practices to follow. Even such basic considerations as curriculum content and admission and graduation requirements had to be developed. Difficult as this situation was, there was also tremendous freedom. Because there were no precedents to follow, there could be great creativity and daring. This attitude touched every aspect of the Harvard Business School.

The overriding concern in designing the graduate business program and the curriculum was to closely link the classroom experience with everyday business life. The case method offered a methodology to bridge the division between the academic and business worlds. The case method continues to be closely related with the Harvard Business School and insures that the bond between the business and the academic worlds remains strong and vital. Dean Edwin F. Gay (1908-1918) described the planned teaching method in the first school catalog: "In the courses on Commercial Law the case method will be used. In other courses an analogous method, emphasizing class-room discussion in connection with lectures and frequent reports on assigned topics—what may be called the 'problem-

¹Jeffrey L. Cruickshank, *A Delicate Experiment: The Harvard Business School 1908-1945* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1987), 35.

method'—will be introduced as far as practicable. Visits of inspection...to various commercial establishments in Boston and in the neighborhood manufacturing centres of New England'' will be made.²

The school faced two immediate concerns: how to gain respect within the Harvard University community and how to develop support for a graduate, academic program in a business world that emphasized moving up through the ranks and on-the-job training.

Establishing a superb research library was viewed as an essential component in addressing these two concerns. Harvard University was, and is, renowned for its rich libraries and unparalleled resources. A preeminent business library was one very important way for this young School to gain respect within the Harvard University academic community and to clearly begin to define the scholarly and intellectual value of business administration as an academic discipline. With the formal dedication of Baker Library in 1927, Harvard University was again establishing another first—the first graduate business library in America. Wallace B. Donham, the second Dean of the Harvard Business School from 1919 to 1942, enthusiastically advocated the development of a historical component to business literature and business studies. Under Donham's leadership, the Business Historical Society was founded in 1925, and the first American faculty chair in business history was established two years later.

There was great latitude in the first decades of Baker Library collecting, both in terms of the range of disciplines included in the holdings and in the format of the materials. All collection decisions were based on the desire to develop a major research institution as well as meet the needs of a professional school. One of the most significant collections to emerge was the Business Manuscripts Collection. Much of the motivation for collecting manuscripts was to provide sources for teaching on current problems faced by businesses by collecting materials actually produced by firms in their daily operations. With the case methodology, there is a need to truly understand and penetrate the actual workings of an organization and management—administrative records often offer that unique insight. This collecting interest was an asset in forging close ties between the business community and the Harvard Business School.

The first manuscript collection, the Samuel Slater Collection, was acquired in 1916. Samuel Slater (1768-1835) established the first cotton mill in the United States in 1791 in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. He, with his brother, went on to establish a series of cotton and woolen mills in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, which were continued by their descendants. Samuel Slater is often credited as having been the father of the American Industrial Revolution, having set in place the infrastructure essential to large-scale factory production such as had been developed in England a generation earlier. Together with his brother, he established regulations for their factory workers and created ancillary institutions such as turnpike companies, banking institutions, and insurance companies to support their endeavor. Social order was imposed on their mill environs through moral societies, temperance groups, schools on Sunday, churches, family tenement units, savings banks, and local institutions of town government. Their records—which comprise nearly one thousand volumes and over one hundred boxes, and span the years 1796 to 1915—are key documents in the history of the early textile industry in New England.³

²*Official Register of Harvard University, The Graduate School of Business Administration, 1908-1909.* Vol. V, Number 28, September 3, 1908 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1908): 13.

³Norman Gras and Henrietta Larson, "Almy, Brown & Slater and the American Industrial Revolution," *Casebook in American Business History* (New York: F.S. Crofts & Co., 1939).

In many ways, the Business Historical Society and the Harvard Business School created and nurtured the development of the field of “business history.” The goals of the Business Historical Society were to identify and preserve original business papers, to encourage the study of business, and to publish research in business history. Baker Library was named as their repository and so became the first library to systematically collect business records.

Arthur Cole, Librarian of Baker Library, described the particular issues the business historian faced in an article entitled “Tracking the Elusive Document,” published in 1927:

The historian of business encounters difficulties which are in some respects more baffling than those of other historians, especially if he attempts to penetrate the “dark ages” of seventy-five or a hundred years ago. The chronicler of political events has his party platforms, his speeches and private letters, his electoral votes, and the like. The literary historian has his books, pamphlets, and a flood of other material. And in somewhat similar measure the military, scientific, or cultural historian has a large body of data ready at hand. At best, all such digging into the past is complicated and difficult, as any one who has tried historical investigation of any sort would admit; but it seems as though he who tries to piece together a story of business meets additional serious obstacles.⁴

One of the primary activities for Baker Library in those first years was to encourage and actively participate in the development of business history and to gather materials. The Business Historical Society published the *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society* which for the initial decade not only announced the most recent acquisition of a business manuscript collection for Baker Library but also promoted how the collections could be used and their value to business historians. Examples of this abound in the early issues of the *Bulletin*: “Lawrence Manufacturing Company is useful for price and wage studies as well as textile tariff history....S. Slater Mills & Sons, Inc. is of particular value for showing the development of machine processes...is source material for statistical studies on wages.”⁵ A representative article from this period would be “The Importance of Farm and General Store Account Books In Business History” which assessed the value of the ledger books held in Baker Library’s collections.⁶ This almost exclusive focus on the manuscript collections of Baker Library began to change in the late 1940s as other institutions began to collect business records and the field of business history began to expand.

Usage of the manuscript collections in the early years was primarily by members of the Business Historical Society and/or the Harvard University community. As the business history field developed, usage of the materials increased. R. Richard Wohl assessed the status of business history in an article entitled “The Significance of Business History,” published in 1954:

⁴Arthur Cole, “Tracking the Elusive Document,” *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society* 1 (May-June 1927): 11.

⁵“New England’s Business History,” *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society* 4 (November 1930): 2-3.

⁶“Importance of Farm and General Store Account Books In Business History,” *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society* 5 (February 1931): 12-14.

In American universities fifty years ago, business history was studied indirectly and intermittently, if at all: it was hardly a distinct specialty without a name, a received technique, or a special following. At the half-century, it was well on the way to having all of these in good measure...Even as recently as 25 years ago, business history was still a fledgling enthusiasm with only a few scholars, who labored to bring it to academic respectability by advancing the claims of research in American economic history generally....It has brought in the mainstream of American historical scholarship a great mass of new material—business archives—which heretofore had been almost wholly neglected.⁷

In reviewing the annual reports for the Manuscript Division of Baker Library from 1948 to 1971, one can trace the development of serious usage of the manuscript materials, an overall increase in the usage, and the changing nature of the user. In the 1948-49 report, Robert Lovett, Curator of Manuscripts, noted thirty-two users and eight mail requests.⁸ The report on the Division in 1957-58, notes "a slight increase in use of the material; noting 47 users....I have kept figures of use now for almost ten years, and certain results are of interest. Among collections used Hancock is by far the most popular;...Next comes the Heard, followed by the Jay Cooke Collection."⁹ (The Augustine Heard collection concerns the China Trade in the nineteenth century; Cooke was a private banker and financier of railroad and other ventures in the western United States) Robert Lovett enthusiastically reported in 1979 that "inclusion of the records in the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections plus the spread by word of mouth, has resulted in an increase of users per year, from 136 in 1968-69 to 250 in 1977-78."¹⁰ Lovett also reflects on the increased diversity of the users and new methods of conducting research: "Our textile collections continue to be consulted for a variety of purposes. New quantitative methods have been applied to certain of the payroll series, in studies of women in the work force, of immigrant workers, or of employees in a certain area."¹¹

Beginning in the 1970s, one can see an increased variety in the historians who consulted these materials beyond the business historian as exclusive user, and a different focus by scholars in approaching the records. In the mid-1980s, Nicholas Salvatore, a labor historian at Cornell University, was just beginning to research an article on workers' control of production in nineteenth-century America. He was urged to seek out business records to get a real understanding of how both workers and management see the shop floor. (Professor Salvatore had never consulted business manuscript material in his previous research.) When reviewing the finding aid to the American Steel & Wire Collection, one of the largest and most used collections in Baker Library, he noted a penciled-in notation of "Amos Webber Thermometer Record and Diary." Expecting to find merely a listing of temperatures, Salvatore instead discovered a nine-volume, two thousand-page chronicle detailing the observations and insights of Amos Webber, a nineteenth-century African-American man. From 1854 to 1860, and then again from 1872 until his death in 1904,

⁷R. Richard Wohl, "The Significance of Business History," *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society* 28 (June 1954): 128.

⁸Robert W. Lovett, "Report on the Manuscript Division, Baker Library" 1948-1949.

⁹Robert W. Lovett, "Report on the Manuscript Division, Baker Library" 1957-1958.

¹⁰Robert W. Lovett, "Business Manuscripts at Baker Library, 1969-1979," *Business History Review* 53 (Autumn 1979): 388.

¹¹Lovett, "Business Manuscripts at Baker Library," 389.

Webber recorded not only the daily temperatures but also current events; he would sometimes add his own comments. In 1996, Nick Salvatore's book *We All Got History: The Memory Books of Amos Webber* was published. Professor Salvatore alternates between the actual diary text and historical analysis in recounting the story and comments of this man, offering a unique view of nineteenth-century American life from an African-American perspective.¹² The entire nature of Professor Salvatore's research and publication changed due to the discovery of this diary among the vast administrative records of the American Steel and Wire Company.

There is also a renewed awareness among the Harvard Business School faculty of the potential of these historical materials, and an interest in tapping into these resources to show the historical precedents for many contemporary theories. Clayton M. Christensen, an Associate Professor at the Business School, is an expert on the strategic management of technology. His research focuses on identifying and managing the factors that influence the way in which a firm introduces an advanced technology to existing and prospective markets. Through extensive research in varied industries, Christensen has learned that most companies have outstanding track records from investing in those technologies that address their mainstream customers' demands for improvements, but have great difficulty investing in simple innovations that create new markets. Christensen terms his theory "disruptive technology."¹³ In the fall of 1996, the Historical Collections Department of the Baker Library presented an illustrated talk to Professor Christensen's course, "Managing Technology," on applying the contemporary concept of "disruptive technologies" to the emergence of ring spinning technology (1828+) in the American textile industry. (This was later turned into a very successful exhibition.) Baker Library has an unusually large and rich collection of nineteenth-century manuscript records from New England textile firms and of the machinery builders who supplied their production technologies. Displayed were daybooks, trade catalogs, credit reports, photographs, and other materials which not only told the story of this significant technological innovation, but also provided the detailed evidence needed to decide whether ring spinning qualifies as an early example of disruptive technology.

Nancy F. Koehne, an Associate Professor and business historian, has noted that more and more second-year MBA students at Harvard Business School are choosing to do research on historical topics, particularly the development of railroads. Professor Koehne attributes this heightened interest to the awareness that history and the past have tremendous value in providing a road map to navigate the present. This is particularly true in periods characterized by far-reaching social, economic, technological, and strategic change. One can look at the second industrial revolution of the end of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century for insight into our contemporary world. MBA students feel that they can better understand the strategic, technological, financial, and other managerial challenges of the Information Revolution by learning more about the patterns of the past.

Historically, the manuscript collections have been heavily used for topics in business and economic history, and they continue to be. But in the last ten years, the materials have been increasingly sought out by scholars from a broad range of disciplines, namely

¹²Nicholas Salvatore, *We All Got History: The Memory Books of Amos Webber* (New York: Times Books, 1996), xiii-xx.

¹³*Harvard Business School Research, 1996-1997* (Division of Research, Harvard Business School, 1996), 67.

cultural anthropology, ethnic and gender studies, industrial archaeology, sociology, fine and decorative arts, maritime history, and engineering. They, too, find within these voluminous records details that are not available from any other source. There is a new understanding that business manuscript and archival collections are a unique and vital component in understanding nineteenth- and twentieth-century social and cultural history.

Today, Baker Library's current holdings include over fourteen hundred sets of original business records that cover such far-flung enterprises as the taming of the American frontier, maritime trade along the Silk Route, and the banking and patronage activities of the Medici family. On the regional front, the collections trace the economic development of New England through industries such as textile manufacturing, shipping, foreign marketing, banking, fishing, whaling, and ship-building. Photographs and engravings capture the images of prominent business people, physical plants, and processes of industry in the United States.

Liberal arts researchers have found merchandise catalogs and sales records to be an excellent resource. Marina Moskowitz, a doctoral student in the American Studies Department at Yale, has been examining such documentation of the firm Reed and Barton for her thesis entitled "The Standard of Living: Design and Distribution of American Material Culture at the Turn of the Century." It is a series of four case studies, each at a different scale of material culture, that examine how design and distribution of goods and spaces contributed to the standardization of material life. The first chapter is on silver-plate flatware and focuses on Reed and Barton. Ledgers from the Lawrence Manufacturing Company collection contain fabric swatches, which helped Deborah Kraak, Associate Curator for Textiles at the Winterthur Museum, measure the success of a special pattern produced in the 1880s which incorporated illustrations from Dickens' *The Pickwick Papers*, framed in lively calico borders.

Maritime historians have long relied on ships' logbooks to document myriad aspects of international trade. Baker Library's collection of some 460 ships' logbooks has aided scholars in their quest for details concerning daily onboard activities. Professor Thomas Layton of San Jose State University came to use the logbooks of the clipper ship *Frolic* unexpectedly in 1984 while working on an archaeological dig of the Pomo Indian village one hundred miles north of San Francisco. He and a group of his students had dug up fragments of Chinese porcelain and were puzzled as to how these pieces had found their way to such a remote area. They were equally perplexed by a local legend that told of Pomo women wearing Chinese silk shawls in the 1850s. Determined to find the answer to these questions, he never dreamed that his quest would eventually involve the lives of nineteenth-century Boston merchants, Baltimore shipbuilders, Bombay opium brokers, and newly rich businessmen in gold rush San Francisco. Here is an excerpt from an announcement of his forthcoming book *The Voyage of the 'Frolic': New England Merchants and the Opium Trade*:

The author soon learned that in 1850 the clipper *Frolic*, a sailing ship built specifically for the Asian opium trade, had wrecked on the Mendocino coast, a few miles from the Pomo village. He unearthed the business records of its owners, A. Heard & Co., which showed that respectable Bostonians had made their fortunes running opium from India to China. The family histories of the firm's two most influential partners are traced from the American Revolution to their joint decision to order a custom-built Baltimore clipper for the opium trade. In describing the design, construction, and outfitting of the *Frolic*, the author was aided by a stroke of luck—a

slave named Fred Bailey, later known to the world as Frederick Douglass, worked in the *Frolic*'s shipyard in 1836 and wrote detailed descriptions of the building of such ships.

The *Frolic*...plied the opium trade from Bombay to China from 1845 to 1850. [Layton] describes the political, financial, and logistical aspects of the profitable enterprise before 1849, when the introduction of steam vessels into the opium trade made the *Frolic* obsolete as an opium clipper. However, the California gold rush created a lucrative market for Chinese goods, and the Heard firm dispatched the *Frolic* to San Francisco with a diverse cargo that included silks, porcelain, jewelry, and furniture. When the *Frolic* wrecked on the Mendocino coast, the Pomo Indians salvaged its cargo, and the vessel's history passed into folk tradition.¹⁴

Indisputably, the most frequently consulted collection is the R.G. Dun & Co. credit ledgers. Founded in 1841 by Lewis Tappan, the Mercantile Agency—later known as R.G. Dun & Co.—was the first commercial reporting agency in America and dominated the field well into the twentieth century. These ledgers contain a wealth of business history information on hundreds of American communities during the period 1841-1888.

The sources of the company's evaluations were its correspondents who prepared credit reports on businessmen in their town or city. By the early 1850s, the firm employed two thousand correspondents throughout the United States and Canada. At least twice yearly, and more often in cases of dramatic change, credit reports were sent to Dun's New York City office where they were entered into large ledger books, arranged by counties. It is these ledgers, comprising 2,580 volumes, that the Dun & Bradstreet Company donated to Baker Library in 1962.

The reports nearly always indicated the subject's occupation and estimated his net worth, the value of his personal and real property, and his general business prospects. Many reports often included such information as former residence, marital status, family and ethnic background, age, business experience, and personal reputation in the community. Many observations are startlingly revealing of the individual's physical appearance, personality traits, and personal habits.

The collection has long served business historians as a resource for documenting the rise and fall of both small and large businesses in the nineteenth century. One can trace the development of Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company as well as the burgeoning law firm of Abraham Lincoln. Historian Nancy Tomes used the ledgers for investigating the American response to germ theory and dangers of sewer gas in the late-nineteenth century. She monitored the advent and varying success of disinfectant solvents to protect citizens, in the words of one company, "from the insidious foe that stealthily enters our homes and destroys our happiness."¹⁵

The R.G. Dun & Co. Collection is widely perceived as an invaluable resource; usage of this collection accounted for over one-third of the total usage of the manuscript holdings in 1996. The collection has been receiving increased attention from gender and ethnic studies scholars examining the roles of African-Americans, Jews, and females in mid-

¹⁴Press release from Stanford University Press for Thomas N. Layton, *The Voyage of the 'Frolic': New England Merchants and the Opium Trade* (1997).

¹⁵This quote comes from a promotional brochure, *The Germicide, Endorsed by Science and Experience* (1882), 3.

nineteenth-century American entrepreneurship—a domain largely the bastion of white Christian males.

The R.G. Dun & Co. ledgers have proved an indispensable tool to Susan Lewis, a history professor at SUNY Binghamton. Professor Lewis has shed light on the diverse roles of “enterprising women”—from those whose dowries and business savvy behind the scenes catapulted them and their husbands to prosperity to those who led a more modest existence through individual or collaborative efforts with other women. In the painstaking process of tracking all women who went in and out of business in Albany, New York, she has identified with certainty over fifteen hundred individuals. Determining a precise figure has proved somewhat tricky, as it was not uncommon for women to operate a business under their husband’s name.

Other researchers have been conducting similar studies on women in business in other “port” cities (Albany is the eastern terminus of the famed Erie Canal), such as San Francisco and New Orleans during a very significant growth period in America’s history owing to waves of immigration from Europe and Asia.

The impact of new ethnicities and religions also introduced new political philosophies into the workplace. One social historian took interest in an entry on the Rockport Granite Company in Massachusetts in the Dun ledgers. The entry listed the company’s total assets and liabilities—the only surviving financial information, as the ledgers and account books had been destroyed. The data served as a fine complement to a manuscript collection held by Baker Library on this company, which came to hold numerous granite properties on Cape Ann between 1864 and 1930. In its heyday, the company employed one thousand men in all, with a weekly payroll of \$20,000. Workers’ records showed a number of immigrant Finns coming to work in the quarries in the late 1880s. Finns tended to subscribe to a strong Socialist work ethic and rallied for improved labor conditions. Strikes ensued and intensified in frequency. In the company’s later years, several strikes, culminating in a tumultuous one in 1922, weakened the firm’s standing and resulted in its liquidation in 1930.

A subdivision of Baker Library’s manuscript holdings in printed form is its Historic Corporate Reports Collection, consisting of selected original company documents, from circa 1840 to the present. Over twenty thousand companies are represented, from small silver mining operations in Nevada to modern international conglomerates. Included are annual reports, prospectuses, proxies, registration statements, listing applications, 10Ks, and miscellaneous items such as brokerage house reports, charts, and unpublished corporate histories.

The dramatic evolution of the corporate report itself is a fascinating research topic. Early on, corporate reports were rather meager communiqués, intended for company internal distribution only. They tended to consist of little more than a letter to stockholders signed by the Chief Executive Officer, a balance sheet, and an auditor’s statement. Several events at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries conspired favorably to transform such reports into a company’s most important marketing and public relations piece. The landmark Securities Exchange Act of 1934 required publicly held companies to make full financial disclosure. Advances in automation had given rise to more cost-effective paper production, speedier typesetting methods, and photographic reproduction. The emergence of the popular press and sales advertising provided an ideal venue for graphic designers to showcase their talent, which soon spilled over into the illustration of corporate reports as well.

Today, the corporate report can be distributed to a broader public with equal effectiveness: stockholders, employees, consumers, the press, and even government agencies. The obligatory financial data are frequently relegated to the back of the report, while the bulk of the contents—both text and graphics—tend to define the company's style and professionalism, vision, and responsiveness to social and cultural issues.

Many of the items are indeed as noteworthy for their intellectual contents as for their aesthetic value. Social historians have taken an interest in a 1955 annual report from Southwestern Bell. The company chose to minimize the emphasis on technology and to depict instead a wholesome suburban setting for wider appeal. In the brightly colored illustration, a happy family stands on their picture-perfect front porch and waves to the smiling repairman on the lawn just this side of the white picket fence.

A similarly interesting find is a 1924 letter to stockholders tucked into the annual report for the Computing-Tabulating-Recording Co. Its president, Thomas J. Watson, foresaw that the production of "additional devices"—as yet unnamed and largely unimagined—by the company justified a change in name to International Business Machines Corporation. Reports from successive years confirm the accuracy of his prediction.

Baker Library also chronicles the historical record of the Business School itself. Major components include the official records of all administrative departments as well as professional papers of Business School faculty. Ever-increasing numbers of outside scholars from around the world—principally Japan—request access to these materials to investigate innovation and development in business education pioneered at the school over the past nine decades. Class notes, student publications, event posters, and other media vividly capture student life on campus. Regina Blaszczyk, Professor of History at Boston University, is researching subsidiaries of Corning Glass Works from 1900-1920 for a book. She has been supplementing use of the historic corporate reports of Woolworth and other retail establishments with class notes of Charles Devon La Follette (MBA '22) and the papers of faculty members Melvin Copeland and Paul T. Cherington. Exploring faculty involvement with relevant corporations has greatly enriched her research findings.

No treatment of Historical Collections in Baker Library would be complete without mentioning the Kress Collection of Business and Economics, one of the premier rare book collections in the world. The collection was brought to Harvard Business School in 1936 through the gift of Claude Washington Kress, who financed the purchase of the private collection of Herbert Somerton Foxwell, a professor of economics at University College in London. The collection comprises first and successive editions of the great classics of economic thought by such luminaries as Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, Thomas Malthus, David Ricardo, and Jean-Baptiste Say. The collection is equally rich in ephemeral material such as broadsides and pamphlets, which are revelatory of social and economic dissent of the times, ranging from public reactions to duties on imported fabrics to early-nineteenth-century debates on the advantages of paper currency over coin. The first stock market crash in England in 1720 over speculative investments in the South Seas is also documented in both decorous and jocular ways and in varied media, ranging from broadsides to playing cards. Technically, the collection falls outside the domain of manuscripts and will therefore not be treated in depth here. Suffice it to say that this collection, too, has begun attracting broader audiences, from architectural historians examining the evolution of shopping arcades from the Turkish bazaar forward, to a Jane Austen scholar seeking more details on people and events alluded to in her novels. A significant number of titles from the Kress collection are included in the microfilm publication, *The Goldsmith's-Kress Library of Economic Literature*, produced in 1972. Requests for this microfilm set account

for the high number of interlibrary loan requests the Historical Collections Department processes. Recently, the OCLC records for this set were added to HOLLIS, the online catalog for Harvard University, and use of the Kress Collection has tripled.

The usage statistics for all the collections held in the Historical Collections Department of Baker Library reveal a tremendous variety of scholars and a wide range of research purposes. One can only conclude that business records have, in essence, been discovered by the wider scholarly community. The assumption can be made that this trend will continue as the collections are cited and referred to in an ever-growing circle of publications. Collection citations have appeared in scholarly journals and historical society publications including *The Northern Mariner*, *The Victorian Society in America*, *Business History*, *Technology and Culture*, *Western States Jewish History*; commercial magazines from *Newsweek* to *Antiques*; monographs produced by both university presses and major publishing houses nationwide such as Richard D. Irwin, Prentice-Hall, Houghton Mifflin, and Times Books; exhibit catalogs produced by such institutions as the Winterthur Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, Yale University Art Gallery, the National Building Museum, and the Bostonian Society; and in conference papers given at national meetings such as the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP), and the Victorian Society of America.

To what does Baker Library owe its increased use by non-traditional users? One can claim that we are in an age of interdisciplinary studies. Scholars across the board are crossing conventional boundaries and are always on the look-out for new and under-utilized manuscript collections. Clearly, online catalogs deserve a great deal of credit. Baker Library is committed to using technology to improve access to and heighten awareness of its unique resources. Records describing the manuscript and archival collections appear in Harvard University's on-line catalog, HOLLIS, which is available on the Internet. In the fall of 1997, Baker Library will launch the Web-based Baker Library Catalog which allows direct links to encoded finding aids for the Business Manuscript Collections. The Historical Collections Department is currently engaged in several retrospective cataloging projects to provide greater access to collections such as trade cards, trade catalogs, and historic corporate reports. It is likely that we will reach an even larger and more varied audience with these electronic tools.

In the over seventy years Baker Library has been collecting rare and historical materials, the field of business history has grown into a full academic discipline represented in many colleges and universities. Correspondingly, business archives is now a recognized collecting focus of institutions around the world. The evolving usage of the historical resources in Baker Library is reflective of the development of business history as a field of research and study. Given the ever-increasing number of academic disciplines reflected by our users and the diversity of their research projects, one can anticipate that these same changes are occurring within the field of business history and that this trend will only continue in the coming decades.