

# Editors' Notes

## EDITORS' REPORT

The great spurt in pieces submitted to the *JOURNAL* in the summer of 1982, to which we referred in last year's report, seems in retrospect to have been little more than seasonal variation. For the year July 1982–June 1983 we had 102 submissions, as compared with 98, 106, 102, 110, and 98 in years from 1978 through 1982. These figures point to a stationary state rather than either growth or decline.

Of the 102 submissions, 17 have been published, 5 accepted for publication, 45 rejected, and 35 are pending. The average time to a decision is 10–12 weeks, about in line with previous experience. Those who hear from us in less than average time can thank the members of our hard-working Editorial Board, of whom we ask and receive timely service, as well as the conscientious outside referees on whom we call for advice when it is appropriate. The 1983 outside referees are listed at the end of this report.

The distribution of 1982–1983 submissions by subject is as follows: United States and Canada, 45 percent; modern Europe, 20 percent; ancient and medieval Europe, 4 percent; rest of the world (Asia, Africa, Latin America, Oceania), 15 percent; and method, history of thought, and general, 16 percent. The North American percentage is about the same as in recent years, but the European percentage continues to decline while that of the rest of the world is increasing.

Our more than one thousand pages this past year contained 20 articles in the three regular issues and 24 articles in the March "Tasks" issue, which featured the proceedings of last year's annual meeting in Baltimore. In addition to the articles, we published 24 notes and discussions, 9 dissertation and workshop summaries, a review article, and 144 reviews of books. The number of book reviews, contrary to our intentions, is down again (albeit only slightly) from the previous year. Perhaps we have been giving in, subconsciously, to the faction that tells us to publish more articles and fewer reviews. The annual-meeting issue is also taking up more of our publishing space. Nonetheless, we continue to strive for comprehensiveness in our review section—we are the only journal in the field with this goal—and we would appreciate the help of our readers both in suggesting books we should not fail to review and in acting as reviewers when requested.

Editing the *JOURNAL* is not an easy job. Few rewarding ones are. The job is made possible by the generous support of our universities, North Carolina State and Iowa. It is made immeasurably easier by the aid of a great many people: the talented assistant editors (Genevieve Gwynne and Ginalie Swaim), able editorial assistants (Judy Gregory, Stefan Jaronski, and Cindy Olsen in Raleigh, Linda Ellis and Ann Tremmel in Iowa City), perceptive referees (on and not on the Editorial Board), cooperative authors and reviewers (see the *JOURNAL* for their names), and Dick and Lynn Williams, who enable us to concentrate on the editorial end of journal publication by so ably handling all of the business and financial aspects of our operation.

We would like to thank for their assistance in 1983 the members of the Editorial Board, whose names are listed on the inside front cover, and the following outside referees:

Lee Alston, Williams College

Robert Ankli, University of Guelph

Peter Berck, University of California, Berkeley

Michael Bordo, University of South Carolina

E. Cary Brown, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Bruce M. S. Campbell, Queen's University

N. F. R. Crafts, University College

Lance Davis, California Institute of Technology  
 Trevor J. O. Dick, University of Lethbridge  
 John C. Dutton, North Carolina State University  
 Douglas Fisher, North Carolina State University  
 James Foreman-Peck, University of Newcastle upon Tyne  
 Louis Galambos, Johns Hopkins University  
 Robert E. Gallman, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill  
 Peter George, McMaster University  
 Stephan F. Gohmann, North Carolina State University  
 Paul Greenough, University of Iowa  
 Thomas Grennes, North Carolina State University  
 Sarah Hanley, University of Iowa  
 Joan Hannon, University of California, Berkeley  
 Bent Hansen, University of California, Berkeley  
 John R. Hanson, Texas A&M University  
 Charles Issawi, Princeton University  
 Paul R. Johnson, North Carolina State University  
 Thomas Johnson, North Carolina State University  
 William Lazonick, Harvard University  
 Ronald Lee, University of California, Berkeley  
 S. Todd Lowry, Washington and Lee University  
 Robert Margo, University of Pennsylvania  
 Michelle McAlpin, Tufts University  
 Robert McGuire, Ball State University  
 Marvin McInnis, Queen's University, Kingston  
 Allan Meltzer, Carnegie-Mellon University  
 Harry Miskimin, Yale University  
 Joel Mokyr, Northwestern University  
 Lawrence Officer, Michigan State University  
 Alan L. Olmstead, University of California, Davis  
 Carla Rahn Phillips, University of Minnesota  
 Jonathan Pincus, Virginia Polytechnic Institute  
 Hugh Rockoff, Rutgers University  
 Richard Roehl, University of Michigan-Dearborn  
 Winifred B. Rothenberg, Brandeis University  
 William Rubinstein, University of Melbourne  
 Anna J. Schwartz, National Bureau of Economic Research  
 James A Seagraves, North Carolina State University  
 Barbara Solow, Boston University  
 Edith D. Sylla, North Carolina State University  
 Michael Tannen, Burke, Virginia  
 Steven Webb, University of Michigan  
 Rona Weiss, Iona College  
 Eugene N. White, Rutgers University  
 Elmus Wicker, Indiana University  
 Gavin Wright, Stanford University

#### EDITORSHIP

Claudia Goldin of the Department of Economics at the University of Pennsylvania has accepted the E.H.A. Trustees' invitation to become co-editor of the JOURNAL for a term of three years, effective with the September 1984 issue. As previously announced, Donald McCloskey of the University of Iowa will continue as co-editor for a second three-year term. Goldin succeeds Richard Sylla whose term will end in June 1984.

## REVIEWING A REVIEW

*The editors have received the following communication from Peter R. Shergold, whose book, Working Class Life: The "American Standard" in Comparative Perspective, 1899–1913, was reviewed in the December 1982 issue, pp. 959–61, by Stanley Lebergott:*

It is a well-established academic tradition that authors do not reply to criticisms leveled at their work in book reviews. Stanley Lebergott, in his assessment of my *Working Class Life*, presents a number of analytical weaknesses that I willingly accept. Indeed, as he is good enough to acknowledge, I make similar comments within the book's covers. I am genuinely grateful to him for discovering a mistake on page 210, although it should be noted that it is not an 'unfortunate multiplication error' but an equally unfortunate typographical one: the cliometrics, if pedestrian, are correct. The thesis I extend—that unskilled workers experienced similar levels of material welfare in Britain and the United States in the 1900s—is controversial, and may well prove unpersuasive to a reviewer. I am moved to break convention, however, and reply to Lebergott's review, because the two most penetrating criticisms made are both based upon glaring factual errors.

First, *JEH* readers are asked whether they realize that my conclusion "does not in fact compare data on workers' pay? For when [Shergold] decides that 'the unskilled Pittsburgh worker gained a real wage the same as, or very little better than, that paid in Pittsburgh or Sheffield,' it is by comparing Pittsburgh pay plus—plus an implicit 26 percent more for the earnings of wife and child." Readers might be surprised at this: the author is staggered! My conclusion (pp. 208–19, Tables 60–65, and Graph 4) clearly compares payment per timed unit of work—that is, real hourly wages for male adult workers. It is true that, in addition, I spend four paragraphs assessing what difference it would make to take into account differences in the paid labor of other family members, weekly hours worked, and income derived from boarders. But even if Lebergott had read *only* these four paragraphs it is difficult to see how he could have been misled, for they are almost totally concerned with the inappropriateness of such measures as unambiguous guides to living standards. It is a cruel irony that the paragraphs in question were informed by Lebergott's own penetrating writings on changes in the American quality of life.

Second, I am castigated for not taking into account qualitative aspects in assessing the relative cost of living. Readers are told that "Shergold simply assumes that a given number of rooms in Pittsburgh and in Birmingham are equivalent in value." I have absolutely no idea how I could be found guilty of such a major error of omission. The greater part of Chapter 7, pp. 141–56, is devoted to testing the proposition that "the standard of housing rented in the American City was superior to that of the Birmingham workers." Lebergott says that I should have considered plumbing. I did, concluding that "Pittsburgh's manual workers did not enjoy toilet and washing facilities superior to those available to their counterparts in Birmingham" (p. 154). Lebergott says that I should have considered gas supplies. I did (pp. 160–62). Lebergott says that I should have considered living space. I did (p. 153). I also examined population density, access to public transportation, and the quality of construction materials. I concluded, on the basis of this empirical evidence, that the superiority of American housing was unproven.

Finally, I am accused of "withering judgments on everyone." A reader who gets no further than Chapter 1 will see the falseness of such a claim. I would let it go as hyperbolic license were it not for my astonishment at finding Phelps Brown listed in my enemy camp. His painstaking work is acknowledged as the starting point of my own analysis (p. 13); I find his methodological argument convincing (pp. 208–09); and I judge his remarkable conclusion—that not until after 1900 did real wages in the United States draw ahead of the British—to be substantially correct (p. 218). I am saddened that my obvious indebtedness to Phelps Brown's pioneering work has been so misconstrued.

*In response to Peter Shergold's communication, Stanley Lebergott writes:*

1. Peter Shergold has a justified complaint. I failed to mention that he provides several tables with hourly and weekly wage rates by occupation, having focused instead on his conclusions and procedures for family incomes of unskilled and skilled workers. Let me partially remedy that lack. His striking conclusion that real unskilled wage rates, and thence family earnings, were much the same in Pittsburgh and Birmingham stems from his average hourly rates for four occupations. One of the occupations with one-quarter of the weight was "third-hand bakers," of whom there were 305 in the Pittsburgh area. But no weight at all was given to the 50 percent higher wage rates paid pick and shovel miners, of whom there were perhaps 10,000 in the labor market area. (The basic U.K. *Enquiry* on which he relies states: "In the Pittsburgh district of the United Mine Workers of America there are some 35,000 organized workers.") A proper wage average for "unskilled workers" should reflect the higher wages for the occupation in which most of them worked. (If the study purports to deal with only the city limits of Pittsburgh then, even more clearly, his multiple generalizations about "British and American" workers clearly will not wash.)

His weekly wage estimates are gotten by multiplying the hourly rates by "full time weekly hours." For building laborers, with one-quarter of the weight for his unskilled average, he multiplies by 54 hours for Birmingham, and 48.5 in Pittsburgh. But the underlying U.K. *Enquiry* notes that 54 was the Birmingham hours figure for the summer, while the Pittsburgh 48-hours figure was for February, the winter low. (Actually the U.S. Bureau of Labor reported a 54-hour yearly average for Pittsburgh in 1906.)

2. "Readers are told that 'Shergold simply assumes that a given number of rooms in Pittsburgh and Birmingham are equivalent in value.' I have absolutely no idea how I could be found guilty of such a major error of omission."

The story is simple. His summary Table 60 reports Pittsburgh rents as 152.7 percent above those in Birmingham. Its sources ("Sources: See Tables in Chapter 6, 8 and 9") do not describe his estimating procedure. But a 152.7 figure appears in his Chapter 7 (p. 143) with the Board of Trade *Enquiry* cited as its source. My review quoted that *Enquiry*: "rooms in the American towns (had) more modern fittings and conveniences (e.g., bathrooms, and, in general), increasing variety and completeness of accommodation." They were also larger. Since his calculations ignore these factors, he implicitly did assume "equivalent value."

#### REDLICH PRIZE

Richard H. Tilly of the University of Münster is the first winner of the recently established Redlich Prize, for his article, "Mergers, External Growth, and Finance in the Development of Large Scale Enterprise in Germany, 1880–1913," which appeared in the September 1982 issue of the *JOURNAL*. Tilly's article was judged as the best appearing in 15 international journals covering economic and business history during the biennium 1981–1982 (see the *JOURNAL*, June 1982, pp. 442–43). The prize committee was co-chaired by Herman Freudenberger, Tulane University, and Robert W. Fogel, University of Chicago. The prize honors the memory of the late Fritz Redlich.

#### CLIOMETRICS SOCIETY

Anyone interested in Cliometrics is invited to join the Cliometrics Society. Cliometrics in its younger days was called New Economic History. It is defined as the use of quantitative analysis and economic theory in the study of historical questions. The Cliometrics Society will maintain and distribute a listing of members and their interests,

periodically publish a newsletter, and organize both the annual Cliometrics meetings and the First World Congress to be held in May 1985. Those interested in joining should contact The Cliometrics Society, Department of Economics, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio 45056, USA.

#### CALLS FOR PAPERS

*The 1985 North American Fur Trade Conference* will be held at McGill University, May 29 to June 2, 1985. Sessions planned will focus on: a) the early fur trade and its significance for native people throughout North America, b) the Montreal based fur trade, c) Jacques Cartier, this being the 450th anniversary of his arrival at the present site of Montreal, and d) other aspects of the North American fur trade. Researchers are invited to submit titles and abstracts of 100 words by May 15, 1984 to: Dr. Bruce G. Trigger, Chairman, Programme Committee, 5th North American Fur Trade Conference, Box 1023, Station A, Montreal, Québec, H3C 2W9.

*The International Congress of Historical Sciences* at Stuttgart in 1985 will have a session on "The Middle East as an Economic Link between Europe and the Indian Ocean from Medieval to Modern Times." Papers dealing with Islamic economic institutions facilitating trade and economic exchange between Europe and the Indian Ocean region are particularly welcome. For further information, contact Dr. Murat Cizaka, P.O. Box 357, Girne, Mersin 10, Via Turkey.

#### HISTORICAL RECORDS

*The Eleutherian Mills Historical Library* has recently opened the Records of the Pennsylvania Power & Light Company (1854–1955, 1000 linear feet) for scholarly research. This collection includes the records of the 1,043 companies that merged over an 85-year period to form the present day Pennsylvania Power & Light Company. It documents the electric industry's tentative beginnings using the Edison system of direct current, the technological innovations that allowed small, inner-city utilities to expand beyond their original urban centers, and the consolidation movement that culminated in the formation of a great regional power network. For further information contact: Research & Reference Department, Eleutherian Mills Historical Library, P.O. Box 3630, Wilmington, Delaware 19807, phone (302) 658-2400.