

Problems in Writing the History of Large Business Units

The giant American Historical Association held its sixty-second annual meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, December 27-29, 1947. Fourteen other societies in allied fields held joint meetings with the American Historical or staged special meetings of their own. For readers of the BULLETIN the amazing fact is that four of the sessions dealt with business history.

The Business Historical Society and the American Historical Association were responsible for two joint meetings devoted to the subject, "Problems in the Writing of the History of Large Business Units." The formal session on the morning of the 29th was followed by a luncheon meeting and informal discussion. Professor N. S. B. Gras of the Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, presided at the morning session and Dr. Charles W. Moore of SKF Industries, Inc., of Philadelphia, was chairman of the luncheon conference.

The attendance at both the meetings was good. The discussion gave evidence of an increasing interest in business history as well as a growing appreciation of the issues involved in research and writing in the subject.

Below follow the papers read at the morning session. The first, by Dr. Ralph W. Hidy of the Business History Foundation, deals with the importance of the history of the large business unit; the second, by Dr. Henrietta M. Larson, also of the Foundation, considers the availability of records; the third, by Professor Richard C. Overton of Northwestern University, is devoted to the problems of writing the history of large business units with special reference to railroads.

THE EDITOR.