

Thursday
December 30, 1954

Internal Memorandum

Lunch at the Harvard Club with Miss Katharine Brand of the Library of Congress on matters concerning collections of papers valuable to this Committee

Miss Brand was in New York for a meeting of the American Historical Association at which she represented the Library. She had brought with her cards on all the collections in which we have shown any interest. At the same time, I had made from our notes a list of people concerning whom I wanted to query her. Also, I took with me the collection of so-called Registers of unpublished papers which we had gathered thus far in the hope that she would give us suggestions and aid in improving them.

Of the forty-odd names which I presented to Miss Brand, the Library of Congress has papers belonging to about ten. They have registers, sometimes old style, sometimes new, of the papers of these people. In a few instances, we have copied from these registers material which directly concerns the Federal Reserve System, but it is obvious that much more copying and much more work must be done on these. Also, it will be necessary to re-frame some of the registers which we made ourselves in an attempt to get a more-or-less orderly system of setting this kind of information down for the use of students.

Miss Brand has done an article setting forth the format which the Library of Congress considers good for registers of this type, and she will send us a copy of this article.

Also, I consulted her about the Carter Glass inventory and the Committee dilemma in the matter of other collections. If these other collections are to cost as much to take care of as did the Carter Glass collection, there will be no money left for anything else.

Miss Brand went over the substance and fashion of the inventory and made the following suggestions. First, she thinks that more work was done on this than would have been necessary or than will be necessary for other collections. She

herself sets the steps in this process as follows:

- 1) The first job to be done is, in any collection, to sort the papers and arrange them in series. There might be, for instance, a series of cables, a series of correspondence, a series of memoranda, a series of speeches, and so on.
- 2) Once this sorting is done, and she says this is the most expensive job, the collection can then be listed and the register made.
- 3) The third step is to send the ^{historian's} research assistant in to see the register and study it with a view to the work which needs to be done by the historian.
- 4) The fourth step is for the historian ^{himself} to go and ask for a specific container which holds specific papers.

Insofar as the Carter Glass collection is concerned, it became obvious from her conversation that the first rough sorting done by the University of Virginia was, as we had thought, completely inadequate. Under those circumstances, it would have been wiser for Professor Kincaid, if allowed, to re-sort the collection. Whether this would have been possible or not, one does not know. Given the almost fierce determination of Dr. Berkeley, Curator of Manuscripts, to keep the collection in the state in which it was given to the University library, this raises very interesting questions of the difference in technique among archivists.

Miss Brand said she thought that we had come much too close to steps 3) and 4) in the process she outlined, and that this was the cause of the costliness of the inventory. She felt that if, in the future, we could be content with steps 1) and 2), that is, with the arranging and listing of collections, a process which in her view should not include any attempt to appraise the importance or even the content of letters, ~~then~~ it would be much less expensive.

Using the Ogden Mills collection, which is now at the Library of Congress, as a guinea pig, Miss Brand said that she would make an estimate of the cost of arranging and listing that collection and let us have it. It may be that this will prove very valuable for future estimates on our part and will be useful in the study of collection problems which the Committee would like done.

Mildred Adams:ib