

2/2/54

To: Miss McKinstry

Subject: The Hamlin Diaries

From: Miss Adams

This should probably go on the card of Mr. Charles Hamlin and there will also have to be a bibliographic card set up for them. It might be wise to take this note in the shape of a note and transfer pertinent material later.

The diaries of Mr. Charles Hamlin are said to have been deposited in the Library of Congress with either a ten or ~~a twenty-five year~~ seal on them. (~~This to be verified.~~) There are twenty-eight volumes of diaries covering the period from 1887 to 1935. These diaries are digested and indexed in twenty-five volumes. There are also a large number (precise number to be determined) of scrap books compiled by Mr. Hamlin from newspaper clippings covering the period 1871 to 1938. These volumes are also indexed in twenty-three separate index volumes. The total Hamlin deposit in the Library of Congress consists of three hundred and forty-five volumes and two manuscript boxes of loose material.

These diaries undoubtedly constituted a mine of information. There is, however, a warning that they may not be entirely reliable. Mr. Chester Morrill, who was for a time secretary of the Board, warns that Mr. Hamlin links his personal opinions with official reports, and that his writings are not always accurate as to what happened. They should be checked with the official minutes or with some other pertinent source. Mr. Morrill also warns that Mr. Hamlin was a mild man on the surface but that his personal comments were sometimes sharp. This should add to the interest of the diary, but obviously the material must be used with care both for accuracy and for the libel laws. It should have been stated at the beginning of this memorandum that the Hamlin collection has been opened for access within the last two years. This date also must be checked. The important thing for our purposes, however, is that the material is now available. It is, however, so voluminous as to be almost embarrassing in its richness.