

March 30, 1955

Internal Memorandum

Dallas Bank - Library and Files

This library is under the charge of Miss Mabel Wilkerson, who came to the Dallas Bank in 1943 from the state college. There had been a gap of years when Dallas had no library. She works alone without an assistant and obviously cannot do as much as though she had a larger staff. She is an intelligent and alert woman, well aware of the lack in her department but doing the best that can be done under the circumstances. The library is under the charge of the officer who is in charge of research, who, in this case, is Mr. Morgan Rice.

Files

This Bank has no effective central filing system, although it nominally has central correspondence files. Thus far, I have not been introduced to Miss White who is head of the files, but I judge from the general attitude that she may not be an adequately trained file head. The general attitude of several officers to whom I have talked is the characteristic western attitude of being interested in the present and the future, but having no particular use for the past. This is likely to bring about a much too liberal interpretation of the Destruction Schedule. Mr. Hollaway, who is nominally the officer in charge of files, told of being in San Antonio when the river rose and the file section had four inches of water in it. His only wish was that it might have had four feet, so that they could throw a lot of old stuff out.

All the Liberty Loan material is said to have been thrown out, and all the War Finance Corporation material. Other material has been kept or destroyed, depending on the department which has it in charge, the Texas law making it unnecessary to keep papers past a certain time period, the Treasury rules, and the Board's destruction program.

Mr. Plant, one of the vice presidents, greatly admires the files at the Board, where one can get what one asks for quickly. He wishes that the Dallas Bank had started central filing, but they did not do this, and it would be expensive, difficult, and only by flying in the face of a great deal of opposition could they install it now.

The Bank has rented space in the Sante Fe Building for the storage of old records. They call their dead files "archives," and in charge of them is man whom they call an archivist. His job is to keep track of what is handed to him by departments which find themselves without adequate space and to destroy it as the destruction schedules permit.

Mr. Waller and Mr. Hollaway say that they hope to re-do the Bank's filing system when the new building goes up, but that new building is now merely in the blue-print stage, and it may take four years before it is finished. That would mean that it would be 1959 or 1960, namely the end of the project period, when one was able to get at the files in the Dallas Bank.

The only cheerful thing about the situation is that both Waller and Hollaway doubt that material of historical interest would get into files of the type that are moved into the archives. On the other hand, the destruction of Liberty Loan material and of War Finance Corporation material makes one very dubious about the possibility that material vital to the history of the 1920's would necessarily have been retained. That material, however, is under the Loan Department, and they may have other ideas. (Later - Mr. Austin says this material is in the Loan Department, as is Insolvent Bank material).

Even when I asked for such obvious things as the Certificate of Incorporation and the McAdoo telegram and the very earliest records, I could not find for certain where they were. (The certificate proved to be hanging in Dr. Irons' office). Mr. Rice thought that probably things of that order of importance were in the vault, but he had not gone to the vault for a long time and was not sure that they were there, though he assumed they probably were.

In the matter of the Talley brief which Dreibelbis prepared for the executive hearing, I have thus far been unable to locate its whereabouts. It seems that the legal work for the Bank was done in that period by an outside firm of lawyers, and it is of course possible that they have this brief. It is also possible that it would be in the legal department of this Bank, but thus far I have not tried to trace the history of those trials.

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