

THE FRANKLIN COLLECTION and other historical resources at Hitotsubashi University*

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On March 26, 1973, the Mitsui Trading Co. signed a contract to purchase from Ethel Franklin the collection of economic literature formed by her late husband, Burt Franklin (1903–1972). Now at Hitotsubashi University, this collection has been formally named the “Burt Franklin Collection—Donated by Mitsui Group Companies,” in recognition of the generosity of some twenty-two Mitsui Group companies, which paid upwards of a million dollars for the collection and attendant expenses. The collection bought by Mitsui Trading Co. was perhaps the finest in private hands¹⁾. Consisting of nearly 20,000 items, it includes material in Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Latin, Portuguese, and Spanish and ranges in time from twelfth century manuscript material, and books from the earliest days of printing with movable type in the fifteenth century, on up to the twentieth century. Since books continue to disappear from the marketplace into institutional libraries, it is unlikely that its equal will be formed in the future.

The term “economics collection” can encompass two basic kinds of material—that useful for the study of the history of economic thought, and that which serves the historian of economic conditions. Needless to say, these kinds of materials overlap. It would not be possible to form a collection exclusively of one type, but the emphasis of the collector can significantly alter the nature of the resulting collection. The emphasis of the collector is also important in determining the degree to which a collection is narrowly economic or more broadly a social science collection. In earlier times, the boundaries between economics and other disciplines were less well defined than now, so to some extent an “economics” collection is necessarily a social science collection. It is a matter of degree.

In both cases Burt Franklin opted for a broad collection. The reasons are various. In the first place, there were not institutional constraints to hold him back. While he was influenced in part by his use of the more narrowly economic Catalogue of the Kress Library of Business and Economics at Harvard University, he did not have to concern himself about such questions as divisions of collecting responsibilities among parts of a university library; he was free to collect whatever he wished. Because Burt Franklin was a bookseller and publisher of scholarly books, his work brought him into contact with a wide variety of material. It is natural that he should tend to collect broadly.

Moreover, Burt Franklin believed strongly that one could not study the economic aspects of a writer's thought in isolation, that it was necessary to examine all the works of an author. Thus, he felt he did not destroy the essential unity of the collection, but rather enhanced its utility in

* I wish to thank the staff of the Hitotsubashi University Library, and especially Mr. Yoshitomi Okazaki, for educating me about their library. To the extent that there are errors, the responsibility must lie with their pupil.

1) For an account of the acquisition of the Franklin Collection which reads like an adventure story see Tsuru, S., “Burt Franklin Collection—Donated by Mitsui Group Companies' nyushu no keii” in *Hitotsubashi Daigaku Fuzoku Toshokanshi* (Tokyo, Hitotsubashi University, 1975), pp. 239–246.

purchasing a first edition of John Locke's *Essay concerning Humane Understanding* (1690) to go along with more strictly economic literature. Likewise, in the case of Hume, the *Political Discourses* (1752) and the best edition of the *Essays and Treatises*, that of 1777, do not stand alone; other works are present. In the same way, Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, as well as the *Wealth of Nations*, are both represented by first as well as by other editions. Any work by a Physiocrat is likely to be in the collection, not just a more narrowly economic treatise. Such breadth in collecting means that in the Franklin Collection one can study the history of social science thought as well as the history of economics.

The collection is also broad because Burt Franklin gathered material for the study of economic conditions as well as the history of thought. Economists tend to form collections of economic treatises, but Burt Franklin was not an economist. In fact, during his days at Amherst College he did not take a single course in economics. Economics was for him, not a science growing increasingly abstract, but a force affecting men's lives. He was more interested in tracing the effects of economic conditions on ordinary men throughout history than in following the development of the discipline of economics. To make history live for the student was one of Burt Franklin's goals in his collecting, and this motive accounts for the presence of so many unusual, ephemeral items in the collection. Although Burt Franklin acquired significant holdings of theoretical treatises, it is especially the economic and social historian who will find the collection a treasure trove.

The variety of material is great, both in subject and form. Looking over the shelves almost at random, one might find an American eighteenth century pamphlet on coinage, Edward Wigglesworth's *Calculations on American Population* (Boston, 1775), or the first edition (1879) of Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*. Hitotsubashi University Library would now seem to be the strongest in Japan in source materials for the study of American history. Further on, one might find a broadside petition to Parliament, the rules of a friendly society (often trade unions in disguise), some seventeenth century Leveller pamphlets (in addition, of course, to works of the classical economists), a French agricultural handbook, the first printed agricultural treatise (1471) by Crescentius, a German technological manual, a manuscript pass from an Italian city attesting that a certain person is free of the plague, or a Portuguese periodical from the early nineteenth century listing ship arrivals and departures in Lisbon.

Much of the material relative to economic conditions is in the form of legal publications. Burt Franklin was a graduate of the Cornell University Law School and, as a lawyer, was especially interested in acquiring legal material. There are hundreds of British statutes and even more French laws and decrees. Also in the collection are some 651 laws and regulations issued during the Italian Cisalpine Republic, 1796 to 1798. These are bound in volumes in chronological order, apparently by a government official. An interesting group are approximately eighty laws providing information on economic and social conditions in Flanders between 1580 and 1640. Many of these indicate that a major social problem was the conduct of the troops towards the populace they were ostensibly to protect.

Another type of legal publication in the collection is nearly five hundred French briefs in legal cases. Presumably such briefs were printed in a very small number of copies, just for the court and those involved in the case; they are exceedingly rare. Such a large number should prove to be a valuable source for students of French legal history. Of course, money is at the root of most civil

suits, so these briefs also constitute a source for the economic and business historian, as well as the legal historian. To cite an example at random, there is a *Mémoire* prepared for the creditors of the late Sieur Marquis de Mézieres and his widow against Messieurs de Moras and their sister, 1749, in a case which resulted from the collapse of John Law's bank in 1720. Of course, we know that many people were ruined by the bank's failure, and we know that that failure retarded for nearly a century the development of banking in France; but a document such as this brief populates that episode with real people and makes history come alive.

The same can be said for so many of the hundreds of manuscripts. They range in date from the thirteenth century to the twentieth and in variety from a copy of the Magna Carta written about 1300 and a Medici account book from 1471-72, up to two twentieth-century essays in French about the status of women. The most useful of the manuscripts may turn out to be the archives of the Marquisate of Laubrières covering the period from 1372 to 1780. There are a large quantity of individual French manuscripts, mainly contracts and receipts, from the fourteenth to eighteenth centuries. These may have a special utility at Hitotsubashi. With them, a student who is planning to work in European archives can practice reading various styles of handwriting. The student can learn in Japan and then efficiently carry out his researches in Europe. The quantity and variety is sufficient for this purpose.

Of course, the manuscripts are unique, but many thousands of other ephemeral items in the collection are as good as unique, since they have not been accessible to scholars. Some, undoubtedly, truly are unique, but the absolute degree of rarity is not the important thing. It is whether the books have been in major collections, especially those with published catalogs. Those are the books which are used by historians, cited in their footnotes, and on that basis used by succeeding scholars in a continuing process. Sometimes even substantial, multi-volume works cannot be located elsewhere. That is the case with the Berlin, 1795 edition of Galiani's *Dialogues sur le commerce des bleds*. Philip Koch, in his edition of the original manuscript, notes two references to the 1795 edition, but was unable to locate a copy for examination. One is in the Franklin Collection²⁾. Usually, though, it is the ephemeral which cannot be found. Burt Franklin's love of those passing publications of the day which cast light on actual economic and social conditions means that the collection constitutes a large body of source material which has not been used by historians.

The collection will be especially useful at Hitotsubashi because it will enhance and be enhanced by material which is already in the University's library. The most significant group of material already at Hitotsubashi is the Menger Collection, formed by the prominent, Austrian economist, Carl Menger (1840-1920). The Menger Collection was purchased by Hitotsubashi University in 1923, from Carl Menger's widow. Menger was a contemporary of the other great economics collectors: E. R. A. Seligman, whose collection is at Columbia University in New York City, and Herbert Somerton Foxwell, whose collections form the basis of the Goldsmiths' and Kress libraries, at the University of London and Harvard. It even turns out that some of the English pamphlets in the Menger Collection have notes in Foxwell's hand: he must have sold them to Menger or traded with him. Menger was

2) Galiani, F., *Dialogues entre M. Marquis de Roquemaure, et M^s. le chevalier Zanobi; the autograph manuscript of the Dialogues sur le commerce des bleds diplomatically edited by Philip Koch*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1968, p. 340.

collecting at an advantageous time. Books were plentiful and prices were low, for few individuals or institutions were interested in buying economic literature. The collection has nearly 16,000 titles, with between four and five thousand (a rough approximation) published before 1850.

As a professor of economics, Menger's main interest was in works of economic analysis, especially in English, French and German. There are also significant holdings in the other European languages, and included among the English-language books are many American works. As one would expect, though, it is in German books that the collection is outstanding, and particularly in German books published in eastern Europe. Throughout the territory of the Austrian empire, and in the Baltic states, German was the language of scholarly and official discourse in the eighteenth century and in some places well into the nineteenth. Menger, being an Austrian, was well situated to acquire such German books.

Unfortunately, the catalog of the Menger Collection (vol. 1, 1926; vol. 2, 1955) does not do justice to the collection. While volume 2 is quite adequate, the first volume, that which lists the bulk of the economic literature, is inadequate. This is not stated by way of criticism, for any catalog of economic literature published in 1926 is bound to be inadequate today. Contemporary standards of description are much higher, and furthermore, few of the tools used in cataloging were available in the 1920's.

Librarians and historians at Hitotsubashi University are well aware of the catalog's defects, but it is important that other historians, who perhaps consult the catalog only occasionally, recognize that it must be used very carefully. Large numbers of anonymous works, whose authors are known today, are not identified; undated books can presently often be dated; and, in addition, the catalog is sometimes incomplete. When two or more works are bound together, only the first tends to be listed. A similar, and striking instance, is "Fr. 1108" which reads: "Ecrits relatifs à Necker. 54 vols."

Because of Carl Menger's emphasis on theoretical works, especially those in German (an area of weakness in the Franklin Collection), there is less duplication between the collections than one might expect. Even when there is duplication, this will sometimes be beneficial to the historian who asks himself whether a particular text represents the author's final intentions. Because production of early printed books was less mechanized, variant readings frequently exist within copies of the same edition. Sometimes these changes were made while the type was standing in the press; on other occasions corrected leaves were printed to be substituted for erroneous ones³).

Occasionally, books which on the basis of the usual library catalog entry would seem to be merely duplicate copies, turn out to be editions printed from totally different settings of type. This increases the possibility of textual variation. Because the Italian translation (1787) of Campomanes, *Discurso sobre el fomento de la industria popular* (1774) states that there were two Spanish editions, both the Franklin and Menger copies were compared. Both have the same number of pages, and in both the

3) For an example of the latter, see Ricardo, D., *The Works and Correspondence of David Ricardo*, edited by Piero Sraffa with the collaboration of M. H. Dobb, Vol. 10 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), pp. 403-404. For the most recent example of a modern edition based on close examination of a number of copies by a trained bibliographer, see Smith, A., *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (2 vols., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976). The textual editor, William B. Todd of the University of Texas at Austin, examined fifteen copies of the first edition.

title-page reads the same. However, they are different editions, printed from totally different settings of type. It is possible that closer examination would reveal textual variations adding to our knowledge of one of the most important economic works of eighteenth-century Spain.

With little effort other cases of "concealed editions," which can be discovered only by comparison of "duplicates," were found—[G. M. Butel-Dumont], *Histoire et commerce des colonies angloises, dans l'Amerique septentrionale* (Londres, et se vend à Paris, 1755) and [J. B. L. Coquereau] *Memoires concernant l'administration des finances, sous le ministere de M. l'Abbé Terrai* (Londres, 1776). Such cases contribute, at the very least, to our knowledge of reading tastes in eighteenth-century France and help document the change from a society concerned primarily with religious questions to one concerned with secular matters.

Materials in other collections at Hitotsubashi University supplement the Franklin and Menger libraries. One of the most important is the Toike collection of literature on the cooperative movement. Literature on such subjects as cooperation, labor, socialism is very rare; by and large it is ephemeral in form and being propaganda, tended to be read (or not, as the case might be) and thrown away. There are some early nineteenth-century pamphlets in the Toike collection which are exceedingly rare. There is also much material of more recent date, which was published locally and not distributed through regular book trade channels, such as histories of cooperative societies. Such materials are also very rare. Some manuscripts, mainly concerning the Rochedale Society, are also present. The Catalog of the Toike Collection was published in 1959.

The Soda Collection, on the history of philosophy, relates less immediately to the Franklin Collection, but, of course, in the history of ideas, everything is related. The Soda collection is particularly strong on Kant and appears to contain virtually every important edition. Its catalog was published in 1942.

There are also some smaller collections at Hitotsubashi, and, of course, there are rare books in the general collection. A carefully compiled and accurate catalog of these was published in April of 1976; it lists 2,423 titles⁴⁾. Since this catalog includes rare works from the H. Murase Collection on maritime law and insurance, it is especially important in this field. It also lists a very fine group of materials on Robert Owen and Owenism from the Shigeru Hoshijima Collection.

With these various collections, which fortunately mesh together so well, Hitotsubashi University Library has become one of the best places in the world for the study of the printed sources for the history of Western economic thought and economic conditions. Heretofore, librarians and historians have spoken of three great economics collections—the Goldsmiths' Library, the Kress Library, and the Seligman Collection. Now, it is necessary to include Hitotsubashi University and speak of four great economics libraries.

Scholars at Hitotsubashi are, indeed, fortunate to have ready access to such treasures. But so are we all that these resources have been brought together in this way, for a catalog of the Franklin Collection will be published which will serve both to make these resources available and to enlarge the body of source material on which historians can draw.

(Kress Library of Business and Economics, Harvard University)

4) Hitotsubashi University Library, *Catalogue of Old and Rare Foreign Books Mainly from the General Collections*, Tokyo, 1976, vii+246p.