



The collections of W. Cameron Forbes

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agency for the project and source of its principal support; the administration of M. I. T., which has made impressive contributions in terms of space, equipment, and reduced teaching loads; the officers of the Harvard University Press, who have acted at all times to encourage and facilitate our undertaking and who have given our labors a permanent habitation in the bound volumes. But in our day-to-day work our dependence has natu-

rally been principally upon the libraries and librarians, and of these primarily upon the libraries and librarians of Harvard and M. I. T. We are all grateful for the opportunity to render thanks here to these institutions and their staffs for the constant care and thoughtfulness that have so greatly lessened the inevitable pain in such a venture and so positively contributed to the equally inevitable pleasures.

ELTING E. MORISON

The Collections of W. Cameron Forbes

WITHIN the past year the Harvard libraries and museums have been considerably enriched by materials from the collections of W. Cameron Forbes, grandson of John Murray Forbes and of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Boston merchant, and former Governor-General of the Philippines and Ambassador to Japan. Mr Forbes, who graduated from Harvard in 1892, has been a frequent donor to the University Library. But with the closing of his house in Norwood, Massachusetts, he has turned over to the University the buildings themselves, together with his extensive collections of books, manuscripts, and museum objects, reflecting his interest in a wide range of fields. A considerable portion of the manuscripts and printed items together furnish materials basic to any study of the Philippines. With real understanding of library needs, Mr Forbes has not required that the collection be kept intact.¹ The ensuing description, there-

fore, is arranged in part in accordance with the divisions of the Harvard libraries to which the materials have been sent. Ian Thom, before leaving Widener for the Northwestern University Library, did much of the preliminary sorting and distribution; a memorandum prepared by him has been of help in recording the disposition of this large and important gift.

The most significant parts of the collection, from the standpoint of the events in which Mr Forbes participated, are his files of correspondence and his journals; these have been placed in the Houghton Library. Because of the responsible positions which he has held, Mr Forbes early made it his practice to preserve copies of his outgoing

ferred by large libraries, in administration, housing, and use, through the enforced existence of little enclaves within their boundaries. There are situations where the establishment or perpetuation of such Monacos and San Marinos may be entirely appropriate, but officers of libraries universally appreciate the opportunity to consult with prospective donors regarding the most effective means of integrating a particular collection with the general one.

¹Essays might be written — indeed, have been — on the perennial embarrassment suf-

correspondence, and to record in journal-form his impressions of events as they occurred. This was in part a matter of protection, so that an accurate account of what was said and done would be available, but it has also resulted in primary source materials for historians interested in those affairs with which Mr Forbes has been connected. The outgoing correspondence fills nearly one hundred volumes, extending from 1904 to 1946. Especially significant letters, or ones which were confidential at the time of writing, have been segregated in seven volumes. In the main, only the more important incoming letters have been given to the Library for preservation. Mr Forbes has had occasion to correspond with many persons prominent in public life, in this country, England, China, Japan, and the Philippines. Most of his own letters; together with the more significant ones he received, are summarized on cards in calendar fashion; interspersed through the file are cards recording important events in Mr Forbes's life.

The journals and collections of documents in manuscript form are particularly numerous for Mr Forbes's years in the Philippines. It was in 1904 that President Roosevelt appointed him to a vacancy on the Philippine Commission, with the portfolio of Commerce and Police. He became Vice-Governor in 1908, and in 1909 President Taft appointed him Governor-General, a position which he held until his resignation in 1913. President Hoover called upon him, together with Leonard Wood, to study the situation in the Islands in 1921. A copy of the journals for the period 1904-13 was presented to the Harvard Library in 1930, with provi-

sion that it should not be used publicly until ten years after the donor's death. Additional copies of this valuable record, with an extension, indexed, coming down to 1946, were received with the present collection. The series of bound documents in manuscript form are also essential to a study of the Philippines during this period. Political documents fill twenty-one volumes, executive, five, departmental, two, and personal, fifteen. There are further unbound manuscripts, such as those relating to prison reform, in which Mr Forbes was particularly interested. A journal of the Wood-Forbes mission has also been preserved. These manuscripts formed the basis for Mr Forbes's own study, *The Philippine Islands*, published in two volumes in 1928, with a revision in 1945.²

It is appropriate to describe here other materials relating to the Philippines in the collection. Also destined for Houghton are extensive scrapbooks of clippings, continued long after Mr Forbes resigned as Governor-General. Some eight hundred non-official monographs and two thousand government documents were received; such as were already in the Harvard libraries were turned over, at Mr Forbes's request, to the embassy in Manila. A framed collection of paper money issued during Governor Forbes's administration is now in Baker Library. Photographs of Philippine personages,

²In the foreword to *The Philippine Islands* the author states: 'During his nearly ten years of service with the Philippine government he made a practice of preserving significant clippings and having copies made of the most important documents that reached his eye, and these, classified, annotated, and indexed, together with copious journals and correspondence, form much of the basis of this work.'

of life in the Islands, and of official occasions in which Governor Forbes participated are part of the photograph collection in the Winsor Memorial Map Room in Widener. A large number of tribal and archaeological objects have been placed in the Peabody Museum. Some of these items will be described in more detail below, but enough has been said to indicate the value of the collection as a whole to the historian of the Philippine Islands. Since 1904 Mr Forbes has been a careful observer of, and on many occasions an active participant in, events in the Islands; and at all times he has been a discerning collector of records illuminating those events.

Other manuscripts to be placed in the Houghton Library include additional journals, describing trips to Venezuela in 1921, to Central America in 1933, and to Spain in 1938. Similar material exists for Mr Forbes's services as Chairman of the President's Commission for the Study of Conditions in Haiti (1930), and as Chairman of the American Economic Mission to the Far East (1935). There are several typed copies of his diary kept when Ambassador to Japan, from 1930 to 1932. Non-governmental activities of Mr Forbes are represented by collections of papers relating to the Carnegie Institution, of which he has been trustee, the Hampton Institute, the Electors of the Hall of Fame, under the auspices of New York University, and the National Foreign Trade Council. Most of these date from the 1920's and 1930's, when Mr Forbes found it possible to assume many trusteeships and directorships. Finally, there are manuscript versions of some of Mr Forbes's own publications, such as *A Letter to*

an Undergraduate (1904) and *The Romance of Business* (1921), and records of the sale of *As To Polo*, which has appeared in several editions since the first of 1911.

A sizable segment of business manuscripts has gone to Baker Library; many of these relate to the China Trade carried on by the Forbes family in the mid-nineteenth century. There is a scattering of account books, but the letters to and from John Murray Forbes, Ralph Bennet Forbes, and Paul S. Forbes, one or another of them in China for considerable periods of time, will be of most interest. Earlier materials include papers of John Murray Forbes, the elder, who was U. S. Consul at Hamburg and Copenhagen, 1801-19, and U. S. Agent at Buenos Aires, 1819-31. A whole case of papers relates to claims against the governments of Chile and Peru arising from the capture of goods and monies from the Ship *Macedonian* in 1819 and 1821. There are business papers of W. Cameron Forbes as well; these include records of his receivership of the Brazil Railway Company, from 1914 to 1919, and a volume of letters relating to the firm of Stone and Webster, from 1892 to 1901.

The general collection of books received in the gift from Mr Forbes numbers some eight thousand volumes. In letters to the Director of the University Library Mr Forbes has told how these volumes were housed at Thomasville, Georgia, Naushon Island, and Norwood, Massachusetts, and how he was wont to place his signature in the front and, when he had finished a volume, his initials at the end. In a memorandum of 28 June 1941, Mr Forbes lists some of the subjects cov-

ered by his collection. These included a selection of books for a colonial administrator, brought together when he went to the Philippines; Chinese and Japanese materials, stemming from his interests in these areas and the years when he was Ambassador to Japan; books relating to Haiti; biographies, especially of American and British political and literary figures; the history of the United States and Great Britain; poetry and drama; Carnegie Institution publications; a French library, purchased for him by a savant in France; school books; autographed books; and recent fiction. A further survey shows a number of titles on the Civil War, World War I, transportation, the writings of political economists and statesmen, and large sets of British and American authors.

Two categories of books deserve special mention. The field of sports is well represented by titles on horses and horse breeding, polo, football, and yacht racing. Mr Forbes's interest in natural history, especially ornithology, is reflected in several important items which have gone to the Museum of Comparative Zoology Library. Numbered among them is Richard C. McGregor's *A Manual of Philippine Birds*, 1909, with manuscript notes by Mr Forbes.

In addition to the photographs relating to the Philippines added to the collection in the Map Room there are others for Japan, China, Formosa, and other regions of the Far East. The Harvard University Archives received pictures of Class reunions at Norwood, of the house itself, and of Harvard football teams. The last-named reflect Mr Forbes's interest in football and his service as coach of the Harvard team

in 1897 and 1898. Additional photographs and albums, many of a personal nature, are in the Houghton Library and the Peabody Museum.

The tribal objects sent to the Peabody Museum belong for the most part to recent periods. They were acquired by Mr Forbes, through gift or purchase, during his many trips to the Far East. There are examples of pottery, baskets, weapons, masks, and other products native to the Philippines, the Malay Peninsula, Indo-China, and Burma. These objects have not been sorted as yet, and it is not possible at present to say what their final disposition will be.

Many medals, coins, and swords were gifts presented to Mr Forbes. Two such objects, of interest because of their association, are in the Houghton Library. One, a map of the Philippines, on which the roads constructed during Governor Forbes's administration are outlined in precious stones, was given to him by his friends 'in appreciation of his genius for administration and his untiring labors for the advancement of the economic development of the Islands.' The other is the Aguinaldo dagger; it was given to Mr Forbes by his friend, General Emilio Aguinaldo, once the leader of the Philippine insurrectionists. Another association item, also in Houghton, is the set of maps used by General Pershing in planning the battles of St Mihiel and the Argonne forest, with notes by General Pershing.

It might have seemed desirable, in view of the presence of so many personal mementos, to keep the entire collection together, but this was not a practicable course, nor did Mr Forbes wish it. As it is—and Mr Forbes

would probably be the first to demur — these materials, especially the manuscripts, once they are finally arranged, will provide excellent sources for an account of his career. The significance of that portion of the collection relating to the Philippines for any study of the Islands during the present century has already been mentioned. Some future user of a picture in the Map Room or the Archives, of an account book or

business record in Baker Library, or of a book on birds in the Museum of Comparative Zoology may also have occasion to be grateful to Mr Forbes. There can be no question of the gratitude of the College, for which, as Mr Forbes wrote in a letter to the Director of the Library, he has always had an unbounded affection and loyalty.

ROBERT W. LOVETT

News of the Libraries

RENOVATION OF THE WIDENER BUILDING

WITH the opening of Lamont Library the Widener building was relieved of many of its services to the Harvard undergraduate, and the administration of the College Library could then turn to improving Widener, a building that has never been entirely satisfactory, and a building that had fallen below the standard at which most other buildings of the University have been maintained. The intensive discussions that have been held and the detailed plans that have been worked out in the past two and a half years have resulted in a renovation program of two parts.

The first part is a plan to combine the official and public catalogues on the first floor of the building, to bring the circulation desk down to that floor, and to reassign the work and study areas of a large part of the building. This part of the program was discussed in Mr Metcalf's article in the Winter 1950 issue of the *BULLETIN*; a decision regarding its execution will probably be forthcoming this autumn. The sec-

ond part of the program is the physical improvement of Widener, and in February 1951 the Corporation granted over \$300,000 for this purpose in fulfillment of its acknowledgment of responsibility to put the building in good working condition upon turning the College Library over to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in July 1949. The following work has been done this past summer, or is to be completed during the next few months.

The periodical room has been expanded into the west end of the main reading room so that nearly all periodicals can be shelved on open display. Two new floor cases form large alcoves in which new leather chairs have been placed. The stairs from the top floor to the second floor and from the first to the ground floor have had abrasive non-skid edges inserted and bronze hand rails installed to provide the degree of safety required by state law. Hand rails have also been placed on the sides and down the middle of the main stairway. The Winsor Memorial Map Room on the top floor has been enlarged to provide more storage space.

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