

possess at least is of a public nature, and that we have no right to restrict its use any more than may be positively necessary. *The fact that it is photographed or copied simply gives it larger publicity.*

Let me draw your attention particularly to this last point, which we will come back to later. The superintendent of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin writes:

May I suggest that historical materials properly belong to society, rather than to the institution or the individual who may have a legal title to them. To the extent that the public may properly claim a greater interest in the affairs of institutions than of individuals, it seems to me that the policy of sealing historical materials against the scholarly world is more reprehensible in the case of the former than the latter.

Many of you are no doubt familiar with the very generous policy of cooperation carried out by this society under the direction of the late Dr. Thwaites. It is gratifying to know that his successor possesses the same broad ideals. The Historical Department of Iowa has adopted substantially the same policy as that of the Wisconsin Historical Society. The curator, referring to the accumulation of private papers, makes the following interesting suggestion:

As this sort of material comes out of the repositories of business men, literary men, soldiers, politicians and others, some connected with other Governments and other States, and not connected with Iowa itself, I propose the eventual exchange of such materials so that they will finally find a resting place in the region to which they properly belong.

Prof. C. W. Alvord of the University of Illinois, writes:

The disasters that historical manuscripts have suffered by fire in recent years is a sufficient excuse for reproducing all important manuscripts as many times as possible and scattering them all over the country.

The librarian of Princeton University says:

I believe that in the fullest manner consistent with the means of the library, photostat copies of all important manuscripts in any collection should be made by the library owning the manuscript, when requested by other libraries, and loaned to these libraries, the idea being to form a lending collection of facsimiles of one's own manuscripts. At all events, I believe that the having photostat copies of one's manuscripts made at the expense of other libraries which will keep these copies for use should be encouraged as much as possible as a precaution against the destruction of the originals in any way. The Vatican Library makes, I believe, this the only condition, i. e., that we shall keep the photographic copy that we have made open for free access of scholars.

The associate director of the University of Chicago, in commending the same principle of cooperation, says:

I should like to see American libraries and institutions show the same generosity in this respect as some of the foreign institutions, notably the German.