

## CLIO'S OVERALLS - A STUDY IN FASHION CHANGES

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This title and topic are not of my choosing. In his invitation the chairman pointed out that tonight's dinner would wind up the meeting; that everyone present would be in a very relaxed frame of mind; that having heard me talk twice on the subject he would like to hear it a third time; that "most of the young generation and even many of the mature generation" have never heard it; and hence Ross Robertson and he thought they should have that opportunity just as their elders had done.

The general idea of my title was hatched in 1938 for an after dinner talk at the meeting of the Midwest Economic Association in Davenport, Iowa. It proved to have come out of a double-yoked egg. In the first place some of the younger generation, nurtured in the New Deal and the labor union developments of the late 'thirties, said there was a printer's error on the program; my title should be, not CLIO, but CIO. In the second, the toastmaster had primed himself for introducing me by looking up Clio in an encyclopedia. There he was baffled to read that it was "a shell-less pelagic mollusc in the class Pteropod; a small spindle-shanked animal with six tentacles on its head; it forms the principal part of the food of some species of whales." Having been brought up on the currently fashionable study of short-run phenomena, he read no further. Had he persisted he would have learned that another Clio was one of the nine muses born to Zeus, the king of Greek gods, and his spouse called Mnemosyne. Intelligence and aptitude tests led each of the nine to take their Ph.D.'s--the D. stood for Divinity--in chosen fields: Terpsichore in choral singing and the dance, Erato in love poetry, and Clio in that other branch of poetic license called history; and for the last three thousand years she has been an eternally young lady who never forgets a date.

Wall paintings on the ruins of Pompeii indicate that Clio dressed vocationally. They show her rather loosely swathed, facing the tools of her trade. In her left hand is a roll of manuscript; on her right a workbox containing books, writing materials, and a water-clock for measuring time; in the center a huge tuba through which she sounds the noble deeds of heroes. Being fashion-conscious, she doubtless chose her apparel and equipment to fit the story she was telling. For at least 2,000 years her themes changed little: war, politics, and religion, the "happenings" in royal courts, camps, castles, council cham-

bers, cathedrals, convents, capital cities. For these she dressed to fit the part--as Amazon or Joan of Arc, as queen or empress, as lady of the manor, abbess, Portia, or politician.

In the last third of the nineteenth century, however, her task widened beyond drums and trumpets, "past politics," and the history of states. By the 1880s economic history came within her ken; whereupon she donned overalls, blue jeans, with big pockets, copper rivets, white stitching, and a union label. The get-up did not look divine, or even muse-like, especially from the back; but for the new job in hand it proved functionally well-suited, and Clio at work on the story of man--and woman--at work has chalked up a creditable record of achievement during well-nigh a century of fairly full employment. It may be that recently her clothes closet has acquired a gray flannel suit and an Arrow drip-dry white shirt which she puts on when writing business history; or it may be that she still regards your specialty as an integral part of economic history. In any case, let me regard it as such and survey the record of what has been done.

It is not a very long record, for the subject did not emerge as a recognizable discipline--hateful word--until the 1870s or '80s. For at least half a century before that time economic history, like the earth before Adam or economics before Adam Smith, was without form and void. Yet at least five spirits were moving over the face of the waters, looking for a bit of firmament in which they could dig or on which they could build a propagandist's pulpit. The first turned to history for evidence to condemn, justify, or advocate some monetary, agrarian, or commercial policy; Adam Smith, Frederick List, and in this country Matthew Carey and his son, Henry Charles, did that. The second wanted to know how the social and economic problems of the industrialized urban society had come into being. Arnold Toynbee the elder is the best example, and he bridged the gap between public lectures or published essays and an Oxford classroom in his famous pioneer course on the Industrial Revolution. The third spirit, proud of the achievements made possible by machinery, steam power, and abundant metals, wrote histories of textiles, engineering, mining, or railroads, or surveyed, as the British statistician G. R. Porter did, The Progress of the Nation in its Various Social and Economic Relations (three editions 1836, 1846, 1851). The fourth spirit hovered chiefly over the German universities, searching for rocks to throw at the cocksure deductive economists and their universally eternally true "laws of political economy." Finally, the fifth turned away in disgust or despair from the "glorified" political and military "almanacs" produced by the old school of historians, and studies instead the history of institutions--of government, of the church, of society, even of the economy.

From this motley quintet there emerged a conglomeration of topics which by 1880 was being called economic (or industrial) history. Some of it was written by men trained under the Oxford constitutional historian Stubbs or his continental counterparts. The records most easily accessible were those of local units--

manor, town, guild; of central or regional governments with their "Thou shalt's" or "Thou shalt not's"; of trading companies that had left behind a legacy of charters and ordinances. Or they were products of some complaint, agitation, and pressure by landlords, peasants, merchants, manufacturers, laborers, social critics and reformers or revolutionaries, with the consequent spate of speeches, pamphlets, sermons, royal commission or congressional investigations, statute books, and maybe of riots and rebellions. Or they told what had been thought or felt about man and his economy, his society, his God.

Institutions, regulations, agitations, and meditations therefore comprised much of the story, with little about actual enterprise and its successes, failures, problems, or limitations. The chapters or lecture headings became as standardized as a Model T Ford. The manor and serfdom, the town, guilds, fairs, the Hanseatic League, and the Church's rules of workaday conduct covered the Middle Ages. The maritime explorations, trading companies, mercantilism, the colonial system, and some skimpy survey of national economies disposed very quickly of the early modern centuries. Then came melodrama: the industrial, agricultural, and transportation revolutions, factories, labor conditions, trade unions, factory acts, joint stock, money and banking, the classical economists, laissez faire, free trade, and perhaps a final scamped sketch of socialism.

That in the main was economic history as known to the first generation in Britain; also to some degree in America; and, packed up in boxes labeled stages or parceled out in a series of ismuses, in Germany. At its best it promised to be an imposing edifice, with penetrating analysis in spots. At its worst it stuck together fragments of doubtful evidence with theories or interpretations that crumbled when hit by unkind critics. Some of its pioneers were scholars of whom any discipline might well be proud. Schmoller in Berlin became a Grand Old Man. Toynbee was too infirm to become one, and was only thirty-one years old when he died in 1883, a year after giving his famous twelve lectures; but their publication in 1884 ensured his fame and influence. There was Cunningham at Cambridge; industrious but rather pedestrian; hostile to the admission of coeds to his lectures; insisting that they come wearing hats and sit in the back row; yet later relying on some of them for the research and rewriting of his History of British Industry and Commerce. There was Thorold Rogers at Oxford, patiently digging out wages and prices over a period of six centuries, and making so many mistakes by failing to realize the lack of uniform or constant units of weight or measure that apparently they canceled each other out and gave a fairly accurate result. Or there was W. J. Ashley, who prepared Toynbee's lectures for publication; came from Oxford to Toronto in 1888 as professor of political science; then moved to Harvard in 1892, there to occupy the first chair of economic history in the world. He built up a large battery of courses to supplement the history offerings of Dunbar, Taussig, and McLaughlin; published two masterly volumes on medieval economic history and theory before he was thirty-three years old;

then, alack, committed suicide as a "productive scholar" by returning to England in 1901 to become dean of the newborn school of commerce at Birmingham University. In today's current cult of the counterfactual I often play with the chances for developing economic--and business--history if Ashley had stayed on at Harvard and hence Gay had not been appointed to succeed him; and since Ashley gave me my first teaching job I wonder what my own career might have been if I had not gone from Leeds to Birmingham for an intervarsity debate, of which he was the moderator. Finally, there was Ely at Johns Hopkins, then at Wisconsin, well-schooled by exposure to the German historical economists during his years in Europe; Cheyney at Philadelphia, Seligman at Columbia, Bourne at Yale, and other men at Michigan, Cornell, Chicago, and elsewhere who introduced the European story or its American counterpart to the universities of this continent.

Thus the first generation left a goodly heritage to the second, which began to take charge during the decade before World War I and retired or died about the eve of World War II. The older members of that generation included such men as Sombart, Dopsch, and Max Weber in Germany; Hauser, See, and Marc Bloch in France; Pirenne in Belgium; Clapham, Unwin, and Iawney in Britain; Gay, Callender, Commons and Clive Day in the United States. The younger members, such as Usher, Chester Wright, Eileen Power, Ashton, and Harold Innis, may be regarded as the 2½th generation, or paleotertiary, a sort of early stone age third. That leaves those of you who came into the field after about 1945 as the neotertiary; but from recent discussions I gather that a new fourth generation, armed with computers in one hand and theory plus mathematics in the other, has invaded the terrain. Actually this division into generations is a poor peg on which to hang my analysis; so let me drop it and examine instead some of the highlights of what has happened during the last half-century to the legacy left by the founding fathers.

It soon became evident, when the mouth of that gift horse was examined, that much dental work was needed to fill the cavities, also a more ample nourishing diet, and maybe a different breed of beast. The new crop of youngsters exercised its father-complex by passing on to higher criticism and acute scepticism; it wanted to be shown; it asked "What is the evidence?" Fortunately, in the first place, it could draw on a rapidly widening supply of the old kind of evidence, as central and local government archives were inventoried, thrown open for inspection, even published. In the second place, it sought new kinds of records. In 1913 the curator of a Yorkshire museum remarked "I don't know whether this stuff will interest you" as he handed me fragments of two letter-books, only 56 leaves in all, on which an early eighteenth century clothmaker and a cloth merchant had written copies of about 300 letters sent to their British or foreign customers. The merchant's letters showed the commercial wheels going round, or grinding to a halt. The manufacturer's revealed the plans and ambitions, the trials and tribulations of a Schumpeterian innovating entrepreneur who had resolved to

challenge the stranglehold of East Anglia and the West of England on the making of worsted fabrics. Yet in his darkest hours he declared, "I think it's now very evident these manufactories will come in Spite of fate into these northern Counties." He was a true prophet. To edit and publish the letters was my pioneer tiny contribution to business history. Two or three years later, across the Pennines in Manchester, George Unwin danced a jig when he learned that some boy scouts had found the attic floor of a ruined mill strewn with the records of a pioneer factory operator about 1790. From that day Unwin spent "his free afternoons, excited and a little anxious, armed with a large brush and a house maid's apron," (Lawney), raiding other attics and transferring their contents to a safe repository. Since those days British civic and university libraries have scoured their districts for business records, while county historical societies or record offices have gathered in the archives of landed families and thereby made it possible to look at four or five centuries of rural society from inside, rather than outside, the gates or walls of many ancestral homes.

True, the going was difficult at times. Those of you who have worked on banking archives for this meeting may not realize how recent is the opening of such manuscripts to scholars. In 1931 I asked the manager of a Yorkshire bank, founded about 1750, for permission to study any records he possessed of a leading merchant firm which decided to build a huge mill with a thousand employees in the 1790s. "Sir," said he, "are you asking me to let you delve into the private affairs of one of our clients? You may do that sort of thing in America, but not in this country." Whereupon he bruskiy bowed me out. It is good to realize that things have changed markedly since then on both sides of the Atlantic, and that the list of firms, large as well as small, studied from inside has grown long. Those who wrote them may well have been harassed by a plethora, rather than a paucity of documents, as have the librarians who have to house them.

For its attack on these masses or fragments of source materials the inter-war generation had some new or improved tools. One was geography. A glance at geology and altitude was enough to upset any naive notion that the medieval open arable field system was far-flung. You could not operate the textbook manorial village in swamps, on mountain slopes, or bleak windswept moors. If much land from the English Channel to Russia was low-lying and swampy; if the soil from Denmark to Dantzig was pebbly glacial moraine; and if northwestern Europe's climate favored the rapid growth of dense forests, then the picture of how many of our medieval and later forebears lived had to be drastically changed. We began to see them as woodsmen, without Snow Whites or cheap sharp axes, hacking down the trees to get a bit of elbowroom; as frontiersmen in Europe before they came to the New World; as amphibians without rubber boots patiently reclaiming waterlogged lands on both sides of the North Sea.

Nearer home it was quite startling to learn from geologists why the northern and eastern two-thirds of Canada, known as the

Laurentian Pre-Cambrian Shield, is almost devoid of good soil, a vast expanse of rock, rivers, lakes, Christmas trees, marshes, muskeg, and tundra. The reason for this bleak contrast with our own rich heartland is that four of five Ice Ages,

scoured the ancient rock formation which underlies three quarters of the continent, depositing soils or the constituents of future soils in sprawling aprons beyond their outer margins. When the ice retreated, it had bared the huge area of the Canadian Shield, (but left behind) rich finely disintegrated soil... from the south-shores of the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico.<sup>1</sup>

That basic fact determined, in the words of the late Professor Brebner, that "future North Americans would distribute themselves in the Proportion of twelve Americans to one Canadian." These words were written over three decades ago. The ratio today stands about ten to one; but most of the 20,000,000 Canadians reside within a hundred miles of the undefended international boundary.

The second useful tool was technology, or rather a better knowledge of technological methods and innovations. There was nothing new in the belief that innovations produced far-reaching changes in productivity. The new thing was the lengthening list of them. We are no longer confined to the Printing Revolution of the fifteenth century and the machines and steam engines of Toynbee's Industrial Revolution. We now know much about the late Roman and early medieval Ploughing Revolution, caused by the coming of the wheeled plough on to the heavier soils of the North European plain; the Haulage Revolution which came about 800 A.D. when effective harness replaced the collar that had choked a horse if it tried to pull a heavy load; the Commercial Revolution of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, especially in the shipping and trading techniques of Italian cities; the Industrial Revolution of the thirteenth century, when the felting and fulling of wollen cloths began to be done with heavy wooden hammers driven by water-power instead of by the weight of human beings walking over the cloth in a water-filled trough or marking time on it in a tub; and Professor Nef's Industrial Revolution of the sixteenth century caused by the rapidly expanding use of coal in place of increasingly scarce and costly wood fuel.

The third relatively new tool of our craft was statistics, as part of that quest of the quantitative and cult of numbers which has swept over virtually all facets of our politics, social sciences, athletics, dietetics, dental care, medicine, phones, mail, checking accounts, intelligence tests, and TV ratings during the last half-century. In well-nigh every field measurement is mandatory, numbers are king.

How could we economic historians hope to escape this overpowering trend and tide? Actually we decided long ago to join and encourage it; maybe we started it. Some forty years ago Clapham, the Cambridge economic historian, insisted that the, methodological distinctiveness (of economic history) hinges primarily upon its marked quantitative interests; for this reason it is or should be the most ex-

act branch of history... Every economic historian should ... have acquired the statistical sense, the habit of asking in relation to any institution, policy, group, or movement the questions: How large? how long? How often? how representative?

This statement of faith appeared in Clapham's article on "Economic History as a Discipline" in the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (Volume V, 1931). The article might be read today with profit, if only to temper the criticism currently being voiced that economic historians have been prone to describe blurred masses of unspecified size by such vague words as "largely," "mostly," or "sizable" in the Era B.C.--Before Computers, or Before Cliometrics.

Actually the search for quantities goes back at least to Thorold Rogers' work on wages and prices; the first of his seven volumes on the history of English agriculture and prices came out in 1866, the last in 1902. In the latter year E. F. Gay completed many years of hard labor devoted to testing the story, based on such literary sources as More's Utopia, speeches, sermons, and pamphlets, of Tudor England's rural depopulation by the enclosure of open arable lands or grazing pastures. According to these abundant angry sources--"contemporary hysterics" as he came to regard them--the "cruel godless covetous" landlords swept countless farmers off their holdings and replaced them with a shepherd, his dog, and multitudes of sheep. Patient examination of local and national manuscripts, official inquiries, and lawsuits convinced Gay that the areas affected were measurably small, that evictions were far from numerous, and that farmers did a lot of enclosing on their own initiative.

A decade later Professor Lybyer of the University of Illinois used dates and statistical data to demolish the widely accepted belief that the blocking of the Near East trade routes from Asia by the Turks forced Europe to seek another route to the Spice Islands and thereby led to the maritime discoveries. This belief fit the Gladstonian era's bad opinion of the Turk: unspeakable; where his foot has trod grass will never grow. In the nineteenth century his favorite outdoor sport was massacring Armenians; in the fifteenth it was torturing European Christians by depriving them of cinnamon for their buns and cloves for their baked hams. But Diaz, da Gama, and Columbus, in Liza Doolittle's phrase, "they done him in." Lybyer shattered this interpretation with a neat left and a dirty right. By looking at dates he found the Turks were not astride the two main routes until at least two decades after the Cape of Good Hope had been rounded, India reached, and the West Indies discovered. Then he studied spice prices in European markets, but found no evidence of a shortage; in fact pepper prices went down in Venice during the century. Since Lybyer's day, Professor Lane has shown that the only serious attempt to block the old routes was made by the Portuguese after they had established themselves in Indian Ocean ports; but their endeavor to channel oriental produce solely round the Cape of Good Hope soon failed.

One other American search for quantities merits attention.

It is the six years of herculean labor by Professor and Mrs. Earl Hamilton during the twenties and early thirties in collecting and analyzing mountains of material for their study of the flow of American treasure to Spain and of the behavior of Spanish prices. On that task they spent 30,750 hours working jointly, had assistance for 12,500 hours, and made no less than 3,000,000 computations--without any mechanical equipment!

In Britain Clapham practiced what he preached during his three decades as a Cambridge professor (1908-38). He directed his questions especially to the Industrial Revolution. That revolution had been painted by Toynbee and his disciples as a grim tragedy of violent whirlwind change; a tornado of social upheaval, as domestic industrial workers and farm laborers, along with their wives and children, were swept from their picturesque villages and thatched cottages into a veritable hell where seven new deadly sins prevailed--satanic mills, smoke-smogged urban slums, long working hours, child labor, overworked women, low wages, and periodic depressions. There they were exploited by hard-hearted gradgrind capitalists, unrestrained by a state converted to laissez faire. The villains waved richer, the victims got poorer.

What were the facts, the figures, the evidence? asked Clapham, and spent more than a decade hunting for them before writing his volume on the first half of the nineteenth century. Often he found no figures and had to admit "We do not know." But he did unearth enough to challenge the belief that everything was getting worse down to near mid-century; enough to give dimensions where hitherto there were only the "blurred masses of unspecified size"; enough to show that the seven deadly sins had not been unknown in the pre-revolutionary economy; and enough to prove that in 1830, fifty years after the first spinning machine and Watt engine had appeared, the technological revolution was far from completed, even for that hare in a world of tortoises, the cotton textile industry.

The interwar decades were thus an "age of research, revision, and monographs." The list of Harvard Economic Studies more than trebled in length and a third of the additions were in our field. The Harvard Studies in Business History began in 1931, four years after the arrival of Gras and his little band of Minnesota disciples. The Journal of Economic and Business History began its promising career in 1928, but expired five years later, partly a victim of the depression. The British Economic History Review saw the light in 1926, defied the depression and the blitz, then grew lustily thereafter. And in the early 'thirties the time seemed ripe for planning a Cambridge Economic History of Europe, which would gather into eight massive volumes an exposition of the new-found knowledge by international teams of authors.

Meanwhile some old concepts were being clobbered and some -isms were losing their appeal as scholars examined them more thoroughly. Heckscher's valiant effort in the early thirties to produce a definitive picture of Mercantilism made some of us wonder whether there ever had been such a thing. The same, or a worse, fate befell Sombart's mighty effort--in six volumes and



3,300 pages--to view Capitalism as a biological entity, with a body, mind, soul, and spirit, born into a world of handicraftism in the Middle Ages, enjoying a lusty childhood and adolescence in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, reaching virile manhood in the nineteenth, but inevitably doomed to senility and death by or before the mid-twentieth. Gras helped to upset Som-bart's appellation by defining capitalism as "a system of getting a living through the use of capital, which in turn we may regard as goods or trained abilities used in producing other goods or services." It had started when prehistoric man devised his first hunting weapons or tools, and can be traced therefrom through a series of stages to the "national capitalism" of the New Deal or the national economic planning policies of our own day.

So the revisionism--or idol-smashing--went on elsewhere. In England Lipson of Oxford talked about the "so-called Industrial Revolution" and insisted there had been no real break in England's developing economy. Eileen Power, the brilliant medievalist at the London School of Economics, insisted that "manor" was a term only as precise as the word "mammal." And agricultural historians were moving toward the point where they would say much less about the "manorial system," and much more about the "manorial system."

As for the future, the depressed 'thirties were pessimistic about it. Such economists as Alvin Hansen were telling us that we had reached economic maturity, were facing stagnation and decline, and salvation could come only from what today are cutely and Keynesianly called "appropriate monetary and fiscal policies." To make matters worse, the population pundits were pointing to the falling birthrates throughout the western world; the drop already recorded in the French population; a similar inevitable early decline in the rest of Western Europe; and the mathematical certainty that our own population would reach its maximum at 136,000,000 by 1956, then fall to 126,000,000 by 1980.

How wrong they proved to be! Virtually all the trends which they thought irreversible have been reversed during the last quarter-century. We have witnessed the "explosions"--demographic, academic, technological, intercontinental, inter-generational, and so forth. New fields of interest have been opened up, and new tools or techniques with which to till them have been found. Since most of you have seen and experienced parts of phases of this changing age, I need comment only on the facets which have affected our discipline. True, the population experts have made no apologies, so far as I know, for having misled us and have switched to their new concern lest fertility triumph over mortality in the near future. The economists are equally silent about their false forecasts, and now assert they know how to rub one side of Aladdin's Keynesian lamp to provoke prosperity and to rub the other side to prevent the economy from overheating. But I recall a reminder that while Keynes prescribed for a patient suffering from prolonged acute anemia, he did not live long enough to write a prescription when the same patient developed excessively high blood pressure.

As for the academic explosion, I doubt whether those of us

who founded the Economic History Association in December 1940 and quickly got 360 individual members ever dreamed that by 1967 we would have 1,100 a thousand of them on this continent; that three-quarters of them got their final degrees or were in process of getting them since 1950 and two-fifths of them did so in the sixties, against only 25 percent who predate 1950; and that 60 percent of them are either economists or have an economist's trained approach to economic history. Meanwhile, the number of "agency subscriptions"--mostly libraries--has increased tenfold from the original 54 in 1941, which assures that most graduate students have access to the Journal of Economic History.

A moment ago I mentioned the emergence of new fields of interest and of new tools with which to till them. Let me therefore conclude by dealing with that development. In the fall of 1940 the Rockefeller Foundation invited a dozen economic historians to meet at its office and "discuss research possibilities" in their field. From that meeting emerged the Committee on Research in Economic History, born three weeks before the Economic History Association. After six months of far-flung discussion and consultation, the Committee decided that its first major project--"the role of government in American economic development"--would be a salutary check on the widespread belief that this country was wedded to laissez faire from its foundation till that gray morn in March, 1933 when F. D. Roosevelt took office as president. Some four or five studies of federal and still more of state policies down to 1860 provided ample evidence that the belief was a myth. The second major theme was "the role of the entrepreneur in American economic development." This was Arthur Cole's brainwave or babe, and he nursed it from its birth to its maturity in the formation of the Harvard Research Center in Entrepreneurial History (1948-58). But war distractions stopped the Committee there, apart from sponsoring and subsidizing many independent research monographs. We shied away from an ambitious proposal that we spend a sizable part of our \$250,000 on compiling "Economic Annals" which would be useful for exploring the history of American business fluctuations. Never once in our discussion do I recall that the term "Economic Growth" was mentioned or suggested as a worthy theme.

Then, like a bright new star, Economic Growth appeared in the sky in the mid-forties, and soon all eyes were fixed, as if hypnotized, on it. Here was a panacea which, if applied, would avert the mass unemployment which bedeviled the prewar decade; would guarantee prosperity, full employment, and stable prices in the "developed" economies; would lead the "underdeveloped" (alias "backward") regions to large total and per capita incomes; and, if these regions were guided and aided by the know-how and money of the developed nations, they would be induced to "be on our side" in the threatened cold or hot war between the world's two superpowers.

The urgent need for such developments created what Barry Supple has called "a sort of forced draft" and Simon Kuznets described as "a rapid intensification of interest in a suddenly emerging complex of problems." That draft sucked in almost

overnight a new generation of economic historians, along with economists, statesmen, and the dispensers of foundation funds. The Economic History Association was the first to give official recognition to the astronomic newcomer, for our entire annual meeting at Yale in 1947 was devoted to Economic Growth, with a stellar cast including Schumpeter, Kuznets, Usher, and Gerschenkron. Since then half of our annual meetings have been devoted wholly to the same theme.

We were not long alone in our enthusiasm--or obsession. Soon the American Economic Association became aware of what was what. The Social Science Council which had fathered to Committee on Research in Economic History in 1940 created one on Economic Growth, with Kuznets as chairman, in 1949. The International Economic Association, founded in 1950, took three years to get around to discussing "Economic Progress," returned to it in later years, and wound up its first decade in 1960 with a full-dress exploration of Rostow's "The Economics of 'Take Off' into Sustained Growth." The first international conference of economic historians, held in Stockholm in 1960, spent three-fifths of its time on "Industrialization as a factor in economic growth after 1700," And the postwar editors, Postan and Habakkuk, of the three "modern" volumes of the Cambridge Economic History have revamped, or discarded, the time-honored division of the subject" because it "does not relate well to the issues of economic development as formulated by nonhistorians (or) find room for subjects common to the economy as a whole." Hence they have striven "so to define the main themes...as to focus attention on topics directly relevant to the current discussions of economic growth and also to enable the authors to deal with the salient features of the modern economy as a whole"--alias macroeconomics.

Thus it seems that, in the immortal words of Mr. James Durante, "everybody wanted to get into the act." But after two decades of this experience, it may be that the zest for analyzing, measuring, and promoting economic growth is being weakened today by the failure to maintain "sustained increase" of GNP in some developed countries; by disturbances or disappointing results in some newly-independent "developing" countries; also by our belated recognition, especially since the Iet vacation experience in Vietnam, that there are limits to our ability to afford guns and butter and the Great Society and external economic aid.

Be that as it may, our academic attention has been diverted by another star which came up over the horizon soon after the mid-fifties and was by 1960 shining with sufficient brilliance to compel attention, even to win many devoted followers. The star has been variously christened: econometric history, Cliometrics, and new economic history, as opposed to old, conventional, or traditional.

Changing the metaphor from astronomy--or astrology--to biology, the new babe was the offspring of interdisciplinary miscegenation or polyandry--between Clio and economic theory, statistics, and higher mathematics. Like the Economic History Association, which was born in two places--the 1940 meeting of historians in New York City and that of economists in New Orleans--

it had two, or at least two birthplaces. One of them was the computer laboratory converted into an electronic quick delivery maternity ward at Purdue University in Lafayette; and since there were five live deliveries between 1957 and 1960 I suspect planned parenthood and am aware of the similarity between the words Lafayette and layetts. The technique has proved so expeditious and effective that I wish it had been available a quarter-century ago when I had to spend two years analyzing seven facts concerning each of the 12,000 British males who automatically became "enemy aliens" when the War of 1812 caught them in this country. That dreary task drove me to bifocals. Today whenever I talk about British steamships or the history of the dollar-sterling exchange rate of the financing of early textile factories, I bow in gratitude toward Lafayette.

The other birthplace was Williamstown, where in 1957 the annual meeting of the Economic History Association was combined with a conference of the National Bureau of Economic Research. There Meyer and Conrad, in a paper on "The Economics of Slavery in the Ante-Bellum Slavery," shocked the moral and humanitarian fibers of many hearers by debunking, with a massive display of theory, statistics, estimates, guesstimates, and cost accounting, the generally accepted view of U. B. Phillips and his disciples that slavery was not merely bad but also bad business.

Since those recent early days the new economic history has grown with extraordinary rapidity in status, stature, and popularity among faculties and students from the Pacific Coast to the Atlantic seaboard. Its leaders have vigorously expounded their cause, frankly admitted some shortcomings, and disagreed with each other. They have had a very good press in professional journals, in collections of "Readings," and in book form; have appeared on platforms at meetings of academic associations; and some of them have adopted the strategic rule that the best defence is to take the offensive--in the military, not civilized sense of the word.

As far as time permits I try to keep up with the new school. True, at times I question the value of the statistics, of the guesstimates, even the validity of the counterfactual hypotheses. I welcome Professor Lance Davis' admission that while facts without theory may not be enough, theory without facts is also no bargain. I even try to conjure up counterfactual possibles, such as "If the miniskirt had become fashionable around 1815, what significant contribution would the New England textile industry have made to the GNP?" But my main worry comes from Davis' confession that the new school has thus far failed to communicate its findings and methodology to the history profession at large. We all know that communication between disciplines or even sub-disciplines, grows no easier, and is in fact an occupational disease at many points. In 1960 Carter Goodrich talked of the danger that economic historians might become divided into those who wrote in words and those who did it in digits. Certainly it is unlikely that an old, or even middle-aged economic (or business) historian will have the time or the understanding needed to wrestle with the 70 graphs and 160 pages of

algebracadra which fill a fifth of the pages devoted to articles in six recent issues of the British Economic Journal. It may even be difficult for some of them to learn much from the 130 pages of statistics, explanatory footnotes, appendices, graphs, mathematics and the like which occupy at least a quarter of the comparable space in the 1966 volume of the Journal of Economic History. If that be so, Cliomay decide to write a play entitled Love' Labor's Last.

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<sup>1</sup>J. B. Brebner, North Atlantic Triangle, (1945), p. 1.