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King's Library
Microphotography

From The Librarian, Windsor Castle, Berkshire.

Dr. Daniel P.O'Brien,
Burlington House,
London W.1.

My dear O'Brien,

At the close of the past year courtesy no less than personal inclination leads me to send you a second report upon the progress of the microfilming campaign in the Royal Archives, supplementing that which I last wrote on 9 July.

During the past 6 months we have taken 160,678 photographic exposures at a cost of £2105:1:10. Under the terms of my original agreement with the company concerned I pay the fares of the operators who come down from London, and these have amounted to £34:12:6. To the enumerators who place a consecutive number upon each document before it is photographed I have paid £31:5:6. And finally there is a small charge for box containers for the negatives, £4:7:0. The total expenditure during this past half-year has thus been £2215:6:10.

If to this we add the previous total, accounted for in my last report, namely £2373:10:11, we arrive at the over-all expenditure to date of £4588 odd. I have thus about £400 in hand, and I think it would be well, if you agree, that a further sum of £3000 should be placed to my account to be going on with - though there is no immediate hurry about this.

Reviewing the position broadly, then, we have hitherto spent about half of the global sum of £10,000 provisionally mentioned as perhaps the total cost of the whole scheme. But considerably more than half the work has been done, and I do not anticipate that we shall need as much as, in their generosity, the Foundation Directors were prepared to earmark. We have completed the Stuart papers, the papers of George III & George IV, and almost all the Old Master Drawings. We are now well ahead with the more modern papers of the late King George V, and also with the Cumberland Papers - i.e. the papers of William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, son of George II, who defeated the Young Pretender in the famous Scottish Rebellion of 1745. I think that all of this programme should be cleared off by Easter: you will realise I am sure that it is difficult to speak with precision - but hitherto my estimates have been on the conservative side.

There will then remain only the papers of Queen Victoria; and here I confess I find it hard to form an estimate at all. If they should take 3 months, i.e. till midsummer, we should by that time have spent say £7,500 in all. I cannot think that they would in any case outlast Michaelmas, by which time the total cost would have risen to say £9000 - but I doubt if we should reach that sum.

I have hitherto shelved the question of duplicating these films, being wholly preoccupied with the task of getting the master-film made. I shall

thereafter have to determine, on behalf of The King, which sections of the film can prudently be made available to students, and which should be reserved as confidential material: and in this task the the desk reading apparatus, of which we have received advance notice but which has not yet arrived, will be of great service. I am inclined to think, on broad principles, that the master-film should remain here, and two copies be made; one for America (presumably the Library of Congress) and one for England (presumably the British Museum). But I do not regard this as particularly pressing, partly because we must first get the film completed, partly because we must select the non-confidential matter - and partly because film is scarce in these days when the Royal Air Force with their vast requirements have the prior claim.

I need not say how very grateful we are for this noble assistance, and for the gift of a reading-machine which will render essential service. I hope that during your recent visit to the States you were able to tell the Directors from your own knowledge that we do feel most sensible of their kindness. Perhaps you will kindly forward the attached carbon copy of this report to whichever member it should be directed.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely yours,

O. F. Morshead