Editorial

Charles Dickens famously began *The Tale of Two Cities* with the following sentence:

> It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.

In many ways, this sums up the experience of *JMH* over the past year. Experiencing a "season of light", *JMH* obtained a citation score (measured by *Scopus)* of 1.11, the second highest in history after 2015, when 1.21 was recorded. This reflects a steady rise in our citation score since 2016, which has seen it rise from 0.48 in 2016 to 0.76 in 2017 to 0.83 in 2018 to 1.11 in 2019. Total citations have risen from 174 in 2016 to 298 in 2019. Interestingly, the steady progress of *JMH* roughly corresponds to the progress of *Management and Organizational History*, which has seen its citation scores rise from 0.84 in 2015 to 0.58 in 2016 to 0.58 in 2017 to 1.05 in 2018. Both journals, it should be noted, have H index scores of 18. That both journals are advancing in terms of citations points to the general health of management history scholarship.

If *JMH*'s rising citation scores represented the "season", then "the epoch of incredulity" was heralded by the outcome of the Australian Business Dean's Council) Review of its journal rankings, which saw *JMH* downgraded from an A to a B. This occurred despite the steady increase in *JMH*'s citations in recent years and our strong position on virtually every objective criteria *vis-à-vis* other journals that remained an A. For example, the Australian-based *Labour History* – which has an H index of 6 and a 2018 citation score with Scopus of 0.23 – remained an A while *JMH* ended up a B and MOH remained a C.

In the past few months, we have also experienced some changes in the editorial leadership team at *JMH*, with both Wim Van Lent and Kyle Bruce stepping side, both of whom have served as Associate Editors since I took over the journal in 2015 and introduced the current system of Associate Editors. I would like to thank both Wim and Kyle for their service over the past few years. In their lieu, we have appointed Chad Seifried from Louisiana State University in the USA and Kevin Tennent from the University of York in the UK. As people who attend the AOM's Annual Meetings would know, both Chad and Kevin are active members of the Management History Division and leading management historians. Both have published regularly in the journal.

With the recent changes in the journal leadership the Associate Editors are:

- Jeffrey Muldoon, USA
- Leon Prieto, USA
- Chad Seifried, USA
- James Wilson, UK
- Kevin Tennent, UK
- Sébastien Damart, France
- Andrew Cardow, New Zealand
- Adela McMurray, Australia

As is obvious, this leadership team is truly international and is reflective of the shift in authorship that has occurred in recent years. In 2019, for example, the USA was still the

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source of most articles, but a minority nevertheless. Australia, Canada and the UK were all roughly equal, followed by France. We are also seeing an increasing number of articles from continental Europe.

This issue

This issue, the final one for 2020, brings seven articles to press. The first, by Svetlana Bratchenko of the Institute of Economics at the Russian Academy of Science, Moscow, is entitled *Russia Management, 1462–1606: A Modernisation Story?* In her fine article, Bratchenko explores not only a largely overlooked period of Russian history, traces the ways in which this period of Russian history led to not only internal transformation but also closer interaction with the West. Often viewed as alien and distant, Russia has nevertheless profoundly influenced the course of human history over the past 250 years. As Bratchenko notes in the opening sentences of her article:

> The West has, historically, had trouble comprehending both the Russian historical experience and its own relationship with Russia. At times – such as during both the Napoleonic war and the Cold War – Russia has been perceived as a European superpower, an economic and military giant. At other times, at has been viewed as a backward frontier region, more Asian than European.

Typically, Bratchenko notes, Russian "modernisation" – the process through which Russia associated the managerial expertise to compete with Western nations both economically and militarily – is associated with the reign of Peter the Great (reign 1682–1725). However, Bratchenko convincingly argues that the decisive period in Russian "modernisation" was actually the period between the ascent of Ivan III (1462) and the death of Boris Godunov (1605). As Bratchenko notes, without this earlier period of "modernisation" the achievements of Peter the Great would have been impossible for the simple reason that Russia would not have survived as an organised society.

In our second article, *Tariffs, rail rates and social welfare in the USA, 1887–1914*, Deirdre Collier (Fairleigh Dickinson University College at Florham, Madison, New Jersey) and Paul Miranti (Rutgers Business School, New Jersey) explore an issue that has long been dear to the hearts of business and management historians: US railroad management and the relationship between competition, expenses and tariffs. In this paper, Collier and Miranti explore the period between 1887, when the Interstate Commerce was established, and the First World War, paying particular heed to the experiences of farmers and other primary producers in the American South and West. As most readers would be aware, it was the grievances of farmers in these region, beset by falling grain prices and what they believed to be "unfair" railroad tariffs, that spurred the "populist" movements of late 19th century America. From the outset, Collier and Miranti note, "the ICC attempted to balance domestic social welfare and international trade objectives alongside its other mandates, through its ability to determine rate fairness and reasonableness." In gauging the much disputed success of these efforts, Collier and Miranti map the inherently difficult path that lay before the ICC. In terms of exports, low railroad freight tariffs were essential to the export of American grain and cotton, both of which experienced growing competition from other international producers. Low tariffs also played a vital role in the fostering of internal commerce and industry with the US reliant on imports for many finished and semi-finished products, including machinery. In balancing a variety of competing interests – farmers, consumers, the railroad companies themselves – Collier and Miranti argue that the ICC's "overriding desire" was that of "regional welfare. The ICC's opposition to rate increases, particularly after 1910, may be best understand in terms of the welfare objectives that the ICC was trying to pursue in the West and the South." In essence, the continued vitality of both American farm exports and domestic manufacturing is gauged to be the principle concern of the ICC. As someone (Bowden, 2015, 2017; Stevenson-Clark and Bowden, 2018) who has long held an interest in the economics and management of late 19th century railroads, I find the arguments of Collier and Miranti to be convincing. I also believe that they have published in this article *the* most significant analysis of 19th century railroad competition and management in the past two decades.

In our third article – entitled *Human and Social Capital as Influencers on Women's Careers: Rosemary Pledger's Path to Career Success and Mobility* – Silvia Ines Monserrat (Universidad Nacional del Centro de la Provincia de Buenos Aires) and Claire Simmers (Saint Joseph's University Erivan K. Haub, Philadelphia) continue their study into the careers of the female academics who profoundly shaped the direction of the Academy of Management. The first tranche of this study – *Carolyn R. Dexter's Legacies: a Broader Perspective on Faculty Work Productivity and Impact* – was heralded in this journal with Monserrat and Simmers' (2019) study of Carolyn Dexter, the female pioneer for whom the AOM's top international prize (the Carolyn Dexter award) is named in commemoration. In this study, Monserrat and Simmers extend their inquiries so as to embrace the career of Rosemary Pledger, who became the first female President of the AOM in 1979. In summarizing Pledger's career, Monserrat and Simmers note that:

> Pledger achieved positions generally not accessible to females, working her entire career as the exception. She was a woman who was able to climb to the top in academia as the first woman president of the AOM, as a President of the Southwest AOM and as a Dean of the School of Professional Studies, University of Houston, Clear Lake City, Texas (UH/CLC), a school closely associated with the US space program

As a journal with a long and close association with the MHD of the AOM, it is fitting that it is *JMH* which has had the honour of recording these female pioneers of the Academy.

In our fourth article, Sidhu, Stevenson-Clarke, Joshi and Halabi examine the Australian accounting profession and the four failed merger attempts between its two pre-eminent professional bodies, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia (the "Institute") and the Australian Society of Accountants (the "Society"). Given the fact that these societies had similar aims, and served a similar function in maintaining professional standards, a merger of these two bodies would appear both beneficial and inevitable. However, as Sidhu, Stevenson-Clarke, Joshi and Halabi point out, mergers between professional bodies are fundamentally different to those relating to corporate organisations in the private-sector. In the latter, corporate managers have considerable powers of discretion in moving towards a merger. By contrast, mergers between professional bodies are dependent upon acceptance by the membership of both bodies. Sidhu *et al.* argue that in the case of Australia's professional accounting bodies this was always going to be difficult to achieve, given it would involve modifications to traditional organisational strategies, including a changed emphasis from exclusivity to inclusiveness for the Institute (and vice versa for the Society). In other words, where the Institute of Chartered Accounts saw its goal as one of defending the privileged position of its membership, the Society of Accountants sought improvement in accounting standards through an embrace of as many members as possible. Witnessing a gradual erosion of its comparative study *vis-à-vis* the Society of Accountants, it was the Institute that had most to gain by a merger and, in consequence, it was the Institute that was the main driver of the four proposed mergers. However, in seeking a merger the exclusive orientation of its existing merger proved an immovable barrier; an outcome that continued to leave Australia's accounting profession with two rival associations.

The fifth article in this issue is by Yaron Zoller (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) and Jeffrey Muldoon (Emporia State University, Kansas) and is entitled, *Journey of a Concept:*

Span of Control - The Rise, the Decline, and What is Next? In this article, Zoller and Muldoon trace the rise, fall and continued relevance of one of the most common concepts in management and organisational behaviour: the span of control, that is the maximum number of employees that a given supervisor can efficiently manage. As Zoller and Muldoon note, the concept of the span of control, although boasting an ancient lineage, moved to centre stage during the Golden Age of management research that occurred on either side of the First World War. Some, most notably Henri Fayol and Lyndall Urwick, believed that in most situations a supervisor could only manage the performance of five to six workers. By contrast, Chester Barnard believed that the typical supervisor could manage up to 15 employees. In tracing the rising interest in the concept of the span of control in the post-1945 business environment, Zoller and Muldoon go on to trace how it became associated with a drive to allow work groups more flexibility. The British Tavistok School, for example, argued that in highly trained work-teams it was possible to operate without any supervisors, thereby allowing for both broad spans of controls and organisational decentralisation. Yet, from a position where the concept of the span of control was central to management – both practically and theoretically – from the 1970s onwards it slowly disappeared from the management lexicon. In explaining this strange circumstance, Zoller and Muldoon argue that the concept of the span of control became victim to a profound shift in management studies, from being a discipline primarily concerned with practice to one mainly concerned with theory; a profound shift that owed much to Herbert Simon. Under assault, the concept of the span of control also suffered a grievous setback with the death of Urwick in 1983, a researcher whom Zoller and Muldoon declare to be "it's most ardent and eloquent defender". However, despite the decline in interest in this classic concept, Zoller and Muldoon argue that it has continued relevance "to the strategy/leadership literature and the concepts of efficiency and effectiveness". It is a conclusion that I can only endorse.

In our penultimate article, virtual global project management in 18th-century astronomy, Klaus Brockhoff (WHU Foundation, Vallendar, Germany), explores one of the seminal scientific research projects of the European Enlightenment: the observations of the transit Venus across the Sun and the estimation of the distance between the Sun and the Earth. In doing so, Brockhoff argues:

> [. . .] that in the eighteenth century leading astronomers mastered the art of virtual global project management. Building on shared standards of scientific explorations and research as well as on mutual trust, they reduced project transaction costs much in the same way as applications of new technologies favored virtual projects in the late 1990s.

To understand the significance of this project we first need to understand why this project, undertaken following the advocacy of Britain's Edmund Halley and directed towards the transits of Venus in 1761 and 1769, was so scientifically important. As Brockhoff explains it in his paper, observing the transit of Venus from different locations allowed for an accurate estimation of the Astronomical Unit, that is, "the absolute distance between the Sun and the Earth, which was not precisely known until then. Once this distance was known, it had implications for the measurement of other distances in the solar system". The problem was that estimation as to the Sun's distance required triangulations, the collation of measurements and angles from places where both longitude and latitude could be accurately measured. In tracing international support for this major scientific endeavour, Brockhoff notes the many obstacles that befell the project. In North America, the American Philosophical Society supported the project but the governing councils of Massachusetts and the Philadelphia region did not. French support waxed and waned in accordance with France's relationship with Britain; a relationship that totally fractured during the Seven

Years War. More significantly, Brockhoff finds that the various Scientific Academies "with their interdisciplinary memberships were not well suited for the management of specific projects". Accordingly, Brockhoff observes:

> [. . .] following the expression of general interest in the global project, the national projects had to be managed by particular working groups. These were named committees or commissions. In the project management literature, these are known as program or project teams.

In short, the success of this key scientific endeavour owed as much to project management as it did to astronomical expertise. For an Australian, it should be noted, this project has particular significance. For among those to conduct (largely unsuccessful) measurements of the transit of Venus was a British expedition to Tahiti led by the notable British seafarer, Captain James Cook. Having completed this task, Cook then opened his "sealed orders" from the British Admiralty, which required him to search for a supposed Great South Land in the Southern Ocean, an endeavour that resulted in Cook's mapping of both New Zealand and the eastern shores of Australia. From this project, the ensuing European settlement of both Australia and New Zealand was an almost inevitable consequence.

In our final article, *The Government's Role in Creating an Innovation Ecosystem: The Springfield Armoury as Hub in the Connecticut River Valley*, Robert Ford (University of Central Florida) and Keenan Yoho (Rollins College, FL) return us to one of the pioneers in modern production systems: the Springfield Armoury. The historic significance of the Springfield Armoury in terms of the transition from "craft" production to "Fordist" assembly line manufacture is well summed up by Ford and Yoho in their opening sentence, where they observe:

> Consider a skilled craftsman making a rifle as one end of a continuum with a modern Ford auto assembly line at the other end. Now consider what transformations must occur in the methods of manufacture and management to get from one end to the other. Each step away from the craftsman requires an increasing sophistication in tools, processes, and organization to be successful as the self-paced, skilled artisan making an entire something is replaced with a less skilled worker making only a part of that something. To make this process more difficult, each separately produced part must fit with others in a structured sequence to make a completed product.

The extraordinary success of the Springfield Armoury – Ford and Yoho describing it as "the envy of the world" in the mid-19th century – is attributed in this study "at least in part to the US Government's role in promoting innovation by setting a goal for and funding the creation of a network of arms manufacturers that evolved into an ecosystem of innovative organizations". Within the network of firms located in the Connecticut River Valley, the Springfield Armoury's success is also traced to its ability to command the key nodal points in the production process, securing what Ford and Yoho describe as "a choke hold on the entire ecosystem". For, to bring its unique production system based around interchangeable parts into service, the assembly system that evolved at the Armoury was only made possible due to its capacity to draw on other producers, capable to developing the machine tools required for the production of the various rifle parts. In consequence, the Armoury – established in 1785 by Congressional grant – more than trebled its output between the date of its inception and the 1820s. As the production of interchangeable parts shifted manufacturing processes away from earlier craft models, the number of job classifications in the Armoury rose from eleven in 1806 to 100 in 1825. In tracing the factors associated with this seminal moment in management history, Ford and Yoho not only bring a fresh eye to the Springfield story but they also tell a thoroughly engaging and well-written account that I am sure every reader will enjoy.

Future specials issues

In the course of the next 12 to 18 months, *JMH* intends to publish a number of exciting Special Issues. This will involve:

- *Debates in Management History* (edited by Jean Helm Mills): In recent years, what has become known as the "Historic Turn" in management and organizational studies, a movement initially associated with an article in *Business History* by Clark and Rowlinson (2004), which has also contributed to the ascendancy of a variety of "critical" perspectives within the management history discipline, most notably ANTi-History (Durepos and Mills, 2011, 2012; Durepos, 2015), history as rhetoric and "grounded factionalism" (Alvesson and Kärreman, 2000; Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005; Foster *et al.*, 2017), "polyphonic constitutive historicism" (Smith and Russell, 2016) and "genealogical pragmatic analysis" (Marshall and Novicevic, 2016). In this Special Issue, the strengths and weaknesses will be debated in a series of invited articles by a number of the leading scholars in the field. Among those participating in this debate are Albert Mills, Gabrielle Durepos, Milorad Novicevic, Nicholous Deal, Foster Roberts, Terrance Weatherbee, Kevin Tennent, Jeffrey Muldoon and my good self. It is anticipated that this Special Issue will be published in the next issue of *JMH*, (i.e. the first volume of 2021).
- *Responsible Business and Strategy in Conversation: Can Management History inform Corporate Responsibility?* (Edited by Kevin Tennent and Nicholas Burton): This article is well-advanced with a number of articles have gone through some or all of the review process. Articles will include studies of British Consumer Cooperatives (Nicholas Wong), Quaker commerce in the eighteenth century (Andrew Fincham), the 1857 Frankfurt Bienfaisance Congress (Jason Good) and post-1945 moral rearmament (Eric Dent).
- *Honouring the Scientific Endeavour of James March* (edited by Matteo Christofaro, Mario Hayek, Alex Williams, Christopher Hartt and Joyce Heames): This Special Issue will commemorate the life's work of James (Jim) March, who died in 2018, aged 90. This SI will celebrate his work through articles that focus on individual-organizational behaviour, decision-making processes, organizational learning and Upper Echelon theory. Submissions for this Special Issue will open in October 2020 and close on 31 January 2021. The link to this Special Issue is found at, www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/journal/jmh/honoring-scientific-endeavor-james-march

Debate and viewpoints within *JMH*

JMH has always been a broad church, open to a variety of methodologies and approaches. Many of those who publish in the journal embrace the various strands of "critical" research: the so-called "historic turn", ANTi-History, postmodernism, post-positivism, etc. Others do not. This diversity has been reflected in both regular articles and Special Issues. In a series of recent email exchanges with members of the Editorial Board, one widely supported suggestion was for the addition of a "Viewpoint" section within the journal's regular issues. This may take the form of replies to earlier articles or the enunciation of viewpoints as to the state of management history and the way forward for the discipline. I do not see this as a substitute for ongoing debate within the journal's normal channels, but rather as a mechanism for addressing the theoretical and practical debates that collectively concern us.

In memoriam

It is with sadness that I report the recent death of Julia Teahan after a long and brave battle with cancer. Julia was a great servant both of this journal and of the Management History Division, where I had the privilege of serving with her on the Division's Executive between 2013 and 2018. Despite her illness, Julia continued to undertake her duties in the Division and to organise PDW sessions. She also continued to work in her position at Michigan's Baker College where she was Professor of Leadership. Julia was also the Managing Editor of the *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* and the Editor of the *Journal of the North American Management Association*. Passionately committed to management history, Julia was above all a thoroughly decent and caring person, someone who made new members to the Management History Division feel welcomed and part of an important global discipline. At my first ever AOM Annual Meeting, feeling alone and overwhelmed, the very first people to speak to me where the late Pete Petersen and Julia. In recent times, following the diagnosis of my own daughter with terminal cancer, Julia has been a great comfort, both spiritually and through her own lived experience as someone who lived and contributed meaningfully for many years in the face of illness and adversity. She will be greatly missed.

Bradley Bowden
Employment Relations and Human Resource Management, Griffith University, Queensland, Australia

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