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Archives Center - NMAH

Leo Baekeland Diary Volume 53, 1933

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Brooksie escapade

All morning discussing wills and trusts with George Baekeland

George tells me his boy did not realise he was doing anything wrong by his escapade. He told his father that he had read so many biographies of great men who started by running away from home etc. George takes it good humoredly The boy does not realise what anxieties he has caused us. He left bareheaded, ~~with~~ in this cold weather. Had 3 suits of clothes one over another to insure him against the cold and had wrapped around his neck his overalls which served as an echarpe. - They seem to have enjoyed their escapade. It might have been a better lesson for them if they had endured the results a little longer to shake them out their dreams for adventure. This is the way many a boy gets on the wrong road without realising it until it is too late.

Nov 10 At office all day ^[[Tomorrow evg.]] George has to leave for St Louis for several days.

Saturday 11 November. (Armistice day) At Yonkers all day. Evening went to Century Club to participate at annual reunion of surviving members of U.S. Naval Consulting board. And group is thinning fast in number. The following were present at supper. Thomas Robbins secy Julian Frank Sprague, Dr. Whitney, Coffin, Addicks, Emmet, Addicks, Hutchinson (former secretary of Thos A. Edison) Capt. Scott ~~assistant to our board~~ Dr. Wheeler, head physicist of the Naval Research Laboratory. Lots of bad news. The laboratory is being disorganised and is practically closed now. Stupidity of management of

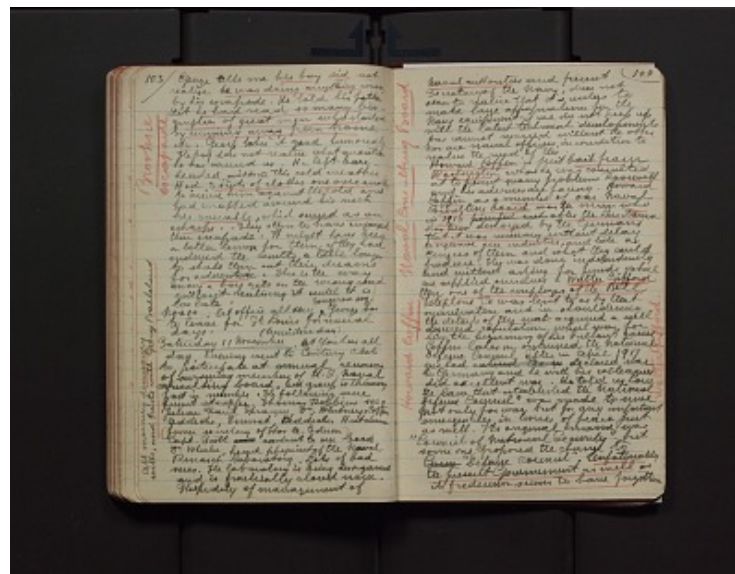
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Walter Gifford Howard Coffin Naval Consulting Board

Naval authorities and present Secretary of the Navy.. does not seem to realise that it is useless to make large appropriations for the Navy equipment if we do not keep up with the latest technical developments One cannot succeed without the other Nor are naval officers in condition to realise the need of this.

Howard Coffin is just back from Washington when he was consulted at to present many problems Roosevelt and his advisers are facing. Coffin as a member of our Naval Consulting board was the man who in 1916 ~~pointed out~~ after the Lusitania had been destroyed by the Germans that it was necessary without delay to organise our industries, and take a census of them and what they could produce. This was done independently and without asking for funds which we supplied ourselves. Walter Gifford then one of the employees of the Bell Telephone Co was lent to us by that organisation and in shouldering the details of this work acquitted a well deserved reputation which was for him the beginning of his brilliant career. Coffin later on



organised the National Defense Council after in April 1917 we had
~~entered the su~~ declared war to
Germany and he with his colleagues did excellent war. He told us how
the law that established the National Defense Council "was made to
serve not only for war but for any important emergency in times of peace
just as well. Its original name was "Council of National Security". but
some one proposed the change to ~~Coun~~
~~"Defense Council"~~. Unfortunately
the present Government as well as its predecessor seems to have
forgotten

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