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September 24, 1925.

Mr. Ernest D. North,
587 Fifth Ave.,
New York City.

Dear Sir:

I am sending you a copy of "The Manuscript," which has some of the illustrations of the places that the firm of Wiley has been in during the last century. I am also giving you a brief sketch of our doings.

Major Wiley and I have had it in mind for some years to go into the matter rather carefully, and compile material. I think probably I shall try to do that this winter, as some of the younger men are anxious to have it. My grandfather never cared anything about our past history as he felt that in science people did not care to know how long you had been in business but what you were doing now.

Trusting this material may be of some service to you, I am, with kindest regards,

Yours very faithfully,

WOW/FP
encs.

W. Wiley

A Short History of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

1807
The publishing house of Wiley is one of the oldest in our country. It was founded, according to one history, in 1800, but this date cannot be definitely established. We do know, however, that in 1807, Charles Wiley, Publisher, was in business at 6 Reade Street, New York City. He was the son of Major John Wiley, a Revolutionary soldier and a great patriot.

1821
An early history states that Charles Wiley was a man of excellent education and of decided literary taste. In 1821, he laid the foundations of the prosperity which has since been almost uninterrupted, by the publication of "The Spy", the first of that series of romances which made the name of James Fenimore Cooper second only to that of the author of the "Waverley Novels."

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literary den
While travelling in Western New York, Mr. Wiley had made the acquaintance of Mr. Cooper, but had no idea of his literary aspirations until, in 1821, Mr. Cooper walked in to his New York office and offered him the manuscript of "The Spy." After this, Mr. Cooper came frequently to the office, where he was a great attraction, drawing around him many literary men, among whom were William Cullen Bryant, James K. Pauldings, Fitzgreene Halleck, Gulian C. Verplanck and others who have since taken high rank among the writers of America. In the rear of Charles Wiley's store there was a room set apart for these men and known far and wide as the "literary den."

At about this time, Mr. Cooper formed a club, which is described as follows in Lounsberry's "Life of Cooper."

Wiley and Halsted
"In 1824 he (Cooper) founded a club. All forms of intellectual activity were represented. To this club, among others, belonged Gulian C. Verplanck, Chancellor Kent, Jarvis, the painter, Wiley, the publisher, Halleck, Bryant, etc. **** It was commonly called the "Bread and Cheese Lunch" and met weekly. *** Wiley and Halsted were his publishers *** Wiley, until his death, continued to be his publisher."

Another reference to this club is found in Haswell's "Reminiscences of an Octogenarian":

"James Fenimore Cooper conceived and originated the formation of a club which was designated the Bread and Cheese Club, which met semi-monthly at the Washington Hall in Broadway, now the northern part of the site of the Stewart Building. Amongst its members were eminent scholars and professional men of the period. In balloting for membership 'bread' was an affirmative vote and 'cheese' a negative."

Lamb's "History of New York" states that the meetings of the club were often swollen to quite a formidable assembly by members of Congress and distinguished strangers. Daniel Webster was a frequent guest, as were also William Beach Lawrence, Henry R. Storrs and the French minister, DeNeuville.

John Wiley
Thomas Wardle

John Wiley, whose name the corporation of John Wiley & Sons now bears, entered the employ of his father, Charles Wiley, at the age of sixteen, and two years later stepped into his father's place; to him belongs the credit for the magnitude and success of the business. In 1828, he became the New York agent of Thomas Wardle of Philadelphia, who at that time was the principal American importer of English books. He also became the New York agent of Carey and Lea, then the leading publishers in America. The headquarters of this firm was also in Philadelphia, which, in those days, was the publishing center of the United States.

1836
1838

In 1832, John Wiley and George Long, the latter the son of an old New York bookseller of the same name, formed the firm of George Long, Wiley and Long. After the dissolution of this firm in 1836, George Palmer Putnam, who had been for many years with Jonathan Leavitt, became Mr. Wiley's partner. Soon afterward, Mr. Putnam was sent to Europe to see something of the book world abroad, and while there he formed the acquaintance of the leading book publishers in London and elsewhere. In 1838, on one of his visits to London, he established a branch house - the first American house ever established in London for the publication of books. The new firm continued in both places as Wiley and Putnam.

1848

One of the early undertakings of Wiley and Putnam was the publication of a series of volumes under the general title of the "Library of Choice Reading" edited by Evert A. Duyckinck. About 1840, the volumes of this series, in their uniform red cloth binding, attained great popularity; they included the works of Hawthorne and Poe and other books which now rank among the classics of America. Among their publications, the works of John Ruskin were the most important. About 1848 the firm of Wiley and Putnam was dissolved, when Mr. Putnam started in business for himself, establishing what later became the well-known publishing house of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

One of the earliest technical books published by Wiley of which there is a record, is "A View of the Lead Mines of Missouri." It was written by Henry R. Schoolcraft and published by Charles Wiley and Company in 1819. The title page of this book is reproduced in the Wiley Bulletin of December, 1920. The oldest technical book on Wiley's lists today is the "System of Mineralogy" by James Dwight Dana, first published in 1837. During its long career, this book has been frequently revised or added to by appendices and is today, as always, a veritable Bible to the mineralogist.