

## The Knowledge Bank at The Ohio State University

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## TODAY—TOMORROW

In order that civilization of the future may know how far our civilization has progressed, Dr. Thornwell Jacobs of the Ogelthorpe University offers a suggestion that certain relics of the present day be preserved for posterity. For, as Dr. Jacobs argues, if only the ancient Egyptians had done this, we could be much more certain as to their customs and methods of living. History today is very uncertain because we have no actual evidences of how the ancients lived, and Dr. Jacobs intends that the future historian shall be in no such predicament.

His plan is to seal up certain articles showing our present day achievements in a crypt or vault, and not having it opened until 8113 A. D. This date, which is 6117 years hence, is offered because it was 6117 years ago, 4241 B. C., which is the first fixed date in history.

It would be quite a problem to ascertain what to include in such a selection. Books and encyclopedias should be included, certainly; and motion pictures showing our physical world, with its industries and social activities. And Dr. Jacobs suggests that we should also have a salutation from President Roosevelt to the citizens of 8113, recorded in sound movies, as well as speeches by other prominent figures, such as Hitler and Stalin.

Samples of our food and drink—even chewing gum—are other suggested articles. Models of automobiles, typewriters, and airplanes of stainless steel are to be made, and pictured encyclopedias are to be preserved in inert gases. And the good doctor of Oglethorpe also asks that the newspapers should print special editions to greet the historians when they open the vault in 8113.

To keep these articles free from the ravages of time, Dr. Jacobs has offered a room in the basement of a building on the Oglethorpe campus as the vault. This room, he says, should be lined with stainless steel to keep out moisture, and then sealed. A tablet should be placed on the outside giving details of the contents and the names of those connected with the project. Then, the vault would be placed in charge of the Federal government.

However this plan works out—whether it is carried out or not—should be of great interest to everyone. For it would certainly be fortunate if there were some such crypt which we could open today to reveal some of the secrets of the past.

—*Scientific American.*