

Reviews of Books

RICHARD G. WOOD, *Editor*

National Archives

Statsradets Forhandlinger, 1848-1863, Volume 1, Jan. 24-Nov. 15, 1848, compiled by Harold Jørgensen. (København, I Kommission Hos Ejnar Munksgaards Forlag, 1954. Pp. xii, 606.)

This volume contains the earliest recorded proceedings of Danish State Councils during the period when Denmark, with the consent and aid of its ruler, became a limited monarchy. Council members, occasionally including the King, were faced with such problems as drafting a constitution, calling a convention to complete that work, suppressing a revolt in Schleswig-Holstein, and recognizing the emancipation of slaves in the Danish West Indian islands, to which revolution and destruction had also extended. The series will eventually cover all council meetings held during the reign of Frederik VII, or through October 19, 1863.

Issued as a result of a 1948 royal resolution, this volume was edited by Harold Jørgensen of the Danish Rigsarkiv, under the sponsorship of Andreas Møller, secretary of the State Council, 1938-52, and Axel Linvald, Rigsarkivar since 1934. In the preface these sponsors express the desire to have "a text that will satisfy modern scientific demands." They also state that little commentary has been included because the average reader would find it unnecessary and "scientific" readers would consider it incomplete, and furthermore, notes would delay publication and might become obsolete. Indexed by names, subjects, and officials (with an alphabetical and page listing of their speeches), the book affords ready access to any desired passage. Dr. Jørgensen's introduction explains general editorial decisions in regard to preparing the material for publication. The work was evidently carefully planned and consistently executed. The Danish Rigsarkiv and all connected with the publication should be congratulated on the content and appearance of this volume that relates to crucial months in Danish history.

The two Danish archivists who sponsored the work have had extensive foreign study and are members of numerous organizations. Their historical writings, editorial work, and contributions to periodicals published both at home and abroad reveal intellectual activities that have hardly been matched by any Federal archivist and perhaps by few American historians. Archivists in Denmark are not considered merely as recordkeepers, a fact that helps explain why an archivist was a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1848-49. Such accomplishments should serve as an inspiration to archivists in the United States.

MARGARETH JORGENSEN

National Archives

Indian Historical Records Commission. *Proceedings of the Twenty-Ninth Session, Bhopal, February 1953*. Volume 29. (Government of India Press, New Delhi, 1953. Pp. 177, 167.)

Report of the Regional Records Survey Committee for West Bengal. (Calcutta, Government of West Bengal, 1954. Pp. 29.)

The volumes of proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission continue to show significant progress in archival work in India. At the Bhopal session, the chief minister of Bhopal stressed the importance for social history of the vast numbers of legal records still in the custody of the high courts. It is to be hoped that these will receive greater attention from scholars. Especially interesting is a detailed report of the archival survey of Rajasthan, which was carried out very thoroughly, state by state. We have here a demonstration of the wealth and variety of materials, especially those in the Indian languages, available at the capitals of the former princely states. It is of course regrettable that, at many such capitals, little survives which antedates the eighteenth century. The existing records, however, in English as well as in Indian languages—supplemented by manuscripts from the record rooms of the former British Residencies, now available at the National Archives—constitute a great and hitherto virtually untouched source for the history of modern India.

Of almost equal importance are the labors of those scholars who are seeking out records in private hands. The report of the Survey Committee for West Bengal is an example of their work. At the Mathurapur estate, N. B. Roy came upon a "treasure-trove of parchments in Persian," including *farmans* of Akbar, Jehangir, and Aurangzeb. Needless to say, a find of this kind underlines the necessity of preserving *zamindari* records from destruction as the new settlement operations proceed in accordance with land-reform legislation.

Twenty-eight papers prepared for the Bhopal meeting are printed with the proceedings. As has been the case in recent years, these range over a very wide field. Indeed, there is now need for an index to such papers if they are to be easily found by scholars. Approximately half a dozen of these papers relate to the pre-British period; the remainder are concerned with nineteenth-century topics. Many of the papers indicate an increasing interest in economic and social history, for instance, "Salt Monopoly in Orissa," by S. C. De; "An Old Village Survey Report," by K. K. Datta; "Food Scarcity in Bombay 1737-39," by P. M. Joshi; and "Some Prominent Parsis in the 18th Century," by B. A. Saletore. Students of Indian history will be gratified at the continuing progress which these volumes report, especially in the field of archival publication and the making of calendars and indexes. The new guide to the Bombay archives now in preparation is very much needed.

HOLDEN FURBER

University of Pennsylvania

Federal Services to Libraries, by Phillips Temple, with a foreword by John H. Ottemiller. (Chicago, American Library Association, 1954. Pp. xxvii, 227. \$3.50.)

Basically this work is a tool prepared for the Federal Relations Committee of the American Library Association; it identifies and explains the services of the Federal Government available to nonfederal libraries. Not only does it analyze the programs and policies of the Federal Government in its relations with libraries, but it also details the many and varied services performed for the libraries and furnishes a background for the formulation of American Library Association policy in its dealings with the Federal Government.

The work proper falls into two parts. In the first, which treats Federal policies governing services to libraries, the author after careful survey concludes that there is no hard-and-fast Federal policy, inasmuch as each Federal agency is primarily concerned with meeting its own peculiar needs and requirements. He did discover, however, a common determinant of Federal practice. In effect, this is that the Federal Government serves libraries in any way possible that does not interfere with the individual agency's official obligation.

In the second part, dealing with Federal services to libraries, the author lists the various services by broad functional headings arranged alphabetically. Among these are: abstracting projects and services, acquisitions, audiovisual aids, bibliography, cataloging, consultative services, depository arrangements, documents, manuscripts and unpublished materials, microfilm projects and services, preservation of libraries and their contents, statistical services, translation services, and union lists. An explanation and pertinent examples of the service follow each heading.

This guide no doubt will prove indispensable to librarians, records officers, archivists, serious research students, and some casual investigators. Its value is further enhanced by a prefatory note explaining certain terms, a bibliographical section, and a comprehensive index. The approximately eight pages of acknowledgements to persons interviewed in preparing the book indicate the exhaustiveness of the study.

ROLAND C. McCONNELL

Morgan State College, Baltimore

A Yankee in King George's Archives; a Brief Synopsis of Some British Public Records in American Libraries as Instruments of Research for Historical Genealogists, by Kenneth M. Ellis. [Genealogical Publications of the National Genealogical Society, No. 11, reprinted from the *National Genealogical Quarterly*, September 1950-51.] (Washington, D. C., 1953. Pp. 23.)

Those who approach this pamphlet expecting to find an account of the author's researches in the British archives or a synopsis of British records in manuscript form in American libraries will be disappointed. Both title and subtitle are misleading. Instead they will find that the author is concerned with research on records printed, zincographed, or transcribed in full or abbreviated

form or even in the form of calendars of digests made from transcribed and translated records.

The pamphlet reveals the author's zest for genealogical research and his desire to stimulate others to a similar enthusiasm. He presents in an interesting manner ways and means he has found useful and stumbling blocks to avoid. In the course of his informal, conversational writing he mentions a goodly number of printed sources and secondary works available in the United States. Among the materials mentioned are charters, the Domesday records, the Curia Regis rolls, the pipe rolls, cartularies, the calendars of close and patent rolls, prepared under the supervision of the Public Record Office; and the publications of the Harleian and other British private societies. He also lists sources for Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, enlightening the reader as to some of the characteristics of the records of these countries.

This article has been published posthumously. It holds a number of errors of several kinds: spelling, *Angelican* for Anglican; incomplete or faulty quotations, pp. 5, 9, 10; incorrect initials of certain authors—*W. S.* for H. E. Salter, *W. W.* for A. C. Fox-Davies; an incorrect title, *History of the College of Herald's* for Mark Noble's *History of the College of Arms*; incorrect extensions of Latin words abbreviated in the text, p. 7; *Edward II* listed for Edward I, p. 12. Moreover, page references in many instances are lacking.

The author alludes to his article as "merely a suggestive study," stating that "anything like a bibliography is impossible." The editor in a note at the end assumes that the article was prepared for private circulation among the author's clan. This, however, is no excuse for publishing it in its present state. It is highly unfortunate that the references in the article were not thoroughly checked and the proof was not more carefully read before the article was published in a serial that the American Council of Learned Societies has included in its compiled list of learned journals.

DOROTHY BRUCE WESKE

Barrington, Rhode Island

Catálogo de Documentos Históricos de la Biblioteca Postal. (Mexico, Dirección General de Correos: Oficina de Museo y Biblioteca, 1954. Pp. 110.)

The library of the Post Office Department of Mexico possesses a considerable collection of documents, especially of the latter half of the nineteenth century, with a few of earlier date. The collection consists of 487 bundles, 255 volumes, and 73 individual documents. To facilitate the use of these records they have been arranged and classified and this catalog of them has been published. The entries are alphabetical, largely by types of record, such as *acuerdos*, *bandos*, *correspondencia*, *cuentos*, and *decretos*. They are either for single documents or for the groups in bundles or volumes. Each entry gives the type of document or documents, a summary of the subject matter, the names of persons involved, the places and dates, the size of the paper, the Brussels decimal classification number, and indication of the location. The catalog serves to reveal the nature and interesting character of the records. Rafael

Murillo Vidal, the director general of the mail service, is to be congratulated on making the catalog available to investigators.

ROSCOE R. HILL

Washington, D. C.

Journal of the Society of Archivists. Vol. 1, no. 1, April 1955. (London[?], printed for the Society of the Chiswick Press. Pp. 27.)

The first issue of the *Journal of the Society of Archivists* is a double surprise, for this is not only tangible evidence of a fresh start in the professional periodical field but the evangel of a fresh alignment of British archivists. On page 1, under the caption Society of Archivists, is a manifesto announcing that in December 1954 a transformation occurred in the name and aims of the Society of Local Archivists, an organization that had existed for nearly 8 years and had sponsored the Steer-Redstone handbook of English local records.

Henceforth under the broader name of the Society of Archivists, the scope of the society will include not merely England, but Scotland, Ireland, and the overseas parts of the Commonwealth — in loyal phrase, all the Realms and Territories of Her Majesty. It would appear that in function there is also a new look: "It had been apparent for a long time that the division between local and national records was often blurred and that more frequent collaboration and consultation between local and national archivists was desirable and in many spheres essential."

The issue contains five main articles, each averaging about four pages in length. The lead article is "Ecclesiastical Records," by John S. Purvis; the concluding articles are "The Records of Church Commissioners," by C. E. Welch, and "The Register of Metropolitan Buildings and His Records," by Ida Darlington. In between are two articles framed against the background of the Grigg Report, something of a bombshell achieved by a bureaucratic committee headed by Sir James Grigg, which undertook between 1952 and 1954 "to produce a practical solution to the problem of what to keep and what to destroy." In these articles the current chairman of the Society of Archivists, P. E. Jones of the Corporation of London Record Office, discusses "Departmental Records," and Rupert C. Jarvis, from a vantage in Chancery Lane, describes the constitutional status of "The Public Record Office."

At the back of the issue are two pages of short communications: Jarvis' note on rebound Domesday, Elizabeth Halcrow's observation on the custody of borough records at Newcastle upon Tyne, and M. J. Chandler's inquiry about Monmouth's Rebellion; three pages of reviews; a page called the society's chronicle; and a page of changes in the members' list.

At the front of the issue is a directory of the society's officers, council, and regional secretaries. Nowhere appears the price of the number nor the terms of subscription to society membership. The place of publication is left to surmise, but the addresses of the officers and secretaries — perversely not of the council members — are included. The editor is A. E. J. Hollaender of the

Guildhall Library, Basinghall Street, London E. C. 2; and the society's secretary is P. Walne, Berkshire Record Office, Shire Hall, Reading.

The page size of the new journal is about that of the *American Archivist* but the type and makeup permits 30 to 40 percent more words to the page.

This first issue leaves a favorable impression, yet it will scarcely supplant *Archives*, the professional medium of the British Records Association. A well wisher to both the association and the new society will wonder what lines of demarcation, if any, will come to be drawn in their labors.

H. B. FANT

National Archives

File This, Please! by Marjorie Thomas Payne. (Chicago, Dartnell Corp., 1955. Pp. 64. 40c; reduced price for quantities.)

Between the paper covers of this convenient booklet are packed 64 pages of sound, practical, commonsense advice addressed to the many people in the industrial world who are faced with the ever-present problem of keeping records. Mrs. Payne tells her story with sprightliness and clarity, with emphasis where it is due and admonition where it is needed. With type that makes for easy reading and clever illustrations to drive home a point, there is never a dull moment for the reader.

The book was written to fill the need for "trained girl-power" that had been an "item high on top management's worry list." As the author puts it, "Whether you operate as the records administrator for your organization, as the top man's top girl, or as the records clerk who takes the responsibility for putting each paper into its reserved spot in the cabinet — the rules and streamlined procedures discussed here are for you."

For such a small book, the coverage of subject matter is amazingly complete. Starting with a "Spotlight on Records," the story runs through nine chapters, ending with "Keys to Quizzes." There is a chapter on alphabetical arrangement of names and the principles of guiding, and another on subject-heading hazards, with excellent examples. A special section is devoted to the names of Federal Government agencies, which are often troublesome. Some practical hints on indexing are included, with special attention to the indexing of corporate minutes. The pamphlet includes advice not only on how to file but also on how to dispose of papers when they are no longer needed, with an excellent section on how to evaluate records that gives a sample schedule for retention of records and a table of limitation for civil actions in the various States. Near the end is a questionnaire for checking one's filing system, with a graded scale for determining its status.

Although this booklet relates to record practices in industry, it contains much of general interest that should make it useful to anyone faced with practical record problems anywhere.

HELEN L. CHATFIELD

Bureau of the Budget

Archival Principles; Selections From the Writings of Waldo Gifford Leland.
[National Archives Staff Information Papers, No. 20.] (Washington, National Archives, 1955. Pp. 14.)

This pamphlet is the gospel of our profession according to our prophet and beloved master, Waldo Gifford Leland. We professionals will read it with a touch of sadness because we have usually fallen so far short of achieving the principles that he laid down. This is particularly true in regard to the statement that the State should have full power to replevin any of its archival material that turns up in private hands—a statement now more obviously true than when he made it but no nearer general adoption. Dr. Leland did not foresee the bitter opposition of autograph dealers and the obstructionism of lawyers. But this tract reminds us that we have generally neglected, in dealing with legislatures, the truth that the preservation of archival material is one of the fundamental duties of a State to its people and to their posterity.

All of us professionals have at times and for good reasons transgressed the axioms in this pamphlet, as Dr. Leland in his postscript says we must. These remain, however, by far the best statement for the professional to have at hand to distribute to legislators and executives who, in general, are completely innocent of any knowledge of the problems and needs of archival practice.

CLIFFORD K. SHIPTON

Harvard University Archives

New Zealand, Dominion Archives. *Preliminary Inventory No. 4, Archives of the Province of New Ulster and New Munster and of the Civil Secretary's Office.* (Wellington, Department of Internal Affairs, 1954. Pp. 15.)

This inventory is a continuation of the series of New Zealand inventories reviewed in the *American Archivist*, 18:80-81. Although extremely brief it provides a useful guide to the character and range of a section of the Dominion archives preserved in Wellington. It deals with the records of the two provinces of New Ulster and New Munster, into which the colony was divided in 1848, and also with those of the civil secretary's office established at the same time to assist the Governor-in-Chief in administering New Zealand as a whole. The period principally concerned, 1848-53, marked an important stage in the development of the colony, during which power passed from the original trading company to the colonial government. After a series of constitutional improvisations the definitive New Zealand Government Act was passed by the British Parliament in 1852.

The classes of documents in the inventory are concisely described, and a six-page introduction enables their provenance to be easily grasped. The extent of the inventory, however, has been limited (and the title somewhat falsified) by the exclusion of all records series but one of the province of New Ulster. This has been done because the officials of New Ulster were appointed to continue as the officials of the new General Government of New Zealand in 1853.

Throughout, they maintained a continuous series of records, which are now therefore to be found among the archives of the General Government.

The records described in the inventory appear to occupy only a 21-foot shelf run. Some records may well have suffered from the inevitably haphazard administrative methods of a colonizing era, while a list of records made in 1853 and printed here as an appendix suggests that others have probably been lost in the intervening century. What survives, however, is of outstanding interest. Several series of despatches to and from the lieutenant-governor deal with major events in Dominion history. The correspondence of the colonial secretary of New Munster and of the civil secretary touches on a wide variety of incidental topics, ranging from negotiations with the Maoris for land sales to applications for permission to sell muskets. The material housed in the Dominion archives is indeed of great value to the historians. It may be hoped that this useful series of inventories will be rapidly completed, and then succeeded by a detailed catalog.

MAURICE F. BOND

House of Lords Records Office
Westminster, England

Library of Congress. *Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress for the Year Ending June 30, 1954.* (Washington, 1955. Pp. ix, 178, appendixes.)

This report, the first issued by the new Librarian of Congress, Lawrence Quincy Mumford, covers events of the year before his appointment, during which the Library was under the direction of Verner W. Clapp as Acting Librarian. Mr. Clapp is given credit for the year's accomplishments. The fact that during this period the Library received its ten millionth book serves to introduce a summary of the outstanding events in the Library's history and a statement of its facilities, and this six-page description is a useful introduction to the record of the year 1953-54.

The eight chapters in the report deal with the acquisition of materials, the organization of the collections, special services to Congress, reference services, administration, personnel, and finance, and the copyright office. Of especial interest is the report on the progress of the Farmington Plan — "to insure that, by dividing areas of responsibility, at least one copy of every currently published scholarly work shall be in some American research library." The plan is now taking effect in 99 countries and possessions. Impressive is the volume of technical information provided by the Library to projects of the Department of Defense, enabling the Army Engineers, the Air Corps, and the Office of Naval Research to coordinate activities which otherwise would be entirely decentralized.

Of concern to workers among manuscripts is the strengthening of security measures to safeguard the priceless collections in the Manuscripts Division. These precautions against thieves make it more difficult for the ordinary scholar to conduct his research, but he will recognize the necessity for tightened rules. The report announces the reluctant decision to mark all 14,000,000

manuscripts as Library property, "but a suitable ink had not been found and the mechanics of marking such a vast number of pieces of paper of varying sizes and states of fragility had not been worked out by the end of the year."

The appendixes furnish detailed facts and figures on the operations of the Library during the fiscal year. There was a general decline in parts of the reader and reference service — fewer readers, fewer materials issued for use, fewer requests by telephone, and fewer bibliographies prepared — but a definite increase in reference correspondence. The list of Library publications contains about 100 items, not including numerous reports compiled by the Legislative Reference Service. The data on permanent specific appropriations and trust funds give an excellent picture of the wide scope of Library activities.

WILLIAM D. HOYT, JR.

Loyola College, Baltimore

Baltimore Correspondence Project, Internal Revenue Service, Office of the District Director, Baltimore, Maryland. (Washington, National Archives and Records Service, Records Management Division, 1954. Pp. 11.)

Records Management Handbook; Managing Correspondence, Form Letters. (Washington, National Archives and Records Service, Records Management Division, 1954. Pp. 33.)

The first of these publications is a concise summary of improvements made by a General Services Administration team of three, in the correspondence system in the Baltimore District Director's office of the Internal Revenue Service. Replacing an obsolete system of handling correspondence, a new and efficient system was installed that saved for this one office \$157,000 during the first year and that holds promise of a yearly saving of \$5,500,000 when it is installed in all 64 districts. The savings were accomplished through the establishment of a centralized correspondence section using simplified procedures of mail handling and form letters, the block control of special correspondence, the elimination of nonessential copies, improved filing, and personnel training.

Besides the written explanation of each step, diagrams of "before and after" procedures show the improvements and make them easily understood. These same principles could easily be applied to other installations with little more than this Government pamphlet as a guide. Consequently the publication is a valuable contribution to the new field of records systems revisions, about which we still have only a limited number of reference books.

The second publication, the *Handbook*, is apparently an instruction leaflet on installing some of the improvements suggested in *Baltimore Correspondence Project*, but it was obviously not written by the same person. It discusses the steps necessary in such a program and uses 33 pages for explanation and diagrams. No clear outline, however, seems to be followed. The first three sections give details of the program and cite examples. Then practically the same information is repeated in section 4, "The Role of Staff Employees," which refers the reader to the instructions and illustrations in sections 2 and 3. Sec-

tion 5 discusses the comparative costs of dictated letters, guide letters, and form letters, and prints a detailed table of costs, but refers also to section 1. The meat of information for an improved correspondence program through the use of form letters is, however, contained in this handbook.

There is no question as to the need of such a pamphlet nor as to the value of the material contained in it. Form letters, if used in their proper place and currently reviewed, cannot fail to bring about a substantial saving in any office where they can be adopted.

The handbook, if rewritten with a short introduction telling its scope and purpose, followed by a single set of carefully outlined instructions, with illustrations, would be materially improved and would be a valuable contribution in its field.

DOROTHY K. TAYLOR

Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department