

SHORTER NOTICES

The Eighth Annual Report of the Archivist, University of Virginia Library, for the Year 1937-38 contains as an appendix "A Checklist of Bound Business Records in the Manuscript Collections of the Alderman Library, University of Virginia." This list represents one phase of the archivist's activity in collecting Virginia historical materials during the past decade. The collections of ledgers, arranged chronologically by county, present an interesting cross-section of the state's economic life from the Revolution to recent years. Records of the "general store" are most numerous, but there are many others dealing with iron manufacture, tobacco production and sale, breeding of cattle and horses, flour milling, rural banking, general farming, and the uses and condition of slave labor. The descriptive notes reveal a wide variety of material of interest to the social historian. A few of the volumes listed are partly business, partly archival records of local officials. A detailed name and subject index is also included.

The *Inventory* of Asotin County, Washington, archives, number two of the state's series, is one of the latest additions to the publications of the Historical Records Survey. For the fifth smallest Washington county, this volume contains more than two hundred mimeographed pages. Ten maps trace the evolution of the counties from the territorial days of 1854.

A fire which destroyed the courthouse at Asotin, the county seat, in 1936, did only slight damage to the records since fireproof vaults housed all archives except those of the superintendent of schools, the county road engineer and the county nurse. At present the records are carefully and adequately preserved in vaults and safes in the remodeled building now serving as courthouse.

The survey was begun May 5, 1936, and completed January 22, 1937, by field workers under the supervision of Robert Stockbridge.

Nederlandsch Archievenblad, XLVI, 73-76, includes as part of its book review section an analysis by S. J. Fockema Andreae of the first numbers of THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST. The following is a translation¹ from this analysis:

The development of archive economy in the United States of North America, to which subject Van Schilfgaarde recently turned his attention in this journal (XLV, 78), has brought with it the establishment of a society of archivists. This was founded in 1936. In 1937 it held its first annual meeting in Washington, D.C. In this year it decided to publish its own periodical, and so entered into exchange with our association among others.

We extend hearty greetings to our sister association in North America. The

¹ By Dr. Lester K. Born.

achievement of its establishment, under circumstances of whose problems it is difficult to form a precise concept in our pleasant little country, already deserves approval. Its first appearance is well designed to arouse confidence and interest. And it cannot be other than useful and convenient for us that the Americans, while preserving their own judgment, desire contact with European ideas and methods. "Europe," says the editorial board in the announcement of the periodical, "preserves a great body of archival lore gained from the practice and experience of the past. Slavishly copying it would be, for American archivists, an error second only to ignoring it altogether. Appraising it in the light of American conditions, letting the logic behind its practices suggest solutions of American archival problems, may make it most useful." The rule permits of reversal. The established archival instruction is almost entirely directed to handling of "old" archives prior to the present prevailing order. The problem for the Americans is the handling, wholesale and rapidly, of what, according to European opinion, are rather new, often even very new, archives. We also encounter that problem, so we, in our turn, will be able to profit by the experience of America.

America, that is, the United States (with which we are here dealing exclusively), has, first of all, in the capital city of Washington a great federal archives depository. Then each state has its own state archives depository, usually located at the state capital in or near the capitol, the administration building. The responsibility for the conservation is placed upon an archivist, with a staff, under the state secretary of state, or upon the state librarian, in which case a separate archives section is arranged under him, or upon the state historical society as a semipublic institution. The state archivist, whoever he may be, often has authority to inspect with regard to everything, including the current state and local archives, while rules concerning careful preservation, periodic sifting, and transfer of the archives are being made. The fact that the states are the legislators in this matter naturally prevents uniformity. However, the professional association of archivists can contribute much to the unification of action over the whole country.

A vigorous stimulus to the archival work was and is the unemployment relief. The "white-collar" division of the WPA, the American *Werkfonds*, has undertaken a description of American historical sources and, inter alia, also of the local archives. The results therefrom are already far advanced. The need for work projects has also had great influence on the building and organizing of archival depositories.

Splendid and practical new archives buildings are going up. One of these, that at Springfield, Illinois, is described by its archivist, Miss Norton. A stream of archives and archivalia of the most diverse provenience is already pouring into these buildings to demand admission. The quantity demands and justifies a rigidly prescribed treatment: first a physical treatment (described, in this periodical, for the federal archives by Arthur E. Kimberly), [in which] the

component parts are disinfected, cleaned (by air blown on them), put together and mangled or pressed (if loose sheets), and finally repaired, pasted together and put into usable condition. In this condition they come into the hands of the classifier and cataloguer—in large institutions such as that at Springfield, two different persons.

This is the place to remark that the American archives exhibit an independent, close connection with the other services of the state on the one hand, and, on the other, with the public libraries. This last aspect is especially important in cataloguing. Miss Norton explicitly states that most visitors and investigators are accustomed to work in libraries, and it is a convenience for them and for everyone if the archives depositories are, in so far as possible, arranged in a similar manner. Therefore it is also necessary, in her concept, to have in archive depositories a general card index in which the whole content of the depository is contained in systematic order, with the necessary references and with an alphabetical key, likewise on cards, to the subjects. Various references in the periodical, in particular those which do not deal specifically with this subject, indicate that this condition is, in fact, generally considered the regular thing. L. Herman Smith, who furnished an extensive contribution on "Manuscript Repair in European Archives," says (p. 56) of the Main Archives of the Kingdom in The Hague, "There is no card catalogue." (We say nothing here of even fuller keys, for example, of all names found in specific series. This work is also done, successfully, by "white-collar" unemployed.) With the systematic and alphabetical catalogues a class-catalogue, as in a good library, is still necessary. In the management of the stacks library practice is shown to be the norm. Smith, mentioned above, states that in The Hague "no slips are placed on the shelves to show where documents have been removed." Actually, this is a notable deviation from what customarily takes place in libraries.

In the case of such a cataloguing job—properly done only in wholesale inventorying such as is taking place through the WPA—one must of necessity run into difficulties. One must dare to solve them if one wants to reach results. Luther H. Evans and Edythe Weiner, the director and the editor of the Historical Records Survey, contribute an attractive report on the experiments which have been made in the cataloguing of county records, and of the results achieved therewith. The success can be seen from the many examples which they give. It is a respectable standard for the description of the archivalia of local magisterial institutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Miss Norton is developing almost similar rules into a system which will, in the meantime, be discussed at the meeting in Springfield. In the archives depository at Indianapolis almost the same methods of working are also being followed ("Indiana Archives," Christopher B. Coleman). Perhaps out of this agreement there will grow a manual for modern archives which will also be very welcome here.

In addition to the items already named the periodical also offers, *inter alia*,

a paper by Oliver W. Holmes, "The Evaluation and Preservation of Business Archives"; a contribution of Howard H. Peckham on the arrangement and cataloguing of a manuscript collection in the William L. Clements Library at Ann Arbor, Michigan; a paper by Herbert William Keith Fitzroy entitled, "The Part of the Archivist in the Writing of American Legal History"; and a survey by Charles M. Gates of [the subject], "The Administration of State Archives." Then [follow] book reviews, short communications, reports, and summaries of archive publications in both eastern and western Europe. These last rubrics it is planned to include as a regular feature.

We would like to go into greater detail in the case of various contributions, but we cannot do that without taking too much space in concluding. And then, since "the proof of the pudding is in the eating," American conditions and ideas should only be judged by one who has worked in the archives there and has seen the results in practice. Let us hope that such a critique can sometime appear in this journal. For one who wants to undertake this THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST can be the best stimulus and guide.

NEWS NOTES

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS

The Society of American Archivists will hold its third annual meeting in Annapolis, Maryland, October 13-14, 1939. Governor Herbert R. O'Connor is chairman, and Dr. Morris L. Radoff, recently appointed archivist of Maryland, is secretary of the Committee on Local Arrangements. Mr. William D. Overman, curator of history and archivist of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, is chairman of the Program Committee.

Tours will be planned to include many points of interest in the historic city of Annapolis. Meetings will be held in the Maryland Hall of Records and perhaps in the senate room of the old statehouse. The program will provide sessions dealing with the subjects of the publication of archival materials, state and local records, problems in archival administration, the care, classification and cataloguing of maps in addition to addresses following the luncheon and dinner meetings.

The headquarters hotel will be Carvel Hall. Rates will be \$2.00 to \$3.00 for single rooms and \$3.50 to \$4.50 for double rooms. Corner rooms with bath \$4.00 single, \$6.00 double. Suites of two rooms, bath and parlor are \$9.50 double and \$13.00 for four. There are a few dormitory rooms available at \$9.00 for four, \$12.00 for six and \$15.00 for eight persons.

On Monday and Tuesday, June 19 and 20, as this number of *THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST* was going to press, the Pacific Coast members of the Society of American Archivists were scheduled to hold a joint meeting with the Historical Records Survey and the Committee on Archives and Libraries of the American Library Association, under the chairmanship of Mr. A. F. Kuhlman.

The first session on Monday afternoon was to be on the general topic, "Some of the Next Steps in Archival and Historical Manuscript Work." Lieutenant Colonel J. M. Scammell was to report on the progress of the Historical Records Survey; Dr. Luther H. Evans to speak on "After the Historical Records Survey, What?"; Dr. Dorsey W. Hyde, Jr., to discuss "The Integration of Work with Archives and Historical Manuscripts," and Dr. Theodore C. Blegen to speak on "A Handbook for Community Historical Workers."

Mr. Leslie E. Bliss, librarian of the Huntington Library, San Marino, was to preside at the Tuesday morning meeting. Its program included a report on the manuscript collections in the Bancroft Library by Dr. Herbert I. Priestley; one on the Hoover Library at Stanford University, by Dr. Ralph H. Lutz; one on the Huntington Library by Mr. R. B. Haselden; and one on the Spanish archives at Santa Fe, by Dean George P. Hammond, University of New Mexico.

"Suggestions for a Code for Cataloguing" were to be considered at the luncheon meeting at which Mr. Frank A. Lundy, chief cataloguer of the University of California at Los Angeles was to preside. The speakers were to include Mrs. Evangeline Thurber, of the Division of Cataloguing, the National Archives, whose subject was "Archival Material," and Dr. Grace Lee Nute, curator of manuscripts of the Minnesota Historical Society, who was to discuss "Historical Manuscript Collections."

In the afternoon Dr. Herbert A. Kellar, librarian of the McCormick Historical Association was to serve as chairman of the session devoted to the "Use of Microphotography in Manuscript and Archival Work." The employment of microphotography in the Bancroft Library was to be discussed by Dr. Herbert I. Priestley, in the National Archives by Dr. Vernon D. Tate, in the Huntington Library by Dr. L. Bendikson, and in the Spanish archives at Santa Fe by Dean George P. Hammond.

Dr. Richard B. Morris, of the City College of New York, has been added to the personnel of the Society's committee on uniform state archival legislation, of which Dr. A. R. Newsome is chairman.

The Society will have a joint luncheon session with the American Historical Association during the latter's annual meeting at Washington, D.C., in December, 1939. The name of the speaker will be announced in the October issue.

Sixty Washington members of the Society met at a luncheon on May 6, at which Mrs. A. Norma Kilmartin, of the War Department, discussed the function of central files units, and other representatives of federal government agencies contributed remarks. Since a large share of the Washington members are filing officials or archivists in government offices, this meeting devoted to a consideration of their common problems proved most profitable. Special emphasis was given to the need for a basis of understanding and co-operation between officials who originally file records and the archivists who are ultimately to care for them. Dr. Jean Stephenson of the Department of the Navy, presided over the discussion. The luncheon was arranged by a committee under the chairmanship of Miss Dorothy Arbaugh, of the National Archives. It is hoped that a series of such gatherings can be conducted in the coming year.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Vernon D. Tate, chief of the Division of Photographic Archives and Research, will attend the Fifteenth International Conference on Documentation at Zürich, Switzerland, from August 10 to 13, as a representative of the American Library Association. Following the conference, Dr. Tate will study European methods of photographic reproduction. *The Academia de la Historia*

de Cuba, at its meeting in Havana on March 16, 1939, unanimously conferred the rank of *Académico Correspondiente* in Washington upon Roscoe R. Hill, chief of the Division of Classification, in recognition of his work as a historian. During a recent European trip, Frederick P. Todd of the Division of War Department Archives visited the Public Record Office in London and the military archives establishments in Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Berlin. Miss Irene A. Wright has resigned her position in the Division of Reference to accept an appointment in the Division of Cultural Relations of the Department of State.

Papers concerning the Burr conspiracy and the preparations to try Aaron Burr and Harmon Blennerhassett in the United States Circuit Court at Chillicothe, Ohio, in 1808, have been transferred to the National Archives from the United States District Court for the Southern District of Ohio. The documents date from 1805 to 1808 and include the recognizances of the defendants given at Richmond, Virginia, following the trials there; the bills of indictment returned by the Ohio grand jury, charging Burr and Blennerhassett with high misdemeanors; and various evidentiary papers.

Experiences of the American privateer *Yankee* in African waters are described in a fragmentary log found among customhouse records in the National Archives. The log covers the period from October 9, 1814, to January 20, 1815, and tells of several naval engagements and of a visit to Boa Vista, one of the Cape Verde Islands. Also of interest to students of American maritime history is the receipt by the National Archives from the Bureau of Customs of bodies of correspondence with collectors of customs, 1789-1907, and, from the customhouse in New York, of crew lists of vessels entering or clearing there, 1803-1919, and shipping articles for the crews of ships sailing thence, 1840-1914.

Other records recently transferred include correspondence of the Division of Insolvent National Banks, from the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, 1865-1937; maps, many of which deal with the Seminole Indian wars in Florida, from the Office of the Chief of Engineers, 1817-1857; personnel records relating to the Department of Justice and the federal judiciary, 1870-1908; requisitions and contracts from the Bureau of Ordnance, 1899-1935; correspondence of the Forester's Office, 1883-1905; correspondence relating to entomological activities, from the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, 1883-1924; and records of the International Fisheries Commissions established in 1908 and 1924.

DELAWARE

Mr. George H. Ryden, state archivist of Delaware, has contributed the following note on the new archives building of Delaware:

After being housed for some thirty-four years in very inadequate quarters, the Public Archives Commission of the state of Delaware has finally moved into

a new home at the capital city of Dover, which, it is hoped, will answer the needs of the commission for many years to come.

When the state legislature, two years ago, found it necessary to provide more room for the Corporation Division of the Secretary of State's Office, it decided to appropriate money for a new building which would be large enough to accommodate not only this division but the Public Archives Commission as well.

The building, which is called the Hall of Records, was completed and turned over to the state last December, but as furniture and equipment could not be secured until the General Assembly of 1939 appropriated money therefor, the offices and records of the Public Archives Commission were not transferred to the new quarters until the month of May.

The Hall of Records building is situated just north of Legislative Hall, which was erected about six years ago as the first unit of a group of capitol buildings to be erected just east of the historic Dover Green and the old State House. The western half of the first floor of the Hall of Records, with a separate entrance, and about two-thirds of the semi-basement floor, also with a separate entrance, will be occupied by the Public Archives Commission. Two large air-conditioned and fireproofed vaults have been built for the records. A beautiful room for research workers with a catalogue room connected, office and work rooms for the staff, and a lobby for exhibition purposes constitute the quarters.

The equipment includes a beautiful safe, built into an alcove behind sliding-doors in the lobby, where are preserved the famous Duke of York deeds of 1682 to William Penn for the land in Delaware, and the charter of 1683 from Charles II to the Duke of York relative to the same area. The work-room equipment includes a fumigation cabinet, photostatic machine, and dark room and repair-work facilities.

Although a state law for a few years past has made it mandatory upon custodians of records in all state, county, and municipal offices of Delaware to transfer each year to the state archives all records of historic interest that have attained the age of seventy-five years, it has not been possible heretofore for the Public Archives Commission to receive records of a date later than the year, 1850, due to lack of filing facilities. The records for the years 1851 to 1864, inclusive, can now be transferred, and each year hereafter there will be annual accretions as the records become seventy-five years old.

Being now for the first time in the possession of photostatic equipment, the Public Archives Commission can also take cognizance of another law which has heretofore not been enforced, namely the law which permits recorders of deeds to accept from the commission bound photostatic copies of their original deed records so that the latter, especially of the colonial period, may be preserved from further use by title searchers, the photostatic copies under the law having equal validity with the originals before the state courts.

The staff of the Public Archives Commission besides the state archivist consists of Assistant State Archivist Leon de Valinger, Jr., an office secretary, and a clerk. The commission of six members is bi-partisan, and consists of one man and one woman for each of the three counties, appointed by the governor for a term of four years. The president of the commission, Mrs. Henry Ridgely, of Dover, has been a member of the commission ever since it was organized in 1905. The other members of the present commission are Mrs. Francis de H. Janvier, of New Castle, Miss Laura S. Richards, of Georgetown, Dr. Frank S. Hall, of Dover, Mr. J. Ernest Smith, of Wilmington, and Mr. J. Edward Goslee of Millsboro.

MARYLAND

Dr. Morris L. Radoff, of Baltimore, has been chosen by the Maryland Hall of Records Commission to succeed the late Dr. James A. Robertson as state archivist. The new appointee is familiar with Maryland record problems and is known to record custodians throughout the state as a result of his work with the Historical Records Survey. Since 1936 he has been successively state editor, regional editor, and regional supervisor of that Survey. Dr. Radoff was born in Texas, and has an A.B. and an M.A. degree from the University of North Carolina and a Ph.D. in Romance languages from the Johns Hopkins University.

NORTH CAROLINA

The North Carolina Historical Commission, Raleigh, has moved from its old quarters on the second floor of the State Administration Building, corner of Fayetteville and Morgan streets, to the first floor of the new State Office Building, corner of Edenton and Salisbury streets. The new quarters are considerably larger than the old, and have been designed to meet the commission's special needs.

The North Carolina legislature has appropriated \$21,000 for the Historical Commission for each fiscal year of the 1939-1940 biennium. This is somewhat under the estimated appropriation for the present fiscal year.

Dr. A. R. Newsome, president of the Society of American Archivists, has published *The Presidential Election of 1824 in North Carolina*. This 202-page monograph, published by the University of North Carolina Press, is the first number of the revived and reorganized publication, "The James Sprunt Studies in History and Political Science," which will be issued twice each year under the direction of the department of history and the department of political science of the university.

Early in 1939, during the regular biennial session of the General Assembly of North Carolina, a statute relative to the preservation of archival material was amended to allow destruction or disposal of records without significance, importance, or value. The procedure is to be initiated on the advice and recommendation of the custodian in charge of the records. The approval or further advice and recommendation of the North Carolina Historical Commission is required before destruction or disposal may be authorized by the Council of State. The disposal of papers of local governmental units is to be regulated by a similar procedure, the difference being that the local unit is delegated the final authority. An important clause of this statute authorizes the North Carolina Historical Commission to make such rules and regulations as are necessary to carry out the provisions of the act.

MISSISSIPPI

Recent accessions to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History include twenty-four volumes of records from the office of the attorney-general. Of these, eleven are opinions of the attorney-general for the periods February 1, 1893-April 28, 1893; June 22, 1894-September 19, 1895; and January 15, 1900-September 2, 1930. Four volumes cover the record of charters from February 9, 1910 to December 21, 1932. Six are of the Supreme Court docket from the October term, 1903, to the October term, 1910. The remaining three volumes are records of the civil and criminal dockets.

Mississippi Senate Journals (six volumes) represent another important addition to the department. The earliest of these is for the fourth legislative session, January 1, 1821-February 10, 1821, and the latest is of the eighth session, January 3, 1825-February 4, 1825.

Additions to the manuscript collections include certain papers, of Brigadier General Thomas J. McKean, relating to the Battle of Corinth. Among the items are to be found field dispatches, general orders, telegrams, reports of commanding officers, and a casualty list.

ILLINOIS

The Honorable Edward J. Hughes, secretary of state and state librarian, announces the establishment of archives internships in the Archives Division of the Illinois State Library. Three months' internships will be offered each spring beginning in 1940. These are open to candidates for the Ph.D. degree in history, political science or manuscripts curatorship, at an Illinois university, on nomination by the head of the department in which the respective thesis fields may lie. Applicants must have completed at least one-half year's residence work in that field beyond the level of the Master's degree. They must also present as prerequisites, courses in historical methodology and bibliography, public documents, and certain theoretical and historical courses in archives and

the auxiliary science of manuscript curatorship. Practical experience during internship will be supplemented by lectures on archival technique and governmental organization. No entrance or tuition fees will be charged the student and no salary paid by the state. Internes will be expected to conform to regulations and hours of work of the *Illinois State Library*.

The University of Chicago, through its departments of history and political science and its Graduate Library School, is prepared to offer a curriculum designed to give a well balanced background for students planning to enter archival work. For fuller particulars relating to courses offered, consult the announcements of the University of Chicago for the year 1939-1940.