

SHORTER NOTICES

The publication, *Survey of Local Finance in Illinois*. Volume I. *Atlas of Taxing Units* (Chicago, 1939), prepared under the auspices of the Illinois Tax Commission and the WPA, provides an example of the contribution auxiliary scholarship may make to a specialized study of a type that requires a high degree of skill.

The series of which the *Atlas* is the first volume is a comprehensive study of the fiscal problems of local government over a ten-year period. The period 1925-1935 was chosen with a view to determine the correlation of local governmental finance and economic conditions. The *Atlas* provides maps which show the areas and periods of settlement, the development and delineation of counties, the location of local governmental units in 1938, the extension of the township form of government, market and distribution centers, and the location of fire protection, mosquito abatement, public health, sanitary, and tuberculosis sanitarium districts. A chart graphically demonstrates the overlapping of taxing units and aggregate rate areas of Lake County as a sample of the tax structure in a single county. Tables summarize the tax units in Illinois and the United States, the growth of the population since territorial times, and statistics relative to taxing units.

Although the objective of the survey was not to audit local financial records, the letter transmitting the report to the governor states that the examination of the records has resulted in improved recording methods and increased adherence to statutory provisions. The critical examination and use of the records, as was the case in this survey, proved to be a valuable test of the present and future worth of contemporary materials of an archival nature.

The *Inventories* of Adams, Jackson, Morgan, and Sangamon counties, Illinois, have been released by the Historical Records Survey during the past months. These volumes, each of which comprises more than two hundred mimeographed pages, conform to the standards of appearance and form of the previously issued volumes. The prefaces to the Adams, Jackson, and Sangamon county inventories state that the survey plans to publish separate histories of these counties as supplements to the inventories. These histories are to be based on the county records and other sources and will be fully documented.

NEWS NOTES

PROGRAM FOR THE THIRD ANNUAL MEETING

OF

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

October 13 and 14, 1939

Friday, October 13

10:00 A.M. Session—Ballroom, Carvel Hall

THE EDITING AND PUBLICATION OF ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

Chairman: Solon J. Buck, The National Archives

1. Publication Policies for Archival and Historical Agencies
C. C. Crittenden, North Carolina Historical Commission

2. St. Columba, Peter Force, and Robert C. Binkley; The Lesson They Teach

Julian P. Boyd, Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Discussion Leader: Clarence E. Carter, U. S. Department of State

12:30 P.M. Luncheon Conference—Officers' Club, United States Naval Academy

Presiding: A. R. Newsome, President of the Society

Addresses of Welcome:

1. For the Hall of Records Commission

Chief Judge Carroll T. Bond, Maryland Court of Appeals

2. For the State of Maryland

Governor Herbert R. O'Connor

2:30 P.M. Session—Ballroom, Carvel Hall

STATE AND LOCAL ARCHIVES

Chairman: Theodore C. Pease, Editor, THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST

1. State Archives

William D. McCain, Mississippi Department of Archives and History

2. Local Archives

Lewis G. VanderVelde, University of Michigan

3. The Historical Records Survey: An Outside View
William R. Hogan, Louisiana State University

7:00 P.M. Annual Dinner—Mirror Room, Carvel Hall

Presiding: George H. Ryden, Delaware Public Archives
Commission

Presidential Address: The Archivist in American Scholarship

A. R. Newsome, University of North Carolina

9:00 P.M. Business Meeting—Mirror Room, Carvel Hall

Saturday, October 14

10:00 A.M. Session—Ballroom, Carvel Hall

PROBLEMS IN ARCHIVAL ADMINISTRATION

Chairman: Luther H. Evans, The Historical Records
Survey

1. Aspects of European Archival Administration, 1939
Emmett J. Leahy, The National Archives
2. A Study of Müller, Feith, and Fruin's Manual in Relation to Current Archival Problems
Arthur H. Leavitt, The National Archives
3. Specifying Inks and Papers for Government Offices
Harold S. Burt, Connecticut State Library

12:30 P.M. Luncheon Conference—Mirror Room, Carvel Hall

Presiding: W. Stull Holt, Johns Hopkins University

1. Finding, Preserving, and Using Business Records
Herbert Heaton, Princeton University

2:30 P.M. Session—Ballroom, Carvel Hall

MAPS AS ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Presiding: Fred W. Shipman, The National Archives

1. The Special Problem of Map Administration
Lloyd A. Brown, William L. Clements Library
2. The Historian as a User of Archival Maps
Samuel F. Bemis, Yale University
3. The Use of Maps in Boundary Problems
S. W. Boggs, U. S. Department of State
4. Archival Maps as Illustrated by Those in the National Archives
W. L. G. Joerg

7:00 P.M. Dinner Session—Mirror Room, Carvel Hall

Presiding: Frank Stringfellow Barr, St. Johns College

1. Remarks from the New President of the Society
2. What the Research Scholar Expects of an Archival Establishment

James F. Kenney, Public Archives of Canada

3. The Franklin D. Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park
R. D. W. Conner, The National Archives

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

The archivist of the United States announces the appointment of Ralph G. Lounsbury, formerly assistant professor of history at New York University, as a consultant in Latin-American affairs in the Division of Reference. Raemey A. Burton recently resigned his position in the Division of Labor Department Archives to become district manager for the Railroad Retirement Board in Columbus, Ohio. Emmett J. Leahy has returned to duty in the Division of Treasury Department Archives from a world tour during which he visited eighteen archival agencies, most of them on the European continent.

The National Archives has recently issued in processed form the following Staff Information Circulars: (1) "Archival Training in Prussia," a translation of a lecture by the German archivist Albert Brackmann, which appeared in the *Archivalische Zeitschrift* in 1931; (2) "Report on a Scientific Mission to German, Austrian, and Swiss Archives," a translation of the official report of the Belgian archivist Joseph Cuvelier, which appeared in *Les Archives de l'Etat en Belgique* in 1914; (3) "Answers to Some Questions Most Frequently Asked About the National Archives"; (4) "Repair and Preservation in the National Archives," by Arthur E. Kimberly; and (5) "European Archival Practices in Arranging Records," by Theodore R. Schellenberg. The history and functions of the National Archives are discussed by Solon J. Buck in an article entitled "Das Nationalarchiv der Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika," which appeared in the *Archivalische Zeitschrift*, 45:16-33 (1939).

Records from more than thirty diplomatic and one hundred fifty consular posts in Europe, Latin America, the Indian Ocean area, and various other parts of the world have been received in pursuance of a four-year program, begun in 1938, under which the records of all such posts to August 15, 1912, are to be transferred to the National Archives. These records contain information supplementary to that appearing in the records of the State Department in Washington. Use of any of these records post-dating August 14, 1906, is restricted. Other accessions recently received by the National Archives include papers filed in cases brought before the Court of Claims, 1855-1923;

War Department accounting records, 1800-1925; organizations strength returns of the American Expeditionary Forces, 1917-1920; correspondence and related papers concerning the location, construction, maintenance, and repair of public buildings, 1837-1933; records of the Potomac Company and its successor, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company, 1785-1900; some seventeen thousand maps constituting the bulk of the collection created and used by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1830-1937; documents concerning Spanish and Mexican land grants in California, 1780-1846, which were formerly in the Public Survey Office at Glendale, California; correspondence and other records of the Bureau of Chemistry and of the Food, Drug, and Insecticide Administration, 1907-1929; correspondence of the Lighthouse Board and of its successor, the Bureau of Lighthouses, 1901-1925; and records of the Merchant Fleet Corporation concerned chiefly with the operation of vessels, 1917-1933.

Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd has presented to the National Archives about 380,000 feet of motion-picture film portraying rather fully his two Antarctic expeditions and less extensively his North Pole and transatlantic flights.

THE HISTORICAL RECORDS SURVEY

The Historical Records Survey projects of the WPA, formerly operated under exclusively federal sponsorship, will now be carried on under local sponsorship at approximately the same levels of employment and operation, according to a recent announcement of Florence S. Kerr, assistant commissioner in charge of the Professional and Service Division of the Work Projects Administration. Under the national direction of Dr. Luther H. Evans, these projects, in the past, have rendered valuable services in connection with the nation's archives. Their continuation under local sponsorship, a stipulation of the current WPA appropriations act, has been made possible by the large number of interested public agencies which have come forward as sponsors.

To date, applications for continuing Historical Records Survey projects have been received at the national WPA office from forty-seven states, New York City, and the District of Columbia. The majority of these projects, of which the sponsors' contribution averages slightly more than thirteen per cent, have been approved for operation.

The current WPA appropriations act stipulates that Historical Records Survey projects along with art, music, and writers projects must all be sponsored locally after September 1, 1939. This provision places these projects—all part of the WPA arts program—on the same basis as other WPA projects which require the sponsors to contribute a part of the cost. Prior to the current act, the Historical Records Survey, as were the other arts projects, was paid for entirely from federal funds and was entirely directed from Washington. The Federal Theater Project, one of the original units of the WPA arts program, was eliminated by a provision of the current appropriations act.

Formerly there had been 186 state-wide programs for art, music, writers, and historical records survey projects under exclusive federal sponsorship, the arts program announcement revealed. Applications are now on hand at WPA headquarters for 173 such projects under local sponsorship. All state programs except those for Maryland, Mississippi, Montana, and the District of Columbia have received final approval. In each of the three states named and in the District of Columbia parts of such a program have been approved and other applications are pending.

Most of the applications on file call for the operation of all four of the units now comprising the WPA arts program—art, music, writers, and historical records survey. Applications for art projects have been received from 42 states, New York City, and the District of Columbia; for music projects from 38 states, New York City, and the District of Columbia; for writers projects from 46 states, New York City, and the District of Columbia, and for historical records survey projects from 47 states, New York City, and the District of Columbia.

On the basis of the applications already received, the total estimated monthly cost of the projects comprising the WPA arts program will be \$3,357,000. At least 13 per cent of this cost will be contributed by sponsors. It is estimated that an average monthly employment of 34,500 persons will be needed on these projects. This, however, is a maximum figure not likely to be reached while general reductions are in force on project rolls. Employment on the arts program is subject to the same fluctuations that affect other types of projects. Actual employment on such projects during the week ending August 16, 1939, was 21,873.

All of the arts program projects are set up on a state-wide basis, usually with one principal sponsor, although in some instances co-sponsors assist with the development of the projects within individual communities. A wide variety of public agencies has come forward as sponsors, including state universities, departments of public welfare, library and archive boards, art commissions, departments of public education, and similar agencies. Sponsors' contributions may consist of cash or equivalents in supervision, material, facilities and quarters.

NORTH CAROLINA

The North Carolina Historical Commission has completed the installation of the stacks in one half of its new archives, affording better facilities than the commission has previously had. It is hoped that sufficient funds will soon be available to install stacks in the other half.

HAWAII

The "Report of the Librarian of the Board of Commissioners of Public Archives for the Year Ending June 30, 1939" states that more patrons were served during this the thirty-third year than in any previous year. Close to five

thousand persons are reported to have used the institution's facilities. An extensive program of translating documents in the Hawaiian and Chinese languages into English is being carried on.

NORWAY

Mr. Harold Larson, the National Archives, contributed this notice of Norwegian archival activity:

May 9, 1939, the archivist of Norway, Dr. Asgaut Steinnes, arrived in New York for his first visit to the United States. His aim was to become acquainted with American archival establishments and, in particular, to inspect the National Archives building in Washington, D.C. Norway is planning a new building to house its national archives, to be erected in Oslo near the university library. During this coming fall Norwegian architects will enter into a nation-wide competition and in the following summer it is hoped that construction will begin in accordance with the plan that has finally been adopted. The building will cost from two to two and one half million Norwegian *kroner* or from six to seven hundred thousand dollars in American money. "Of course," said Dr. Steinnes, "we have read much of the new imposing archives building in Washington. But it is another matter to see what has actually been done, to examine the building and the equipment and to observe the methods of operation." For one week Dr. Steinnes made a careful study of the National Archives, where he was shown every possible courtesy by the archivist of the United States, by the executive officer, by the administrative secretary, by the director and the assistant director of archival service, by the director of publications and by various other officials too numerous to mention. Dr. Steinnes paid special attention to the original plans of the archives building and was interested in every detail of its construction as explained by the executive officer and by the chief of the Buildings and Grounds Section. Escorted by the archivist, he made a tour of the stack areas, the equipment of which he inspected long and carefully. While in Washington he looked into the new annex to the Library of Congress and he also visited the Hall of Records at Annapolis, Maryland.

Actually, indicated Dr. Steinnes, the need of a new building for the national archives is an old story in Norway. The beginnings of a central Norwegian archival establishment can be traced back to about the year 1300 in the depository at the old fortress of Akershus. The national records remained at Akershus until 1866, when they were moved to the building occupied by the Norwegian *Storting* (parliament). But the legislators needed more and more the space allotted to the records and the latter were therefore moved in 1914 to their present quarters, a structure formerly used by the Bank of Norway. The Norwegian parliament, however, retained its own records as a special collection. Despite an addition, this old bank building soon proved

inadequate and Dr. Steinnes has estimated that he could well utilize five times the amount of space available at present.

The oldest item in the Norwegian national archives is in Latin, a papal letter from the year 1189. From around 1200 A.D. come the earliest manuscripts in Old Norse, chiefly parchments now considered priceless but once so little regarded that tax collectors used them to bind up their reports to the Danish exchequer in the days when Norway was ruled from Copenhagen. A significant feature of Norwegian archival history has been the repatriation of records lodged in foreign collections, especially in Copenhagen. After the separation of Norway from Denmark in 1814 began the long process of recovering from the Danes the material that belonged, strictly speaking, to Norway and for which in several instances the Norwegians still possessed the original loan receipts. During the years 1820-1822, 1851, and lastly in 1937, the Norwegian records slowly drifted back to their old home.¹ But much negotiation was necessary, for the Danish government proved not as generous as was the Bavarian king who in 1830 relinquished without question several thousand Norwegian documents that had been found in his kingdom.²

The year 1814 forms a convenient dividing point in the national archives of Norway. Papers prior to that date are used mostly for historical research. Relatively little is available beyond the year 1850, which year was the terminal date in the last great accession, which took place in the eighties. However, there are some records dating from as recently as 1910 and it is hoped that everything to 1914 can be included in the new building. Dr. Steinnes has in his custody a number of older Norwegian business records. These he considers valuable for economic history, a field in which he himself has made notable contributions to Norwegian learned journals. The archivist of Norway is also enabled to receive private papers but prefers especially those of statesmen such as the great Liberal leader, Johan Sverdrup, from whom originate ten cases of documents. Papers of literary men, however, generally fall to the university library in Oslo, which has excellent Bjørnson and Ibsen collections.

The principle of *provenance* is, of course, adhered to, and the archival system strongly resembles that of Denmark. Each government department in Norway has its own archives and it is the belief of Dr. Steinnes that in both the department and the national archives the same filing system should be employed. At present the central archives in Oslo has no card catalogue and no recent guide has been published because not all the material has been classified. For collections stemming from temporary agencies developed in a time of crisis—Norway had them also during the World War—Dr. Steinnes

¹ See H. Koht, *Det gamle norske Riksarkiv og restene fra det* (Oslo, 1927); and the popular treatment of Chr. Brinchmann, *Norges arkivsaker i Danmark* (Oslo, 1927).

² O. J. Falnes, *National Romanticism in Norway* (New York, 1933), 94-95, 151 et seq.

thinks a separate guide may well be produced but that for other groups of records a card catalogue would seem preferable. The Norwegian archives does not receive motion-picture film. It has its own special library of some twenty-five thousand volumes and it does its own bookbinding. The publication program is modest, being one volume annually of about three hundred pages. Dr. Steinnes is now working on Norwegian historical source material from the sixteenth century and is a member of the Norwegian Council for publishing such sources (*Kjeldeskriftraadet*). Dr. Steinnes does not publish his annual report, for he fears, modestly, that if he did, it would of necessity be repetitious.

Among the predecessors of Dr. Steinnes as *Riksarkivar* are numbered several of Norway's most distinguished men. The poet, Henrik Wergeland (1808-1845) spent the closing years of his hectic life in this position.⁸ Wergeland's successor, Christian C. A. Lange (1810-1861) was an assiduous collector of documents both at home and abroad. Lange also was instrumental in beginning the comprehensive *Diplomatarium Norvegicum*, a sort of *Monumenta* of Norse medieval documents, which is still in progress. Lange was followed by the brilliant historian, P. A. Munch (1810-1863), who received the appointment in part to repair his shattered finances, because as he once complained, he must have been born wholly without "economic talent."⁴ It was Munch who got access to the papal archives in Rome and made known its treasures to the Scandinavian North. He died unexpectedly in Rome and was buried there in the Protestant cemetery, the historian Gregorovius bringing at his grave the tribute of European scholarship. Next may be mentioned Michael Birkeland (1830-1896), the greatest, Dr. Steinnes believes, of Norwegian archivists and assuredly so in point of service, for he was first employed in the Norwegian archives in 1856 and was *Riksarkivar* from 1875 to 1896.⁵ He personally supervised the removal of the archives in 1866 from Akershus to the building of the Norwegian parliament. In 1869 he took the initiative in the founding of the Norwegian Historical Society. Extremely conservative, Birkeland did more as a researcher in and collector of source material than as a productive author.⁶ Under him the Norwegian national archives became essentially an independent institution, although then as now under the Department for Ecclesiastical Affairs.

The present *Riksarkivar*, Dr. Asgaut Steinnes, after having taught in various schools, took the doctorate at the University of Oslo in 1928 and in the same year was appointed University Fellow in history. He has been archivist of Norway since 1933. His professional staff numbers around fifty and includes

⁸ One may note as does Falnes, *op. cit.*, 85, Wergeland's "picture of the self-denying archivist wallowing in dust and documents, uncomplaining and content thus to serve the honor of his country."

⁴ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁵ See Fr. Ording, *Det Laerde Holland* (Oslo, 1927), 117 *et seq.*, *passim*.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 132.

two women, both employed at Oslo, the one as a librarian, the other as an archivist. As the head of the Norwegian archival system he administers the central archives (*Riksarkiv*) in Oslo and the five separate "state" archives in the cities of Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, Kristiansand, and Hamar. The term "state" archives, he admits, is misleading, since these contain records of the local authorities. As potential archivists Dr. Steinnes prefers students of history or of law; the latter are hard to get since the best ones prefer to practice. Genealogists are frequent callers and are assisted to a limited degree. But for extended searches they must do the work themselves or employ an assistant.

From Washington Dr. Steinnes planned to travel to Springfield, Illinois, to see the new building recently erected there for use as the archives building of the state of Illinois. After a short visit to California he will return to Norway.

ABSTRACTS OF ARCHIVE PUBLICATIONS

It has been necessary to omit the abstracts of European archive publications. The abstracts will continue to appear in future numbers.

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