

# Trends of Organization in State Archives

By MARY GIVENS BRYAN<sup>1</sup>

*Georgia State Archives*

AT the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in September 1954, I was appointed chairman of the State Records Committee; and I was reappointed in 1955 and 1956. During the 3 years of my service on this important committee we have presented the following reports:

1. *1955 Comparative Study of State and U. S. Territorial Laws Governing Archives*, by Mary Givens Bryan, State Archivist, Georgia. This study was revised for the years 1956 and 1957.
2. *1956 Report on Records Disposal Policies in the States and Territories of the United States*, by Robert M. Brown, State Archivist, Minnesota. In 1957 a supplement to this report was issued.
3. *1956 Survey on Microphotography in the States and Territories of the United States*, by Lola M. Homsher, Director, Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department. A 1957 revision of this report has been prepared for the current year by the new chairman of the Committee on Microphotography, Dorothy K. Taylor, Microfilm Administrator, Wyoming; the new survey does not appear with the State Records Committee reports.
4. *1956 Report on Salaries in the States and Territories of the United States*, by Gust Skordas, Assistant State Archivist, Maryland.
5. *Replevin of Public Records, 1957 Preliminary Report*, by Philip P. Mason, Archivist, Michigan.

The above listed reports appear in four processed handbooks, the first three of which were distributed to archivists and record managers in the States and Territories as well as to interested university libraries and legislative council committees. The stock of the 1955 and 1956 studies is exhausted. The *1957 State Records Committee Reports* is being distributed to members of the Society of American Archivists at the present meeting. Two hundred mimeographed and bound copies of the *Reports* will be distributed by the chairman of the State Records Committee as long as they are available.

<sup>1</sup> A report by Mrs. Bryan, Archivist of Georgia, for the Society's State Records Committee.

Users of the handbook must bear in mind that the reports have been prepared by busy archivists as a labor of love, crowded into already full schedules; they therefore lack much to make them finished products. The reports on archival laws and disposal policies are arranged by State or Territory; the committee regrets that it could not spare time for indexing. The committees on State records, record management, and microphotography has so far been able to assemble data on archival and record programs only by correspondence. It will continue to be impossible for the Society and these committees to make an adequate, unbiased, and significant study appraising State archives and record administration programs (including microfilming projects) until funds are available to send some competent State archivist on sabbatical leave to make personal surveys in the States. Such surveys would give us a true picture of our shortcomings and our strengths. The committee presents the 1957 handbook as suggestive, not as definitive. The handbook does, however, give us data about programs in our States and Territories, to which we have long needed access, and it fills a need even though the material is in some cases inadequate.

Barrow laminators for the restoration of documents and books were being used in 1957 in the following *nine* States: Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Minnesota, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. A Barrow laminator was also installed in 1957 by the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, which holds the General Archives at San Juan.

A true archival program should include the care, preservation (by microfilming or other photographic methods), and servicing of archival records of the State, counties, and municipalities. The archival agency of a State should be administered by a competent, professionally trained State archivist, who should have overall supervision of both the archival and the record management programs. It is highly important that the archives from the beginning be of service to all State government agencies, to the counties and municipalities, and to the citizens in general. The ideal arrangement for any State is to have a separate building designed especially for the preservation and use of archives and *occupied by the archives alone*.

*Two* States, South Carolina and Georgia, have passed legislation during 1957 to erect archives buildings to replace their present inadequate quarters. Texas has passed legislation to erect a combined library and archives building. Some of our more progressive States now have two separate buildings devoted to archival pur-

poses: one serving as an administrative office and a place for documents of high value that are frequently consulted; and another — a fireproof warehouse of less expensive construction, either built for the purpose or converted, with less expensive shelving and boxing — serving as a storage space for documents of less importance and less often consulted. The States that now have in operation such separate buildings for intermediate storage, called State record centers, are California, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, and North Carolina. Other States provide space for record centers in State office buildings. In the few States that have good and well integrated record management programs with their archival program, the record center serves as a place in which records are studied, screened, and scheduled for retention or disposal — all under the supervision of the archivist. Many records of legal and administrative value are microfilmed in the record center before disposal. Up to the present time the policy of our best archival agencies has been not to destroy vital records of high historical value even after they have been filmed. The filming of such records is usually done to save the originals from wear and tear. The archivist, in view of his experience with the old records of historical value, knows more than anyone else about what records of today will be the historical records of tomorrow. In every State the archivist should be a member of the State record committee or commission, and of any destruction committee. The archivist should also have authority over microfilming projects on the State and local levels.

To be most effective, archival and record management programs must be integrated, not separated. The best programs are those where the two are integrated and where the archival authority is organized as an independent agency or commission or is directly responsible to the secretary of state or some other high administrator.

*Seven* States have independent history, archives, or record commissions: Arkansas, Delaware, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Vermont.

*Seven* States have separate Departments of Archives and History or Archives Departments: Alabama, Iowa, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

In *nine* States the Archives operates under the State Library or Library and Archives: Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

*Five* States have put their Archives under the administration of the secretary of state: California, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts,

and Rhode Island. It is hoped that in 1958 Louisiana will enter this camp. The Archives of Louisiana has been operating under the State university; during 1955 and 1956, however, a Louisiana archives study was conducted under the secretary of state, and the secretary is now waiting for the 1958 session of the legislature to appropriate \$75,000 to begin the operation of an Archives and Record Service for Louisiana.

*Ten* States have their archival programs integrated with their State historical societies: Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Utah. Of these ten States, surveys by our Society's State Records Committee and Records Management Committee indicate that none (with the exception of Colorado) has anything resembling a comprehensive, broad, archival and record management program. Colorado has specific legislation setting up the Archives and Public Records Division. Utah has just this year (1957) adopted legislation establishing a Division of State Archives within the larger framework of the Utah State Historical Society. Utah has established also a Military Records Section under the Archives Division and has appropriated funds for its operation. It is evident from all surveys that the Archives operating under State historical societies tend to be buried unless a separate division is established, as in Colorado and Utah, with its own appropriation for archives and record work.

*Two* States — New Jersey and New York — operate their State Library and Archives under the Department of Education. New York has separate organizations, within the Department of Education, for State and local records.

During the 1957 session of the Wisconsin legislature the Committee on Public Records, with its staff and equipment, was transferred from the State Historical Society to the Executive Department, Bureau of Purchases. Wisconsin's archival administration is now being reorganized. Minnesota in 1955 provided for the transfer of certain powers from the Minnesota Historical Society to the Minnesota State Archives Commission, an independent agency. This made the Archives Commission responsible for all public records in the State, the historical society retaining its responsibility for papers and documents other than official public records.

Unique is the archives of Washington State at Olympia, which, like the National Archives, functions under a Department of General Administration.

*Five* of our States have not yet provided for a Department of Archives or an Archives Division, although most have passed laws relating to records and their microfilming: Maine, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, and New Mexico. Official records in these States are for the most part still in the departments of origin. In New Hampshire the State librarian and the secretary of state share the responsibility for archives; and \$4,000 appropriated in 1955 for an archives study is being used to employ Leahy and Co., Management Consultants, to make a preliminary survey of the archival situation in the State.

The chart that follows is self-explanatory, and speaks volumes without further elaboration. It shows the name of State or Territory, the number of archival or record management employees, the budget, and the organizational setup. Only 15 States employ as many as 10 persons for archival and record work. One can readily gather from the tables of employees, budgets, and administrative setups which programs are thriving. It takes a sizable staff and budget to do thorough work. The great need lies in establishing separate budgets for archives and record management programs. Until more States can account for how much of their funds are being spent for archives and how much for record programs, the field of archives will continue to be handicapped.

It is not possible for the Society of American Archivists or its committees, or any other professional association, to say where within the framework of a State government the archival agency should be located. Our States are all different, and political situations vary. We suggest that any user of the 1957 handbook who is considering the establishment of a true archival agency with a record management division should study specifically those States that at present have successful organizations similar to the one planned for his own State. The chart, arranged alphabetically by States and Territories will answer many questions.

In closing, as chairman of the State Records Committee, I should like to note that it would have been impossible to bring out the committee's four handbooks without the valuable assistance of my faithful secretary, Mrs. Virginia W. Atwell. She alone has cut all the stencils and assembled all the reports during the three years of my chairmanship. I am deeply indebted to her. I am indebted as well, to members of my committee: Robert M. Brown, Minnesota; Lola M. Homsher, Wyoming; Philip P. Mason, Michigan; and Gust Skordas, Maryland; and to the chairmen of the Records Management and Microphotography committees: Rex Beach,

Maryland; and Dorothy K. Taylor, Wyoming. I could continue by naming State archivists, National Archives friends, and other members of the Society of American Archivists who have given me valuable counsel and have inspired me to try to make some small contribution to the archival profession during my chairmanship. Without naming them, I say thank you most sincerely for your faith in me and remind you "that the healing of the world is in her nameless saints!"

# ARCHIVAL CHART, 1957

STATE	NO. OF EMPLOYEES	BUDGET (annual unless otherwise stated; figures are approximate in some cases)	ORGANIZATIONAL SETUP
ALABAMA	12	\$ 75,000	Department of Archives and History
ARIZONA	2 +	\$ 65,030 (+ \$27,201 for microfilming back- log)	Department of Library and Archives
ARKANSAS	4	\$ 18,600 (\$36,200 for microfilming)	Arkansas History Commission Department of Archives and His- tory
CALIFORNIA	10	\$ 58,297	Secretary of state Archives and Central Depository
COLORADO	10 + 4	\$ 43,080.71 (+ \$12,000 reimbursable revolving microfilming fund)	State Historical Society of Colorado Division of State Archives and Public Records
CONNECTICUT	Not reported	Not reported	Connecticut State Library
DELAWARE	14	\$ 65,475	Public Archives Commission
FLORIDA	1	Budget for Archives not segregated from State Library funds	Florida State Library
GEORGIA	14 +	\$105,000	Secretary of state Department of Archives and His- tory
IDAHO	4 (these have historical duties also)	Biennial, \$ 45,000 (total for Society)	Idaho Historical Society

# ARCHIVAL CHART, 1957 (Con't.)

STATE	NO. OF EMPLOYEES	BUDGET (annual unless otherwise stated; figures are approximate in some cases)	ORGANIZATIONAL SETUP
ILLINOIS	20	Biennial \$88,016 (1957-58) for per- sonal services; \$32,850 (1957-58) for equipment, travel, commodities, etc. Total for 1 year, \$120,866	Secretary of state State Archives Division
INDIANA	9 +	Archives budget integrated with State Library — \$16,750 for microfilming and photography in addition to regu- lar library budget	Indiana State Library
IOWA	Not reported — total of 21 employees engaged in historical and archival work	\$ 70,460	State Department of History and Ar- chives
KANSAS	3 +	\$ 13,633	Kansas State Historical Society
KENTUCKY	2 part time	\$25,500 + \$13,262.29 revolving fund	Kentucky Historical Society
LOUISIANA	4 (at Louisiana State University)	Not segregated \$75,000 currently requested by sec- retary of state to initiate program	Louisiana State University and sec- retary of state
MAINE	None	None	None



MARYLAND	18	\$65,645 (archival and historical) \$34,620 (record management)	Hall of Records Commission
MASSACHUSETTS	11	\$ 48,020	Secretary of state Archives Division
MICHIGAN	5	\$28,000 + \$47,000 (State Record Center)	Michigan Historical Commission
MINNESOTA	5	\$ 27,291	Minnesota State Archives Commission
MISSISSIPPI	8	Biennial, \$87,820; or \$43,910 annually	Department of Archives and History
MISSOURI	Not reported	No breakdown of budget for archives and record work. Missouri has no true archival agency	State Historical Society of Missouri
MONTANA	None	No specific appropriation for archives or record work	Historical Society of Montana (not an archives)
NEBRASKA	3	Biennial appropriation to Historical Society \$256,489.31; or approximately \$148,244.65 annually. Funds for archives and record work cannot be segregated.	Nebraska State Historical Society
NEVADA	3	No specific appropriation for archives and record work	Nevada State Historical Society
NEW HAMPSHIRE	None	\$4,000 appropriated in 1955 for study being made by Leahy and Co.	No archival agency Secretary of state and State librarian share dual responsibility for archives.

# ARCHIVAL CHART, 1957 (Con't.)

STATE	NO. OF EMPLOYEES	BUDGET (annual unless otherwise stated; figures are approximate in some cases)	ORGANIZATIONAL SETUP
NEW JERSEY	7	\$40,594.85, for archives and micro-filming	Department of Education State Library
NEW MEXICO	None	None	Bureau of Archives and History
NEW YORK	8 (State records)	Not segregated from total budget to State Library, which has annual bud- get of over one million dollars	No archival agency; departmental ar- chives Department of Education New York State Library Mss. & History Section (State records)
NORTH CAROLINA	4 (local records)	\$ 27,706	Division of Archives and His- tory (local records)
NORTH DAKOTA	18	\$90,000 for archives and record man- agement	Department of Archives and History
	1	Archives not segregated from total biennial appropriation to State His- torical Society, which is \$83,100 — \$41,550 annually	State Historical Society of North Dakota
OHIO	None	Archives supported by library and museum funds	The Ohio Historical Society Ohio State Museum The Library

OKLAHOMA	6	State Library annual budget, \$172,-965. A fair portion is allocated to the Archives and Microfilm Divisions of the Library though <i>not</i> segregated from total budget.	Oklahoma State Library
OREGON	11	Biennial, \$63,839 + \$4,000.33 for pay raises (+ reimbursable microfilming fund)	Oregon State Library Oregon State Archives
PENNSYLVANIA	6	Budget breakdown impossible because of reorganization	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
RHODE ISLAND	1	\$5,500 for Archives Division	Secretary of state State Library Archives Division
SOUTH CAROLINA	9½	\$ 75,485.99	South Carolina Archives Department
SOUTH DAKOTA	2	\$25,340, of which \$8,600 is for micro-filming	South Dakota Historical Society
TENNESSEE	10	\$54,600 + for Archives Division	Tennessee State Library and Archives Archives Division
TEXAS	5	\$19,160 for Archives Division; \$18,600 for record administration	Texas State Library Archives Division
UTAH	4	\$25,000 for Archives Division \$18,800 for Military Section of Archives Division	Utah State Historical Society Division of State Archives
VERMONT	3 +	\$9,700 for microfilming \$ 18,350	Public Records Commission
VIRGINIA	20	\$80,000 for Archives Division \$38,000 for record management	Virginia State Library Archives Division

# ARCHIVAL CHART, 1957 (Con't.)

STATE	NO. OF EMPLOYEES	BUDGET (annual unless otherwise stated ; figures are approximate in some cases)	ORGANIZATIONAL SETUP
WASHINGTON	4	\$25,502 or \$51,014 for biennium; roughly \$20,000 of the \$51,014 is earmarked for filming	Department of General Administra- tion Division of Archives and Records Management
WEST VIRGINIA	None	\$30,910, of which not more than \$3,500 is spent for archival purposes	Department of Archives and History
WISCONSIN	5	Has been approximately \$25,000 an- nually	Executive Department Bureau of Purchases (public record service is in state of reorganization)
WYOMING	2	\$38,850 for Archives and Historical Department, State Museum (annual) or \$77,000 for biennium	Wyoming State Archives and His- torical Department
	10 (microfilm department)	\$72,175 (annual) or \$144,350 (bi- ennial) for Centralized Microfilm De- partment, plus \$40,000 for travel unit for county filming	Wyoming Centralized Microfilm Department
TERRITORY			
TERR. OF ALASKA	5 +	\$25,930 (annual) or \$51,860 (bi- ennial)	Alaska Historical Library and Mu- seum
TERR. OF HAWAII	13	\$42,000 of \$50,000 total budget for record work — 84% of budget.	Board of Commissioners of Public Archives
PUERTO RICO	5	\$40,000 for Archives, \$10,000 for record management	Institute of Puerto Rican Culture General Archives