

Reviews of Books

HENRY P. BEERS, *Editor*

National Archives

Archivos Modernos: Principios y Técnicas, por el Dr. T. R. Schellenberg. Traducción y adiciones por el Dr. Manuel Carrera Stampa. (Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia, Publicaciones del Comité de Archivos de la Comisión de Historia; La Habana, Archivo Nacional, 1958. 358 p., notas.)

The appearance of a translation is in itself evidence of a successful book. The translation into Spanish of Dr. Schellenberg's *Modern Archives: Principles and Techniques* is evidence of another book that successfully meets a basic need and satisfies an insistent demand.

The first edition of this work was published in 1956 simultaneously in England, New Zealand, and Australia (where the major part of the manuscript was prepared). The following year a second edition was issued by one of the American university presses for another segment of what has proved to be an eager and expectant English-language audience. Now, largely through the initiative of John P. Harrison of the Rockefeller Foundation and with the cooperation of various Latin American archivists and scholars, the volume makes its appearance in the language of Castile. This new version is an important contribution to the rapid and systematic diffusion of the techniques and principles of archival science, as evolved in recent decades in the United States. It is meet and just that this text on archival methodology should be more widely known, for the United States' leadership as a nation largely depends upon the combined efforts of our professional men and women to share their enthusiasm and the results of their experience in the solution of problems that are common and bothersome to colleagues elsewhere. In the present volume the Spanish-speaking world has ready access to the forms and formulas of current American archival practice, set down in the lucid and forthright language that is characteristic of the writing and thinking of this distinguished member of the archival profession.

This Spanish-language edition has been enriched by the inclusion of material that did not appear in the original. The author has written two additional chapters (nos. 16 and 17), dealing with the arrangement and description of private papers, which obviously give the present version considerably greater breadth of scope and usefulness as a professional reference work. The translator has added bibliographical references to appropriate material scattered throughout the professional literature — citations to guides, inventories, and essays that point up the interests of readers of this Spanish edition. Here one finds, for instance, references to the numerous writings on Latin American archives and Spanish documentary sources by Roscoe R. Hill and other archivists and historians.

It is easy to underestimate the particular contribution that a translator can make to the success of a foreign language edition. It is also easy to minimize the hard work of making a good translation, work that is not made any easier by the absence of many equivalents of standard words (policy or leadership, for instance) or by the necessity to render in an extended definition, rather than by a single word or by a two- or three-word phrase, archival terminology that has not yet made its appearance outside the original English. There is also the somewhat limited flexibility of Spanish for a suitable rendering of nouns used in English as adjectives, compound words, and similar verbal roadblocks. The present translator, who ingratiates himself to others by a confession of inadequacy in the face of some of these linguistic problems, was helped in his chores here by an internship in the National Archives some time ago, which was made possible by the United States Department of State.

Now we hear that translations of Dr. Schellenberg's work into German, Portuguese, and Hebrew are in preparation. These new versions, as well as the Spanish-language edition, should contribute immensely to a worldwide diffusion of this much-needed text, and it is to be hoped that the author and his collaborators will be amply compensated for their pains in putting together these versions of a most useful commentary on archival principles and methods.

GASTON LITTON

Escuela Interamericana de Bibliotecología
Medellín, Colombia

Guide to Methods of Listing, Indexing, and Reporting on Business Archives. (London, Business Archives Council, Nov. 1959. 10 p.)

What to Save and What to Eliminate. (London, Business Archives Council, Nov. 1959. 4 p.)

Though designed to guide persons reporting on collections of business records to the Business Archives Council, these leaflets have a wider interest; for little of a practical nature is as yet available in this field. The back cover of the first lists ten "hints to workers," starting with the admonition that "archive investigators, in common with archeologists and all those who seek a first-hand knowledge of the past, must be prepared to face dirt." Workers are told how to fill out the main report sheet and prepare the index slips. Definitions of the more common types of business records are given, and considerable attention is devoted to filing rules for the index cards. Three well-organized collections are cited as examples: those of the British Transport Commission, Glyn Mills and Co., and the Hudson's Bay Company. Appendixes list the names of a few suppliers of cards and equipment and that of an expert repair man, and provide a few titles for further reading.

Of more general interest is the supplementary paper, "What to Save and What to Eliminate." Two recent English business histories are cited to show what records the authors found most useful; this is a device that might well be extended. Under the heading "Contemporary Records" examples of the more common types found worth preserving are shown. "Minute books should always be preserved; though minutes are often brief and apparently uninforma-

tive, they occupy little space and are potentially of very high value to the historian. Any memoranda passing between managers and partners of directors, especially reports from branch establishments, should be kept. Comments by auditors should be kept; they frequently contain sidelights on business methods otherwise unobservable." Because of the bulk of certain routine series, sampling is suggested. The leaflet concludes, "When in doubt, keep everything and ask for expert advice," an admonition which all of us can second.

The Business Archives Council is doing a commendable job in spreading thus widely an appreciation of the significance of business records and in setting up procedures (though of necessity at the beginner's level) for their handling. The publications may be obtained from the Council, 9, King's Bench Walk, Temple, E. C. 4, London.

ROBERT W. LOVETT

Harvard University

Preservation and Storage of Sound Recordings; a Study Supported by a Grant From the Rockefeller Foundation, by A. G. Pickett and M. M. Lemcoe. (Washington, Library of Congress, 1959. vii, 74 p., illus. 45¢. For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.)

The work reported in this publication was performed at the Southwest Research Institute, San Antonio, Texas, for the Library of Congress, and supported by the Rockefeller Foundation. This appears to be the first systematic effort, reported in the literature, to define the problems associated with the preservation and storage of sound recordings and to make suggestions for their solution. After a brief introduction, the report is divided into four main sections: (1) factors relating to the degradation of sound recording materials; (2) the study of phonographic discs; (3) the study of magnetic tape; and (4) recommendations for future work. The one-year project was regarded as a preliminary study in the new field of preservation of sound recordings.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the deterioration of discs and tape recordings in storage in order to establish optimum storage conditions and to suggest proper use techniques. The effects of heat, light, fungus, grit, moisture, and storage conditions were studied in relation to the preservation of acetate, shellac, and vinyl discs and of acetate and polyester magnetic tapes.

The authors point out that resistance to degradation is built into a product at the time of its manufacture, and that most sound-recording materials were designed for play-back qualities and low cost rather than for longevity. The only way to correct this situation is to develop suitable specifications, including formulation and manufacture, for suitable recordings with a maximum storage life. It is concluded that the demand for sound recordings of maximum longevity is probably sufficient to justify their manufacture.

The very difficult task of predicting shelf life was attempted by the technique of accelerated aging, *i.e.*, maintaining the product in an environment that increases the usual rate of degradation. The authors emphasize that accelerated aging can seldom give an accurate picture of the relative aging rates of different

materials, but it is a very useful ally in predicting the probable useful life of a product. When used in conjunction with other information, fairly good "educated guesses" can be made concerning the longevity of sound recordings.

On the basis of the work performed during this project, and information available in the literature and through the cooperation of manufacturers, recommendations are made for the storage of phonograph discs and magnetic tapes. These recommendations are too lengthy to summarize in this review.

The recommendations for future work are so much to the point that the suggestions for implementing a continuing program on the preservation of sound recordings are quoted here:

... it would be unthinkable not to take advantage of the wealth of knowledge which has been accumulated by those in industry . . . Such a project would involve public relations as well as the cooperation of many people of such diverse disciplines as library science, solid state physics, sound recording, plastics technology, and chemistry. If one were to adopt successful precedent, the formation of a committee for the Preservation of Sound Recordings is indicated. Such a group formed of people with a mutual interest in the problem and with the desire and ability to contribute to the development of longer lived sound recordings could achieve dramatic results in this field which would not be attainable by any single research effort or organization of limited viewpoint. The main obstacle to progress in this field seems to be the lack of communication between the different disciplines, and this should be easily overcome by such an approach.

The Library of Congress and the Rockefeller Foundation are to be commended for their foresight in initiating and supporting this work. The report indicates that the project was exceptionally well planned, coordinated, and executed. It is obvious that the group approach, *i.e.*, bringing together a number of specialists from widely different scientific disciplines, has been used to good advantage.

This report is required reading for all individuals and organizations having collections of sound recordings that are to be preserved for many years.

WILLIAM K. WILSON

National Bureau of Standards

Suspect Documents; Their Scientific Examination, by Wilson R. Harrison.
(New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1958. viii, 583 p., illus. \$15.)

This book of 583 pages has 15 chapters on "suspect documents" (in this country commonly called questioned documents). It covers more details on the various subjects in the field of document examination than any other book published so far in Great Britain, and it includes many of the most recent methods employed in document examination, as well as valuable historic dates. In addition, it offers attorneys and investigators very valuable information regarding document cases before they reach the document examiner.

Suspect Documents is well indexed and appends to each chapter a bibliography on the subject covered. (This is of much value to the document examiner who wishes to do research work.) It also contains a glossary of words commonly used in document examination. Although the book is well illustrated,

the cuts are not of very good quality; but of course this is the fault of the printer — not of the author.

The first five chapters introduce the reader to the work of the document examiner and to the necessary equipment. The author describes the various materials that enter into the making of most documents (such as pens, pencils, paper, inks, adhesives, ball point pens, and crayons) and describes the equipment that should be included in a fully equipped laboratory for document examination. A thorough explanation is given of the many uses of the various pieces of equipment such as optical instruments, chemical equipment, illuminating and measuring devices, ultra-violet and infra-red light and x-ray, and the infra-red image converter. Procedures are given for solving problems involving erased and faded writing, charred documents, and paper fiber identification; and the author describes the use of chromatography and electrophoresis in the examination of inks. Chapter 6 describes the photography of documents and includes practical instruction on the use of cameras, lenses, illuminating devices, and filters.

Every practicing document examiner should not only read but should study thoroughly chapter 7, "Dating Problems." Dr. Harrison includes in this chapter very valuable date information concerning paper fibers, coloring matter, bleaches, fillers, inks, and pencils; it should be remembered, however, that this dating information is based on information available in *Gray's Dating*.

description and classification of various kinds of anonymous letters, and suggestions regarding interviews with suspects and recipients of anonymous letters.

A word of warning to the reader of chapter 15, which describes a document case in court. The author is referring to British courts, the customs and traditions of which are not always the same as ours. For instance, Dr. Harrison describes the equipment that one should take to the courtroom for examination of documents while on the witness stand. There are few qualified document examiners in the United States who would attempt to examine a document while on the witness stand.

There can be no question but that the author of *Suspect Documents* is a highly qualified and experienced examiner of questioned documents, and the basic principles and reasoning set out in his book are exhaustive and sound. This reviewer finds, however, that much of this work is tinted with the thoughts and experiences of a document examiner whose work has been primarily in law enforcement — as opposed to civil practice. Nevertheless, *Suspect Documents* thoroughly covers more subjects on document examination than any book published in the last few decades. It is highly recommended to investigators of document matters, attorneys, and students of the subject. Every practicing document examiner should study this book and have it available for reference. Those of us in the document examining profession owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Harrison, who has so ably put into print his marvelous storehouse of knowledge regarding this highly specialized profession.

GEORGE J. LACY

President, American Society of Questioned Document Examiners

DESCRIPTIONS OF RECORDS

Picture Sources; an Introductory List, ed. by Helen Faye. (New York, Special Libraries Association, 1959. 115 p. \$3.50.)

It is a great pleasure to see the fruition of a project that has long been of special interest to archivists and librarians concerned with pictorial source material. This new publication has an interesting history. In 1947 the Association of Federal Photographic Librarians was founded in Washington, D. C., for the special purpose of compiling a guide to picture sources in the Federal Government and the District of Columbia. Preliminary guides were compiled in 1949 and 1950 by this group and its Committee on Publication headed by Josephine Cobb of the National Archives. In 1952 this group joined the Special Libraries Association and was designated the SLA Picture Division. *Picture Sources*, issued by the Division, is the long-awaited guide, enlarged to cover national picture sources.

The book is divided into several subject classes such as "Commerce and Industry," "Military Subjects," or "Transportation." Particularly extensive is "History." In each division are entries covering individual collections, giving all necessary information such as name of institution, address, telephone, and name of custodian, followed by an indication of the size, type, and contents of each collection and the availability of items. At the end of each division there

is a section on "Picture Finding Tools," an extremely helpful aid for further research in the particular field.

One division, "General Picture Collections," includes the holdings of the National Archives and the Library of Congress, and another covers "Specialized Subject Collections" such as pictures pertaining to money, buccaneering, and Girl Scouts. Two indexes increase the usefulness of the publication, one an index of picture sources and the other a subject index.

This compilation is a monumental task, for information on photographic collections in the past has been almost in the category of trade secrets. It fills a long-term need for writers, historical researchers, and the communication media. However, the Committee considers this guide as provisional only, and it requests contributions and corrections for future editions. It is true that there are many types of subject classes — scientific or technical, for instance — that should be included or expanded. Not mentioned are some of the more valuable collections such as those of the U. S. Air Force and the American Museum of Photography in Philadelphia. These are details, however, that can be corrected in the next edition. In the meantime one can applaud a most useful publication.

HERMINE M. BAUMHOFFER

USAF Motion Picture Film Depository
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base

Manuscript Collections in the Columbia University Libraries; a Descriptive List. (New York, Columbia University Libraries, 1959. v, 104 p.)

The Columbia guide to manuscripts lists 294 collections held by several libraries of the University. The descriptions, arranged alphabetically, include title of the collection, type of manuscripts, dates, size, location, a brief note on scope, source, and restrictions. Not included in the list are several thousand miscellaneous letters and documents not a part of a group or a homogeneous collection.

The holdings are varied, both in type and in subject matter. The major kinds of collections are personal papers, special subject collections, archives of the university, organization records, and transcripts of interviews produced by the Oral History Research Project.

The varied subject matter indicates that collecting policies have not restricted the acquisition of material to a particular period, geographic area, or subject. Personal papers of faculty members, administrators, and students, as well as units of university records and subject-matter collections gathered through the interest of faculty members, follow lines frequently pursued by university archival establishments. In addition, however, the libraries have gathered personal papers of businessmen, politicians, writers, musicians, and lawyers; business records; and archives of such organizations as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the New York (City) Charter Commission.

Much of the basic work on this guide was done by Edward C. Lathem and J. Terry Bender when attending Columbia's School of Library Service, and its completion has been the work of Kenneth Lohf and Alice Bonnell of the Department of Special Collections. These and the several other persons who

collaborated to produce the volume have done a thoroughly professional piece of work. They have succeeded in the difficult task of incorporating into their descriptive list the best features of the true guide.

LUCILE M. KANE

Minnesota Historical Society

Guide to Manuscripts and Archives in the West Virginia Collection, comp. by Charles Shetler. (West Virginia University Bulletin, series 59, no. 10-1, Apr. 1959; Morgantown, West Virginia University Library, 1958 [re. 1959]. x, 160 p.)

The West Virginia Collection, established in 1950 at the University of West Virginia, had its origin in the Division of Documents of the University of West Virginia Library. For many years Dr. Charles H. Ambler, Head of the History Department, had been concerned that the original records of the State were being scattered and lost. Dr. Ambler worked tirelessly to see an agency established to collect and adequately preserve the sources of the history of the State. In 1933 this task was partially accomplished when the Division of Documents was established as a part of the University Library. Dr. Ambler was the first head of the Division of Documents. He was assisted by Dr. Festus P. Summers, who was appointed Archivist in 1935. They worked together to build the collections and were remarkably successful in spite of handicaps of inadequate financial support and clerical staff.

During World War II the Division of Documents suffered an eclipse. In 1950, however, the West Virginia Collection was established to carry on the work for which the Division of Documents had been set up. During this period the Collection has grown tremendously and now numbers in its manuscripts and archives some three million items.

This guide describes material acquired from 1936 to June 1958. It covers approximately 1,130 collections. The entries are divided into two sections. The first includes material acquired before 1957 and the second records acquisitions since that time. The arrangement of the entries is alphabetical by the name of the collection. Information given for each collection includes dates covered and the source from which each was acquired. The annotations include the following data: biographical information about the persons whose papers are included, discussion of the subject matter, and lists of correspondents.

A detailed index includes entries for names of persons and organizations, geographical areas, subjects, and types of records. Among the subjects covered are agriculture, churches, railroads, coal mining, roads, the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and printers and printing. The records of many counties and of a number of families are listed. Types of records included are accounts and account books, authors' letters and papers, broadsides, diaries and journals, herd books, lawyers' papers, maps, photocopies, photographs, and physicians' papers and records. Among the collections of papers listed are the papers of State Governors Arthur I. Boreman, Aretas B. Fleming, and Albert B. White, and U. S. Senators Johnson N. Cawden, Harley M. Kilgore, Henry G. Davis, and Stephen B. Elkins. Some of the larger collections are those of Ira E.

Robinson, member of the West Virginia Legislature and judge of the Supreme Court of the State, and Waitman T. Willey, one of the founders of the State.

While most of the groups of papers in the West Virginia Collection are primarily of State and regional significance, there are a number of letters from such persons as Abraham Lincoln, Grover Cleveland, James G. Blaine, Andrew Carnegie, James A. Garfield, Ulysses S. Grant, William Howard Taft, Theodore Roosevelt, and J. P. Morgan.

This guide will be indispensable to scholars of this region. Its compiler, Charles Shetler, and the staff of the West Virginia Collection are to be congratulated on their accomplishment.

JACQUELINE BULL

University of Kentucky Library

DOCUMENTARY PUBLICATIONS

American Jewry Documents Eighteenth Century; Primarily Hitherto Unpublished Manuscripts, ed. by Jacob Rader Marcus. (Publications of the American Jewish Archives no. III; Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College Press [distributed by University Publishers, Inc., 59 East 54th St., New York 22, N. Y.], 1959. xix, 492 p. \$8.50.)

While Dr. Marcus hopes the "amateur historian, the beginning student, and the nonprofessional reader" will use his latest work, the happy fact is that most professionals in those categories can also use it. Being professionals, they will of course have some reservations about it.

The editor has grouped his 196 rubrics (many containing more than one selection) into four sections: The Personal Life; The Religious Life; The General Community; and Commerce and Trade. Each item of the 196 is preceded by an "appropriate introduction" indicating the background, importance, relevance, or fascination of the document or documents that follow. Deliberately, each introduction stands alone and repeats, if necessary, data given in other such notes. As a result, one can dip into this source book at random and be fairly well oriented. On this count, the neophytes have Editor Marcus to thank.

The professionals, however, can grumble with some correctness that such editorial generosity, printed, let it be noted, in a larger point of type than the sources, has the unintended result of making Dr. Marcus' comments more attractive reading than his documents. The type size and the amplitude of these introductions make them overshadow the very texts they are intended to illuminate. But if the pros grumble, the neophytes are grateful.

Throughout this work any reader comes again and again to the realization that the Jew in eighteenth-century America — including Canada — differed from his contemporaries here only in being a Jew. Religion only made the difference, and it made less of a difference in the New World than in the Old, thanks to fewer restrictions here. That a Jewish slaveholder, for example, was pretty much like other colonial slaveholders the following extract from a letter

in Dr. Marcus' book by Meyer Josephson in Reading to Michael Gratz in Philadelphia, July 25, 1762, makes clear (the translation from the original Yiddish is Dr. Marcus'):

I also inform you that I may again sell my nigger wench at a profit. So if a ship with niggers should arrive, or a ship with [indentured] Germans, you will let me know, because I cannot manage without a servant. The wench I now have has two virtues, both bad ones. First, she is drunk all day, when she can get it, and second, she is mean, so that my wife cannot say a word to her. She is afraid of her. How did all this happen? A free nigger here wants to court her and to buy her from me. I don't want to give her away for less than 110 pounds, with her bastard, because I bought the bastard too. At present she costs me 90 pounds. So if I can make out with her, I think it is best to let her go and get another. So if you should have occasion to hear of a good nigger wench, or of a good servant, you will inform me.

Countless other sources could be adduced to prove the fact of Jewish kinship with the rest of eighteenth-century American society. It is a point Dr. Marcus first makes in his preface. Both beginners and veterans will admit that his texts bear him out.

Most of the time the amateurs have the better of the argument with the professionals. Designed for a specific audience, Dr. Marcus' book has met that need, and that audience will read it. So will the other audience, even as it hopes that Marcus will one day meet its professional needs by providing it with a guide to manuscripts for the study of the Jew in America. In short, the present collection has also served to whet the archival appetite.

MALCOLM FREIBERG

Massachusetts Historical Society

Texas Indian Papers, 1825-1843, ed. by Dorman H. Winfrey, James M. Day, George R. Nielsen, and Albert D. Pattillo. (Austin, Texas State Library, 1959. 298 p. \$5.25.)

This is the first volume of a proposed three-volume series bringing into print the papers and documents in a file in the Texas Archives labelled "Texas Indian Papers." This volume covers the period 1825-1843; the second volume, for which plans are already under way, will cover the years 1844 and 1845. A third volume would be necessary to cover the early years of Texas statehood. Texas historians will want this series completed in the fine style in which it has been started, and it is to be hoped that the Texas Library and Historical Commission will provide the necessary funds.

The present Archivist, Mr. Winfrey, who prepared this volume for publication, has had a strong background in historical editing, and the present volume speaks well of his experience and his ability. The book evidences painstaking transcription and proof reading. A comment, in no way derogatory, should be made: the editorial work is limited to transcription. No notes of explanation or identification accompany the documents. These would, in the main, have been superfluous and unnecessary because of the availability of the *Handbook of Texas* (published by the Texas State Historical Association in 1952). This historical encyclopedia, virtually unique among State histories,

makes minute identifications of personalities and events of Texas history unnecessary.

Nevertheless, there are a few places where editorial notation might have been used to advantage. For example, several of the items in *Texas Indian Papers* have been printed previously in other works, and at least one (no. 35) appeared elsewhere with a different date. Notes on these items might have been helpful to some scholar some day. Another refinement would have been notes indicating the physical appearance of the original with the customary manuscript symbols of ALS, LS, DS, etc., as well as the number of pages of the original.

But such things are minor, especially when one considers the limited budget on which the book was issued. The work itself is an important contribution to the published sources of Texas history now available to historians. These 217 numbered items, many two or three pages in length, give added perspective to the problems of the infant Republic. Of especial value are the many documents relating to the Cherokee and East Texas Indian situation. As with any bulk collection of papers, some of the items are far more interesting than others. The detailed report of J. C. Eldredge on a special Indian Council at Bird's Fort, on December 8, 1843, covering 25 printed pages, is of substantial worth to historians, as are a number of previously unpublished statements of Sam Houston and M. B. Lamar relative to Indian affairs.

The archival file here published is an artificial one, which grew undisciplined in the early years of the Texas archives as clerks, researchers, and custodians pulled documents and letters that related to Indian affairs from the files of other departments. There is no assurance, however, that the "Texas Indian Papers" include all the archival material relating to the subject; indeed, the published and unpublished files of other departments of the Texas government still hold many Indian items. Although one may deplore the lack of system that characterized the great Texas archives in the past, one can be grateful that steps like this are being taken to continue to make available in published form the documents of the Texas heritage.

The book itself is nicely printed and bound — a real credit to the Texas Library and Historical Commission. Although it is an insignificant matter, this reviewer must express an objection to the copyright notice. Other than Mr. Winfrey's two-page introduction, it seems unlikely that any of the material in the book is copyrightable. The availability of these manuscripts to the general public without restriction in the Texas archives is the equivalent of "general publication," and has placed them unequivocally in the public domain.

SEYMOUR V. CONNOR

Texas Technological College

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

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