

Reviews of Books

HENRY P. BEERS, *Editor*

National Archives

CONFERENCE REPORTS

Records Management; Proceedings at the Short Course in Records Management Conducted in Sydney by the Business Archives Council of Australia (New South Wales Branch), November, 1959, ed. by David S. Macmillan. (Business Archives Council of Australia, Publication no. 3, Sydney, New Century Press, 1960. 15 s.)

The papers presented at this three-day course fall into three categories: those providing an introduction to the records management field, those describing recent developments in data-processing equipment, and one (plus a supplement) relating to the handling of older or more traditional business archives. T. E. Sparrow of the Commonwealth Bank, who had studied records management in this country in 1958, covered the first topic in two papers, "An Introduction to Records Management" and "The Do's and Don'ts of Records Management." Two employees of I. B. M. of Australia (B. Z. de Ferranti, speaking on "Hardware for Processing Business Records," and D. S. Greatorex, on "Techniques in Information Handling") presented the second subject. David S. Macmillan, Archivist of the University of Sydney, who has contributed several worthwhile papers in this field, had the subject "The Organization of Old Business Records." H. G. McCredie's article, "Business Records Management and Accounting" (not part of the short course, but added as a supplement) considers the preservation of both the older type of business record and its modern equivalent from the point of view of the accountant.

A few of the statements that especially interested this reviewer may be noted. Sparrow makes the useful point that records are an integral part of the production process and that their real end-product is information. De Ferranti points out that data-processing machines, by calling attention to the exceptional, will help to emphasize the unique and important as opposed to the routine and recurrent. Macmillan gives several practical hints, such as that it is well to remember that early record books may sometimes have been used for different record purposes, one series beginning at the front of a record book and the other, on the blank reverse pages, starting from the back of a book. McCredie makes an interesting distinction between the terms "retention," applied to materials kept for immediate use, and "preservation," applied to records kept because of their historical or long-term significance. "It is, however, far more delightful," he writes, "to see an old record relating to an old Australian firm than it will be in 100 years time to look back on a record of 1960 consisting of 'a card with holes in it.'"

Summing up the course, one of the participants said that it had given those

who attended an awareness of the historical value of old business records as well as of the techniques of modern records management. The Business Archives Council of Australia is doing much in its various branches to promote the careful handling of business records, from creation to final preservation or disposition; and as yet, fortunately, the cleavage between current records management and archival management has not developed seriously there.

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TECHNICAL STUDIES

Preservation of Documents by Lamination, by William K. Wilson and B. W. Forshee. (National Bureau of Standards *Monograph* 5; Washington, Government Printing Office, 1959. iii, 20 p., graphs, tables. 20¢.)

This monograph will be of interest to the modern archivist inasmuch as it throws light in a simple and understandable language on the efficacy and limitations of the machine lamination process in use for archival preservation during the last 20 years or so. It has a wealth of information that may well inspire enthusiasts to experiment for new techniques or look for new materials for preservation and restoration. The field is still largely unexplored.

Observations on steps like deacidification of the document paper and reinforcement of the laminate with tissue paper confirm their use as also does the experience of workers in the field—the former to minimize degradation of paper as well as of cellulose acetate foil during the process, and the latter to add strength to the already weak document paper and to prevent shrinkage during storage. Some interesting observations to note are: (1) paper not acid free is affected during lamination, the degradation being proportional to the amount of acid present; (2) the strength of the bond increases with temperature, but unfortunately heating a film at a temperature high enough to evaporate the plasticizer may cause physical changes in the film; (3) though an unplasticized film is more stable, yet an archival film for maximum stability should have plasticizers that do not contribute to degradation, “in order to permit lamination to paper at a temperature low enough to keep degradation of the film and paper at a low level,” an antioxidant to prevent oxidative degradation and an acid acceptor “like magnesium acetate to suppress the degrading effect of sulphuric acid on the film which may be there as an impurity during manufacture as well as from atmospheric contamination”—it is doubtful if any of the films used during the last 20 years meet this requirement—and (4) “a softening temperature of 114° C is desirable for an archival film.”

Section 7 is devoted to special laminating methods: (1) “solvent lamination” technique, which compares favorably with the machine method using heat and pressure, should be attractive to an operator who cannot justify the cost of a laminating press, and (2) mounting on a nonwoven fabric using an adhesive necessitates consideration of stability of the adhesive and the nonwoven fabric. In other words, if a suitable adhesive can be found, the mounting of documents written on one side only may well prove to be an ideal method of restor-

ation. Solvent lamination is one such technique. In the National Archives of India rolls 30 to 40 feet long have been mounted on fine "malmal" by this process without affecting any cuts or joints in the rolls. Of the other films studied, polyethylene terephthalate has the best physical properties for archival purposes; thinner film equals the performance of acetate foil and tissue, while a thicker film equals that of cloth reinforcement. But a problem is its removal "as probability of damage to the document during removal is much greater than with cellulose acetate foil."

The requirements of an ideal film are enumerated, and on the basis of the data obtained during this study specifications have been given with the suggestion that they "always be kept as flexible as possible in order to take advantage of new development" and experience. Methods for testing the physical properties of cellulose acetate film have been detailed. New tests described are for edge tear, intrinsic fluidity (numerical value of which increases with degradation), and accelerated aging at 124° C. in flowing moist oxygen. How accurate a criterion of degradation this new technique of aging will be in comparison to baking at 100° C. at 72 hours (which has been found to be equivalent to 25 years of normal storage) is difficult to say at present because the higher temperature, unlike natural aging, may induce a breakdown in the cellulose content of the paper. The effect of light on the laminate has not been studied, presumably because of the complicated nature of the problem.

Y. P. KATHPALIA

National Archives of India

Preliminary Report on Business Reporting Requirements of the Federal Government. Subcommittee on Census and Government Statistics, House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, 86th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, 1959. 76 p., appendixes.)

The reports that private industry must prepare for the Federal Government were the subject of a special study by one of the Second Hoover Commission Task Forces in 1955. Anyone interested in what has happened to the 169 reports that were nominated for oblivion by the Commission will find the answer in one of the appendixes of this Congressional publication. (Most of the reports are still being made.)

This preliminary report outlines the Federal statistical system, wherein over 60 bureaus, services, commissioners, administrations, boards, and other agencies have statutory authority to collect data from the public. Much of this material on prices, trends, productivity, and population has great value to the businessman as well as to his Government. Concern for the businessman, however, led Congress in 1942 to give authority to the Bureau of the Budget to coordinate and control as best it could the Federal requirements in this area.

The committee points up a fact, frequently overlooked, that many Federal agencies, though not considered statistical, nevertheless collect data from the public for administrative, regulatory, and operating purposes. As a matter of fact only 20% of the paperwork required of businesses is for statistical purposes.

This report abounds in excellent charts and case studies, which depict the

tremendous and expensive burden that Federally required reports impose upon business—at a much greater cost to business than to the agencies compiling the data. As one example, a small Pennsylvania manufacturing company, which in 1919 had submitted 6 reports, in 1951 was preparing 1,523.

The committee found the reports required of the railroads so great that it is undertaking a special study of that area. It is also concentrating on the effect of burdensome reporting on small business and recommends that this group have better representation in the coordinating and control structure. Another recommendation is that, before new reporting requirements are approved, estimates be made of the cost to respondents.

The case studies point up the need to look into the many cases of overlapping forms and those requiring the collection of similar and partially duplicate information. Nevertheless it would be easy for the records manager to deduce that the need is not so much to reduce the kinds of information being gathered, but rather to improve the recordkeeping and reporting machinery so that information can be collected more easily and at greatly reduced cost to the American economy.

EVERETT O. ALLDREDGE

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MANUALS

North Carolina. State Department of Archives and History. *The County Records Manual*, ed. by H. G. Jones and A. M. Patterson. (Raleigh, N. C., 1960. iv, 73 p., appendix.)

The Department of Archives and History has for a number of years been assisting State agencies in the preparation of retention schedules. Upon request, it has performed a similar service for the county offices. With this background of experience and with the advice and assistance of an advisory group composed largely of local officials, the editors have prepared this *Manual*, which "is designed to serve as a guide for county officials in North Carolina in matters pertaining to the retention and disposal of public records in their custody."

The *Manual* begins with a general discussion of the problems of preserving public records, especially problems arising from a constant increase in records produced. The procedures for transferring county records of historical value to the State Archives and for destroying those that are useless are described. Burial—presumably with solemn obsequies—is listed along with burning, shredding, and pulping as an effective means of destruction.

Courthouse fires alone, not to mention other losses, have destroyed valuable records in one-third of the counties in North Carolina. The State legislature in 1959 authorized an extensive program of inventorying, repairing, and microfilming county records to be carried out by the Department. The inventories will include recommendations on how long each series should be preserved. Records of permanent value will be microfilmed and security copies of the film will be stored in two separate depositories. Those that are too badly deteriorated to be microfilmed without damage will be repaired at no cost to the

county. Record custodians are authorized to transfer original records of permanent value to the State Archives and receive microfilm in exchange. It is estimated that the program will be completed in seven years.

The greater part of the *Manual* is devoted to schedules for the retention and disposal of the records of various county officers such as the board of county commissioners, the clerk of the superior court, and the register of deeds. Sample entries are:

*41. Divorces, Records of

Preserve permanently. After 60 years (20 years if microfilmed) may be transferred to State Archives.

79. Jury Tickets

Retain 5 years, or until audited, then may be destroyed.

It is emphasized that these are recommendations only and that custodians must proceed in the manner prescribed by law before destroying records. Record series selected for microfilming are identified by asterisks.

The laws affecting county records are reproduced in the appendix.

The editors of this *Manual* are to be commended for an imaginative effort to solve a difficult problem. The idea of preparing general schedules for county records certainly merits the attention of archivists and records managers in other States. Obviously the schedules in this *Manual* will not be directly applicable but will have to be modified and adapted. They should, however, offer valuable ideas and suggestions in view of the basic similarity of many county records.

GUST SKORDAS

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Indexes and Indexing; Guide to the Indexing of Books, and Collections of Books, Periodicals, Music, Gramophone Records, Films and Other Material, With a Reference Section and Suggestions for Further Reading, by Robert L. Collison. (2d ed.; New York, John de Graff, Inc., 1959. 200 p. \$4.50.)

The reviewer had occasion a few years ago, in the course of examining several books on indexing, to read the first (1953) edition of this book. She considered it then the most rewarding practical work in the field, aside from the long-recognized standard manual, Marion Thorne Wheeler's *New York State Library Indexing; Principles, Rules and Examples* (5th ed., 1957). The second edition of Collison's work is even more rewarding because of its increased coverage; in fact the reviewer considers it the best existing introduction to all phases of indexing. It is concise in wording, comprehensive in scope, and exceptionally readable because of its stimulating, flowing style, punctuated with pertinent and sometimes humorous quotations that bring a literary flavor to the development of the subject.

The author is a Fellow of the Library Association (British) and a founding member of the Society of Indexers (established in London in 1957). Since the first edition of the book, as he states, there have been great and important developments in the complex field of modern indexing. Consequently the new

dition contains several new chapters and an expansion of some former ones. The introductory pages point out the all too often underestimated value of carefully prepared indexes and give something of the history of indexing, mainly over the past two centuries. There are three main divisions. "Part One: The Indexing of Books" describes in lucid detail general principles of indexing and gives special attention to difficulties that arise in handling subject headings, personal and place names, foreign names, names of government and other organizations, alphabetizing, cross-references, and other puzzling matters. Three new chapters deal with hints for speed in indexing, the application of certain algebraic laws to cross-referencing between subjects on different levels of relationship, and fees for indexing. "Part Two: Wider Indexing" contains, in addition to the former chapters on indexing private correspondence, photographs, music and recordings, local archives, periodicals, and bibliographies, five new chapters on indexing news-film events, sound effects accompanying films, and business records, and on recent attempts to solve the problem of massive indexing by means of "coordinate" and "mechanized" indexing methods, which are not yet fully developed but are very promising. "Part Three: Reference Section" includes suggestions for handling proof, summaries of rules for indexers, evaluated references for further reading, and a new chapter giving a specimen examination for indexers. An appendix gives the constitution and rules for the aforementioned Society of Indexers. The book ends with an excellent seven-page index.

MARGARET E. FLORY

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DESCRIPTIONS OF RECORDS

Manuscript Issue; Local History and Manuscript Collections in Illinois. (*Illinois Libraries*, 40: 275-400, Apr. 1958; Springfield, Ill., 1958.)

This special issue of *Illinois Libraries*, in a very real sense, was inspired by the former State Archivist of Illinois, Margaret Cross Norton, and is dedicated to her. The work gives a bird's-eye view of manuscript treasures in the State of Illinois and shows where they are deposited. It is an important landmark in the current movement for a better control over our nation's manuscripts.

The issue is divided into two sections. The first and larger contains separately signed articles summarizing the holdings of ten major manuscript depositories in the State, five of which are college or university depositories. These articles are highly informative and often contain references to general guides or checklists to the collections. Of special archival interest is the article on the record holdings of the Illinois State Archives. Most of the subheadings in this article identify records of the various departments of the State government. One subheading relates to county records. It identifies records (or microfilms of them) relating to the settlements before the organization of Illinois as a Territory, especially the old French settlements. The articles are not indexed. We think, however, that the inclusion of the addresses of the ten depositories would have been worth while.

The second section of the issue was prepared from the replies to question-

naires sent to the smaller college and university libraries, public libraries, special libraries, and private collectors. It consists principally of lists of the holdings. The Madison County Historical Society has impressive holdings; but it is the only county historical society included. The listing of the holdings of important private collectors is an interesting and valuable feature. An alphabetical listing of the names of the individual collections found in the second section serves as an important key to the use of research materials.

A primary objective of the issue was to stimulate interest in local history, although the publication does not pretend to cover the important municipal and county archives. The publication does more than aid the local historian; it calls attention to the location of items that originated outside the State, such as medieval documents, literary manuscripts of H. G. Wells and other authors, documents relating to Simón Bolívar and Napoleon Bonaparte, war crimes trial documents of World War II, and autograph letters of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence.

MEREDITH B. COLKET

Western Reserve Historical Society

United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Edward Woozley, Director. *The Public Land Records . . . Footnotes to American History*. ([Washington], Government Printing Office, 1959. Unpagged sketches, maps, photographs and reproductions of documents.)

The largest corpus of manuscript material in the United States, if not in the world, surely must be the voluminous records of the old General Land Office, now the Bureau of Land Management. The 12,000 volumes of patents, 6,000 volumes of surveys, 135,000 township plats (themselves enormously detailed), 6,750 volumes of tract books, 10,000,000 case records (some very complex and heavily documented), and countless other correspondence together constitute such a formidable source group as to frighten off young scholars. Yet, until they have been analyzed and scores of economic historians have made elaborate calculations and computations from research in them—as hosts of historians have investigated the Lincoln correspondence or the papers of the State Department—we shall have no adequate understanding of the way our nation was made.

If these records have been largely neglected by historians, they have been worked over countless times by lawyers; abstractors; representatives of title, oil, copper mining, lumber, cattle, real estate and investment companies; and hordes of settlers, land lookers, speculators, and town promoters—not to mention Government employees. This constant use has brought the records to the point of destruction. Fading ink, frayed pages, and careless custodians and public users have combined with the ravages of time to make necessary an enormous copying and synthesizing program that will ultimately have all the essential information on new and better organized records than the originals. The Bureau of Land Management must be commended for undertaking such a necessary enterprise, graphically described in this brochure. Unfortunately, the historian who may want to determine, for example, the amount and loca-

tion of land entries an individual made at a certain office, or who may be searching for information concerning the amount of land acquired respectively by small entymen-farmers and by speculators and large scale developers will

to France and Adams minister to Great Britain from 1784 to 1789, and during the 1790's while the two were closely associated in the work of the new Federal Government—Adams as Vice President and President and Jefferson as Secretary of State and Vice President. As members of rival political factions they became estranged at the end of the Adams administration in 1801 and were not reconciled until 1812, when a second period of their correspondence began and continued during their long years of retirement. Jefferson first met Abigail Adams in Paris in 1784 and corresponded with her after the Adamses had moved to London. She, however, was more deeply and permanently aggrieved than her husband at the political revolution of 1801 and after this point, except for a brief interlude in 1804, never resumed her correspondence with Jefferson on any sustained basis, even after the two men were reconciled in 1812.

A grand total of 380 letters appears in this edition: 189 from Adams to Jefferson, 140 from Jefferson to Adams, 24 from Jefferson to Abigail Adams, and 27 from her to Jefferson. The letters are arranged and printed chronologically but are grouped in chapters, for each of which the editor has provided an introduction explaining the situation of the writers at the particular period and placing within their proper setting the events and issues to which the letters refer. There is also a lengthy introduction to the work as a whole, evaluating the overall significance of the correspondence and describing the main events in the lives of Jefferson and the Adamses as these were related to one another and to the history of the period in which they lived. Thoroughness without pedantry and completeness without ostentation characterize the editor's work in the preparation of this edition. It might well serve as a model for other projects of a similar nature.

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Cedularios de la Monarquía Española relativos a la Provincia de Venezuela (1529-1552), estudio preliminar de Enrique Otte, tomos 1-2. (Caracas, Edición de la Fundación John Boulton y de la Fundación Eugenio Mendoza, 1959. xcii, 272, 356 p., illus.)

These two volumes present in printed form the contents of two sixteenth-century Spanish manuscript collections of royal despatches (*cedulas*) relating to the province of Venezuela. The first manuscript volume (158 folios), containing 193 documents of the years 1529 to 1535, is deposited in the British Museum (MSS/Ad. 24, 906). The second (190 folios), comprising 231 records of the years 1535 to 1552, is found in the Archive of the Indies at Seville (Section 5, Caracas *legajo* 1).

Since the manuscripts have no summaries of the subject matter of each despatch, such summaries have been provided in the index-list at the end of each printed volume, which also indicates the number given to the document and its date. These reveal the many matters that came to the attention of the Spanish sovereigns, involving decisions regarding the procedures to be carried out by the royal representatives and others engaged in the activities of the colony.

Each volume contains a facsimile of a page of the corresponding manuscript. These show the necessity for expert paleographic knowledge of sixteenth-century Spanish handwriting in order to edit the materials. It appears that the transcription has been carefully executed and that the printed volumes make available to scholars a correct reading of the documents.

To indicate the character and nature of the subjects treated, there is an extensive introduction (vol. I, p. i-xcii), which is a summary of the types of problems that came to the attention of the monarch. It is organized under the following headings: A. The conquest and settlement of Venezuela, subdivided into the constitution of the rights, laws, and obligations, and the rewards of colonization. B. The defense of Venezuela. C. Ecclesiastical administration. D. The Royal Treasury. In the treatment specific references are made to the pertinent despatches. This introduction, together with the indexes, serves to give a good picture of the activity of the Spanish crown with respect to the administration of Venezuela during its early years.

The publication of these volumes is the joint effort of the John Boulton Foundation and the Eugenio Mendoza Foundation, both devoted to the development and promotion of historical activities in Venezuela. These volumes, because of their character and the nature of their editing, are a valuable contribution to Venezuelan historiography and will be most useful to scholars interested in the early years of that Spanish colony.

ROSCOE R. HILL

Washington, D. C.

Acotaciones Bolivarianas: Decretos marginales del Libertador (1813-1830)
ed. by Manuel Perez Vila. (Caracas, Fundación John Boulton, 1960. xx+323 p., illus.)

In connection with the celebration of the sesquicentennial of the independence of Venezuela from Spain, many important volumes regarding the period of independence are being published in that country. The John Boulton Foundation has prepared this one containing a collection of documents that passed through the hands of Simón Bolívar. They consist of petitions and requests that came to him during the years 1813 to 1830, when he was the leader of the movement for independence. It should be observed that the majority of the documents are of the years 1818-1821.

The documents selected for this volume have the special feature that on the margin there is written the decision reached by Bolívar, after the secretary read it to him, which bears his signature. Thus these marginal notes serve to reveal the thinking and the attitude of Bolívar on the many problems that were presented to him by individuals—both high and low—communities, and authorities that were engaged in the movement for independence. The requests relate to all kinds of subjects. As Bolívar went through the country

the inhabitants of the various regions presented petitions to him in which they requested a favor, a promotion, a job, a gift, or asked for justice, or set forth the necessities of their community. The native and the landholder, the official and the soldier, the slave and the farmer, the widow and the orphan, the artisan and the merchant,

the magistrate and the functionary, the priest and the teacher, the prisoner and the needy person, all addressed themselves to him in search of direction, aid, counsel or justice.

The documents are arranged chronologically by the date of Bolívar's signature. Each has a heading indicating the name of the petitioner and the subject matter. The volume serves to present a special feature of the thinking and activity of Bolívar and thus is a valuable contribution to Venezuelan historiography. The John Boulton Foundation has rendered a distinct service to the celebration of the sesquicentennial of the movement for independence.

ROSCOE R. HILL

Washington, D. C.

The Papers of Lucullus Virgil McWhorter, comp. by Nelson A. Ault. ([Pullman, Wash.], Friends of the Library, Washington State University, 1959. 144 p., illus. \$2 to Friends of the Library, \$3 to nonmembers.)

Lucullus Virgil McWhorter (1860-1944), native of the frontier country of West Virginia, was a successful livestock farmer in that State and in Ohio before he settled on a ranch near North Yakima, Washington, in 1903. He was also a self-trained archeologist, ethnologist, student of Indian cultures, and writer, who amassed a collection of several hundred thousand pieces of manuscript, pictorial, and printed material reflecting these interests. Particularly large amounts of material concerned his study of the Nez Percé Indian War of 1877 and his efforts to preserve valuable land and water rights of the Yakima Indians.

As the compiler points out in an informative introduction, Mr. McWhorter failed to assemble or arrange the materials in a systematic way, perhaps because of his lack of formal training. After his death a son, Virgil O. McWhorter, brought together the whole, keeping the arrangement his father had given the materials, and presented the collection to the State College of Washington Library. The library also preserved this arrangement and assigned numbers—from 1 to 1,643—to items that may consist of a single piece, a folder of correspondence and clippings, or an envelope filled with photographs.

Mr. Ault's task of producing a guide to this mass within the framework of the numbering system was obviously not easy. He has attempted to describe "as many items as reasonable considerations of space will permit" by dividing the numbered sequence into 29 sections that contain materials of like form or related subject matter, writing an introductory headnote to each section and then describing all or selected parts of each item in its numerical order. He has deviated from this pattern only in treating Mr. McWhorter's library, which forms three sections; within each of these he has rearranged and listed the items alphabetically by author, placing the library's item number in brackets at the end of each entry. A name and subject index to all but the library sections is keyed to the item numbers.

Surely this calendar would be easier to use if the names of persons mentioned within a given item had been presented in alphabetical order. If the number of pieces as well as the number of pages within an item had been indicated, the

user could know what proportion of the material has been described in detail. The guide will nevertheless be of real assistance to those who consult the McWhorter collection.

DOROTHY S. EATON

*Manuscript Division
Library of Congress*

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