

Reviews of Books

HENRY P. BEERS, *Editor*

National Archives

FINDING AIDS

A Guide to Archives and Manuscripts in the United States, comp. for the National Historical Publications Commission, ed. by Philip M. Hamer. (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961. xxiii, 775 p. \$12.50.)

From time to time in the last 40 years librarians and scholars have had occasion to refer to two small, red-covered handbooks published by the Library of Congress: *Check List of Collections of Personal Papers in Historical Societies, University and Public Libraries and Other Learned Institutions in the United States* (1918) and *Manuscripts in Public and Private Collections in the United States* (1924). These were valuable as the only tools of their kind, but as time passed they grew more and more inadequate because of further acquisitions of manuscripts by almost all the institutions represented in the original survey and because of the appearance of new collecting agencies. Not until this year, however, has a new guide been provided, and appropriately by the National Historical Publications Commission.

It is the business of the Commission to plan and recommend publications of historical manuscripts and archives, but being without funds it has been able to do little except add its applause to publication plans announced by other agencies, State and private, and to assist in such publications by finding materials in the National Archives and the Library of Congress. This compendium, therefore, is all the more welcome as a harbinger of what the Commission may be able to do itself. Since it is national in scope, the subject matter is most proper for a Federal agency to sponsor.

The executive director of the Commission, Philip M. Hamer, served as editor. He obtained the cooperation of libraries, archives, museums, colleges, historical societies, and business corporations in reporting their holdings of manuscript collections. It was a tremendous ingathering of compressed information, which was then compiled in uniform style of entry, with references to published catalogs and lists. The institutions have been arranged alphabetically by State (including Puerto Rico and the Canal Zone) and thereunder by city. An enormous index of names of collections, writers, and institutions makes possible the finding of some group of manuscripts for almost any fairly prominent individual. It is not so detailed as a union catalog, of course, but until such a tool is available this *Guide* will do very well. It is in part an amalgamation of the guides of particular institutions and in part a coverage of depositories that have published no manuals. About 1,300 depositories are represented, contrasted with 130 in the 1924 Library of Congress handbook. More than 20,000 collections are mentioned.

Intensive staff work made possible the gathering and editing of the information needed. The old Historical Records Survey guides for the 17 States that published them were utilized. The initial decision to hold the *Guide* to a single volume was judicious, even though it kept all entries brief. This *Guide* is a finding list, a beginning point.

There are some interesting revelations about size and variety of holdings in given institutions, insofar as they may be measured, perhaps inaccurately, by the length of the descriptions. As was to be expected, the Library of Congress fills the most space, taking up 81 columns. Second is Yale University Library with 27 columns. But third is the University of North Carolina Library with 23 columns, followed closely by the New York Public Library, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and the Huntington Library. At least the *Guide* makes clear that American scholarship does not suffer from a concentration of source materials.

Dr. Hamer and the Commission are to be congratulated for providing scholars and librarians with a broad survey of the riches in manuscript form that may be found in hundreds of depositories scattered across the country. It fills a distinct need, and its extensive use is assured.

HOWARD H. PECKHAM

William L. Clements Library

Index to the Abraham Lincoln Papers. (Library of Congress, *Presidents' Papers Index Series*. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1960. x, 124 p. \$1.)

This useful index is the fruit of Public Law 85-147 (Aug. 16, 1957), which directed the Library of Congress to index (in addition to arranging and microfilming) the papers of 23 Presidents in its possession. The manuscripts popularly known as the Robert Todd Lincoln collection, which were microfilmed and opened to the public in 1947, have been released in a reedited form to include certain additional letters and previously omitted notations and endorsements, as of December 1959. This augmented collection, consisting of 14,724 pieces contained in 194 volumes and 3 boxes, is available on 97 microfilm spools. It can be purchased in this form (by writing to the Chief, Photoduplication Division, Library of Congress, Washington 25, D.C.) for \$765. Any single reel, covering a period specified in the present *Index*, sells separately for approximately \$8.

This *Index* is arranged alphabetically by the name of the writer or recipient with whom Lincoln was in correspondence and is further arranged under each such name chronologically. Items are listed under both names if third parties were the correspondents. The subject is indicated only for such documents as messages to Congress listed under Lincoln's own name. The index, the work of Fred Shelley (head of the Presidents' Papers Index Section), Elizabeth M. Thomas (the editor), and numerous other members of that section (none of whose names, regrettably, are listed in the present publication), was done from key-punched cards that were sorted and printed mechanically. The index itself is preceded by a brief but informative introduction that provides an ex-

cellent provenance of the papers, a select bibliography, and a succinct set of instructions for the use of the index. It should be emphasized that it is limited to the Robert Todd Lincoln collection and does not include Lincoln letters in the Herndon-Weik collection and some 30 or more other collections in the Library that include some Lincoln letters. Nor does it include any Lincoln materials in the National Archives and more than a hundred other repositories. For these, Lincoln scholars will need still to turn to Roy P. Basler, Marion Dolores Pratt, and Lloyd A. Dunlap, *Index to the Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (Rutgers University Press, 1955). But in itself the Library's *Index* is an addition of great value and convenience to the growing number of tools available to the student of American history.

WOOD GRAY

George Washington University

Inventaire analytique de la correspondance générale avec les colonies. Départ: Série B (déposée aux Archives Nationales). I. Registres 1 à 37 (1654-1715), par Étienne Taillemite. (Paris, Ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer, Service des Archives, 1959. viii, 312 p. Index des noms propres.)

The documents inventoried in this work are better known as Series B, Archives des Colonies. They consist of copies of letters, memoranda, commissions, and orders concerning the administration of French colonies. While most of these communications were sent to the governors and intendants, some were sent to officers in France, particularly in the ports, and to private persons both in France and in the colonies. In this series, more than anywhere else, one can see the methods and the temper of French colonial administration.

This volume, limited to the first 37 registers of the series, stops with the death of Louis XIV. Although the dates given are 1654-1715, there exist but a few documents before 1669. There were at one time two volumes preceding what is now volume 1, but they have long since disappeared.

In the introduction and the *avant-propos* are general information about the usefulness of the documents and some details about their arrangement. The inventory gives a brief summary of each document, including folio, date, correspondent, nature, and subject. The index, which occupies over 40 pages and contains nearly 3,000 entries, is restricted to names of companies, councils, and persons. But for every person mentioned in the text, there is a word of identification or a short biography.

Two factors mitigate against easy use of the index. First, it refers to pages of the text, and the reader has to scan two columns of dense type to find the name he wants. Numbering by columns would have reduced his work by half. Second, there are no cross-references in the index and one must sometimes look in several places to find a particular name. The uncertain spelling of the names of the period adds to the difficulty. For example, one finds Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de La Vérendrye under Varennes de la Véranderie (Pierre Gaultier de), but Christophe du Frost de La Jemeraye under La Gemmeray (Christophe du Frost de).

Historians of New France (Louisiana and Newfoundland included) will

still find useful Miss Surrey's calendar for the Mississippi Valley and E. Richard's inventory published in 1899 as a supplement to the Canadian Archives report. Richard's report could well be consulted in conjunction with this inventory; it contains usually a more detailed description of the documents but does not always include the communications to administrators in France. It should also be noted that Richard's folios do not always coincide with those indicated in this work; for example, in register 19, Richard's folio 1 is now folio 13, and in register 33, Richard's folio 1 is now folio 228. For those engaged in the study of the West and East Indies, this book will fill a distinct need.

BERNARD WEILBRENNER

Public Archives of Canada

Repertorio bibliográfico de los archivos mexicanos y de los europeos y norteamericanos de interés para la historia de México, por Agustín Millares Carlo. (México, Biblioteca Nacional de México, Instituto Bibliográfico Mexicano, 1959. xxiv, 366 p.)

Tal como su título indica, y como su autor explica en el prólogo este nuevo libro del prof. Millares Carlo es de carácter predominantemente bibliográfico. Se trata de dar a conocer en forma sistemática y ordenada los libros y artículos publicados sobre archivos y otros repositorios de fuentes manuscritas, que poseen documentación de interés para la historia de México. Después de unas páginas dedicadas a señalar ciertas obras de alcance general, se ocupa el autor de los archivos y bibliotecas europeas, excepto las de España, a la que dedica a continuación un largo capítulo de acuerdo con la importancia que las bibliotecas y archivos de España tienen para la historia de México. Sigue un capítulo consagrado a los Estados Unidos y por último registra minuciosamente la bibliografía existente sobre los archivos y colecciones manuscritas de México. Dentro de esta distribución, se ha adoptado el orden alfabético de lugares. En total, son 1,047 los trabajos registrados en la obra, la cual se cierra con un buen índice alfabético.

El *Repertorio* del prof. Millares Carlo encierra copiosa información para el investigador de la historia mexicana, y aun de otros países americanos y europeos. Pero debe tenerse bien presente lo que escribe el autor sobre el alcance de su obra:

No ha sido nuestro propósito presentar los resultados de una investigación directa en dichos centros [archivos mexicanos y de interés para la historia de México] por más que consideremos esta tarea de gran importancia y de utilidad y urgencia manifiestas; quedan, por lo tanto, fuera del marco de nuestra bibliografía todos aquellos establecimientos que no han sido objeto de estudios publicados.

De acuerdo con este criterio, se nos ofrece sólo información entresacada de las obras y artículos que se van reseñando, con el inconveniente inevitable de que tal información aparece fragmentada y dispersa. Por otra parte, el carácter preferentemente bibliográfico de la obra, mientras por una parte limita el número de los centros tomados en consideración, obliga por otra parte a mencionar escritos que encierran poco valor como guías de una futura investigación; o que incluso resultan inútiles, por haber cambiado desde su publicación el estado de

los archivos y aun desaparecido algunos de estos. En pocas palabras, no se trata de una guía de archivos sino de una bibliografía sobre archivos.

Como trabajo bibliográfico, brillan en él la erudición y la maestría a que nos tiene acostumbrados el prof. Millares Carlo. Creo que será muy difícil acrecentar el número de artículos reunidos. Sin embargo no encuentro mencionadas la *Guide to the Manuscripts Materials for the History of the United States to 1783, in the British Museum, in Minor London Archives, and in the Libraries of Oxford and Cambridge*, by Charles M. Andrews and Frances G. Davenport, ni la *Guide to the Materials in London Archives for the History of the United States Since 1783*, by Charles O. Paullin and Frederic L. Paxson, ambas publicadas por la Carnegie Institution of Washington. Estas dos obras registran también documentos que interesan a la historia de México.

LINO G. CANEDO, O. F. M.

Academy of American Franciscan History
Washington, D. C.

Catalogue of Nuremberg Documents. ([London], Wiener Library, Jan. 1961. 139 p. Processed.)

The Wiener Library (4 Devonshire Street, London, W. 1), one of the outstanding libraries in the field of contemporary history with special stress on the Hitler period and the Jewish problem, has compiled and issued in a limited edition this indispensable instrument for scholars who want to make use of prosecution and defense documentary and testimonial evidence in the Nuremberg war crimes trials.

The *Catalogue* covers both the International Military Tribunal and the 12 cases of the so-called "subsequent proceedings." It will be supplemented by the following other devices for facilitating research in the Nuremberg documentation: (1) a table correlating document numbers and the document books in which they are contained; (2) a list of all documents published in the "Trials of War Criminals" series ("green volumes"), with volume and page references; and (3) a list of all Nuremberg documents dealing directly with the Jewish question. A name and subject index to a collection of about 4,500 interrogation summaries in the possession of the library can also be expected.

Tests at random have revealed a high degree of accuracy; errors in the lists of names are remarkably small. Lee J. Kahn, the responsible member of the library staff, and his assistants must be congratulated on their achievement.

Fritz T. Epstein

Bad Godesberg

DOCUMENTARY PUBLICATIONS

The Windsor Border Region, Canada's Southernmost Frontier; a Collection of Documents, ed. by Ernest J. Lajeunesse, C. S. B. (The Champlain Society, *Ontario Series*, IV; Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1960. cxxix, 374 p., illus., appendixes. \$5.)

One of a series of volumes sponsored by the Ontario Government, this compilation contains documents relating to the settlement of the Canadian side of

the Detroit River in the eighteenth century. An introduction not only sets the stage but makes a contribution to the history of the region. It contains chapters relating to exploration, the founding of Detroit and the Huron Mission at L'Assomption, the settlement on the south shore, the pioneer settlers and their farms, government and law, religion and education, American loyalists and land boards, and the development of Sandwich and Amherstburg.

The documents that follow are drawn from French and British sources and are arranged chronologically in chapters corresponding to the introduction, to which they are keyed by symbols. Some of the documents are from local sources such as the notarial records of Detroit, the registers of Ste. Anne's Church of Detroit, and the registers and other records of the Huron Mission. Others are from French and British records and transcripts in the Public Archives of Canada, documents in the Department of Public Records and Archives of Ontario, the Archives of the Archbishopric of Quebec, and papers of officials and merchants. Documents in French and Latin from published sources are presented without change; others are translated literally by the compiler, who is a professor of French at Assumption University of Windsor. The collection includes correspondence, reports, instructions, censuses, land grants with lists, contracts with *voyageurs*, extracts from journals, diaries, church registers, and the account book of the Huron Mission.

The third part of the volume is composed of the original texts of French and Latin documents, lists of officials, genealogies, abstracts from Detroit notarial records, a summary of marriages recorded in the parish of Assumption, 1760-81, *marguilliers* of that parish, and lists of holders of farm lots in Essex County about 1794. A number of maps taken principally from archival sources, pictures, and sketches are worthwhile additions to the text. A brief bibliography and an unanalytical index complete the work.

The volume presents a skillfully chosen and well rounded collection of documents that is of great value for local history and genealogy. It demonstrates the need for rewriting the eighteenth-century history of the region. Since the officials of this area were at Detroit until 1796, many of the documents contain information on that town. A greater effort might have been made to select unpublished documents; those already in print could have been mentioned in footnotes to related documents. The annotations are largely limited to identifications of persons and places. It may be mentioned that two words on p. lxxxiii are usually rendered as Oswegatchie and Lunenburg. Other censuses of Detroit for 1760 and 1765 in the Library of Congress might have been included. In format and typography this volume is a fine product.

HENRY P. BEERS

National Archives

MANUALS

A Guide to the Care and Administration of Manuscripts, by Lucile Kane (*Bulletins* of the American Association for State and Local History, vol. 2, no. 11; Madison, 1960. P. 333-388, illus. \$1.25.)

Miss Kane, curator of manuscripts in the Minnesota Historical Society,

brings together a description of some of the routines of her institution, combined with a survey of accepted practices in manuscript care as they have been described in the literature of the past two decades.

In 6 units of from 4 to 14 pages each, the author gives both general and specific guidance in the handling of collections and single items from the time they are acquired until they are shelved for reader use. The recommended progression of processing routines may be seen in the chapter headings: "Establishing the First Controls," "Organizing the Collection," "Sorting," "Evaluation," "Preservation," and "Cataloging." Under each topic Miss Kane describes the basic administrative, processing, and cataloging controls that should be imposed on every collection. She gives practical suggestions on accessioning; determination of the catalogable unit; the arrangement of materials in complex collections; evaluation of material for retention or disposal; distribution of non-manuscript materials; cleaning, repairing, and housekeeping techniques; and the development of reference tools. The reporting requirements of the National Union Catalog of Manuscripts are set forth. There is a center spread of four pages of photographs of processing and preservation equipment. A bibliography of about a hundred titles (over half of which appeared in the 1950's) provides sources for further reading and study.

This *Guide* will be especially valuable as a source of workable routines for fledgling manuscript centers. While most depositories have met, in one way or another, the problems and solutions offered here, the manual offers standards by which existing routines in any historical manuscript agency can be evaluated.

CHARLES SHETLER

West Virginia University Library

A Guide to Efficient Filing [by a committee of records managers of Pennsylvania agencies]. ([Harrisburg, Pa.], Governor's Office of Administration, [1960]. 61 p., illus. Processed.)

This guide was prepared by a four-member committee from Pennsylvania State government agencies, representing skills in records management, administrative services, and management analysis. It was devised primarily for the use of State agency personnel concerned with records management and the supervision of filing work and secondarily for the use of file clerks themselves.

The guide covers the following topics: (1) the use of files and the scope of filing work; (2) planning and installing filing systems; (3) the advantages and disadvantages of centralized files; (4) filing equipment and supplies; (5) training file clerks; (6) preparing records for filing; (7) filing records; (8) aids to filing; (9) finding, issuing, and following up on records; and (10) retaining and disposing of records. The language used is simple, direct, and easy to understand. Suggestions on matters to be considered in selecting and installing a filing system are good, but more material in this area would be helpful. The ideas for on-the-job training of file clerks provide a commonsense approach.

The implied suggestion that the subject-numeric system be used for general files is in line with acceptable practices in the field. The sample subject-numeric

classification outline would be improved by the inclusion of a description of the records to be filed under each major subject. It would be improved also by an explanation that file material may be marked for filing by using abbreviations or symbols instead of written-out subject captions. Although the filing rules and practices recommended are generally good, a few are questionable—for instance, time-stamping every record received for filing, and separately typing cross-reference and tickler sheets pertaining to the same record. The illustrations are helpful in understanding the descriptive material, but more are needed.

A glossary adds greatly to the value of the guide.

FRENCH M. CLEVINGER, JR.

*Office of Records Management
National Archives and Records Service*

Plain Letters; the Secret of Successful Business Writing, by Mona Sheppard.
(New York, Simon and Schuster, 1960. xiii, 305 p. \$4.50.)

The *New Yorker* often includes in its pages a special department entitled "Letters We Didn't Finish Reading," which reprints the first few lines of business letters too uninteresting to be read to the end. The authors of such letters could learn much from Mona Sheppard's new book, *Plain Letters; the Secret of Successful Business Writing*, an expanded version of the excellent pamphlet she wrote for the U. S. Government in 1955. So, too, could all those who are faced with the flood of correspondence that pours into business and government offices every day of the year.

Miss Sheppard's approach to the handling of this correspondence is a practical one, based on her years of experience in business as a trouble-shooter whenever a jam of correspondence threatened the successful flow of business. She is not concerned with literary style or rhetoric. She is interested in seeing that letter writing is handled quickly, efficiently, and intelligently. She eliminates needless repetition of information already known by the correspondent and the use of meaningless jargon, which sets in motion a vicious circle of correspondence that could have been avoided if a simple, direct reply had been used. Her purpose is to save time and money by eliminating many of the useless habits practiced in business letter writing today.

To achieve her objective, Miss Sheppard has devised a simple formula—"The 4-S Formula" for Shortness, Simplicity, Strength, and Sincerity—by which business letters should be written. And she provides simple, easy-to-follow rules to make the formula work. It is not a new formula, but one that has been practiced by good writers through the ages and one that is emphasized, perhaps not so simply or directly, in many college composition courses. The strength of her formula lies not only in her use of it in her own writing of the book but also in her application of it to hundreds of illustrative examples of successful and unsuccessful business letters.

For the timid and uncertain user of the English language Miss Sheppard includes a section on grammar and punctuation that easily solves problems of usage, and there is a section that deals with the production and physical appearance of business letters.

Miss Sheppard's book is really a letter writer's guide, much like the handbooks and writer's guides used in college composition courses and the old secretary's handbooks, the bibles which good secretaries once consulted and worked by. If a letter writer follows Miss Sheppard's directions, he will write letters that the *New Yorker* will gladly read to the end.

GEORGE J. LOVE

American University

La fotoriproduzione dei documenti e il servizio microfilm negli Archivi di Stato italiani, di Elio Califano. (*Quaderni della Rassegna degli Archivi di Stato* 5. Roma, 1960. 80 p. 500 lire.)

The use of microfilm in Italy began during World War II and has progressed technically and organizationally within the State Archives. The Microphotographic Center of the State Archives at Rome, under the Ministry of the Interior, was founded in 1951 and was made a separate entity for budget purposes within the last two years. It has some 33 branches attached to the State Archives in other cities.

Sig. Califano lists the advantages of microfilm, including the benefit to scholars and the possibility of cross-reference arrangements. For Italy the possibility of completing series, parts of which have been moved from their original sites because of wars and dynastic changes, is an important advantage of microfilm. For example, after World War II, Italy had to give France certain records that had been kept at Turin for centuries. To fill the gaps, microfilm copies were retained. Likewise, Italy was obliged to give Yugoslavia the archives of the city of Gorizia. Yugoslavia, however, accepted microfilm copies; and the originals remained in Gorizia.

The author points out some of the disadvantages and limitations of microfilm but observes that no other media have been invented that would entirely eliminate them.

Considerable attention is given to the internal working of a microfilm unit and to the necessary correlation of the film record with the record in its original form. Careful preparation of the material to be photographed is emphasized. Sample forms used to control the flow of work and clarify the duties of personnel are reproduced for the reader's benefit.

GEORGE C. REEVES

U. S. Tariff Commission

STILL AVAILABLE—

General Index to the American Archivist Volumes I-XX

Order from: Leon deValinger, Jr., Treasurer, Hall of Records, Box 710, Dover, Del. (\$6 a copy to members of the Society; \$8 to *American Archivist* subscribers and others).