

Reviews of Books

HENRY P. BEERS, *Editor*

National Archives

Guide to Photocopied Historical Materials in the United States and Canada, comp. by Richard W. Hale, Jr. (Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press, 1961. xxiv, 241 p. \$5.)

This volume, sponsored by the American Historical Association, brings together from a variety of sources information about photocopies of 11,637 bodies of historical records held by some 285 institutions in the United States and Canada. The entry for each body of records gives: the name of the author, compiler, collector, or holder of the original material; the title of the material with characterization or description where necessary; the dates, amount, and location of the originals; the types of photocopies available (*e.g.*, positive or negative microfilm); and the institutions holding such copies. The main body of the *Guide* is arranged by accepted fields of history in the same general sequence as that followed in the American Historical Association's *Guide to Historical Literature*. There is an index of about 4,000 entries—mainly personal and institutional names. Unfortunately, the index does not compensate for the difficulties inherent in using the very broad subject approach by which the body of the *Guide* is arranged. The user who, for example, is interested in material on Hessian troops in the American Revolution will not find an entry in the index. With much searching he will locate under the heading "United States, Foreign Affairs" material held in the original by the Staatsarchiv, Bremen, Germany; under the heading "United States, Immigration" he will find materials held in the original by the Staatsarchiv, Osnabrück, Germany; and under the heading "United States, Military Affairs, Revolution" he will find diaries and journals of Hessian soldiers the originals of which are located in the Landesbibliothek at Kassel, Germany. The difficulty is not that these entries have been misplaced, for the first two bodies of records contain material relating to foreign affairs and immigration as well as to the role of Hessian troops in the Revolution. The example points rather to the deficiency inherent in a rough subject arrangement unless it is supplemented by a detailed subject index providing multiple approaches to bodies of material covering a number of subjects.

The *Guide* would have been impossible without the cooperation of a large number of institutions. The editor acknowledges his particular indebtedness to the Philadelphia Bibliographical Center. There for many years Eleanor E. Campion has produced practically single-handedly the *Union List of Microfilms*, from which a large number of entries in the *Guide* are taken. The cooperation of the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is evident in nearly every page of the *Guide*; thousands of groups of vital statistics and church records filmed in the course of the Church's world-wide project to film genealogical materials are listed. The

comprehensive recording of these and numerous other genealogical materials available on film will make the *Guide* of immense interest to genealogists. It will also, of course, be a basic reference tool for librarians and historians, especially teachers of history seeking research materials for students, for it provides information about a wide range of historical materials available on loan or readily available in relatively inexpensive reproduction. It is to be hoped that a means will be found to provide regular supplements to the *Guide* so that materials photocopied in the future may also be readily located.

ROBERT D. STEVENS

Library of Congress

Guide to Materials on Latin America in the National Archives, by John P. Harrison. (Washington, National Archives, 1961. Vol. 1; x, 246 p., maps.)

This is the first volume of a two-volume guide. It describes records pertaining to Latin America in the State, War, Navy, and Treasury archives and those listed under general records of the United States Government, boundary and claims commissions and conferences, other commissions, and expositions. A second volume will include records of other agencies of the Government. When records are accessioned in the National Archives, they are assigned permanently to a numbered record group, and these are the major subdivisions beneath the departmental level with which the compiler deals. The nature of the material usually dictates the breakdown of a record group; in some cases it is the type of record, *i.e.*, despatches, instructions, notes; in some cases it is the country.

That the compiler has prepared this volume with a great deal of care is evident in the precision and clarity of every sentence. Not a little historical background is set forth, in a succinct manner, to introduce a description of a group of records—for instance, why international conferences met or why records were originated and how they came to be arranged as they are. The book is rich in illustrative material; it lists in detail the content of the Miscellaneous Letters series of the Department of State for the one month of April 1818, the one month of April 1858, and a portion of April 1898. In evaluating groups of papers and in cautioning the researcher against judging that a particularly likely title covers all the papers that he needs, the compiler has been very generous and helpful.

An indication of the quantity appears with each unit of records described. This is indispensable to enable the student to determine the extent of his research within the time available to him, but, on the other hand, to a person applying himself, for illustration, to the large decimal file of the Department of State, the overall figure of quantity is of little value. The compiler has included information on the finding aids available: those that accompanied the records from their source, those produced in the National Archives, and oftentimes printed guides. For those unable to do any or all of their research in Washington, and for libraries and research centers generally, the data on the availability of microfilm will be heartily welcome.

With all the merits of this book it seems ungrateful to find any fault. The

compiler might have answered questions in the minds of students in connection with the treaty files, had he used a sentence or two to explain the availability of executive agreements, which during World War II superseded the treaty as a form of international commitment. Perhaps the second volume will mention the literally scores of international agreements, neither treaty nor executive agreement, negotiated by Department of State personnel, together with representatives of other governmental agencies, with Latin American nations.

It is inevitable that the proportionate amount of space that the compiler assigns to the various groups of papers will be criticized. This reviewer would prefer less space for claims commissions—about ten percent of the volume is devoted to them—and more space to the Inter-American conferences. In broader dimension this reviewer would prefer more space for the twentieth-century and less to the nineteenth-century record.

Of the records of the later period, those of the central files of the Department of State are most important. The compiler describes and illustrates the filing system in a most understandable fashion. Many students are tempted to prefer a group of papers attributed to one man or office, composed of all kinds of subjects, usually unindexed, often lacking indication of action taken. The compiler takes pains to show the superiority of the central files to such conglomerations. The National Archives was in possession of the central files through 1944 at the time of the issuance of this guide. It is unfortunate that the compiler was not in a position to elaborate on the nature of this vast collection from 1930 through 1944. Its use, to be sure, is limited, but the appearance in recent years of volumes by authors who have had access to these papers makes desirable some explanation of the conditions surrounding their use. Indeed, this reviewer feels that the public is entitled to the wide dissemination of information on the restrictions applying to records and in this respect this guide might be improved. But this matter is one of policy in the establishment, for which the compiler may or may not have had any responsibility. In any case this guide is an accomplishment of which the compiler and the National Archives may be proud.

ALMON R. WRIGHT

Department of State

Catholic Archives of Texas; History and Preliminary Inventory, by Sister M. Claude Lane, O.P. (Houston, Sacred Heart Dominican College [2409 East Holcombe Blvd.], 1961. v, 114 p., map. Processed. \$4.)

Having himself called national attention to the Catholic archives of Texas ("An Episcopal Contribution to History," *Mid-America*, 1955), this reviewer is delighted with the publication of this inventory of the holdings therein. The title probably is a bit restrictive, for according to the definitions promulgated by Theodore R. Schellenberg it applies to but a limited portion of the papers and records and not of course to the books. Most of the documents and correspondence do indeed refer to the activities of Catholics within the boundaries of the present State of Texas. In addition, they comprise historical material relating to matters in an even broader frame of reference.

The great value of Sister Claude's publication is that it makes available to scholars in the field a list of the holdings now quartered in Austin. While original documents comprise but a fraction of the collection, the knowledge that source material is available in one place should inspire undertakings that otherwise would be too protracted and expensive. No other repository in the United States offers so much pertaining to the Spanish phase of our country's history.

This reviewer's acquaintance with many of the personalities prominent in the amassing of this material in later years sharpened his interest in the history of the Catholic archives of Texas. Despite his favorable disposition the historical section seemed unduly detailed. For example, the almost complete failure to obtain copies of Spanish archival holdings could have been recounted in a single paragraph, rather than diffused over many pages.

The notation "Unarranged," appended to so many classifications, gave a sorrowful twinge to my study of the preliminary inventory. Save for the animated interest of the late Bishop Lawrence J. FitzSimon of Amarillo, both collecting and arranging the materials have at best been intermittent. Only the continued services of a qualified archivist will uncover the hidden treasures of this collection. The aspiration to continue the work, voiced by Sister Claude, has already yielded to a teaching assignment.

PETER J. RAHILL

Catholic University of America

Spain. Dirección General de Archivos y Bibliotecas. *Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla; Guía del Visitante*, por José María de la Peña y Cámara. (Junta Técnica de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos, *Ediciones Conmemorativas del Centenario del Cuerpo Facultativo*, 1858-1958, XIII, Madrid, 1958. 206 p., illus. 65 pesetas.)

For over a hundred years Spanish governmental archives have been administered by the Cuerpo Facultativo de Archiveros. The present guide, which describes the holdings of the Archives of the Indies, is the thirteenth in a series of publications prepared to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Cuerpo.

An introductory statement emphasizes the rich archival tradition, documentary holdings, and famous archival institutions of Spain. Then follow a description and a detailed history of the building that houses the Archives of the Indies, with interesting information about important accessions of documents and famous individuals who have used the holdings. Washington Irving, who in 1828-29 did some research on the voyages of Columbus, had the honor of being the first United States citizen to use these archives.

Descriptions of the archives and lists of finding aids are given in two appendixes. The holdings of the institution are grouped in large units (*secciones*) divided into series consisting usually of several bundles (*legajos*). The total holdings of the Archives of the Indies consist of 38,903 *legajos* grouped into an unspecified number of series, which together form 16 large *secciones*. Each *sección* is given a number and a descriptive title. The *secciones* are described in numerical order and the following information is given

for each: (a) number and title, (b) inclusive dates, (c) origin, (d) volume of records in terms of number of *legajos*, (e) date records were accessioned, (f) character and content of the records, (g) classification and arrangement, and (h) a list of pertinent published and unpublished finding aids. An average of five pages is devoted to describing the records in each *sección*. The second appendix is a selective bibliography of general guides, catalogs, articles, and other publications that describe the holdings of the Archives of the Indies and other Spanish archival institutions. A limited number of documentary publications is included in the bibliography.

The guide is provided with a name and subject index and 13 well-chosen illustrations.

According to its title, this guide is primarily for the visiting tourist, not the scholar. It must be said, however, that the guide contains highly useful information for scholars and is the indispensable tool that will lead them to detailed finding aids that adequately cover their particular fields of interest. José María de la Peña y Cámara, a professional archivist with 40 years of experience, writes with the knowledge and authority he commands as head of the Archives of the Indies, the most famous archival institution in Spain.

GEORGE S. ULIBARRI

National Archives

Deutschland (Bundesrepublik). Bundesarchiv, Koblenz. *Das Bundesarchiv und seine Bestände*, Übersicht bearbeitet von Friedrich Facius, Hans Booms, Heinz Boberach. (*Schriften des Bundesarchiv*, 10; Boppard am Rhein, Germany, Harald Boldt Verlag, 1961. 211 p. 15 DM.)

With the fall of the Third Reich in 1945 its national archival institution, the Reichsarchiv, went out of existence and such of the holdings as survived the holocaust of war were dispersed. Some of the archives fell into the hands of the Soviet Union. These were eventually placed in East Germany's Deutsche Zentralarchiv, established in 1946. The holdings of the Reichsarchiv that were seized by the Western Allies, insofar as they have been returned to the Federal Republic of Germany, are in large part in the Federal depository, the Bundesarchiv, created in 1950. Descriptions of the restituted records and other documentary materials received by the Bundesarchiv through 1960 are presented in the guide here reviewed.

In view of the incomplete state of the holdings of the Bundesarchiv, and after much deliberation and argument, an abbreviated guide instead of an inventory was adopted as the proper medium for describing them. Only brief descriptions of record groups and subgroups are presented, with no accounts of the origin and functions of agencies.

The editors of the guide chose two historic years around which to group the descriptions—1867 (date of the establishment of the North German Confederation) and 1945. Thus the guide is divided into three main chronological periods: pre-1867, 1867–1945, and post-1945. The holdings are physically divided between the Bundesarchiv at Koblenz and its branches at Frankfurt (which has most of the earliest records) and Kornelimünster (which has principally military personnel records).

Among the materials for the post-1945 period are records of German agencies established by the Western Allies in their individual zones or jointly in all three zones. With the withdrawal of the occupation forces, the Federal ministries fell heir to these records and have now turned them over to the Federal depository at Koblenz.

The Bundesarchiv has formed a special collection designated "East Archives." In it are remnants of archives of regional and local governmental offices and private organizations located in areas east of the Oder-Neisse line that were once part of undivided Germany but are now annexed to Poland. This special collection also contains depositions and questionnaires of knowledgeable Germans who fled from regions on both sides of the Oder-Neisse line or from former German settlements in East Middle Europe and who report about conditions and developments in these areas for the period 1939-51.

But the most striking feature of the guide is the evidence it offers of the appalling gaps in the holdings of the Bundesarchiv as a result of the destruction and dispersal of records. Hardly a single record group is untouched. Essentially the Bundesarchiv presides over fragmented collections. Return of all dispersed records could fill in some of the gaps, but complete restitution is unlikely. The Governments of France, Great Britain, and the United States have returned large quantities of archives, are scheduled to give up more, but will retain a remnant for some time yet. The Deutsche Zentralarchiv will certainly hold on to what it has. The Bundesarchiv exercises no authority over the Hauptarchiv in West Berlin, which, with the Deutsche Zentralarchiv, received some of the archives of the former Preussisches Geheimen Staatsarchiv. A portion of the central archives of Prussia and of the former Reich are held by some of the present West German state or provincial archives. This is the picture today, one that is truly frustrating to the German federal archivist and to the historian interested in studying German source materials.

PHILIP P. BROWER

National Archives

Fiji. Central Archives. *Records of the Cakobau Government, the Ad-Interim Government and the Provisional Government, June, 1871-September, 1875*, by S. Tuinaceva. (Central Archives of Fiji and the Western Pacific High Commission, *Preliminary Inventory* no. 1; Suva, Fiji, 1960. Unpaged. Processed.)

Fiji. Central Archives. *Records of the Land Titles Commission, Rotuma, 1882-1883*. (*Preliminary Inventory* no. 2; Suva, Fiji, 1961. Unpaged. Processed.)

The first of these inventories covers the organically interrelated records of three successive governments of Fiji immediately preceding the formal establishment of the Colony of Fiji by Great Britain in September 1875. Following a brief preface discussing the origins, history, and state of preservation of the records and an introduction (with documentary and other appendixes) surveying informatively the nineteenth-century precolonial political history of

Fiji, the inventory proper consists of two parts dealing with (1) the main body of the records of the three governments transferred to the Central Archives from the Secretariat in 1955 and (2) additional records since discovered among the holdings of various other departments of the government.

Part 1 is subdivided into three sections, each organized hierarchically: a list of "sets" (essentially series), descriptions of these sets, and a descriptive list of the contents of bundles of "miscellanea." Part 2 is similarly broken down into a list of sets and descriptions of the sets, both arranged by department from which transferred. A typical set-list entry consists of a heading identifying the office of origin followed by the set number and title, its inclusive dates, and its linear dimensions; if bound, the number of volumes is indicated. All this is repeated at the head of the descriptive entry for the set; and, in addition, detailed amplificatory information is provided, under appropriate subheadings, on the types and subject content of the records, their arrangement (including, where relevant, an analysis of the system of registration employed and a listing of inclusive registration numbers), the nature of available indexes, and the numbers of related sets.

A major shortcoming of the inventory, arising perhaps from an overly rigid application of the principle of provenance, is the compiler's failure to integrate for descriptive purposes fragments of series that in the course of time have become physically separated from each other. The two-part division of the body of the inventory, reflecting the main difference in custody of the records involved just before their transfer to the Archives, may be the result of a similar misapplication of the principle; an overall, hierarchically organized consolidation of Parts 1 and 2 would have simplified considerably the structure of the inventory and facilitated reference to it. Other flaws include the needless repetition of the name of the office of origin above each set list and descriptive entry for that office; the common overelaboration of set titles and descriptions; and the frequent repetition of much of the text of set titles in the corresponding descriptive entries.

These defects notwithstanding, *Preliminary Inventory* no. 1 is a major effort and manifestly an invaluable finding aid for the concerned researcher and administrator alike. A particularly useful feature, which makes it possible to relate known names of individuals to the records with which they were associated, is the principal appendix to the introduction: this lists by administrative entity all ministers and senior officials of the three governments.

The second inventory, although a very brief one, is organized much like the first, and shares both its virtues and faults.

MORRIS RIEGER

National Archives and Records Service

The Papers of Alexander Hamilton, ed. by Harold C. Syrett and Jacob E. Cooke. (New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1961. xvii, 627 p.; xl, 710 p.; illus. \$12.50 each vol., \$10 subscription price for all vols.)

The first fruits of an ambitious publication project begun in 1955, these

two volumes cover the career of Alexander Hamilton from his early years as a clerk in the West Indies to his participation as an officer in the battle of Yorktown. The *Papers*, which include both letters from and to Hamilton and other items about him, appear in chronological order. Volume 1 concerns the years 1768-78 and volume 2 the years 1779-81. Because Hamilton was Washington's aide-de-camp during much of the Revolutionary War, most of the material relates to military affairs. Messrs. Syrett and Cooke wisely decided to print only brief summaries of many such items.

Other important aspects of the subject have not been overlooked. Hamilton's shrewd insight into the relationship between Great Britain and the American Colonies can be seen in "A Full Vindication of the Measures of Congress, &c." and "The Farmer Refuted," both well-known examples of political pamphleteering. The personal side stands out in Hamilton's confession of great ambition to his boyhood friend Edward Stevens, in his ardent letters to Elizabeth Schuyler, and the warm, revealing correspondence with his fellow aide-de-camp, Lt. Col. John Laurens. But the real Hamilton remains difficult to detect despite the many well-chosen words and smoothly flowing sentences.

These two initial volumes are of particular interest to archivists as well as to the reviewer. Alexander Hamilton's *Papers* are among the publication projects of the National Historical Publications Commission, in which Philip M. Hamer had a prominent role. And it was while surveying records of the Government of the Virgin Islands, under Dr. Hamer's supervision, that the reviewer first became interested in Alexander Hamilton. In the course of this survey the reviewer learned that much research on Hamilton's background and family had already been done in the Danish State Archives by the late Maj. Gen. H. U. Ramsing, and he persuaded General Ramsing to publish his findings in a Danish periodical. Messrs. Syrett and Cooke refer to Ramsing's article, but the average reader who does not know Danish will find the story in English in the reviewer's article in the *William and Mary Quarterly* (3d ser.; 9: 139-151; Apr. 1952).

The editing throughout the work is painstaking, and every effort has been made through numerous footnotes to assist the reader and to identify persons and places in the text. With commendable candor Messrs. Syrett and Cooke on occasion admit confusion and uncertainty and confess their inability to find a given letter or to uncover the desired evidence for a certain statement. One error was noted—the mutilation of a Danish word in citing the title of General Ramsing's article.

Apart from their importance and value for the historian and political scientist, these two volumes and the ones to follow are certain to provide an indispensable source of information for all those interested in Alexander Hamilton and the Federalist period. Here, then, one sees the initial offering in what must become the definitive edition of the Hamilton *Papers*.

HAROLD LARSON

University of Maryland