

The International Scene: News and Abstracts

FRANK B. EVANS, *Editor*

Canada

W. Kaye Lamb, former Dominion Archivist of Canada and a past president of the SAA, spent the fall of 1973 advising Australia's Department of the Special Minister of State about the establishment of a National Archives of Australia and on the future development of the Commonwealth Archives Office.

The January 1974 issue of the *Canadian Archives Bulletin* reveals that archivists in Canada are experiencing many of the problems that have characterized the profession in the United States in recent years. Through a Committee of the Future, chaired by Hugh A. Taylor, Canadian archivists are discussing their status as a section within the Canadian Historical Association. Other choices they are deliberating include the forming of a separate national society or joining the SAA "with each Canadian regional association as a regional group recognized by the SAA, and a Canadian archives council representing Canadian archivists nationally." A number of letters to the editors reflect many of the arguments that were advanced by archivists in the United States at the time of the deliberations of the Committee for the 1970's and show the emergence of regional archival organizations.

This issue contains also reports of the committees on oral history, conservation, microfilm, training, and records management; an account of an archives training course held at the University of Alberta in July and August 1973; and news of the activities of four regional associations—the Association des Archivistes du Québec, the Archival Association of the Atlantic Provinces, the Association of British Columbian Archivists, and the Toronto Area Archives group. Then follow summaries of various oral history and conservation conferences, news notes, and the results of a survey of university archives in Canada.

Public Archives of Canada, Report for 1971/1972. The Public Archives of Canada has published its bilingual annual report. The

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statistical tabulations accompanying the reports of each of the major organizational units illustrate graphically the continuing trend toward greater public and private use of the resources and services of the Public Archives. In his introduction, Dominion Archivist Wilfred I. Smith observes that although appropriations for the archives increased substantially during the five-year period 1967-72, most of the increment was expended simply to maintain existing levels of service in the face of rising researcher demand and to establish archival control over vast quantities of newly accessioned materials. Concentration upon the former, in fact, has resulted in increased description and preservation backlogs. The archivist enumerates seven goals for the immediate future: opening of records centers in Winnipeg and Halifax; developing a cultural program involving archival resources; extending the techniques of automatic data processing into the fields of records control and retrieval; integrating machine-readable records into the existing management system; establishing a national film archives; expanding document restoration and preservation programs; and continuing the emphasis upon special projects. He urgently recommends that a new building be constructed to house the Public Archives and that its joint tenancy with the National Library be terminated as expeditiously as possible. Finally, he suggests that recent archival trends have demonstrated the need for legislation to replace the Public Archives Act of 1912. [ROBERT B. MATCHETTE]

Provincial Archives of Alberta. Indexed inventories to the archives of the Anglican dioceses of Athabasca and Mackenzie River have been completed and distributed. Work is now well advanced on the records of the Anglican diocese of Edmonton. Further steps have been taken in listing and collecting records of counties and municipal districts. Significant accessions include seventeen tape-recorded interviews with Italian pioneers, archives of the Eastern Rockies Forest Conservation Board 1948-72, and files of Mr. A. O. Aalborg, minister of education and provincial treasurer, ca. 1950-70. A general meeting with record officers in government departments was held in January as part of a regular system for informing them of government policy and procedures and the Public Records Committee of practical problems. The government's Essential Records Program and microfilm service was placed under the control of the branch in February and will be located in the records centre to be established shortly in Edmonton. A start has been made in compiling well-documented histories of government departments as a basis for an eventual scheme of arrangement. Personnel in the branch reached an all-time high with a staff of thirteen permanent employees (including the librarian and a heritage historian), twelve temporary employees, and two volunteers. [ALAN RIDGE]

Provincial Archives of British Columbia. Willard Ireland, doyen of

provincial archivists in Canada, retired in January after some thirty years service. [ALAN RIDGE]

ABSTRACTS

Italy. *Rassegna degli Archivi di Stato*, vol. 32, no. 2 (May–August 1972). Vittorio Stella, writing on historiography and the archival discipline, archival work and the archivist (pp. 269–84), reviews the philosophical interpretations of Giorgio Cencetti, Leopoldo Sandri, Giannini, Valenti, and Brenneke regarding the relationship between historiography and the archival discipline. That discipline is a recent creation, and in reflecting on its foundations the author concludes that although it has generally been considered a subsidiary of history, it is really a theory of history when it tries to understand itself, to study its own methods, and to study its own being. He regards it as historiography in action when the organization-inventory coincides with the history of the entity which produced the documents. According to the author, archival work cannot be related to historiography if it is regarded as an office duty, the work of an organization, research, or any other manner of assistance to the researcher. The author considers those theories that maintain that archives are a reflection of the entity from which they came and that give to the archivist's creative function the task of shaping its archives according to ideal schemes born from the synthesis of their provenance.

Piero D'Angiolini and Claudio Pavone, discussing a new guide to the Italian State Archives, an experience in progress (pp. 285–305), point out that two guides have already been published, one of 1910 and another of 1939, both with an historical approach which did not facilitate the use of the archives. To compile this new guide, a series of instructions were given to all archivists to be studied and discussed, and from these discussions emerged the problems which the compilation of a new guide presented: the order of entry and notation for the archives, description of the "fonds," the problem of inclusive dates, the general division of the guide, and many others. The authors indicate the decisions intended to solve each of these problems and particularly note the cooperation among older archivists who provided their experience and younger ones who provided quick action and hard work.

Maura Caprioli Piccialuti, in her notes on an inventory of London radio records, 1939–45 (pp. 315–59), traces the history of transmissions of the BBC to Italy during the second World War. Among the types of transmissions represented in those archives preserved under the Italian Service Group are news programs and commentaries or talks which complemented the news. These began in 1939, and around them the Italian Programme was structured. The third type of transmission was the staged transmission where two or more voices were used and music and various sounds were added. The texts for these programs are preserved in the Written Archives Centre of the BBC.

The archives are incomplete because of the bombing of London that damaged the BBC and because many of the authors, like Caluso, Treves, and Candidus, kept their own scripts. An ideal inventory of all known records is appended to the article. [LAURA V. MONTI]

Netherlands. *Rijks archiefschool, Verslag en bijdragen, 1971-1972*. This volume consists of the report of the State Training School for Archivists, 1971-72, and contributions. The State Training School provides one year of supervised field training and instruction leading to certification for two categories of archivists, the senior level (for those who hold university degrees) and the middle grade (for grammar and secondary school graduates). Eleven of the former and thirty-two of the latter stood examinations in 1971-72; articles by two of the candidates for the middle grade appear in the publication. In "Turf en water" [Peat and water], P. Brood drew upon his inventory of the records of Jasper Klijn and Company, owners of one of the Drenthe canals, to prepare a history of that waterway. A. M. van der Woehl, in his "Van joodse natie tot Nederlands-Israëlitische gemeente Rotterdam" [From Jewish 'nation' to Dutch-Israelite community], utilized his examination of the archives of the Dutch-Israelite parish of Rotterdam to write a brief history of the Jewish community of that city. [ROBERT B. MATCHETTE]

Romania. *Revista Arhivelor*, vol. 33, no. 1 (1971). M. Andrișoiu and M. Cerghedeian describe (pp. 3-26) village seals in the counties of Hunedoara and Zarand, in Transylvania, that validated different acts from 1851 to 1881. Dragomir Georgescu and P. Căncea, on pp. 61-67, describe the records of the rural credit bank as valuable sources for the study of social history. Some of the documents contain details of the gradual decline of the great landed proprietors, the descendants of the old noble families, and the transfer of the lands in the last decade of the twentieth century to the ownership of the bourgeoisie. Other documents reflect the phenomenon that preceded the gradual replacement of the old noble families by the new bourgeoisie, notably the extension of property mortgages, a temporary phenomenon lessened by the creation of the rural credit bank. Relations between landed proprietors and tenant farmers on the one side and between peasant and rural proletariat on the other are also reflected in the documents. [HOPE K. HOLDCAMPER]

USSR. *Sovetskie Arkhivy*, no. 1 (1974), is the first issue we have received of this leading archival journal. In addition to a number of articles on Lenin's ideas and their implementation, the issue contains (according to a table of contents in French) articles on preservation, information research and archives, arrangement, scientific-technical documentation, documentary publications, and archival buildings in Yugoslavia. We would welcome a volunteer to write abstracts of this and succeeding issues and other publications in Russian that we are receiving.