

## Reviews

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*Guide to the National Archives of the United States.* (Washington: National Archives and Records Service, 1974. xxv, 884 pp. \$12.30.) Copies should be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, with reference to Stock Number 2203-00908.

Guides to national repositories are major features on the archival landscape which require long periods of gestation but which, on publication, erupt like volcanoes, scattering their clouds of information and benign fallout across the world; their predecessors meanwhile become cold and extinct upon our shelves, graceful reminders of an earlier archival environment. The new *Guide to the National Archives of the United States* is by any standards a "spectacular," bursting upon us with a weighty cascade of paper and scholarship that will illumine our scene for years.

Within a remarkable compass of less than 900 pages we are provided with a companion through the stacks of the National Archives—through nearly one million cubic feet of records, more than 1.5 million maps, 201,000 rolls of microfilm, 43,000 motion pictures, over 7 million still pictures, and 66,500 sound recordings.

The introduction contains a brief outline of the origin and history of the National Archives and Records Service, followed by an account of previous general guides. This one supersedes the 1948 guide and subsequent notices of accessions appearing elsewhere and contains "all official records of the U.S. Government—now legally designated as the 'National Archives of the United States'—accessioned as of June 30, 1970, regardless of where such records are located," but not including the holdings of the Presidential Libraries.

Within the body of the work the record group is the unit of entry and is defined as "a body of organizationally and functionally related records established with particular regard for the administrative his-

tory, complexity, and volume of the records and archives of an agency." A record group is usually at the bureau level, but in addition may be formed from the "general records" of heads of departments and agencies with related financial and personal support. "Collective record groups" bring together small and short-lived agencies that have "an administrative or functional relationship" under one umbrella. A record group may also be formed from an artificial collection consisting of pieces culled long ago from their *fonds* for some forgotten project such as documentary publication (usually to the lasting despair of the archivist).

In general, the present guide is so organized as "to reflect the current organization of the Government, with the table of contents of the *United States Government Organization Manual* serving as a model," and is divided into the following parts: General U.S. Government, including the pre-Federal records; Records of the Legislative Branch; Records of the Judicial Branch; Records of the Executive Branch subdivided into Presidential agencies, independent agencies and executive departments; Records of or Relating to Other Governments including the District of Columbia. In each part, current institutions precede those which are defunct.

With regard to the *Guide* entries, the experience of NARS affirms that "the most useful guide to the subject content of official records is a knowledge of the organization and functions of the Government agencies in which they originated. For this reason the description of accessioned records for each record group is generally preceded in this guide by a brief administrative history and a concise statement of the major functions of the agency or agencies that created the records."

The sum of these "brief lives," with select bibliographies, adds up to an impressive corpus of federal administrative history which provides a dimension to the *Guide* which it would not otherwise have, and a relevance far beyond the boundaries of the United States and extending to any country that is evolving under a federal system and seeks contrast and comparison.

The descriptions of the records themselves include, besides the usual information, valuable indications of completeness; the existence of indexes, registers, and finding aids on a selective basis; and a date span covering the bulk of the documents. Earlier documents are identified in the description, and this avoids a misleading impression of serial antiquity.

The allocation of space to each entry is not based on sheer volume but on present research value and administrative complexity, which is as it should be. Published finding aids, inventories, and microfilm are also noted as well as select research publications on important record groups.

In addition, rules of access are clearly defined, forms of citation are suggested, and record groups are listed numerically and diagrammatically by date span.

The index is "limited to organizational units, names, and functions

or broad subjects mentioned in the text of the Guide," and, within these limitations, is excellent. One would perhaps have liked headings for archival media such as films and photographs, which are scattered through many groups. But it must be recognized that, despite many significant entries for other media, this is primarily a guide to manuscript records.

The volume is a pleasure to handle and heft. Although heavy, it is stoutly bound in cloth and opens well. The choice of bold, open type of generous size is inviting to the reader. This volcano will surely be active for a very long time.

*Public Archives of Canada*

HUGH A. TAYLOR

*British Maps of Colonial America*, by William P. Cumming. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1974. 114 pp. \$10.95.)

This is a well documented and illustrated survey of British colonial cartography in North America. It provides historical, political, and bibliographic information about maps and mapmakers and their techniques. The work is useful to historical cartographers, geographers, historians, archivists, and librarians. For those interested in the study of colonial America through the medium of maps, this concise and readable book provides a basic approach to this interesting subject.

William P. Cumming, Irvin Professor Emeritus at Davidson College, has made the history of cartography his lifetime avocation and is eminently qualified to provide both a guide and a challenge to the study of the development of graphic records in British North America to the end of the Revolution. His most notable work in this field is his frequently consulted cartobibliography *The Southeast in Early Maps* (second printing, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962).

The present work, illustrated by thirty-four well-chosen maps which show the development and diversity of cartographical knowledge in the colonies, is a modification of four lectures entitled "British Cartography of Eighteenth-Century North America," delivered by Cumming at the second series of Kenneth Nebenzahl, Jr., Lectures in the History of Cartography, at the Newberry Library, Chicago, in April 1970. The book consists of four chapters, with index and extensive notes, plus two appendixes listing some newly uncovered manuscript maps, and a bibliographical essay.

The first chapter discusses mapping of the southern colonies and provides an insight into the development of geographical knowledge from John Farrar's 1,651 misconceptions of Virginia, to the more scientific maps of Fry and Jefferson, DeBrahm, and Purcell. The second chapter highlights the northern colonies and explains their stylistic differences which are attributed to varied political origins, traditions, and settlement patterns.

The third chapter deals with hydrographic charting of the east coast, beginning with the early inaccurate sailing charts of Robert Dudley, the charts of John Seller, and charts of the apprentices of the "Thames School"; to the 104 years of the infrequently revised *English Pilot*; and culminating in the accurate, large-scale scientific charts published as the *Atlantic Neptune*, by Joseph F. W. Des Barres, for the use of the Royal Navy during the American Revolution.

The fourth chapter examines and contrasts military maps made under wartime conditions. These range from simple, on-the-spot sketches made by frontier scouts to elaborate, detailed military surveys made by professional military engineers.

Supplementing the essays are two appendixes which list several newly found manuscript maps in England, some of which have not previously been studied or examined and which appear in print for the first time here. These maps are in the collections of J. G. C. Spencer Bernard at Aylesbury, England, and of Hugh, Earl Percy, at Alnwick Castle, England. Unfortunately the maps are not discussed here in detail. The author comments, however, that they, and some of the well documented ones described in his book, need further study and investigation. The bibliographic essay which completes the book is basically a guide to the major general sources for the study of eighteenth-century British cartography in North America. This book is recommended for students of the American Revolution and of historical cartography as a useful addition to their collections.

Library of Congress

ANDREW M. MODELSKI

*Manual of Archival and Manuscript Processing Procedures*, compiled by Richard Strassberg. (Ithaca: Cornell University Libraries, second edition, 1974. 95 pp.)

The working archivist, especially the one with a staff with which he is in daily contact, operates in an environment of specifics far removed from archival theory and principle. Working with specifics, providing instant solutions to problems of arrangement and description, the archivist-supervisor is somewhat like an athlete trying to return a fusillade of bullets with a tennis racquet; he must be busy, facile, sometimes frantic, and, above all, quick to respond. That he can find any time at all to write a manual, particularly to summarize processing procedures, is a miracle.

If there is a major problem with Richard Strassberg's *Manual of Archival and Manuscript Processing Procedures*, it is probably attributable to his efficiency as a working supervisory archivist. His manual has the tempo of a storekeeper's daybook. It is indeed an amalgam of responses to on-the-spot incidents in the Cornell University Archives. Because it has the authenticity of an ongoing archives shop operation, one can share some of the excitement of cartons being opened, papers being unfolded, artifacts discovered, memorabilia being sorted out.

The *Manual*, however, is somewhat breathless, lacking the well ordered progress and sequence of definition, illustration, and explanation

particularly needed by the novice archivist or manuscript processor. The lack of cohesiveness and context and the absence of any orientation to the world of archives, historical documentation, manuscripts, or non-print media, makes the *Manual* more of an abrupt shower of processing detail than a fertilizing slow rain of introduction, explication, example, and principle.

For example, in the introduction, Strassberg suggests that the *Manual* will not treat the matter of manuscript procedures; the greater part of the *Manual*, however, relates to handling manuscript items, rather than archival series or record groups. He refers from time to time to records retained under statutes of limitation, but does not discuss records management, retention schedules, or other matters pertinent to archival disposition.

Strassberg presumes a body of knowledge possessed by his processors, including an understanding of accessioning, historical documentation, inventorying, series analysis, and preparation of finding aids. This presumption implies that his working staff has already been fully indoctrinated prior to setting to work. It would be helpful to most newcomers and to readers of this manual to have a brief preliminary essay on Cornell's advanced and diverse collecting programs, their purpose, scope, and policies, particularly those regarding archives as distinguished from collections of personal papers.

There are a few specific problems that should be mentioned. (1) Reference is made to systems of annotating or writing on original documents, but exploration of when, how, and why does not follow until the middle of the *Manual*. It is dangerous to indicate to newcomers that they may mark documents. (2) A distinction is made between archives and historical documentation, but the latter is never defined. (3) A collection number is referred to, but how it is arrived at is never explained. (4) There is an absence of definition of other significant terms such as inventory, series accessions, and record groups. (5) Estimating the size of a collection is not adequately explained. (6) It is not clear what "updated" means about documents; or why, as on page 19, sermons should be filed under the earliest date. (7) The word *bracked* is used on page 19. *Bracketed* would be better. (8) Disk (meaning computer disk storage media) is described as a document in the glossary. Also, the glossary is totally "item-oriented" or more pertinent to discrete manuscripts than to archival series or subseries. Since the glossary is arranged alphabetically, there seems little need to index it, as on pages 89-95. The appended Newspaper Indices listing seems oddly irrelevant to the main purpose of the *Manual*.

In short, Mr. Strassberg's *Manual* seems to be a private conversation with his own staff, a miscellanea which tends to make one feel he is somehow on the outside of what must be a wonderful shop. At the end of almost every definition in the glossary it is declared: "See your supervisor." Strassberg's *Manual*, it may be said, is not very useful without him.

*Information and Records Management*, by Wilmer O. Maedke, Mary F. Robek, and Gerald F. Brown. (Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press, 1974. 449 pp. Illustrations. Photographs. Teacher's Manual. \$11.95.)

This volume is a cooperative effort by two university faculty members and a corporate records manager; Maedke teaches on the Los Angeles campus of California State University, Robek has taught at Eastern Michigan University for several years, and Brown is employed by the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company and is in his second term as the president of the American Records Management Association. Their combined classroom and industry experience exceeds thirty years and their product reflects both theory and the "nuts and bolts" of an operating program.

Although there are several other books written for the records management practitioner or as a reference tool, this is the first one designed as a text for use in college courses. Several of its features assist the student to comprehend and utilize the data presented: (1) the writing style and vocabulary is not technical and the glossary of terms included will clarify most terminology; (2) the suggested discussion questions and projects at the end of each chapter provide opportunities to develop the data further; and (3) several illustrations in the form of pictures, charts, and drawings give specific details of equipment, workflow, and space utilization. There is also a separate "Teachers Manual" which gives additional sources for data, a key to the discussion questions, and suggestions for examination questions.

The authors' concept of records management is very broad: "A comprehensive records management program exercises control over the creation, distribution, retention, utilization, storage, retrieval, protection, preservation, and final disposition of all types of records within an organization." To treat the individual facets of the above definition, the volume is divided into six major parts and eighteen chapters. After a discussion of the history of records management and its purposes and desirability, there are one or more chapters on records creation, classification, maintenance, disposition, and preservation. The problems of space and equipment to house, reproduce, and retrieve the records and/or the information they contain are considered and various solutions are given. While some topics are not treated in depth and some information is now outdated, most subjects are adequately covered and sources are available to obtain additional and/or current data.

The historical background given will be disappointing to those interested in this aspect of the field. All pre-1935 contributions of industry and government are ignored. The creation of the National Archives and its later conversion into the National Archives and Records Service is not clearly explained. Several citations of sources, maps, and charts are not accurate because of the almost two-year period between completion of the manuscript and its publication.

No doubt many professional archivists will question or disagree with statements contained in the chapter on "Archives Management." However, most will agree that all records managers will benefit from reading and observing the major principles outlined therein.

As a text, the volume is excellent and the most comprehensive available. It is also a useful reference work. Both archivists and records managers should have it on their professional book shelves.

Washington State University

BRUCE C. HARDING

*The American Radical Press, 1880-1960*, 2 vols., edited, with introduction, by Joseph R. Conlin. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1974. xiv, 720 pp. Index. \$29.95.)

It is altogether refreshing to come across one of those rare instances when a long needed reference work appears with format, style, and content that transcends the ordinary and delivers more than one has a right to expect. Such is the case with Joseph Conlin's *The American Radical Press, 1880-1960*. Conlin provides us with an anthology of one hundred descriptive and often interpretive essays on a spectral selection of one hundred and nineteen periodicals generated by a myriad of American radical organizations and individuals between 1880 and 1960.

Conlin's two-volume anthology represents the tip of a project of icebergian dimensions undertaken by Greenwood Press in the mid-1960s. Using Walter Goldwater's magnificently comprehensive bibliography, *Radical Periodicals in America, 1890-1950* (Yale University, 1964), as a point of departure, Greenwood editors Harold Schwartz and Harold Mason secured copies of and reprinted one hundred and nine of what they considered to be the most important American radical periodicals that appeared between 1890 and 1960. While Greenwood originally had intended to reprint only Dwight MacDonald's iconoclastic personal magazine, *Politics*, the project eventually assumed massive proportions and at final count included some 410 separate volumes. For students of the American Left and political activists alike, the Greenwood reprint project stands as a monumental contribution to the preservation of a rich American heritage. For those of us who labored over crumbling yellowed pages of obscure journals, cursed warped microfilm rolls, and spent countless hours harassing overworked interlibrary loan librarians, the Greenwood project came as a welcome realization of our scarcely conceived dreams.

The Greenwood project developed largely as a response to the new market brought about by the radicalization that swept the United States in the 1960s. A renewed interest in labor history, socialism, and radicalism precipitated and nourished by the antiwar and social movements of the 1960s created a whole new generation of scholars whose primary concerns encompassed an investigation and reexamination of



American radical history. Thousands of young political activists in quest of their antecedents also turned to the relatively sparse supply of available source materials. Most American radicals have always had what has been variously described as a "historical consciousness" or a concern for "historical continuity" combined all too often with inordinately short memories.

This appreciation of radical traditions and heritage was initially manifested more among adherents of older, established political organizations of the Left, such as the Communist and Socialist Workers Parties, than among their "New Left" counterparts. As the decade of the sixties came to a close, however, many participants in the broader "New Left" milieu came to appreciate the contributions of the "Wobblies" (members of the Industrial Workers of the World), Eugene Debs, the militants who built the C.I.O., the Dunne Brothers who led the 1934 Minneapolis General Strike, and a host of other legendary and representative figures from the radical past in America. As the pace and tempo of the sixties radicalization increased, so also did the interest in radical history. Greenwood, then, in a very real sense provided a singularly appropriate response to a growing and urgent demand.

As part of the process of publishing the reprint editions, the Greenwood editors commissioned a wide range of historians and, in some instances, individuals who were actually involved with the original publications, to write introductory essays for each publication. In early 1972, Joseph Conlin assumed the task of editing and arranging the collected introductory essays, contributed by fifty-eight individuals. *The American Radical Press, 1880-1960* is the result of Conlin's efforts.

As in any anthology, the essays in Conlin's two volumes are uneven in quality. It is obviously not within the scope of this review to consider each essay, nor for that matter should one fault Conlin for excesses or errors committed by a few of his contributors. To the contrary, Greenwood and Conlin should be congratulated for assembling an impressive galaxy of knowledgeable contributors including, among others, noted historians Howard Quint, Herbert Gutman, James Gilbert, Melvyn Dubofsky, Philip Taft, David Herreshoff, William Appleman Williams, and Milton Cantor. Perhaps equally laudable was Greenwood's decision to include as contributors a number of editors and others who were intimately associated with producing the publications included in the reprint project. Of the essays written by individuals who actually edited the original publications, two stand out for their clarity and depth. Joseph Hansen's historical narrative on the Trotskyist weekly, the *Militant*, is remarkably well written and informative, as is George Novack's piece on the theoretical magazine known sequentially as the *New International*, the *Fourth International*, and the *International Socialist Review*. Among other contributions the essays by Paul Buhle, former editor of the contemporary Left journal *Radical America*, are uncommonly lucid and interpretive. In many instances the essays go far beyond a simple history and description of the publications they review and, as such, function as a collective narrative,



albeit uneven and fragmented, of the development of American radicalism. In this sense, the two volumes serve as much more than simply a valuable reference guide to the printed legacy of the American Left.

When one searches for faults in these two volumes, the results are meagre. Only once, for example, does Conlin indulge in a bit of extraneous subjectivism when, in his introduction, he permits a wholly gratuitous and unnecessary editorial sneer to surface as he discusses the merits of some of the radical publications. This unfortunate slip does not, however, mar his otherwise excellent performance. Indeed, Conlin anticipates most potential critics in his preface by acknowledging that the volumes are comprehensive rather than exhaustive or definitive. One can possibly take issue with Greenwood for including only 109 of the 321 periodicals listed in Goldwater's bibliography. In this reviewer's opinion, for example, a few important publications were omitted, including most notably Bert Cochran's well-done *American Socialist* magazine, which had a brief life span in the 1950s. Greenwood, however, nicely covers itself by noting that many of the omitted publications were relatively easily accessible and hence did not require reprinting.

Conlin also anticipates criticism of the organizational structure of his work by admitting that some periodicals were rather arbitrarily assigned locations in his twelve major categories: Early Radical Periodicals; the Socialist Party Press; Wobbly Papers; Journals of the Bolshevik Crisis; Publications of the Socialists; the Communist Press; Periodicals of the Sects and Splinter Groups; Anarchist Publications; Independent and Ad Hoc Journals; Theoretical Journals, Little Magazines and the Arts; Personal Journalism; and Post-War Periodicals. Some members and supporters of organizations categorized by Conlin as "sects and splinter groups," for example, might justifiably take exception to their inclusion in this subjectively determined category.

On the whole, though, the Greenwood Press and Conlin have provided us with a rich source of interpretive and factual data on a massive array of radical American periodicals ranging from the influential pre-World War I mass circulation Socialist paper *The Appeal to Reason* to the obscure publication *Class Struggle*, the organ of a miniscule 1930s grouplet called the Class Struggle League. In between, one can find essays on magazines edited by I. F. Stone, Dwight MacDonald, Upton Sinclair, and a host of other radicals, some prominent and others long consigned to the dust bin of history. One of the major delights of this work is, of course, its broad and inclusive scope.

*The American Radical Press, 1880-1960* is, then, a well-stocked arsenal for harassed reference librarians, for frustrated archivists trying to identify elusive fugitive publications, for scholars and students of American radical history and, perhaps most important, for those who take seriously Karl Marx's admonition that "the world has been interpreted in various ways; the point, however, is to change it."

Northwestern University

PATRICK M. QUINN

*Guide to Manuscripts Collections & Institutional Records in Ohio*, edited by David R. Larson. (Columbus: Society of Ohio Archivists, 1974. x, 315 pp. Maps.)

With financial support from the Ohio Historical Society, the Society of Ohio Archivists has produced a useful guide which can serve as the germ of a continuing survey of source materials in that state.

*Guide to Manuscripts Collections & Institutional Records in Ohio* goes beyond most state guides by including a selection of "institutional records," defined as "those holdings of historical materials kept in the agency of origin, often not for general historical research, but rather for current research within the organization or because of their intrinsic historical nature." Represented as "institutions" are university archives, businesses, churches, associations, citizen groups, chambers of commerce, and even several local political headquarters. Specifically excluded are state and local government offices and agencies.

The inclusion of "institutional records," though admittedly highly selective, provides not only a new dimension but also by far the bulk of entries in the SOA guide. These entries will be suggestive to researchers seeking seldom-used and little-known records. In Hamilton County, for instance, records of more than fifty "institutions" are included. We find that the Cincinnati Reds have various records for 1967 (but where are those before and after 1967?), that the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra has a variety of records dating back to 1895, that the Cincinnati Typographical Union's records begin in 1846, and that the Mercantile Library holds minutes and administrative records dating back to 1835.

Records in research institutions—i.e., repositories whose purpose is to make their materials available to outside researchers—are given the designation "Manuscripts." This casual use of the term may not bother the layman, but to the archivist it is a reminder of the blurring of definitions in the profession. Its use in the SOA guide is inexplicable because the entries themselves stand in contradiction. Many entries for research institutions listed under "Manuscripts" describe the archives of businesses, organizations, and even government offices. The "Manuscripts" of the Swanton Public Library, for instance, consist solely of township trustee minutes and photographs of the town. On the other hand, the Ohio University Archives, listed under "Institutional Records," contains materials which constitute private manuscripts.

Archivists from states with strict laws governing the continuous custody of official records will be surprised by the dispersal of public records in nonpublic custody.

The guide, therefore, while not serving as a model for organization and terminology, performs a three-fold service: first, it provides a brief summary of the holdings of Ohio's many research institutions (excluding the OHS, Western Reserve Historical Society, and American Jewish Archives, all of which have published their own more detailed guides to

holdings); second, it offers a suggestive glimpse into the records of many institutions not usually included in such guides; and third, it will be a challenge to other archival organizations to undertake a published survey of the primary source materials within their own states.

*North Carolina Collection*

H. G. JONES

*University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

*Guide to the Archives in Israel*, by P. A. Alsberg. (Jerusalem: Israel Archives Association, 1973. 257 pp. Paperback. Title pages in English and Hebrew.)

This is the first English version of the *Guide to the Archives in Israel*. In 1966 a Hebrew edition was published in honor of the sixtieth birthday of Alexander Bein, then chairman of the Israel Archives Association and State Archivist. The new guide lists the holdings, as of 1971, of twenty major archival institutions (both governmental and private) and some lesser ones. The private institutions contain the archives of labor, political, religious, and educational organizations, many of which are named in honor of, or in memory of, victims of the Nazi holocaust or for prominent Jewish leaders. Each description was written by the agency itself; the spelling is in the British style.

Institutions numbered in the *Guide* from 1 to 20 have their own title pages containing address, telephone number, name of director, and visiting hours cited in 24-hour time (i.e., 7.00–13.30). Summary 21 lists holdings of several lesser institutions. The institutions differ in character—some are libraries, some are documentation centers. Accordingly, there is some variation in the forms of lists and units being described. All summaries include histories, organizational arrangement, and departmental responsibility. Lists of holdings are described in five columns under three headings: Record Group, which includes number, agency name, and date span; Notation (numerical or numerical-alphabetical symbol representing entire record groups or, in some instances, individual items); and Shelving, reported in metres. The total amount of shelf space of archives in Israel is reported as 45 kilometres (45,000 metres or 147,645 feet). The *Guide* ends with an alphabetical index of the holdings, including the summary number and, in parentheses, the record group, i.e., 10 (156).

Eighty-five percent of all records described are in the first six institutions summarized: (1) Israel State Archives, (2) Military (Israel Defense Forces) and Defense Establishment Archives, (3) Jerusalem Municipality Archives, (4) Tel Aviv-Yaffo Municipality Archives, (5) Central Zionist Archives, and (6) Archives and Museum of the Jewish Labor Movement. The remaining 15 percent are in the other agencies.

Archives administration in Israel is governed by the provisions of the Archives Law 5715/1955. Under this law, the state has control of all

historical archives in Israel and over disposal of official records not considered to be of permanent value. The Higher Archives Council, composed of representatives of archival institutions, government departments, and other public bodies, assists the state archivist in formulating archival policy. Regulations governing access to records for research purposes are determined by consultation of the prime minister with the Higher Archives Council. Most agencies have free access to records except for private papers. The Central Zionist Archives has the most interesting and, possibly, the most stringent of restrictions. Researchers must provide proof of the seriousness of their work and are granted permission to use material only for the specific purpose stated. An appeal against refusal to permit use of archival material can be made to the executive of the World Zionist Organization. A complimentary copy of any publication based upon documents must be furnished.

*National Archives and Records Service*      SYLVAN MORRIS DUBOW

*A Manual of Policies and Practices for the Small Manuscript Repository*, by Charlotte S. Price. Occasional Papers Series No. 3, Consciousness IV. (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Library, 1973. 40 p.)

One of the signs of the growing technical expertise in the archival and manuscript profession is the recent proliferation of procedural manuals. Along with the increasing availability of such publications, however, has come the potentially dangerous tendency on the part of compilers of these manuals to generalize on the basis of their own particular experiences and techniques.

The problems inherent in such methodological projection are basically twofold. The procedures in most manuscript repositories evolve in response to the desire of their staffs to implement the soundest possible program based on currently available knowledge. Such ambitions, unfortunately, must usually be tempered by needs and limitations inherent in the repository's setting in a particular institution. It is the interplay of both these factors that produce the final *modus operandi* for a given manuscript department. The second limiting factor in the broad application of procedures developed exclusively at one institution is the unstated assumption, usually implicit in most in-house documents, that there exists among the readers of that document a certain common body of knowledge.

The author of the handbook reviewed here was the manuscript librarian of the Moorland-Spingarn Collection at Howard University. As stated in her preface, it is Ms. Price's hope that an elucidation of the techniques used in her institution might be of assistance to small libraries initiating the processing of their own manuscript holdings.

Undoubtedly, a well-written manual which reflects the high level of professional expertise evident in the operations of the Moorland-

Spingarn Collection will be of interest to both novice and experienced manuscript professionals. Because of its largely subjective nature and its brevity, however, the application of this guide beyond in-house use is somewhat limited.

For one thing, simply too much is left unsaid in the forty-page pamphlet. Procedural methodologies from acquisition techniques through reference services are outlined in seven pages of text and thirteen pages of illustrations. Staffing, equipment, and storage requirements are touched upon in an additional page and fourteen appendixes illustrate the repository's major forms and findings aids. For the department that produced it such a brief treatment may well be sufficient; such cannot be the case for the uninitiated for whose edification it has apparently been made more widely available.

In the paragraphs which deal with inventory, for example, Ms. Price advocates the sorting of newly acquired materials into broad physical categories to facilitate initial examination. In the following section on processing, however, it is noted that if the original order of a collection is usable it should be maintained. The former instruction would appear to contradict the first, since if the initial advice is followed, the original order of the collection might be irretrievably damaged. No doubt at Howard the initial inventory would be conducted with due regard for provenance, but how would the inexperienced librarian handle such a situation? Indeed, the whole issue of provenance is given far less attention than should be the case in a manual for beginners. Although advocating that provenance, along with anticipated use and the kinds of materials involved, will determine how a collection is to be processed, the author does not define what provenance is—a painful omission in the light of her intended audience and the subsequent emphasis on rearrangement into chronological or alphabetical order in the manual.

If provenance needs explanation in this handbook, so certainly does the author's usage of the term *series*. In describing the procedural steps necessary in the arranging of a collection, Ms. Price suggests that "items are sorted into series by kind of material, by subject, period, place, or some other useful division." Without arguing the merits of this methodology, the use of series in the context above is not wholly in accordance with the definition of the term as it is accepted by most archivists and manuscript curators.

Other methods suggested by the manual may well have local validity, but they must also be questioned when they are raised to the level of procedural principles. The enunciated policy of maintaining single documents in their original frames is one such case. Most frame makers have little knowledge of or regard for the preservation of what they encapsulate. Frequently severe damage can occur from the migration of lignin from the raw board backings often used in framing. Although requirements of aesthetics or provenance may necessitate the preservation of the original housing of a document, the conservation needs of the document itself often require its removal

from potentially damaging framing materials. Another apparently archaic practice advocated in the manual is the suggestion that deteriorating documents can be "mounted." If by mounting, the author means silking onto acid-free backing, encapsulation, or some other suitable restoration method for deteriorating manuscript materials, no indication of this appears in the pamphlet. The unqualified recommendation of mounting to novice manuscript curators under these circumstances is a dubious practice at best.

One final comment is in order. Ms. Price suggests that a minimum educational requirement for a manuscript cataloger is a master's degree in library science. Although such may be the requirement at Howard, this is assuredly not the case in many other repositories around the country.

In short, although it is an excellent discourse on the generally superior practices of the manuscript department at Howard University, and thus is of interest and use to the experienced manuscript professional, the current publication falls short of being, as its title would have it, a manual of policies and practices for the small manuscript repository. In addition to Ms. Price's publication, beginning manuscript curators will have to continue to rely on such standards in the field as Lucile M. Kane's far more extensive *A Guide to the Care and Administration of Manuscripts* and Bordin and Warner's *The Modern Manuscript Library* as well as newer works such as the *Forms Manual* of the Society of American Archivists.

Cornell University

RICHARD STRASSBERG

### Briefly noted

In the January 1975 *American Archivist*, the brief review of the recently published guide to the *Robert Hudson Tannahill Research Library* in Dearborn, Michigan, gave the impression, incorrectly, that copies were available for the asking and could be ordered from the library. There is a charge of \$1.40 per copy, postpaid, and orders should be sent to Mr. Earl Hartman, Merchandising Manager, Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn, Michigan 48120.

*Subject Collections*, edited by Lee Ash, is worthwhile for any librarian or researcher who needs to know which libraries have significant holdings in specific subject areas. The fourth edition, published in January 1975, includes many new subject headings and has approximately 30,000 new entries. Some manuscript holdings have been included and library collections in museums have been listed for the first time. *Subject Collections* is available from R. R. Bowker Co., 1180 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036, for \$38.50. [Isabel Clarke]