UNTIL RECENTLY historians tackled piecemeal and without any comprehensive plan the task of organizing and protecting the world's treasury of historical materials. Anything less than the energetic co-operation of international scholarship united upon a systematic program foredoomed such efforts to failure. Now the apocalypse of violence through which we are living has shaken us out of our apathy. The historian sees in the Second World War a menace to the past which is his province as well as a threat to the present way of life. Were our civilization, forged in the American and French Revolutions, to be destroyed, the chances of the records of that civilization surviving would be slender indeed.

Perhaps it is still too early to toll for archives and books that are no more, that were destroyed in the invasions of Poland, Norway, Belgium, Holland, and France. Various accounts have come out of these invasions. After the surrender of Leopold, the Pierlot government announced that it had saved 250 tons of foreign office records, from which a white book is being compiled. On the other hand, it is known that the British and French burned their archives at the Berne legations and that the former felt impelled to destroy their secret archives in Bucharest and Sofia. During the panic of May 16 caused by news of the break in the French front, employees of the Quai d'Orsay lighted huge bonfires along the Seine with great bundles of secret documents and other archives hurled out of the windows of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. All day and all night the bonfires of archives burned. Others doubtless suffered the same fate, for it is hardly credible that, during the demoralization attendant upon the French retreat, archives were moved to safer zones but war tanks were left to rust in warehouses. Doubtless serious damage was done to historical records under bombardment in ruined Warsaw and Rotterdam and in the battered fortress of London. We know that the Louvain Library and a goodly portion of the London University and Bristol libraries have been destroyed. In addition to such destruction, many records were seized by the invader. The

¹ This paper was read at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in New York in December, 1940. The author is indebted to a number of scholars for criticism and suggestions. Mr. Herbert A. Kellar, director of the McCormick Historical Association, was especially helpful.

Germans claimed that parachute troops captured the diplomatic archives of the Netherlands, and proceeded to utilize them to justify their invasion. Similar convenient "discoveries" followed the Polish and Norwegian conquests, and both invader and invaded have already resorted to the publication of color books. Just how many of the treasures of the French National Archives and the Bibliothèque Nationale have escaped the Nazis' fine-toothed comb? In addition to destruction and capture, many records were hastily removed. Included are many legation records together with those of the secretariat of the League of Nations, which, fearing an invasion of Switzerland, moved its archives to Vichy for safekeeping, and, after the German military successes in France, shipped them back to Geneva. Then they closed shop and went home. Are the League records still intact?

The air war has demonstrated that the major European depositories have no real protection against direct hits by high explosives and that they lie in constant danger of destruction by fire from incendiary bombs. Americans can learn much from the desperate archival situation abroad.

First, recent experiences abroad point to the imprudence of concentrating all national archives in one central location, however protected from bombardment. No archives building has as yet been constructed with concrete protection as solid as the Maginot Line. Today we need to re-evaluate the advantages of centralized archival housing which set in with the French Revolution and which was responsible for the preservation by the state of many archival treasures. Neither France nor Great Britain, where centralized housing was accelerated through the activities of the Public Record Office and the office of the Master of the Rolls, have consistently followed the path of centralization. In the former country separate ministerial archives have continued to expand. In Great Britain the trend toward centralization is now being reversed. The *Report* of the Royal Commission of 1910 disclosed the existence of a sizeable reaction against the centralization of national records; a considerable demand for decentralization was stimulated by the activities of the local war records committees in the First World War. The beginning of the Second World War made it necessary to move some thousand tons of the most important records of the Public Record Office to depositories set up in the countryside. This was a prudent act, as in recent months bombs have hit the Public Record Office, Somerset House, County Hall, the Inner Temple Library, and the British Museum, and that great depository of municipal archives-the Guildhall has been wrecked. Now, where a country is quickly and completely subjugated, as were Denmark, the Netherlands, and Belgium, it probably makes no difference whether the records are centralized, as at Copenhagen, or distributed, as is the case in Belgium, in nine depositories in the chief provincial centers. The panicky efforts at removal of the Amsterdam archives to locations outside the city or the sandbagging of the archives at Leyden were tragically futile gestures. Indeed, it is not unlikely that, with the hasty partition of Roumania, at least some of her regional archives have fallen to Russia, Hungary, and Bulgaria respectively. Nevertheless, it does seem patent today that complete centralization of archives invites their total loss through destruction or capture. Regional archives offer irrefutable advantages of safety and convenience. Furthermore, in certain European nations there is a decided advantage in preserving archival depositories in districts which have retained autonomous privileges or distinct cultural traditions. In this country it is quite apparent that the National Archives does not have the physical facilities to house the entire bulk of our federal records nor offer advantages to investigators comparable with properly administered regional archives. In the course of time it will become increasingly necessary for the National Archives to concentrate upon central office records, particularly of historical and inactive items. Ultimately the setting up of regional archives for the agencies of the federal government operating outside the national capital would seem to be a practical solution of the problem of housing our federal archives. Archivists will doubtless profit from the forthcoming survey of the National Archives conducted under the auspices of the Social Science Research Council.

A second lesson from the European war is that microphotography is of increasing importance as insurance against the destruction of archives. If microcopying had been in more widespread use in the diplomatic service, then, when the necessity arose of destroying foreign office or legation records to prevent their seizure, a few packing cases or even valises, packed with film, could doubtless have been transferred to safer zones. Certainly all archives now in threatened belligerent zones should be microfilmed. In the case of British records, the film could be sent to Canada or to the Library of Congress for the duration of the war, if necessary under seal. Magna Charta shuttling between the New York World's Fair and the Congressional library is symbolic of the fate of historical treasures under the new world order. Film not only can be duplicated, thereby increasing the chance of survival many times, but, as Dr. Vernon Tate has pointed out, also serves as insurance against the alteration of archival material. Where Dutch, Polish, and Norwegian archives were seized and portions edited and published by the invader, there could have been no more effective check upon tampering than to have located in advance in safe or neutral zones photographic copies of the originals. With the war emergency in mind, there was held early this summer in Washington a conference on microcopying, which, before adjourning, set up a continuation committee to compile want lists and to investigate the possibility of immediate copying in Europe. A very extensive list of suggested materials to be microcopied has been compiled. Data on thirty-five countries has been gathered with over two hundred pages dealing with Great Britain alone, and an exploratory program is now being carried on. But up to the time this paper was written no specific copying was done. It is clear that we must move far more rapidly than we have to date if we are to protect historical records from the ever-widening orbit of warfare and destruction.

Among microfilm projects launched in America in recent years for the copying of European manuscripts and printed books have been the following: (1) the project for filming the items in Pollard and Redgrave's Short-Title Catalogue; (2) the University of Michigan Law School project for filming chancery decrees in the Public Record Office; (3) the copying of Brussels manuscript material for the Library of Congress acting for the Modern Language Association, as well as of items from the Bibliothèque Nationale, Vatican Library, and Staatsbibliothek in Berlin; (4) early eighteenth century English periodicals; (5) the Harvard University project for filming foreign newspapers, which, with few exceptions, begin with files for 1938; (6) the University of California project for filming British Naval Office lists; (7) the microfilming for the Library of Congress of selected letters from the Foreign Office series in the Public Record Office; (8) microfilming of the British House of Commons Sessional Papers, 1801-1900.

Other projects have been inaugurated for the microcopying of Western Hemisphere materials. Among these should be mentioned the project to arrange and microfilm the records of the work relief activities of the federal government outside of Washington. The Library of Congress has secured microfilm copies of material in Latin-American archives. Many thousands of pages of records relating to New Mexico and the Southwest located in the National Archives at Mexico City have been microcopied for the University of New Mexico. Materials gathered from the whole country relating to the history of the lower South, 1820-1880, have been filmed for the University of Texas. The Committee of the Littleton-Griswold Fund of the American Historical Association, in addition to sponsoring the publication of colonial judicial sources in a series known as American Legal Records, has encouraged projects for microcopying of colonial court minute books. Films have been made of judicial materials in Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and coastal Virginia. The American Documentation Institute, which in 1937 assumed the functions of Bibliofilm Service, now microcopies materials in the Library of Congress. Despite requirements of national defense, we should continue technical improvements in microphotography. European armament programs have kept the optical companies abroad running at full-load capacity, so that relatively little time or attention is being devoted to microphotographic equipment or the actual filming of materials. Let us hope that situation will not arise in this country.

The advantages of microphotography are now well established. It is the cheapest copying process that has been devised to date. The NRA and AAA hearings, amounting to some 300,000 pages, were copied for about a dozen libraries at a little over \$400 a set, or oneseventh of a cent a page, while a hectograph copy would have cost \$6,000, and a printed edition involved an outlay of half a million dollars. The Maryland Gazette, 1745-1820, microcopied by the Yale University Press, has been distributed at \$95 for a complete set. With this compare the cost of a single year's bound photostats of the invaluable South Carolina Gazette, distributed by the Charleston Library Society to a handful of subscribers able to afford the tariff of about \$350 for one year's issues. Actually a year's file of a newspaper can be microcopied satisfactorily for less than the cost of binding it. Research foundations are beginning to realize that for the expense involved in underwriting the field work abroad of one investigator engaged in an examination, let us say, of certain foreign newspaper files, such files and all others that he could possibly examine in a limited study in the field, could be microcopied and made available at strategic centers of learning in this country where they

could be studied by a great many less fortunate research workers. Current conditions abroad are rendering research outside this country ever more precarious. Of the total number of grants-in-aid awarded by the Social Science Research Council in 1940 only six appointees were to engage in foreign travel. Foundations in the near future may find it more productive to make institutional grants for microphotographic equipment instead of individual grants for research and travel.² Doctoral theses of five universities are now being filmed in Microfilm Abstracts. The estimated costs of filming the Ph.D. manuscript, storing the negative, and printing and distributing an abstract to a select list of some two hundred is \$15. For microprint publication the cost will be slightly more. Any chance of slicing the printer's bill for Ph.D. theses will be welcome news to graduate students. In many cases their dissertations will enjoy about as wide a reading public in microfilm as they would have in printed form.

Microfilm saves valuable storage space-anywhere from eightyfive to ninety-seven per cent of the space necessary to house original archives. As such, it may constitute the practical solution of the problem of reduction of archival materials. The present program of the WPA to microfilm all important records for permanent preservation and then list such records for disposal as useless papers will be, according to Dr. Tate, "the first to employ microphotography systematically in a program to reduce in bulk and preserve the administrative records of the Federal Government." And to safeguard, we must eliminate. To say that nothing must be destroyed is a counsel of perfection, as we do not have adequate housing for the vast bulk of our records and there is no likelihood that our housing will ever catch up with the present rate of multiplication of archives. As our governmental activities continue to mount it is likely that routine records, time sheets, duplicates and triplicates, etc., will be systematically destroyed after microcopies are made.3 In addition to advantages of economy and space-saving, microfilm made of cellulose acetate will last; if properly cared for in a reasonably humid atmosphere, it will certainly outlast by many years our present crop of wood pulp

² See "Microphotography for Scholarly Purposes," Report of An Inquiry by the Com-

mittee on Scientific Aids to Learning, (July, 1940). ⁸ See Philip C. Brooks, "The Selection of Records for Preservation," THE AMERI-CAN ARCHIVIST, III (October, 1940), 221. In Great Britain today many old records are being utilized to satisfy the urgent demand for old paper in the manufacture of munitions. British Records Association, Technical Section, Bulletin, No. 7 (October, 1939).

newspapers, or documents written with impermanent ink or pencil on poor quality wood pulp paper.

Nevertheless, no large-scale program of microcopying should be instituted without making allowance for the disadvantages of that process. The available reading machines still have serious defects. The lenses are satisfactory for medium and low reduction, but not for the high reduction required in newspaper copying, particularly of the smaller type used in our colonial papers. Where ink is faded, paper stained, or writing cramped, as in much of the seventeenth century manuscript materials of the American colonies, microcopying is not yet signally successful. It is highly desirable at present to keep to sixteen diameters reduction if you want clear, sharp images.⁴ But at times so low a reduction involves inconveniences in handling copy, and definitely rules out for the present such economical approaches as filming of a double page, large folio size, on a single frame of 16 mm. film. The best results today are being obtained with the more expensive 35 mm. film, although copying on 16 mm. has been done satisfactorily for library cards. The film footage required in copying material on 16 mm., using full width film, is less than half that on 35 mm. Thus, employing 16 mm., it was possible to photograph the complete set of the General Sessions minutes of Plymouth, Massachusetts, 1723-1782, a total of 1,500 pages on fifteen feet of film and at a cost of about \$1.50. But the reduction amounted to about twenty-eight diameters instead of sixteen diameters and therefore too great for the present commercial reading machines. Where loose file papers which do not follow any specific sequence are filmed, the reader has considerable difficulty in locating particular items on the reel, although the reverse is true in using minute books, journals, account books, etc. The travelling scholar engaged in bulk copying may suffer some inconvenience owing to the necessity of frequently reloading his miniature Leica, Zeiss Contax, Exacta, or Argus camera, which hold only five feet of 35 mm. film. Cameras like the Folmer-Graflex holding a hundred feet or more of film and designed to operate like a single-shot motion picture camera, are still considerably beyond the means of the average scholar. On the other hand, the cost of microphotographic equipment is now coming down, and lowpriced reading machines will shortly be available, among them the Students' Microfilm Reader, simple to operate and especially suited

⁴ Dr. Tate has made some fifty diameter reductions which were perfectly clear when reprojected to size. He concedes, however, that the subject matter was ideal.

for short runs. High reduction ratios in microcopying require a high degree of skill. Mistakes in focusing, exposing, and processing at ten diameters of reduction may not be serious, but the same errors would be fatal in reductions of twenty diameters.

It is generally conceded that reading of microfilm produces considerably more eye fatigue than the ordinary reading of print on paper, although, as Dr. Tate points out, "we are seriously handicapped by the lack of a suitable measure for determining legibility." As yet it has not been possible to eliminate entirely such faults as blurred images, lack of sharpness, glare, and insufficient contrast. As a result, we find that a number of institutions still prefer photostats or the use of printed enlargements of microfilm. The Library of Congress, to take one example, has made available enlargement prints of its important series of transcripts of European archives, which are found more acceptable to the reader in that form. Similarly, that institution plans to make enlargement prints as soon as possible of its microfilm of Argentine and Mexican materials. In 1939 over twenty thousand pages of manuscripts of maritime and legal materials in the Public Record Office were photostated for the library. The Bancroft Library has printed its Mexican and Central American film to the enlargement size of eight by ten inches, and the University of New Mexico, finding that serious eyestrain was induced by using reading machines for foreign language material, decided to enlarge and print for permanent use its Southwestern photocopies.

Another approach to this problem is that offered by the recently formed Readex Microprint Corporation which reproduces microcopy on paper and calls it microprint. By means of a reading machine such material can be enlarged from ten to fifteen diameters, giving print which has both brightness and sharpness of definition. Microprint does not require the special care of film. Unlike film it is not subject to scratches, abrasions, and damage in unskilled hands, and is more convenient to file. Furthermore, the location of material is greatly simplified. It is therefore bound to attract increasing attention as an alternative method of inexpensive documentary reproduction, principally suited to the edition publication of upwards of twentyfive copies.⁵ The present achievements with microprint indicate that when exposure controls become more accurate, when finer grain emulsions are evolved, and other possibilities more fully explored,

⁵ See also John Tennant, "Readex Microprints," Journal of Documentary Reproduction, 111 (March, 1940), 66-70.

99

such as developing a binocular microscope using molded mirrors to read the microprint, even higher reductions are likely to be successfully obtained.

While microfilm is the cheapest method of documentary reproduction on the market today, other processes, such as the blueprint, photostat, photo-offset, and planograph processes offer advantages for special uses. The late Robert C. Binkley, in his valuable Manual on Methods of Reproducing Research Materials, compiled comparative costs for these various processes, including printing. Today the photooffset typescript book offers decided advantages in cost for the limited edition market of doctoral dissertations and other scholarly monographs, and, more especially, for documentary publication where the market is even more restricted than for the monograph. Hence, the possibility that microphotography will entirely supplant printing of original documents still seems remote. The National Archives is considering a "sub-publication" plan for editing certain classes of documents and making microfilm copy of the transcript. Microcopying is justified as a low-cost medium for long runs of material under favorable conditions and where little selection is necessary. Where highly selective transcripts are desired and serious research is involved, notably in short runs, the photostat or typed transcript is still preferable, as the labor costs of microcopying will in such instances overbalance the economies of the filming process.

It is true that there is no longer justification for acquiring a scholarly reputation by putting between the covers of a book masses of documentary trivia. Nevertheless, there is still room for the printing of truly significant source materials—a task which requires editorial skills of selection and evaluation, collation, annotation, and the preparation of introductory and explanatory matter as well as workable indexes. The task of historical analysis and textual interpretation is quite different from the mere mechanical work of photographing. The advantages of having the printed word available for study and reference-particularly of highly technical items-still greatly outweigh those of film. The Ames Foundation's recently published Proceedings before the Justices of the Peace in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, with fruitful commentaries by Bertha Haven Putnam and Theodore F. T. Plucknett, conclusively demonstrates the value to contemporary scholarship of such sound, wisely selected, documentary publications. Until reading machines are greatly perfected and within the price range of students, there is little likelihood that scholars will discontinue the printing of important documents. Where large numbers of copies are needed, the cost advantages of microcopying tend to disappear. However, Readex Microprint comes in at this point and, in volume production, can supply copies at a fraction of a cent a page.⁶ Far more documentary material could be made available to scholars if printing programs for outstanding sources were supplemented by microprint projects for masses of material which might require little more editorial work than that involved in suitable arrangement for reproduction. It should be clear, then, that conventional printing can no longer be regarded as the sole technique for reproducing research materials.

While as yet microcopying has not made serious inroads in the publishing business, there is no doubt that it already has influenced library management and will continue to do so. Large-scale plans for international library lending services, at best cumbersome, would seem to be replaced by film copying or microprint programs which obviate the need for the shipment of rare works or manuscripts. The war may have delayed the program in Germany of substituting for all interlibrary loans a central processing laboratory in Berlin which would immediately develop all microfilm copies made in any library and send them directly to scholars requesting the loan of materials. It is a source of comfort to scholars, in view of conditions abroad, that English books printed before 1640 are now available in this country in film. International lending programs are predicated upon continuous good-will between nations. Unhappily, this is too slender a foundation upon which to build a research program.⁷

In the disciplines of history and the social sciences we are confronted with a constantly enlarging body of research materials of both archival and printed character. In order to determine the facts about our social order and how it works we must make this material more serviceable to research. To that end we need both national and international inventory programs of manuscript materials and systematic and thorough bibliographies of published works. In this country there has long been a need for adequate inventories of federal, state, and

⁶ The Sabin, Eames, and Church bibliographies are being made available by Readex Microprint at \$50, and Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan Island*, at \$15. One of the most useful projects being undertaken by that organization is the microprinting of early American newspapers.

⁷ See Archives et Bibliothèques (1935), No. 2, 110 (1937-1938), No. 4, 299-302. Space limitations do not permit consideration of motion pictures and sound recordings as new media for preservation of primary sources which the historian of contemporary society will find it extremely advantageous to utilize.

local archives and of historical manuscripts. About forty years ago the American Historical Association sponsored an inventory of state and local records. Though by no means definitive, the results were a decided fillip to historical scholarship. There still remained the need for a comprehensive inventory of our governmental records. To the performance of that task the Survey of Federal Archives, sponsored by the National Archives, and the Historical Records Survey were instituted late in 1935 under WPA auspices. In any evaluation of their accomplishments it must be kept in mind that they served a dual purpose: (1) to systematize our records; and (2) to make work for unemployed white-collar people. As regards the latter objective, the fact that for the past five years they have employed in excess of five thousand persons and expended impressive millions would indicate that they have played a not unimportant part in the employment and rehabilitation program of WPA. However, their experiences have not been entirely parallel. Because of the singleness of purpose of the Survey of Federal Archives, the actual field work was virtually completed after a year and a half of activity. Three hundred and three inventories have been published, and about fifty more approved for publication. Only recently this inventory program has been supplemented by the publication of a useful and compact Guide to the Material in the National Archives. The SFA program should be completed this coming June.

On the other hand, the HRS is not able to show after five years that it is anywhere near the completion of its program. As of August 1, 1940, inventories for some three hundred counties had appeared, less than one-tenth of the total number of counties in this country. About one hundred more have been approved for publication and the first drafts of a good many more are on file in local offices. In addition, forty volumes of town and municipal inventories have also been published. During recent months the rate of publication has been stepped up considerably. The failure of the HRS to make more rapid progress is due chiefly to its attacking at least a half-dozen large-scale projects at the same time instead of concentrating on the principal objective-the survey of state and local records-and then taking on the rest in order of importance. In the course of time attractive but expensive sidelines have been added, such as vital records studies, church inventories, surveys of religious congregations, historical bibliographies, including an ambitious "Annotated Bibliography of American History," state-by-state check lists of American Downloaded from https://prime-pdf-watermark.prime-prod.pubfactory.com/ at 2025-07-01 via free access

imprints, surveys of manuscript collections of historical societies, studies of county formations and boundary changes, calendars and transcripts, both of personal papers, such as the Alexander Graham Bell correspondence in the Volta Bureau, and of public records, such as the police jury minutes of Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, indexes of local news in such papers as the Northampton Hampshire Gazette and the Burlington Free Press, inventories of American portraits and other paintings and painters, and a Congressional vote analysis. Now each of these projects may be commendable in itself and able to win local sponsorship, but unless we are to assume that funds for inventory work are inexhaustible, an assumption which, in the light of national defense requirements is very doubtful, there is serious risk that none will ever be completed. Other factors explaining the relatively slow progress of this project are the lack of properly qualified workers in many states owing to the increasingly stringent relief requirements of WPA, including the eighteen months' ruling, the contagious tendency in such programs to delay completing one job while expanding commitments in other directions, and the amount of time which the more highly trained personnel on the project, such as the state directors and their assistants, have had to expend cutting red tape, pacifying pressure groups, and trying to get some measure of co-operation from WPA officials. Finally, since September, 1939, the national office of HRS has become a technical rather than an administrative office and the control of the program is shared with local sponsors.

Mr. Sargent B. Child, who succeeded Dr. Luther Evans as director of the HRS, has manifested genuine concern with the problem of completing the county inventory surveys, and to that end has inaugurated a number of "key volumes" dealing with such subjects as county or town government in each state. These are meant to supplant the repetitious and prolix prefaces to the county inventories, the compiling of which has in the past seriously delayed the whole publication program. More condensed publications, such as the threevolume inventory for North Carolina, are to be commended. Similarly, compact state guides to manuscript depositories, of which one has already been published for Pennsylvania, are likely to prove very useful. If this vast series is ever to be made readily accessible to scholars, there will have to be a first-rate job of condensation done similar to the late J. Franklin Jameson's "Guide to the Items Relating to American History in the Reports of the English Historical Manuscripts Commission and Their Appendixes,"⁸ or Francis Bickley's guide to the manuscript commission reports.

With all our emphasis in recent years on inventory programs, the question might be appropriately raised as to whether we have abandoned calendaring as a research aid. True, there are difficulties inherent in a calendaring project,⁹ and it is to be seriously doubted whether workers on relief projects have the necessary skills and historical training to engage in such tasks. But in major collections of governmental documents, as with the British state papers, and with vast series of court minute books, such as the pre-federal series of Supreme Court of Judicature minutes in New York, calendaring offers some advantages over microcopying and should be seriously considered where printing *in extenso* involves too vast an expenditure to be justified by the results.

The HRS and SFA have done more than any other enterprises in our history to quicken national and local interest in the preservation of our records. They have disclosed the existence of deplorable physical conditions in some archival depositories, such as the "Mounts Aetna and Vesuvius" in the New York Custom House sub-basement; they have located archives in a basement room in Abbeville, South Carolina, the floor of which was covered with a pool of oil from a leaking barrel, and important colonial judicial records covered with cement, in a similar location in Cambridge on Maryland's eastern shore. As a result, such conditions have been corrected in numerous instances. The recent formation of the Society of American Archivists, the drafting by a subcommittee of that society of a Proposed Uniform State Public Records Act to establish standards of safety and proper control of archives, the increasing emphasis today upon archival training, as evidenced in the program inaugurated for the present academic year at the American University, and the superior physical conditions for housing archives now obtaining at the National Archives and at Hartford, Annapolis, and Raleigh, to mention only a few outstanding locations, have all served to increase interest in the care and control of archives.

There is still much to be done in safeguarding our archives. In New York state, where there is no archival centralization, county record standards are not always acceptable, varying from the effi-

⁸ American Historical Association, Annual Report, 1898, 611-700.

⁹ See Worthington C. Ford, "On Calendaring Manuscripts," Bibliographical Society of America, *Papers*, 1V (1909), 45-46.

ciently and properly housed archives at Goshen to the thoroughly deplorable archival conditions for older records obtaining at Jamaica. It may be surprising to some to learn that facilities for examining court records obtaining at such sparsely settled communities as Alfred, Maine, or Accomac, Virginia, are decidedly superior to those prevailing in the Court of General Sessions in this county. Nevertheless, judicial and county records are generally in much better condition than are municipal administrative archives, which, in this city and in many others throughout the land, lack proper housing and care. Only the vigilance of an historian prevented a great deal of the mayor's correspondence from the days of Tweed to those of Walker from recently being destroyed. Clipping books of the administration, collected at city expense and with city labor, have customarily been taken away by departing mayors. In this way students have been deprived of invaluable records of our municipal affairs, amounting for the present administration alone to several hundred volumes. In short, the need for administrative archives of inactive records of such large cities as New York is clearly indicated today.

Our archival resources in this country have suffered far more heavily from the indifference of bureaucracy than from fires, hurricanes, or torrential floods. From this city alone ample illustrations could be drawn. Some forty years ago there were sold as old paper many tons of records from the Barge Office in New York and the Hall of Records. An autograph dealer salvaged some, including custom house entries from 1790-1810 and a large portion of the file papers of the mayor's court of this city. For many years until his recent death he made a handsome living largely from the sale of holograph items culled from this collection. The failure to draw a hard-and-fast line between the personal papers of public officials and their official correspondence has hampered the effective use of administrative archives. Many officials have taken all significant items away with them on leaving office. Postmaster-General Brown of the Hoover régime burned his papers. The use of official papers has. frequently been restricted by descendants of public officeholders. The papers of Albert Gallatin and Woodrow Wilson are illustrations of this. President Roosevelt, by making his papers available to students, has set a precedent which may quicken the conscience of public men hereafter.

One field of public archives that has deservedly received consid-

erable attention in recent years is that of legal records of courts and legislative bodies. The Committee on the Littleton-Griswold Fund of this association is committed to publishing judicial records of the original states prior to the published law reports in order to provide a documentary history of the development of our legal institutions. A field survey has been completed,¹⁰ and, in addition to the three volumes already published, about a dozen others are scheduled to appear over the course of the next few years. It is encouraging to note in this connection that some of the law schools, notably New York University, Columbia, Harvard, and Michigan, have manifested interest in publishing the legal records of our origins and in promoting American legal history. Not merely legal historians but other social scientists as well are coming to recognize that the activities of the courts offer a fertile field of investigation. The increasing emphasis upon the common man and his ways will turn the historian more and more to court records. Mrs. Spruill's recent study of women in the old South, to take one example, demonstrates effectively the value of judicial records to the social historian.

Inventory programs are needed for the vast field of historical manuscripts, for there is increasing awareness today on the part of the social scientist of the value of such types of materials as family, church, business, and farm records. While the genealogist has long been a master of the technique of research, the social historian is finding it increasingly worth while to utilize family and personal papers. Allan Nevins' notable study of Rockefeller is the best of the recent examples. It is hoped that the church inventories now being carried on by the HRS of Baptist and Roman Catholic archives will, if completed, supplement the excellent survey made by William Henry Allison of Protestant church archives in this country.

As regards their systematic inventorying and effective utilization, nonpublic archives quite naturally offer a more serious problem than governmental records. Except in so far as certain classes of records are required to be kept for tax purposes and, more recently, to comply with the record-keeping provisions of the wage-and-hour legislation, they are in general outside the field of public control. Yet their importance to social scientists is becoming increasingly evident today. Europe has pointed the way in the preservation of business records. The example of the Krupp works in establishing the first

¹⁰ See Richard B. Morris, Early American Court Records: A Publication Program (New York, 1940), Anglo-American Legal History Series.

modern private business archives in Essen in 1905 was followed by other German industries. In the following year the first central business archives was set up in Cologne for accumulating by gift the old business records of mining, manufacturing, banking, and shipping enterprises. Similar institutions sprang up in Switzerland, Belgium, and the Netherlands before the First World War. In this connection it is of interest to note that the 1937 meeting of the Archives Section of the Society of Magyar Librarians and Archivists was held in the home offices of one of Hungary's great iron works. In England as recently as 1934 there was organized a Council for the Preservation of Business Archives, affiliated with the British Records Association.

In this country leadership in the organization and preservation of business records was assumed by the Business Historical Society, organized in Boston in 1925. This society has urged that certain classes of business records relating to accounting, purchasing, production, inventory, labor and personnel, sales, advertising, statistics, and general finance be preserved because of their inestimable value to economic historians. It also recommended the preparation of firm diaries detailing important events in the life of an enterprise. The recent formation of the American Economic History Association, the proposed Industrial History Society, and the founding of local groups devoted to economic history in Indiana and Minnesota are all heartening signs of a broadening of interest in the preservation and study of business records in this country. In recent years much attention has been devoted especially to the subject of price data; in this country notably by Professors Warren and Pearson and Dr. Anne Bezanson and her collaborators; for Europe, by the International Scientific Committee on Price History, whose publications of findings on English prices and wages have begun with the recent issuance of the first volume on price tables in the Mercantile Era.

Largely as the result of recent emphasis upon economic history important business collections have been accumulated by institutions or are in the process of systematic organization by some of our larger business corporations. The Baker Library, with its notable collection of material relating to the American textile industry, including the Slater collection, and to foreign trade, in which category fall the John Jacob Astor papers utilized by Mr. Porter, is perhaps outstanding for the nineteenth century. The Essex Institute of Salem, with its important collection of maritime materials and items relating to the oriental trade, the New York and Pennsylvania Historical Societies —the latter with its notable Hollingsworth Collection,¹¹ the Carter Brown Library and Newport Historical Society, to mention merely a few of the outstanding depositories, have valuable collections on commerce and industry for the eighteenth century. Regional collections are also in process of formation, notably at the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania and the University of Pittsburgh, where records of steel products and foundry companies are being gathered, and a start has been made to collect and preserve business manuscripts in the South in such institutions as the University of Virginia, the College of William and Mary, Duke and North Carolina Universities, and the University of South Carolina, which only recently acquired important data relative to cotton raising in the nineteenth century.

A number of business firms have begun to set up company history files-the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, Standard Statistics, the International Nickel Company, and the Hardware Mutual Casualty Company are but a few. In Germany, business firms, especially banking firms, have frequently undertaken the preparation of volumes devoted to the development of their particular enterprise, in this way preserving valuable data on business history.¹² In recent years some American firms, such as the Philadelphia advertising firm of Ayer, have undertaken publications based on their archives. The invaluable archives of such railroads as the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific, available in the James J. Hill Reference Library in St. Paul and the company's general offices in Chicago, and the Illinois Central, whose records were studied by Paul Wallace Gates,¹³ are of prime importance for the economic historian. Dun and Bradstreet, whose New York archives are a mine of information on business credit conditions, have in course of preparation a volume commemorating their centenary. Professor Albion's excellent study of the port of New York, 1815-1860, illustrates the value of nineteenth century commercial and maritime archives for historian and economist. The increasing recognition being accorded to the role of labor in our industrial society serves to emphasize the

¹¹ See Historical Records Survey, "Descriptive Report on the Hollingsworth Collection in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania" (Typescript, Philadelphia, 1938)—a copy on deposit with the society.

²² Such a volume is Die Bayerische Staatsbank, 1780-1930.

¹³ The Illinois Central Railroad and Its Colonization Work (Cambridge, 1934). Many of the early records of this railroad were destroyed by fire in 1871. Many of the Baltimore and Ohio records are believed to have suffered a similar fate.

need for the systematic organization and preservation of trade union archives and the encouragement of studies based upon such primary materials.

The research worker interested in the location of business records should not overlook the special libraries. The most recent edition of the *Special Libraries Directory of the United States and Canada* shows a great increase in the number of specialized collections listed since the *Directory* was first published in 1921. Of 1,154 libraries listed, from one-third to one-half are of business organizations or trade associations. Out of 233 special libraries listed for New York state, 179 represent business firms or economic associations, some of which, like the ubiquitous National Association of Manufacturers, whose history is now being written, should be a fertile field for the research worker. In a current survey being undertaken of materials relating to national defense, the resources of special libraries occupy a conspicuous place.

Special libraries are indispensable to historical scholars in other fields. We need only mention the libraries of Baptist material at Hamilton, New York, and Chester, Pennsylvania, and the libraries of material on freemasonry at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Washington, Boston, and Philadelphia, as outstanding illustrations of important special collections. Such important depositories as the Huntington Library and the William L. Clements Library are today well known to the historical profession.¹⁴

More elusive but equally significant for the economic historian are the records of American agriculture contained in farmers' diaries, account books of rural stores, mills, elevators, stockyards, tobacco warehouses, and cotton gins, the rural newspaper, and the land office. The role of labor-saving machinery in American agricultural history can be studied in the archives of the McCormick Historical Library. As a matter of fact, the McCormick Reaper Company records, running from 1831, when the reaper was invented, until the merger with other concerns to form the International Harvester Company in 1902, is considered one of the most complete collections of individual business and corporate enterprise to be found in this country. The records of the great farmers' organizations, such as the American Society of Equity, are especially important to track down. But in many instances, as with the records of the Patrons of Husbandry,

¹⁴ See D. C. McMurtrie, A Suggested Program for Augmenting Materials for Research in American Libraries (Evanston, Illinois, 1939).

important data have been thoughtlessly destroyed. A few years ago four truck loads of records of the early days of the Grange in the form of letters, copies of reports, etc. were destroyed. Definitely fitting into this picture is the institution of the mail order house with its close relation to farm life and rural purchases. Fortunately, files of mail order catalogues are available, and, as Mr. Cohen has demonstrated in his recent study of the Sears Roebuck catalogue, they can illuminate a significant page of our social history as well as provide a good deal of innocent amusement at the expense of the past.¹⁵ In addition to mail order house records, those of the larger retail units are worth increased attention. Forthcoming studies of Marshall Field and R. H. Macy are awaited, but attractive possibilities remain in this field.

Although we are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of farm tenancy, its story, as Everett E. Edwards has shown, is often unrecorded, resting in considerable part on local custom and oral agreements. Aside from leases sometimes filed with county clerks, there is nowhere a single group of records on this subject.¹⁶ A recent development of interest to students of farm archives, and one which offers a new method of research for the agricultural historian, is the *Wisconsin Domesday Book*.¹⁷

One indubitable result of the present military tension throughout the world has been the rediscovery on the part of historians of the importance of military history and the relation of the epochal military campaign to social and cultural achievements. Total war is making the civilian more keenly aware of the importance of studying past warfare and its effects on civilian society. The establishment of the *International Review of Military History* by a subcommission of the International Congress of Historical Sciences and the activities in this country of the American Military Institute will doubtless give renewed interest to the subject of military archives.

¹⁵ For many years the Montgomery Ward catalogue carried the notation on the cover, "The Original Grange Supply House." In catalogue No. 38, published in 1885, the following statement appears: "Our business was organized in 1872 to meet the wants of the Patrons of Husbandry from whom we have received our main support. We do not, however, from prudential reasons, refuse the patronage of any person. The more goods we handle the cheaper we can sell them."

¹⁶ As regards farm journals, the United States Department of Agriculture has a manuscript, "List of American Agricultural Journals," prepared by the late Stephen Conrad Stuntz. Among the forthcoming projects of Readex Microprint is the microprinting of a selected list of publications in agricultural history.

¹⁷ See Joseph Schafer, "The Wisconsin Domesday Book," Agricultural History, XIV (January, 1940), 23-32; "A Rural Life of a Western State," in J. F. Willard and C. B. Goodykoontz, eds., The Trans-Mississippi West (Boulder, Colorado, 1930), 291-308.

The great increase in the annual publication of material of historical interest challenges us to a reconsideration of our present bibliographical techniques. At least four thousand historical publications appeared annually at the outbreak of the Second World War.¹⁸ For France alone Messrs. Caron and Jarvc indicated in their Répertoire des periodiques de langue française (Paris, 1935) about seven hundred periodicals of historical interest were being published. This takes no account of the thousands of monographs and documentary publications. A recent inventory of official publications of American counties lists 5,248 items.¹⁹ Up to the present time we have approached this problem either through the device of the highly selective guide, such as the bibliography prepared by Professor Dutcher and others entitled, A Guide to Historical Literature, in which, in the compass of some twelve hundred pages, the world's historical works are arranged according to systematic plan, or, in order to keep au courant, through that interesting experience in international co-operation, The International Bibliography of the Historical Sciences. The first type of bibliography holds little for the trained scholar; for the neophyte in historical matters selected bibliographies in sound textbooks will probably be more helpful. The second type of bibliography, which seeks to present a comprehensive view of the world's annual output, fails on the grounds of subjectivity and incompleteness. Until 1937 material on postwar history was not included in the International Bibliography; each national committee excluded from the list all polemic and propaganda. Therefore, as the editors are the first to admit, we really do not have a full bibliography, but rather a mirror of "national tastes in historiography, relating to the recent and current." The history of the Western Hemisphere has been . cavalierly dealt with in the International Bibliography, as are Asia and Africa, represented by a "Selección Moderada." Out of 5,851 entries listed for 1935 (which appeared, by the way, in 1938) only 142 items related to the original thirteen colonies or the history of the United States, as against 4,430 items for the same area in Griffiin's Writings on American History for 1935. The International Bibliography, while useful in special fields of European history, has been especially inadequate on the documentary and biographical side of

¹⁸ See P. Caron and M. Jaryc, World List of Historical Periodicals and Bibliographies (New York, 1939).

¹⁹ J. G. Hodgson, ed., The Official Publications of American Counties—A Union List (Fort Collins, Colorado, 1937).

American history. For the American, British, and French historians the annual bibliographies of Miss Grace Gardner Griffin, of A. A. Milne, and of Caron and Stein will continue to be used far more frequently than the *International Bibliography*. In this connection, it is of interest to note that the Historical Records Survey is planning to publish an annual report of accessions of historical manuscripts by historical agencies in this country which will parallel the function of *Writings on American History* for printed items.

While co-operative efforts have not always been signally successful in producing comprehensive bibliographies (historians await with interest the completion of the "Annotated Bibliography of American History," a WPA project under the direction of Dr. George Mc-Farland), historical journals such as the Economic History Review and the Journal of Modern History continue to furnish us with valuable classified bibliographies to the current literature. Extensive topical and regional bibliographies have been produced in recent vears. In the first category should be mentioned the critical work of Bemis and Griffin, Guide to the Diplomatic History of the United States 1775-1921 (Washington, D.C., 1935), G. E. Manwaring's thorough and admirably planned Bibliography of British Naval History (London, 1930), and Stephan and Leube's indispensable bibliography of modern church history.20 The First World War produced a mass of bibliographical items which the Hoover War Library at Stanford has endeavoured to preserve and systematize and to which Almond and Lutz have provided a useful bibliographical guide. It also stimulated some excellent bibliographical studies, notably those of Camille Bloch for France and of M. E. Bulkley for the United Kingdom, and valuable documentary collections or guides, such as those of Leland and Mereness and of Hubert Hall. For the Second World War documentary and bibliographical activities in America are already well under way. The War Documentation Service, sponsored by the Philadelphia regional group, has published a check list. Other organizations, such as the Hoover Library, the Yale University Library, and the A.L.A. Committee on the Importation of Books, are attempting to provide adequate documentation. A good deal of attention is also being devoted to an analysis of radio broadcasts and war propaganda generally. The Princeton Listening Center is checking on short-wave broadcasts to determine their content and influence. Washington and Lee Univer-

²⁰ Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte, Teil 4, Die Neuzeit (Tübingen, 1931).

sity is setting up a research division known as the Propaganda Promotion Archives. The publications of the Institute of Propaganda Analysis demonstrate that in many respects the subtlest and most insidious form of propaganda is propaganda analysis itself. Madge and Harrisson's Mass-Observation's Weekly Intelligence Service is an important contribution to the recording of trends in British opinion during the Second World War as are the Gallup and Roper polls in this country. But generalizations on public opinion must be cautiously accepted, for recent polls have shown the hazards of statistical inference from current samplings,²¹ especially where the answer to the opinion question is unconsciously suggested by the phraseology or where the question leaves only two alternatives, neither of which may be desirable. Thorough war documentation includes, of course, a complete record of the activities of peace or antiwar groups and a record of peace aims as formulated at various stages of belligerency. Under the auspices of this association a "Guide to the Opinion-Forming Press of the United States" is in course of preparation.

National and regional bibliographies continue to flourish. Doubtless they are inspired by such models of national bibliographies as the classic of Dahlmann-Waitz, Pirenne's bibliography of Belgium, now available in a third edition, and the notable *Short-Title Catalogue of Books* . . . 1475-1640, now being continued by Donald Wing for the period, 1641-1700, as the initial publication venture of the newly-formed Index Society. Thorough local bibliographies such as the *Bibliographie alsacienne* and the *Bibliographie lorraine* are of great utility to the specialist, as are Morgan's bibliography of British history, 1700-1715, and the compilations of Williams, Davies, and Grose, and J. F. Kenney's *Sources for the Early History of Ireland*. Worthy of widespread emulation in the field of local history is Earl G. Swem's monumental *Virginia Historical Index*, two volumes, which locates subjects, persons, and places in a number of serials and other historical publications relating to Virginia.

The need for inventories and bibliographies of historical resources in leading urban centers is increasingly felt today. Such a study has already been published for historical materials in New York City prior to 1800. The union library list for the Philadelphia area, which

²¹ Defending the Gallup poll, which erroneously reported a Willkie trend on the very eve of the 1940 presidential election, George Gallup admits that the experiment in a last-minute telegraphic poll did not work as "our interviewers were unable to find, early Sunday morning, the right proportion of low income people in the time allotted them."(!)

includes over three million titles available in some 150 library collections, will serve as a model for other regional union catalogues. B. M. Headicar and C. Fuller have compiled an inventory for the five important London collections, mainly in English, French, and German.²² Such inventories and union lists can best be directed by urban bibliographical planning committees such as the one functioning in the Philadelphia area under a grant from the Carnegie Corporation. Other union catalogue projects are under way in this country, notably the great union catalogue of the Library of Congress. In addition to making resources more conveniently available to scholars, such union lists promote intelligent co-operation in institutional book-buying to the end that needless duplication may be avoided and resources strengthened on the basis of comparison of available materials in special fields. Union lists of periodicals and newspapers are constantly growing. Two supplements have already been issued to the Union List of Serials in Libraries in the United States and Canada. Three hundred fifty-one periodicals available in New York City for the period 1728-1870, few of which appear in Poole's Index, have been systematically indexed by a WPA project under the direction of the New York University library. This should prove of immense value to historians as well as students of American literature. As regards newspapers, Clarence S. Brigham's bibliography for the period, 1690-1820, published in the Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, 1913-1937, has recently been supplemented by a union list, 1821-1936, compiled by Miss Winfred Gregory.23

If we are sufficiently prudent to preserve our records from loss and destruction, we must also be prepared to organize the constantly enlarging body of such research material. Aside from making records accessible through better housing and administration, microfilming, well-planned inventorying, calendaring, and selective documentary publication, we must be prepared to utilize such records effectively in the writing of history. There is good reason to fear that the flood of monographs and periodical literature is likely to overwhelm the digestive powers of individual scholars.24 The Work Projects Ad-

²² A London Bibliography of the Social Sciences (London, 1931-1932).

²³ See also Solon J. Buck, "The Status of Historical Bibliography in the United States,"

Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, IXIII (October, 1939), 390-400.
²⁴ See David Owen, "Co-operative History," Yale Review, XXIV (1934-1935), 420-422; Hugo Andres Krüss, "Comment on Domine Le Savoir," Archives et Bibliothèques (1937-1938), No. 1, 7-12.

ministration as of May 1, 1939, announced that 5,137 research projects in the social sciences were being undertaken.²⁵ In the field of history these pieces of research ranged anywhere from "interviews with ex-slaves for the purpose of compiling a history of their experiences during slavery and the period of reconstruction" to a history of the legends and rumors concerning gold in California from 1530 to 1840. In addition, 2,244 projects were listed as being currently undertaken by American historians in the April, 1940, supplement to the *American Historical Review*. Apropos of this problem, the Committee of Ten of this association has recently suggested a division of labor between our leading historical reviews on the ground that the world's output of historical literature "is fast becoming too extensive for any one journal to review it all."

We are coming to realize that the analysis and evaluation of historical sources involve interdisciplinary techniques. The other social sciences have been conscripted in the recent production of encyclopedias or historical dictionaries and in our current crop of co-operative histories. One may be permitted the plausible inference that, while the large co-operative inventory programs now under way foreshadow more extensive co-operative histories than we have yet seen, it is likely that individual scholars will continue to make the most original and best integrated contributions. But whether as an individual or in co-operation with others, the seeker of a comprehensive view of history is profoundly dependent upon the research results of others, not alone in the field of history but in all the social sciences. Hence, we must improve the methods of assaying the quality of completed pieces of research in the various social sciences, of analysis of content, questioning premises, and testing conclusions. Book reviews, even in professional journals too often fail to perform this function satisfactorily, but emphasize minor details and avoid coming to grips with the larger implications of a study. Moreover as Arthur M. Schlesinger has recently pointed out, "they do not supply the need of reappraisal after the investigator's conclusions have been tested by the research of others." To that end the Social Science Research Council has been engaged in subjecting to critical analysis a list of studies published in the United States since the First World War, which authorities in the respective fields have declared to be of outstanding significance. In the field of American history Webb's

²⁵ See Index of Research Projects, Vols. 1-III (Works Progress Administration, 1938, 1939).

The Great Plains was selected, and an appraisal written by Fred A. Shannon. The author in turn was given an opportunity for comment and rejoinder. More such studies are needed in the field of history in order that the technique of evaluation may be established on a firm foundation. This should lead ultimately, not only to improving the quality of scholarly book reviews, but also to the addition of regular reappraisal sections in our historical journals.

In addition to raising standards of appraisal of results in the social sciences, we need co-ordinated planning, both of programs for the reproduction of original documents and for directing the individual research of seminar paper, doctoral monograph, and post-doctoral study. Numerous research foundations as well as the graduate schools of our larger universities are all engaged in research programs which frequently overlap, thus involving unnecessary travel and wasteful duplication of research effort. What is needed is a central planning committee for proposing fields and subfields of research. In this way more genuine research co-operation might be obtained and duplication eliminated. Perhaps, too, through a proper distribution of subjects for doctoral and post-doctoral research, there could be avoided the assignment of topics for the M.A. and Ph.D. beyond the capacity of the investigator or the too frequent concentration upon pedagogic trivia or Czerny exercises. Even if somewhat unfair, there is still much substance in Archibald MacLeish's criticism of the Ph.D. thesis as "work done for the sake of doing work—perfectly conscientious, perfectly laborious, perfectly irresponsible."

As regards inventorying, calendaring, and documentary reproduction, we need an interdisciplinary clearing house for systematizing programs now being carried on without genuine co-operation, either between the respective disciplines of the social sciences or within the historical guild. Represented in such a clearing house might well be such groups as the Joint Committee on Materials for Research of the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies, the Committee on Scientific Aids to Learning of the National Research Council, the Sub-Committee on Research Materials of the Committee on Public Administration of the SSRC, the Public Records and Legal History Committees of the American Historical Association, the Committee for International Studies of the Institute for Advanced Study, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Foreign Policy Association, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the American Documentation Institute, the Society of American

115

Archivists, the American Library Association, the Associations of State, Research, and College and Reference Libraries, the American Bibliographical Society, and representatives of the National Archives and the Library of Congress. To such a body could be confidently entrusted the task of co-ordinating the inventory, publication, and microcopying programs, as well as that of providing for a central listing of microfilm copies and the preservation of master negatives at a central depository.

Within the time limitations allotted this paper it was feasible merely to suggest rather than to explore some of the possibilities of improving our research techniques and our research opportunities. Our world is rapidly changing before our eyes. The Model T has given way to the Stuka bomber. But we historians are still largely applying the research techniques evolved in the golden era of Bancroft and Stubbs to interpreting the very latest "syllable of recorded time." Our historical and archival techniques must of necessity be drastically overhauled if we are to study and preserve the record of the momentous changes of these hurried and turbulent years and contribute an appraisal of modern life that will have a true measure of validity.

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