

sidered as part of Council's spring budget meeting.

### Council Spring Meeting

Council chose 6-8 June 1983 as the dates of its spring meeting. The meeting will be held in Chicago; if an appropriate site is not available, then Council will meet in Washington, D.C.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

ANN MORGAN CAMPBELL  
*Executive Director*

### W. Neil Franklin

W. Neil Franklin, Alexandria, Va., resident, American history specialist, and retired federal archivist, who after leaving the civil service reappeared at the National Archives to locate documents for editorial projects sponsored by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, died from stomach and heart ailments on 29 October 1982, at the age of 80. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Evelyn Gibbs Franklin, their two married children, and five grandchildren.

Born at Morristown, Tenn., on 24 August 1902, he was reared there forty miles northeast of the state university at Knoxville, where he received the A.B. degree and a reserve commission in 1924. He reported briefly to Camp McClellan with officers of the 323d Infantry and then experienced a year's teaching at Newport, Tenn. Proceeding to Princeton University, he attained the A.M. degree in 1926, followed by a Schuyler scholarship, then a Boudinot fellowship, and the Ph.D. degree in 1929. As assistant professor, then associate professor of American History, he taught at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, from 1928 to 1932. Forming summer connections with the University of Tennessee (1930-35), Franklin married at Knoxville in July 1931, taught at nearby

Maryville College (1934-35), and lectured at U.T. (1935-36). Articles he wrote on colonial topics, including Indian trade, appeared in the North Carolina, Mississippi Valley, and East Tennessee historical publications. He became managing editor for his regional historical society before his name appeared on the editorial board of the Southern Historical Association.

Appreciating what it meant for the nation to construct and operate a National Archives Building in Washington, D.C., he welcomed a role in assembling federal records and administering them to the advantage of the government and the public. Appointed a special examiner on 1 June 1936, he installed his family in congenial nearby Alexandria, where, as in Washington, he made numerous friends. Two of his Virginia neighbors were another early examiner, Philip C. Brooks, and Thad Page, an Archives executive.

Franklin worked up from associate archivist (1936-41) to archivist, Division of Veterans' Administration Archives (1941-43), and to chief, Division of Navy Department Archives (1943-44). As chief, General Reference Division and Branch (1944-62) and chief, Central Research Room Branch (1963-64), he and his signature came into wide notice though few people knew that W. stood for William. Later he presided as chief, Diplomatic, Legal, and Fiscal Branch (1963-66), an office controlling many valuable records. After serving as archivist, Territorial Papers Branch (1966-72), he officially retired in the summer of 1972.

A pioneer in the Society of American Archivists, he contributed to this journal occasional reviews and the article describing the 1943 meeting at Princeton. On the 1948 program at Raleigh he discussed reference. *The National Genealogical Society Quarterly* (1962-64) and a 1971 NARS publication

aired his considerable census expertise. He kept up his earlier ties with foremost historical organizations and joined the Association for Documentary Editing and the Society for History in the Federal Government. Until the spring after this respected native of East Tennessee attended the 1981 Los Angeles AHA meeting, he assisted the editors of the Andrew Johnson papers in locating archival items.

H. B. FANT

### Dorothy Hill Gersack

The Society of American Archivists, the archival profession, and her many friends and professional colleagues lost a highly valued and admired associate with the passing of Dorothy Jean Hill Gersack early this year. Dorothy was one of the earliest employees of the National Archives, beginning her career there on 2 November 1936. She was a pioneer in the development of techniques for description and appraisal and for handling the retention or disposal of the rapidly growing numbers of U.S. government records flowing into the National Archives. Many of these techniques became standard in records management programs for all U.S. government agencies.

Dorothy qualified as a specialist in records of the Veterans Administration, the United States District Courts, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation and in military records and history. On occasion she was assigned to other Federal agencies and to the Organization of American States, at their request to advise on records management problems.

She wrote many articles that were published in professional publications and presented numerous papers to professional groups. She was a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists and edited the News Notes for its journal, the *American Archivist*, for eight years. She was a member of the American

Library Association, the District of Columbia Library Association, and the Regional Cataloguers Association and is listed in *Who's Who of American Women* (1975). She travelled extensively as a member of several Society of American Archivists Study Tours, visiting archival and other cultural institutions in many countries, including the Soviet Union. She also faithfully attended the annual meetings of the Society of American Archivists for over 30 years.

Born in Livingston, Illinois, Dorothy attended Wittenberg College in Springfield, Ohio, and Western College in Oxford, Ohio. She graduated from the University of Illinois, where she majored in library science and earned B.S. and M.S. degrees.

Always public spirited and community minded, she was active in civic affairs in Montgomery County, Maryland, and was appointed to the Bethesda Fire Board in September 1964 as the representative of the Old Georgetown Road Citizens Association, serving as its secretary from January 1969 until June 1975. She was a founding member of the American Federation of Labor Lodge at the National Archives and participated in an outstanding manner in achieving a number of highly successful professional training reforms.

She retired from the National Archives on 31 July 1975 and left Bethesda to reside in homes she and her husband had established in Delray Beach, Florida, and in Ruidoso Downs, New Mexico. She was stricken with cancer in 1980 and bravely underwent a special treatment program at Los Alamos, New Mexico, in anticipation of resuming her activities, including a long-planned trip to China. She succumbed on 5 January, 1983 at the home of her daughter in Ellicott City, Maryland.

KATHRYN M. MURPHY  
*National Archives and Records  
Service*