

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

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Air Raid Protection Code for Federal Buildings and Their Contents, prepared by the Interdepartmental Advisory Committee on Protection, and approved by the Federal Works Administrator. (Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office, 1942. Pp. xiv, 173. \$.20.)

Code for the Protection of Federal Buildings and Their Contents from Subversive Hostile Acts, prepared by the Interdepartmental Advisory Committee on Subversive Activities, and approved by the Federal Works Administrator. (Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office, 1942. Pp. vii, 39. \$.10.)

For archivists—federal, state, municipal, and private—the importance of these codes will depend upon the extent to which the measures relating to the protection of records are enforced or observed by the federal government, and are known and used by state and local officials, and by private individuals. Both codes were prepared at the request of the President to assist the Public Buildings Administration in the execution of a nation-wide program of protection for federal buildings. Because of their general application, the Office of Civilian Defense has ordered reprints of both, distributing the *Air Raid Protection Code* to building managers and owners, and distributing the *Code for Protection . . . from Subversive Hostile Acts* to the executive officers of various municipalities. The application of either code by non-federal agencies will depend however upon the apparent danger of aggression or subversive action, and upon the extent to which the codes actually reach other individuals concerned with the use and protection of buildings or their contents.

The codes are mutually important, and to some extent duplicate each other. Both define many of the same terms, both use the same classification of building construction, both establish the same scale of priorities based upon the functional use of the buildings for war purposes. Many other points are also common to both codes, and they are intended to be used together, for steps relating to the survey of the building, and the organization of fire-defense, first-aid and rescue squads are not supposed to be duplicated. There are two codes, probably because there were two committees, and the duplication would be unwarranted except for the fact that the *Code for Protection . . . from Subversive Hostile Acts* should only be applied by custodians of buildings used for essential war work.

For archivists the importance of the *Code for Protection . . . from Subversive Hostile Acts* relates to the protection of records and the preservation of their integrity from subversive destruction, fire, or theft. In so far as

America is endangered by aggression, the importance of the *Air Raid Protection Code* on the other hand relates to its provisions for the evacuation of records not needed for war business, for protective measures for material retained for use, for the reallocation of space so that the most valuable records are safest, and for the salvage of damaged materials. In the past great damage has been done to records by hurried evacuation, and the code requires that all steps for the protection of records be completed before air raids are imminent. Especially helpful to custodians of records is an extensive appendix, with diagrams illustrating not only blackout methods, the protection of skylights, and shelter areas, but also illustrating the distribution of filing equipment, so that it serves the dual purpose of protecting more important records and staff. Most helpful is Chapter x which lists agencies, persons, and publications to whom records custodians can turn, and which discusses the problem of classification of records needing various degrees of protection, and the problem of physical housing. Unfortunately the section on salvage is too brief, and the extent to which burned, or water soaked records can be salvaged is not emphasized by specific example. Information on salvage is needed not only for war, but for peace, and the republication of this chapter, with an expanded discussion of salvage, including lamination and dehydration would be justified, so that the information can be placed in the hands of the custodians of records and their friends for their use and consideration, and so it would not be obfuscated by the other considerations of the code.

DAVID C. DUNIWAY

The National Archives

The North Carolina Historical Commission, Forty Years of Public Service, 1903-1943. Bulletin No. 43, of the North Carolina Historical Commission. (Raleigh, N.C. 1942. Pp. 115, 15 illustrations.)

The addition of only a library binding and a shortened title might easily have transformed this lucidly written and well illustrated paper-covered bulletin into a best-seller among archivists, historical society librarians, and local historians. Within the space of the first fifty pages is related interestingly and succinctly an account of the formation of this commission and its achievements to the present time. In this portion of the bulletin is described the archival materials in the commission's custody, the utilization of these materials, the publication policy of the historical commission and the Legislative Reference Library, the enactment of legislation to authorize and advance this work, the significance and use of the Hall of History, the erection of memorials and markers, and the co-operative work of the WPA and NYA.

The section entitled "The Historical Commission—Past, Present, and Future" is a splendid résumé of the commission's progress as well as a glimpse of its plans for the future. Although portions of this section are repetitious

of some of the introduction, this should not be construed as a fault in as much as many readers studiously avoid "introductions." Furthermore, such a repetition serves as a forceful reminder to the citizens and officials of those states, which are remiss in the preservation of their historical and archival heritage, that they still have to meet and surmount the barriers which confronted the people of North Carolina in this field of endeavor forty years ago.

Seven appendices occupy the remainder of the 115 pages of this bulletin. The source material presented in these appendices makes this publication an indispensable aid to anyone attempting serious research among the historical records of North Carolina. The first appendix contains a codification of the laws governing the North Carolina Historical Commission. Brief but adequate biographies of the members of the commission 1903-1942 constitute the second appendix. Appendix III, "Materials in the Commission's Archives," is important enough to have been a separate publication. Descriptions indicating the kinds and quantities of records are given under the following categories: state archives (including legislative, executive, judicial records), county archives, town archives, United States of America archives relating to North Carolina, foreign archives relating to North Carolina, personal and unofficial collections, maps, newspapers, pamphlets, and textbooks. The next three appendices are bibliographical, listing respectively the publications of the North Carolina Historical Commission (including the writings of its staff members), the North Carolina Historical Record Survey, and the Survey of Federal Archives in North Carolina. Appendix VII is a complete list of busts, tablets, and markers placed throughout the state by the historical commission.

This publication is not only a record of the achievement of the North Carolina Historical Commission; it is also a memorial to those citizens, public officials, and legislators who had the vision and courage to work for the preservation and dissemination of the knowledge of their state's historical resources. In this writer's opinion this bulletin deserves a place on archivists' and librarians' reference shelves along with Jenkinson or Muller, Feith, and Fruin. Although not a textbook for archivists, it could very well serve as a manual by virtue of the numerous examples, rather than theories, it contains regarding the inception and administration of a modern, well-balanced American historical agency.

LEON DEVALINGER, JR.

The Delaware Archives

Catalogue of Archival Material, Hall of Records, State of Maryland. Publications of the Hall of Records Commission, No. 2. (Annapolis. 1942. Pp. 161.)

If one were inclined to quibble about the titles of books, one might make a case for calling this volume a "Guide to the Holdings of the Maryland Hall

of Records." It contains not only descriptions of archival material—state and local government records and church records—but also listings of newspaper files and of miscellaneous manuscript collections received from private sources. In arrangement the volume follows the structure of government, with the sections for the records of government agencies grouped under the following headings: executive, legislative, judicial, financial, military, miscellaneous state offices, county records, and city and town. Following the sections dealing with government records are those for church records, newspapers, and private manuscript collections. The entire holdings of the Hall of Records at the end of August, 1942, are covered, and one can only quote enviously from the excellent introduction: "Every paper, every volume which had come into the Hall of Records before September 1, 1942 is arranged in order, accessioned and available for use." All materials listed in the catalogue are open to the public, and typewritten, photostat, or microfilm copies of them can be obtained, certified if necessary.

A typical section dealing with the records of a government agency consists of a brief historical sketch of the agency and its records, the length of the sketch increasing when previously published information on the agency and its records is scant; references to works used in preparing the sketch; and a description of the records, including citations when portions of the records have been published in the series *Archives of Maryland*, a statement of the quantity of the records in terms of boxes and volumes, and the Hall of Records accession numbers, which are useful both as finding aids and as a means of showing the date of transfer.

The volume is of such high quality that only two slight improvements can be suggested. Its introduction indicates that indexes, shelf lists, and other finding aids exist for many of the records; references to these aids might well have been included in the catalogue. And in any new edition the compilers might also reconsider their decision to omit the index, though the present work can be used satisfactorily without one.

Credit for compiling such a comprehensive guide a mere eight years after the establishment of the Hall of Records goes to Morris L. Radoff, its present archivist, who wrote the introduction and most of the rest of the volume, and to Gust Skordas, a member of the Hall of Records staff, who prepared practically all the sections under the headings Financial and Military.

HERBERT E. ANGEL

The National Archives

Preliminary Inventory of the Council of National Defense Records, 1916-1921, issued by the National Archives, Preliminary Inventory, No. 2. (Washington, D.C. December, 1942. Pp. xvii, 75. Processed.)

In the halting progress of the Council of National Defense there was epitomized the United States' first experience in mobilization for world con-

flict. Authorized in 1916 as a planning body to co-ordinate "industries and resources for the national security and welfare," the six cabinet officers who comprised its original membership before long were supplemented by a Civilian Advisory Commission. Then, after the United States entered the first World War, the council passed through a complex variety of changes. It became a channel for government propaganda and a sounding-board for public opinion. To its direction fell such diverse tasks as Liberty Loan drives, the increase of farm production, control of food supplies, fuel conservation, munitions, transportation, labor, medicine, metals, engineering, education, and clothing. At least theoretically there were all of 184,000 local councils associated with the national council, and many of these affiliates became self-appointed guardians against allegedly treasonous disloyalty. Most of these multifarious activities, however, were only temporarily under the council's control. New organizations were constantly stemming from it or being created as separate agencies to assume some of its duties. Perhaps the most important of its issue was the War Industries Board.

Questions of jurisdiction and similar obstacles plagued the council. Indeed, it is not surprising that an inventory of the council's records offers evidence that competent operation of such an amorphous body was extremely difficult. As a matter of fact, this is so obvious that the inventory itself gives an impression of unevenness due to the disappointing absence of many important records. Very noticeably, what must be some of its most vital documents have been removed from the council's files for inclusion in the records of the War Industries Board, the Food Administration, the War Labor Administration, the Surgeon General's Office, or still other collections. For example, it is disconcerting to find that the council's Committee on Labor's investigations of the cost of living, mediation, conciliation, wages, and hours of employment are reported as "probably" transferred to the War Labor Administration whose records have been destroyed. On the other hand, it is not exactly encouraging to note that the inventory features rather prominently the activities of the council's Advisory Committee on the Purchase of Public Animals and Remount Service. At times the fragmentary nature of the records would seem to be due not only to transfer to other record collections, but also to the evanescent enthusiasm which soon evaporated to leave an erstwhile committee without any tangible expression of its existence.

By co-ordinating the records of the council with those of the Food Administration, the War Industries Board, and other agencies whose records have been inventoried by the archives staff, the investigator has at hand the working materials for an interesting synthesis. It seems regrettable, however, that a better integration of these records could not have been made available both to government administrators and to independent historians early in the present war-time crisis. In the very adequate introduction to the council's record inventory it is stated that there will of necessity be a thorough winnowing

of the chaff before a definitive rearrangement of the council's records. A final inventory will then be issued. But it seems questionable that such items as telephone directories of well-known cities, a card list of American newspapers, laundry books, and similar entries should have been allowed to encumber even a preliminary inventory. This is not to imply, however, that the preliminary inventory has not been well made. The units of description are as logical as the rather chaotic organization of the council would permit. Descriptions of the items are adequate. There is a good index.

Doubtless the inventory will be of limited value to government administrators. But to historians it offers an opportunity for service: critical examination of the Council of National Defense's activities. A few pages of the inventory are given to the records of the council's Reconstruction Research Division; they may have particular significance in the days of rebuilding that are yet to come.

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