

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

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The National Archives, Washington, 25, D.C.

American Historical Societies, 1790-1860, by Leslie W. Dunlap. (Madison, Wisconsin. Privately printed, 1944. Pp. ix, 238. \$3.50.)

The author limits the meaning of the term American historical society to an association of individuals "organized primarily to collect, preserve, and make available the materials for the history of the United States or a section of it." He states that his purpose is to describe "the character of the societies before 1861 and their contribution to our knowledge of American history." The ten chapters that make up Part I contain much interesting information about the methods of organization of individual societies, their financial policies, kinds of materials assembled and attempts at cataloguing them, and about the publication ventures and other projects to diffuse those materials. These data—drawn, we are told, largely from the correspondence and minutes of proceedings of the societies—appear to have been set down without much sifting or organizing, with consequent repetition and some conflict of statements. There is so much duplication in Part II of the material in Part I, that it seems to this reviewer that the sketches of the sixty-five societies—falling as they do, more or less, into one pattern—might, with real gain in effectiveness, have been presented in table form for quick and easy reference. Some readers may wonder at certain omissions, although the author seems to leave no room for a difference of opinion as to which societies fall within the scope of his definition.

In spite of his purpose as stated in the preface, Mr. Dunlap concludes that "it is, of course, impossible to determine the importance of such intangibles as the influence of sixty-five institutions on the development of an interest in history throughout the land." General tendencies among the societies studied which became precedents for later effective organizations can, however, be detected, and one wishes the author might have found it possible to summarize such tendencies. The study complements the *Historical Societies of the United States and Canada* handbook and Franklin F. Holbrook, *Survey of American Agencies in Relation to the Humanities* by its useful information about defunct societies and the clues it affords to the present whereabouts of their collections of historical materials, thereby being a helpful bibliographical tool. Some of the policies and activities of individual societies described contain suggestions worthy of consideration by societies today. The broad concept of history as understood by the American Antiquarian Society when it stated in its *Proceedings* for 1849 that "The history that is hereafter to be written is not to be

merely the history of government and of politics but the history of man in all his relations and interests, the history of science, of art, of religion, of social and domestic life," and by the Virginia Historical Society when it recorded the same year that "it was generally understood that history should not be merely 'the transactions of the *government* of a country, but the doings, the progress, the character, of its people' "; Peter S. Duponceau's declaration in 1840 that "the publications of a historical society should possess 'a literary and . . . *popular* character by which means they will be more generally read and more extensively diffused' "; the historical pilgrimage, the popular lecture, the printed circular describing the kinds of records that the societies solicited—all make one conscious of how much that has been considered modern and novel in the approach to and an understanding of the problem of creating and fostering an interest in American and local history was realized and practised by Isaiah Thomas, Lyman C. Draper, and other outstanding pioneers in the effort to preserve the materials out of which alone our history can be written; and we are grateful to Mr. Dunlap for helping us to appreciate our great debt to their labors.

EDNA L. JACOBSEN

New York State Library

Historical Societies in the United States and Canada. A Handbook, compiled and edited by Christopher Crittenden, editor, and Doris Godard, editorial associate. (Washington, D.C. The American Association for State and Local History, 1944. Pp. x, 261. \$2.50.)

One of the principal motives behind the founding of national, regional, state, and local historical societies has been the preservation and the making available of archival material and private manuscripts of historical value. During most of the century and a half since this work began, these societies have been the only agencies actively engaged in gathering archival material, and by means of print they have made hundreds of volumes of it available to the public. Some of the societies have been official repositories of public records, and all have gathered in private papers.

The primary difficulty in obtaining access to this material has been in determining what societies are active in a particular area and in making contact with the responsible officers. This volume is a directory of the 1,464 societies now or recently active. Besides addresses it gives names of officers, the size of libraries, the character of book and museum collections, the availability of photo-copying service, lists of publications, and information as to membership. A very full index makes it possible for the user of the volume to locate individuals, publications, and specialized collections which could hardly be found otherwise. The book is absolutely invaluable to anyone who has reason to consult records or manuscripts outside of his own collection.

It is difficult to see how this volume could have been made more useful. Its editing nears perfection; the only error which the reviewer has found is one which he himself made in the report of his own society. The editors are more apologetic than they should be about the minor societies on which it was impossible to obtain a revision of the data which appeared in the 1936 edition of this handbook. In most of these cases the difficulty has been that the officers of these societies were too preoccupied with matters relating to the war to fill in and return the rather long questionnaires which were sent to them. Some thought was given to the desirability of holding this edition of the handbook until after the war for that reason, but so great was the demand for the volume that it seemed wise to bring it out as originally planned.

CLIFFORD K. SHIPTON

American Antiquarian Society

Catálogo de los fondos del Real Consulado de Agricultura, Industria y Comercio y de la Junta de Fomento. [Publicaciones del Archivo Nacional de Cuba, I.] (La Habana. Imp. El Siglo XX, 1943. Pp. xlv, 655.)

Correspondencia Diplomática de la Delegación Cubana en Nueva York durante la Guerra de Independencia de 1895 a 1898. Tomo primero. [Publicaciones del Archivo Nacional de Cuba, II.] (La Habana. Imp. El Siglo XX, 1943. Pp. xlviii, 171.)

In connection with the celebration of the centenary of the founding of the National Archive of Cuba, a new series of publications has been inaugurated under the editorship of the director, Captain Joaquín Llaverías. The volumes here reviewed are the first to appear and represent two types of archival publications.

The first item which is termed a catalogue is in reality an alphabetical index of subjects, with the entries under each subject arranged chronologically. The materials listed comprise the papers of the Real Consulado y Junta de Fomento, Spanish institutions in Cuba interested and active in all phases of the economic life of the island. The collection comprises 209 legajos and 211 volumes. Upward of 9,500 items are listed in the *Catálogo*, covering the period from 1795 to 1877. Some of the subjects for which the entries take up numerous pages are: *Calzada* (paved highway, 14 pp.), *caminos* (roads, 15 pp.), *cimarrones* (runaway slaves, 29 pp.), *cuentas* (accounts, 30 pp.), *ferrocarriles* (railways, 16 pp.), *muelles* (wharves, 12 pp.), *negros* (25 pp.), *privilegios* (concessions, 31 pp.), *puentes* (bridges, 17 pp.) and *sueldos* (salaries, 11 pp.). These ten subjects occupy about one third of the pages of the volume. Each entry comprises the number of the *expediente*, the dates, the title, and the number of the legajo. There is an historical introduction by Captain Llaverías, which gives extensive quotations from important documents relating to the

Consulado and the Junta de Fomento. A foreword by Dr. Emeterio S. Santovenia and a general index are included.

The second item in the series is volume one of a collection of diplomatic correspondence of the Cuban delegation in New York during the War of Independence. This volume contains 204 letters written mostly by Tomás Estrada Palma, between November 12, 1895, and March 4, 1898. They treat of a great variety of subjects vital to the prosecution of the War against Spain in Cuba. An illuminating and interesting historical introduction by Captain Llaverías presents the principal facts regarding the delegation and its activities. The foreword is by Dr. José Agustín Martínez, a former minister of state. There are also portraits of Martí and Estrada Palma, as well as a general index.

These publications of the archive are sponsored by the Permanent Directive Council of the Archives of the Republic of Cuba consisting of Dr. Emeterio S. Santovenia for the Academy of History of Cuba, Dr. Julián Martínez Castells for the Pan American Columbus Society, Dr. Felix Lizaso for the Direction of Culture of the Ministry of Education, and Captain Joaquín Llaverías, director of the National Archive. The volumes represent a worthy and positive contribution to archivology in the Western Hemisphere.

ROSCOE R. HILL

The National Archives

Fourth Annual Report of the Archivist of the United States as to the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N.Y. for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1943. ([Washington,] 1944. Pp. ii, 14. Processed).

This is a particularly interesting report for a number of reasons. In the first place it deals with an institution whose resources cover a wider field than archives alone. The Roosevelt library receives manuscript material, sound recordings, motion pictures, printed materials, and museum pieces. In fact, it represents the lifetime activity of the President in its many phases. Consequently the library receives all materials which are presented to it by the President and such materials from others as the President approves. It is expected, however, in the latter connection that materials from persons other than the President shall be restricted to the area of the lower Hudson valley. It would seem that this is a wise policy.

This report is interesting for a second reason. It deals with the administrative organization, the use of building and equipment, the use which may be made of materials deposited in it, and the fiscal affairs of the library. In these respects the report is a model for reports on similar institutions even as the library itself is a model for institutions of a like nature.

Acquisitions during the year included many volumes of Roosevelt family papers as well as approximately four hundred feet of White House official

and the President's personal files. The total holdings of manuscript material of the library amounted to nearly nineteen hundred cubic feet at the end of 1943. This is an imposing amount. Other materials have been acquired at substantially the same rate as manuscripts.

ALBERT B. COREY

The University of the State of New York

Annual Report of the Public Archives Commission, State of Delaware, by the State Archivist for the fiscal year July 1, 1943 to June 30, 1944. (Dover, Delaware. Hall of Records, 1944. Pp. 33.)

Other archivists, like this reviewer, are likely to find the annual report of their colleague from Delaware, Mr. deValinger, to be very stimulating reading. One is impressed above all else by the diversity of the tasks undertaken by the Delaware Hall of Records, all of the tasks that one might imagine to be suitable for an archival establishment. The economy of this arrangement may be illustrated by a comparison with some Maryland practices: testing of papers and writing materials is a function of the Land Office in Maryland, war activities are handled by a special War History Commission appointed by the governor, historical markers are placed and maintained by the State Roads Commission. Perhaps it would not be possible to do so much in a larger state than Delaware, but judging from Mr. deValinger's report of progress there can be no doubt of the desirability of such a plan in that state.

One of the bright features of this report is the continued increase in the volume of records destroyed. The archivist who undertakes to store all records will not only fail himself but he is liable to undermine the whole idea of central archives establishments. Sooner or later the taxpayer will turn on him in wrath. Some exception should be taken to Mr. deValinger's section on "Classification." The items which he mentions there do not seem properly to fall into that category. The "Financial Statement" is all too brief and the discussion of the "Staff" is inadequate. Perhaps it would be better for all of us if we exchanged fuller information on such matters. Serious objection might be taken to the section listing accessions. The items do not seem to be arranged in any order easily recognizable. But these objections are all minor, the important thing is that Mr. deValinger has given us here a clear account of the functioning of an efficient institution.

MORRIS L. RADOFF

Maryland Hall of Records

Annual Report of the Staff of the Historical Society of York County, 1943. [York, Pa., 1944.] Pp. 16.

The staff report covers the period from November 30, 1942, to December

31, 1943, "in keeping with a resolution of the Board of Trustees that the Society's fiscal year coincide with the calendar year." Under the caption "Manuscripts" some of the gifts received are listed and one interested in business archives will note: a compilation of available local records of the Codorus Navigation Company; forty-four day books and ledgers of Dr. John Ahl and Dr. Jacob Mathias Gross, two physicians of Dover, Pennsylvania, covering the period 1846-1929; and day book of Peter Wiest, 1843-1844, presented on the centennial anniversary of the firm of P. Wiest's Sons. Among the "Historical Research, Copying and Indexing . . . Projects Completed" are Graceham (Maryland) Moravian Records, an abstract alphabetically arranged by family groups, 1759-1851, translated and edited by Henry J. Young, as well as transcripts of a number of registers of Pennsylvania churches, most of them Lutheran. Albert J. Byrnes, who has done most of the microphotographic work since this department was established in 1936, microfilmed records of twenty-four churches including the Warrington Monthly Meeting minutes and index, 1747-1785, and other Quaker records.

To this report is added in the form of inserts the report of the treasurer (1943), and a newspaper reprint of an article on the Berger Musical Family of York, by James W. Shettel, and another on First Negro Minstrels, by the same author. The two latter are for public distribution by the society.

NEWMAN F. MCGIRR

The National Archives

Records of the Columbia Historical Society of Washington, D.C., 1942-1943, Volume 44-45, edited by Newman F. McGirr. (Washington, D.C. The Columbia Historical Society, 1944. Pp. vii and 392. Illustrated. \$3.50.)

The present volume of the *Records* not only illustrates that the National Archives is continuing to perform a service to the students of the nation's capital but also that members of the staff of the National Archives are developing an interest in the history of their adopted city. Several articles contain citations to source materials deposited in the National Archives. Two contributors, Mr. Newman F. McGirr and Mr. Herman Kahn, have long been on the staff of this institution, while Dr. Gibbs Myers served as an employee for several years.

A truly scholarly approach to population composition in early Washington is Dr. Myers' "Pioneers in the Federal Area." He treats of the growth of the city, the nativity of its people, caste barriers, slaves and free Negroes, tradesmen, government clerks, and social classes. Washington, in those days, had more foreign-born residents than all the states in the union other than Maryland and Virginia. With excellent arguments from source materials, Dr. Myers presents the thesis that Washington was not what the forefathers had

struggled so hard to obtain, a city where each state would have equal privileges, but "in reality a provincial resort monopolized by a Maryland and Virginia plantation gentry."

Mr. Herman Kahn's "Appendix to Pierre L'Enfant's Letter to the Commissioners May 30, 1800" reprints a document now in the National Archives which sheds further light on the foresight of L'Enfant. The existence of this was noted in Miss Bethel's paper on pages 178-179 of Volume 42-43 of the *Records*. Its publication supplements the memorials of the city's first architect which appear in Volume 2 of the *Records*.

Of considerable value to libraries and research students is the 37-page subject index of "Illustrations in the Records of the Columbia Historical Society, Volumes 1-42/43, Printed 1897-1942," by Mr. Newman McGirr. This may be purchased from the society as a separate for \$1.00. Mr. McGirr is much to be commended both for the preparation of the index to illustrations and the editing of this fine volume, which, despite the war, is the largest yet published by the Columbia Historical Society.

Two articles may be the last printed articles of the respective contributors. One, the leading article, concerns an ever popular subject, the life of colorful and politically significant Peggy O'Neal[e]. The other, "Early British Diplomats in Washington," contains an excellent account of the Washington lives and residences of British ministers from 1800-1874. The author of the first, Mr. Allen C. Clarke, since 1916 president of the Columbia Historical Society and compiler of more books and articles on Washington history than any other one man, died May 16, 1943. The author of the other article, Dr. Charles O. Paullin, who is well known to archivists for his *Guide to London Archives for the History of the United States Since 1783* and his association with Dr. John Franklin Jameson at Carnegie Institute, died September 1, 1944.

MEREDITH B. COLKET, JR.

The National Archives