

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

RICHARD G. WOOD, Editor

The National Archives, Washington 25, D.C.

*Libraries Guests of the Vaticana During the Second World War*, by Dom Anselmo M. Albareda. (Vatican City. Apostolic Vatican Library, 1945. Pp. 70.)

This booklet of seventy pages is important to archivists chiefly for two reasons: it contains a brief but definite record of notable achievement on the part of several archivists under the dangerous handicap of bombardment and it emphasizes the importance of preventive care necessitated by the new instruments and agencies of destruction. The record is contained chiefly in the preface from the pen of Dom Anselmo M. Albareda, of the Vatican Library. This is followed by a list of twenty-six libraries and archives which were given shelter in Rome during the time of danger. Dr. Nello Vian, of the Vatican Library, edited several pages of historical notes describing each of these libraries. This section is followed by a short chronicle of the transfer and storage of the libraries. When the danger was over, the Vatican Library prepared a public exhibition of the chief treasures from the collection. The booklet concludes with a descriptive catalogue of the exhibition rather amply and elaborately illustrated.

Since there may be some delay in the general distribution of the booklet, it may be permissible to recount here some of the high lights of the achievement as narrated by Father Albareda. Calling attention to the unceasing concern of the Church for the care and preservation of library materials, he recalled the circular letters of 1902, 1907, and 1923 addressed by the secretary of state to the Italian bishops containing counsels and instructions for the preservation and administration of libraries; and he pointed particularly to the letter of Cardinal Giovanni Mercati, librarian and archivist of the Vatican, addressed in November, 1942, to the Italian bishops to promote a new and detailed care of ecclesiastical archives and libraries which proved, under the circumstances, to be most providential. When the danger became imminent with the waging of warfare both on land and in the air, in November, 1943, Cardinal Mercati, whose position and long experience were instantly recognized, took charge of the situation. Thirty-seven towns and villages near Rome were visited and scores of materials, including ecclesiastical and communal archives, books, and objects of art were transported to be deposited in the libraries of Rome, some reaching the Secret Archives of the Vatican. Even in the Vatican Library a number of structural changes were necessitated to insure perfect safety. Through an agreement with the German embassy to the Holy See, co-operation was had from Dr. G. Lang, assistant at the

German Historical Institute in Rome, from Professor H. Evers, of the University of Munich, and some members of the German command, which usually provided the transportation.

With the coming of the Allies to Rome, the work of salvage and repair was carried on with the co-operation of the Subcommittee for Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives, directed by Professor E. T. DeWald, of Princeton University, assisted by the Vatican archivist, by Captain T. H. Brooke, of the British Record Office, and Dr. Emilio Re, the superintendent of archives in Lazio.

Dom Albareda notes with regret the persistent and vigorous attempts which were made through every channel to save to Rome three great German libraries—the Hertziana Library, with its abundant Michelangelo collection, and the libraries of Archeological Institute and the German Historical Institute; these the Germans took to Salzburg, or at least started them in that dangerous direction.

F. A. MULLIN

The Catholic University of America

*Tenth Annual Report of the Archivist of the United States, 1943-1944.*  
(Washington. 1945. Processed. Pp. iv, 97.)

Prepared in the midst of war, the *Tenth Annual Report of the Archivist of the United States* reveals the vastly augmented role which the National Archives has been called upon to play and foreshadows its significant place in post-war federal administration. Within a ten-year period that agency has accessioned nearly all the permanently valuable records of the federal government through the first World War, with the exception of the records of the House of Representatives, the federal courts, the General Accounting Office, the Patent Office, the Post Office Department, and the military and naval service records of the first World War.

Dr. Buck paints a realistic picture. Within the next two or three years, he warns, the available storage space in the building will be exhausted, and it has become imperative to revise completely the original plans for the storage of federal records, now being created at the rate of a million cubic feet a year. The records of the emergency war agencies, which would need a building double the capacity of the National Archives, should be brought at the earliest possible moment under proper centralized supervision and control; otherwise hopeless record confusion will ensue when these agencies terminate their activities. The archivist wisely plans for the time being to concentrate on these emergency agencies.

With the permanent federal agencies the records problem is not as exigent. The federal Disposal Act of 1943 allows the disposal schedules of government agencies to be applied not only to valueless past records, but to similar

records deemed valueless in the future. In this connection, the archivist recognizes the need for records organization of some kind in each permanent agency of the government, and the National Archives has offered its good counsel to other departments and agencies in setting up such organizations. Time and patience will be needed to eliminate the chief ills that beset record keeping in federal agencies—sluggishness, obesity, and atrophy.

The federal survey undertaken for the National Archives a number of years ago indicated that the federal records are fairly evenly distributed between Washington and the field. Since they now run to the immense quantity of seventeen million cubic feet, it would seem that further centralization of field records of permanent agencies would be unwarranted, except in the case of the choicest historical items in imminent danger of loss or destruction, and that some plan of regional decentralization should now be seriously proposed to fit into the federal government's post-war planning and construction program. The archivist points out that it now costs \$300,000,000 a year to house and maintain the scattered federal records—five per cent of the budget for the peace-time year 1938. Should not an effort be made at this time to persuade Congress that a modest budget for regional storage and administration might in the long run guarantee lasting economies in the records storage budget?

Despite the loss of staff members to war agencies, many of the valuable activities of the National Archives have been carried on during the past year. The program of granting fellowships in archival administration to properly qualified candidates from three Latin-American nations is one offering great promise. Interesting and important accessions continue to enter the vaults of the National Archives, including such items as the records of the Springfield Arsenal, 1794-1911, and the records of the collectors of customs at Baltimore, 1783-1919. There are gaps in these latter records, the description indicates. Some years ago a New York autograph dealer collected large quantities of the ship manifests of the early federal period for this port, and the reviewer had the good fortune to examine them before they were disposed of piecemeal at auction. This single illustration underscores the need for proper records organizations at the various agencies of the federal government, as well as for a vigilant policy of central over-all control.

The objectives of the National Archives are not narrowly conceived by Dr. Buck to be the production of an individual naturalization folder or service record, but broadly stated to provide students and federal administrators with administrative, procedural, and historical data which will facilitate the handling of analogous problems and the making of policy in our contemporary life. Limited by its restricted budget and personnel, the National Archives has nonetheless in the ten years of its existence made important strides toward attaining its objectives. It has amply justified its existence, not

alone to the historian, research investigator, and federal official, but to the taxpayers, who are once more going to think in conservative figures now that astronomical war spending has become a thing of the past.

RICHARD B. MORRIS

The College of the City of New York

*Fourteenth Annual Report on Historical Collections, University of Virginia Library, for the year 1943-44.* (Charlottesville. University of Virginia, 1944. Pp. 50.)

In reading Dr. Cappon's report one has the feeling that much more information is implied than is presented in the few pages of text. Discussing the problems and techniques of collecting for an institution, he ranges from equipment, personal qualifications, tips and clues, interpretation of what is "historical," the virtue of a comprehensive program of collecting, and the attitude of owners to talking points for persuading owners to part with materials. The intriguing question, for example, of contact with sources beyond written records, the variety and range of materials, both in subject and type, and the technique of organizing a program of search—all these and many other points call for fuller treatment. The alluring possibilities, therefore, suggested by the topics covered, lead one to wish that they could be more fully developed. Experience of the sort described (not anecdotes) should be more widely exchanged.

Results of energetic collecting efforts for the ten-month period from September, 1943, to June, 1944, are apparent in the twenty-one page list. Among notable items are the Edgehill-Randolph collection, containing a group of Jefferson papers, Randolph speeches and letters, 1805-1832, and Sabine Hill papers between 1659 and 1897, relating to the Carter family. It is encouraging to note appreciation of the needs of the economic historian in the preservation of many business records. The excellent index adds in no small part to the value of the report as a reference tool for the archivist and historian.

WALTER HAUSDORFER

Columbia University

*Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 1944.* (Washington, D.C. United States Government Printing Office, 1945. Pp. 204.)

*The Library of Congress Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions*, v. I, July, 1943-June, 1944.

This annual report of the librarian of Congress marks Mr. MacLeish's final accounting of his brief but meteoric period at the helm of the world's largest library. As such it is of special significance and interest. Particularly

important, for archivists and other scholars, is the fact that under the MacLeishian hand the annual report has become more and more of a streamlined, administrative document. The discussion of important acquisitions and current accessions, commented on at considerable length in the earlier annual reports, has now been transferred to the new journal here under review.

Mr. MacLeish takes two paragraphs in the report to discuss and explain the launching of the *Quarterly Journal of Acquisitions*. The forty-year custom of the library of recording its acquisitions in the annual report had several disadvantages, he says. "Discussions of acquisitions for any one year were scattered, . . . interspersed with reports of a purely administrative character; balance was not sought or secured as between the acquisitions of various collections; the presence in the Library of new materials was reported anywhere from 6 to 18 months after receipt; and finally additions to the 'general collections,' which received the great bulk of new acquisitions, were mentioned only in exceptional circumstances."

The first volume of the new journal resulting from the decision to record and discuss acquisitions separately contains 273 pages. These added to the 204 pages of the report under review total 477 pages as compared to 482 pages in the annual report for 1938, the last full year of the library under the direction of Herbert Putnam. If balance was "sought" in this first volume, it was apparently not "secured." One finds little attention in it, and no separate articles, in such practical fields as business, economics and the pure sciences, all of which fall within the canons of selection of the library as carried at the front of each issue of the *Journal*. Philosophy, too, gets little attention and music, which rated some twenty-odd pages of detailed discussion in the 1938 report, gets less attention in the *Journal* than its importance in the library would seem to indicate.

More detail and more titles were apparently mentioned in the earlier reports than appear in the *Journal*, but the signed discussions in the *Journal*, chiefly written by department heads and fellows in the library, are better written, more interesting and more informed and evaluative than the comments and rather long lists of "notable accessions" appearing in the earlier reports. Such articles as "Three Indic Manuscripts," by Horace Poleman, in No. 4, typify the kind of scholarly contribution that could not be conveniently carried in an annual report. The same author's very useful and informative "Serial Publication in India" in the first issue has a flavor and a scholarly tone, as indeed do all the signed articles, which would not ordinarily be found in the annual report. The Review of the Quarter, however, with which each issue concludes, carries information very similar to that in the earlier reports.

Arthur W. Hummel's article "Movable Type Printing in China: a Brief Survey," in No. 2, points the way toward scholarly articles in subject fields, based on the library's collections but not discussing them or current additions

to them in specific detail. This kind of article, even though desirable and well done, as this one is, will have to be used sparingly by the editors if we are to have in fact a "Journal of Current Acquisitions."

It is good that Mr. MacLeish stayed at the helm long enough to be able to record in this, his fifth and last report, a fairly complete consummation of the drastic administrative reorganization which he undertook upon the advice and with the assistance of an outside committee of librarians and a separate committee drawn from the staff of the library. This reorganization, proceeding along accepted lines of modern administrative procedures, and thus centralizing and clearly delegating authority in a limited number of departmental chiefs responsible to the librarian, has obviously stirred the library to its roots. It is fortunate that Luther Evans, the successor to Mr. MacLeish, had an important hand in working out the reorganization and determining the direction it would take. He can be confidently counted on to hold the library to the course on which it has been so boldly launched by MacLeish.

To Evans falls the considerable responsibility of proving how much better the new streamlined administration is than the less clear, sometimes haphazard, but nevertheless remarkably effective procedures and policies of Herbert Putnam. Certainly all of us, as taxpayers, have a right to expect something very much better, since we are, through a generous government, now providing almost twice as much money (\$2,717,338 in 1938; \$4,683,992 in 1944) for the maintenance and development of the library as we did when Herbert Putnam handed over the controls. Much of this increase has fortunately been in salaries. It is with obvious satisfaction that Mr. MacLeish records further increases authorized for 1944-1945 which add \$226,000 to the salary budget of the library and give it five \$8,000 salaries, below the librarian, as compared with none in the year under review and ten \$6,500 salaries as compared with two in 1943-1944, and similar increases throughout all the personnel brackets of the library. This is a far cry from the days, not too long ago, when this reviewer entered the library profession. At that time the highest salary in the library was \$5,000, a salary in no way indicative of or commensurate with the high quality of service then being given by the library and its staff.

All in all the new *Journal*, with its excellent and authoritative articles, introduces an additional flavor of scholarship into the work of the various subject divisions and departments of the library, to the credit of the library and the editor of this first volume, Allen Tate. It can, from all indications, be counted on to become eventually a much more significant and usable aid to scholars than the acquisitions and growth discussions formerly intermingled with administrative detail throughout the annual reports. A detailed index appearing promptly at the close of each year, will, however, be essential if the *Journal* is to be of maximum value to scholars.

It may be predicted that the public printer will get no relief, as Mr.

MacLeish had persuaded him, from this new way of recording the current acquisitions of the library. The *Journal* gives every evidence of being a lusty infant which will grow and thrive. As it does it will need, ask for, and undoubtedly secure many more pages, bringing into them numerous facsimile reproductions of woodcuts, manuscripts, and photographs. All this will be fine for scholars, but it will add another infinitesimal grain to the already gargantuan burden of the public printer.

WILLIAM H. CARLSON

Oregon State System of Higher Education

*New York State Library. 127th Annual Report 1944.* (Albany. University of the State of New York, 1945. Pp. 96.)

This report, the last one made by Mr. Vail before he left for the New-York Historical Society, follows the usual pattern. First is a report on the general policy and progress of the library for the past year, then detailed reports of the section chiefs. Of particular interest is the report of the head of the Manuscripts and History Section. About six illustrations enliven the report, and a good index closes it. The whole report shows compliance to the full with the requirement set forth in the act of April 21, 1818, establishing the state library as "A Public Library for the Use of the Government and People of this State."

EDWARD F. ROWSE

The National Archives

*Ship Registers of the District of Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1789-1875*, with an introduction by Stephen Willard Phillips. (Salem. The Essex Institute, 1944. Pp. 196.)

In a changing world, it is heartwarming to find that an institution in the United States can adhere to a publications program begun as long ago as 1906. Then a volume similar to this for Gloucester appeared for Salem. In between have been a volume for Newburyport and another in a different form for Marblehead not to mention all those compiled by the Survey of Federal Archives for which they furnished inspiration.

The volume for Gloucester includes besides information taken from registers of the custom house deposited at the Institute, similar information taken from those sent to Washington in connection with the French spoliation claims and now in the National Archives and also from others in the National Archives for the period 1845-1857, when there is a gap in the custom house records. It is interesting to note that the National Archives was able to furnish, in spite of their poor condition, the needed record for about eighty-five per cent of the registers issued in this period. Information regarding the history of almost all the various vessels after 1875 or their history before or



after they were registered at Gloucester can also be obtained from the National Archives.

Vessels are listed alphabetically as in the *List of Merchant Vessels of the United States* and for each there is given rig, hailing port, tonnage, date and place of build, dimensions, number of decks and masts, type of stern and head, date of registry, place and date of previous document, and names of owners and master. If the vessel was registered more than once at Gloucester, the date of the new register is given together with any changes shown. There is an index of names of owners and masters.

For purposes of local history, genealogy, and the history of shipbuilding, the inclusion of data from enrollments would have enhanced the value of the volume but doubtless would have made the cost prohibitive for the institute. What the volume purports to do is well done. If all were so, the archivist's labors would be lightened.

FORREST R. HOLDCAMPER

The National Archives

*Annual Report of the Indiana Historical Bureau, 1944-1945*, by Howard H. Peckham, director. (Indianapolis, Indiana. Indiana Historical Bureau, 1945. Pp. 24.)

In his first report as director of the Indiana Historical Bureau, Mr. Howard H. Peckham uses the completion of the thirtieth year of the bureau's activity as the occasion of a special report. In this "unofficial" report, longer than the customary statement appearing in the *Year Book of the State of Indiana*, Mr. Peckham reviews his agency's origins and projects, with commendable perspective, its future.

The Indiana bureau, *sui generis* among state historical agencies, reflects inspiration found in the neighboring states of Ohio and Illinois. Its organization as the Indiana Historical Commission in 1915, to direct the observance of the centennial anniversary of statehood in 1916, may be attributed at least partly to the stimulus of the Illinois centennial commission created in 1913, although subsequent developments resemble more closely the precedents found in Ohio. After ten years, in 1925, it was reorganized as the Indiana Historical Bureau and united with the state library and legislative bureau in the Indiana Library and Historical Department, from which the legislative bureau was separated in 1933. Mr. Peckham's predecessor, the late Christopher Bush Coleman, was the first director of the historical bureau and had served one year as director of the earlier commission.

Five statutory functions of the bureau indicate its principal obligations: to edit and publish documentary and other material relating to state history; to promote the study of state history; to promote the development of the state historical museum and the archaeological collection; to procure the



official portrait of the governor; and to contribute the services of the director on the state public records commission. These functions were carried on in 1944-1945 with a budget of approximately nineteen thousand dollars. A *Bulletin* is published monthly and distributed free of charge to over two thousand libraries, historical societies, and members of the Indiana Historical Society; through the years sixteen volumes of the *Indiana Historical Collections* have been published.

While, strictly speaking, the bureau is neither an archives nor a manuscript depository, it is an agency vitally concerned with records and their preservation and use. Its programs and activities have direct effect on the preservation and use of documentary materials through publication and the stimulation of public interest. The educational activities developed during the first thirty years are to be strengthened and expanded. An effort is to be directed to interests at the grade school level, establishing a foundation on which the historical consciousness necessary to archival and manuscripts programs must rest. This is to be done through an almanac, a popular history, and leaflets. The Junior Historical Society, a high school program, is to be strengthened, and county societies encouraged. The program of publications will be aided by the relaxation of war-time restrictions on the use of paper.

With enlightened interest in Indiana history beginning in the lower grades of the school system, the state may well anticipate an intelligent respect for the records of its history and a sense of responsibility for them.

CHARLES W. PAAPE

The University of Illinois