

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

RICHARD G. WOOD, Editor

The National Archives, Washington 25, D.C.

Diocesan Archives: A Historical Synopsis and Commentary, by William Francis Louis. The Catholic University of America Canon Law Studies, No. 137. (Washington, D.C. The Catholic University of America Press, 1941. Pp. x, 101. \$2.00.)

Parish Registers: A Historical Synopsis and Commentary, by James J. O'Rourke. The Catholic University of America Canon Law Studies, No. 88. (Washington, D.C. The Catholic University of America Press, 1931. Pp. x, 101. \$1.25.)

In the Roman Catholic diocesan organization under the 1918 Code of Canon Law the chancellor is the official archivist. In this country the actual archivist is frequently a vice-chancellor or a specially designated diocesan archivist who acts in the name of the chancellor. To such a person, when newly appointed, three particular problems immediately present themselves: the disposition of the old records, the reorganization of current records, and the arrangements for the future preservation of these current records. Unfortunately, the lack of uniform legislation or practice before the code complicates the first problem, even where the records have been preserved, because of the lack of system in most old records. Early bishops in this country were their own chancellors in many cases and did not always distinguish between personal and official correspondence. They had their own notion of organization and their own rules for the disposal of old records; and, frequently, the interim between episcopates was the occasion of wholesale destruction of archives. These volumes on the canon law of archives cannot change the past; they are intended primarily to explain the church law on present and future record-keeping.

Dr. Louis introduces his study of the canons on diocesan archives with a sketch of previous legislation on the preservation of church records. This legislation was quite unorganized before the sixteenth century. Beginning with the papal constitution, *Muneris Nostri* of Pius V, the church law on archives becomes quite definite, although the full details of this later legislation were not imposed generally until the new code of canon law went into effect in 1918.

Dr. Louis follows the code in dividing his subject into common archives and secret archives. His commentary on the non-legal phases of the classification and the preservation of archives, while depending greatly upon Jenkinson's *Manual*, does not indicate a very deep appreciation of the prac-

tical problems of today's diocesan archivist. He does not give a clear plan for the organization of current records and dismisses too quickly the value of the chronological arrangement of archives. While it is true that divisions in records will be determined by the volume and character of the records themselves, except where a special file is required by the nature of the documents, the chronological file offers advantages of continuity and relationship which are lost in an alphabetical or subject matter arrangement. Neither does the author insist sufficiently that the code requires the index or catalogue of these documents to be kept up regularly. This index or catalogue eliminates the necessity of many other convenient arrangements. The existence and nature of secret diocesan archives is important to the future historian because it will make available the general historical material in the common archives which will thus be distinguished from the sacramental and secret documents that cannot be made available.

Dr. O'Rourke's study of the requirements of the code on the making and preservation of parish registers shows a better understanding of the actual processes. His introduction explains the evolution of the five present-day parish registers. Legislation on marriage, particularly the recent rules on the information about the partners in marriage, necessary before the ceremony, increases the value of such records. Historians, and especially genealogists, have found the existing parish records indispensable for certain types of research. Before the establishment of definite parish lines, the keeping of these records was sometimes haphazard and the church regulations on the subject were not fully clarified until the code. Dr. O'Rourke treats each register in detail, indicating not only the nature of the registers but also the obligation of the ministers of the sacraments to register their acts. The most important, of course, are the baptismal register and the matrimonial register. The Register of the Confirmed, the Book of the Dead and the Register of the *Status Animarum* are equally valuable, although for the historian the latter two are of incalculable importance. Dr. O'Rourke has rendered valuable services to the recorder by giving practical rules for the preparation and inscription of these registers.

THOMAS T. McAVOY, C. S. C.

Archives of the University of Notre Dame

French Activities in California, An Archival Calendar-Guide, by Abraham P. Nasatir. (Stanford University, California. Stanford University Press, 1945. Pp. xiii, 559. \$10.00.)

This book is a guide to the materials in the Paris archives and libraries for the history of California from 1700 to 1857. Most of the materials concern the seventeen years from 1840 to 1857 when international interest in California was greatest. Also included are calendars of source materials for French

and American filibustering expeditions into Mexico and Central America and for the history of the Hawaiian Islands.

The author, who is a professor of history at San Diego State College, visited Paris in 1924, 1925, and 1930 to study the activities of the French in California. Out of these researches he has published two articles and two books. The present volume was completed in 1934, but it had to await 1945 for publication.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I is an introductory essay on "French Activities in California Prior to Statehood," which is an expansion of an article by the same title which Professor Nasatir published in the October, 1929, issue of *The Grizzly Bear Magazine*. In this part of the book he points out that, although French contacts with California began in 1786 with the voyage of *La Pérouse*, the French did not become greatly interested until after 1836, when it appeared that Mexico was losing control over Upper California. Then followed a period of international rivalry among Great Britain, United States, and France. The French government sent Duflot de Mofras to visit the western coast of North America and opened a consulate at Monterey. However, France played in California a passive role of watchful waiting, while the Americans acted.

Part II is the calendar-guide. Pages 63-299 are devoted to materials in the *Archives des Affaires Étrangères*. Here is calendared correspondence between the French Foreign Office and its diplomatic agents in the United States, 1819-1857; in Mexico, 1818-1857; and in the Hawaiian Islands, 1819-1870. Noteworthy are two long letters describing conditions in California in the 1850's from Jacob A. Moerenhout, the able French consul at Monterey. This correspondence is followed by materials in the *Mémoires et Documents* section and by a calendar of the consular correspondence in *Box Monterey*. Perhaps the most valuable discovery which the author made in Paris was the correspondence of the French consuls in California from 1842 to 1851 which he found in this "box." This material he has used effectively in his studies of the gold rush. Following these Foreign Office listings, appear calendars of sources found in the *Archives du Service Hydrographique de la Marine*, the *Archives Nationales*, the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, and other Parisian depositories. On pages 412-454 one finds a bibliography of French activities in California.

In a series of rather lengthy appendices, the author has enlarged the scope of his catalogue to include calendars of materials concerning California in the Public Record Office, London, and in the Spanish *Archivo General de Indias*. These calendars, however, are based partly on the author's examination and partly on other guides. He has "hastily gone over" (p. 511) the diplomatic correspondence between the United States and France for the years 1844-1856, which is deposited in the National Archives, and his results appear in Appendix C. Still another appendix is devoted to a description of California in 1849 by a French consul.

This is not a definitive guide. The author is very careful to emphasize that many of his calendars are not complete, that he did not go to Paris with the intention of preparing this catalogue, that it was an afterthought. Consequently, the best that can be said for it is that it is a compilation of materials that proved helpful to the compiler and that will be helpful to others working in the same field. It is unfortunate that the title does not indicate better the variety of the contents.

The reviewer, remembering his own experience in Paris, noted with satisfaction the short descriptions that have been included of the major Parisian archives and libraries. These descriptions, which include location, methods of admission, organization, and reproduction of the call-slips, should prove helpful to historians utilizing the resources of these institutions for the first time.

ROBERT G. DUNBAR

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Reference Information Circulars, Nos. 1-33. (Washington. The National Archives, 1942-1945.)

During the course of the second World War, a tremendous amount of energy has been expended in mobilizing men and material. This fact is well-known, but another which is not grasped by the public is the fact of the great mobilization of information. Global war-making has meant that the United States has had to operate in the far corners of the world and in many strange environments. If military, naval, and air operations were to be successful they must be based upon accurate data. The finding and making available of such material has been a task as difficult and important as munition making and ship building.

Fortunately for the nation, the National Archives had come into being since the first World War. Here central control could be established over a vast mass of data, and as soon as the war started search began in a thousand files according to patterns laid down. Once the records were mobilized, their existence and character had to be made known confidentially to the various interested bureaus. In order to do this a series of Reference Information Circulars was written under the supervision of Dr. Philip M. Hamer, director of reference service, and given very limited circulation as classified documents. Now the end of the war has permitted their declassification and they can be obtained from the assistant administrative secretary of the National Archives.

These circulars are thirty-three in number. One group is geographical and separate. Pamphlets analyze the material in the archives on the Philippine Islands, the southern and western Pacific areas, Belgium, France, and the Netherlands, the Balkan states, the Scandinavian countries, Alaska, the Caribbean, Brazil, the west coast of South America, Netherlands East Indies, French possessions in Africa, Spanish possessions in Africa, and Portuguese possessions in Africa and in the Atlantic.

A second group deals with economic situations within the United States. Separate circulars were prepared on labor and labor problems; labor migration during the first World War and the post-war period; transportation; food production and distribution, 1917-1940; forest products; small business; dehydration of foods; basic iron, steel, and tin industries; nutrition and food conservation by consumers, 1917-1941; rubber, and materials containing statistical data on economic subjects, 1910-1944.

A third group describes data on previous government experiences particularly useful at the moment. These are the termination and modification of contracts and the settlement of claims following the first World War; the disposition of surplus property following the first World War; the demobilization of the armed forces and the relief, rehabilitation, and employment of veterans following the first World War; the termination of economic controls by government agencies in the same period; and the liquidation of federal agencies, 1917-1944. These with a few miscellaneous numbers make up the lot.

The series of circulars provides the key to a vast storehouse of material which will be as valuable to scholarship as it has been to government. It will show social scientists much that they want to know and will make the National Archives more than ever an indispensable source of data.

ROY F. NICHOLS

University of Pennsylvania

Records Depot Organization and Operation. Army Service Forces Manual M810. ([Washington, D.C.] 1945. Pp. 55.)

An essential part of the records administration program of the War Department and the Army is the establishment of service command records depots to which noncurrent files can be retired. Manual M810 presents the basic operational pattern with which all of these depots are expected to comply. It thus represents a concentrated contribution to a field about which little has been committed to paper in so organized a fashion.

Like most manuals it cannot be absorbed by a single swift reading. Chapters are devoted to organization and facilities, correspondence and service, and processing operations. Since only eight pages are taken to cover the first chapter and two the second, it is clear that the final chapter on processing represents the heart of the work. This is in keeping with the chief purpose of a records depot which "is not a warehouse for the dead storage of files; neither is it an archival depository for the permanent maintenance of valuable records . . . [but] is an intermediate depository through which noncurrent files are processed and in which they are administered pending either destruction or transfer to a permanent depository."

The most satisfying feature to the taxpayer will be the manner in which the War Department proposes to utilize some of its thousands of foot lockers for records stowage. The reviewer, who is officer in charge of a somewhat

similar naval establishment, however, believes the manual could have accepted a less complex system of control records and files for the depots. It is also believed the section on personnel would have been strengthened by the inclusion of job description sheets and recommended grades.

It is understood the manual is primarily the skillful work of Sherrod East, formerly with the National Archives.

EVERETT O. ALLDREDGE

U. S. Navy

Dominion of Canada, Report of the Department of Public Archives for the Year 1944. (Ottawa, Canada. Edmond Cloutier, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1945. Pp. xli, 154. \$1.00.)

The dominion archivist reports that the number of research students and historians using the records in Ottawa was larger than in the previous year, and that the number of visitors to the historical museum increased from 29,000 in 1943 to over 50,000 in 1944. There is a checklist of accessions of manuscripts, maps, and prints, as well as of gifts to the archives library (pp. xi-xxiii).

A half-dozen historical documents are included (pp. xxvii-xxxix) headed by the minutes of the first meetings of the first legislative assembly in the country, that of Nova Scotia, convened October 2, 1758, and concluded by a War of 1812 document revealing an ingenious scheme of certain mercantile interests to carry on business with the enemy by running the blockade (1813). Among the others are two documents relating to the beginnings of British Masonry in Quebec.

The bulk of the volume comprises 151 pages of the "Calendar of Series Q" (state papers composed of official correspondence of the governors, lieutenant-governors, administrators, and other officials of Quebec and Lower and Upper Canada for the years 1760-1841.) This is a continuation of the calendar which was resumed for Upper Canada in the report for the year 1943 and it covers Vols. 403-415 (Series Q) for the year and a half from February 15, 1838, to July 23, 1839. The entries are detailed enough to be of considerable reference value to the student and the bulk of them deal with the events following the Rebellion of 1837 and the border incidents of the year 1838-1839.

WILLIAM D. OVERMAN

Firestone Tire and Rubber Company

Archives Year Book for South African History, published by authority of the Minister of the Interior, edited by Dr. C. Graham Botha, Dr. Coenraad Beyers, Prof. J. L. M. Franken, Dr. H. B. Thom, and Dr. D. J. Pieterse, Fifth Year, 1942. (Capetown. Cape Times Ltd., 1943. 2 vols. Pp. 238 and 272.)

The Archives Year Book for South African History is rather a historical

than an archival yearbook. True, the first two editors are respectively the chief archivist and the assistant chief archivist of the Union of South Africa. All the historical studies published in these two volumes are directly based upon archival researches. However, none of these studies deals directly with the archives.

This is not to distract from the value of the publication. To the contrary, we all know of the plight of the young historian who has patiently searched the archives and the existing literature and has finally succeeded in spreading new light on a certain point of history but has no opportunity of publishing the results of his work. For the archivist who has assisted him in his work, the situation is equally discouraging. *The Archives Year Book for South African History* is one of the periodical publications that seeks to provide this need. Of the seven studies published in the present two volumes, five are theses of students of the universities of Stellenbosch, South Africa, and Witwatersrand. Volume I contains a thesis on the fisheries on the Cape until the middle of the eighteenth century and on the short-lived republic of Natalia (1839-1842), the present republic of Natal which forms part of the Union of South Africa. The second volume contains a biography of Andries F. Du Toit, one of the minor figures in the early history of the Transvaal of South African Republic and the planner of the present city of Pretoria. It contains the diary of William Duckitt, late eighteenth-century English agriculturist and studies on early parliamentary government in the Cape Colony and on the Cape Colony's attempts to forestall the German imperial government in occupying the later German South West Africa.

The details of these studies are of little interest to the American archivist who does not make special study of South African history. There are a few points, however, on which a comparison between South African and American historical research might be of value. We take the history of the republic of Natalia as an example. Around 1839 a few hundred Afrikaander pioneers moved eastward over the Drakensbergen and, after a fierce struggle with the Zulu kings, conquered most of the fertile land between the mountains and the Indian Ocean. The author gives a long list of published and unpublished archival material on his subject. There are parallels to this story in American pioneer history. What would be the result if we should compare the archival material respectively at the disposal of the South African and the American student? If the material were better preserved in one case than in the other, what would be the cause of it? It is possible that in some instances South Africa would appear as having ampler and better preserved material. If so, this would probably be due to the continuous contacts between the Afrikaanders and the British, a foreign power with an organized administration.

Of course there are many points of purely historical interest that also might lead to a comparison of South African with American pioneer history. We mention only the Afrikaander policy towards the natives and the confusion in

land claims resulting from British occupation after preliminary free settlement by Afrikaanders. Especially in the latter respect there is remarkable similarity with American pioneer history.

B. H. M. VLEKKE

Netherlands Historical Institute, Rome

Kaapse Plakkaatboek, Deel L (1652-1707), edited by M. K. Jeffreys, M.A., published by order of the Minister of the Interior. (Capetown. Cape Times Ltd., 1944. Pp. xxiv, 382.)

Plakkaat is the old Dutch legal term indicating ordinances by national or local authorities. The term was taken from the French and derived from the *sceau placqué*, the seal attached to the original document. Popular etymology in Holland connected the original French term *placcard* with the Dutch verb *plakken*, to paste on, and thus *plakkaat* was supposed to mean *poster* which fitted in with the usage of posting newly promulgated ordinances outside the town halls. In old Dutch it is written with one *c* or with two, or with *k*.

The *plakkaten* or ordinances of the States General of the Dutch republic and of the states of the individual provinces were published in large folio volumes during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These volumes were supplemented in the nineteenth century by the publication of the *plakkaten* of the Dutch East India Company. The latter were edited by J. A. van der Chijs in seventeen volumes (1885-1900).

Batavia was the administrative center of the whole colonial empire of the company and the colony at the Cape, founded as a half-way station for ships sailing from and to the Indies, formed part of it. Matters of high policy were thus decided at Batavia by the governor general and council of the Indies under general supervision of the directors at Amsterdam. It was natural however, that the geographical position of the Cape Colony led to a larger amount of autonomy for that part of the empire than that granted to other outposts. Moreover, the problems of the Cape administration were quite different from those of the other Dutch East Indian territories.

By publishing the *Kaapse Plakkaatboek*, the Cape archives commission has rendered a real service to the students of South African and Dutch colonial history. This first volume brings the publication up to 1707. The documents were copied from the original *Placcaatboek* in the Cape Archives, from the *Extract and Registers of Plakkaten* also in the Cape Archives, and, whereas the original documents do not form a complete series, the collection has been supplemented from the *Resolutions* of the Cape administration and the *Journal* of that same body. The editor mentions two earlier publications containing part of the material here printed. It is to be regretted that Miss Jeffreys did not indicate in the text which ordinances and resolutions have been published before and so establish the exact relationship between hers and the preceding publications.

The Dutch East India Company maintained a strict monopolistic economic regime over its subjects at the Cape. Most of the ordinances deal with matters of trade and agriculture. There is a wealth of material here for the student of the economic history of early overseas settlements. It is to be expected that the next volume, which will deal with a period when the Cape Colony gained rapidly in importance, will be even more interesting.

B. H. M. VLEKKE

Netherlands Historical Institute, Rome

The Historical Collection of the Insurance Company of North America, by M. J. McCosker. (Philadelphia. Privately printed, 1945. Pp. 173.)

Are you thrilled by pictures of American clipper ships and packets under full sail cutting through the angry sea? Do pictures of old-time fire fighting apparatus rushing to the conflagration recall those happy days when you also raced to the fire barefooted, on a bicycle, or, if a modern youth, in your jalopy?

Or are you interested only in the historical accuracy, the archival efficiency and completeness of a collection covering two of the interesting—and important—phases of early America?

In either case, you will enjoy an evening with M. J. McCosker, *The Historical Collection of the Insurance Company of North America*, first edition, 1945.

There you will find material that will start many pleasant and interesting conversations with friends at lunch, on the train, or in the drawing room. Stories of the thrilling episodes of the bounding main, or experiences in the life of a fireman, are inexhaustible sources of exciting conversation.

McCosker's well-written, profusely illustrated book of 176 well-printed pages is easily read and highly interesting, but it is not fiction. It is a factual description of the commendable efforts of the Insurance Company of North America to preserve a history of the two fields of activity in which it functioned during the early "growing-up" days of our country—a collection of marine paintings and ship models that reflect what the poet, Longfellow, calls "the beauty and the majesty of the ships, and the magic of the sea," and pictures, models, and specimens of early American fire-fighting equipment, from the days when the "pumper" was carried to the fire (as if wheels had not yet been invented) and a fire bucket was standard equipment in every home.

Most of us know something of the many-sided interests and activities of Benjamin Franklin but have you ever seen a picture of him in the regalia of a volunteer fireman? Or of hose carts that never were taken to fires, only to parades? And do you know the fire warden had great authority at a fire? He could blow up buildings and pull down houses so long as he held in his hand the mace which was his badge of authority.

Have you ever seen crews of hand-pumped fire engines competing for the honor of throwing the highest stream of water? Ever see a parade of six

thousand "visiting firemen" in dress regalia? Are you familiar with fire marks—and why they are prized collectors' items? Do you believe, as did Josiah Quincy, major of Boston in 1825, that "every hundred feet of [fire] hose is as effectual as the presence of sixty men with buckets"? Do you know the difference between "spiders" and "jumpers"?

Does the story of flour at \$44 a "bar-rell" in San Francisco, or the romance of the side-wheeler steamboats still plying the Ohio and the Mississippi interest you? Do you realize that in the early trials of the newly invented steam-driven vessels versus sailing ships, the latter sometimes out-distanced their upstart competitors? And that the valiant defenders of early American homes against the ravages of fire were hesitant and reluctant to replace their time-tried hand-pumped engines with the newly developed steam-powered equipment. How fearful man is of the new, the strange, and the untried!

The Insurance Company of North America is to be commended for collecting and preserving this history of the days that rapidly are passing out of our ken and recollection—days when "the freedom of the seas was necessary to our life and prosperity . . . when it seemed as if that freedom were impossible for us to win or to keep . . . when every American flag the company helped keep afloat was a blow for our side in the battle for national existence." And McCosker is to be commended for so interestingly telling us about it.

If, at rare intervals, bits of advertising crept into the text, it is easily forgiven for verily the company, over a long span of years, has been protecting its clients (at least, so says the book) against some of the perils St. Paul mentions in his second letter to the Corinthians with which the book opens: ". . . thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often; in perils of waters; in perils of robbers; in perils of mine own countrymen; in perils by the heathen; . . . in perils in the city; . . . in perils in the sea."

FRANK M. ROOT

Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company