

# Reviews of Books

RICHARD G. WOOD, Editor

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

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*Eleventh Annual Report of the Archivist of the United States for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1945.* (Washington. United States Government Printing Office, 1946. Pp. vi, 86.)

In an administration report of this kind it is expected that each year certain characteristics shall be repeated. In this report the Archivist stresses three major emphases—revision of administration, insufficiency of staff and appropriations, inadequacy of storage space and an analysis of disposal methods as approved by the Disposal Act, or otherwise recommended for closed or current records. These problems involve not alone the so-called “headquarters records,” but the widely scattered “field records” that make up half the total bulk of the Federal records. For the guidance of the various Federal agencies in scheduling or listing their records for disposal a manual was prepared by the National Archives on *How to Dispose of Records*. We quote the Archivist to show the ultimate responsibility. He says (p. 11): “It is the responsibility of the Archivist to appraise items on disposal lists and schedules and to report thereon to Congress. The National Archives in acting on comprehensive schedules appraises only those records proposed for disposal, and the reporting of such a schedule to Congress does not commit the Archivist to accept for transfer the items on it marked for retention.”

Matters hitherto dealt with in former reports, but again stressed, are concerning methods pursued with respect to accessions, preservation, technical treatments, and description of the records in the National Archives, together with making them accessible for use through the reference and other services of the agency. During the fiscal year here recorded the National Archives received about 74,000 cubic feet of records, bringing the total in custody there to 689,195 cubic feet. In this tremendous mass, ever enlarging, there has been during the year a reduction by processing of records previously awaiting packing and shelving from 147,000 to 102,000 cubic feet. “The situation,” says the *Report*, “is still serious, however, because efficient reference service cannot be rendered on records that remain in their shipping containers, and unless more labor is made available to the National Archives there seems to be little prospect of eliminating this still alarming backlog.” And “as more and more records are received it becomes increasingly difficult to fit them into the storage space left in the National Archives Building, and it has been obvious for some time that only a small part of the avalanche of war records that will descend upon the agency in the next few years can be accommodated in the

present building. Accordingly the Commissioner of Public Buildings was asked to request the construction of a records storage building for use by the National Archives and other Federal agencies." This situation was foreseen by some of those who, like the present reviewer, long years ago advocated a national repository for the archives of the Federal Government as a concentration centre. A site of ample acreage was considered desirable. Such a site had been chosen, but was diverted to the use of the present Senate building. The present site of the National Archives building was considered in dislocation, and almost as soon as the building began to be used changes were made by closing up courts to afford more storage facilities. It had taken so many decades with various national administrations, and with various Congresses, to get anywhere, that the friends of public archives had to accept that which was at long last conceded. So the situation now with the Federal archives is like having a home for the aged in the best central part of a city and providing an overflow burying ground in the suburbs—that does not make sense with respect to the Federal archives.

Since during the Second World War more than ten percent of the population of the United States was engaged in the war for the Government, either in the uniformed forces or in civilian service, they, as well as all the rest of us, were participants in the creation of some kind of public records, even if no more than in being registered or in rationing. Dr. Buck avers that though "records did not win the war," it is a fact "that without records, which constitute the administrative mind of any large organization, the war could not have been won." So we see that during this war, and in the aftermath of it, the making of records, creating a huge mass of paper, has cost several hundred million dollars each year, eventuating already at its end in some 18,000,000 to 20,000,000 cubic feet of records. Were these records, all of them, to be preserved, they "would fill eighteen buildings the size of the present National Archives Building, or if dumped" in a pile "would cover an acre of ground" and be "nearly as high as the Washington Monument." It stuns one to contemplate it! Manifestly these records are not in the National Archives building but, says the *Report*, "are scattered among thousands of Federal agencies in hundreds of thousands of offices, depots, or warehouses throughout the world," and they "cover the manifold activities of the Government at war and at peace. They account for the expenditure of billions of dollars, document the rights and privileges and obligations of millions of people, show how a mighty administrative machine works, and record for impartial judgment of history the aspirations, failures, and successes of the Nation." And yet, lest we forget, there is no provision made for bringing together these widely scattered records in proper storage for processing under the direction of a large number of trained men and women; because the Government does not make appropriations toward that end, while the accomplishment of this thing, so imperative, would cost much less than the building of a new cruiser. Moreover, it would in the long run prove to be economical.

Because of the great cost to maintain the Government's records, so scattered and yet so much unorganized and therefore unavailable, the Archivist has made

definite proposals toward their processing or reduction. He believes that two-thirds of them "need not be preserved after they have served their purpose." He recommends that "by destroying them promptly, instead of paying storage on them for years, the Government can effect great savings," and by this process, he declares, "more important, perhaps, than the dollars and cents savings is the fact that continuous elimination of records as they lose their usefulness helps to insure the recognition, preservation, and utilization of the significant records of the country's endeavors." This seems to this reviewer a compromise with a hard case, an expediency which must bring qualms of conscience to any appraiser of the written word. One man's meat is another man's poison—who knows? Some may say: "We live in an atomic age, who cares?" That is fatalism. This reviewer commiserates the Archivist and all those who are faced with problems so tremendous. It is scandalous that the National Archives staff has been reduced again and again, and is "less than 350 people." So small a number cannot handle alone the mass of records created during this war, not to mention those that have existed before. Here the Archivist has proposed legislation that would require the various Federal agencies to sift their records in their own organisms and make the consideration of disposal possible by furnishing the Archivist of the United States with "lists and schedules of records proposed for disposal," and, as already shown, subject to the procedure enacted by the Congress in the Act, "as amended," of July 6, and approved July 7, 1945, which Act is printed on pp. 48-50 of the *Report*.

A general organization chart, as approved on October 25, 1945, shows at a glance the revised plan of administration of the National Archives, of all functions under the Archivist and the relationship of the respective divisions within the organization. In the "general administration" fall the secretarial, managing, program, budget, operations, records appraisal, and records control officers. The "Departmental Records Division and Officers" and the "Special Records Divisions" and sections make up the control of the various departmental organisms of archives, and the collection of maps and charts, motion picture and sound recordings, photographic archives and research, veterans' records, and the library; while the "Business Service Divisions" manage the personnel, property, printing and processing, finance and accounts, etc. On pp. 57-61 are listed in title-a-line 220 "Record Groups" in the National Archives on October 31, 1945. These are numbered seriatim as they have been received from a "single autonomous agency." A word should be said about the Division of Maps and Charts which reported 404,455 maps and 785 atlases, of which about 200,000 are in manuscript or are annotated maps. The accessions for the year were 55,135 items—an astounding mass to handle and administer, but containing no doubt much of value to the technician and historical cartographer.

This reviewer cannot forbear to express his personal gratification in the competent administration of the National Archives of the United States, begun by Dr. R. D. W. Connor, the first Archivist, and continued by his successor

Dr. Solon J. Buck, both of whom were associated with him in the Public Archives Commission of the American Historical Association in earlier years.

VICTOR HUGO PALTSITS

Jamaica, New York

Indian Historical Records Commission: *Proceedings of Meetings, Vol. XXI, Twenty-First Meeting Held at Udaipur, December 1944.* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1945. Pp. 132, 50.)

One is sometimes impressed to see the extent to which normal peace-time interests and activities are pursued in time of war. For three years the war was close enough to the gates and the roof-tops of India to give the people a day-to-day sense of impending disaster, even in a small western town like Udaipur. Yet it appears from the numerous reports in this publication that interest and activity in archival matters continued throughout British India and the Indian States. This was manifested not so much in actual accomplishment as in planning for the future.

The name of the Commission indicates clearly where its thoughts are centered, namely, on the historical records of the country. The main objectives are the collection and preservation of Indian historical records, the extension of research by opening up more records to research students, the acquisition of improved technical equipment for the preservation and service of the records, and the training of archivists to handle them.

The most significant and important section of this publication is probably the "Appendix F," entitled "*Report On The Post-War Reorganization of Archives Offices and Historical Researches in India.*" This report reviews briefly the history of records work in India and presents in considerable detail the objectives just mentioned. Attention is drawn to the many existing gaps in the files of the Imperial Record Department, and it is evident that chief objective is to fill in these gaps as far as possible from whatever source the records may be obtained, without too much thought being given to such matters of theory as "provenance," "uninterrupted official custody," and the like. It is recognized that many records will have to be obtained from government authorities in England and in foreign countries, that many others will be obtainable only from private persons in India and elsewhere, and furthermore, that a survey of Indian records is necessary.

Specific recommendations are made with a view to attaining these objectives. Under the heading of manuscripts records it is recommended (1) that micro-film copies of all unpublished records relating to modern Indian history not available in India should be obtained and preserved in the Imperial Record Department; (2) that all necessary steps should be taken for salvaging privately owned manuscripts in India, that the Central and Provincial Record Offices should be legally authorized to take charge of such manuscripts when their respective owners are willing to transfer them on mutually acceptable terms, and that such owners as may be prepared to provide for the better preservation of their manuscripts should be given such technical advice and



service as they may require; (3) that unwarranted destruction and export of historical manuscripts should be legally prohibited.

Under the heading of library facilities it is recommended (1) that microphotographic copies of all rare publications on India not available in that country should be obtained irrespective of the period they deal with and should be placed in the custody of the Imperial Record Department; (2) that all *bona fide* students should have access to these copies; (3) that the Imperial Record Department should supply at a reasonable price copies made from these microfilms to universities, learned societies, public libraries and such persons as may apply for them.

Under the heading of technical equipment it is recommended (1) that early steps be taken to air-condition the muniment rooms of the Imperial Record Department with a view to securing uniformity of temperature and relative humidity; (2) that vacuum fumigating and laminating equipment be installed in the Imperial Record Department at an early date; (3) that imparting instructions in theory and practice in archives-keeping be recognized as one of the normal duties of the Imperial Record Department.

The report concludes with a careful statement of the financial implications of the above recommendations.

ARTHUR H. LEAVITT

#### The National Archives

*Annual Report of the Director, Historical Society of York County 1945.* (York, Pennsylvania, 1945. Pp. 10. Enclosures.)

The Historical Society of York County, Pennsylvania, completed its fiftieth year of service in the cause of local history on March 25, 1945. The sole surviving member of the founding group is the Reverend Robert F. Gibson, former mayor of York, now a resident of Charlottesville, Virginia. Despite the inevitable handicaps of personnel, insufficient space, and inadequate equipment the Society can boast of a fine record of accomplishment as it rounds the half century mark.

The Society now has over 800 members in good standing and a staff of seven persons consisting of the director, a secretary, a typist, a genealogist, an indexer, and two caretakers. During the recent war years a plan has been formulated for the complete filing of all records including manuscripts, pamphlets, correspondence, memoranda, pictures, and maps. The new system involves a sub-numeric vertical file which already has 6,500 folders completed, and another 5,000 folders will be filed within the year. Another feature of the plan envisages a master card file of some 250,000 data cards arranged in a uniform manner.

Other activities of this energetic Society include the microfilming of the registers of all the county churches, the preparation of genealogical reports, the compilation of abstracts of all the wills and orphans court records from 1749 to 1850, the calendaring of the eighteenth century list of taxables, the copying of all advertisements in New York papers of the period of the American Revolution, the completion of an exhaustive index to the *History of York County*,

a listing of York County naturalizations for the years 1736-1940, and the collecting records of local participation in the Second World War. The Society also broadcasts a local history program once a week, and arranges lecture courses for schools and civic organizations.

Amongst recent notable accessions are a collection of Papers of the Treasurers of York County, presented from its Burton Historical Collection by the Detroit Public Library; a collection of 1,000 slides of local characters, incidents, and views; and photographs, manuscripts, memoranda, and maps relating to family histories, fire companies, street railways, township histories, and flora and fauna. The collections in the library and museum of the Society were examined by some 4,300 visitors and 35 school and civic organizations, during the year.

The mere statement of the activities, services, and holdings of the York County Historical Society, as indicated in its annual report, should be sufficient to cause many similar organizations to look to their laurels, particularly when it is realized that the Society operated on an annual budget of but \$14,000. There are even some state archives and libraries that could well emulate the energy, planning, and accomplishments of the local history society of this Pennsylvania county.

VICTOR GONDOS, JR.

National Archives

*Retention and Preservation of Records, With Destruction Schedules*, by the Chicago Bureau of Filing and Indexing. (Chicago. Chicago Bureau of Filing and Indexing, 1946. Pp. 26. Mimeographed. \$1.00.)

This small publication deals competently, though briefly, with a subject of increasingly recognized importance to the business establishments which form the major part of the publisher's clientele. There are three sections, of which the first is a five-page text containing an almost astonishing amount of useful information on records administration. Attention is devoted, for example, to the desirability of establishing separate files for records of temporary value, using the proper inks and papers for permanent records, planning file storage equipment for maximum efficiency and protection, and microfilming especially important papers for security. Sampling is described as a means of reducing bulk while retaining essential historical data, and suggestions are given as to how to conduct a records survey and prepare a schedule for retention and disposal. The three appendixes consist of a table, "Limitations for Civil Actions" arranged by states; an example of a records survey form; and a schedule of Department of Labor records approved for disposal after six months. The second major section, "Laws and Government Regulations on Record Preservation by Business," contains a summarization, with references to the applicable statutes and regulations, of the rules for records retention governing enterprises subject to the Interstate Commerce Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Public Contracts Act, the Securities Exchange Act, and the Contract Settlement Act, as well as discussions of the records practices necessary in order to comply with income tax, price control, priority, social

security, unemployment insurance, and wage stabilization legislation. The third section is called a "Tabulation of about 100 papers found in a normal business office with length of time usually retained." Fifteen firms were surveyed, but the gaps in data are frequent and great variations in record-keeping practice are evident. The value of the table would perhaps have been increased by a more complete identification, at least as to type of business and volume of files, of the firms used for examples. A brief bibliography of materials on the destruction of business records completes the publication.

It is unfortunate that faults of format, arrangement, and style serve to lessen the usability of this stimulating and informative work. It is hoped, for example, that a future edition will be provided with a table of contents (an index now does double duty). A fuller discussion of methods of sampling might prove useful, and greater attention could be devoted to microfilming for the purpose of space-saving by disposal of original records rather than simply as a security measure.

ROBERT CLAUS

#### National Archives

*Regulations to Govern the Destruction of Records of Steam Railroads*, Issue of 1945, Prescribed by the Interstate Commerce Commission (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1945. Pp. 47. \$.15.)

*Regulations to Govern the Preservation of Records of Class I Motor Carriers*, Issue of 1942, Prescribed by the Interstate Commerce Commission. (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1943. Pp. 44. \$.10.)

These two books may be reviewed as one, as they are virtually the same regulations, one to apply to railway carriers, and one to apply to motor carriers. Each has an introductory section explaining the regulations governing the preservation and destruction of the accounts, records, and memoranda to which the regulations pertain. The chief part of the book, of course, is the actual regulations prescribing the length of time that each specific type of record must be retained, according to law. There is also an appendix with suggested forms for the use of carriers, and an alphabetical index to the contents.

Carriers are permitted to destroy a record after preserving it for the period of time specified for that particular record. If a carrier desires to destroy any records other than those named, it may petition the Commission to that effect. There is a new paragraph in these most recent issues providing that carriers may be granted authority to preserve photographic copies of certain records in lieu of original records, or copies thereof. This practice is becoming widely adopted, and is a great improvement in the preservation of records. The Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad has microfilmed over twenty-two million documents, and has done a magnificent job of demonstrating the value of microfilming in the preservation of records.

An officer is appointed by the board of directors of the carrier to have supervision of the destruction of accounts, records, and memoranda. When any records are to be destroyed, this officer issues a written authority naming the person or persons by whom the records are to be destroyed. This written au-

thority is filed in the office of the issuing officer. It is not required that copies of these specific written authorities be filed with the Commission.

The precise method of destruction is not prescribed. The Commission is not concerned with the method so long as the destruction is authorized, and a certificate of destruction is filed as required by these regulations. If the records are not actually destroyed, but are disposed of by sale or otherwise, the certificate of destruction shall so state. Unless the carrier exercises great care in disposing of the records by sale, it may result in an infringement of Section 15 of the Interstate Commerce Act, which provides that a carrier shall not divulge to any person information concerning the business of a shipper or consignee which may be used to the detriment of such shipper or consignee. If any records are accidentally destroyed, by fire, flood, or other casualty, a statement certifying such destruction shall be filed with the officer having supervision of the destruction of records, and a copy of the statement shall be filed with the Commission.

The accounts, records, and memoranda of the carriers are listed in these books, but unfortunately the task of assigning an ICC item number to the individual company's documents is left to the carrier. Since there is often more than one number under which a record could very well be classified, this makes it possible to misconstrue, and assign a number which calls for a different period of retention. The carrier is held completely responsible for its classification, and if the ICC auditors find any discrepancies in checking the classification, the carrier is at fault. This hardly seems fair when in many cases the carrier seems to have a choice of numbers, which would appear equally correct for some specific record. This flaw greatly depreciates the value of the books, as it allows for such looseness of classification. The ideal situation would be for all carriers to agree to call their records by the same names, and to submit a uniform list, which classifications could be checked by the ICC, and thus give each similar record of all carriers the same item number.

The Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad has a *Manual of Procedures*, a section of which (Section 15) is entitled "Preservation of Records." In this section are listed all the records, and the following information on each: Form Number, Name of Form, Section, Page, whether the document is an original or which duplicate, the Filing Point, ICC Item Number, period which records must be retained, and after which they may be destroyed or microfilmed according to D&RGW requirements. In some cases the railroad desires to keep records longer than is required by the Interstate Commerce Commission, but, of course, in no case do the railroad regulations infringe on the ICC requirements.

The D&RGW has distributed Section 15 of the Manual to all records custodians and is no longer widely distributing the ICC books. They have thus attained uniformity in the classification of their records, the officers now being responsible for the classification rather than the individual employee handling the records. The Supervisor of Records co-ordinates this program, and makes annual checks to see that all record custodians submit requests for authority to microfilm and destroy records. All requests for authority are

checked by the Supervisor of Records before being forwarded to the "officer having supervision of destruction." While the original work of matching records to ICC regulations is a difficult and long task, any carrier would be amply repaid by the results of its co-ordinated program as a substitution for the old haphazard methods of classification, which could very readily result in an expensive fine.

These two latest issues vary but little from the previous issues except in length of retention periods. In the cases where the period was changed, about ninety percent were reduced. While these two books issued by the Interstate Commerce Commission are very helpful, and in fact necessary, they will serve their purpose better when specific records can be assigned a definite number, with no degree of uncertainty, and uniformity of classification can be achieved.

DOROTHY K. TAYLOR

Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad Company

*Manual of Fire-Loss Prevention of the Federal Fire Council.* ([Supercedes National Bureau of Standards Handbook H19] Washington, Government Printing Office, 1945. Pp. vii, 162. Appendix and bibliography. \$.30.)

The rapid rise of interest in the proper care, preservation and disposition of both public and private archives has resulted in the erection of a variety of specially designed record buildings. Unfortunately the architectural and building professions were not prepared to meet adequately the problems of the archivists. Artistic and monumental design has all too often taken precedence over practical records storage needs. Vault construction has been characterized by over-emphasis on burglar protection facilities and too little emphasis on fire protection and accessibility of the records.

Substantial progress was made through private organizations like the National Fire Prevention Association by the publication of standards of construction for buildings especially designed to protect valuable collections of records. Such publications, however, have had a very limited circulation and are inclined, in turn, to stress fire protection without sufficient concern for other archival problems. There is a definite need for close cooperation between the archivist and the technical expert on the dangers of fire and other destructive agents. Close liaison must be established and made a part of archives planning if the overall archival program is to be properly balanced.

For these reasons the *Manual of Fire-Loss Prevention* of the Federal Fire Council should be familiar to all those engaged in archival work. The establishment and maintenance of proper safeguards is the best guarantee of the security of records. The manual does not pretend to exhaust the subject but does present in condensed form ready reference to the types of fire protection and the rules for the safety of both personnel and the contents of buildings. There are special sections on "Construction and equipment for protecting records" and "Protection of records and valuables" which deal with physical protection. In addition to these sections every custodian of records should be

familiar with the facts presented on "Fire causes and their elimination," "Inspection of properties" and "Fire-loss prevention under war conditions." The inclusion of a list of 113 general and special references to publications on fire protection is important and adds to the general usefulness of the volume.

HUGH FLICK

#### War Department

*Calendar of the American Fur Company's Papers* edited by Grace Lee Nute. Part I, 1831-1842. Part II, 1841-1849. Volumes 2 and 3 in *Annual Report of the American Historical Association 1944*. (Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1946. 2 vol. Pp. 20, xi, 1951. Printed and processed, \$2.00 per vol.)

This calendar is preceded by a reprint of an article by Miss Grace Lee Nute, Curator of Manuscripts of the Minnesota Historical Society and editor of the calendar, in which she describes the papers and tells of their history, and how the calendar came to be made. It was to make them more easily available to the scholarly public that the Association planned to publish this calendar so that the whole group of research scholars might consult them rather than the ten contributing libraries or historical societies. It is, however, a bit unfortunate that the publication had to be in near-print, rather than in print, as so much better a job could have been done.

The calendar is arranged generally in chronological order, following, in general, the arrangement in which the papers had been placed when sold to the New York Historical Society in 1879. The information on each item includes the date, the place where written, the person or persons to whom written, the place to which sent, pages of the contents, the location within the collection and the number of the document. Thus all of the essential information is given and the calendar suffices for all but the most meticulous scholar, who must see the document itself, and even for him, it gives a key to the location of the document, so that he need not waste days and weeks searching for a particular document. A subject index adds a great deal to the value of the work. This index is by addressee and by the subject of letter, arranged together in one alphabet, thus greatly facilitating of the use of the calendar.

The publication of this calendar, together with the opening up of the papers of the Hudson's Bay Company, will render available a mine of material for the study of the fur trade with all its ramifications, political, economic, and social, in Canada and in the United States and makes possible a great step forward in the realm of business history, which is now coming into its own as one of the principal fields of historical scholarship. We shall be looking for many publications soon anent the fur trade.

EDWARD F. ROWSE

#### National Archives

*The Matabele Mission. A Selection from the Correspondence of John and Emily Moffat, David Livingstone and Others 1858-1878*, edited by J. P. R.



Wallis. Government Archives of Southern Rhodesia. Oppenheimer Series, No. 2. (London. Chatto and Windus, 1945. Pp. xxxiii, 268. 2 plates, folding map. 30s.)

This volume is a worthy successor to the two volume edition of the Journals of Robert Moffat published as number 1 of the same series. It consists of a hundred and thirteen letters from missionaries concerned in establishing the first mission station Matabeleland, as well as fragments of journals, and other pertinent material. From a technical point of view, it is even more interesting than the earlier volumes, involving, as it does, a much greater task of editorial work. Dr. Wallis has presented us with an example of judicious selection, skillful arrangement, and adequate annotation which might well be studied by archivists interested in preserving and publishing early American church records, not only for these reasons but because the letters themselves, written more than a century later and a hemisphere away, present an extraordinary likeness to those of the religious pioneers of our own earliest frontier.

ELIZABETH KIEFFER

Franklin and Marshall College

*The National Archives of Latin America*, edited by Roscoe R. Hill (Cambridge, Massachusetts. Harvard University Press, 1945. Pp. xx, 169. Illustrations and appendix.)

This little volume, as Dr. W. G. Leland tells us in his preface, is a cooperative product of Inter-American scholarship. It was edited for the Joint Committee on Latin American Studies, which in turn represents three important research committees of the United States, and is dedicated to the Pan American Institute of Geography and History. The editor is well known for his monumental *Descriptive Catalogue of the Documents . . . in the Papeles Procedentes de Cuba Deposited, . . . at Seville*, for a decade of advisory work in Nicaragua, and for another decade of service in the National Archives at Washington. To the data afforded by these varied experiences he has added three extensive journeys through Latin America (two on commercial missions) and editorial work on the *Handbook of Latin American Studies*. Many of his contributions to the last named reports have been incorporated in the present work.

In a ten-page introduction Dr. Hill notes the beginnings of archival procedure in the Iberian Peninsula and shows how Spain and Portugal shifted the practice of carefully preserving routine administrative documents to their colonies. The resulting collections of the homelands and the present American republics fill enormous repositories into which burrowing specialists have barely penetrated. Dr. Hill's purpose is to lighten the preliminary stages of work for such researchers. His experience on both sides of the Atlantic well qualifies him for this task. He first mentions the problems that are common to each country and follows with a more detailed description of each of the nineteen separate archives. Salvador alone has no specific national agency of the sort. This conspicuous lack and the paucity of archivalia in a full half of the others may arise from the fact that these minor republics did not spring from colonial audiencias, as did Cuba and Guatemala, nor did they contain important colo-

nial municipalities. Lima, too, fails to offer the *legajos* (bundles) or bound volumes of documents that we might expect to find in that former seat of viceroyalty. A century of neglect and warfare and a fire (not the recent burning of the National Library), coupled with extensive purloining of valuable collections for sale abroad, have greatly depleted her former plethoric stores. Her present national archives dates only from 1919. The national archives in Argentina, Mexico, Bolivia, Brazil and Cuba, are in each case due to definite legislation adopted in the early period of independence. Seven others date from the last half of the nineteenth century and the remaining seven from the last three decades. In this group, too, one must place the United States.

In the chapter devoted to each archives Dr. Hill follows about the same general plan: an historical sketch; a description of regulations and methods of administration, determined largely by legislation; suggestions to professional scholars; some comment on the building that houses the archives (only two of these, in Cuba and Panama, were definitely built for this purpose; some older structures have been fairly well adapted to that end); lists of archivists; classification of groups of documents; publications. Among the last named are inventories, catalogues, and in some cases, selected series of documents. Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Colombia have brought out notable volumes of this sort. There are also numerous articles relating to the various archives, generally the work of some noted historian. Of all this the editor makes good use, and often can check their work from personal observation. A fifteen-page index makes of this material a readily available, preliminary working tool in historical research.

ISAAC J. COX

Louisiana State University

*Drei Vorträge zum Archivwesen der Gegenwart* by Ernst Posner. (Stockholm, Alb. Bonniers Boktryckeri, 1940. Pp. 75 2:50 Rt.)

The first two of the three lectures given before the staff of the Royal Swedish State Archives cover rather broad subjects in brief space, but they reveal essentials with clarity and insight. On the development and problems of archival economy in the United States Dr. Posner observes that in the political climate of our country the pressure for establishing a national archives came not from administrative necessity but from the need of source materials for research. Thus the American Historical Association's activities are recounted. Some account is given of previous legislative efforts, of the National Archives Act, of the arrangement and facilities of the archives building, of state, local and business archives. There is also reference to professional development through education, and the work of the Society of American Archivists.

In the survey of the development of German archival economy since World War I, the problem of transfer of archives from Germany to France, Poland, and Belgium, the tendency toward unification of archives under governmental reorganization, the problem of dual administration of archives of royal houses, advances in education through the Institut für Archivwissenschaft, the necessity for and construction of new buildings, problems of changed forms

through standardization and reorganized office procedure, of right of inspection, of reduction of mass (and dangers of old paper drives, particularly in 1924), of provenance in relation to registry principle of organization—all these matters are considered in this compact though very readable lecture. As to trends under Nazism there is a hint in the mention of heavy demands since 1933 on archival staffs for materials used in genealogical research. Other developments, not associated with the movement, are also described: liberality in the loan of archives, the use of photocopy, and of the cellulose acetate coating similar to the lamination process. In addition, he touches on the subject of collecting non-official archives: papers of statesmen, politicians, military men, and other public officers, as well as on the subject of need for adequate terminology.

Discussing central archives versus ministerial archives, in his third lecture, Dr. Posner combines the survey and technical approach, presenting with some historical background the situation in several European countries, and citing Sweden as an example of great concentration with all its virtues and disadvantages. On the technical aspects of the problem he takes up the questions of getting cooperation of administrators in reduction of records, controlling destruction, and of organizing an archives department.

Again it must be said that although the treatment of the subjects of these three lectures is brief, the matter is concentrated and ably presented.

WALTER HAUSDORFER

Columbia University

*Utbildningsfrågor Inom Litteraturtjänsten. Biblioteken Och Reproduktionsfrågan.* Anföranden vid Tekniska Litteratursällskapetets årsmöte den 20 mars och 25 maj 1945. (TLS Meddelande Nr. 1. Stockholm. 1945. Pp 50. processed.)

This work contains the proceedings of the Swedish Technical Literature Society as unfolded at its annual meeting on 20 March and 25 May 1945. The papers presented and the ensuing discussion treat of two major topics, the training of librarians and the matter of reproducing material for library use. Actually, this publication constitutes a warm tribute to the activity of American librarians, coupled with a thoroughgoing appreciation of superior American techniques in documentary reproduction. Again and again, America serves as the example to be followed. It is the land of experiments and of possibilities, from which lessons can be learned.

The discussion of the proper background and training for librarians is by no means devoid of interest to archivists, since it is directed to the problem of preparing personnel to care for special library collections such as might be found in archival institutions. Here the American Library Association and especially the Special Libraries Association are the accepted guides, and frank recognition is accorded to American pioneering in the field. With respect to the staffing of the special library, the Swedish ideal may be described as that hard-to-find person possessed of high qualifications in the required field—say, industrial research—combined with training in library science.

Of peculiar interest to archivists are the pages—about one-half of the entire

fifty—which are devoted to libraries and the modern methods of documentary reproduction. In his introductory remarks the librarian, Dr. C. Björkbom, stresses the effect on libraries of the tremendous flow of published material and the increasing demands of the reading public. These, in turn, necessitate the adoption of new and comparatively inexpensive methods of reproduction notably by means of photographic processes. In Björkbom's opinion, micro-filming won no wide acceptance among librarians until early in the 1920's. This method has proved invaluable to the library, since for a small sum any patron can obtain a photographic copy of a desired item for home study, while the original remains available to other readers. Inter-library loans may be avoided, and distance no longer plays a part. "It is as easy," one is told, "to obtain a photographic copy from America as from Gothenburg."

For archival establishments photocopies of manuscripts have proved especially significant: the Swedish State Archives, for example, has secured considerable material in this way from the Russian archives. Photography also may be employed to augment the library's resources. Material so acquired is relatively inexpensive and occupies very little space. Moreover, security copies can be made of unusually valuable books or documents. According to Björkbom, even ordinary wear and tear can be very destructive of library material and especially of newspapers. In his view, film editions of newspapers are a necessity if they are to be preserved as historical sources and if libraries are to have space for their holdings.

Next on the program is Gösta Grönwall's exposition of various duplicating devices such as the hectograph, rotaprint, and the addressograph—all familiar to most Americans interested in this subject. According to another speaker, Nils Torin, photocopying of archives is aimed at reproducing expeditiously large quantities of documentary material of diverse types and sizes on a medium that conserves space. In particular, Torin notes the need of identifying film copies for reference purposes, and to assist the searcher he suggests the insertion of blank spaces between each ten numbers in the film edition of a newspaper. Above all, he realizes the dependence upon reading machines, which, he hopes, in the future will become as convenient as typewriters.

According to the last speaker, G. M. Eklund, despite the absence in Sweden in World War II of all American technical journals and catalogs, it was clear that America still held the lead in microphotography, with respect to methods, cameras, and film. In Sweden, he reveals, this process suddenly became vital as a protection against wartime hazards, whereas Americans had been impressed largely by its practical advantages such as enhanced security for valuable records and a great saving in storage space. Eklund recalls that some time ago he received much information of value on microfilming technique in the United States from Dr. Vernon D. Tate of the National Archives. American microcopying cameras come in for high praise from Eklund, who finds them more adaptable than the cameras generally employed in Sweden. On the basis of his own experience he recommends a well-known American-made microfilm. American reading machines, he acknowledges, have progressed beyond the European models.

Throughout this section the emphasis rests upon American precedents

such as the microfilming of the NRA and AAA hearings. American photographic equipment is mentioned frequently in the text, and it is conspicuous in the two pages of illustrations in this work. The brief closing discussion also refers to American practices. Professor Velander contributes his observations made on a tour of the United States in 1944. The engineer, G. M. Eklund, points out the possibility of renting microcopying cameras in Sweden as is done in America, and the librarian, Dr. Björkbom, suggests that Swedish candidates for the doctorate take advantage of American photographic processes in publishing their dissertations.

As a whole, this publication demonstrates that a fertile field exists in Sweden for the latest in American equipment for documentary reproduction and for the most recent ideas, methods, and procedures relating to that subject. For the truth is that much of the discussion here reviewed hardly extends beyond the contents of the comprehensive *Manual on Methods of Reproducing Research Materials*, issued by the late Robert C. Binkley in 1936.

HAROLD LARSON

Arlington, Virginia

Foreign archival journals are once more reaching American hands. It is hoped that arrangements can be made to revive the practice of publishing abstracts in the *American Archivist* of the more significant items appearing in them. Meanwhile, we are indebted to Olga Paul of the National Archives staff for the English titles of the following articles and notes selected from those appearing in the Russian archival journal *Arkhivnoe Delo*, 1940-1941. List of contents of *Arkhivnoe delo*

1/53, 1940 April 7, 1940

G. Starov, Bolshevik planning of work in archival branches, pp. 1-7.

S. Markov, Approaching tasks of scientific research in archival branches. pp. 8-16.

#### Scientific method section

N. Korovkov, Russian diplomatic, pp. 17-37.

#### Exchange of experience

I. Varshavskii, On the improvement of reference work in the Government Archives of USSR, pp. 52-63.

I. Zinin, From experience in the work of the new registration of archival materials, pp. 64-70.

A. Bondarexskii, On the question of the elimination of archival materials not suitable for preservation, pp. 71-79.

G. Nikolskaia, Some questions on the systematization of partial fonds, pp. 80-85.

V. Levashev, About the systematization of archival material in chronological order, pp. 86-88.

#### Storage and restoration

V. F. Nikitin, The restoration of archival materials, pp. 89-100.

2/54, 1940, May 31, 1940.

N. Kniazev, A steadfast struggle for scientific organization of archival work, pp. 1-4.

N. Pavlova, Against an attempt at decentralization of the government archival fond, pp. 5-11.

#### Scientific method section

I. Kolesnikov, Auxiliary historical disciplines and their significance in historical and archival work, pp. 12-28.

#### Exchange of experience

M. Sokolov, From experience in the work of the Central Government Archives of the Red Army 1937-1939, pp. 29-40.

D. Bobrik, Experience in the work of the manuscript sources of the Government Historical Museum, pp. 41-53.

I. Tartakovskaia, Storage of archival materials in the Archives of the Main Administration of the Citizens' Aid Fleet, pp. 54-59.

P. Ermolaev, Archives of the active institutions of the Chuvash USSR, pp. 60-64.

#### Storage and restoration

P. Mizin and V. Chumadurova, Accelerated aging of paper and the effect on substances, changing during restoration, disinfection and conservation, pp. 65-86.

3/55, 1940, August 21, 1940

Twenty-two years of archival administration in the USSR. pp. 1-16.

#### Scientific method section

I. Kolesnikov, Auxiliary historical disciplines and their significance in historical and archival work, pp. 32-43.

#### Exchange of experience

A. Chernov, Contribution to the problem of compilation of guides to archives from the experience of the work of Gofky, pp. 44-55.

N. Szmakin, The work of the Central Government Navy Archives in publishing documents, pp. 61-65.

M. Muzikantova, From the history of archival work in the Turkoman SSR, pp. 66-72.

#### Storage and restoration

V. Yek, Experience in the use of cyanide in archival depositories, pp. 73-84.  
1/57, 1941, April 19, 1941.

S. Markov, Summation of scientific work of archival branches in 1940, pp. 8-19.

#### Scientific method section

C. B. Veselovskii, Problems of scientific description of letterbooks, control, and copybooks of the Moscow government of the 16th and 17th centuries, pp. 20-35.



## Exchange of experience

- G. Frolov, Experience in the organization of archival materials for exhibition on Gorki, pp. 58-62.  
A. Kurbanov, Contribution to the history of the archival administration of the Azerbaijan SSR, pp. 63-67.  
2/58, 1941, May 16, 1941.  
A. Scherbakov, Training of staffs (personnel)—the most important task of the archival branches, pp. 1-7.

## Exchange of experience

- A. Ivanov, About a Complex method of processing documentary materials, pp. 21-28.  
A. Shapiro, Processing of documentary materials in the Central Government Archives of National Economy, pp. 29-33.  
V. Derbina, Work in the archives in accordance with schedules (from the experience of the archival division of UNKVD of the Moscow Region), pp. 34-39.  
F. Yudin, The Central Archives of the Red Army should be among the foremost archives, pp. 40-45.  
D. Epshtein, Details of the consolidation of the archives of Georgia and Azerbaijan, pp. 46-49.  
P. Karavaev and P. Zelenova, Increasing the qualification of the party workers of the archives, pp. 50-53.  
A. Goriachkin, Utilization of documents by the Tarnoplo Regional Archives, pp. 54-58.

OLGA PAUL

National Archives