

pioneer squatters of the Darling Downs to their parents in Scotland, and which are now in the Oxley. These have been arranged by writer, then chronologically within each group, and filed in folders in a steel filing cabinet. No entries have been made in the catalogue yet, as the arranging is not complete.

In the past, it has been difficult for students of early Queensland history to undertake research in the period 1824-59, as very few documents existed in Brisbane. The New South Wales Archives and the Mitchell Library are rich storehouses of this material, and the Queensland Government has now arranged with the Trustees of the New South Wales Public Library for microfilm copies of all documents relating to Queensland to be made. This will be a valuable adjunct to the collection of reels of microfilm copies of the documents in the Public Record Office, London, being made under the project instituted by the National Library, Canberra, and the Mitchell Library, in which project, Queensland is sharing.

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"MODERN ARCHIVES", by DOCTOR T.R. SCHELLENBERG
(Cheshire, Melbourne, 37/6.)

The sub-title of Doctor Schellenberg's book is "Principles and Techniques" but the content of the work belies this rather uninviting description. This is more than a treatise on archives and their care, on the ideas which have influenced record-keeping and the methods which have been applied in organising records, preserving them and making them available for use. It is a reasoned survey of the whole subject with remarkably impartial assessments of the problems attendant on archives work. The author's attitude - one might say his working philosophy - is clearly expressed, without dogmatism and with a commendable willingness to bend the rigidities of theory to the exigencies of practise.

It is, of course, the work of an historian - and an historian with an unusually well-developed power of synthesis - for in reviewing the development of record keeping and the growth of ideas about record keeping, Schellenberg shows a masterly ability to pick out the salient features of varying archival practise in many countries and many ages.

For probably the first time in the annals of archival literature, a comprehensive handbook admirably suited to the

needs of a "new country" has been written. A feature of the work which does a great deal to commend it is its simplicity of statement and its freedom from abstruse technical jargon. Too many books on archives have lacked quality by reason of their adherence to involved terminology and their addiction to disputation about theory. Schellenberg's re-definition of archives, as in accordance with the needs of the archivist who is dealing with "modern archives", is refreshingly satisfying and his refusal to become involved in the controversies on this matter of definition is a stimulating break. His definition of "archives" as; "Those records of any public or private institution which are adjudged worthy of permanent preservation for reference and research purposes and which have been deposited or selected for deposit in an archival institution", may not find favour with all purists, but at least it is a useful working definition for the archivist in a country whose history is comparatively short. What is more, eminently adaptable.

Another vital matter dealt with in an introductory first part of "Modern Archives" is the relationship between library and archives institutions. One cannot help feeling that on this subject the author has, in deference to his hosts in Australia, expressed himself with too much moderation. But still, there can be no doubt about his view of the relationship which should exist between the library and archives functions, and chapter lll on "Library relationships" contains trenchant arguments for the independence of the archivist in his work. Schellenberg returns to this question in dealing with archival management in Part lll where his analysis of the nature of authority and his argument for the need for status for the archival profession is again soundly expressed.

The second part of the book dealing with record management and the consideration of production controls, classification principles, register systems, disposition practises and like matters, contains the considered views of an expert on this extremely complex subject. A less judicious author with the experience that Schellenberg has behind him, might have been inclined to pontificate on a subject which he has so monumentally made his own, but here again, as in his consideration of theory and definitions, Schellenberg weights up one system against another and makes due allowance for those differences in governmental organisations and administrative systems of registering, classification and filing which make them most suitable in a given country or situation. Not the least value of the book is that it brings together in one place a great deal of

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information which has been scattered through the introductions of guides, staff directories and articles on archives subjects in the world's periodical literature. Anyone who has attempted to cull practical detailed information from these scattered sources will appreciate the value of Schellenberg's achievement. There is little indication in either the preface, the main text or the excellent footnotes of the magnitude of the labour which this must have involved. It is obvious that, apart from the sources which he quotes, the author is extremely well versed in the writings on archives - and not only in the productions of the last century.

The history of archival development is a subject on which the Germans have tended to be the authorities and many will perhaps feel that Brenneke's "Archivkunde" contains too much description of archival development. "Modern Archives", while less preoccupied with the subject, none the less has as one of its most delightful features, frequent illustrations from practice in the past. The way in which the author has integrated practical information and reasoned argument with historical illustration is one of the book's most pleasing features.

The stimulating effect of Schellenberg's visit to this country in 1954 is still being felt. Most of the foundations of institutional archives since that date have been largely due to his missionary zeal and there could have been no better follow-up to the visit than the publication of "Modern Archives". With Australian interest in the subject awakened, this clear exposition of principles and methods with its refreshing simplicity could not have come at a better time. Published in Melbourne, the book can perhaps claim to be Australia's first important contribution to the world's archival literature. Schellenberg's insistence on the value of archives organisation to administrators as well as to historians will be, it is to be hoped, influential among the reading public in promoting the idea of archives as more than mere relics. Schellenberg's book is being widely read and the idea of archives as the tools on which every efficient government must rely for its efficiency, cannot be propagated too widely in Australia today.

If there is some doubt that "Modern Archives" can be claimed as an Australian contribution to archival literature, the circumstances in which it was written at least gives some weight to our claim. But of this there is no doubt, that the book will come to replace many works now regarded

as "standard" especially in "new countries".

It will certainly be a most welcome addition to the working libraries of the Australian archivists to whom it is dedicated.

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NEWS AND NOTES

"A Summer School in Archives will be held at the University of Sydney in the week, Monday 4th March, 1957, to Friday 8th March inclusive. A number of exhibitions of records material, publications, illustrations etc. will be held and there will be lectures and discussions on various aspects of archives work -- the special problems presented by records of different types, methods of storage, classification and repair etc.. The theme of the School will be that of "Archives and Society in the 1950's". The School is being held with the co-operation of the University of Sydney and further details and notifications will be circulated in the next few weeks. It is hoped that with the accent on discussion, Australian Archivists and Historians will have an opportunity to meet and exchange views on the problems which face them in this field in Australia today".

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Mr. I.C. McNay, M.A., an Archives Officer of the Archives Department of the Public Library of New South Wales has resigned to accept a position, with the Editorial Department of the Law Book Co. of Australia.

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Miss L. Fairweather, B.A., and Miss Parker, B.A., visited the New South Wales archives during September. Miss Fairweather is on the staff of the Western Australian Archives as was Miss Parker who is now with the History Department of the University of Queensland.

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Miss M. Lukis of Western Australia has been granted assistance by the Carnegie foundation for travel in Europe and America early next year.

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