

VICTORIA'S STATE ARCHIVES

Brief notes on some of the major record groups held by the Archives Division of the State Library of Victoria.

The Archives Division of the State Library of Victoria works under the authority of Premier's Instruction of 1928 and repeated in 1940, 1943 and 1949 that no records be destroyed without reference to the Library. This Premier's Instruction was issued in 1928 as a result of agitation against destruction of records following a "Board of Inquiry" into "methods in the Public Service" in 1927 which drew attention to the difficulty of locating wanted files by departments, the space occupied in the storage of correspondence and records and which recommended a Conference of Chief Clerks to "formulate uniform methods of registration, records and correspondence".

The first archivist was appointed in 1948 and there were three changes in personnel by 1955 when provision was made for the appointment of a Senior Archivist and staff of three archivists.

An internal programme of sorting, arranging, shelving and describing the accumulated record groups together with further accessions has been carried out since 1955, and the following are some of the major departmental groups:

Chief Secretary's, 1836 - 1900. This group of records includes those of the administrations of Captain Lonsdale (Police Magistrate, 1836-39), C.J. Latrobe (Superintendent, 1839-51), the Colonial Secretary (1851-56) and the Chief Secretary (1856-1900). During the first three administrations the office was the centre of Victorian government and consequently these early records are vital to the history of the state.

Education, 1848 - 1936. This group covers the growth of Education in Victoria. Until 1862 there were two types of schools - Denominational and National - supervised by two different Boards and both received government grants. With the passing of the Common Schools Act in 1862, grants to Church schools ceased. The Common Schools are well documented in Archives. The Education Department as it is known today was formed in 1872 and the records of the Department held by Archives are comprehensive and are a constant source of research material.

Crown Law Correspondence, 1841-70. This is a recent accession and, although arranged and shelved in order, the records have not yet been fully processed.

Crown Law Briefs, 1841 - 1932. These are well arranged chronologically and in districts.

The N.S.W. Aborigines' Protectorate, Port Phillip District, 1839 - 50. This is a small, well-developed group of records which have been widely used for research. They document the well-meaning but abortive attempts of the government to deal with a difficult situation.



Police, 1852 - 1940. These are a very large group of records shelved in chronological order and by police districts, but not yet fully processed for use.

Public Library, 1854 - 1945. A well-developed group of great value to the State Library and librarians since it documents the growth of the institution from its inception and also sheds light on the early cultural history of Melbourne. A valuable find amongst these records is a collection of the private papers of Sir Redmond Barry, Chairman of the First Board of Trustees and a Justice of the Supreme Court.

The Ships Passenger Lists, 1852 - 1923. These are a much used group, both by Commonwealth Departments and by professional and amateur genealogists. The Lists have been recently cleaned, repaired, re-shelved in covers and microfilmed.

Other groups of records include Public Service Board, 1893-1909; Council of Public Education, 1906-52; Lands Department Registers of Deeds, 1850-1925; Exhibition Building, 1881-1941; Crown Lands, 1829-60; Treasury, 1856-63; Public Works, 1844-1903; Companies Registration Branch of Crown Law, Defunct Companies, 1867-1900; Public Works, Local Government Branch, 1881-1932; Workers Compensation, 1938-53; State Rivers and Water Supply, Grazing Permits, 1870-1950; Chamber of Commerce, 1851-1924; Austin Hospital, 1896-1927; Royal Children's Hospital, 1872-1943.

An interesting recent accession has been the records of the Organising Committee of the XVith Olympiad held in Melbourne in 1956.

An external programme for the surveying and assessment of the accumulated backlog of records held in departments has also been carried out and the disposal of the ephemeral records by the introduction of disposal schedules has been initiated.

HWN

ARCHIVES' SECTION PROGRAMME AT THE L.A.A.

CONFERENCE in MELBOURNE, 1961

The Eleventh Conference of the Library Association of Australia will be held at the University of Melbourne from August 21st to August 25th. The theme of the conference is 'Library resources for the Nation' and the Archives' Section will be holding three sessions. The first of these will be on Tuesday, August 22nd, when Mr. C.A. Burmester will give a paper on the collecting of Australian historical records - this will deal in part with the outcome of the Canberra conference being held in July on the same subject. Also on Tuesday, August 22nd, there will be a symposium 'Archival resources of Australia' in which papers by Mr. R. Sharman, Mr. P.R. Eldershaw, and Mr. H. Nunn will discuss aspects of holdings in the Archives of Queensland,