

subscription-only basis, we trust that quite a large amount of its support will come from those who make their contribution to the furtherance of historical knowledge, not by arranging, describing and caring for archival materials, but by exploiting them. Though it is no part of our intention to trespass on the field of the historical journal, we do believe that *Archives and Manuscripts* can achieve a great deal by making known the ways in which documentary materials can be used in historical and allied research work, and we believe that historians can contribute articles on this theme which will be equally appreciated by their colleagues and by archivists.

ARCHIVES IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

SOME BRIEF IMPRESSIONS

by

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In October 1968 I was one of a group of eight Australian women who spent four weeks in Germany as guests of the Federal Republic on a study tour organised to give an insight into cultural, social and economic conditions in Germany. It was not possible for members of the party to deviate from the program to any great extent in order to follow special interests but arrangements were made for me to visit the Federal Archives and State Archives at Bremen and Munich.

No attempt will be made to give a comprehensive description of the institutions visited but instead reference will be made to certain aspects of their work which were found to be of particular interest. Readers who seek a general background of knowledge about Archives in Germany are recommended to read the excellent article by Dr Alfred Wagner on "The Administration of Archives in Germany". (*Archives* Vol. 6, No. 30 Michaelmas 1963 p. 67.)

There are certain similarities to the situation in Australia with regard to State and Federal Archives in Germany. As in Australia the State Archives are autonomous bodies and there are no administrative ties between them and the Federal Archives; again, as in Australia, the bulk of the records in the Federal Archives are recent in origin compared with those held by most of the States. It was interesting to find also that to date archives have not been controlled by

Statute, at either State or Federal level.

The Federal Archives in Koblenz are housed in a modern office building occupied since 1961. In addition to official documents, maps and still pictures there is a division containing unofficial records obtained by gift or purchase, including private papers of ministers and high officials, a collection of some 5000 handbills, posters, brochures etc. largely relating to politics and labour relations, a quantity of tapes and gramophone records and motion picture films (separately housed) from about 1914 which are mainly newsreels and documentaries.

The repository contains a photographic section in which photographs and documents are copied for research workers and records are microfilmed. A program of microfilming key series of records in both State and Federal Archives for security reasons is organized by the Federal Office for Civil Protection of the Population, though carried out in the individual archival repositories concerned. All the negative film resulting from this program is placed in special underground storage in the south of Germany. Microfilming for the reduction of bulk was not evident in the institutions visited but the copying of all photographs on to strips of 35 mm film seemed to be a fairly general practice which has certain advantages both for reference and storage.

Access conditions in the Federal Archives seemed to be fairly liberal, with no restrictions on material more than thirty years old. More recent records may be made available by permission from the relevant ministry.

There are two libraries in the repository at Koblenz, one containing books for general reference which are mainly histories of Germany or deal with aspects of German history, the other consisting entirely of government publications and currently receiving them all. The staff includes qualified librarians to manage the libraries. Responsibility for the conduct of the archives search room is assigned permanently to one member of staff. Archival staff are trained at the Archives School at Marburg and there are two levels among the professional archivists; in the first category are those who did the eighteen months course at the School after graduating with a doctor's degree in either history or law. The remainder take a special course of one year at Marburg having passed the final examination (somewhat similar to our Matriculation) at the High School. Both categories of staff have a period of in-training after leaving the school. All senior posts are held by staff with academic qualifications.

In addition to the main repository of the Federal Archives at Koblenz there are two branch repositories - one at Frankfurt, one at Kornelimunster near Aachen - and an important departmental archives, the Politisches Archiv, of the Foreign Office in Bonn. I was fortunate to be shown through the latter where about ten students, including several foreigners, were busily engaged in research.

In addition to seeing the records in the quite extensive stacks a number of documents which it was felt would be of special interest were produced for me, among them such items as Germany's copies of the Locarno Treaty and the Munich Agreement with original signatures and seals; a map showing the partition of Poland with the signatures of Stalin and von Ribbentrop scrawled across it; Kaiser Wilhelm's letter of abdication in 1918 and original letters of Napoleon and Bismarck.

The State Archives of Bremen proved to be of particular interest, partly because they are housed in a fine new building opened less than six months before my visit, partly because some comparisons could be made with archival administration in my own State. The old Hanseatic city - State of Bremen, with an area of only 156 square miles, has a population of approximately 800,000. Though the area is so very different, the government of Western Australia is concerned with administration for about the same number of people and again, although the history of Bremen goes back to the Middle Ages, the bulk of the records held date from early in the 19th century, as do ours in Western Australia.

Dr Karl Schwebel, head of the Bremen State Archives, gave most generously of his time to show me as much as possible of his institution and its administration. After many years in unsuitable and temporary quarters he was naturally very proud of his new repository completed earlier in the year at a cost of 4¼ million marks. The building is in two distinct sections - a two storey block, of which the bulk of the walls is glass, built around a central courtyard and containing offices, search rooms, display area, lecture room etc. etc. and the adjoining stack of eleven floors, entirely without windows but presenting a distinguished appearance because of the stone, varying in colour from pink to red, used in its construction. Monotony in the blank walls has been avoided partly because of the shading of the stone and partly because it has been laid in series of blocks which run alternately horizontally and vertically.

The interior of the stack has all the features one would expect from a carefully planned modern building but I was particularly impressed with the high quality and finish of the steel shelving and other equipment. I also noted with interest the wash basins provided at the entrance to the stack on each level and in the corridors outside the search rooms, so that both staff and research workers could readily wash their hands as often as required.

The map collection in Bremen State Archives is particularly fine, with some maps dating from the 17th century. The bulk of the older maps, prior to the present century, have been photographed and miniature copies about 16" x 20" produced. These can be easily filed and are made available to research workers in the first instance. Examination of them may provide the student with the information he needs but if not it usually enables him to select the specific

item required, thus avoiding unnecessary handling of original maps.

Dr Schwebel had been anxious to find some records of Australian interest among his Archives for me to see and several files were located containing reports from Australia, mainly from South Australia, by consuls for Bremen in the first half of the 19th century. Attached to these in some cases were copies of Australian newspapers.

Dr Schwebel and his staff produced in 1968 for the opening of the new State Archives building a copiously illustrated book dealing with the history, organisation and functions of the Bremen State Archives which any Australians reading German would find of considerable interest, particularly with regard to planning the building. The State Archives of Bavaria are naturally much larger and also more complex in their organisation than the Archives at Bremen. In Munich I was only able to visit two of the five departments into which they are divided. Each of the departments is responsible for records in a particular field or fields but certain technical services, including repair and photography, are centrally provided and these I was able to see. The photographic section of the Bavarian State Archives was the best equipped I have ever seen with a great variety of cameras suitable for different types of work and most enthusiastic staff.

The Bavarian State Archives also runs its own training school for archivists in Munich; this school is one of the oldest in Europe having been established in 1821. I was able to meet Dr Klemens Stadler, the director of the school, and he gave me a number of papers about it, including details of the syllabus. As in the school at Marburg, archivists are trained at two levels but the course for both lasts three years in Bavaria, practical work and in-service training being included in this period. In order to train technicians for work in Archives special courses are given every two or three years with emphasis on restoration and repair of documents and seals, binding, production of facsimiles, methods of dealing with insect pests etc.

Although primarily to train staff for the Bavarian State Archives the school accepts trainees from elsewhere in Germany and from other countries. Staff for ecclesiastical and other non-government archives in Bavaria also receive their training in the Munich School. Entry is either at post graduate level or on leaving high school, having passed the final examination required for entrance to the University - these latter candidates must have studied Latin for a minimum of six years. The average age of archivists of the higher level when they complete their course is 27 years; those of the second level would be about 22.

Dr Stadler's teaching staff all work part time in the school; one is also a professor at the University and the other nineteen are on the staff of the State Archives. Material received from Dr Stadler about the Archives School in Munich

could be made available to any Australian archivist who reads German and is interested.

I left Germany full of admiration for the archival colleagues whom I met there - not only for their competence, which one would expect in a country where there is such a long background of professional training, but also for their ability to explain their work in a foreign language which, although some of them spoke it fluently, must have been most exhausting for others as they had not used their English for a considerable time.

TO CATALOGUE OR NOT TO CATALOGUE:
THE SUBJECT/FORM CATALOGUE OF
THE QUEENSLAND STATE ARCHIVES

by

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During the last twenty or thirty years it has become more and more obvious that it is not the sole *raison d'être* of an archives institution simply to preserve those records which have been entrusted to its care. Records management has become one of the major influences in archives administration in that archivists often advise on records-keeping practices, they are expected to have a thorough knowledge of past and present methods of records-keeping, and so on. Arrangement and description, considered also to be part of efficient records management, are playing an increasingly important role as part of the archivist's duty with the development of sophisticated systems for arranging and describing records.

Previously, it was one of the minor functions of the archivist to make "his" records available for reference and research purposes, with no obligation on his part to assist the student or scholar. It was sufficient for him to present the material to the unwitting newcomer and leave him to it. Any Australian archivist who failed to do more than this now would be charged with archival negligence, and cries of "What useful purpose does *he* serve anyway?" would be heard far and wide. Furthermore, there would surely be enquiries into the reasons for "wasting" government or company or university finance by employing an archivist and trained staff when, after all, record clerks could do the job just as well! In a sense, the archivist needs to justify his own worth by providing