

## EDITORIAL

For many years, archivists of Australia, the United States, and other parts of the new world, have relied to a large extent upon a text-book of Dutch origin written by Samuel Muller, J. A. Feith and R. Fruin. The second edition of that book was translated by Arthur H. Leavitt as "Manual for the arrangement and description of archives" in 1940 (published by the H. W. Wilson Company of New York). The "Manual . ." was first published as long ago as 1898, and appeared in the second Dutch edition in 1920, having appeared in German, Italian and French translations in the meantime. At the time Leavitt worked on his translation, the only general treatise on archives generally available in the English language was Jenkinson's "A manual of archive administration". Doubtless our American colleagues found the English archivist's pedantry enflaming, and his tendency to draw examples from the rather recherche depths of English medieval archival practice as a type of one-up-manship not likely to win friends on the western side of the Atlantic.

So Muller, Feith and Fruin was translated by a gifted American archivist, and published by a New York publisher. Other American archivists may not, however, have greeted the appearance of the "Manual . . ." with unalloyed enthusiasm. For Muller and company were engaged on the production of what was undoubtedly a manual, in the true sense of the word. In many ways, it was like a staff training handbook. It gave explicit instructions which enabled Dutch archivists to cope with the particular problems of the Dutch archival world. It is not a general textbook with wide international application. This is not to say that general principles cannot be inferred from it. On the contrary, the perceptive reader, aware of the background of Dutch archival practice, can elicit from the book a great deal of what is appropriate for an understanding of the principles and techniques of archives administration. What was needed, however, was a clear and concise explanation of Dutch archival practice.

For this reason, *Archives and Manuscripts* is extremely pleased to be able to publish Mr. H. Hardenberg's article, "Archives in the Netherlands". This was originally published in *Acta Historiae Neerlandica*, III, 1968. The Editor is grateful to Mr. Hardenberg for permission to reprint the article, and to Mr. H. J. Gibbney, of the Australian Dictionary of Biography, Australian National University, for drawing his attention to it. It is an interesting and instructive article in its own right, and will have the added advantage of assisting Australian archivists preparing for the task of reading Muller, Feith and Fruin's book.

The second article in the present issue deals with maps, with special reference to Australia. Australian archivists need to know something about maps, from at least two separate points of view. First, there are questions relating to provenance. Who produces maps in Australia? What are the relationships between the various map-producing authorities? What are the major series at present available, and what series have been available in the past? When did the major series of grid maps begin? And so on. Secondly, there are questions relating to the arrangement and description, the storage, restoration, repair and physical maintenance of maps. These questions have to a large extent been answered by Mrs. P. A. G. Alonso, in her article "Archival map preservation and documentation" (*Archives and Manuscripts*, 5, 1, November 1972). The questions posed in the earlier part of this present paragraph, however, have not normally been easy to answer. Thanks to Mr. M. Foaie's article, Australian archivists will now have a handy source of information on these points.