

## RESEARCH IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC POLICY

Frank B. Evans and Harold T. Pinkett (Eds.), *Research in the Administration of Public Policy*. Howard University Press for the National Archives Trust Fund Board, Washington D.C., 1975. xiv + 229 pp. \$9.95.

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Reviewed by E. W. Russell

The seventh volume in the U.S. National Archives Conference series, *Research in the Administration of Public Policy* reprints five years after the event the papers and proceedings of a conference held in 1970 by the National Archives and Records Service (N.A.R.S.).

The conference was part of a series, begun in 1967, 'to provide archivists with guidance and counsel in how to serve better the needs of researchers and at the same time, to provide directly to researchers information concerning the research potential of the Federal Government's Archives' (p.vii). Other conferences in the series have dealt with the U.S. polar exploration, statistical research, the American territorial system, urban research, foreign relations research, captured German records, historical geography research and the Second World War. Some of the resulting companion volumes of papers and proceedings have previously been reviewed in these pages.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this particular conference within this framework was 'to stimulate interest in the relatively neglected study of the history and performance of Federal Government Agencies by bringing together researchers concerned with this subject, by noting how archival resources relating to the subject have been profitably used in the past, and by suggesting ways in which they can be used more profitably in the future' (p.vii).

The conference proceedings comprise five sessions. The opening session, on writing the history of a Federal agency, begins with a paper by Richard Hewlett, Chief Historian of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, on 'Government History: Writing from the Inside'. Hewlett outlines some of the endemic problems—access, censorship, independence, and quality control—and gives some proposals for solutions, like the device of a Historical Advisory Committee, and a convention that government historians should have a right of access without necessarily a right to publish. Sometimes he goes too far, as when he claims that research into government history is 'in a literal sense, desperately needed' (p.9), because, among other things, 'government holds the power of life and death over us all' (p.10), and when he claims that the historian can play a useful part in attacking the problems of the present 'because he has mastered techniques that are particularly useful in understanding the present. The historian concentrates his attention on what has happened, not on what shall or should occur' (p.8). Even his colleagues at the conference wouldn't swallow that one. Later in the conference, Louis Morton made the appropriate flat contradiction: 'It is not at all clear . . . that the historian has anything unique to contribute to the solution of current

problems, or that he possesses any special qualifications not possessed by others for the analysis of policy and the making of decisions' (p.142). Hewlett is on surer ground in his discussion of the conditions of successful bureaucratic history, and that is something we want to know about. Why do bureaucratic histories vary so much? Two of them were reviewed in the April 1975 *Historical Studies*. Of one, the reviewer said, 'The Department is to be congratulated on its good sense in not entrusting this work to one of its own servants'; of another, its reviewer hoped that 'the buyer will not . . . be obliged to cart off these two fat volumes on which the dead hand of bureaucracy lies so heavily'.<sup>2</sup>

It's just not that simple of course, and Hewlett helps us to see why. Thomas Manning helps too, on a more practical plane, by providing useful tips on how to do government research (just the type you sometimes don't get in Theory and Method). Manning advises the would-be administrative historian to start work not at the archives but in government department libraries, obtaining a sense of the outline of his topic from government publications, committee hearings, etc., so that when he turns to archival sources he will at once distinguish what is new and significant.

Significance is the theme of the third paper in the trio, which is a sketch of N.A.R.S. appraisal criteria for various types of policy and programme records, by Harold Pinkett, Deputy Director of its Records Appraisal Branch. It is however just a sketch for the uninitiated, and contains no news for archivists.

The second session 'Dilemmas in Administering Public Policy' is a disappointment. The topics of the papers—'Saccharin—A Bitter Regulatory Controversy'; coal price regulation; and 'Records Concerning Decisions in Federal Regulatory Work' indicate an intention to discuss a generally neglected, difficult, but fruitful species of records—those of regulatory agencies. Anyone who has read L. T. C. Rolt's book *Red for Danger*, a thrilling story of the Board of Trade's attempt to regulate railway safety in Britain, will appreciate what an imaginative historian can do with this type of material. Unfortunately, the two case studies in saccharin and coal price regulation are just case studies, and not very interesting ones at that. Jerome Finster's paper on the records describes some of the main types of regulatory documentation and U.S. regulatory agencies. I think this session represents a good opportunity lost. Case studies have their place, but in the limited space and time available more useful things could have been said about the records of regulatory agencies and their uses.

A bewildering contribution called 'Deepening the Wellsprings of Public Policy' constitutes by itself the third session. Perplexed by the title, I read on, to find a discussion of the vexing problem, 'What motivates the supergraders?' A supergrader, it seems, is a top Washington executive. Among other things, such people are motivated because they 'exhibit an innate desire to achieve; they were born with a desire to get ahead' (p.87). (Clearly this is important. The latter aim is not innate among cannibal headhunters, in whom it is achieved by social conditioning.) This speaker continues by asserting, *inter alia*,

that 'the Rural Electrification Administration attracts people who believe that the farmers deserve electric power and that only the Federal Government will make it available to them' (p.88). Finally he concludes by declaring that 'I suspect it is wholly apparent to you that I think these motivational forces are real'. Let us hope not. It may be that this paper relates to the title of the book, but how it relates to the aim of the conference escapes me.

The fourth session is about 'Efforts at Federal Administrative Reform'. The two academic contributions under this heading are descriptive, and are supplemented by a paper giving comments on major relevant record holdings.

Finally, a session devoted to 'New Proposals for Research in the Administration of Public Policy' comprises two papers on research areas—poverty and indian affairs—and a plea for a government-wide historical office. However important in 1970, this plea is slightly amusing now. The author urged that President Nixon should establish an Office of History in the Executive Office of the President, illustrating the need by arguing that, although each of the Services was proposing a history of the Vietnam war, none would treat those aspects of it which would be of greatest interest to the public. 'Such a history', this writer maintained clairvoyantly, 'could only be written at the White House level' (p.144).

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The book, as it stands, is neither what its title nor its stated aims suggest it should be. It is not really about 'Research in the Administration of Public Policy', for this is too broad a title for a blend of papers on particular fields of administrative history (6), methodology of administrative history (2), and N.A.R.S. record holdings (3). As far as its stated aims are concerned, it does not really look at 'how archival sources . . . have been profitably used in the past', while only two of the papers are concerned with the profitable use of such sources in the future. To use the word 'performance' in the context of the aim of promoting the study of the 'history and performance of Federal Government agencies' is to debase it, since it normally connotes quantitative study (cf. 'performance measurement') in the context of public administration. As a local promotion and communications exercise, this conference may well have been a great success; its wider significance must be questioned.

A redeeming virtue of the book is this anecdote about a jury that ate its evidence:

While jurymen and the defence attorney . . . sipped sugar and saccharin versions of a grape beverage, a Bureau of Chemistry witness offered in evidence also lemon, cherry and sarsaparilla flavours. Next came cakes of all sorts, pies, cream puffs, eclairs, caramels . . . A short wrangle ensued over the question of whether or not it was legally proper to offer exhibits in evidence and then destroy them by eating them . . . (p. 246).

The author ignores the issue of archival principle. A caramel, offered in evidence, becomes a public record; to eat it shows a want of *respect pour les fondants*.

## REFERENCES

1. For example, *The National Archives and Foreign Relations Research* in the August 1975 issue at p. 131; *Captured German and Related Records* in the same issue at p. 133; *The American Territorial System* in the November 1974 issue at p. 26.
2. *Historical Studies*, vol. 16, No. 64, April 1975, p. 489 and p. 497.

## INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORY OF ARCHIVES

The International Council on Archives, *International Directory of Archives*. Mansell Information/Publishing, London 1976. 480 pp. £20.00 stg.

Reviewed by Ian Maclean

When this review appears in *Archives and Manuscripts* the Editor will have made the necessary decisions as to what bibliographical details will appear at the head. Why I have started in this fashion will be explained in the latter part of the review because I want to emphasize the high quality of the contents of the directory before being critical of certain aspects of its production and distribution.

Although there is very little editorial comment or, other than a brief foreword, any continuous prose passage, I still feel, given the various languages involved, both official and unofficial, and the well-known difficulty of terminology variations between different countries, that the sheer consistency of organization and, as far as I can check, accuracy, of the presentation, improved rather than diminished by optimum condensation, justifies my calling the Directory a work of true scholarship. It is moreover a kind of archival scholarship that will help to counter the view, popular among at least some Public Service administrators, that archivists, while potentially skilled in an 'academic kind of way', are not at home in practical affairs. This Directory is a very practical product in all the circumstances; and as far as I can judge compares more than favourably with other directories in the 'cultural' field.

Without in any way disparaging the pioneer effort, the 1975 Directory represents a considerable advance, both qualitatively and quantitatively, on the first Directory which appeared as Volume V (1955) of *Archivum* with a supplement in Volume IX (1959). In 1955 and 1959, fifty-five countries were represented with entries for 1,791 institutions; by 1976 we find 132 countries represented with 2,515 institutional entries. The Australian section emphasizes the advance both in number and varieties of institutions. In 1955 there were three entries and in 1959 another was added. In 1975 there are thirty-two entries (of which six are for the State Branches, and one for the Northern Territory Branch, of the Australian Archives). A useful addition in 1975 is a broad summary of the national context within which the specific institutions operate. Categories and sub-categories of information specified for each entry are listed in a Questionnaire at the outset and, these being numbered and sub-numbered, numerical symbols can substitute, in effect, for 2,515 repetitions of the concise but still quite extensive wording used to define the categories in the first place. The reader, on first approach, is advised to use a marker

for the questionnaire and the foreword and possibly the list of abbreviations appropriate to his search, because very logically and usefully but at first confusingly, the general introductory sections are reproduced in five languages (French, English, Spanish, Dutch and Italian). The entries in the national sections are in one of the above languages although the names and addresses are phonetically rendered where necessary in Roman letters. However in the case of the U.S.S.R. the regular entry is presented in Russian but supplemented by a directory in French, with slightly different format, which was contributed by Mrs P. K. Grimstead, Associate Professor of History at the American University, Washington D.C.

The categorization of information is not dissimilar to that adopted, for the original Directory. The 1975 categories, in the face of twenty years extra experience of burgeoning international demand, are better delineated and there is one important addition. Within the limits imposed by the need for brevity, an attempt is made to show the nature and extent of holdings in each institution. I imagine that this is both a virtue and a necessity in that many of the additional institutions are 'specialist', i.e. non-government institutions, whose holdings cannot be taken for granted as they can for most government institutions. Potential users of the directory can expect to gain information, in respect of each listed institution and in addition to address etc., about opening hours (and closed days); procedure for admission to search-rooms; (within limits) nature and extent of holdings; published finding-aids available for potential searchers *before visiting*; facilities, e.g. photocopying, available; and inter-institutional loan policy respecting original documents.

I suppose it is inevitable, with such a mammoth task of digesting, presenting to the publisher, proof-reading etc. of the raw material, that considerable time should elapse between the time of 'freezing' the contents and their publication; but from internal evidence, I am sure that some, at least, of the information presented as correct as at January 1975 was in fact supplied much earlier. For example, the period which must elapse before a general opening of the New South Wales State Archives is stated to be thirty-five years. In fact it is now thirty years and this was decided by the Archives Authority of New South Wales and announced in its Annual Report for 1972. It is probably any given institution's own fault for not up-dating its entry as long as it remains technically possible to do so; but therein lies the rub. We in archivally-developing (whatever our economic rating) and, almost by definition, distant countries are not only the ones most subject to rapid change (if only of address) but also least in touch with the progress of affairs at the heart of I.C.A. activities. Even so, I note that a special appendix was needed to note changes in English County archives by local government reorganization occasioned on 1 April 1974. I shall certainly discuss this informally at the Eighth I.C.A. Congress.

The above-mentioned communications problem brings me to the more general communications-distribution problem. The Directory under review, though a single volume, stands also as Volumes XXII and XXIII (1972-1973) of *Archivum*. It is, indeed, most sensibly

packaged with appropriate cover design as a sole-standing reference tool in its own right; but I cannot see any reason, other than the tremendous editorial burden, for it to be substituted for Volumes of *Archivum*. My personal feeling has long been that annual Volumes of *Archivum* reach the consumer in stately procession but too long after the year to which they are related. No doubt we in afore-said distant lands, subject to ever-deteriorating surface mail service, feel this more; but whatever the case I cannot believe that there was not material enough for Volumes XXII (1972), XXIII (1973), XXIV (1974), to be issued and for Volume XXV (1975) if necessary to encompass the Directory. Moreover, why the apparent delay from the time contributions reach the press to the time the first customers receive it, let alone the last?

There, in the uneven distribution of the 1975(?) Directory lies the reason for the first, rather jaundiced, sentence of my review. The actual review copy reached me on 1 July (thirty-one days from Melbourne to Sydney — a delay not attributable of course to any source other than that well-known whipping horse 'Australia Post'). I had started work on a copy belonging to the Library of New South Wales University received by the library in September 1975. No copy had yet been received either by the State Library of New South Wales or the Archives Office. I checked and found that the Australian Archives' (i.e. a member's) copy had arrived in February 1976. Studying both copies together and, as the police are wont to say, from other information received, we find the following strands in the production-distribution network:

1. The International Directory of Archives is also Volumes XXII and XXIII of *Archivum* which is published with the financial aid of the UNESCO and under the patronage of the International Council on Archives.
2. It was published by Press Universitaires de France, who hold the copyright as for all other volumes of *Archivum*, in 1975.
3. *Archivum* and therefore this Directory is sent to members of I.C.A. (by implication) by the I.C.A. Secretariat and to subscribers by Vertag Dokumentation, D-8000 München, 71, Pössenbacher Strasse 2 (Bundesrepublik Deutschland).
4. According to a small notice on the cover of the review copy the Directory is 'Distributed exclusively in the United Kingdom, the Commonwealth, Africa *except South Africa*, Asia *except Japan and Hong Kong* and distributed in South Africa and Middle East by Mansell Information/Publishing Limited, 3 Bloomsbury Place, London WC1A 2QA'.
5. According to his Bestelkaart Voor Bockwerken (and in five other languages including 'book-order' in English and presumably meaning Catalogue), Martinus Nijhoff Lange Voohout 9-11, P.O. Box 269, Den Haag, Holland, offers for sale an item '*International Directory on Archives*', edited by the International Council on Archives, London, 1976, 484 pages \$43.90 (presumably U.S.). He even counted four pages of advertisements at the end, as the last assigned page number is 480.

Perhaps I may be forgiven for leaving it to the Editor to decide what bibliographical detail he will supply, forgiven also for letting that last straw, the late arrival of my review copy which is not attributable to the I.C.A. or any of its affiliates, break the dam of my long-standing if low-key dissatisfaction over the slow production/distribution cycle for *Archivum*. The above-described network certainly displays an appropriate international character but I wonder when things will improve generally and more specifically when others like the Archives Office of N.S.W. (which at least now has the review copy in my vice-like grip) will get their copy of this excellent work. Yes, I suppose we all guess that the trouble centres round that \$43.90 mentioned above but even so, would not fewer cooks improve the broth?

On a final and appropriately serious note, this Directory should be on the shelves, even at the price, not only of all archives institutions and major reference libraries but also in the reference collections of every Embassy and Consulate in any country where visas etc. are applied for by the inevitable hopeful student who, without forward planning, applies to visit a country and use its archives in pursuit of the rapidly growing and now academically respectful pursuit of 'instant history'.

## NOT ALL TASMANIANS WERE CONVICTS

Ian Pearce and Clare Cowling, *Guide to the Public Records of Tasmania. Section Four: Records Relating to Free Immigration*. Archives Office of Tasmania, 1975. 128 pp. \$7 hard cover, \$5 paper bound.

Reviewed by Marjorie Morgan

This book is a very welcome addition to the slowly-growing collection of works relating to Australian immigration. The first twenty-five pages are devoted to an account of free immigration from 1816 to 1946 and the changes in policy and administration. The text here is fully documented and there is also a list of sources for further reference. The regulations governing migration to Australia were altered on many occasions and it is very useful to find such basic but essential information set out in a clear manner.

The next section of the book gives a description of the records of the Board of Immigration which operated from the end of 1855 until 1887. Each group of records is listed under a title with the relevant dates, number of volumes or space occupied, followed by a brief description of the records, their arrangement, whether indexed, and their reference number. The records are mainly in manuscript form and include the correspondence of Government officials and records created by Government Departments. Reference is also made to printed material as well as microfilm records of the British Colonial Office relating to emigration to Australia 1831-1894.

There are nine appendices (which in fact take up much of the volume), each one either self-explanatory or followed by a list of useful references. It is worth detailing the appendices.

1. Note on Private Societies, listing eight societies formed to encourage or sponsor desirable immigrants, and making remarks about each society.
2. Note on Naturalization Procedures, giving references to Acts of Parliament and the number of people naturalized.
3. Tasmanian Acts of Parliament relating to Immigration, including reference number, title and date — a very useful list for researchers.
4. Board of Immigration Regulations, including notices, instructions and forms printed in full.
5. Returns of Assisted Immigration 1839-1890, giving the number of ships and the number of passengers for each year.
6. Assisted Immigrant Ships 1832-1889, listing ships in chronological order giving date of arrival, ports of departure and arrival, and the number of immigrants on each ship. The list of contents of the *Guide* gives the date of the last entry incorrectly as 1887 instead of 1889. The list is headed 'Ships from Britain and/or Melbourne' but there are several ships listed which departed from other countries. The footnote at the conclusion of this list which states that there may be inaccuracies should perhaps have appeared under the heading at the beginning of the list or as a footnote on the first page of the list. This compilation, consisting of almost 800 entries, would have required a vast amount of effort by the people responsible for its creation, a fact which should be appreciated by the users.
7. Abstract showing the ships in which Pensioners arrived in the Colony of Tasmania as guards over convicts between August 1850 and August 1852. The fourteen ships are listed giving date of arrival and strength of the guard.
8. Return of Immigrants under the 'Youths for Farm Work Scheme' covering each year from 1922 to 1932, giving the number of such immigrants for each State.
9. Return of Immigrants under the 'Household Workers' Scheme' covering each year from 1922 to 1932 giving the number of such immigrants for each State.

Because of the increasing interest being taken in early migration to Australia there will be many people, and not just Tasmanians, who will be grateful to Ian Pearce, Clare Cowling and the Archives Office of Tasmania for producing this guide.