

Service, It planned the syllabus and prepared much of the documentation for the course which began on March 13th, 1958.

Attending the course are registrars from sixteen departments and a representative from the Public Service of Papua, New Guinea, and two observers. The course which will conclude on July 10th is divided into ten parts as follows:-

- Part 1. An introduction to public records management.
- Part 2. Assignment in registrars department to conduct a census of non-registry records.
- Part 3. Registry management (including theory of classification).
- Part 4. Assignment in departmental registry to analyse types of files and possible disposal classes.
- Part 5. Disposal of records.
- Part 6. Intermediate records and archives management.
- Part 7. Some selected problems and techniques (including problems of granting access for research purposes, secondary reference services, microfilming, etc.)
- Part 8. Reviewing the registry organisation.
- Part 9. Assignment in departmental registry.
- Part 10. Training for registry staff and final review.

Copies of the programme and limited quantities of the documentation for the course are available and may be obtained on application to the Secretary, Commonwealth Public Service Board, Canberra. A.C.T.

ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHIVES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

In this pioneering attempt to set forth briefly the present position as regards ecclesiastical archives in New South Wales close attention must be paid to some general considerations.

A clear-cut distinction must be drawn between "archives" in the sense in which this term is used in this article and "papers" not properly so termed or regarded.

"Archives" is used herein as referring to records or documents addressed to or emanating from an ecclesiastical authority or one of its branches, activities or delegated authorities in the course of carrying on the work or businesses of those bodies or authorities. On the other hand the term "archives" does not refer to or include groups of "papers" not arising in the conduct of official business such as letters from clergymen or missionaries to their families or

friends or their private diaries, letters from laymen to others interested in ecclesiastical affairs or passing private judgments (not as an official communication) on current church affairs or dignitaries.

Before dealing in detail with archives in the sense used herein a few examples may be given of classes of "papers" properly so called touching ecclesiastical affairs in New South Wales but not properly classed as "Archives". The Rev. John Dunmore Lang, D.D., was most punctilious in dating and preserving the letters he received from many classes of persons on many subjects. He also preserved copies of many documents he created. Many of these papers were private letters addressed to Dr. Lang by ministers and others in distant parts of the colony, commenting freely on leaders and affairs in the church. These papers are not archives because they had no official basis or connection, but they may be as valuable to the historical researcher as the archives themselves, indeed they may be more so as being "off the record".

On the other hand, some of the Lang Papers may be true archives when received by him in the course of official ecclesiastical or political business. For example, an archival file of his Church may lack a letter or petition addressed by Lang to an ecclesiastical authority or body. The Lang Papers may supply a copy of this document retained by him and so help to complete the archives of his Church. In passing, it may be mentioned that the great bulk of the Lang Papers are preserved in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, and contain much valuable material of the nature indicated very shortly above touching early Church work and ecclesiastical affairs as well as politics, colonisation and his many other activities. These papers have been chronologically arranged in different classes by subject, bound up, and are readily available to students. Similar papers, but much fewer, are preserved in the National Library, Canberra, the Victorian Public Library and in private collections. Of course the distinction made above is equally applicable to many other classes of records, but is stressed here merely for the purpose of clarification of treatment.

Another preliminary matter deserving attention is the value of ecclesiastical archives to the researcher in a number of fields not necessarily ecclesiastical or connected with any religious subject. Most religious bodies functioning in New South Wales have had widespread activities, spiritual, social, cultural, charitable, missionary and the like. Their leaders have made official pronouncements on many social, political and educational subjects and these reflect current thought in ecclesiastical quarters or more broadly, the opinions of large sections of the population on important public questions. These archives are, of course, of prime authority and importance as a record of the history and doctrines of a particular denomination, but the

wider value of its records mentioned above must never be lost sight of. A few examples will make this abundantly clear.

The New South Wales Bush Missionary Society was established by a number of non-conformist clergy and laymen in the "fifties". It had for its objects the evangelization of the scattered dwellers in the interior and the providing of religious instruction and consolation to them. Its missionaries travelled the length and breadth of New South Wales, lived largely upon the charity and hospitality of the pioneering families visited, kept diaries of their work as part of their official duty and made periodical reports to head-quarters. The annual reports of this society and its other records furnish valuable pictures of the difficulties of travel of its agents and the social conditions and hardships of early settlers in remote parts of New South Wales. The remarkably complete archives of this Society were recently deposited in the Mitchell Library. Another example is taken from the archives of the Methodist Church of Australasia. Control was exercised over the affairs of the Methodist Church Mission and its missionaries in Tonga at the time when the schism led by Rev. Shirley W. Baker supported by George Tubon, King of Tonga, led to a division in the Church, the establishment of the Free Church of Tonga and the persecution of many of the loyal adherents of the original Church. The details of this unhappy ecclesiastical dispute (now happily healed) which eventually called for the intervention of the British Government and deportation of Baker, are found in the official reports made by Commissions of enquiry sent forth by the Church in New South Wales, official correspondence with the parties, and minutes of conference debates and determinations. These are archives of the highest importance in Pacific history. Fortunately some years ago an arrangement was made by the Mitchell Library to act as the repository of the archives of the Methodist Church in New South Wales and all its sub-ordinate bodies. These archives, which are very extensive and were in considerable danger from difficulties of housing and control, have now been safely stored in the Mitchell Library, where they are being added to from time to time.

Passing now to the main purpose of this paper, it must be admitted at the outset that in New South Wales generally ecclesiastical archives have not been collected or arranged in a systematic way or preserved in safe or appropriate storage, nor have they usually been in the care of skilled archivists or rendered easily accessible to students.

Records of Births, Deaths and Marriages which were early the subject of legislation in New South Wales, are, in general, carefully filed and preserved in the office of the Registrar General and/or in parish churches or in the Diocesan Registry or other central repository of the records of the particular denomination. The Registrar

General is very active in obtaining either originals or copies of these records so important for legal, genealogical and historical purposes. It must be acknowledged, however, that owing to various causes of loss, there are serious gaps even in these vital records.

Another class of records which have usually been safeguarded with special care are documents in transactions relating to the properties of the various denominations, including instruments of title.

Putting aside these two important classes of archives, the position with regard to the care, safe custody and arrangement of ecclesiastical archives has been far from ideal in New South Wales and even now, calls for considerable improvement in the major points of:

- (a) selection and retention of suitable archival material;
- (b) provision of suitable storage for the same;
- (c) arrangement and calendaring of the same under competent supervision;
- (d) access to records under reasonable conditions, of bona fide historical or other research students.

In the case of most religious bodies in New South Wales there are only scanty remnants of the archives which might have been contemporaneously built up and preserved. The custodian of documents was usually a clergyman, registrar or other clerical officer untrained as an archivist. There were many changes in the personnel of these officers with consequent interruptions or dislocations of any systems attempted to be established and loss of documents. Suitable accommodation was often not available, and if such provision for records as there might be became overcrowded there was the ever present risk of destruction to give space for records more recent and regarded as of more practical utility. These facts explain the absence of many records from official files or repositories and the chance preservation of some in governmental offices, public libraries or private collections.

In some churches the dangers of neglect or destruction of records have been off-set by an ancient and traditional respect for the past of the Church and the work of its servants and this has been reflected in the care bestowed upon its records. An outstanding instance is recorded by the Right Rev. Dr. Eris M. O'Brien, now Bishop of Canberra and Goulburn, in his work "The Life of Archpriest J.J. Therry" (Sydney: Angus & Robertson Ltd., 1922). At p. XI he refers to the letters left in the keeping of the Jesuit Fathers at Loyola, Sydney. He writes: "The Therry Papers" at Loyola number about three thousands; they are made up of letters from Governors,

public officials and townspeople, diaries, business notices and early newspapers A smaller, but no less important collection of letters and papers relating both to Father Therry himself and to the history of the early Church in Australia, is preserved at St. Patrick's College, Manly". The learned author states that without these Therry papers his biography would have been useless. Inasmuch as practically the whole of Father Therry's activities were official and the documents received and created by him related to his office as a priest and servant of his Church most of these records would appear to be archives in the strict sense. That they were preserved by Therry himself and later handed on to the Jesuit Fathers was indeed a fortunate circumstance. The joy of the distinguished author in obtaining access to this mine of information can well be understood but it points, too, to the lack of similar systematic preservation of early records in other communions and perhaps, in other directions, in the Roman Catholic Church itself.

Small space remains to give some account of the present attempts of the major religious denominations in New South Wales to preserve and make available to students their archives. In considering what archives may be expected to exist it is necessary to draw up a clear picture or diagram of the activities direct or through individual parishes and churches, committees, colleges, charitable educational and missionary organisations and the like. Each of these bodies may create archives, which may be held by the branch organisation concerned, or ultimately be deposited with some central authority.

It is worthy of note too, that several Churches publish the Proceedings of their Synods, Assemblies, Conferences or other periodical conventions. These publications generally record the minutes of the Synod, etc. and often present full reports of all the activities of the branch organisation during the period intervening since the last Synod, etc. Historic interest is stimulated and maintained in some Churches by the existence of Historical Societies and the publication of the Proceedings of those societies, e.g. The Church of England Historical Society; The Methodist Historical Society and The Jewish Historical Society. The value of archival collections is stressed by these Societies.

The position in the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales with regard to its archives presents a contrast between two periods:

- (1) the earlier one of archival instability and neglect; and
- (2) the modern one of careful collecting and preservation of same.

In 1865 a general Union of the Churches belonging to this denomination with some exceptions (known and still in existence as "The Free Church") took place. Prior to 1865 there was division into a number of dissident Synods and after the Scottish Disruption of 1845 great internal dissension took place. The records of these earlier bodies before 1865 are scanty and have not been systematically preserved, leading to many difficulties in ascertaining facts and dates. From 1865 onwards an annual Assembly was held and report of all organisations for the current year published, but there was still no systematic archival repository or system except in regard to documents of title. Some archives were in the possession of the officers of individual presbyteries, churches, committees, trusts or other organisations carrying on the work of the Church.

In 1932 when the Assembly Hall Building in Margaret Street, Sydney, was erected the Trustees of the Church provided a library room wherein were to be preserved the Archives of the Church, surviving from the past or created in the future.

As a consequence a valuable collection has been assembled and is open to approved students, and the honorary staff is able to supply historical information required.

After a careful consideration of a similar scheme by the United Church of Canada (see "The Bulletin. Records and Proceedings of the Committee on History and Archives of the United Church of Canada". No. 1 (1948) et seq.), the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales unanimously adopted in 1956 the following report and recommendations regarding its archives:

"The United Church of Canada has proclaimed the study of Church history and the collection, preservation and indexing of Church archives to be matters of great importance

In the light of the above we recommend to the Assembly the desirability of congregations:-

- (a) providing safe storage space for local records, particularly in designing new Church buildings;
- (b) appointing a local archivist;
- (c) collecting and preserving all manuscripts and printed matter touching the life and work of the parish;
- (d) seeking from members of the congregation or others any missing minute, books, registers, annual reports, magazines, etc. so as to complete sets;

- (e) persuading departing ministers to leave marriage and other registers used in the pastorate;
- (f) forwarding to the Assembly Hall Library any material of wider than local interest or which is old and valuable or subject to risk and better preserved in that central archival repository;
- (g) sending to the Assembly Hall Library complete lists of all material held locally, also copies of local histories, special orders of service, annual reports and parish magazines, etc.

It is a distinct advantage in an age when wholesale destruction, as well as local catastrophe, is to be taken into account, to have copies of records deposited in more than one place for more abundant caution.

We respectfully invite the General Assembly to direct the attention of Presbyteries and Congregations to these guiding archival principles declaring, with the United Church of Canada, "an institution that is indifferent about its past will likely have an indifferent future".

To conclude this necessarily condensed treatment of the subject, and for the information of students, it may be mentioned that archives, usually extensive in bulk, are held as follows:

Church of England. Here each Diocese has in general the custody of its own archives and the Bishop arranges for their preservation and examination. The rector of each parish has custody of the records of that parish.

The general archives of the Archbishopric of Sydney are preserved in the Chapter House, Sydney and access to the same may be had by arrangement with the Right Rev. Co-adjutor Bishop E.J. Hilliard. Mr. P.W. Gledhill, the official historian of the Church of England in New South Wales is particularly well informed on all aspects of his subject.

The Roman Catholic Church. Large and important collections of documents are preserved at St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, and St. Patrick's College, Manly, including some relating to the early establishment of this Church in New South Wales of great historical and religious interest. The archives are under the control of learned custodians who will give ready assistance to approved students or researchers on application. The valuable library of Catholic books, etc. of John Lane Mullins is preserved in the Catholic Women's College of Santa Sophia in the University of Sydney.

The Congregational Union of New South Wales. Archives and Year Books from the middle of last century are held at the offices of the Union, 250 Pitt Street, Sydney. These records are in the immediate custody of the General Secretary and controlled by a special Committee, subject to any directions of the Annual Conference. Printed material of an historical character is housed also at Camden College, Hereford Street, Glebe Point, Sydney.

The Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. Reference has been made above to the existing archival arrangements of these denominations.

The Jewish Community. Each synagogue has the custody of its own records. The Great Synagogue, Elizabeth Street, Sydney, has important collections of archival as well as other historical material, including the extensive Marks and Rabbi Falk collections of Judaica. The Falk Memorial Library provides convenient accommodation for study.

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NEWS AND NOTES

Mr. I. Sparrow, B.Ec., Archivist of the Commonwealth Bank has gone to the American University to do the Archives course there. He will visit Archives in the U.S., Great Britain and India before returning.

Mr. I. Maclean, Chief Archivist of the Commonwealth is due to leave for England and the United States early in July. He expects to be away for about eighteen months. Mr. H.S. Broadhead will act as Chief Archivist in his absence.

Mr. Ian Diamond of the Commonwealth Archives has been appointed Archivist to the Government of Fiji.
