

Origins and Development of the New South Wales Regional Repositories System

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The author explores the origins, and traces the development, of Australia's only successful statewide archival network, the regional repositories system established by the Archives Authority of New South Wales. Challenging Russell Doust's account of its establishment, he shows how the reluctance of Archives Office staff to commit themselves to a policy of regionalisation has effectively prevented the system's members from exploiting the full potential of networking.

STATEWIDE ARCHIVAL NETWORKS are a familiar feature in the United States,¹ though not well known in Australia. Our closest equivalent is the regional repositories system established under the auspices of the Archives Authority of New South Wales between 1963 and 1991.² Inspired by Wisconsin's Area Research Center Network, which predated it by twelve years, the New South Wales system currently has six approved repositories for the deposit of state archives created by district or local offices of central departments. Four of these repositories are in university-based collecting archives and two in public library local studies centres. Universities predominate because demand for the establishment of repositories was driven by the needs of tertiary education; but impetus has also come from regional communities concerned to retain what they regard as their cultural property.

The idea of creating repositories for regional records emerged in New South Wales during the 1950s, as historians, archivists and librarians campaigned for legislative, rather than administrative, regulation of official records.³ According to Russell Doust's pioneering study of the state's archival legislation, the principal concerns were management of centrally created departmental records and library control of archives. Establishing regional repositories was, by comparison, a 'peripheral issue, and one which [he believed] received almost no consideration' whilst the Archives Bill was being drafted. Significantly, he relegates his only mention of it to a footnote, insists the idea originated in October 1959 with the vice-chancellor and librarian at the University of New England, and neglects to indicate whether any repositories were actually set up.⁴

Doust's claims are strikingly inconsistent with extant evidence. The principal librarian at the Public (now the State) Library of New South Wales had incorporated a clause, intended to permit the establishment of regional repositories, in the draft 'Heads of a Bill for an Archives Act' in October 1955; and subsequently proposed creating a network of repositories based on local public libraries and regional universities to the University of New England librarian on 10 September 1957.⁵ In the intervening period, there was lively debate on regional custody of records created in district offices of central departments and by local government.

Public debate on archival reform began in June 1955, following the appearance of an article in *Public Administration* by a Sydney University historian, Marjorie Jacobs. She used the findings of the United Kingdom's Committee on Departmental Records to argue that the best way of satisfying both the administrative needs of departments and the interests of historical researchers was to link 'purely archival work' with records management functions. The 'creation of effective machinery for guiding and coordinating the control of records by the departments from the time they are created until they are disposed of' was, she thought, impossible so long as archives remained in the control of libraries.⁶ Her article drew a rejoinder from the Public Library's principal librarian, John Metcalfe. He stressed the bureaucratic and fiscal impediments to far-reaching change, and defended the ability of librarians 'to influence administrators, and even ministers'. 'At this juncture', he felt it might 'be wiser to support them in consolidating the gains which they have made, to let them finish their sweeping of the temple, before the coming of the high priests, and, who knows, even of the gods themselves.'⁷

The first public reference to custody of local or regional records came in November, when Sydney University's newly appointed archivist,

David S. Macmillan, raised the issue in *Historical Studies*. A product of the Scottish Record Office, Macmillan was a fervent advocate of decentralisation and an uncompromising opponent of library control, who saw the United Kingdom's county record office model as a universal panacea. Record offices would not only house official records, either national or local according to circumstances, but also shelter the records of other institutions and private individuals. For him the issue was simple: were 'there to be ten record offices or forty?'⁸ Another record office supporter was Keith Penny, an English trained archivist working at the National Library. Unlike Macmillan, Penny did not believe regional record offices could 'cater economically for an area less than that of the State' in the Australian setting where 'cities are large and . . . towns are usually small'. He therefore believed the 'only possible remedy' was for 'State capitals to become the centre for what is equivalent to provincial archives'.⁹ Frank Rogers, the new University of New England librarian, disagreed. Alluding to his experience of regional institutions in England and New Zealand, he urged a Library Association conference in Sydney in October 1956 to explore the 'setting up of provincial archival institutions, housing state and local archives besides business and private records'.¹⁰

Allan Horton, on the other hand, judged it preferable to archive central and locally created departmental records in a capital city repository. But he considered the record office to be alien to Australia, and doubted whether Penny's scheme for travelling archivists could adequately meet the records management requirements of 'outlying districts'. Writing in *Historical Studies*, he suggested establishing 'semi-current or "intermediate" record centres . . . at Newcastle, Armidale and Wagga Wagga . . . to store non-current records', pending their 'destruction or transfer' to Sydney. These he envisaged as satellites of the central repository, under the charge of an official custodian who could 'allow access by scholars'.¹¹ In common with Penny, Horton seemed more concerned to cater to records management requirements than scholarly needs. For this reason he was critical of both Macmillan and Rogers for suggesting Australians follow English and American precedent and designate regional universities and municipal libraries as approved 'places of deposit'.¹²

Horton's article poses some interpretative challenges because of his membership of the Public Library's archives department, closeness to the principal librarian, John Metcalfe, and role in helping him draft the 'Heads of a Bill for an Archives Act'. In the absence of any other supporting documentation, his expressed centralism, insensitivity to the needs of emerging regional universities, and concern to play down the archives department's cultural role, can all be read as evidence of dissatisfaction: but

whether with the critical reaction of departments and the Public Service Board to the 'Heads of a Bill', or with the stance of the principal librarian on these issues, is open to question.

John Metcalfe had been a public servant for over thirty years, so for him politics was pre-eminently the art of the possible, as his rejoinder to Marjorie Jacobs made clear. Confronted by hostile departments, disquieted at the prospect of an archival authority with wide-ranging inspectorial powers, Metcalfe was quite prepared to water down those of the bill's clauses which allowed archives department staff to exercise records management functions. His preference for the status quo is perfectly comprehensible, for he perceived there was every prospect of ministers endorsing the bill's central provision whereby the trustees of the Public Library were reconstituted as 'the Archival Authority for New South Wales'.¹³ Similarly, because none of his political masters had challenged a clause permitting the proposed authority to 'delegate the preservation of State Archives to other institutions', he had seen no necessity to disseminate his ideas about a network of regional repositories: an issue to which he attached some importance, in spite of reservations on the part of his deputy, G. D. Richardson. But when he found himself embroiled in a press campaign aimed at securing the separation of the archives department from the Public Library, he set about rallying support: from colleagues in local public and regional university libraries, using the prospect of them augmenting their research resources with state archives as bait.

The press campaign began with a third leader in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 2 August 1957, ten days after the premier announced cabinet's decision to proceed with Metcalfe's bill. Undoubtedly inspired by Macmillan, the leader struck a characteristically iconoclastic note when it declared the Mitchell Library chaotic, and questioned the competence of the principal librarian to be the state's archivist. Metcalfe promptly rebutted these allegations, which Macmillan was to repeat with further embellishment in an unsigned leader page article in the *Herald* towards the end of December. Although Metcalfe's reply was magisterial—'Your correspondent's article . . . is welcome, but not free from mere assumption and opinion'—he obviously was irritated at being branded an advocate of centralised custody, who believed his library could serve the needs of all researchers, whether metropolitan or regional.¹⁴

Metcalfe, as his biographer acknowledges, had 'a strong, difficult, contradictory personality . . . [whose] ideas and attitudes were not always consistent or coherent and changed from time to time in ways that it is not easy to follow'.¹⁵ But he was no more a centralist than Macmillan. His own interest in regional library networks dated from a 1934–35 tour of the United

States and the United Kingdom, and seems to have survived his postwar preoccupation with education, cataloguing and classification.¹⁶ Married to his belief that researchers were best served if archives, manuscripts and the necessary printed sources were managed as parts of a single collection by staff with a 'dual and even a triple qualification, as archivists, librarians and historians', it surfaced in his scheme for a system of local studies centres—a term he did not use, though it accurately summarises his intent. Writing to the University of New England's vice-chancellor, R. B. Madgwick, he explained how his draft bill envisaged, 'as the Commonwealth does, decentralised custody of archives of local origin', 'without any limit of the bodies such as local public libraries, universities and others, which might be given custody'. Evidently one of these centres was to be in Newcastle, where the University of Technology (now the University of New South Wales) had established a college in 1951. Another was to be in Armidale. With a keen eye for the ambitions of the University of New England, he held out the prospect of it becoming 'a custodian of records wide in both geographical and administrative range because north of Newcastle there is not likely to be any other authority with the "adjunct" library and other services which the use and preservation of archives require'.¹⁷

Although Metcalfe's appointment as librarian at the University of New South Wales prevented him from implementing this scheme, his New England colleagues were keen to go forward with it. Their interest in being a repository for state archives dated from 1947, when Madgwick had attempted to persuade Metcalfe to transfer records from the Armidale Court House to the then university college for use in history teaching and research.¹⁸ Ten years later, the needs of research students remained the major consideration. But, as Madgwick told Metcalfe, it had never been their intention 'to regard the resources of such a repository as being solely materials for historical research and reserved for University workers'.¹⁹ To them they were culturally valuable materials which encapsulated the identity of the university's host community, still in the grip of new state fervour. Inaugurated early in 1949, and but the latest manifestation of separatism in what its supporters sometimes called the 'Northern' region, the New England New State Movement gave impetus to the formation of the Armidale and District Historical Society towards the end of 1959; though it surely is no accident that this coincided with representations from Madgwick to the New South Wales premier on the regional repositories issue, and the commencement of the university's search for a professional archivist to take charge of records already collected by the librarian and history department staff.²⁰

Frank Rogers, the university librarian, was one of the society's founders, and afterwards its president. An historian by training, he had studied palaeography and archives science for the British Library Association's fellowship examinations, and administered an officially recognised place of deposit for local public records at the University of Bristol. War service (with the Iraq Levies) apart, he had always worked and studied in provincial universities with a strong manuscript collecting tradition. Brought up on Jenkinson, he had embraced Schellenberg's ideas on the cultural role of archives, and took a thoroughly pragmatic stance in the dispute over library control. The fundamental issue, as he saw it, was not whether archives were housed with manuscripts in libraries, or in the custody of librarians, but whether those with responsibility for their management were prepared 'to acquire new techniques for that purpose'.²¹ He thus had little difficulty accepting the solution embodied in the 1960 Archives Act, together with the 'ingenious and perhaps predictable administrative compromise'²² which accompanied its proclamation in July 1961. Under the provisions of the Act, custody of state archives was vested in an independent Archives Authority. It was empowered to 'establish an office and repository', as well as branch repositories, 'either alone or by agreement and in conjunction with any other person or body'; but the central office and repository was to remain at the Public Library, and its principal librarian, Gordon Richardson, was also to serve as principal archivist.

Since both Rogers and Metcalfe were appointed Authority members, they were advantageously placed to raise the regional repositories issue. Rogers accordingly wrote to the principal archivist in January 1962, enquiring whether 'any thought had been given to the establishment of branches'. Richardson's response was not encouraging. Given the shortage of trained archivists, and the necessity for the Authority to 'become part of the known and accepted pattern of administration in the State', he believed 'attempts to decentralise' were 'a little premature at this stage'.²³ Moreover, his letter managed to convey the impression—reminiscent of Horton's 1956 article—that he and his professional staff were interested only in branches which were satellites of the central repository, manned by public servants, and offering records management services to agencies. To those who knew him, this was a familiar tactic: Richardson counted on opponents being deterred by a glimpse of his defences. Rogers, however, was unimpressed. Though professing agreement, he used the occasion provided by a spirited discussion of a disposal recommendation for public archives²⁴ in the East Maitland Lands Office to call for the designation of the 'Archives Division' of his own university as an 'experimental regional repository. . . On its success could depend the

establishment of other regional collections on similar terms in the years to come'.²⁵

Rogers' proposal and a paper over Richardson's signature—but substantially based on a minute by the senior archivist, Russell Doust²⁶—were considered at an Authority meeting on 8 April 1963. Richardson was at pains to separate discussion of the disposal of the East Maitland records, and 'the general question of records in country centres', from the issue of establishing branch repositories. On that issue he still thought action would be premature, particularly since the present archivist of the University of New England was not professionally qualified, and was understood to have tendered his resignation. As for public archives in country centres such as East Maitland, he and Doust shared the view that these simply duplicated existing series in central offices. Unsurprisingly, Rogers had anticipated their argument, pointing to a recent MA thesis based on Lands Office records from Tamworth which had taken 'the accepted generalisations about the Orders in Council of 1847 and the Robertson Land Acts . . . and shown that these generalisations [did] not apply to the Liverpool Plains Area . . . and [might] be inaccurate altogether'. The upshot was that members resolved to transfer the East Maitland records to Sydney, and to follow the same procedure with any other public archives in cases where 'there was doubt as to their permanent importance'. They nonetheless declined to give unqualified endorsement to the principal archivist's opinion that 'the public interest [was] best served . . . by maintaining centralised control over public records'. Instead they directed him to obtain information about 'the use of local repositories for central records in the United Kingdom and in the State of Wisconsin, USA'.²⁷

Richardson was in no hurry to tender the information required by the Authority; though his staff had accorded him some satisfaction by speedily confirming that the only central—as opposed to local government—records held in regional 'places of deposit' in the United Kingdom were series from the lower courts. The situation in Wisconsin, where custody of the state's archives was delegated to the State Historical Society, proved more complicated. A literature search corroborated the view that it offered parallels with New South Wales, but two references in the *American Archivist* were insufficient to clarify the role of the Society's regional repositories.²⁸ Precisely why Wisconsin had been singled out by the Authority remains unclear. The initiative may well have been Metcalfe's, for as Rayward has argued, he was an intellectual cosmopolitan, whose troubled attitude to his own Englishness manifested itself in a conviction that Australians could 'learn more from the United States than from Great Britain'.²⁹ But he cannot have seen Wisconsin's

'Area Research Centers' at first hand. Legislation permitting the Society to establish 'regional depositories' postdated his second visit to the United States in 1947–48,³⁰ and by the time he made his next visit in 1963–64, Richardson had written to the Society's associate director, Richard A. Erney, and received what he chose to regard as a splendidly discouraging reply. Seizing on the comment that it was 'too early to judge how successful' the Wisconsin 'Area Research Centers' had been, he forwarded Erney's letter to the Authority on 14 October, with a recommendation to reconsider the situation 'in two or three years' time'.

Rogers immediately responded by pointing out 'the desirability of having local records available at research centres'. This, after all, was the burden of Erney's letter. It emphasised how Wisconsin's regional depositories housed 'permanently valuable materials'—including state records created in district offices—'for research in the history of the region'; they did not offer intermediate storage, nor records management services for county and local officials. Depositories were located in the libraries of liberal arts colleges, which were in the process of evolving from teacher training institutions, and ultimately were to become campuses of the University of Wisconsin. Unfortunately, most of the libraries did not have a staff member solely responsible for the archival collections, so all processing was done by the Society's headquarters staff. The six centre 'system' consequently was costing more in staff time and travel than the storage received in return was worth. But, as Erney explained, the Society was 'simply gambling that the colleges [were] going to develop in a direction that will make such materials increasingly important and useful' to their teaching and research.³¹ To at least three Authority members—all of whom were connected with regional universities, regional colleges, or their sponsoring institutions—this seemed an acceptable risk. The chairman, and director-general of the New South Wales Department of Education, Dr Harold Wyndham, evidently agreed. By way of compromise, he 'suggested that rather than establish a formal branch of the Archives Office at this stage', they in effect adopt the Wisconsin approach and 'transfer to the custody of the University of New England public records relating to the New England region, which were duplicates of State archives'. In the course of what the minutes describe as 'considerable discussion', it was pointed out that section 16 of the Act allowed the Authority to 'dispose of any public records in its custody or under its control', and on this basis it 'was generally agreed that a precedent was now being established which could appropriately be applied in future at the discretion of the Authority'.³²

The Authority's present principal archivist has stressed the limited character of this decision, and argued that 'the first, crucial, step in regionalising the State archives' was delayed until February 1973, when it was decided to permit the loan of *state archives*, 'as distinct from . . . records not required as State archives'.³³ His interpretation is problematic because, from the outset, there was ambiguity about precisely what was being loaned. Beneath the heading, 'Loan of *State archives* to public institutions', the minutes of the Authority's December 1963 meeting recorded approval of a 'draft letter for use in offering the loan of *State archives* to other authorities'.³⁴ Whilst this might reasonably be discounted as clerical error, it is tempting to see it as further evidence that the notion of regional records as 'duplicates' was little more than a convenient legal device intended to protect the professional pride of Archives Office staff, ruffled by Rogers' criticism of their Maitland disposal recommendation. His paper had made out a persuasive case which, at the very least, suggested regional records could throw light on how policy was implemented. Its implications ought not to have been lost on either Richardson or Doust, both of them accomplished historians of public policy making.

In practice, then, the question of whether or not it was state archives which the Authority had agreed to put on loan was of less consequence in restricting the process of regionalisation than the centralist ethos of Archives Office staff. They were not interested in setting up a system of regional repositories. All they wanted to do was lend small quantities of research material, allocated on an individual series basis. Hence Richardson's comment to Erney, a week after the meeting, that they had decided to 'bide [their] time' on the regional repositories issue and 'let it stand for a little longer'.³⁵ The grudging fashion in which he set about implementing the Authority's decision is exemplified in his treatment of its draft pro forma letter, approved in December. Marked in his handwriting, 'For use when appropriate', it evidently was not his intention to distribute it generally. So far as he was concerned, it was up to 'other authorities' to take the initiative in seeking to become 'regional repositories'—a term he and his colleagues took care to eschew.

Metcalf, on the other hand, was still wedded to the idea of a network of local studies centres, and gave his backing to the Newcastle Public Library's claim to regional repository status. His association with Newcastle dated from the appointment of C. E. Smith, one of his protégés, as city librarian in 1961. With his support, Smith had established a library school, and instigated a cooperative collection building program aimed at rationalising reference acquisitions between the public, university college and technical college libraries. A 'gentleman's agreement' bound the parties to assist the public

library to extend its local history collection, which embraced printed materials as well as manuscripts.³⁶ Manuscript collecting had got off to a strong start with the acquisition of the Merewether Estate papers in 1958, but civic pride had suffered grievously when significant local business records were lost to archives in Sydney and Canberra.³⁷ To members of the city council, accustomed to thinking of their big, well-resourced collection as a regional equivalent of the Mitchell Library, enhancement of their library's resources had become inextricably linked with ambitions for the creation of an autonomous university.³⁸

Not long after the Authority approved their application in 1964, Richardson embarked on a seven months overseas tour, which included visits to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's Madison and Milwaukee repositories. He was gratified to discover that generally the 'records of the State government itself [were] kept permanently in Madison even if they were created in a region,' though the Milwaukee repository was a 'partial exception'. Milwaukee, however, was 'a city with a population approaching 1,000,000'. Experience there, his report concluded, amply supported 'reservations expressed . . . elsewhere . . . that in repositories that are not fully controlled by the central archives there is a lack of guarantee of continued proper control'.³⁹ Having confirmed the essential correctness of his existing views, Richardson seems not to have kept in touch with the way the area research centres were evolving, and thereafter the Wisconsin connection was lost to the Archives Office's corporate memory.

During the 1960s and early 1970s no new regional repositories were created by the Archives Office; but the Wisconsin network grew prodigiously—its extension facilitated by the state's demography. Less sparsely settled, and with population distributed more evenly than in New South Wales, its teachers' colleges already were being converted into constituent campuses of the University of Wisconsin in the 1950s and early 1960s. By 1972 there were twelve area research centres on its campuses, and another at a private college. Unlike the Archives Office, the Wisconsin Historical Society actively solicited support from potential host institutions, adjusting regional boundaries so each centre had a 'sufficient quantity and variety of collections to support a broad range of research interests and projects'.⁴⁰ In New South Wales, by contrast, the government did not begin converting its teachers' colleges into autonomous colleges of advanced education until the 1970s, having failed in a challenge to the federal binary policy in 1965–67.⁴¹ These did not achieve university status until 1989, when several were amalgamated to form the state's second regional university, Charles Sturt University, with campuses

in Albury, Bathurst and Wagga Wagga, and study centres in Dubbo and Broken Hill. Given it was demand for augmented research resources by developing regional universities which was providing much of the impetus for extension of both the Wisconsin and New South Wales networks, it is understandable why the Archives Authority's system should have lagged so far behind its Wisconsin counterpart.

By the time the Authority established its next three repositories in the late 1970s, the Archives Office had been separated completely from the State Library, and its administration placed in the hands of senior officers who took a more sympathetic stance towards regional repositories. These staffing changes began in December 1970, when John Cross succeeded Russell Doust as senior archivist.⁴² Obligated to 'tidy up' administrative arrangements under which the existing repositories operated, he saw their potential for providing a solution to the 'time consuming and expensive' problem of recovering public archives alienated from official custody by 'individuals and groups in country areas . . . on the moral ground that they are "their records" and they are only preventing them from being taken away to Sydney'.⁴³ With his encouragement, Newcastle University and Riverina College of Advanced Education applied for repository status in 1976 and 1978;⁴⁴ whilst in 1979 he took the initiative on behalf of Wollongong University, in order to regain custody of regional estrays which had found their way into its collection. Following his appointment as principal archivist in 1980, he secured an Authority commitment to full regionalisation, though the network's coverage remains patchy in comparison with its Wisconsin counterpart. Despite the opening of a Broken Hill repository in 1991, it still covers only six of the state's ten (or eleven) non metropolitan survey and planning regions—or five if one excludes the inactive Wollongong repository.

Considering its unpropitious beginnings, the survival and growth of the New South Wales regional repositories system is indeed remarkable, offering a clear lesson to those who contend that statewide networks are unworkable in Australian conditions.⁴⁵ But a fresh appraisal of its current and future role is now overdue. This will need to reckon with divergent perceptions about its character and functions. Although senior Archives Office staff have moved away from speaking of a regional repositories *system*, and begun to think in terms of a *network*, it is doubtful whether this perception is shared by their colleagues or those responsible for administering member repositories. They continue to operate in a situation where arrangements are on a bilateral basis between the Archives Office and individual repositories, and there is only the most informal contact with staff in other regions. Their American

counterparts, on the other hand, regard the possibilities for cooperation and collaborative development amongst members as the *raison d'être* for networking.⁴⁶ Perhaps this is an opportune moment to revive the Wisconsin connection, and take a look at the way American networks have sought to exploit all the possibilities networking can offer.

Endnotes

I am grateful to John Cross and Richard Gore (Archives Office of New South Wales), Jennifer Sloggett and Gail Orchard (Local Studies Section, Newcastle Region Library), Chris Buckley and Edward Bridle (University of New England Archives) and Michael Piggott (Australian Archives) for their help in locating sources and discussing pertinent issues.

1. A 1982 survey identified nine statewide networks: 'Survey of Archival Networks', *Midwestern Archivist*, vol. 6 no. 2, 1982, pp. 98–129.
2. The New South Wales system appears to be unique. Although other state legislation—most notably in Victoria with its 'section 14' provisions—permits the establishment of decentralised repositories, as opposed to branches, these have largely been a failure. One exception is the Geelong Historical Records Centre. However, it has agreed to serve as a repository for local government records only owing to lack of space.
3. For an overview of state and federal developments, see Michael Piggott, 'The Visit of T. R. Schellenberg to Australia 1954: a study of its origins and some repercussions on archival development in Australia', Master of Archives Administration thesis, University of New South Wales, 1989, chapters 1–2.
4. R. F. Doust, 'The Administration of Official Archives in New South Wales 1870–1960', Master in Librarianship thesis, University of New South Wales, 1969, p. 183 n. 22.
5. A copy of the draft 'Heads of a Bill' can be found in Doust, 'Administration of Official Archives', Appendix D; the relevant clause is 4 (ix). The original of Metcalfe's letter to Rogers has not been located, but its contents can be deduced from R. B. Madgwick's reply, 25 September 1957, and a subsequent letter from Metcalfe to Madgwick, 9 October 1957, UNE Archives: A664/Box 24, 64/187.
6. Marjorie G. Jacobs, 'A New Approach to Departmental Records', *Public Administration*, vol. 14, June 1955, p. 122.
7. John Metcalfe, 'Miss Jacobs and Archives', *Public Administration*, vol. 14, December 1955, p. 254.
8. David S. Macmillan, 'The Future of Australian Archives', *Historical Studies Australia and New Zealand*, no. 25, November 1955, p. 81.
9. K. Penny, 'The Problem of Local Records', *Historical Studies Australia and New Zealand*, no. 26, May 1956, pp. 215–219.
10. F. Rogers, 'The Preservation of Records in New Zealand' in *Reading and Research in a Technological Age*, Conference of the New South Wales Branch of the Library Association of Australia held 19th to 21st October, 1956, Library Association of Australia, NSW Branch, Sydney, 1958, pp. B14–B19.
11. A. Horton, 'A Further Note on the Problem of Local Records', *Historical Studies Australia and New Zealand*, no. 27, November 1956, pp. 334–335. Other contributors to the *Historical Studies* debate were G. L. Fisher from the Public Library of South Australia, and the Wagga Wagga journalist and local historian Eric Irwin.

12. Under the United Kingdom's *Law of Property (Amendment) Act 1924*, the Master of the Rolls was empowered to approve 'places of deposit' for local records. Rogers himself had administered an 'approved place of deposit' at the University of Bristol. The *Public Records Act 1958* allows the Lord Chancellor to 'appoint' any 'place', other than the Public Record Office, which he believes 'affords suitable facilities for safe keeping and preservation of records'. See J. R. Ede, 'The Record Office: Central and Local', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, vol. 5, no. 4, 1975, pp. 210, 212 and *Halsbury's Laws of England*, 4th edn., Butterworths, London, 1974, vol. 8, paras 1292-1295.
13. Doust, 'Administration of Official Archives', pp. 167-171.
14. 'Preserving the State Records', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 August 1957; Metcalfe's reply appeared on 5 August 1957. Our Correspondent, 'Better Training of Librarians', 27 December 1957; Metcalfe again replied on 31 December 1957, prompting a letter signed by Macmillan on 8 January 1958, and a further reply from Metcalfe on 14 January 1958. Macmillan and Horton meanwhile slugged it out in the columns of the *American Archivist*, vol. 20, no. 1, 1957, pp. 49-55 and vol. 22, no. 1, 1959, pp. 39-48. For the context of this debate see Michael Piggott, 'Library Control of Archives: an historical debate and its current relevance' in *Australian Library History in Context*, ed. W. Boyd Rayward, University of NSW School of Librarianship, Sydney, 1988, pp. 27-37.
15. W. Boyd Rayward, 'John Wallace Metcalfe (1901-82)', in *ALIAS: Australia's Library Information and Archives Services—an encyclopaedia of practice and practitioners*, vol. 2, ed. Harrison Bryan, ALIA Press, Sydney, 1989, pp. 125-127.
16. W. Boyd Rayward, 'Reflecting on a Wider World: Metcalfe's Overseas Travels and the Creation of a Modern Library Profession in Australia', in *Libraries and Life: the Metcalfe Years 1920-1970*, ed. W. Boyd Rayward, SILAS University of NSW, Sydney, 1993, pp. 9-13, 29.
17. Metcalfe to Madgwick, 9 October 1957, UNE Archives: A664/Box 24, 64/187.
18. Madgwick to Metcalfe, 11 March 1947, 28 March 1947, 16 April 1947, Metcalfe to Madgwick, 2 April 1947, 23 April 1947, UNE Archives: A262/Box 138, TEA/20.
19. Madgwick to Metcalfe, 25 September 1957, UNE Archives: A644/Box 24, 64/187.
20. Ulrich Ellis, 'The New State Movement in Action', *Politics*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1966, pp. 17-20; Madgwick to R.J. Heffron, marked 'Personal', 15 October 1959, UNE Archives: A664/Box 24, 64/187.
21. Rogers, 'Preservation of Records', pp. B14-B15; Rogers, 'Archives and Local Records', Circular to members of the Joint Library Committee, First meeting of Library Sub-Committee, 31 July 1957, UNE Archives.
22. Doust, 'Administration of Official Archives', p. 189.
23. Rogers to Richardson, 11 January 1962, 2 February 1962, Richardson to Rogers, 24 January 1962, Archives Office of NSW (hereafter AONSW): Subject Files, Box 7, Regional Repositories, 1963-64.
24. 'Public archives' are defined in the 1960 Archives Act as 'all public records that have ceased to be in current use in the public office in which they were originally made or received or in the public office in whose custody they have been placed after being made or received'. Doust, 'Administration of Official Archives', p. 193, notes the 'Act is unusual in defining "public archives" as noncurrent public records'.
25. Rogers to Richardson, 31 January 1963 with enclosure, 'Disposal of Lands Office Records—New South Wales', AONSW: Subject Files, Box 7, Regional Repositories, 1963-64.

26. Doust, 'Records in Land Board Offices in Country Centres', 4 February 1963, Richardson, 'Public Archives in Country Centres', 28 February 1963, AONSW: Subject Files, Box 7, Regional Repositories, 1963–64.
27. Archives Authority of New South Wales Minutes, 8 April 1963, AONSW.
28. 'Public Archives in Country Centres Progress Report' received by Archives Authority, 17 June 1963, together with 'Report on National Archives deposited in Regional Repositories', AONSW: Subject Files, Box 7, Regional Repositories, 1963–64.
29. W. Boyd Rayward, 'Central and other mysteries in librarianship: the writings of John Wallace Metcalfe', *Australian Library Journal*, vol. 36, 1987, p. 222; Rayward, 'Reflecting on a Wider World', pp. 22 and 13 (quoting Metcalfe to Ilfould, 13 February 1935).
30. Richard A. Erney, 'Wisconsin's Area Research Centers', *American Archivist*, vol. 29, January 1966, pp. 11–12. For a more critical, contemporary appraisal see Ernst Posner, *American State Archives*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1964, pp. 296–302.
31. Erney to Richardson, 29 July 1963, AONSW: Subject Files, Box 7, Regional Repositories, 1963–64.
32. Archives Authority Minutes, 14 October 1963, AONSW.
33. D. J. Cross, 'Regionalisation of the State Archives: A Policy Review', 21 November 1991, p. 2: AONSW, AO90/80P.
34. My italics.
35. Richardson to Erney, 21 October 1963: AONSW, Subject Files, Box 7, Regional Repositories, 1963–64.
36. Telephone conversation with Charlie Smith, 26 May 1995; *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 12, 13 December 1961; 'Notes for address by Mr Justice Else-Mitchell at the official opening of library extensions in the Cultural Centre, 14.9.1977', in *Extracts from files of Newcastle City Council relating to the history of Newcastle Region Public Library*, NRL Local Studies Collection.
37. 'Historic MSS Sought', *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 2 April 1958; 'Moves to Save Leaves of City's History', *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 3 March 1961.
38. 'Sydney has a university and university students use the Mitchell Library extensively. If we want to have an autonomous university we must have a good reference library.' *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 13 August 1958.
39. *Report of a Tour of Libraries and Archives in North America, Europe and Asia, 31st August 1964 to 3rd April 1965 by G. D. Richardson, MA, FLAA*, received by Archives Authority at its meeting on 11 October 1965, Appendix 9: AONSW.
40. Richard A. Erney and F. Gerald Ham, 'Wisconsin's Area Research Centers', *American Libraries*, vol. 3, February 1972, pp. 135–140.
41. D. Boadle, 'Critics of Australia's Binary Policy: the Riverina University College Debate, 1965–67', *History of Education Review*, vol. 23, no. 2, 1994, pp. 20–31.
42. Doust became deputy principal librarian, then principal librarian following Richardson's retirement in February 1973. He served as acting principal archivist until Ian Maclean was appointed substantively in 1976.
43. 'Regionalisation of the State Archives', pp. 2–3, AONSW: AO90/80P.
44. For a brief account of the establishment of the Riverina (now the CSU Regional Archives see D. Boadle, 'Riverina Studies—Retrospect and Prospect', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Special Riverina Issue, vol. 80, pts 3 & 4, 1994, pp. 143–149.

45. Space does not permit an adequate discussion of this issue, but it is worth noticing that Queensland's State Archives recently advised its government not to establish regional repositories in Townsville and Rockhampton. Its reasons reflect concern about the presence of trained personnel, consistency in approach between the Brisbane office and the regions, and the inability of host institutions to offer a full range of records management services to agencies (Lee McGregor to author, 1 March 1995). The inability or unwillingness of potential host institutions to offer full records management services appears to have been equally decisive for the National Archives of Canada: see Paulette Dozois, 'Beyond Ottawa's Reach: The Federal Acquisition of Regional Government Records', *Archivaria*, no. 33, Winter 1991-92, pp. 57-65.
46. John A. Fleckner, 'Cooperation as a Strategy for Archival Institutions', *American Archivist*, vol. 39, no. 4, 1976, pp. 447-459 and Richard A. Cameron, Timothy Ericson and Anne R. Kenney, 'Archival Cooperation: A Critical Look at Statewide Networks', *American Archivist*, vol. 46, no. 4, 1983, pp. 414-432.