

Until such time as the appointment of an archivist is finalised, no attempt, however, will be made to take over records in Government Departments with a view to preservation or disposal.

Nevertheless, it may be of interest to note that certain registers have at this date been brought into Brisbane from country areas for permanent preservation. Included amongst these are extensive records of Croydon, and of Maytown (a gold-fields town no longer existent), as well as individual records, such as a letterbook of the early Somerset Settlement in Cape York, the Bowen Customs House Book of the 1860's, a Bowen Chamber of Commerce Minute Book, and an account book from the Taroom Police Office, and, in addition, station records such as account books and journals.

#### THE ARCHIVES OF THE DIOCESE OF CANBERRA AND GOULBURN.

The diocese of Canberra and Goulburn was founded in 1863 when the territory included within its boundaries was separated from the diocese of Sydney and its first bishop, the Right Reverend Mesac Thomas, D.D., was appointed by Royal Letters Patent. He was the last colonial bishop to be so appointed.

Many of the parishes of the diocese are, however, older than this; those of Goulburn, Queanbeyan and Yass having been established in 1838, Collector and Bungonia in 1840, Braidwood and Maneroo in 1843, Canberra in 1850, Albury and the then undivided parish of Tumut, Gundagai, and Wagga in 1851. Bombala dates from 1854, Tumut from 1855 and Wagga from 1859. The process of subdivision and the formation of new parishes has continued down to the present day and the diocese now consists of forty-seven parishes, the latest to be established being North Albury in 1959. At the same time, some of the older parishes, e.g. Collector and Bungonia, have lost their separate status and become parts of other parishes. Collector is now in the parish of Gunning and Bungonia in that of Marulan.

The early records, both of the diocese, and of many of the parishes, (except for those still in current use), are held in the Diocesan Registry at Goulburn. The registers of episcopal acts and proceedings are complete only from 1884, the earlier episcopal registers having disappeared. The letter books of Bishop Thomas, the minutes of the diocesan Synod, the Council of the diocese and the Goulburn Church Society, (established in 1864), supply some of the information lacking from the earlier period of diocesan history.

The parochial records comprise registers of services, of baptisms, marriages and burials and, in some cases, minutes of



meetings of churchwardens, parochial councils and building committees. The baptismal registers and burial registers of the parish of Goulburn date from 1838, the marriage registers from 1839; while the Cathedral service registers are complete from its opening in 1884. The baptismal, marriage and burial registers of Queanbeyan begin in 1838 and its earliest service register in 1860. The baptismal, marriage and burial registers of Yass date from 1839 and its first service register from 1863.

Registers of baptisms and marriages at Collector begin in 1839 and the burial register in 1840; while Bungonia's registers of baptisms and burials date from 1840 and its marriage register from 1843. Braidwood's registers begin in 1843 and those of the district of Maneroo, in 1842. Canberra's registers of baptisms, marriages and burials date from 1845 and are complete to the present day. There is also a record book of the churchwardens of St. John's Canberra covering the period, 1845 - 1897. Tumut's registers begin in 1855 and those of Gundagai in 1865.

The condition of these records and, indeed, the fact that so many of them have survived at all, is remarkable when we consider the conditions under which many of them were kept in pioneering days. There is evidence, for example, that leaves from marriage registers were sometimes carried in saddle bags to the place where the marriage took place and brought back again to be pasted in the register book.

The parochial registers are held for safe keeping in the Diocesan Registry under the provisions of the Parochial Administration Ordinance of the diocese which provides that:

"such books, instruments and records not in current use in any parish or parochial district shall be forwarded to the diocesan registrar for safe keeping".

The conditions under which they are kept leave much to be desired. When the diocesan offices were built, in 1923, it was not contemplated that the custody of parochial records would be a responsibility of the diocesan registrar and no special provision was made for their storage. The bulk of them are kept with the diocesan records in the strong room of the registry office, in a space which is both inadequate for the purpose and does not allow of easy access. They have already overflowed this limited space and some have had to be stored on open shelves in another room.

Reference has frequently to be made to the parochial registers in order to provide certificates of baptism, marriage or burial and to establish the identity of particular persons for legal purposes. In this connection the older registers are most

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important since they date from a time when the registration of births was not compulsory or was sometimes, through force of circumstances, impossible.

These early records provide also the source material for diocesan and parochial histories. The late Ransome T. Wyatt's "The History of the Diocese of Goulburn", published in 1937, was based upon the records lodged in the Diocesan Registry at that time; and a number of parishes have published booklets giving details of their own histories.

The records are available for purposes of historical research to accredited persons who are able to come to Goulburn and pursue their studies within the Registry office and every assistance will be given to them for the purpose.

A. Haines,  
Registrar of the Diocese.

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NEWS AND NOTES.

As a result of a recent survey of the Archives of the Northern Territory, a proposal has been put forward for a Territorial Archives to be associated with a reference library for the Administration in Darwin. No decision has yet been made about the creation of this position but should any member of the section be interested in such a position, further information may be obtained from Mr. H.J. Gibbney of the Archives Division, Commonwealth National Library, Canberra.

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Mr. Ian Maclean, Chief Archivist of the Archives Division of the Commonwealth National Library has returned from a world tour during which he examined archives in Great Britain, the United States, Canada, France, the Netherlands and West Germany.

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Dr. Margaret Rendle has joined the staff of the Archives Division of the Commonwealth National Library in Melbourne.

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