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NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE

Report... 1957/1958



1958

Ninth Annual Report of the Administration
of General Services for the year ending
June 30, 1958.

Section II. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The National Archives and Records Service is responsible for promoting improved current records management and paperwork practices in Federal agencies and for selecting, preserving, and making available to the Government and the public the permanently valuable noncurrent records of the Federal Government. It is also responsible for publishing the laws, constitutional amendments, Presidential documents, and administrative regulations having general applicability and legal effect, and for the preservation, publication, and administration of the historical materials in the Presidential libraries.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND CENTERS

The General Services Administration is following two approaches in carrying out the objectives of the Federal Records Act of 1950 and the recommendations of the second Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government (the Hoover Commission). In its long-range approach, GSA provides agencies with guides, standards, and other instructional material to enable them to make and keep fewer and better records. In its short-range approach GSA helps agencies with their immediate records problems through surveys, technical assistance, and low-cost storage space in records centers.

One of the most effective devices for long-range improvement has been the workshop, designed to help operating officials with day-to-day problems. Because of the volume and cost of Government letterwriting, a series of correspondence management workshops was started in January 1957. Over 35,000 Federal employees throughout the country attended the workshops in 1958. More than half of these were conducted by the agencies themselves with training material supplied by GSA. The results have been uniformly good.

In a series of 2-day workshops on mail management 24 principles of faster mail handling and less costly mail operations were discussed, and a dozen practical problems were solved through applying the principles. By June 30 GSA had conducted 16 workshops for 379 agency officials in Washington and 77 workshops for 1,595 participants in the field.

Printed guides also contribute to long-range improvement. Early in the year a third files handbook for Congressional offices, one for the use of committees and subcommittees, was issued. In May the seventh records management handbook, *Protecting Vital Operating Records*, was published.

Representatives of 21 agencies are working with GSA in preparing a Government correspondence manual which can be adopted by all agencies to standardize practices.

These long-range measures have helped keep the quantity of Federal records from increasing appreciably. About 3.8 million cubic feet of records were created, while 3.6 million cubic feet were disposed of, leaving the total volume at the end of the year at 23.7 million cubic feet.

Surveys and Technical Assistance

Assistance in the form of paperwork surveys was given to 27 agencies. Forty-five survey projects were undertaken by the records management staffs of GSA. Federal agencies requested technical assistance in the form of on-the-spot suggestions from GSA paperwork specialists in 100 instances.

Records Centers

Federal Records Centers continued to expand during the year through absorption of agency records centers and through normal transfer of agency records to less expensive storage space. The records and the services performed on them at the depository of the Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, in Baltimore, and the Army's Prisoner of War Records Center at Fort Holabird were absorbed by GSA at the Alexandria Federal Records Center and the Federal Records Center Annex at Philadelphia, respectively.

The most significant change, however, was the transfer of the Departmental Records Branch of The Adjutant General's Office to the GSA Region 3 Center at Alexandria, where it became the Military Records Branch.

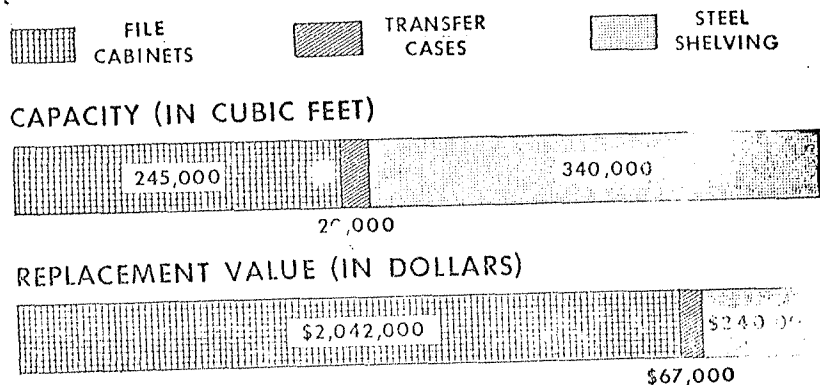
The Department of the Navy and GSA arranged early in the year for the Federal Records Center at Seattle to accept and provide service on an experimental basis on Navy records in that area. This experiment proved satisfactory to the Navy, and as the year ended arrangements were completed for the transfer of the Naval Records Management Centers at Alexandria, Va., Mechanicsburg, Pa., New Orleans, La., and Ogden, Utah, to GSA on July 1, 1958.

Exclusive of the 235,000 cubic feet of records in the Departmental Records Branch, the regional records centers accessioned 580,800 cubic feet of records during the year, 40,000 cubic feet of which were received from the Baltimore and Holabird centers. These accessions brought the holdings of the Federal Records Centers, including St. Louis, to 3,840,000 cubic feet.

Accessions by records centers, including St. Louis, released 206,000 square feet of office space and 142,000 square feet of storage space re-

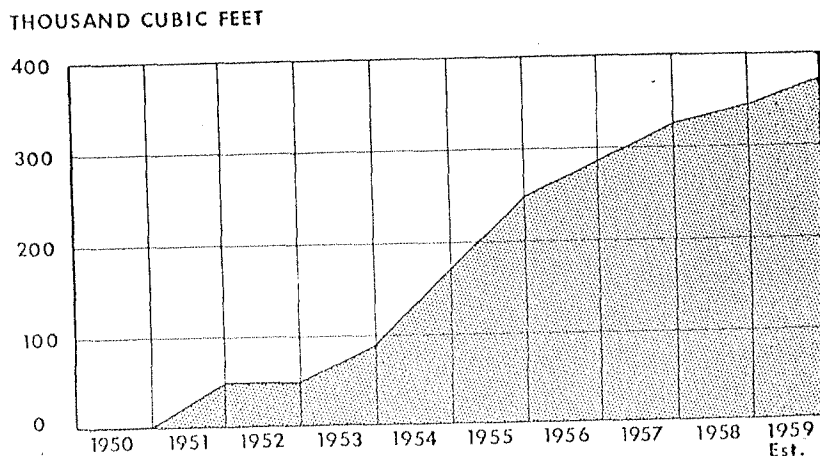
assignable for other uses. In addition, 73,000 square feet of office space and 25,000 square feet of storage space were released in blocks of less than 100 square feet. Equipment released by the year's accessions is indicated on the chart.

AGENCY FILING EQUIPMENT RELEASED FOR REUSE IN FY 1958 THROUGH TRANSFERRING RECORDS TO CENTERS



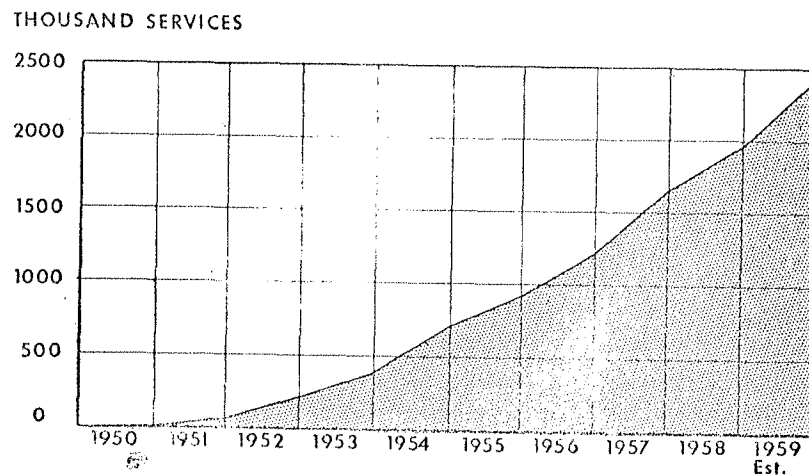
Disposal in the regional centers reached the highest figure so far attained—346,000 cubic feet (see chart).

DISPOSAL OF RECORDS, FY 1950-59 BY REGIONAL FEDERAL RECORDS CENTERS



Reference requests to the regional centers continued to rise, as indicated on the chart. This year's total figure of 1,943,700 reference requests is about 300,000 above that of last year and 25 times the total for the year 1951.

REFERENCE SERVICES, FY 1950-59 BY REGIONAL FEDERAL RECORDS CENTERS



The specialized Federal Records Center at St. Louis rendered 559,000 reference services to Government agencies and to the public on the personnel and pay records of former Government employees. In addition, it received from the agencies during the year some 2,238,000 file items.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Most of the older permanently valuable Federal records are in the custody of the National Archives, and the General Services Administration is now chiefly concerned with preserving them and making them more easily available for use by Government agencies and the public. GSA is also faced with the problem of deciding which current records should be permanently retained, a question of first importance to Government agencies and scholars of the future.

Reference Service

Searchers consulted or were furnished reproductions of 346,655 record units and received 83,521 answers to requests for information from or about records, an increase of 12,929 record units and 5,100 replies over last year.

By the end of the fiscal year 3,857 rolls of microfilm were available in the microfilm reading room established in 1957, and searchers had used them 5,082 times. The room makes information from the records more easily available to the searcher and lightens the reference load of the records branches.

As the Civil War Centennial approaches, reference requests pertaining to the war are increasing in number. To enable it to fill them more efficiently the National Archives plans to compile preliminary inventories for the record groups containing significant documentation of the Civil War and to prepare a guide to Civil War records in the National Archives.

Accessioning and Disposal

The total holdings of records in the National Archives amounted to 783,905 cubic feet at the end of the year. Nearly 12,000 cubic feet of permanently valuable records were transferred to the agency, 3,800 cubic feet were disposed of, and 106 cubic feet were transferred from the National Archives to the records centers.

The largest body of records accessioned during the year was the 1,200 cubic feet of central correspondence files of the Headquarters, Army Air Forces, 1942-44. An accession from the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine contains records relating to cotton-insect investigations going back to 1866. Also from the Department of Agriculture came a quantity of photographic prints, negatives, and portraits of agricultural scientists, departmental officials, and agricultural processes and exhibits, 1866-1936. Also accessioned were records of the Bureau and Department of Labor, 1884-1913, containing the only known records of the Pullman Strike Commission, 1894-96; complete files of a Bureau of Air Commerce board established to investigate the 1937 disaster of the airship *Hindenburg*; correspondence of the Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, 1939-50; and a report by William Tatham, 1806, on the survey of the coast of North Carolina from Cape Fear to Cape Hatteras.

In accordance with the law requiring the National Archives to review all lists and schedules of records recommended for disposal by Federal agencies, lists and schedules describing 2,935 record series were appraised and reported to Congress for final action.

An act of Congress approved July 3, 1957 (71 Stat. 276), provided for the transfer to the Philippine Republic of records captured by the American Army during its suppression of the Philippine Insurrection against the United States in the years 1899-1903, but only after the records had been microfilmed. Microfilming the 126,000 documents and books involved was done by contract, beginning about the middle of November. In June, the President of the Philippine Republic visited the National Archives, viewed some of the records his country would re-

ceive, and in token of the transfer received a bound volume containing photographs of significant documents.

Arrangement and Preservation

Progress was made in the preservation of the nearly 4 million still pictures in the National Archives, many of which are nitrate-film or glass-plate negatives. Nearly 60,000 of them were reproduced on microfilm, making a total of 150,000 that have been microfilmed in the past 3 years.

The National Archives continued its long-range program for rehabilitating historically valuable paper records. Some 58,000 sheets were laminated, and 1,154,000 sheets were microfilmed.

One preservation microfilming project was completed—the Revolutionary War rolls, 1775-83. Two others were nearing completion—the New York passenger lists, 1820-97, and the consular trade reports, 1943-50. At the end of the year, the filming of letters received by the Office of Indian Affairs was nearing the half-way mark (350 rolls), and the filming of the Papers of the Continental Congress, 1774-89, was progressing satisfactorily. Arrangement of the records preparatory to filming was under way for the New Orleans, 1820-1902, and Baltimore, 1820-91, passenger lists; the post-Revolutionary War rolls, 1784-1821; selected series of naval records, 1802-84; and the schedules for the 1820 Census of Manufactures.

Description and Publication

Preliminary inventories were prepared of the general records of the Department of State, and of the records of the Coast and Geodetic Survey of the Department of Commerce, the Enforcement Department of the Office of Price Administration, the Bureau of Reclamation of the Department of the Interior, the Shipbuilding Stabilization Committee, the Rural Electrification Administration, and the Commission on the Renovation of the Executive Mansion. Inventories were also prepared of the records of the House of Representatives for the 82d Congress and of the House Select Committee to Investigate Educational, Training, and Loan Guaranty Programs Under the GI Bill.

A description of records accessioned by the National Archives during the year July 1, 1956-June 30, 1957, was published in *National Archives Accessions* for June 1958. This issue also contains an article on the history of early business statistical operations of the Federal Government. An *Index of Microfilmed Records of the German Foreign Ministry and the Reich's Chancellery Covering the Weimar Period* was published.

There are now approximately 100,000 cards covering 6,760 film subjects in the motion-picture subject catalog. A backlog of less than 800 subjects remains to be cataloged.

Microfilm publications.—Microfilming for publication and for preservation have become two closely interrelated operations. Although publication projects are undertaken primarily to meet research needs and preservation projects to prevent deterioration of records from constant use or to preserve those already badly deteriorated, the records in the second category are also used for research. Once the master negative has been prepared, positive copies can be processed to meet reference demands. In this category fall the letters received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824–81, from the Arizona, Arkansas, Dakota, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah Superintendencies and from 13 agencies; the Papers of the Continental Congress, 1774–89; the New York passenger lists, 1820–97; and the Revolutionary War rolls, 1775–83.

The largest microfilm publication completed and one of the most popular was the Consolidated Index to Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers. Schedules of the 1820 population census for Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, and Pennsylvania were also microfilmed and more will be filmed next year for other States. Eleven pamphlets were issued in the series designed to inform users of the essential facts about each microfilm publication. Forty-seven of these pamphlets are now available.

During the year 7,311 rolls of microfilm were sold—an all-time high and 1,300 rolls more than in 1956. A record number of master negatives, 2,074, were added to the microfilm program, bringing the total number to more than 9,000 rolls.

Territorial Papers of the United States.—The second volume relating to Florida Territory was expected off the press soon after the end of the year. Work continued on the third and fourth volumes for Florida and on those for Wisconsin.

Exhibition Hall

The number of visitors to the Great Hall of Archives to see the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and other exhibits continued to rise. In April alone 121,474 people were counted, and on April 11 there were 10,654 visitors—the greatest attendance in a single day in National Archives history.

More than 42,000 facsimiles of historic documents or publications containing reproductions of documents were sold at the Information Desk.

THE FEDERAL REGISTER AND RELATED PUBLICATIONS

The year was marked by several developments including (1) the adoption of new devices and procedures to improve the production and usefulness of all Federal Register publications, (2) the publication of the first volume of the *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*,

and (3) a substantial increase in assistance given agencies in planning major regulatory programs as well as in drafting individual documents.

Statutes at Large and Slip Laws

The size of Volume 71 of the *Statutes* was reduced without reducing the size of the type page or affecting its legibility. The smaller book is easier to handle, requires less shelf space, and costs about \$2 less. The tables listing earlier laws amended, repealed, or otherwise cited in the current *Statutes*, printed last year as a separate pamphlet, are included in Volume 71.

These changes round out a series of recent major improvements, which include publishing the slip laws and the *Statutes* by photographic offset; providing permanent marginal notes, citations, and *Statutes* pagination on current slip laws; and including the number of the Congress in the number of the law.

Rules and Regulations

New procedures and technical improvements developed for publishing these documents include the Added Pocket Part supplement to a volume of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, designed to be used with an earlier supplement and thus avoid costly re-cumulation of relatively stable rules; a semi-annual supplement for rules that are frequently changed; 5-year cumulation of Executive orders and proclamations; and a system by which agencies can submit regulations in rough-draft form and receive page proofs of them to be signed and submitted as the official copy. This system not only saves the making of typescript originals but eliminates one source of error.

Ancillary Publications

The first volume, subtitled *Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1957*, in the new series of *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*, was presented to the President on May 15, 1958, and at the same time was placed on sale. Work progressed on both the 1956 and 1958 volumes; the former is scheduled for delivery in November 1958.

The 1957–58 *United States Government Organization Manual* printed for the first time a "Guide to Selected Boards, Committees, and Commissions." In spite of an increase in price from \$1 to \$1.50, public sales increased by 1,759 over the previous year for a total of 28,726.

PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES

The Harry S. Truman Library

The Library was dedicated on July 6, 1957, with former Presidents Truman and Hoover, Mrs. Roosevelt, Chief Justice Warren, Speaker Rayburn, and other dignitaries participating. The Harry S. Truman

Library, Inc., which had constructed the building from privately contributed funds and furnished it, turned it over to the Government.

At the same time Mr. Truman formally presented most of his papers to the Government. Additional papers still in Mr. Truman's custody are expected to be transferred in later years.

The museum, featuring objects received by the President, was opened to the public on September 16, 1957. During the rest of the year some 70,000 people visited the museum.

In accordance with a joint resolution of August 12, 1955, to provide for the acceptance and maintenance of Presidential libraries, the Library is administered by GSA in the same manner as the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

The Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

Approximately 200 cubic feet of manuscript material were accessioned, bringing the total manuscript holdings of the Library to 7,287 cubic feet. The most important collections of papers received were those of Wayne Coy and of Senator Harley M. Kilgore, and part of those of William D. Hassett. The Library also received from the United States Secret Service its files relating to the protection of President Roosevelt and the Roosevelt family. Of these papers, only those of Wayne Coy are now open for research use, under certain stipulations imposed by Mrs. Coy.

The Library's two-volume documentary publication, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and Conservation, 1911-1945*, was published in November 1957. Work is now under way on a documentary publication to cover Roosevelt and foreign affairs, 1933-37.

The reference work of the Library continued at a high level of activity. There was a 36-percent increase in the number of reference letters—986—written during the year.

Over 170,000 persons visited the museum, an increase of 3 percent over 1957.

NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS COMMISSION

The membership of the Commission was not changed during the year. Dr. Wilfred E. Binkley and Dr. Guy Stanton Ford were reappointed for 4-year terms. The Commission held two meetings, one on December 4, 1957, and the other on June 17, 1958.

On August 22, 1957, Congress approved a concurrent resolution endorsing the Commission's program. Transmittal of this resolution to State officials and others stimulated interest in collecting, preserving, and publishing historical documents.

There was continued progress on projects for which the Commission's staff has immediate responsibility. Completion within the next 5 years of the Commission's projected documentary history of the ratification

of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was virtually assured by a \$125,000 grant from the Ford Foundation and the selection of Dr. R. E. Cushman, formerly professor of political science at Cornell University, as chief editor. Compilation of the one-volume guide to archives and manuscripts in the United States was completed. By the end of the year the 1952 volume of *Writings on American History* had been published; the 1953 volume was in press; and work on the 1954 volume was under way.

To the growing list of projects with which the Commission cooperates, three major additions were made: the Woodrow Wilson Papers, sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation; the James K. Polk Papers, sponsored by the Tennessee Historical Commission and Vanderbilt University; and Naval and Maritime Papers of the American Revolution, sponsored by the Navy Department's Office of Naval History. Substantial progress was made by various organizations toward the establishment of projects to publish the papers of John Marshall, Daniel Webster, and Albert Gallatin.