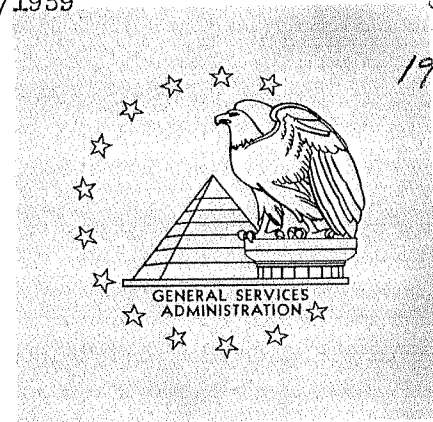
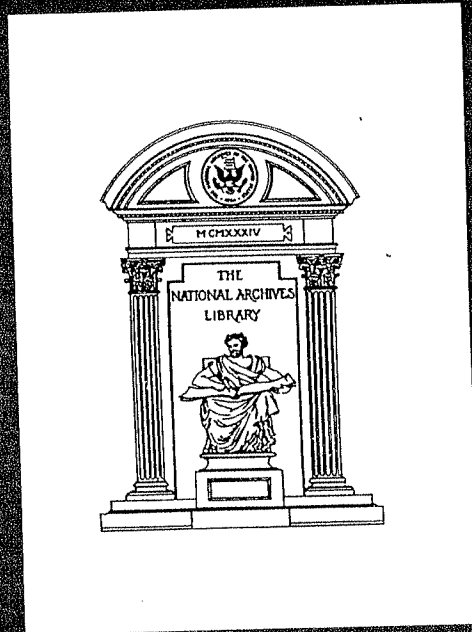


CD  
3027  
A21  
1958/1959



CD  
3027  
A21  
1958-5



#### *Part 4. Federal Records*

The General Services Administration is continuing its programs for improving 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. Significant steps are also being taken in connection with other Federal records activities which include administration of historical materials in Presidential libraries and the publication of laws, constitutional amendments, Presidential documents, and administrative regulations having general applicability and legal effect.

1959

## Records Management Assistance

The Federal Records Act of 1950 requires Federal agencies to have effective programs for controlling the creation, maintenance and use, and disposition of their records. The same act directs the General Services Administration to assist the agencies by providing records management standards, procedures, and techniques.

In complying with this law, GSA has developed a series of long-range programs, each designed to improve some important records management technique. These programs make use of published guides and standards, training workshops, and other promotional devices. In addition, GSA helps agencies with their immediate records problems through surveys and technical assistance.

To help agencies create fewer and better records, GSA concentrated in fiscal year 1959 on Government-wide campaigns to improve the techniques of correspondence and forms management. In correspondence management the most popular aid was the "plain letters" workshop, designed by GSA to shorten, clarify, and otherwise improve the quality of Government letterwriting. Since the workshop was first presented in fiscal year 1957, over half of the 84,000 participants have been trained by agency instructors using GSA materials, and GSA analysts have trained the rest.

Another correspondence workshop developed by GSA, using the handbooks "Form Letters" and "Guide Letters," was also given in many agencies. The participants learned to replace dictated letters with form or guide letters, to replace typed envelopes with window envelopes, and to eliminate extra copies and unneces-

sary reviewing of letters. A draft of a Government correspondence manual, which can be adopted by all agencies to standardize practices, and on which 21 agencies have been collaborating with GSA, was submitted for agency review.

In January 1959 a forms improvement workshop directed to agency supervisors and forms originators was introduced. By the end of the fiscal year workshop participants had improved nearly 3,000 forms for which they were responsible.

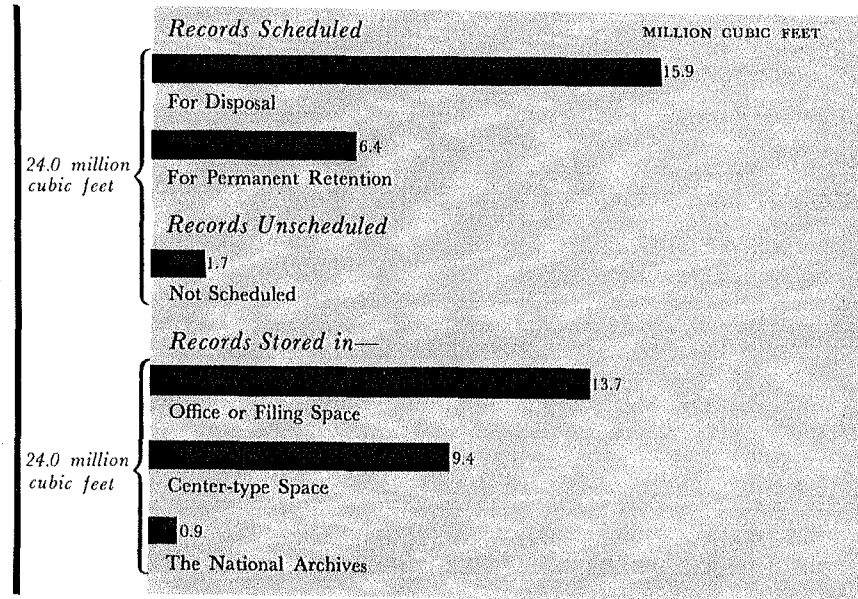
To help agencies maintain and use their current records most economically and effectively, GSA has provided a workshop built around the handbook "Agency Mail Operations." This workshop was presented to 3,000 officials in fiscal years 1958 and 1959, who compared actual agency practices with those advanced in the workshop to achieve faster replies to communications.

At the end of fiscal year 1959 there were 24 million cubic feet of Federal records in existence. The accompanying chart shows the status of records scheduling at that time and the type of space that these records occupied.

In the third area of records management, records disposition, GSA had in fiscal years 1954 and 1956 published handbooks entitled "Federal Records Centers" and "Applying Records Schedules." In fiscal year 1959 it continued its long-established programs to improve records scheduling and records centers. Too many records are still considered "permanent," however, or have overlong retention periods, or are not retired soon enough to records centers. To improve this situation a records disposition workshop has been

## Records Management Assistance

STATUS OF FEDERAL RECORDS, JUNE 30, 1959



developed for indoctrinating agency files custodians during fiscal year 1960.

Agencies with immediate records management problems were given technical advice and assistance and those with major problems were aided by extensive paperwork surveys. During fiscal year 1959 such surveys were made by GSA central office or regional staffs in nine executive departments, eight independent agencies, and the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

These surveys were concerned with a wide range of paperwork improvements worked out in collaboration with the agencies concerned. In the Coast Guard Office of Merchant Marine Safety they included changes in forms and paperwork practices to speed up ship inspections and make them more effective and a simplified system for the nationwide registration of motorboats. Also in the Treasury Department, in the Bureau of Customs, revisions were made in methods for registering vessels, handling mail,

keeping files, and issuing instructions.

Projects involving improved correspondence methods, new filing systems, and faster mail service were completed for several bureaus and offices of the Department of Labor. Procedures for processing the paperwork for foreign visitors were simplified for the Office of International Labor Affairs as was paperwork for recruiting personnel for overseas assignment by the International Cooperation Administration.

New filing systems were also developed for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

In GSA itself purchasing procedures were shortened and expedited in the National Buying Division of the Federal Supply Service, and a study was undertaken of the paperwork for construction and repair projects in regional offices of the Public Buildings Service.

## Records Centers

The Federal Records Act of 1950 directed the Administrator of General Services to establish records centers for the storage, processing, and servicing of records, and it directed agency heads to use the centers whenever economy or efficiency could be achieved thereby. By the end of fiscal year 1959 GSA was operating 15 Federal records centers in its 10 regions, plus a specialized personnel records center in St. Louis and an annex in Honolulu. The total holdings of these centers, which consisted chiefly of records that did not need to be kept in expensive operating space but that were not yet eligible for disposal or for transfer to the National Archives for permanent preservation, was 5,134,000 cubic feet.

In fiscal year 1959 the centers experienced the greatest expansion in their history, increasing their total holdings by one-third. Most of this increase—1,036,000 cubic feet of records—resulted from the taking over, at the request of the departments concerned, of five agency records centers. These were the four Naval records management centers at Alexandria, Va., Mechanicsburg, Pa., New Orleans, La., and Ogden, Utah, and a large part of the Departmental Records Branch of The Adjutant General's Office (Army), also at Alexandria.

The rest of the increase resulted from transfers to the regional centers by Federal agencies of 692,000 cubic feet of records. These transfers were nearly 10 percent larger in volume than accessions usually received annually and had been exceeded in only 2 previous years, 1954 and 1956.

Before their transfer to the centers

these records had occupied 255,000 square feet of office space and 136,000 square feet of storage space that was in blocks of 100 square feet or more. In addition, 154,000 square feet of office space and 38,000 square feet of storage space were cleared in smaller blocks.

The transfer of records to the centers also released large quantities of agency filing equipment—53,000 filing cabinets, 8,400 transfer cases, and 432,000 linear feet of shelving. This enabled the agencies to curtail purchases of new equipment by \$3,124,000.

From the time the Federal Records Act of 1950 was passed until the end of fiscal year 1959, the records center program had made possible the reuse of 395,000 usable filing cabinets, 314,000 usable transfer cases, and 772,000 linear feet of shelving. It had also cleared 2,074,000 square feet of office space and 2,556,000 square feet of storage and industrial space.

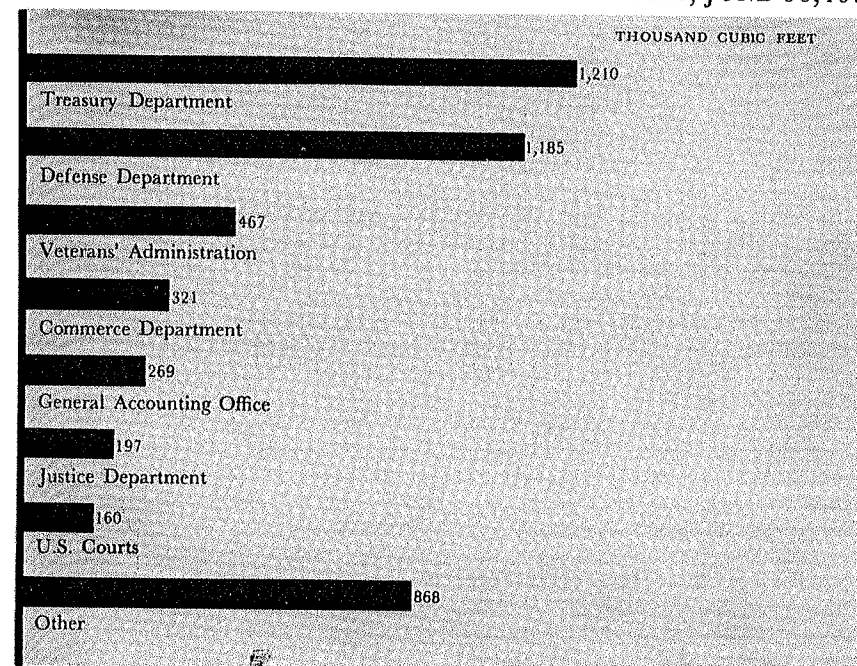
The steady growth of the regional

Table 10.—HOLDINGS AND REFERENCE SERVICES OF REGIONAL RECORDS CENTERS, FISCAL YEARS 1950–59

Fiscal year	Number of reference services	Total holdings (in cubic feet)
1959.....	2,621,195	4,677,387
1958.....	1,943,670	3,390,708
1957.....	1,662,748	3,186,186
1956.....	1,225,862	2,908,498
1955.....	899,514	2,472,495
1954.....	697,755	2,083,459
1953.....	384,306	1,563,803
1952.....	218,214	1,025,333
1951.....	71,467	603,221
1950.....	250	45,000

## Records Centers

SOURCES OF RECORDS IN REGIONAL RECORDS CENTERS, JUNE 30, 1959



records centers from their establishment in 1950 through fiscal year 1959 is evidenced by their reference services and total holdings. The 35-percent increase in reference services in fiscal year 1959 over those in 1958 reflects not only normal expansion but also the workload assumed from the Army and Navy records centers.

The chart shows the departments and other agencies from which the largest quantities of records have been transferred to the regional centers.

In fiscal year 1959 the centers disposed of almost 405,000 cubic feet of records, 14 percent more than in 1958, which was previously the highest year.

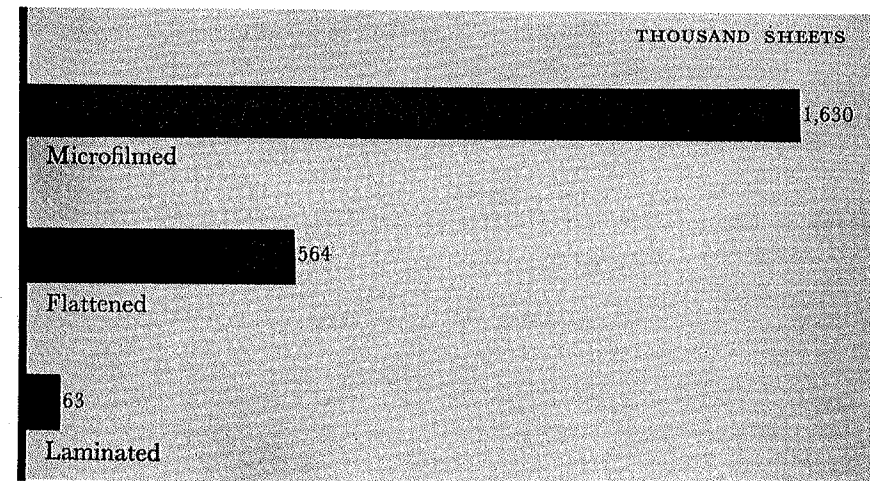
The specialized personnel records center in St. Louis began its operations in October 1951 with the receipt of records from the Department of De-

fense. It soon received records of former personnel from other agencies, and in April 1953 the Civil Service Commission designated it the mandatory repository for personnel and pay records of all former employees of the Federal Government. During fiscal year 1959 it interfired in its collection 2,075,000 items received from Government agencies, and it provided 530,000 reference services to Government agencies and the public.

To achieve maximum economies in operation, at the end of the year the Alexandria center was being consolidated into three locations instead of six and the New Orleans center into one location instead of two. A new Government-owned building was being constructed for the St. Louis center to replace a smaller rented structure.

# National Archives

PRESERVATION OF PERMANENT RECORDS, FISCAL YEAR 1959



# National Archives

The transfer of World War II military records to the National Archives at the beginning of the year brought records holdings to an alltime high of 910,000 cubic feet, slightly more than the holdings 10 years ago. In fiscal year 1955 the holdings had dropped to less than 750,000 cubic feet chiefly because of the application of higher standards of selection provided for by the Federal Records Act of 1950 and the transfer to Federal records centers of noncurrent records not worthy of permanent retention.

Despite a vigorous reappraisal of records in the National Archives, the disposition of those not warranting further retention, and the rearrangement and consolidation of all holdings (accomplished during fiscal years 1953-56), the solid core of records worthy of permanent preservation continued to expand. The use of microfilming for space-saving purposes could conceivably slow this growth, but additional space for the proper housing of historically valuable records is necessary.

At the same time that records holdings were reaching new heights a peak in the preservation of textual records was achieved in fiscal year 1959. The preservation of records that are deteriorating because of their poor physical composition or because of increased use has presented a constant challenge. For many years only the most seriously damaged records were preserved by lamination. A survey revealed that nearly 13 million sheets of paper were in an advanced state of deterioration and that an additional 5 million would probably reach that same stage within 10 years. In fiscal year 1956, after the

survey, GSA began a long-range program of preserving records by microfilming them whenever feasible, using lamination chiefly for records of such value that their original physical form must be preserved.

Also, in 1956, the National Bureau of Standards completed a study of lamination problems, sponsored by the National Archives and other agencies, that resulted in specifications for an improved laminating material.

Although preservation microfilming has been in use for only 3½ years, the total quantity of records preserved by this process is more than four times that preserved by lamination during the last 10 years. Other desirable results achieved by the increased emphasis on microfilming for preservation include the perfection of the arrangement of the records microfilmed, the shortening of the time required for searches in many series, and the saving of storage space through the disposal of some of the original records. The program has also enabled research institutions to obtain

Table 11.—PRESERVATION OF PERMANENT RECORDS, FISCAL YEARS 1950-59  
(In thousands of sheets)

Fiscal year	Laminated	Flattened	Micro-filmed
1959.....	63	564	1,630
1958.....	58	374	1,154
1957.....	32	384	1,054
1956.....	65	301	144
1955.....	125	492	.....
1954.....	131	706	.....
1953.....	141	407	.....
1952.....	139	635	.....
1951.....	138	324	.....
1950.....	69	100	.....

copies, at nominal cost, of the records filmed.

The conversion of the most valuable motion-picture holdings of the National Archives that were on rapidly deteriorating and dangerous nitrate film to a permanent safety base of triacetate was begun in 1953 and completed in 1957. A reappraisal of the film undertaken at the same time resulted in a reduction of holdings by nearly half. Total holdings are now about 40,000 reels.

In fiscal year 1954 a subject catalog of the motion-picture holdings was started. By the end of fiscal year 1959 the catalog was current and contained 119,000 cards covering 9,700 subjects.

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 1,517 record series were appraised and reported to Congress for final action.

One of the ways in which the historically valuable records in the National Archives are made more accessible to both Government and the public is through the issuance of descriptive finding aids. Of the 11 is-

sued during the year one of the most significant was the 2-volume inventory of the records of the House of Representatives, 1789-1946. Since January 1, 1950, 92 such preliminary inventories have been published, and 8 special lists, which describe in detail the contents of certain important record series, have also been published. Among the other finding aids issued during the past decade is a 2-volume guide, "Federal Records of World War II," issued in 1951. Volumes 15 through 23 of the "Territorial Papers of the United States" have been published since responsibility for the compilation and publication of this series of documentary publications was assigned to the National Archives late in 1950.

Another way in which records are made available to searchers is through the microfilm publication program. The increasing demand for these film copies of series of records of high research value is shown by the 40-percent increase in sales in 1959. Since GSA's creation the number of rolls sold annually has almost quadrupled and the number of rolls of master microfilm negatives from which the reproductions are made has increased

## National Archives

from less than 3,500 to more than 10,000 rolls. Since 1953, 60 pamphlets describing the contents of individual microfilm publications have been issued; 12 of these were made available this year.

Microfilming for publication and for preservation have become closely interrelated. Although publication filming is done primarily for research needs, the filming preserves the informational content of the records. Preservation microfilming, aimed at preventing the deterioration of records, also provides rolls of master negative from which film copies may be produced to meet scholarly demands.

Reference service, a fundamental obligation of the National Archives and the end product of archival activity, reached an alltime high in fiscal year 1959. The more than one-half million reference services surpassed the previous record set in fiscal year 1953. The comparatively small rate of increase in reference services during the past 10 years is primarily due to the transfer, virtually completed by fiscal year 1955, to Federal records centers of records needed primarily in current Government work. The number of scholarly users of records, whose requests are increasingly more complex, has about doubled since GSA was created.

In order to keep the cost of servicing records down without sacrificing quality it has been necessary to limit the amount of information furnished in response to certain types of requests. Increased emphasis has been placed on supplying low-cost reproductions of records in place of abstracting information, on compiling information required to answer complicated repeat inquiries, on using form and guide letters, and on developing more efficient operating techniques and procedures such as streamlining search-room service and centralizing the servicing of microfilm whenever possible. The number of rolls of micro-

film used in the central microfilm reading room, for example, amounted to over 19,000 this year as compared with 5,082 last year.

Exhibits in honor of James Monroe, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Alaskan statehood, and the 50th anniversary of Peary's conquest of the North Pole were installed in the National Archives during the year. Since the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights were placed on permanent exhibit with appropriate ceremonies in 1952, increasing numbers of visitors have viewed these great documents and the many other exhibits of historic records.

More than one-quarter million copies of Charters of Freedom, a publication containing facsimile reproductions of the three great documents, have been sold since 1952. Larger size facsimiles of these three documents suitable for display in schools, offices, and public buildings were printed in September 1958. By the end of the fiscal year the Superintendent of Documents had reported sales of about 30,000 each.

### Presidential Libraries

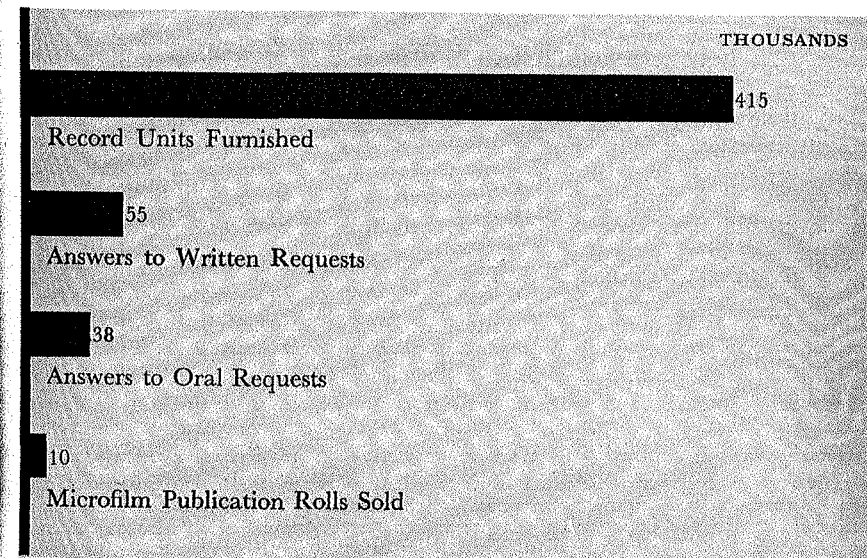
In fiscal year 1959 the Harry S. Truman Library was in full operation for the first time. In May about 1.5 million papers, including a large part

Table 12.—REFERENCE AND MICROFILM PUBLICATION SERVICES, FISCAL YEARS 1950-59

Fiscal year	Reference services	Microfilm publication rolls sold
1959 .....	507, 700	10, 237
1958 .....	430, 200	7, 311
1957 .....	412, 100	5, 767
1956 .....	413, 800	5, 662
1955 .....	416, 400	4, 372
1954 .....	444, 200	4, 700
1953 .....	473, 700	3, 780
1952 .....	411, 600	3, 849
1951 .....	441, 000	2, 982
1950 .....	373, 700	2, 700

## National Archives

REFERENCE AND MICROFILM PUBLICATION SERVICES, FISCAL YEAR 1959



of Mr. Truman's White House files, were opened to research. During the year 107,000 people visited the museum of the library. The Harry S. Truman Library Institute for National and International Affairs, a private corporation, made grants to assist nine students who are working on the history of Mr. Truman's public career. Manuscript materials in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library constitute one of the richest and most heavily used collections of primary source materials in existence relating to the history of the United States for the period 1933-45. Since 1950, when most of them were opened to research, they have been used for biographies of Roosevelt and his associates and for many other studies of his era. Holdings of the library were used more in

fiscal year 1959 than in any previous year. In the past 10 years more than 2 million persons have visited the museum of the library.

Recognizing that Presidential papers, although private property, are as important to the Nation as Federal archives, Congress in 1955 passed a joint resolution to provide for them. This resolution authorizes GSA to accept and operate as part of the national recordkeeping system any Presidential library that is offered to the United States as a gift. It thus lays the foundation for a series of libraries that will serve as important cultural centers, dedicated to research and to the preservation in professional hands of the documentary sources of important segments of the Nation's history.



## *Federal Register and Other Publication Activity*

During fiscal year 1959 a new program emphasis was adopted for the Federal Register. Its principal objective is to bring about continuous, Government-wide improvements in the drafting and publishing of documents having the effect of law. This objective was furthered by clarifying and expanding the regulations governing the program, by developing a handbook and related technical instruction courses for executive agencies, and by further modernizing Federal Register typography and printing processes. An immediate benefit is the new codification system designed to simplify Federal procurement procedures and to make them more readily available. This system, which began with the publication of GSA's Federal Procurement Regulation, will ultimately bring together all similar regulations in a single volume under a common numbering system.

Many major improvements have been made by GSA in the overall publication program, which includes the Federal Register, the Code of Federal Regulations, the U.S. Statutes at Large and the slip laws, the "Government Organization Manual," and the "Public Papers of the Presidents." They comprise more than 37,000 printed pages per year, about 90 percent of which are executive documents. The 60-volume Code of Federal Regulations was reorganized and redesigned in 1949. Instead of a complete new edition every 5 years, a self-perpetuating Code was established which can be kept up to date by pocket supplements and occasional revised volumes.

In fiscal year 1950 the publication of the Statutes at Large and the slip laws was transferred to GSA. During that year, GSA began to print the slip laws and Statutes by offset, reproducing the enrolled bills photographically. Thus the possibility of typographical error was eliminated and an 18-month publication backlog was overcome.

GSA later added marginal notes and permanent Statutes citations to the slip laws and a list of earlier laws affected by new legislation to the Statutes volumes. In fiscal year 1957 an improved system of numbering the laws was introduced.

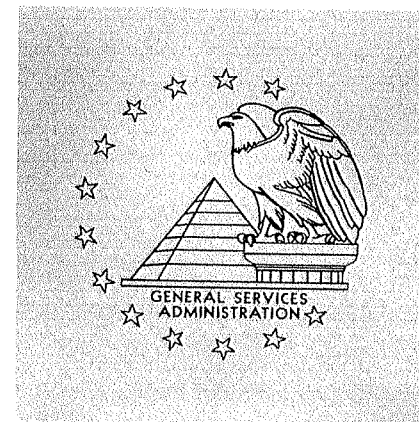
Annual volumes of the series of "Public Papers of the Presidents," begun in 1957, have also been released for the years 1956 and 1958.

### *National Historical Publications Commission*

The Commission was authorized by the Federal Records Act of 1950 to encourage and assist other organizations in collecting and publishing historical documents. Substantial progress has been made on a program that the Commission first recommended to the President in 1951 for the comprehensive publication of the papers of five persons who have contributed significantly to the American way of life—Benjamin Franklin, John and John Quincy Adams, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton. Publication programs have been fully developed by private organizations for the papers of all five. During fiscal year 1959, initial volumes of the papers of Franklin and John Adams were sent to press. Publication of the papers of John Quincy Adams will follow as part of the Adams family project; most of the papers of Madison have been collected; and several volumes of the papers of Hamilton have been edited.

In line with the Commission's recommendation for the publication of the papers of other leaders in many fields, the journal and letters of Francis Asbury have been published, and projects have been started for the papers of John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, John Carroll, and others.

The Commission itself began work on a documentary history of the ratification of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.



## *Part 5. Defense Materials*

This part describes activities in connection with stockpiling strategic and critical materials; expanding productive capacity and supply of metals, minerals, and other materials; administering production of abaca; and administering the National Industrial Equipment Reserve and other machine tool programs.

With the exception of the National Industrial Reserve functions, which are administered in accordance with determinations of the Secretary of Defense, these GSA programs are carried out under Executive orders and under directives from the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization.

GSA also supervises the operation of the Nicaro Nickel Plant in Cuba.