



Administrator's
ANNUAL REPORT
Fiscal Year 1968



GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION



Archives and Records Management

The archival and records programs of the General Services Administration are administered by the National Archives and Records Service and are based upon the responsibility to preserve historically important documents and to promote accessibility to other records during their useful life. During the past year, the National Archives and Records Service took steps to encourage expanded use of its historical records, provided guidance and assistance to scholars in the use of Federal records, supported projects for the organization and publication of the papers of prominent Americans, published the basic documents which promulgate the executive orders and administrative decisions of the executive branch of the Federal Government, developed archival plans for two additional Presidential archival depositories, provided increased advice and assistance to other agencies for the management of their records and files, and supplied storage and reference service through its system of Federal records centers.

The National Archives

The volume of records constituting the National Archives of the United States rose to 909,000 cubic feet during the fiscal year and a significant change took place with the beginning of controlled decentralization of these permanently valuable records. Working and expansion space in the overcrowded National Archives Building was obtained by sending about one-third of the records to the new Washington National Records Center building in Suitland, Md., where they will be permanently housed in space especially built and equipped for the purpose. In addition, a regional archives concept was initiated in some of the Federal records centers by the establishment of small cores of archival materials of particular regional significance. Ultimately, as funds and staff are available, it is anticipated that each regional Federal records center will have such units.

Researchers consult the Nation's historical records in the Central Research Room of the National Archives.

The past year saw considerable progress in the development of a computer program for the production and application of finding aids for archives and private papers. The project, supported by a grant from the Council on Library Resources, Inc., is being carried out in cooperation with nine other institutions, both Government and private. Less than a year into the 2-year-grant period, the project is well ahead of schedule.

Another important innovation during the year was the initiation of a series of conferences directing the attention of the academic community to archival holdings and problems. The first of these conferences coincided with the opening of the Center for Polar Archives in the National Archives and was devoted to records relating to Arctic and Antarctic exploration by the United States. The second dealt with the National Archives and statistical research. A third was scheduled on the captured German and related records of World War II. The success of these pilot conferences led to a decision to schedule other conferences of major concern to both Government and scholars.

Sales of microfilm publications, primarily to research institutions and libraries, exceeded 113,500 rolls, a 25-percent increase over last year. Since 1940, the equivalent of 5 million pages of the most valuable documentary holdings of our Nation has been distributed to individuals, research institutions and libraries. Pamphlets describing the contents of 35 microfilm publications were issued. The production of negative microfilm exceeded 3,000 rolls.

Large numbers of visitors continued to be attracted to the National Archives building. Among the exhibits were a presentation on the Arctic and Antarctic and a display on statistics presented to coincide with the conferences on those subjects. An exhibit on "The Making of a President" featured material from four Presidential archival depositories. Numerous exhibits were prepared for display outside the National Archives, including one on Howard University for the General Accounting Office. Exhibits were planned to commemorate the Test Ban Treaty's fifth anniversary, the 1918 Armistice and the Paris Peace Conference, Human Rights Year 1968, and the Revolutionary War Bicentennial.

The number of reference services on records constituting the National Archives increased slightly over that of the preceding year to a total of 571,783.

Thirty new retention plans, identifying permanently valuable records of particular Federal agencies, were prepared.

A special study on GSA's responsibilities for motion pictures and other audiovisual records was completed and recommendations were sent to the Bureau of the Budget for determination of available resources. The study proposed that audiovisual archival and records center programs of NARS be augmented to meet Federal agency needs, and that five new audiovisual services for Federal agencies and the general public be established. These services include central points for information, sales and free loan distribution, a motion picture stock footage library for non-Defense agencies, and an audiovisual technical assistance service for Federal agencies.

It was decided during the year to establish an Archives Advisory Council drawn from the scholarly community to advise on matters relating to the effectiveness of the Federal archival program. The advisory committee, chaired by the Archivist of the United States, was appointed by the Administrator. Another significant policy decision made was that the National Archives and Records Service will publish a scholarly journal three times a year as a new means of communication with the academic world. Plans were prepared for the first three issues.

Presidential Archival Depositories

Construction of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library by the University of Texas on its campus at Austin was begun and completion is anticipated in early 1970. GSA, which will operate the Johnson Library as it does the other Presidential archival depositories, worked closely with the architects under contract with the University of Texas in planning the new facility.

A gift of more than 200,000 feet of film relating to John F. Kennedy was received from the Columbia Broadcasting System. The John F. Kennedy Oral History Project continued its activities which have resulted in the completion of more than 724 interviews since 1964.

An addition to the Harry S. Truman Library which provides an additional exhibit area plus office space and an enlarged museum was completed during the year and the new museum area was opened to the public.

Planning for the construction of a much needed addition to the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library was completed and construction is expected to be underway by February 1969. Work continued on a three-volume documentary publication, "Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs," which will be published early in 1969 by the Harvard University Press.

Architectural studies were underway incident to plans to remodel and enlarge the Dwight D. Eisenhower Museum building in order to display many interesting items now in storage.

Records Management

The National Archives and Records Service has a central role in the executive branch paperwork program, providing general guidelines and direct technical assistance to Federal agencies on such demanding subjects as paperwork automation and information systems for management decisionmaking.

In the field of guidance, two new workshops were developed: "Modernizing Management Reports," a 3-day course to insure better information for management decisionmaking, and "Office Information Retrieval," a 5-day course covering theory and practice of data retrieval, including automation techniques. Added to the growing list of handbooks were two new volumes: "Communicating Policy and Procedure" and "File Stations." More specific guidelines on paperwork control programs were given thorough detailed evaluations made in six Federal agencies.

The ad hoc Committee on Machine-Readable Records submitted recommendations regarding the archival management of magnetic tapes and other computer-produced records and a pilot operation was authorized to cope with the problems of obtaining, understanding, and servicing machine-readable records. There are those who believe that the impact of computer records on archives may be greater than that of the typewriter.

Direct assistance was given to other agencies through 68 paperwork management surveys and 52 technical assistance projects based upon workshops. Over 100 lesser projects comprising con-

sultations and short-term assistance (averaging 1 workweek) were also provided to agencies at their request. According to agency reports to GSA, the surveys and assistance resulted in more than \$10 million in savings to the agencies and other benefits including reduced time lags and quality improvements.

Two large national symposiums were held in collaboration with other Government agencies and private industry to help managers keep abreast of new developments: "Communicating Policy and Procedure" and "Mechanizing the Information Process." About 1,800 attended the two symposiums.

Continuing development of pertinent workshops and expansion of agency surveys and technical assistance projects are planned in an expanding program to improve paperwork handling and records control within the Federal Government.

Federal Records Centers

Records centers handled 6,165,103 reference inquiries, a new high, exceeding the figure for fiscal year 1967 by almost 600,000. Center holdings reached a record 9,526,000 cubic feet, over one-third of all Federal records.

Regional centers received 943,300 cubic feet of records, also a new high, and destroyed 576,000 cubic feet. A government-wide records cleanout campaign and the continuing moratorium on the acquisition of filing equipment were major causes of the large amounts of record transfers and destruction of unneeded records. Cleanout campaigns resulted in agencies' transfer of 515,000 cubic feet of records to centers and their destruction of 1½ million cubic feet. The number of file cabinets purchased by Federal agencies during fiscal year 1968, a total of 43,717, was 26 percent below purchases for fiscal year 1967 and 40 percent less than the number of cabinets purchased during 1964, just before the moratorium was imposed.

Transferring records to the centers enabled the Government to save over \$6.6 million by clearing for reuse:

- 469,800 square feet of office space
- 113,600 square feet of storage space
- 72,800 filing cabinets
- 8,900 transfer cases
- 570,500 linear feet of shelving

The movement of records into the new Washington National Records Center at Suitland, Md., was completed during the year. Eventually, the center will hold almost 4 million cubic feet of records.

To meet overall center space needs on a long-term basis, additional increments need to be provided at nine locations, totaling approximately 575,400 square feet. Included in this figure are the requirements of 197,400 square feet for a new Chicago Federal Records Center and about 134,000 square feet of temperature and humidity controlled storage space at selected locations.

The Federal Register

Approximately \$300,000 in printing costs was avoided by screening 30,000 manuscript pages from publication in the Federal Register during fiscal year 1968. The manuscripts, reviewed in connection with the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552), involved agency bulletins, directives, standards, specifications, manuals, handbooks, guides, and other technical rules, instructions, and procedures. Large printing costs were avoided either by incorporating the materials by reference or by reflecting them in the form of notices of availability of the information.

Despite these efforts to keep the volume of administrative rules to be published from expanding too rapidly, the cumulative size of the daily Federal Register increased nearly seven percent during the year, reaching a total of 18,000 pages.

In addition to the daily Federal Register, the publication program includes the Code of Federal Regulations, the "U.S. Statutes at Large" and the slip laws, the "U.S. Government Organization Manual," the "Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States" and the "Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents."

National Historical Publications Commission

Upon recommendation by the Commission and from funds appropriated under Public Law 88-383 (44 U.S.C. 393) 39 grants, totaling \$377,919 were made to 33 universities, historical societies and other nonprofit organizations to help support 19 letterpress and 14 microfilm publication projects. In addition,

four grants amounting to \$194,320 were made from a fund given in 1964 by the Ford Foundation to support the editing and publication of the papers of Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, and the Adams family. Ford Foundation funds also supported a "Survey of the Availability and Use of Primary Sources in the Graduate Teaching of History." The survey has been completed and a report will be published in the coming year. A revised catalog of microfilm publications prepared with Commission aid describes the 72 titles available as of June 1968.