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The Maine State Archives: Its Development, Program and Future Operations

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THE MAINE STATE ARCHIVES: ITS DEVELOPMENT, PROGRAM
AND FUTURE OPERATIONS

Presentation before the Vassalboro Historical Society

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by

Howard P. Lowell, Administrative Archivist

From the beginning of written communication, man has created and preserved records to document his activities. The temple of the Mother of Gods in Athens housed valuable Greek documents including the statement of Socrates in his own defense, plays by Euripides and Sophocles, and the lists of Olympic Games victors. The Romans kept careful records and in 79 B.C. constructed the first building, the Tabularium in Rome, planned exclusively for archives. Decentralization of authority in the Middle Ages caused the decline of records making though the Catholic Church, the one institution not affected by this decentralization, bridged the documentary gap by preserving church and state records. The Vatican Archives was established in 1612.

However, it was not until the French Revolution that the concept of a state archives as we know it was born. In this period of upheaval, as the new order upset and replaced institutions of the past, officials became increasing-

ly concerned with records for legal and fiscal reasons and emerging nationalism came to view them as monuments worthy of preservation. In 1789 the National Assembly created an archival institution in which its acts were to be preserved and exhibited; by the Decree of September 12, 1790, this institution was designated L'Archives Nationales, the first national archives established by any country. A Decree of June 25, 1794 set up a nation-wide public archives administration under the jurisdiction of L'Archives Nationales in Paris; this Decree was strengthened by law, October 26, 1796, giving L'Archives Nationales jurisdiction over all archival institutions established in the departements.

One of the most important results of the French Revolution therefore, was this recognition of the importance of records to a society which resulted in: (1) the establishment of an independent, national archival institution; (2) the emergence of the principle of public access to archives; and (3) the recognition of the responsibility of the state for the care, preservation and servicing of its valuable documents. A central archives institution, the Public Record Office, was created in England on August 14, 1838.

The idea of state archives developed slowly in the United States. The most noteworthy achievement of the 18th century was the two volume collection of State and Federal documents, Historical Collection (1792, 1794), copied

and compiled by Ebenezer Hazzard for a promised subsidy of \$1,100 from the Continental Congress, a subsidy he never received. This work foretold of a wide-spread movement in the 19th century to publish copies of records.

Most notable of these were the Journal of the Constitutional Convention (1818) and Peter Force's nine volume American State Archives.

By 1840 state archival institutions were being established throughout Europe but in America, the emphasis remained on the Jeffersonian concept of multiplication of copies rather than preservation of originals. The historian Jared Sparks, on a tour of the United States from New Hampshire to Georgia in 1826, observed that few original records had survived and those that had were neglected because of "ignorance and apathy on the part of the responsible officials." He found government officials quite willing to give him original records in exchange for transcripts, and Sparks soon joined other American scholars in turning to foreign archives for information. The observations of Sparks are substantiated by the French traveler Alexis de Tocqueville.

Isolated drives for the creation of state archival institutions in the United States were made from time to time during the 1800's by men such as New Hampshire Secretary of State Richard Bartlette, but their efforts had little national impact. It was not until the emergence of the Scientific School of

Historians in the 1880's with emphasis on the German seminar method of instruction and its utilization and evaluation of primary source material, that the idea of preserving state archives in official repositories was implanted in the American mind. The American Historical Society, founded in 1884, stressed the use of primary sources and in 1899, under the leadership of J. Franklin Jameson, of Johns Hopkins University established a Public Archives Commission to investigate archival resources and conditions in the country. Resulting from the Commission's efforts and the public's growing awareness of the need for public records preservation, the first American State Archives, the Alabama Department of Archives and History, was established by law on February 27, 1901.

The movement for public archives then spread rapidly throughout the United States, especially in the South and mid-West. In 1913, Congress authorized development of building plans for a National Archives in Washington, but it was not until 1933 that actual construction began and not until June 19, 1934 that the agency was actually established.

In Maine, the development of a centralized archives repository ran parallel to the rest of the country until the early 20th century. Recognition of the need

American State Archives, would write, "On the archival map of the United States, the venerable state of Maine appears as a blank spot, for it has neither an archival nor a records management program." Only the Committee on the Destruction of Records, created in 1943, hinted of a program. Bills introduced into the Legislatures of 1945, 1959, 1961 and 1963 failed to find the necessary support for enactment.

In November, 1964, prior to the convening of the 102nd Legislature, Governor John H. Reed appointed a Maine State Archives Committee with Dean Ernest C. Marriner of Colby College as chairman. This Committee, believing that the creation of a State Archives was vital, introduced, under the joint sponsorship of Representatives Walter A. Birt and James A. Bishop a Bill: AN ACT creating the Office of State Archivist (H.P. 768, L.D. 1012). The Bill received a unanimous OUGHT TO PASS report from the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs on April 15, 1965 and was enacted by the Legislature, as amended, June 4, 1965 with approval by Governor Reed on June 8. as P.L. 1965, c. 441. This legislation has subsequently been amended by P.L. 1969, c. 318, effective October 1, 1969, and is set out as Title 27, Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, §§ 274-279. The Maine State Archives became

operational with the appointment of the first State Archivist, Samuel S. Silsby, Jr. on July 4, 1966.

The Archives and Records Management Law of the State of Maine was enacted to make "the operations of State Government more efficient, more effective and more economical through current records management . . . (and to) preserve its noncurrent records of permanent value for study and research." To that end the Maine State Archives is developing a comprehensive State-wide, government-wide program to improve records management, provide technical advice, assistance and leadership in archival and records management techniques and practices, and select, preserve and service the permanently valuable noncurrent records of Maine.

The program is not limited in scope to records created by State agencies in Augusta, but includes records of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches and those of the political subdivisions of the State, i.e. the towns and the counties. The records created by all levels of government reflect the complimentary nature of their governmental functions and provide essentially different information as a result of their administrative, legal or fiscal requirements. From the standpoint of documentary needs, it is essential to consider all public records, regardless of origin, as an integral part of a

State records system. Each must be cared for and preserved as evidence of the origin, development, policies and procedures of the government creating them, the official source of information on that government's functions and activities, and the public, private and personal rights which these records establish. Private records, too, form an important part of the total documentation of the State, and, though generally preserved by private individuals or institutions, may be preserved with public records for the purpose of explaining or interpreting them.

I am not saying that all permanently valuable noncurrent records in Maine should be centralized in the Maine State Archives nor am I saying that the Maine State Archives is interested in collecting vast amounts of private material; the former is impractical from an economic and physical viewpoint; the latter is not within the parameters of a governmental archives such as established in Maine. What I am saying is that the Maine State Archives must develop and implement standards and regulations for the preservation and use of public records, standards which might be adopted by private institutions, to prevent deterioration, mutilation, loss or destruction of Maine's documentary heritage, and that local records repositories must meet these basic requirements. Through the use of its facility in the Maine State Cultural Building, scheduled for completion

In April, 1971, the Maine State Archives will: (1) provide for storage, preservation and service of original records of local agencies who are unable to provide adequately for this; (2) provide a security storage center for microfilm master negatives; (3) make available the technical capabilities of the Conservation and Photoreproduction Laboratories; and (4) make the staff of the Maine State Archives available to assist in applying and implementing the standards and regulations. These services will also be offered to private institutions and individuals to assist in the preserving, arranging, describing and servicing private materials.

The preservation of Maine's documentary heritage is too great, and expensive, a task for a single repository to undertake. The accomplishment of this task is necessarily a cooperative effort on the part of State and local government, historical societies, museums, libraries and private individuals. It is not the preservation of the records of a single level of government or a single segment of society which is important, but rather the preservation of permanently valuable records of all levels of government and of all segments of society. This is our responsibility, to collect and preserve, and most importantly, to allow the use of our public and private records of permanent value, regardless of origin and content. To do less

would be to prostitute our responsibility as custodians of Maine's documentary heritage. To meet this responsibility adequately requires close cooperation among those agencies, institutions and individuals involved with this documentation.

THE MAINE STATE ARCHIVES: A STATE RECORDS SYSTEM

Presented before the Jefferson Historical Society, October 28, 1969

by

Howard P. Lowell

Director, Administrative Services

What are "archives" ? I feel a necessary starting point for our discussion this afternoon is to define the terms which we will use, and by "archives" I mean: 1) permanently valuable noncurrent public records; and also 2) the building in which such records are preserved. What are these "public records" ? To paraphrase Schellenberg, "public records" are "all books, papers, maps, photographs or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristic, made or received by any public agency or institution in pursuance of its legal obligations or in connection with the transaction of its proper business, and preserved, or appropriate for preservation, by that agency or institution, or its legitimate successor, as evidence of its functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities, or because of the informational data therein contained." More simply, "archives" are the records of a government which retain value after the immediate use for which they have

been created no longer exists, and are preserved, as such, by that government. "Archives", in this sense of the term, includes private material only to the extent such material is of ancillary value in explaining or interpreting the public records.

From the beginning of written communication, man has documented his activities. The peoples of ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome were very aware of the necessity for records, and in 79 B.C. the Romans constructed the first building, the Tabularium, planned exclusively for their preservation. The decline of the Roman Empire and the subsequent decentralization of political authority in the Middle Ages saw a virtual cessation of records keeping as we know it. The exception was the Catholic Church, the one institution not effected by this decentralization of authority. Its monasteries bridged the documentary gap by preserving both church and state records. The Vatican Archives was established in 1612.

It was not until the French Revolution that the concept of a state archives as we define it was born. In this period of upheaval, as the new order replaced institutions of the past, officials became increasingly concerned with records for legal and fiscal reasons, while emerging

nationalism came to view them as monuments worthy of preservation. In 1789, the National Assembly created an archival institution in which its Acts were to be preserved and exhibited; this institution was designated L'Archives Nationales, the first national archives established by any country. A Decree of June 25, 1794 set up a nationwide public archives system under the jurisdiction of this institution; this action was strengthened by law, October 26, 1796, when L'Archives Nationales was given jurisdiction over all archival institutions established in the departements. One of the most important results of the French Revolution, therefore, was this recognition of the importance of records to a society resulting in: 1) the establishment of an independent, national archival institution; 2) the emergence of the principle of public access to archives; and 3) the recognition of the responsibility of the state for the care, preservation and servicing of its valuable documents. England created its central archives depository, the Public Records Office, on August 4, 1838.

The idea of state archives developed slowly in the United States.

The most noteworthy achievement of the 18th century was a two volume

collection of State and Federal documents, Historical Collections, copied and compiled by Ebenezer Hazzard for a promised subsidy of \$1,100 from the Continental Congress, a subsidy he never received. Published in 1792 and 1794, Historical Collections foretold of a widespread movement during the 19th century to publish copies of records. Most notable of these were the Journal of the Constitutional Convention (1818) and Peter Force's nine volume American State Archives.

By 1840, state archival institutions had been established throughout Europe, yet in the United States, emphasis remained on the Jeffersonian concept of multiplication of copies rather than preservation of originals. The historian Jared Sparks, after a nationwide tour in 1826, observed that few original records had survived and that those that had were neglected because of "ignorance and apathy on the part of responsible officials." Sparks found governmental custodians quite willing to give him original records in exchange for transcripts, and he soon joined other American scholars in turning to foreign archives for information.

Isolated drives for the creation of state archives in the United States

were made during the 1800's by men such as New Hampshire Secretary of State Richard Bartlette, but their efforts had little national impact. It was not until the emergence of the Scientific School of Historians in the 1880's with its emphasis on the German seminar method of instruction and utilization and evaluation of primary source material that the concept of state archives was implanted in the American mind. The American Historical Association, founded in 1884, stressed the use of primary sources and, under the leadership of J. Franklin Jameson of John Hopkins University, established, in 1899, a Public Archives Commission to investigate the archival resources and conditions in the country. Resulting from that Commission's efforts and the growing awareness of the value of public records preservation, the first American State archives, the Alabama Department of Archives and History, was created by law, February 27, 1901.

The establishment of public archives depositories spread rapidly throughout the United States during the first half of the 20th century.

In 1913 Congress authorized development of building plans for a National Archives to be located in Washington, D.C., though actual construction did not begin until 1933 and it was not until June 19, 1934 that the National Archives was officially created. *phawett*

In Maine, developments leading to the formation of a centralized public archives depository ran parallel to the rest of the country until the early 1900's. Recognition of the need for the safekeeping of public records is recorded early in the State's history, witness the Laws of 1821, c. 109, "AN ACT to provide the safe keeping of Public Records, and for regulating the quality of paper for Books of Public Records" and the Register of Council for Saturday, July 6, 1822 which contains a memorial from the senators of York County for the removal of one George Thatcher, Jr., Register of Probate, for failure to transfer official records in his custody to the new fireproof courthouse at Alfred. That public officials were interested in preserving the history of the State can be deduced from an analysis of the membership lists of the Maine Historical Society, founded in 1822. As in other states, records often became lost or destroyed.

Commissioner Goddard, reporting on the statutory revision of 1883, observed that no evidence could be found among the archives of the State for the adoption of an amendment to the Maine Constitution supposedly accepted by the people in 1871.

In 1908, Professor Allen Johnson of Bowdoin College conducted an inventory of Maine's public records for the Public Records Commission of the American Historical Association. Observing the sorry state of Maine's documentation, he concluded his report with a proposal for the creation of a department of archives and history under the charge of the State Historian. The first State Historian, Reverend Henry Burrage, endorsed this proposal and urged the creation of such a department, and periodically during the next forty-seven years, this concept would be resurrected only to die again until in 1964 Ernst Posner, in his book American State Archives, would write, "On the archival map of the United States, the venerable state of Maine appears as a blank spot, for it has neither an archival nor a records management program." Only the Committee on the Destruction of Records, created in 1943, hinted of a program. Bills introduced into

the Legislatures of 1945, 1959, 1961 and 1963 failed to find the support necessary for enactment.

In November, 1964, prior to the convening of the 102nd Legislature, Governor John H. Reed appointed a Maine State Archives Committee with Dean Ernest C. Marriner of Colby College as chairman. This Committee, believing that the creation of a State archives was vital, introduced, under the joint sponsorship of Representatives Walter A. Birt and James A. Bishop, Bill: AN ACT Creating the Office of State Archivist (H.P. 768, L.D. 1012). This Bill received a unanimous OUGHT TO PASS report from the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs on April 15, 1965 and was enacted by the Legislature, as amended, June 4, 1965 with approval by Governor Reed on June 8 as P.L. 1965, c. 441. This legislation has subsequently been amended by P.L. 1969, c. 318, and is set out as Title 27, Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, sections 274-279. The Maine State Archives became operational with the appointment of the first State Archivist, Samuel S. Silsby, Jr., on July 4, 1966.

The Archives and Records Management Law of the State of Maine was

enacted to make "the operations of State Government more efficient, more effective and more economical through current records management ... (and to) preserve its noncurrent records for study and research." The Law represents one of the most progressive pieces of archival legislation in the country in that it combines both an archives and a records management function under the administration of a single independent agency empowered to establish provisions governing the creation, use, maintenance, preservation, retention and disposition of State records. To implement the provisions of the law, the Maine State Archives is currently developing a State-wide, government-wide records system. In accepting this concept of a State-wide, government-wide archives and records management system, the Maine State Archives has directed its planning efforts toward insuring the operation of a program at the maximum level of productivity. Nothing provides a more ludicrous description of a number of state archival programs in the United States than Dickens' description of the grandnephew in Martin Chuzzlewit as being "very dark and very hairy and apparently born for no particular purpose but to save the looking glass the trouble of reflecting more than the first idea and a sketchy notion of a face which had never been carried out." The concept for the records system adopted by the Maine State Archives represents more than a "sketchy

notion" or a "first idea"; it represents nothing less than the absolute determination that Maine will settle for no less than the strongest and most effective archives and records management program possible. This program provides for: 1) the management and preservation of the public records resources of Maine, regardless of the level of government creating them; 2) technical assistance and centralized services adapted to meet State and local agency needs in records management and archival program areas; and 3) administrative hold over permanently valuable record holdings to provide the basic data necessary for effective planning and administration in State Government. The records created by the municipal, county and State governments in Maine reflect the complimentary nature of their governmental functions and provide essentially different information as a result of their administrative, legal or fiscal requirements. From the standpoint of documentary needs, it is therefore important to consider all public records in Maine as integral parts of a records system for the State. Each must be cared for and preserved as: 1) evidence of the origin, development, policies and procedures of the government creating them; 2) the official source of information on that government's functions and activities; and 3) the public, private and personal rights which these records established. Private records too form an important part of the total documentation of the State,

and, though generally preserved by private individuals or institutions, may be preserved with public records for the purpose of explaining or interpreting them.

When I speak of a State records system, I do not mean that all permanently valuable noncurrent public records in Maine must be preserved in the Maine State Archives nor am I saying that the Maine State Archives is interested in collecting vast amounts of private material; the former is impractical from an economic, geographic or physical standpoint; the latter is not within the parameters of a public archives as defined by Maine law. What I am saying is that the Maine State Archives is developing and will implement standards for the preservation and use of public records, standards which may be adaptable to private institutions, to prevent records deterioration, mutilation, loss or destruction. Local public records repositories will be assisted by the Maine State Archives in attaining and maintaining these standards. Through use of its facility in the Maine State Cultural Building, scheduled for completion in April, 1971, the Maine State Archives will among other things: 1) provide for the preservation, storage and servicing of original records of local public depositories who are unable to adequately provide these services; 2) provide a security storage center for microfilm master negatives;

3) make the technical capabilities of the Paper Conservation and Photoreproduction laboratories available; and 4) make the professional staff available to assist local government in solving archives and records management problems. Services will also be offered to private institutions and individuals to assist in inventorying, preserving, arranging, describing and servicing private documentary material.

The preservation of Maine's documentary heritage is obviously too great, and expensive, a task for a single repository to undertake. The preservation of Maine's documentary heritage must be a cooperative effort on the part of State and local government, historical societies, museums, libraries and private individuals. It is not the preservation of the records of a single level of government nor of a single segment of society that is important for taken out of their proper context, they have little meaning. It is rather the preservation of the permanently valuable records of all levels of government and of all segments of society according to the principle of provenance and the principle of respect des fonds, cardinal rules of the archival profession, which is truly meaningful.

The job of the Maine State Archives is simple; get rid of Maine's unnecessary

public records and put Maine's necessary public records in a condition to be used. This task takes on slightly different proportions if one thinks of it in terms of 150 years of accumulated records in various stages of disarrangement and deterioration, in terms of 235 State agencies who are daily creating records, not to mention the 400 or so agencies which have existed since Maine achieved statehood, in terms of sixteen counties, 22 cities, 415 towns and 57 plantations, and in terms of the records creating capabilities of the computer age.

The Maine State Archives pledges to fulfill its statutory obligations for the public records of the State, to put Maine on Posner's archival map of the United States in the position reflected by our State motto, "Dirigo". The Maine State Archives also stands ready to cooperate in the preservation of all of Maine's documentary heritage. To do less would be to prostitute our responsibility as one of its custodians.

Not presented due to illness

The Maine State Archives: The Past is Prologue

Presented before the Maine State Society, Washington, D.C. October 21, 1969

by

Howard P. Lowell

Director, Administrative Services

Five years ago, (in his book American State Archives), Ernst Posner stated,

"On the archival map of the United States, the venerable state of Maine appears as a blank spot, for it has neither an archival nor a records management program."

Attempts to enact legislation to create a State archival agency in Maine had produced a long record of failure beginning with Johnson's 1908 proposal for a department of archives and history under the State Historian. By 1964, Maine was one of but three states in the country without an archival agency. Only the Committee on the Destruction of Records, created in 1943, hinted of a records program.

In November, 1964, prior to the convening of the 102nd Legislature, Governor John H. Reed appointed the Maine State Archives Committee with Dean Ernest C. Marriner of Colby College as Chairman. This Committee succeeded in drafting legislation which was enacted at the regular session of the 102nd Legislature as Public Laws 1965, c. 441, (AN ACT Creating the Office of State Archivist). This law has subsequently

been amended at the regular session of the 104th Legislature by Public Laws 1969, c. 318 (AN ACT to Clarify the State Records Law), and is set out as Title 27 § 274-279 of the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, 1964. The Maine State Archives became operational with the appointment of the first State Archivist, Samuel S. Silsby, Jr., on July 4, 1966.

The Archives and Records Management Law of the State of Maine is one of the most progressive pieces of archival legislation in the country in that it combines both an archives and a records management function under the administration of a single independent agency empowered to establish provisions governing the creation, use, maintenance, preservation, retention and disposition of State records. To implement the provisions of the law, the Maine State Archives is currently developing a State-wide, government-wide records system. In accepting this concept of a State-wide, government-wide archives and records management system, the Maine State Archives has directed its planning efforts toward insuring the operation of a program at the maximum level of productivity. Nothing provides a more ludicrous description of a number of state archival programs in the United States than Dickens' description of the grandnephew in Martin Chuzzlewitt as being "very dark and very hairy and apparently born for no

particular purpose but to save the looking glass the trouble of reflecting more than the first idea and a sketchy notion of a face which had never been carried out."

The concept for the records system adopted by the Maine State Archives represents more than a "sketchy notion" or a "first idea"; it represents nothing less than the absolute determination that Maine will settle for no less than the strongest and most effective archives and records management program possible. This program provides for:

- 1) the management and preservation of the public records resources of Maine, regardless of the level of government creating them;
- 2) technical assistance and centralized services adapted to meet State and local agency needs in records management and archival program areas;
- and 3) administrative hold over permanently valuable record holdings to provide the basic data necessary for effective planning and administration in State Government.

The records created by the municipal, county and State governments in Maine reflect the complimentary nature of their governmental functions and provide essentially different information as a result of their administrative, legal or fiscal requirements. From the standpoint of documentary needs, it is therefore important to consider all public records in Maine as integral parts of a records system for the State. The express purpose of the program is "to make the operation of State Govern-

ment more effective, more efficient and more economical through current records management...(and to) preserve its noncurrent records of permanent value for study and research."

At the time of its creation, the Maine State Archives had no facility in which to implement a program. In November of 1966, the voters of Maine acted favorably on legislation passed by the 102nd Legislature and created the Maine State Cultural Building Authority charging it with the responsibility for acquiring land and erecting a \$4.8 million building to house the Maine State Museum, Maine State Library and Maine State Archives. The firm of Walker O. Cain and Associates of New York was chosen as architects and a site just south of the State Capitol selected. Ground breaking ceremonies were held July 16, 1968, and the steel skeleton of the structure is now nearing completion. The Maine State Cultural Building, scheduled for agency occupation in April, 1971 contains 142,650 square feet of space. Its main entrance will face north toward the Capitol and as one enters, the Library will be to the left in the East wing, the Archives to the right in the West wing and the Museum will be in the connecting central location.

The archives facility will be one of the most modern in the country, both in

respect to layout and equipment. Designed to follow a work-flow concept, it will contain a small exhibit area, conference room, administrative offices, a computer room, a receiving and cleaning area, a processing room, two floors of stacks comprising 2/3 of the total archives space allotment, a specialized fire-security vault, search room with microfilm reading room attached, a photoreproduction laboratory and a paper restoration laboratory. Specialized equipment will include a vacuum fumigator, cleaning tables, punch paper typewriter, pettifogger, lamination, stain reduction apparatus, and microphotoreproduction cameras and processors.

The Maine State Archives has departmental status and as such, is responsible directly to the Governor. Administratively, it is divided into three Bureaus. The Bureau of Administrative Services is responsible for overall agency administration, technical services, publications and the training, information and education program.

The Bureau of Records Management is responsible for developing improved records-making and records-keeping systems and practices in State Government, ensuring adequate documentation of agency organization, procedures and transactions while reducing non-essential paperwork. Records management responsibilities include:

1. development and promulgation of policies, procedures and standards to improve and simplify records-making and records-keeping systems;
2. promoting compatibility in paperwork management systems and equipment;
3. supplementing program standards with operational standards, principles techniques and improved practices, and publishing them as instructional handbooks;
4. providing leadership in establishing programs to administer the creation of records, in adopting efficient controls over correspondence and mail systems along with report, directives and forms;
5. establishment of retention and disposition schedules;
6. developing standards for the improvement and management of paperwork through use of automated and mechanized equipment and systems.

The overall objectives of the records management program are to eliminate records no longer needed, preserve records of value, predetermine their disposition and release valuable space, personnel and equipment for other administrative uses.

The Bureau of Archives is charged with the broad responsibility for acquiring, preserving and servicing the permanently valuable noncurrent public records of Maine as well as private records of ancillary value. Processes include fumigation, cleaning, accessioning, analysis, arrangement, description and the preparation of finding aids. As a service agency, the Maine State Archives is responsible for making

the public records in its custody available to governmental officials, scholars and the general public for study and research. To that end, in addition to the preparation of finding aids and the publications program, the Bureau of Archives offers reference and research assistance through the Search Room with its specialized reference library. The Bureau is also responsible for the Exhibits program.

The implementation of archives and records management programs and activities to achieve maximum effectiveness will depend much more upon the spirit with which the agency undertakes its tasks rather than on the naked authority of the law or the construction of a building. The wellspring of our efforts is reflected in a number of attitudes which we hope will characterize the development and administration of a successful program. They may be summarized as follows:

The first is a rejection of the narrow limitations imposed by the orthodoxies of theory and techniques;

The second is the belief that the Maine State Archives must be strong and aggressive to best serve the interests of the entire State;

The third is that the Maine State Archives should be responsive to the needs of State Government and the people of the State;

The fourth is that the Maine State Archives should adopt policies that are cooperative rather than competitive or compulsive with respect to other agencies and institutions;

The fifth is that the Maine State Archives should receive adequate appropriations and staff to administer an effective program;

The sixth is to seek out and apply the best in newly developed information and techniques for obtaining the objectives of the program;

The seventh is to strengthen the educational and cultural resources of the State through extension activities which will effectively achieve this purpose;

The eighth is to develop a spirit of interest and enthusiasm in the purposes and objectives of the Maine State Archives which will be reflected in the efforts and activities of the staff and those which it serves;

The ninth is to develop a program for Maine which will not only effectively serve the State, but which will encourage consistently higher standards in the archives profession as a result of our imagination and effort;

The tenth is to encourage the discovery of new principles rather than a reliance on seeking precedents.

To describe the efforts of the Maine State Archives during the past four years requires less than the two volumes Martorelli wrote "to prove, by inspection of an inkwell, that the ancients did not use scrolls, but books of rectangular shape."

Without doubt, our efforts will be regarded as having more value. Limited by funds, staff, facilities and equipment, the gains that have been made are largely in terms of planning for implementation of a fully operational program with the opening of the Maine State Cultural Building. The observation of Parkinson that:

Examples abound of new institutions coming into existence with a full establishment of deputy directors, consultants and executives; all these coming together in a building specially designed for their purposes. And experience proves that such an institution will die. It is choked by its own perfection. It cannot take root for lack of soil. It cannot grow naturally for it is already grown;

will have little relevancy to the future effectiveness of the Maine State Archives in fulfilling the purposes for which it was established.

If the "past is prologue". it may be well to examine what the staff of the Maine State Archives has accomplished in the past three years toward achievement of an operational program. Fifteen months ago the staff consisted of the State Archivist and a secretary; today we have a staff of six having added a Reference Archivist, a Processing Archivist, a Records Management Officer and a Director of Administrative Services. The projected staffing needs for a basic operational program in the Maine State Cultural Building is 50 people.

What have we accomplished in the past three years? Administratively, the Maine State Archives has:

1. planned a State-wide, government-wide archives and records management program for operational implementation with the opening of the building.

2. developed plans and specifications for the archives facility in the Maine State Cultural Building;
3. prepared the budget for a fully operational program in the facility;
4. prepared an initial organizational and procedural manual;
5. developed a publications program;
6. prepared legislation for action at the regular session of the 104th Legislature;
7. developed educational and training programs for archives and records management;
8. developed an educational cooperation program with Maine's colleges and universities, including the offering of graduate level courses in archives administration and records management;
9. formulated plans for a national association of State Archivists and Records Managers;

Under the records management program we have:

1. developed policies and procedures governing the destruction of public records;
2. developed a data processing program statement;
3. developed ADP documentation standards;
4. developed a Records Center concept for Maine to provide low-cost, temporary storage for semi-current records;
5. authorized the destruction of 11,634 cubic feet of noncurrent records having no permanent value (this is the equivalent of nearly 2000 four drawer filing cabinets or nearly \$ 170,000);

Our archives program has:

1. researched and compiled the records policies of the State since 1820;

2. developed policies to govern archival microfilming;
3. solicited Maine documents from out-of-state depositories;
4. solicited materials of former Maine Governors;
5. conducted 3 annual surveys of the historical societies in Maine;
6. developed a file on thesis and dissertation holdings in Maine's institutions of higher learning;
7. operated a limited search room facility which has served 391 searchers in 366 hours of operation (what is significant about this figure is the fact that only one record group, Maine vital statistics, is available for search use);
8. inventoried noncurrent record holdings of the Treasury Department and the Adjutant General's Department;
9. transferred permanently valuable noncurrent records from the Adjutant General's Department and the Bureau of Vital Statistics;

Additionally, the Maine State Archives has inventoried the judicial records in all Maine counties, some 10,000 cubic feet, surveyed the county microfilming programs for Register of Deeds' records, and developed a municipal records preservation program in cooperation with the Maine Municipal Association.

Throughout our planning and programming efforts, we have been fortunate to have the complete cooperation of the Archivist of the United States and the staff of the National Archives and Records Service especially Frank Burke, Frank Evans and Jack Landers who have supplied us with valuable "operating experience".

This then is the program of the Maine State Archives. I trust that our accomplishments in the past three years serve only to indicate our activities of the future. The job is simple: get rid of the unnecessary records and put the necessary records in a condition to be used. This task takes on slightly different proportions if one thinks of it in terms of 150 years of accumulated records in various stages of disarrangement and deterioration, in terms of 235 State agencies who are daily creating records, not to mention the 400 or so agencies which have existed since Maine achieved statehood, in terms of sixteen counties, 22 cities, 415 towns and 57 plantations, and in terms of the records creating capabilities of the computer age. Maine, while late in attending to the care and preservation of her public records, now has the law, will have the facility, and is building the staff to place Maine on Posner's archival map of the United States in a position which is expressed in the State motto, "I lead the way."

THE MAINE STATE ARCHIVES: A STATE RECORDS INFORMATION SYSTEM

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by

Howard P. Lowell

From the beginning of written communication, man has documented his activities. The peoples of ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome were very aware of the necessity for records, and in 79 B.C. the Romans constructed the first building, the Tabularium, planned exclusively for documents preservation. The decline of the Roman Empire and the subsequent decentralization of political authority in the Middle Ages saw a virtual cessation of records keeping as we know it. The exception was the Catholic Church, the one institution not effected by this decentralization of authority. Its monasteries bridged the documentary gap by preserving both church and state records. The Vatican Archives was established in 1612.

It was not until the French Revolution that the concept of a state archives as we define it was born. In this period of upheaval, as the new order replaced

institutions of the past, officials became increasingly concerned with records for legal and fiscal reasons, while emerging nationalism came to view them as monuments worthy of preservation. In 1789, the National Assembly created an archival institution in which its Acts were to be preserved and exhibited; this institution was designated L'Archives Nationales, the first national archives established by any country. A Decree of June 25, 1794 set up a nationwide public archives system under the jurisdiction of this institution; this action was strengthened by law, October 26, 1796, when L'Archives Nationales was given jurisdiction over all archival institutions established in the départements thus creating a unified public records system throughout France. One of the most important results of the French Revolution, therefore, was this recognition of the necessity of public records for a society resulting in: 1) the establishment of an independent, national archival institution; 2) the emergence of the principle of public access to archives; and 3) the recognition of the responsibility of the state for the care, preservation and servicing of its valuable documents. England created its central archives depository, the Public Records Office, on August 4, 1836.

The idea of a state archives developed slowly in the United States. The most noteworthy achievement of the 18th century was the two volume collection of State and Federal documents, Historical Collections, copied and compiled by Ebenezer Hazzard for a promised subsidy of \$1,100 from the Continental Congress, a subsidy he never received. Published in 1792 and 1794, Historical Collections foretold of a widespread movement during the 19th century to publish copies of records. Most notable of these were the Journal of the Constitutional Convention (1818) and Peter Force's nine volume American State Archives.

By 1840, state archival institutions had been established throughout Europe, yet in the United States, emphasis remained on the Jeffersonian concept of multiplication of copies rather than preservation of originals. The historian Jared Sparks, after a nationwide tour in 1826, observed that few original records had survived and that those that had were neglected because of "ignorance and apathy on the part of responsible officials." Sparks found governmental custodians quite willing to give him original records in exchange for transcripts, and he soon joined other American scholars in turning to foreign archives for information. In 1831, Alexis de Tocqueville commented, "In fifty years it will be more difficult

to collect authentic documents concerning the social conditions of the Americans of the present day than it is to find remains of the administration of France during the Middle Ages . . . (because) no methodical system is pursued; no archives are formed; and no documents are brought together. . . ."

Isolated drives for the creation of state archives in the United States were made during the 1800's by men such as New Hampshire Secretary of State Richard Bartlette, but their efforts had little national impact. It was not until the emergence of the Scientific School of Historians in the 1880's with its emphasis on the German seminar method of instruction and utilization and evaluation of primary source material that the concept of state archives was implanted in the American mind. The American Historical Association, founded in 1884, stressed the use of primary sources and, under the leadership of J. Franklin Jameson of Johns Hopkins University, established, in 1899, a Public Archives Commission to investigate archival resources and conditions in the country. The Commission concluded, "It may be doubted if in any country in the world archives of relatively so much value are so lightly regarded or carelessly kept." Resulting from that Commission's efforts and the growing awareness of the value

of public records preservation, the first American State archives, the Alabama Department of Archives and History, was created by law, February 27, 1901.

The establishment of public archival depositories spread rapidly throughout the United States during the first half of the 20th century.

← In 1913 Congress authorized development of building plans for a National Archives to be located in Washington, D.C., though actual construction did not begin until 1933 and it was not until June 19, 1934 that the National Archives was officially created.

In Maine, developments leading to the formation of a centralized public archives depository ran parallel to the rest of the country until the early 1900's. Recognition of the need for the safekeeping of public records is recorded early in the State's history, witness the Laws of 1821, c. 109, "AN ACT to provide the safekeeping of Public Records, and for regulating the quality of paper for Books of Public Records" and the Register of Council for Saturday, July 6, 1822 which contains a memorial from the senators of York County for the removal of one George Thatcher, Jr., Register of Probate, for failure to transfer official records in his custody to the new fireproof courthouse at Alfred. As in other

states, Maine's public records often became lost or destroyed. Commissioner Goddard, reporting on the statutory revision of 1883, observed that no evidence could be found among the archives of the State for the adoption of an amendment to the Maine Constitution supposedly accepted by the people in 1871.

In 1908, Professor Allen Johnson of Bowdoin College conducted an inventory of Maine's public records for the Public Records Commission of the American Historical Association. Observing the sorry state of Maine's documentation, he concluded his report with a proposal for the creation of a department of archives and history under the charge of the State Historian. The first State Historian, Reverend Henry Burrage, endorsed this proposal and urged the creation of such a department. Periodically during the next forty-seven years, this concept would be resurrected only to die again until in 1964 Ernst Posner, in his book American State Archives, would write, "On the archival map of the United States, the venerable state of Maine appears as a blank spot, for it has neither an archival nor a records management program." Only the Committee on the Destruction of Records, created in 1943, hinted of a program. Bills introduced into the Legislatures of 1945, 1959, 1961 and 1963 failed to find the support necessary for enactment.

In November, 1964, prior to the convening of the 102nd Legislature, Governor John H. Reed appointed a Maine State Archives Committee with Dean Ernest C. Marriner of Colby College as chairman. This Committee, believing that the creation of a State archives was vital, introduced, under the joint sponsorship of Representatives Walter A. Birt and James A. Bishop, Bill: AN ACT Creating the Office of State Archivist (H.P. 768, L.D. 1012). This Bill received a unanimous OUGHT TO PASS report from the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs on April 15, 1965 and was enacted by the Legislature, as amended, June 4, 1965 with approval by Governor Reed on June 8 as P.L. 1965, c. 441. This legislation has subsequently been amended by P.L. 1969, c. 318 and is set out as Title 27, Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, sections 274-279. The Maine State Archives became operational with the appointment of the first State Archivist, Samuel S. Silsby, Jr., on July 4, 1966.

The Archives and Records Management Law of the State of Maine was enacted to make "the operations of State Government more efficient, more effective and more economical through current records management . . . (and to) preserve its noncurrent records of permanent value for study and research." The Law represents one of the most progressive pieces of archival legislation in the country in that

it combines both an archives and a records management function under the administration of a single independent agency empowered to establish provisions governing the creation, use, maintenance, preservation, retention and disposition of State records. To implement the provisions of the law, the Maine State Archives is currently developing a State-wide, government-wide records. In accepting this concept of a State, government-wide public records information system, the Maine State Archives has directed its planning efforts toward insuring the operation of a program at the maximum level of productivity. Nothing provides a more ludicrous description of a number of state archival programs in the United States than Dickens' description of the grandnephew in Martin Chuzzlewitt as being "very dark and very hairy and apparently born for no particular purpose but to save the looking glass the trouble of reflecting more than the first idea and a sketchy notion of a face which had never been carried out." The concept for the records system adopted by the Maine State Archives represents more than a "sketchy notion" or a "first idea"; it represents nothing less than the absolute determination that Maine will have the strongest and most effective archives and records management program possible. This program provides for: 1) the management and

preservation of the public records resources of Maine, regardless of the level of government creating them; 2) technical assistance and centralized services adapted to meet State and local agency needs in records management and archival program areas; and 3) administrative hold over permanently valuable record holdings to provide the basic data necessary for effective planning and administration in State Government. The records created by the municipal, county and State governments in Maine reflect the complimentary nature of their governmental functions and provide essentially different information as a result of their administrative, legal or fiscal requirements. From the standpoint of documentary needs, it is therefore important to consider all public records in Maine as integral parts of a records system for the State. Each must be cared for and preserved as: 1) evidence of the origin, development, policies and procedures of the government creating them; 2) the official source of information on that government's functions and activities; and 3) as protection for the public, private and personal rights which these records established. Private records too form an important part of the total documentation of the State, and, though

generally preserved by private individuals or institutions, may be preserved with public records for the purpose of explaining or interpreting them.

At the time of its creation, the Maine State Archives had no facility in which to implement a program. In November of 1966, the voters of Maine acted favorably on legislation passed by the 102nd Legislature and created the Maine State Cultural Building Authority charging it with the responsibility for acquiring land and erecting a \$4.8 million building to house the Maine State Museum, Maine State Library and Maine State Archives. The firm of Walker O. Cain and Associates of New York was chosen as architects and a site just south of the State Capitol selected. Ground breaking ceremonies were held July 16, 1968. The Maine State Cultural Building, scheduled for agency occupation in April, 1971 contains 142,650 square feet of space. Its main entrance will face north toward the Capitol and as one enters, the Library will be to the left in the East wing, the Archives to the right in the West wing and the Museum will be in the connecting central location.

The archives facility will be one of the most modern in the country, both in respect to layout and equipment. Designed to follow a work-flow concept,

it will contain a small exhibit area, conference room, administrative offices, a computer room, a receiving and cleaning area, a processing room, two floors of stacks which comprise 2/3 of the total archives space allotment, a specialized fire-security vault, search room with microfilm reading alcove, a photoreproduction laboratory and a paper restoration laboratory. Specialized equipment will include a vacuum fumigator, cleaning tables, punch paper typewriter, pettifogger, laminator, stain reduction apparatus, and microphotoreproduction cameras and processors.

The Maine State Archives has departmental status and as such, is responsible directly to the Governor. Administratively, it is divided into three Bureaus. The Bureau of Administrative Services is responsible for overall agency administration, technical services, publications and the training, information and education program.

The Bureau of Records Management is responsible for developing improved records-making and records-keeping systems and practices in State Government, ensuring adequate documentation of agency organization, procedures and transactions while reducing nonessential paperwork. Records management responsibilities include:

1. development and promulgation of policies, procedures and standards to improve and simplify records-making and records-keeping systems;
2. promoting compatibility in paperwork management systems and equipment;
3. supplementing program standards with operational standards, principles;
4. providing leadership in establishing programs to administer the creation of records, in adopting efficient controls over correspondence and mail, reports, directives and forms;
5. establishment of retention and disposition schedules;
6. developing standards for the improvement and management of paperwork through use of automated and mechanized equipment and systems.

The overall objectives of the records management program are: 1) to eliminate records no longer needed; 2) preserve records of value; 3) predetermine their disposition; and 4) release valuable space, personnel and equipment for other administrative uses.

The Bureau of Archives is charged with the broad responsibility for acquiring, preserving and servicing the permanently valuable noncurrent public records of Maine as well as private records of ancillary value. Processes include

fumigation, cleaning, accessioning, analysis, arrangement, description and the preparation of finding aids. As a service agency, the Maine State Archives is responsible for making the informational content of public records in its custody available to governmental officials, scholars and the general public for study and research. To that end, in addition to the preparation of finding aids and the publications program, the Bureau of Archives offers reference and research assistance through the Search Room with its specialized reference library. The Bureau is also responsible for a small Exhibits program.

To describe the efforts of the Maine State Archives during the past four years requires less than the two volumes Martorelli wrote "to prove, by inspection of an inkwell, that the ancients did not use scrolls, but books of rectangular shape." Without doubt, our efforts will be regarded as having more value.

Limited by funds, facilities and equipment, the gains that have been made are largely in terms of planning for implementation of an operational program with the opening of the Maine State Cultural Building. The observation of Parkinson that:

Examples abound of new institutions coming into existence with a full establishment of deputy directors, consultants and executives; all

these coming together in a building specially designed for their purposes. And experience proves that such an institution will die. It is choked by its own perfection. It cannot take root for lack of soil. It cannot grow naturally for it is already grown;

this will have little relevancy to the future effectiveness of the Maine State Archives in fulfilling the purposes for which it was established.

When I speak of a State records system, I do not mean that all permanently valuable noncurrent public records in Maine must be preserved in the Maine State Archives nor am I saying that the Maine State Archives is interested in collecting vast amounts of private material; the former is impractical from an economic, geographic or physical standpoint; the latter is not within the parameters of a public archives as defined by Maine law. What I am saying is that the Maine State Archives is developing and will implement standards for the preservation and use of public records, to prevent their deterioration, mutilation, loss or destruction. Local public records repositories will be assisted by the Maine State Archives in attaining and maintaining these standards.

"Archives" are the records of a government which retain value after the immediate use for which they were created no longer exist, and are preserved,

as such, by that government. The Maine State Archives rejects the concept that an archival institution exists solely for the use of the historian. The prime function of an archival agency is to provide the information necessary for efficient, effective and economical governmental planning, programming, decision making and administration. The idea that one can separate "records management" from "archives" stating, the first is "administrative", the second is "cultural", is an incorrect oversimplification. "Archives" is a process in a records management program and the administration of an archives depository is ~~a~~ continuation of a comprehensive records management program. It is the contention of the Maine State Archives that its activity is a necessary administrative, "house-keeping" function, and it is "cultural" only to the extent that the information contained in its holdings may be used and interpreted in a "cultural" way. The primary functions of the Maine State Archives cannot be logically segregated from the administrative activities of government.

This then is the program of the Maine State Archives. The job is simple: get rid of the unnecessary records and put the necessary records in a condition to be used. This task takes on slightly different proportions if one thinks

of it in terms of 150 years of accumulated records in various stages of disarrangement and deterioration, in terms of 235 State agencies who are daily creating records, not to mention the the 400 or so agencies which have existed since Maine achieved statehood, in terms of sixteen counties, 22 cities, 415 towns and 57 plantations, and in terms of the records creating capabilities of the computer age. Maine, while late in attending to the care and preservation of her public records, now has the law, will soon have the facility, and is building the staff to place Maine on Posner's archival map of the United States in a position which is expressed in the State motto, "I lead the way."

From the beginning of written communication, man has created records. Traditionally, secretaries of governmental institutions have kept accurate accounts of official proceedings, but little was ever done to permanently preserve them. The concept of a state archives was born in Europe during the French Revolution as the new order upset and replaced institutions of the past. Officials became concerned with records for legal and fiscal reasons; emerging nationalism came to view them as monuments worthy of preservation. The 1790's saw the establishment of the first state archives, L'Archives Nationales in Paris.

The idea of state archives developed slowly in the United States. The most noteworthy achievement of the 18th century was the publication of a two volume collection of State and federal documents, entitled Historical Collection, compiled and copied by Ebenezer Hazzard. (1792, 1794). His efforts foretold of a widespread movement to publish copies of records. Most notable of these was Peter Force's nine volume American Archives. By 1840 state archival repositories were being developed throughout Europe, but in America, the emphasis was on multiplication of copies, not preservation of originals. The historian Jared Sparks, on a tour of the United States from New Hampshire to Georgia in 1826, found little original documentary material; his observation was substantiated by the French traveler Alexis de Tocqueville.

Isolated drives for establishment of state archival institutions were made during

Presented 5-12-69 by W.P. Lowell, Administrative Archivist
to Maine History class, University of Maine, Augusta

the 1800's by men such as Richard Bartlette, Secretary of State in New Hampshire, but these efforts had little national impact. It was not until the emergence of the Scientific School of historians at the end of that century with their emphasis on the utilization and evaluation of source material that the idea of preserving state archives in an official repository was implanted in the United States. The American Historical Association, founded in 1884, also stressed primary sources, and in 1895, under the leadership of J. Franklin Jameson, established the Public Archives Commission to investigate archival resources and conditions in the country. Resulting from the Commission's efforts and the public's growing awareness of the need for records preservation, the Alabama Department of Archives and History was established by law, February 27, 1901.

Public archives in the United States then spread rapidly throughout the South and into the mid-West where State historical societies became recognized as official repositories. In 1934 the federal government created the National Archives and Records Service in Washington, D.C. The first meeting of the Society of American Archivists was held at Providence, Rhode Island, December 29, 1936.

In Maine, development of a centralized archives depository ran parallel to the rest of the country until the early 20th century. Recognition of the need for safe-keeping of public records is recorded as early as 1821, and the Register of Council

for Saturday, July 6, 1822 contains a Memorial from the senators of York County for the removal of one George Thatcher, Jr., Register of Probate, for failure to transfer official records in his custody to the safety of a new fireproof court house in Alfred. (Register of Council, Vol. 1, p. 119). As in other States, material often became lost or destroyed. Commissioner Goddard, reporting on the statutory revisions of 1883, observed that no evidence could be found among the State archives for the adoption of an amendment to the Maine Constitution supposedly accepted by the people in 1871.

In 1908 Professor Allen Johnson of Bowdoin conducted an inventory of State records for the Public Archives Commission of the American Historical Association. Observing the sorry condition of Maine's public documents, he concluded his report with a proposal for the creation of a department of archives and history under the charge of the State Historian. The first State Historian, Reverend Henry Burrage, urged the establishment of such a department and from time to time during the next fifty-seven years, the idea would be resurrected only to die again. As the rest of the country moved ahead with archives legislation, Maine, neglecting her State motto, fell by the wayside until Ernst Posner in his book, American State Archives (1964) would write, "On the archival map of the United States, the venerable state of Maine appears as a blank spot . . ."

(131). Only the Committee on Destruction of Records, created in 1943, hinted of a program. Bills introduced into legislature in 1945, 1959, 1961 and 1963 failed to find support.

In November, 1964, prior to the convening of the 102nd Legislature, Governor John H. Reed appointed the Maine State Archives Committee with Dean Ernest C. Marriner as chairman. This Committee, believing the creation of a State Archives was vital, introduced, under the joint sponsorship of Walter A. Birt and James A. Bishop, Bill: AN ACT Creating the Office of State Archivist, (H.P. 768, L.D. 1012). This Bill received a unanimous OUGHT TO PASS report from the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs on April 15, 1965 and was enacted, as amended, June 4, 1965 with approval by Governor Reed on June 8. Adopted as Public Laws, 1965, c. 441, and set aside as Title 27, Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, §§ 275-279, the Maine State Archives became operational with the appointment of the first State Archivist, Samuel S. Silsby, Jr., July 4, 1966.

The Archives and Records Management Law was enacted to make "the operation of State Government more efficient, more effective and more economical through current records management . . . (and to) preserve its non-current records of permanent value for study and research." To that end the Maine State Archives is developing a State-wide, government-wide program to promote improved records management, provide technical advice, assistance and leadership in archival and records management techniques and practices, and select, preserve and service the permanently valuable records of Maine. Facilities for implementation of the program are provided in the Maine State Cultural Building, scheduled for completion in October, 1970.

The Maine State Archives operates as an independent agency save that the appointment of the State Archivist rests with the Secretary of State. The Archives Advisory Board, as the name implies, was established to advise the State Archivist on policy and program. It consists of six members, especially interested in the history of the State, and five ex officio members, with one exception, holdovers from the old Committee on Destruction of Records, who are namely the Attorney General, Commissioner of Finance and Administration, State Librarian, State Historian and Register of Vital Statistics. In only one area, the authorization for destruction of records, do they possess equal power with the State Archivist.

The Records Management Division is responsible for developing improved records-making and records-keeping systems while ensuring adequate documentation of agency organization, procedures and transactions and reducing nonessential paperwork. The overall objectives of records management are: 1) predetermine records disposition; 2) eliminate records no longer needed; 3) preserve records of value; and 4) release valuable space, equipment and personnel time for other use. An example of records management savings is provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts which saved \$2,000,000 in one year by releasing 1,160 file cabinets, (10,000 square feet of office space; cost of cabinets @ \$75; cost of personnel maintenance @ \$35 per year). The increased use of automatic data processing and the direct creation of records in machine

readable form presents some interesting problems for the records manager which have yet to be satisfactorily solved.

The Administrative and Technical Services Division, handles all routine administrative functions of the Agency such as budgeting, supplies, personnel, etc. Technical Services supervision include the Extension Branch, Publications Branch and Repair and Photoreproduction Branch. The Extension Branch coordinates all field services offered to county and municipal governments, schools, local historical societies, etc. The planned program for the Publications Branch includes reports, guides to holdings, general information leaflets and newsletters, manuals, handbooks and documentary publications. The "product" will take the form of printed matter or photoreproduced copies. Restoration will be done on a priority basis through the archival processes of humidification, deacidification, lamination and binding. Closely associated with this operation, the Photoreproduction Laboratory will provide complete rapid copying and microfilming capabilities. Microfilming of records provides research copies, security copies and high density storage. It is not yet a proven medium for records preservation, and thus should not be considered a substitute for original documentation.

The State Archives Division is responsible for acquiring, preserving and servicing the permanently valuable records of Maine. Specific functions include appraisal, preliminary processing and control of the Stack Area. As a service agency, the State Archives is responsible for making the public records in its custody available for

search. To that end the Projects Branch will be engaged in establishing accurate finding aids and administering a small exhibit area. The Reference Branch will handle inquiries, provide research assistance and advice and administer a modern search facility in the Maine State Cultural Building. Presently a limited search area is open two afternoons per week, (expanding to three in July). Located in the 112 complex of the Education Building, its records are mostly of interest to genealogical researchers and include the delayed returns of Maine vital statistics through 1892, census volumes for 1850, 1860, 1870 and 1880, as well as nearly 1000 reels of microfilmed Maine town records.

The Maine State Archives operates within the framework of one of the most progressive archival laws in the United States; its facility in the Maine State Cultural Building will be one of the best equipped; the scope of its program encompasses all public records regardless of creating agency and includes provisions for the care of ~~the~~^{the} 150 year backlog since achievement of statehood; the combination of the archives and records management functions allows records control from creation. Positive movement for archives legislation was slow in coming to Maine, but the position of the Maine State Archives is such that it can become the most comprehensive, progressive archival repository in the United States.