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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE HISTORIAN'S HANDBOOK: A DESCRIPTIVE GUIDE TO REFERENCE WORKS. By Helen J. Poulton. Foreword by Wilbur S. Shepperson. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972. Pp. xi + 304. Footnotes, indexes. \$4.95)

As a user and producer of reference tools, the archivist has a special interest in reference publications helpful to the historian. Both professions have problems of rapidly ascertaining dates and names, locating brief summaries of events or biographical sketches, compiling bibliographies and verifying specific references, of determining the existence and present location of manuscripts, newspapers and other original sources. It is with such problems that this volume is designed to help. As the title indicates, Poulton has listed and described only reference books, omitting more than incidental mention of journals, collections, monographs and other types of material frequently found in guides to the literature of a field. She has included useful, general reference materials as well as the more specialized ones designed primarily for the historian. Described here are the major library catalogs; trade, national and historical bibliographies; encyclopedias; dictionaries; books of chronology; handbooks; yearbooks, almanacs, and gazetteers; atlases and directories. Union lists and major periodical indexes are also discussed. Most important of all, she has indicated the guides which list and describe omitted titles. Her descriptions vary in fullness, sometimes noting the strengths, limitations and organization of a volume, and merely indicating other titles as good sources for certain types of information. A brief discussion of the basic organization of library collections and card catalogs and of the interlibrary loan service should be of help to younger historians.

The limitations of this Handbook result primarily from the broad scope of the subject and the relatively small size of the volume. Attempting a guide designed to aid students and scholars in all fields of so broad a discipline as History requires a certain bibliographic boldness; and, when the 304 pages of this compendium are contrasted with the 689 pages of the Harvard Guide to American History and the 962 pages of the American Historical Association's Guide to Historical Literature,

Poulton's difficulties in selecting titles for inclusion become apparent. Her coverage in places seems somewhat thin and her choices reflect a bias toward American and British history, toward political and diplomatic history, and toward the modern period as contrasted with Mediaeval or Ancient History. Book review indexes receive no mention at all.

Considering the difficulty of locating manuscript and archival materials, a more extensive treatment of this subject would have been helpful. However, the major guides to manuscripts in this country are here and some attention has been given to locating foreign manuscripts. Emphasis is placed upon the various guides, lists, inventories and other publications of the National Archives. She calls attention to local guides and regional union catalogs, although no attempt is made to list these and no help is given in locating them other than mention of Billington's "Guides to American History Manuscript Collections in Libraries of the United States," now quite old. Suggestions for finding recent guides and checklists through such standard reference sources as Literary Literature would have added much to the usefulness of this section.

These objections become minor, however, when measured against the utility of the book. As a handy-sized survey of basic sources of information in all fields of History, the volume fills a need not adequately met by any other publication currently available. Poulton, trained as both historian and librarian and experienced in reference work and publication, is well qualified to compile such a book and the results of her efforts will be of aid to many.

Emory University Library

Sarah C. Gillespie

THE GILCREASE-HARGRETT CATALOGUE OF IMPRINTS. By Lester Hargrett. Introduction by G. P. Edwards. Foreword by John C. Evers. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972. Pp. xviii + 400. \$20.00)

This is an annotated bibliography of printed materials on the American Indian originally gathered by the noted archivist, Lester Hargrett, covering archival items held by the Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art. A native of Tifton Georgia, he was one of the first

bibliographers and collectors of writings in this field. Holding a lasting interest in the Indians of the Southeast and the Southwest, he brought scholarship and professional skill to the subject.

The collection contains some 60,000 books, manuscripts, published documents, first editions, maps, pamphlets, and broadsides. A gold mine for American historians, particularly those of Colonial history, the catalog will undoubtedly stimulate studies in Indian history. It should also help bring about a better understanding of our American Indians.

In 1946 Hargrett's collection was purchased by Thomas Gilcrease of Tulsa and under him has become the largest and most valuable in the country. Gilcrease was of Creek Indian descent and the listings are rich in items re the Five Civilized Tribes--Cherokees, Chickawaws, Choctaws, Creeks and Seminoles. More than 1,000 concern them--their early residence in the Southeast, removal, resettlement and participation in the Civil War.

Included also are 17th and 18th Century memoirs, travels, and 19th Century western material, both Indian and White. Contemporary accounts of trade missions, hostilities, federal and state negotiations over lands, legal documents and claims are here. Many are rare and the examples of printing in various Indian languages are perhaps the only known copies.

The entries are clear, concise and detailed while the arrangement is chronological under subject in Hargrett's original form. There is much more than just a listing of bibliographic data. His comments are significant contributions to American historical knowledge. Checking the index one finds for such entries as Georgia, Creek, Sequoyah, John Ross, etc. that there are 28 entries on Georgia Indians, 79 pages on the Cherokees and 30 on the Creeks. This amounts to 114 pages of interest to Georgia researchers.

Some items can be found in Georgia and other Southeastern libraries and most of the government documents will be available in older depository libraries. Such a comprehensive list as is given here will hardly be accessible anywhere, and the University of Oklahoma Press is to be congratulated for bringing out this vast store of knowledge on the Indians.

Librarians and archivists should like to have seen in the Introduction or Foreword something about the availability of the materials to the researcher--restrictions, interlibrary loan, copying, etc. It will be most useful as a reference tool, however, for any library with a good American History collection, because of such basic research material in a wide coverage. I recommend it as being a thorough bibliography.

Emory University Library

David E. Estes

ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPT REPOSITORIES IN THE USSR: MOSCOW AND LENINGRAD. By Patricia Kennedy Grimsted. (Studies of the Russian Institute, Columbia University; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972. Pp. xxx + 436. Indexes. \$22.50)

This publication, sponsored by the Russian Institute of Columbia University, is the work of an American, Patricia K. Grimsted, currently a Research Associate at the Russian Institute, who also is a wife, mother, and contributor to archival publications. Her purpose in part was to provide a guide to foreigners who in recent years have been permitted to make use of the archives in the Soviet Union. In addition to serving the foreigner using the Soviet archives, the author intended to make known available holdings and finding aids and acquaint scholars with "some of the features of the development and overall organizations of archives and manuscript repositories in the Soviet Union." A general discussion of procedures for using the materials is included.

That the Russians are extremely proud of the present status of their archives is evidenced by their hosting the 7th International Congress on Archives in Moscow in August, 1972. Author Grimsted points out that although the archival development in the Soviet Union has been impressive since the Russian Revolution in 1917 much credit goes to what took place earlier during the era of the Russian Empire. The oldest library in Russia was founded in the fifth century, and there was preservation of state records and private manuscripts. The Russian Orthodox Church collected and preserved many state, church, and other written records. Under Ivan the Great (1440-1505) treaties, charters, and state correspondence were kept in a "stone vault" in the Kremlin, and among the reforms of Peter the Great (1672-1725) was one having to do with

preservation and registration of archives to be deposited in the College of Foreign Affairs. In 1766 Catherine the Great (1729-1796) appointed the German scholar Gerhard Freidrich Müller director of the archives. This wise decision by Catherine in naming so able a man as Müller, along with the archival reforms of Peter and the preservation carried on by Ivan, would justify titles of "the Great" in the opinion of scholars, historians, and archivists.

During the nineteenth century the general development of state archives lagged considerably behind that of the more advanced nations of Western Europe and documentary records commonly remained in the custody of their issuing agency, with resultant fragmentation and dispersion of archival sources. Toward the end of the Romanov dynasty little was done by the state to promote systematic record-keeping. Nevertheless, much was accomplished by a few interested persons "working in opposition to rather than in cooperation with ruling governmental circles." Learned societies accounted for collections of valuable materials and many families of nobility amassed splendid private libraries.

Great archival changes came about with the Revolution of 1917. During the early period of revolution and civil war there was great destruction and damage to archives. Inexperienced archivists, shortages of paper, and creation and elimination of governmental units caused confusion and problems. But a significant change came on June 1, 1918, when a decree was issued under Lenin's signature for a reorganization of state archives. This was 16 years before the passage of the National Archives Act in the United States. Mrs. Grimsted feels that "the establishment of Bolshevik power stands as the single most important turning-point in the history and organization of Soviet Archives, for it brought to Russia the most highly centralized state archival system and the most highly state-directed principles of preservation and management of documentary records which the world had seen." (p.23)

The present work examines holdings in seventy-five archival institutions in Moscow and Leningrad, providing also a list of published materials and working conditions associated with the various collections. The resources are tremendously rich in early manuscripts, medieval maps, and personal papers of leading historical figures. For example, Greek manuscripts in the Leningrad Public Library

account for "one of the most impressive repositories of Greek texts outside Greece" (p.306), and French holdings there dealing with the Bastille include some 13,000 documents. Mrs. Grimsted's guide to Russian archives is said to be the most complete available in any language. Researchers will applaud the current publication and rejoice to know that a companion work dealing with regional archives is already underway.

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