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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

Genealogical Books for Librarians and Archivists.

"Genealogy for All People," the keynote address delivered by Milton Rubincam, past president and former editor of the National Genealogical Society, at the Diamond Jubilee Conference of the Society, summarized genealogical developments during the seventy-five years since the Society's founding. His talk, published in the Society's quarterly (December 1978), offers librarians and archivists a partial evaluation and survey of genealogical "how-to-do-it" books. He includes at least seventy books which have been published since 1885 (the publication date of the earliest genealogy in the Library of Congress), two of which are especially useful and easy to obtain: Searching for Your Ancestors by Gilbert H. Doane (New York: Bantam Books, 1974. 4th ed. Pp. 212. Appendices, bibliography, index. Paper. \$1.95), originally published in 1937, and Know Your Ancestors: A Guide to Genealogical Research by Ethel W. Williams (Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1974. Pp. 313. Glossary, bibliography, index. \$8.50), now in its fourteenth printing.

A more recent volume, Tracing Your Ancestry by F. Wilbur Helmbold (Birmingham: Oxmoor House, 1976. Pp. 210. Bibliography, index. \$9.95), is most helpful in illustrating the sources for genealogical research—city directories, census, pension records—and giving examples of how to use a microfilm machine or library card catalog. Although these skills seem elementary to many archivists, they are not familiar to everyone, and this guide is a good teacher's manual. Unfortunately, the volume includes old addresses in the glossary. The accompanying Logbook (\$3.95. Paper) contains ten copies of thirteen useful forms.

Since the publication and airing of Roots and the U.S. Bicentennial celebration, the genealogical market has been deluged with numerous "how-to-do-it" books which differ only slightly. It is hard to imagine why anyone would attempt to write another one, yet new titles appear yearly.

Some of these recent books, written by well-known genealogical lecturers, do have something to add. Finding Your Roots (New York: Ballantine Books, 1978. Pp. 291. Appendices, index. Paper. \$1.95) by Jeane Eddy Westin has a useful foreign research section. Diane Dieterle's Easy Genealogy (Mableton, Ga.: Roots Publishing Co., 1977. Pp. 48. Paper. \$3.95) contains a good outline of sources, their location, and their potential yield. How to Trace Your Family History (New York: Everest House, 1978. Pp. 187. \$6.95) by Bill R. Linder, head of Central Research at the National Archives, focuses on family newsletters and organizations. Discovering Your Ancestors: A Quest for Your Roots (New York: Arco Publishing Co., 1978. Pp. 113. Appendices, bibliography. \$6.95) by Hugh Peskett, editor of Debrett's Peerage, is useful for British sources. Tracing Your Roots (Skokie, Ill.: Consumer Guide Magazine, 1978, Pp. 98, Bibliography with each chapter. Paper. \$1.98) does not add much but does put genealogy on the market shelf with other magazines.

Recent publications also include two useful guides to black history: Black Genealogy: How To Begin (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia, Independent Study/WGTV, 1977. Pp. 52. Paper. \$4.00), the text of the educational television series by James D. Walker, and Black Genealogy: How to Discover Your Own Family's Roots (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1977. Pp. 232. \$8.95) by Charles L. Blockson and Ron Fry. The Newsletter of the African-American Family History Association (c/o Carole Merritt, 2077 Bent Creek Way, S. W., Atlanta, Ga. 30311) provides current information for black genealogists; membership is \$12 for non-student adults or \$25 for organizations.

Each year more and more of these popular "how-to-do-it" books will probably be published, although what new approaches will be taken remains to be seen. Genealogical works are needed that individually address research sources in each state. Such guides should be written by researchers in the appropriate state rather than members of some outside organization.

These "how-to-do-it" books are directed to the individual genealogist, but librarians and archivists will also want to be aware of many valuable specialty works and directories including The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy (Baltimore, Md.: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1975. Pp. 535. Index. \$10.00) by Val D. Greenwood; Newspaper Genealogy Columns Directory (Escondido, Cal.: by the author, 1979. Pp. 104. \$8.00) compiled by Anita Check Milner; Directory of Genealogical Societies in the U.S.A. and Canada with an Appended List of Independent Genealogical Periodicals (Pasadena, Md.: by the editor, 1978. 2nd ed. Pp. 80. Index. Paper. \$6.00) edited by Mary K. Meyer; Directory of Historical Societies and Agencies in the United States and Canada (Nashville, Tenn.: American Association for State and Local History, 1978. 11th ed. Pp. 474. Indexes. Paper. \$24.00) compiled by Donna McDonald; and local lists of historical societies such as that for Georgia prepared annually by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (Historic Preservation Section, 270 Washington St., Atlanta, Ga. 30334).

Three bibliographies provide access to most genealogical books in print: American and British Genealogy and Heraldry: A Selected List of Books (Chicago: American Library Association, 1975. 2nd ed. Pp. 467. Index. \$25.00) compiled by P. William Filby; United States Local Histories in the Library of Congress: A Bibliography (Baltimore, Md.: Magna Carta Book Co., 1972. 2 vols. and a 1977 supplement) edited by Marion J. Kaminkow. There are also specialized bibliographies for some of the larger genealogical libraries such as the National Genealogical Society Library and indexes to genealogical periodicals including A Survey of American Genealogical Periodicals and Periodical Indexes (Detroit, Mich.: Gale Research Co., 1978. Pp. 199. Appendices, index. \$22.00) by Kip Sperry which explains how to use earlier indexes as well as the current Genealogical Periodical Annual Index by Laird Towle of Bowie, Maryland.

An unusual publication, Lest We Forget: A Guide to Genealogical Research in the Nation's Capital (Annandale, Va.: Annandale Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1976. 4th ed. rev. Pp. 135. Index. Paper. \$6.00) compiled by June Andrew Babbel, highlights the National Archives, the Library of Congress, the DAR Library and the National Genealogical Society Library, and is a useful example of what other libraries and archives, or all of those located in one city, could do to make research easier for visitors.

Atlanta Journal-Constitution
and Georgia Life
Genealogy Columnist

Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr.

COPYRIGHT, LITERARY RIGHTS, AND OWNERSHIP: A GUIDE FOR ARCHIVISTS. By David E. Horn. Society of Indiana Archivists Publications No. 2. (Indianapolis: Society of Indiana Archivists, 1978. Pp. 22. Bibliography. Paper. \$1.50)

In this brief pamphlet David Horn has attempted to "explain the rules for handling archival collections under both the old and new laws, to state the regulations that continue to be in effect, and to suggest practical steps for archivists, researchers, and donors." Archivists who are unfamiliar with the new law can profit from reading Mr. Horn's treatise, which provides a good discussion of the basic differences between the old law and the new, and the problems which must be resolved.

Mr. Horn has divided his pamphlet into thirty short sections covering literary rights, possession, and ownership of papers; duration of copyright and public domain; copyright and common law rights; copyright in published and unpublished materials; registration of copyright; the effect of the copyright law on government, business, religious and university archives; and its effect on the acquisition of papers, relations with donors, and access to materials by researchers. The author uses specific examples to explain basic, though sometimes elusive, concepts such as possession of papers as opposed to legal ownership of papers, and ownership of papers as opposed to ownership of literary rights.

His efforts to explain a complicated law in so brief a space creates several difficulties. The sections devoted to explanations of literary rights and copyright, fair use, and photocopying of unpublished materials are especially disappointing since these areas are of the most immediate concern to archivists and users.

In some cases an imprecise choice of words leads to confusion. In section 5 (literary rights), for example, Mr. Horn states that an author on creating a work has certain rights in the work ("intangible property"), and that the author may choose to "publish and copyright" the work, thereby giving himself certain additional protections. In fact, under the new law the work is protected by copyright from the time of its creation. The author may choose to register his copyright (with or without publication) and thereby obtain additional rights. Although Mr. Horn treats the registration of unpublished materials in a later section, the choice of words in section 5 creates confusion. Mr. Horn also fails to explain clearly the different rights held by authors who register their copyright and those who do not.

Mr. Horn includes a bibliography of the most useful publications relating to the new copyright law, but omits the General Guide to the Copyright Act of 1976 issued by the United States Copyright Office in September 1977.

In the original version of his manual the author had misinterpreted the twenty-five year transition period for unpublished materials under the new law. To avoid the expense of reprinting the entire pamphlet, the sentences containing the erroneous interpretation were blacked out and a general correction was pasted on the inside back cover. Although the reason for making the change in this way is certainly understandable, the method of making the change gives a disjointed effect to certain sections.

Mr. Horn has attempted to speak plainly without legal jargon and to make his explanations simple. As he wisely notes, he is offering guidance and

suggestions for further investigation and thought; the copyright act itself should be read and studied, and a wise archivist will consult his own institution's lawyer should any potentially serious questions arise.

In spite of these shortcomings, the manual succeeds in its efforts to bring the mysteries of the new copyright act within the ken of the archivist who has had little previous exposure to it and who is fearful of the long arm of the law. It is most successful when the author explains the law's effects in particular situations or in specific types of archives and offers case studies as examples. The organization makes for easy reference and the subsections noting particular problems which may arise with sections of the law are also helpful. The Society of Indiana Archivists and Mr. Horn should be commended for their initiative in providing this brief overview for archivists.

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AWAKENINGS: WRITINGS AND RECOLLECTIONS OF EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA WOMEN, ed. Sally Brett. (Greenville, N.C.: Department of English, East Carolina University, 1978. Pp. iv, 105. Paper. \$3.00.)

In 1977 the Modern Language Association selected East Carolina University as one of fifteen schools to participate in a project, entitled "Teaching Women's Literature From A Regional Perspective," designed to collect and preserve previously neglected examples of women's literature. At East Carolina, English professor Sally Brett combined the M.L.A. program with a course in writing and editing. Broadly defining women's literature to include manuscript sources and interviews, Brett and her six students used materials in the manuscript collection of the Joyner Library at East Carolina to produce this anthology.

Focusing on one woman or group of women, each essay examines a different aspect of the lives of white middle-class women in eastern North Carolina from the 1850s to the 1970s. Topics covered include life at antebellum female academies, the experience of rural North Carolina women during the Civil War, the conventions of mid-nineteenth-century courtship, women's clubs at the turn of the century, career patterns of early alumnae of the University, and women's participation in politics in the mid-twentieth-century. The articles are based on traditional manuscript sources, personal interviews, and questionnaires.

Some of the students decided to let the women speak for themselves, reproducing letters in their entirety and adding only occasional editorial comments, while others used their source material as the foundation for interpretive essays on the lives of eastern North Carolina women. Thus the book must be evaluated in two ways: first as a contribution to the secondary literature on the history of Southern women, and second as an exercise in editing manuscripts for publication.

The students came to Brett's class with little background in historical writing and the volume reflects their inexperience. The major weakness in all the essays is the authors' failure to examine a wide range of secondary literature on the historical experience of American women. They rely too heavily on the interpretive treatment of Southern women's history presented by Anne Firor Scott in The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-

1930. Their work would have benefited had they taken a more critical view of Scott's assumptions and conclusions and then explored ways in which the evidence in their sources could be used to modify or challenge Scott's thesis.

The students are more successful in their collective attempt as editors to retrieve the lost words of women. They show good judgment in their selection of "neglected" women, choosing women or groups of women whose writings and recollections can be used to illuminate significant areas of feminine experience. All display a fine instinct for knowing when to let the women speak for themselves and when to speak for them. The authors are all sensitive to one of the major problems in working with material of this type: determining the significance of what is not said, as well as what is.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of Awakenings lies not in its specific contents but rather in the problem it addresses: that of finding and preserving the lost words, both written and spoken, of women and other neglected groups. Brett and her students have given us one useful approach to this problem; archivists and historians must cooperate to find others.

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