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Using manuscript sources for British history

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This article tells you how to use manuscript sources for British History. It was written in 1995 by RJ Olney from the Historical Manuscripts Commission.

Index

Introduction

History cannot be written without sources. Good history cannot be written without knowing how to find those sources, how to understand them, and how to exploit them effectively. From this point of view manuscripts are no different from printed sources, or from evidence contained in computer databases or archaeological remains.

But manuscripts have their peculiarities. Unlike most printed books they are unique artefacts, and this can make them difficult to trace or to identify. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes - bound or unbound, boxed or bundled, in mountainous heaps or scrappy fragments. They can be awkward to handle and hard to read. Their relation to each other may be problematic, as may their relation to the historical reality for which they provide the evidence. This guide can therefore take the reader only a short way into the labyrinth, but it may at least serve as a pointer in the right direction.

It is written primarily with the postgraduate student in mind, and more specifically the student undertaking a thesis in British history. As such it may be regarded as complementing the courses on sources and methods that are increasingly available for the first-year postgraduate. But it is also intended to help anyone embarking on a project that involves the use of manuscript material. It may even have something to say to the more experienced researcher, since the world of manuscripts has changed considerably over the last twenty or thirty years. Owners of manuscripts now value them more highly; libraries and record offices are in many cases run to higher professional standards; the quantity of material available for research has grown enormously; and there is a greater awareness of the need to handle manuscripts carefully, and to store them in controlled and secure conditions. There is more widespread recognition, in short, of the need to preserve the rich archival heritage of this country for future generations. This may not necessarily make life easier for the individual scholar wishing to work on a particular collection of papers. No longer is it generally acceptable for manuscripts to be `borrowed' and kept at home in study drawers for the duration of a private research project. And in many record offices damaged or uncatalogued papers are less readily available to readers than they once were, although in some cases microfilms or photocopies are available as a substitute for the original documents. Another comparatively recent development is the impact of information technology on historical research. But this booklet is not about `information'. It is about the relationship that the historian establishes with the sources (in this context the manuscript sources); and it is the quality of that relationship that will significantly affect the quality of the work produced.

Essential to the effective exploitation of historical sources is a knowledge of the history of those sources themselves - who created them and why, how they managed to survive, and by what route they reached their present resting places. The first section of this booklet therefore deals with such questions. The second section offers a vade mecum to the student setting out on the quest for manuscript material.

The origins of this guide lie in a conference on postgraduate training, sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council and held at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, in April 1990. The postgraduate training committee of the Institute which arose out of

this has had as one of its aims the preparation of aids, particularly for the student without easy or regular access to the libraries or training programmes of the larger university history departments. This guide, dealing with manuscript sources, was proposed originally as a joint publication with the Historical Manuscripts Commission but later adopted by the Institute of Historical Research.

My acknowledgments must therefore begin with an expression of my debt to fellow-members of the committee, and particularly to Drs Alice Prochaska and Jim Parker, who encouraged me to proceed with this guide and very helpfully commented on it. My thanks are also due to colleagues at the Historical Manuscripts Commission, and in particular its Secretary Dr Christopher Kitching, who supported the project and provided a very constructive critique of an early draft. Among those who made many invaluable comments and suggestions at a later stage were Dr Caroline Barron, Mr Joe Coohill, Miss Anne Crawford, Miss Heather Creaton, Dr Barbara English, Ms Clare Griffiths, Mr Robin Harcourt Williams, Miss Barbara Harvey, Dr Joan Lane, Mr Christopher Lawrence, the late Dr Angus Macintyre (to whose memory this booklet is dedicated), Professor Colin Matthew, Professor Patrick O'Brien, Sir John Sainty and Mr Keir Waddington. Errors doubtless remain, both of commission and omission, but had it not been for the generous help of fellow historians, archivists and students there would have been many more. Comments from users of the volume will also be gratefully received.

RJ Olney

Historical Manuscripts Commission
April 1995

Preface

Sources are to history what bricks and mortar are to architecture. Although the past can be imagined and designed, it can never be securely constructed except upon a foundation of sources. Sources include a wide range of material that happens to have survived - oral testimony, films, artefacts, buildings, geological and botanical evidence and remains of very diverse kinds that historians pull together in order to illuminate and explain the past. Richard Olney's booklet refers entirely, however, to their major source of evidence - manuscripts.

Latterly a discourse (emanating largely but not entirely from outside the discipline) has tried to persuade historians that the evidence they assiduously uncover in primary sources is entirely problematical. Manuscripts are merely texts. Their apparent meanings emerge only if and when they are decoded and written down by historians. But, the argument goes, there is no recoverable or unambiguous meaning out there in documentary or other forms of evidence. All attempts to write history are severely compromised notably by the ideological and other biases that historians bring to their research but also by their discipline's predilection for imposing a spurious order on a chaotic and incomprehensible past through the use of theories and narratives and above all through language. Historians have, however, long been aware of the problems involved in the interpretation of manuscripts. They knew that written and other sources needed to be `deconstructed' to expose their meanings. They appreciated that the transformation of historical texts into modern prose requires integrity, skills and sensitivity if the reality and objectivity embodied in evidence is not to be reduced to mere texts of ambiguous authority and credibility. What else have modern historical debates ever been about except the inferences and probabilistic statements that might feasibly be drawn from manuscripts and other sources?

Differences separating historians from their postmodernist critics are between nihilism and despair, about the possibility of saying anything objective and sustainable about the past on the one hand and their own working assumptions on the other. Practitioners of the discipline accept that inferences are contestable; that evidence is provisional and subject to the discovery of new and better sources.

In its approximations to reality, history has always been constrained by availability of evidence. That is why historians converse endlessly about the nature and quality of their sources. That is why they constantly search for new and more diverse forms of evidence about the past. That is why the Institute of Historical Research welcomes and is pleased to support Richard Olney's excellent guide to Manuscript Sources for British History. Without such guides historians would be like geologists without maps, unable even to begin a search, not for gold (or truth) but for the high quality ores that are out there in so many places waiting to be refined into plausible stories and acceptable conjectures about Britain's past.

Patrick O'Brien

Director, Institute of Historical Research

Manuscripts and archives

Historians seldom take documents at their face value. In assessing the nature of the evidence, it is often helpful - indeed, necessary - to ask a number of questions. For whom was the document prepared? To whom was it sent, and for what purpose? Was the writer or sender attempting to provide the recipient (and others) with an objective statement, or was there some ulterior or hidden motive?

With a manuscript (and 'manuscript' is used here to mean any hand-written document) the historian can study not only what it says but also how it presents itself. The way that a letter is laid out, the formality or informality of its style, the way the text has been altered or corrected, the evident care or haste with which it has been written, the existence of any docket or endorsement - all these may be useful clues. In the case of nineteenth-century Foreign Office correspondence, for instance, there is an important distinction between a despatch and a 'private and confidential' letter, and this is normally indicated not only by the style and form of address but by the size and type of paper used.

One can also learn something, however, from the company which an individual document has kept, or in which it is now to be found. Documents are sometimes produced in isolation, but more often they originated as part of a series - a series of letters, for instance, between two individuals, or a series of minute books recording the activities of an institution or a business firm. Thus the Foreign Office despatch and the private letter from a diplomat to the Foreign Secretary would belong to two separate series of correspondence. The original incoming despatch, or the official copy of the outgoing one, would be part of a series preserved in the official records of the Foreign Office. The private correspondence, together perhaps with drafts of despatches, might be kept in the personal papers of the Foreign Secretary himself. The historian using the Foreign Office records does not need to examine every document to discover its status. But the historian working on the privately preserved papers of a Foreign Secretary might well need to know whether a certain document is the draft of a private letter or the draft of a despatch.

The historian is here dealing with two archives: the Foreign Office archive and the personal archive of the Foreign Secretary. The word archive, originally meaning a place where documents were kept, is now used in a variety of senses. Most loosely it can stand for any assembly of documentary material. In this booklet, however, it is used specifically to mean a body of documents accumulated in the course of business. `Accumulated' implies here that the papers have been created and retained in order to further the work of the organisation or individual that has created them, not primarily in order to form an interesting or valuable collection of documents. The formation of an archive is in fact a necessary act of institutional or personal housekeeping. Business implies the activities of any record-creating body, be it a department of state, corporation, commercial firm, society, charity, landed estate or individual. Personal archives, however, may be less `natural' and more self- conscious than institutional archives.

In contrast with the archive stands what may be termed the artificial collection. This is an assembly of items culled from various sources, by purchase, gift or otherwise. It may have a certain uniformity of content: it may consist, for instance, entirely of letters or manuscript maps,

or it may relate entirely to one historical period or subject. But it will lack the internal coherence of an archive, making it harder to draw any conclusion from the physical position of a document within it.

From what has already been said it will be clear that to find a document in its archival context is a distinct advantage. There are other advantages in working on an archivally coherent body of material, as opposed to a number of isolated documents from different sources. To take an example from a different kind of collection, the student of seventeenth-century agrarian history might be pleased to discover a rent account for a major landed estate, but might then find it hard to interpret it if it is merely the lone survivor of what had once been a series of similar accounts. The sums due from individual tenants, for instance, might represent the annual rental, or the rent plus accumulated arrears. If the volume survives as part of a run of rentals and accounts for the period, on the other hand, its evidence will be much easier to interpret.

The greatest merit of the archive for the historian, however, is that it is more than the sum of its constituent documents. Because of the way in which an archive is built up - or rather laid down, like sedimentary rocks - it can provide the temporal dimension that is so essential to any historical study. In other words, it provides evidence for the study of change, change not only within the institution that created it but in the wider society of which it formed a part. In choosing a research project, therefore, the existence of one or more relevant and well-preserved archives may be an influential factor. But this is not, of course, to say that the student should eschew subjects for which large collections or archives are unavailable, still less that, having found a good archive, he or she should build a study exclusively on it and look no further for relevant material. It is with an historical question needing an answer, rather than with an archive inviting exploration, that the researcher's quest should begin.

Just as it is wise to approach an individual document with a degree of scepticism, so it is necessary to bear in mind that institutions as well as individuals can distort the record in their own interests. A medieval monastery such as Westminster or St Albans might re-write its own history by `forging' early charters. More subtly the minute of a board or committee meeting may be `constructively' written to record what should have been said rather than the discussion that actually took place. This is an example of where the formal manuscript record may be slow to yield its secrets in the absence of supplementary evidence from diaries, newspaper reports or similar sources.

Furthermore, although institutions develop their own personalities, it is often useful for the historian to establish which individual within the organisation produced the record. In the case of a composite archive such as a major family and estate collection this can be quite complicated. The bulk of the archive may have emanated from the estate office, under the control of the agent or steward, although a large estate may have had sub-agents with separate offices, and separately-run departments devoted to buildings or forestry. Deeds and legal papers may also be bulky, having come either from the chief family lawyer in London (or Edinburgh or Dublin) or from the offices of local solicitors engaged as manorial stewards. The family itself will in many cases have kept its own archive, including perhaps letters from stewards and solicitors to the head of the family as well as more personal material. In the grander houses housekeepers, butlers, librarians and private secretaries may all have kept records. In a manufacturing business archive the

principal division may have been between the company records, including the minutes and correspondence, kept by the company secretary, and the works records, kept nearer to the shop floor.

In studying a large collection of any kind it may also be helpful to establish whose job it was to keep the records and where. The public records of this country, for instance, have had a remarkably chequered custodial history (see below, p 7). In some country houses valuable family papers might be kept in the muniment room; in others the muniment room might be the preserve of the family lawyer, and personal papers would be kept instead in the library, particularly if they were in bound volumes. These differing practices have important implications not only for where manuscripts might now be located but in some cases for whether they have survived at all.

Loss and survival

It cannot be assumed that because records are known to have been created they must therefore have survived. A denial of knowledge of their existence is sometimes greeted with suspicion, as evidence of a desire to keep the student away from the material. There are certainly cases where the refusal of a researcher to take no for an answer has eventually been rewarded by the successful capture of the quarry. But it is more realistic to begin from the opposite assumption, that records no longer exist unless, by good luck, they happen to have survived all the hazards that manuscripts are prey to. Large- scale disasters apart, archives are prone to destruction by fire, exposure to damp or otherwise unsuitable conditions, or accidental loss of other kinds. A change of owner or a change of location, for instance when a business is taken over or its operation removed to different premises, is always a particularly vulnerable time in the life of an archive.

Once records cease to have a practical value, their survival may depend on inertia - on the absence of an effective policy of regular weeding-out of unwanted material. The ideal conditions for preservation in this respect are the long-term survival of an archive-creating institution combined with a conservative tradition and plenty of space for storage. The records of a small business with no successor, or of a club, society or pressure group that is wound up after a term of years, are by contrast much less likely to survive. The survival rates for the papers of individuals are also very variable. The papers of a prominent statesman may be kept through family pride, or because they are fairly obviously of value for the history of the nation. Thus for 229 individuals who held Cabinet office between 1782 and 1900 there are nearly 200 substantial surviving personal archives. This high figure is also a reflection of the fact that a good proportion of these office-holders came from families with traditions of record-keeping and room to store papers. For twentieth-century politicians, who by and large live in smaller houses, move house more frequently and may lack family traditions of record-keeping, the archival survival rate (as far as private papers are concerned) will be lower. There may not be much the historian can do about all this, but if he or she is aware of these differential survival rates, it may influence a decision whether to pursue a particular source, or even whether to proceed with or abandon a particular line of enquiry.

An archive may indeed survive, but only in an incomplete state. Subsequent owners may make random or ill-informed decisions as to what should be kept and what discarded. In the case of a large archive, part of it may have been stored in an unsafe building, and subsequently destroyed with that building, whilst another part may have been kept in a much more secure place, perhaps some distance away. A knowledge of the history of the archive may therefore help the historian to decide whether or not to attach significance to the presence or absence of an individual document or series of documents within it. In the case of an exceptionally full and well-preserved collection the absence of a particular record may be significant. In other circumstances any argument ex absentia might be unsafe.

Another fate that befalls many archives is fragmentation. The archive of a great family may descend, like the family estates, to more than one heir. Thus part of the archive of the Egerton Earls and Dukes of Bridgewater descended to the grandson of the last Duke, Lord Francis Egerton, who became Earl of Ellesmere in 1846; but part, along with many of the Duke's estates,

passed to a cousin and thence to the Cust family, Earls Brownlow. More rarely, but more confusingly, the property might go one way but the records another. When the second Earl of Oxford died in 1741 his patrimonial estates in Herefordshire passed to a cousin but most of the Harley family papers went to his widow, the ancestress of the Cavendish-Bentinck Dukes of Portland. An individual's papers might become equally fragmented. Sometimes a conscientious literary executor might return correspondences to their senders, or the senders might ask for their letters back. Papers might remain in the hands of a secretary or literary executor and thus pass out of the family; or a biographer might acquire letters and papers of or relating to his or her subject. In the case of the papers of the nineteenth-century prime minister Lord Melbourne, his letters to Lord John Russell and Russell's to him were exchanged after his (Melbourne's) death, although a few were left behind in each case among the papers of the original recipients. In the early twentieth century most of the Melbourne-Russell correspondence was brought together for the purposes of a biography, and this group was then sold, passing into the hands of Wilfrid Ashley, Lord Mount Temple. Thus the Russell-Melbourne correspondence is now to be found in three personal archives, those of Russell, Melbourne and Lord Mount Temple.

When archives are sold they may be sold en bloc, either at auction or more commonly by private treaty. The bulk of the medieval archive of the Bacon family of Redgrave (Suffolk), for instance, is now in Chicago University Library. But another result of sale can be fragmentation and dispersal, particularly if the collection goes to the saleroom and is parcelled into a number of separate lots. Thus the Townshend muniments from Raynham (Norfolk), including papers inherited from another branch of the Bacon family, were partially dispersed in two major sales, in 1911 and 1924. Artificial collections are of course particularly prone to this fate: indeed, the same process may have been responsible for their formation in the first place. An individual document or group of papers may pass through several collections before finding a resting place in an institutional repository; or it may disappear from view and will eventually be presumed lost.

The transition to institutional custody

The decision by an owner to deposit a group of papers in a library or record office is often a momentous one in the life of an archive, even if the deposit is a loan and ownership is consequently unaffected. It is the equivalent to moving house in the life of an individual or family, but with this difference, that the archive may not move to a single home. When Welbeck Abbey was given up as a family home by the Cavendish-Bentinck family after the Second World War, substantial sections of the family archive (that of the Dukes of Portland) were transferred to five different repositories: Nottinghamshire Record Office (now Nottinghamshire Archives), Nottingham University Library, Hampshire Record Office, the British Museum and the Bodleian Library, Oxford. There were good reasons for these divisions, confirmed more recently when the collection as a whole was accepted for the nation in lieu of tax. But no archive can be divided without at least minor or accidental overlaps or misplacements between its constituent sections, and the historian using the Portland papers needs to be aware both of the thinking behind the division and of its practical effect on the present-day location of the manuscripts.

Similar complications may arise in the case of an individual's papers, particularly if the surviving papers are voluminous and important, or if they relate to more than one aspect of history. Quite commonly papers relating to the tenure of a particular office, forming an easily-defined group within the archive, may be sent to a national or specialist repository, whilst papers of a more personal nature may be deposited locally or retained by the family. Occasionally material of particular sensitivity may call for special treatment. In the case of WE Gladstone the bulk of his political papers was transferred to the British Museum, although the royal correspondence was deposited there under particular conditions and as a loan rather than a gift. Gladstone's diaries, however, were placed in the hands of the Archbishop of Canterbury for safe- keeping in Lambeth Palace Library. This still left a large collection of letters and papers in local custody at St Deiniol's Library, Hawarden.

In the case of the archive of a landed estate, the records of outlying properties are sometimes deposited in the nearest county or other record office, thus perpetuating the split in the archive as a whole. For local historians this arrangement may be convenient, but very rarely will all the records relevant to the Loamshire estate end up in the Loamshire Record Office: material covering the estates as a whole, created by the head agent, the family lawyer or the owner himself, may need to be sought elsewhere. Similar considerations may apply in the case of a large business conglomerate with various subsidiaries.

The moral of all this is never to assume that a group of papers represents the totality of a surviving archive. The custodian may label a certain collection `the Brown papers', unaware that it is only one part of Brown's papers. (In some cases the papers thus described may not even be Brown's own papers, archivally speaking, but merely a collection of letters from Brown to other people or material relating to him and his career.)

Conversely, and more positively, deposit may result in the reunification of an archive, as various of its sub-groups find their way, by one means or other, to the same repository. Thus the Loamshire Record Office, in addition to the main deposit from the Brown estate office, may

acquire supplementary groups of papers from the family of a deceased agent, a member of the owner's family now living in New Zealand, and legal firms both in London and the locality. It may also succeed in reclaiming stray papers by purchase in the auction rooms. These groups may be added to the main deposit by the custodian if that is the practice of the repository; or they may be accessioned and catalogued separately.

Public and non-public records

Given that the history of manuscript collections in this country is varied and sometimes complex, it is not surprising that the archival geography of the United Kingdom is also far from simple. Just as individual archives are accumulated over time, so the pattern of provision for records has developed in a `natural' rather than a logical way. This has had its advantages: the greater the number of repositories and the more widespread their distribution, the more likely are valuable records to find permanent homes. But there are also, needless to say, disadvantages: there are gaps in the provision, and areas of overlap. It may also be unclear in what type of repository certain kinds of record should be sought, and in this context it may be helpful to begin by discussing the difference between public and private records.

What, in the British context, is a public record? Is it a record produced by a public body, a record kept in a public repository, or a record to which there is a public right of access? The answer in all three cases is no, not necessarily. Not all records produced by public bodies in England and Wales are public records under the Public Records Act (1958). Public repositories may hold privately created and indeed privately owned records; and conversely, not all public records are to be found in the Public Record Office. The public have rights of access to some private records but by no means all public ones. The safest definition of public records is in fact the narrowest: they are those records defined as public by the relevant legislation, that is to say, the records of government departments and the courts of law, together with the records of some other non-departmental public bodies that have from time to time been declared to have the status of public records. By this definition the records of parliament, local government and many other publicly-funded bodies and institutions are all non-public records.

Beyond the public records there is no comprehensive legislative framework for the preservation and administration of manuscript or other records in this country. There is no single government minister or department with responsibility for archives. County councils have a statutory obligation to preserve their own records but not to provide archive services for the public. And when it comes to records in private hands there has always been great reluctance to interfere with property rights. There may be occasions on which the student will find it useful to be aware, for instance, of the regulations governing manorial documents, or those relating to the export of manuscripts, but by and large the historian is working in an area where the services provided are voluntary and the user has very few statutory rights. This is an area, however, where the Historical Manuscripts Commission has advisory and co-ordinating functions.

For the British administrative, legal or political historian there is probably no path that does not lead eventually to the Public Record Office in London. It is a rare topic, even among those remotest from the history of the State, that does not have relevant material lurking somewhere in the public records. It follows that every British historian should have some knowledge of the contents of the Public Record Office and how to use it. This booklet cannot duplicate the contents of published guides (for which see Part 3); but it may be helpful to draw attention to some features of the PRO's holdings.

The first act to regulate the country's public records was not passed until 1838, and a purpose-built repository for them not begun until 1851. Before that the records of the central courts and government departments were held in various repositories in London, often in chaotic and unsuitable conditions. Even today the older public records reflect to some extent their ramshackle early history and the sometimes misguided attempts that were made in the early days of the PRO to sort and `rationalise' them. That there are numerous gaps in the great series of State Papers is also inevitable. Officers of state sometimes took away papers on leaving office: hence for instance the great collection of Cecil papers, relating to Lord Burghley and his son the first Earl of Salisbury, now preserved chiefly at Hatfield House. Other State papers were collected by antiquaries and historians, and have come to rest in the British Library, along with medieval records such as certain royal wardrobe and household accounts. The PRO has no power to declare records public retrospectively, or to reclaim them for public custody, although the rules governing what papers may be removed by ministers when they leave office are now much more stringent than they were fifty years ago.

Other records may never have left departmental custody, but for one reason or another may not be available for public consultation. They may be less than thirty years old; they may be more than thirty years old, but retained by their creating departments or subject to special restrictions; or they may have been destroyed while still in departmental custody. Much misunderstanding has arisen from these `missing' or `hidden' records. Whilst there may be good reasons of national security for not making a limited number of files available, the reasons for the disappearance of files are usually more prosaic - accidental loss, or the weeding of files that (despite their occasionally alluring titles) contained nothing of interest or importance. The historian may well lament the fate of some records, but the PRO does its best, in consultation with departmental record officers, to ensure the survival of what is historically important (or what at least is judged at the time to be so), and in the end it is, of course, physically and financially impossible to keep more than a small fraction (estimated at one per cent) of the records annually generated.

Not all public records are housed in the PRO or in departmental registries. The records of the India Office, a great record factory in its time, are kept separately, along with large and valuable collections of Indian and India- related manuscripts; and this archival monument to the Raj is now part of the British Library Oriental and India Office Collections. Other public records (currently about one fifth of the total) are kept locally - records of quarter sessions, for instance, in the appropriate county record office, or hospital records in local or specialist repositories. Such places of deposit must be approved for the holding of public records by the Lord Chancellor, who under the Public Records Act is now the responsible minister of the Crown. The arrangements for Scotland and Northern Ireland are dealt with below.

On the other hand the Public Record Office does contain records that did not originate as records either of government departments or of courts of law. A wide range of records, for instance, that began as estate, financial or personal papers entered the Court of Chancery and were never reclaimed, being incorporated into the Chancery archive. (They became public records only under the Act of 1958.) For example, many of the earlier records of the Stonor family, Lords Camoys, probably reached public custody in connection with an early sixteenth-century court case, and were later distributed in a very unarchival way among various existing classes of record. More recently the PRO has acquired, or accepted on deposit, various private collections

that have a connection with the public records, for instance the major part of Lord John Russell's surviving correspondence and papers.

In addition to its growing series of guides and information leaflets the PRO is making more information electronically available, and its reader services department maintains a registers of members of staff available to give advice in particular areas of research.

Whilst its records relate to all parts of the United Kingdom - and indeed to pre- partitition Ireland and to many other parts of the world - the PRO in London is not the only public record office in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Since 1885 Scotland has had its own government department, and under an act of 1937 its records, together with those of the Scottish courts, are held by the Scottish Record Office in Edinburgh. Following the partition of Ireland, the province of Northern Ireland was given its own parliament and government under the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) was established in 1924. (South of the border the National Archives of Ireland (formerly the Public Record Office of Ireland) house the records that survived the fire at the Four Courts, Dublin, in 1922, more recent records of the Irish Republic, and the contents of the former Irish State Paper Office in Dublin Castle.) From around the turn of the century a growing number of government bodies and agencies have been concerned specifically with Wales, rather than with England and Wales generally, but a separate department, the Welsh Office, was created only in 1965, and as yet there is no Welsh Record Office at Cardiff on the model of the record offices in Edinburgh and Belfast. The Isle of Man and the Channel Islands are not part of the United Kingdom, and their government records are kept locally, although, as with Ireland, many relevant records are held in the PRO.

National and local repositories

Just as the Public Record Office could be described as the national archive repository, so the British Library (successor to the British Museum and other libraries) can claim to be the national collection of manuscripts. The pre- history of the British Library's Department of Manuscripts (now, like the Oriental and India Office Collections, part of the directorate of Special Collections) lies not in the world of government bureaucracy but in the world of antiquarian scholarship and aristocratic libraries. The two traditions may seem far apart, but the holdings of the two institutions have many points of connection. The British Library's (formerly British Museum's) holdings of ex- State papers have already been mentioned, and in the mid-nineteenth century it was even considered as an alternative repository to the PRO for the contents of the old State Paper Office. More recently the Library has acquired many personal and institutional archives, and even the occasional estate collection: it has also taken over the former India Office archive, not to mention copies of plays from the Lord Chamberlain's Office. Like the PRO, the British Library's Special Collections are developing ways of making information electronically available, and have recently established a Universities Research Support Service. The British Library's collections are supplemented by those of more specialist national museums such as the Science Museum and the National Maritime Museum.

The situation is a little different in Scotland. The National Library in Edinburgh is similar in some ways to the British Library in London. It dates only from 1925 (as against 1753 in the case of the British Library), but was the heir of the Advocates' Library established in 1682. The Scottish Record Office, however, is somewhat different in character from the PRO, since it holds many more private archives, including those of a number of great landed estates. This is not because the Scottish Record Office set out to rival the National Library of Scotland (although there have in the past been a few areas of overlap), but because until recently Scotland lacked a network of local government archive services. In Wales the National Library was founded in 1909 by royal charter, and became a library of legal deposit in 1911, but its pre-First World War ambition to house a Welsh Record Office was not fulfilled. Instead it built up a manuscript monument to the Welsh language and culture, collecting family, estate and institutional archives from all over the principality. Latterly, however, the establishment of record offices in most Welsh counties has altered the archival map. Northern Ireland is different again. There, due to the absence of county record offices, and also to the absence of a major manuscript library in Belfast, PRONI has had the archival field to itself, and, like the Scottish Record Office, has built up large holdings of estate, family and business archives in addition to its official records. In the Republic of Ireland the National Archives hold few private collections, the principal repositories for these being the National Library of Ireland and the libraries of Trinity and University Colleges, Dublin.

As will already have become evident, the relationship of national to location provision is one of the significant variants in the British archival scene. In England the Victorian improvements in the care and custody of the public records were followed by a vigorous development of local record offices, provided for the most part by the shire counties. There was, however, a considerable time-lag, for many county record offices were opened only after the Second World War. They originated in the muniment rooms maintained by the clerks of county councils, and before them the clerks of quarter sessions; but prior to the erection of County Halls county

government tended to lack adequate or centrally sited administrative buildings, and this helps to account for the uneven survival of earlier county records.

These earlier deficiencies have in many counties been amply atoned for by more recent progress, with a number of authorities now boasting repositories purpose-built to high standards, holding several miles of records and managed by highly qualified staff. A typical county record office will hold the records of its own authority and its predecessors; the records of other local authorities or former authorities such as district and parish councils and Poor Law unions; court records or hospital records, being locally deposited public records; probate records before 1858; diocesan, parish and other Church of England records if appointed a diocesan record office by the bishop; and a wealth of private records from individuals, families, estates, businesses, societies and organisations, including in some cases records of local or county branches of national bodies. The county system of record offices, however, has worked better in the shire counties than in the great urban and metropolitan areas, and problems have been compounded by successive reorganisations of local government. The Greater London Record Office has survived the abolition of the Greater London Council, and the West Yorkshire Archives Service the abolition of the metropolitan county of West Yorkshire, but elsewhere the pattern is less clear. The counties of Avon and the West Midlands, created in 1974, never established record offices of their own.

This brings us to another significant variant, the differing traditions of the record office and the library. Municipal libraries in many cases began to build up collections of manuscripts long before county record offices appeared on the archival scene. Within the metropolitan counties, therefore, archive services often centre on the records of the metropolitan districts, among which borough records and library collections may be prominent. The great municipal libraries hold records of a range and importance extending well beyond their municipal boundaries. Thus although Avon never had a record office, there was an old-established city record office in Bristol; and although the West Midlands similarly lacked a county repository, in Birmingham Central Library it had a particularly important regional collection of manuscripts. London's Guildhall Library holds many important City collections, though not the archive of the Corporation of London itself, which has its own record office. Links between record offices and local libraries are now closer. (Indeed, some county record offices are now part of county library services.) But there remain some libraries whose holdings are not well known, partly due to the fact that they are catalogued in some cases on cards or slips that are not easily reproduced or summarised elsewhere.

Another feature of the local archival landscape, and often a more ancient one than either the record office or the public library, is the antiquarian or record society. Such societies were partly publishing bodies, and their editions of ecclesiastical, genealogical and other records are a major resource for the historian. But they also formed libraries and collected records. Some county archaeological or other collections have latterly been deposited, wholly or more often partially, in local record offices. The Northamptonshire Record Society was in fact the predecessor of the Northamptonshire Record Office, and the extensive collections of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society are now maintained as part of the West Yorkshire Archive Service. Other bodies maintain an independent existence, such as the Spalding Gentlemen's Society or the Royal Institution of Cornwall. In some counties, therefore, the locally deposited records are

concentrated in the county record office, but in others the record office co-exists with one or more other substantial local collections. A good example is Warwickshire, where part of the county is covered by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Record Office.

Wales and Scotland, as already mentioned, have seen a later expansion of county record offices than England. In Wales the archival map was influenced first by the manuscript acquisitions of Cardiff City Library in the late nineteenth century and then by the creation of a National Library at Aberystwyth in the early twentieth. The creation of unitary authorities in the latest round of local government changes may have a significant effect on local provision in a principality where population is unevenly distributed. In Scotland the shire or county has historically been weaker than in England, but there has been a strong city or municipal tradition of record-keeping; and official links between local authority repositories and the Scottish Record Office may facilitate a more ordered development of local services despite boundary and structural changes.

University and specialist repositories

Institutional archives tend to become the nuclei of larger manuscript collections. Just as this has happened in the case of national and local authority records, so it has occurred with a multiplicity of institutions and organisations. Foremost among these are Britain's universities and colleges, where the collection of research materials has been accompanied, in some cases rather belatedly, by a recognition that their own archives are often both extensive and valuable. The Bodleian Library, Oxford, is post-medieval in its present constitution, but even so it considerably pre-dates the British Library, to whose manuscript holdings its own are most closely comparable. Cambridge University Library has less extensive but still highly important collections, as have many individual Oxford and Cambridge colleges, some of the colleges of London University, Durham University and some of the newer university libraries. The student will at a fairly early stage in his or her research locate the university with a relevant specialist collection - that of the Rural History Centre at Reading, for instance, or the Modern Records Centre at Warwick. In Wales the University College of North Wales, Bangor, has collections that complement the holdings both of the National Library and of the neighbouring record offices. In Scotland Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen are among the universities with well-established and substantial departments of manuscripts or specialist manuscript collections.

From the foregoing it will be clear that, whilst repositories can be classified as national, local or university, this by no means guarantees that collections of similar type or origin will group themselves tidily in a limited number of logically predictable libraries or record offices. The reasons for a particular archive finding one home rather than another are various: the choice of a place of deposit may be due to legal, financial or administrative constraints, or may reflect personal preferences or geographical ties. Thus, of the papers of statesmen who held prime ministerial office in the years following the Reform Act of 1832, those of Peel, Aberdeen and Gladstone are mainly in the British Library; but the Disraeli papers are in the Bodleian Library, those of Wellington and Palmerston in Southampton University Library, those of Russell mainly in the Public Record Office and those of Melbourne in the Royal Archives, Windsor Castle.

The existence of specialist repositories complicates the picture further. As it happens there is no one repository for political records: the Bodleian has those of the Conservative party, the British Library of Political and Economic Science those of the Liberal party, and the National Museum of Labour History (at Manchester) those of the Labour party. For trade union records the Modern Records Centre at Warwick University has the most extensive holdings, but the historian of the labour movement may also need to visit the National Museum of Labour History, the Working Class Movement Library at Salford, the National Library of Scotland for Scottish organisations, numerous regional and local repositories for branch records, and, for international bodies, the Institute for Social History in Amsterdam. For the medical historian the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine is often the first port of call, but for some other specialist areas of research there is no obvious repository, and records may find scattered homes on grounds of local association, or even be lost for want of a suitable resting place. Garden history is currently a case in point. The records of voluntary and charitable bodies, based in London but having a national significance, are also hard to place. In many cases the student's best hope is that the organisation in question is still in existence and has retained its records in its own custody.

The records of the Established (and pre-Reformation) Church in England may serve to bring this chapter to a conclusion, since not only are they of great antiquity and archival complexity, but they serve to illustrate the interlocking nature of record repository provision in this country. The probate records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury are in the Public Record Office, those of the Prerogative Court of York in the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, University of York. Lambeth Palace Library, with its archiepiscopal collections and its important manuscript holdings, ranks as one of the country's major specialist repositories. The archive of the Church Commissioners is housed partly at the Church of England Records Centre, which also holds Synod records and acts as a clearing-house for information on all central records of the Church of England. But some archival material from the Church Commissioners is locally deposited, principally in county record offices which may also act as diocesan record offices and hold parish records. In other cases universities may act as diocesan record centres, as at York and Durham. Some cathedral deans and chapters have made similar arrangements to deposit their records, but others retain them in their own custody.

Methodist records are held partly at the John Rylands University of Manchester Library and partly in local record offices. Similarly Baptist records have been gathered centrally at Regent's Park College, Oxford, Congregationalist records in part at Dr Williams's Library, London, and Unitarian records partly at Manchester College, Oxford and partly at the John Rylands Library. Jewish records are now concentrated principally at Southampton University Library and the Greater London Record Office. Roman Catholic archives, on the other hand, present a much more diverse picture, with the records of some dioceses deposited in record offices but others retained in diocesan custody. For ecclesiastical records in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland the student may wish to turn for information initially to the Scottish Record Office, the National Library of Wales and PRONI respectively.

Mapping the ground

Surveying the primary source material is an important element in planning any piece of historical research. It is tempting either to conclude too hastily that sources for the topic under consideration do not exist, or to fall with joy on the first good source that presents itself, and then spend the next six months working over that one source in excessive detail. For the postgraduate student it is part of the role of the supervisor to offer advice and guidance at this early stage. But every historian beginning a new piece of work may find it helpful to consult somebody with special knowledge or previous experience of the same or a similar area. This may be another historian, but it may also be a librarian or archivist. A university librarian may well have some bibliographical advice that will save much scrabbling in catalogues or in the stacks. For the local historian the nearest archivist may be the best person to consult. At all events, there is never harm in asking, and often much profit. For those who have the opportunity to join a seminar or class on historical sources (for example at the University of London's Institute of Historical Research) there is the double advantage of learning from the tutor and discussing problems with fellow students.

Exploring what is in print is of course part of these preliminaries. A not infrequent mistake of the inexperienced historian is to plunge into the manuscript sources when, at least for the early stages of a research project, there is a considerable quantity of material in print, or available in some comparatively accessible medium such as a microfilm edition. The earlier periods of British history are those best covered by published editions of manuscript sources, but even for the nineteenth century there is a growing body of material in print, from major political correspondence to local and parish records. An increasing number of collections is now available in microform editions. This is not a well-charted area bibliographically, but a very helpful starting-point is DJ Munro, Microforms for Historians: a finding-list of research collections in London libraries, now maintained as a data-base at the Institute of Historical Research. Other libraries, such as the Bodleian Library, Oxford, also maintain lists of microforms in their custody.

When it comes to the manuscript sources themselves there is no single comprehensive guide. Part 3 of this booklet presents a bibliography, but it is of course far from complete, and it will be noticed that many publications have as their starting points the records themselves rather than the research interests of the historian. They are for the most part produced by archivists who have to cater for a wide range of historical interests, and although they may be aware of, and try to cater for, the fashionable research topics of the current generation they cannot be expected to anticipate those of the next. Source guides arranged by subject are now becoming more frequent, but even so most students will need to undertake their own surveys of the available material.

How should such a survey be made? At a fairly early stage it will be necessary to make use of the facilities of a major specialist library. Some guides to individual collections, for instance a catalogue of deeds in a country house muniment room, may have been privately printed rather than published, and may survive in a few places only - the British Library, the library of London University's Institute of Historical Research or the library of a record office or record society. More easily available secondary sources, however, may contain valuable clues to the existence and whereabouts of manuscripts, as, of course, may unpublished theses and thesis abstracts.

Historians pursuing a certain line of enquiry often unearth sources not previously known, or discover new ways of using known sources, and a careful reading of the footnotes of relevant monographs and articles is well worthwhile. More generally, those books and articles themselves may, by providing examples of types of method and approach, help the student to bridge the gap between what is available and what he or she requires. It is partly a matter of learning what questions to ask. For instance, if one is preparing to work on witchcraft, it may be futile to search for a volume entitled `Sources for the historical study of witchcraft'. It may be almost as unprofitable to turn up at a record office and ask `What have you got on witchcraft?', although the archivist, used to such questions, may have ear-marked the odd reference to appease the casual enquirer. The briefest study of the secondary sources, however, will indicate that the records of church courts are likely to yield a substantial body of manuscript evidence.

Negative information may also be valuable. A lack of publicly available references to a particular collection does not amount, of course, to proof that it does not exist; but if a previous writer has established that such-and-such an archive has been destroyed, or that there is little or no hope of its survival, and has recorded the fact in a discussion of his or her sources, it may prevent successors from wasting their time in further fruitless searches. In this sense even negative information is a contribution to knowledge.

The Historical Manuscripts Commission

Once this preliminary reading has been done the student may have a clearer idea of the topic of research and what it may involve in the way of relevant manuscript sources - or may at least have drawn up a short list of two or three possible topics, the final choice being dependent partly on the availability of material. It is at this point that a visit to the offices of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts (usually known as the Historical Manuscripts Commission or HMC) is usually necessary. Founded in 1869, the Commission is charged with recording the existence and whereabouts of manuscripts of value for the study of history. Covering the whole of the United Kingdom, it embraces not only sources for British history kept in this country but also sources for overseas history in British repositories and sources for British history kept in other countries. In its earlier days its work consisted in surveying and publishing reports on collections mainly in private hands - those of individuals, families, estates, corporations and other bodies. These reports, published as parliamentary papers, were supplemented from 1885 by a series of octavo calendars, such as those of the Cecil papers at Hatfield House or the records of the House of Lords. These reports and calendars, together with their published indexes, are, despite their fairly obvious limitations and deficiencies, still in regular and frequent use by historians, and particularly by political historians of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

More recent HMC publications have responded to the needs of scholars for archival information on later periods of British history, and for sources not only for high politics but for many other areas of study. The Commission's most important current series of publications is its Guides to Sources for British History, covering so far the papers of individual politicians, diplomats, colonial governors, churchmen and scientists, and some of the principal surviving family and estate and business archives in this country. HMC publications also include an Annual Review (including brief accounts of major collections), a regularly reprinted guide to Record Repositories in Great Britain and occasional booklets such as that on Surveys of Historical Manuscripts in the United Kingdom (of particular relevance to these paragraphs: the second edition (1994) lists some 300 subject surveys completed or in progress). An annual digest of Accessions to Repositories, based on returns from a large number of libraries and record offices, is available as a publication down to 1991. The returns are still obtained but the information they contain, as well as being incorporated in the National Register of Archives, is also disseminated in print in the form of subject lists supplied to a number of historical journals. In this way it is hoped to reach more historians than before.

A study of these printed works will, however, be only a preliminary to a visit to the Commission's search room to make a more detailed survey of the information available in the National Register of Archives (NRA). It will be helpful at this point to explain what the NRA is, since there are still misconceptions about its nature and its relation to the HMC.

The NRA is the Commission's information bank, and not a separate body or organisation. It consists physically of a large number of unpublished lists and catalogues of collections of manuscripts and their attendant indexes, supplemented by information contained in published catalogues, guides and reports. Some of the typescript lists (still known as reports, since they supplement the Commission's early printed reports to the Crown) are compiled by the

Commission itself, but most are supplied by the custodians of the records that are described in them, mainly record offices and libraries. They can be consulted in the Commission's search room in Quality Court which is open Mondays to Fridays with no need for a prior appointment. The HMC can answer only limited and specific enquiries by post, and it is usually more useful for the student to come in person to find out what is available and how the NRA works. The Commission's search room is normally open Mondays to Fridays 9.30 am to 5 pm, although a preliminary telephone call may be advisable if coming from a distance. Leaflets describing the Commission, the NRA and the Manorial Documents Register (also maintained by the Commission) are available free of charge, as are NRA Information Sheets describing the sources for a number of subject areas and a leaflet describing the Commission's recent publications.

The titles of the reports, now numbering nearly 40,000, with a further 30,000 in unnumbered special series, are held on a computerised register, together with details of the location of the papers that they describe. There are also computerised personal, subject and business indexes, and a repositories file giving up-to-date details of over 1,500 national, local, specialist and other repositories. There is no room here to describe these indexes in detail, but two general points may be made. They are designed on archival principles, reflecting the organisation of the raw material as it is received, and built around collections and types of document rather than topics such as women's history or witchcraft. The main factor determining the comprehensiveness of the NRA, however, is the quantity and quality of the information supplied to the Commission. A backlog, for instance, in the cataloguing programme of a repository may mean that there is no detailed list of a particular collection in the NRA, although information culled from published reports or guides, or from annual returns of accessions from the repository in question, should mean that the Commission is aware at least of the existence and general scope of the collection.

In the near future the Commission's computerised information will be available on line, giving some students access to it through terminals in their own departments or libraries. But the indexes by themselves do not always make it clear whether a collection is worth visiting, and in many cases a trip to Quality Court to examine lists and catalogues will still be advisable. The Commission, furthermore, is more than a computer system: its staff can advise on conditions of access, and on possible further lines of enquiry. The researcher may find a visit worthwhile both at the start of a project and also at a later stage, when checking that nothing has been overlooked or that no further material has recently come to light. Some students, indeed, find that they need to re-visit the Commission more than once in the earlier stages of research, as their topics develop and become better defined.

The repository

A visit to the HMC will often be followed by a visit to a library or record office. This will mean forming a working relationship not only with the papers themselves but with their custodians - the word custodian being used here to mean the librarian, archivist or other member of staff whose job it is to deal with readers.

There are two misconceptions of the role of the custodian. One is of somebody whose sole job is to serve the historian, providing the material, putting it away after use, and answering questions when required - in short, a role analogous to that of a waiter in a restaurant. The other misconception, inspired, perhaps, by one or two unfortunate encounters, is of the custodian as a kind of Cerberus, guarding the records and putting sometimes unnecessary obstacles in the way of their use. The truth is that custodians have a difficult balancing act to perform. Their first duty is to the records entrusted to their care. But the whole point of preserving records is so that they can be used; and the historian may have a legitimate reason for needing to use an original manuscript rather than a copy. In recent years, however, as demand has increased, custodians have become more acutely aware of the damage that can be done to manuscripts by wear and tear in the search room, not to mention the rare but disturbing incidence of theft. The custodian must think of future as well as present users. If a document is produced to one reader in an advanced state of fragility it may be found to be altogether beyond repair, or decipherment, the next time it is requested. If documents are produced before sorting, cataloguing and the addition of reference numbers they are more likely to be muddled during use, and it takes longer to check afterwards that they are all present and correct.

For all these reasons documents may be less freely available in the search room, or available in more restricted quantities, than formerly. In some cases they may be available only in the form of photographic copies. This can be irritating, or even a serious impediment to research. The long-term answer is for repositories to spend more time on conservation and cataloguing; but both tasks are unfortunately time-consuming and labour-intensive, and with restraints on overall repository budgets the custodian may sometimes be forced to choose between time spent behind the scenes and time spent in the search room.

It follows that the custodian will not have much time to help directly with the historian's research. A letter asking about the existence and availability of material should receive a helpful response, but a letter that in effect asks the custodian to do the student's own work will probably receive a negative reply, or an intimation that research on behalf of a reader will be charged for. But this does not mean that the custodian is not interested in the research in question. On the contrary, he or she may also be an experienced historian, highly knowledgeable about the holdings of the repository from the historical point of view, and quite possibly with personal experience of writing a book or thesis. A conversation with the custodian, at an early stage of a thesis or other project, may well prove more valuable than any amount of reading in bibliographies and other printed sources.

The custodian will appreciate a letter in advance of a visit that makes specific rather than general enquiries, and that is based on familiarity with such sources as the printed guide to or annual

reports of the repository. If the letter is to make an appointment to use a particular collection, it will help considerably if the student can study the catalogue beforehand (for instance from the copy in the National Register of Archives) and quote the references of the documents with which he or she will wish to start. These can be got ready for the student's arrival, and further documents can then be ordered during the visit.

Some students resort to the use of questionnaires as part of a survey of the available material. These tend to evoke an unenthusiastic response from repositories, particularly if they require an element of research on the part of the custodian, or if they ask questions that the writer could answer from other sources. Circulars to private owners should certainly be avoided: the personal and individual approach is the only one likely to achieve the desired result.

Reference to an up-to-date edition of Record Repositories in Great Britain, published by HMSO for the HMC, or to British Archives (see below, Part 3, 25), will provide details of addresses, telephone numbers and opening hours. (A number of record offices have moved to new premises in recent years.) The repository may be very busy, particularly during the summer, and it is advisable to plan a visit and book a seat in the search room well in advance. A letter or telephone call will confirm that the repository is open on the day in question (some have closed periods for stock-taking or other purposes), and will also establish whether there is any requirement for readers to have a ticket. (A passport-sized photograph may be worth taking with one on the first visit.) A few repositories now charge for the use of the records or for the issue of a reader's ticket. Most if not all repositories charge for supplementary services such as photocopying or research on behalf of readers. In some repositories records are produced for readers only at set times during the day.

The repository may have a good library of printed sources and secondary works. But the principal finding aids will usually comprise (rather as with the National Register of Archives) a series of typescript lists and catalogues and their attendant indexes. (The indexes will generally be much more detailed than those at the HMC.) The collections will have a system of reference numbers, or letters and numbers, and it is advisable to familiarise oneself with the system (which varies from repository to repository) at an early stage, since these references act as call marks when ordering documents and will eventually need to be quoted in footnotes. Where a catalogue is constructed on archival principles the reference may have several elements. For instance, a collection of estate papers may have the overall reference D.60. Section one of the collection may be the deeds. The first item in the first bundle of deeds may therefore bear the reference D.60/1/1/1. Obviously enough, the omission of any element in the reference will entail the production of the wrong document.

It will not take long to become aware that repositories vary in their methods of sorting and arrangement, and in how the collections are described and presented in printed or typescript lists and catalogues. The reader may initially be disappointed not to find a collection arranged by subject, with all the material relevant to a particular topic gathered together in one section of the list. But few archives were formed entirely or mainly on a subject basis, and the archivist may have decided to list a collection in a way that more closely reflects its original arrangement. This method may well do least violence to the archive, in avoiding the artificial separation of papers that make more sense if kept together, but the result may be a complex catalogue that requires

careful study before use. If the catalogue has an introduction it should be read with attention, particularly for any indication that the catalogue does not represent the entirety of the collection on deposit.

The historian and the private owner

The HMC, with its knowledge of individual collections and experience of records in private hands, may be able to advise the student on how to approach an owner. Some owners, in fact, have specified that applications for access should be forwarded through the Commission. In other cases the Commission may be able to advise on whether the initial approach should be to an owner or an archivist, since some owners have a regular arrangement with a nearby record office, whilst a few employ their own archivists. In Scotland the National Register of Archives (Scotland) has an important liaison role with owners of privately-held collections.

Some owners do not grant access to manuscripts in their possession, but many are prepared and even anxious to help the scholar. The first thing for the student to realise is that there is in most cases no right of access to privately- held collections. An archive of family papers is a particularly delicate matter. It may contain very recent or personal material. It may be kept in a relatively inaccessible place. The owner may be frequently away from home, or unable to make the necessary arrangements. All these factors may make it difficult to grant access for practical reasons, even if there is no objection in principle. If access is granted, it will have to be at a date to suit the owner's convenience, and may take some time to arrange. The student may have a deadline, for instance the submission date for a thesis, but the only way to minimise the risk of running out of time is to open negotiations at an early date. It is unwise to plan a whole thesis or other extended piece of research on the assumption that access can be arranged to two or three particular collections, or arranged within a certain span of time.

The first approach should generally be by letter. It should be phrased to indicate the writer's awareness that a favour is being requested. It should indicate the nature of the project, and the relevance and importance of the collection to that project. It should be as specific as possible, and include a realistic estimate of the time that might be needed. If the writer can refer to previous experience of working on collections in private hands, or to the involvement or guidance of an established historian, that too may help. A stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for the owner's reply. Only at the next stage, of confirming an appointment or discussing possible dates for a visit, is it normally appropriate to use the telephone.

Some owners make a charge, generally to cover their costs rather than to make a profit. These charges are variable: there is no standard tariff.

Once the appointment, for instance at a private house, has been made, the historian will then be in the position of a guest, and will be expected to behave accordingly - to arrive promptly, to fit in easily with whatever arrangements have been made, and to detect and respond to hints, however polite, that one's welcome is at risk of being overstayed. It helps to show some enthusiasm for the records (even if they may in fact turn out to be disappointing), and to be ready to respond appropriately to the question `Found anything interesting?'. The visit must be followed by a letter of thanks, and the owner kept in touch with further developments regarding the use of the material and the eventual publication of the book or article. All this may seem elementary, even insulting to the student's natural good manners. But it is very easy, in the excitement of exploring

a new source, to be unaware of the impression one may be creating. Any lapse or faux pas may make it harder for others to gain access. Owners have long memories.

At some houses one may not meet the owner, or the owner may appear briefly and then hand one over to the custodian of the records. In this case the experience of using the archive may approximate to that of using a small record office, but there are nevertheless important differences. The custodian may very well be single-handed. He or she may work only part-time, or have other duties besides that of attending to the needs of scholars. The reader may therefore be restricted to a certain day of the week, or to a certain quantity of material. As with the owner, the archivist will probably expect an initial approach in writing, with limited and specific requests. In these more security and conservation-conscious days the private archivist may be less willing than formerly to produce uncatalogued material, or to allow the historian to rummage in the less well-ordered parts of the archive. This may be a problem if it becomes clear that the records presided over by the archivist do not represent the totality of the archive. Certain family papers may not have been handed over to the archivist, but may remain in the library or the owner's private business room or study. Only the older records of a landed estate may be accessible: current records (which are not always the same thing as recently created records) will be kept to hand in the estate office, and non-current but still comparatively recent material may be awaiting sorting and evaluation in some kind of `limbo' storage.

Somewhat similar problems may arise in an institutional archive. The member of staff with responsibility for managing the records of the firm or other body may not in practice have secured the co-operation of every record-holding department, and the most important records, the minutes of board or council meetings, may reside on shelves in an office whose occupant is too busy or high-ranking to be disturbed. Other records may turn out to have been out-housed in another building, on a different site, for want of space at headquarters. Further progress will be made only if the researcher can make an ally of the archivist or records manager, convincing him or her not only that requests for further material are necessary to the project, but that other members of staff are not likely to be inconvenienced or antagonised. Even then the student may need to accept that the desired access is impossible to arrange. It should also be noted that some businesses or institutions grant access to their archives only on certain conditions, for instance that books or articles should be submitted for approval before publication.

A few owners may be prepared to lend manuscripts to scholars in order that they may work on them at home or in a library. Whilst it is tempting to accept such an offer, the difficulties and dangers of accepting personal custody of privately-owned papers should be appreciated. First there is the responsibility of keeping them securely and in suitable conditions. Secondly there is the risk of possible misunderstandings about the precise terms of the loan, or the exact number of documents handed over. A temporary deposit in a library or record office, where a clear agreement is reached between the owner and the librarian or archivist, is preferable.

Owners who do not have regular access to professional advice, or who had not previously realised that their manuscripts were of any interest or value, may consult the visiting student about the best way to preserve them, or the most suitable place of deposit. In such circumstances the most helpful course may be to suggest that the owner contact the nearest record office or alternatively the Historical Manuscripts Commission. In some cases the latter may be more

appropriate since it is a non-acquisitive body, and may already have some knowledge of the collection, or of other collections containing related material. Some owners, it must also be said, do not feel in need of advice from any quarter, and it is never politic for the researcher to offer it unasked.

The care and handling of manuscripts

In a repository the student may be under the watchful eye of the custodian, ready to pounce at the first sign of insensitive or careless use of documents. When working on one's own on a private collection there will be no such invigilator. But in either case it behoves the student to learn and practise certain elementary rules, for the sake both of the documents themselves and of those who come after. Manuscripts are in some ways remarkably tough: they have survived in quantity from periods whose other small-scale artefacts are now extremely rare. But they can succumb to the effects of damp and other hazards, and, as already mentioned, repeated handling, especially clumsy handling, can take a serious toll.

Most search room regulations now require searchers to use pencil, not pen, so it is advisable to provide oneself with a good supply, together with a rubber and a pencil-sharpener (for use only over the bin provided) in case the search room sharpener is blunt or out of use. A magnifying glass may also be useful. The reader should avoid:

- tearing or creasing the documents
- dropping them on the floor
- eating (and of course smoking!) over or near them
- spilling liquids over them
- handling them with dirty or greasy fingers
- leaning on them while making notes, or piling them one upon another
- straining or forcing the bindings of volumes
- marking documents with pen or pencil
- disordering them
- muddling them up with one's own papers
- failing to return them to their correct folders or envelopes after use
- cramming them into containers too small for them.

In the case of papers in private hands, the scholar has a particular responsibility with regard to their physical condition. All the above rules should be observed just as if the papers were in a public repository. In addition it may be necessary to exercise self-discipline in refraining from examining papers that are brittle, damp, or otherwise fragile and decayed. It may also be helpful to draw attention, tactfully, to any evidence of active damp or insect or rodent infestation discovered during the visit, and this may lead to a discussion of possible sources of advice. (Here the local record office, if it employs a professional conservator, may initially be the owner's best bet.)

Amateur repairs should not be attempted. Over the years adhesive tape has caused far more damage than it has prevented. Even attempts to flatten documents can be counter-productive. There are of course steps that the owner may be able to take to improve the environment in which his papers are stored, for instance by reducing humidity and increasing the circulation of air. But achieving the desired results is not always easy, and, again, by far the safest course is to refer the owner, if asked, to a source of professional advice.

Just as conservation should be left to the conservationist, so should archival work on the papers be left to the archivist. The temptation to re-order papers while working on them should be resisted. Apart from the dangers of being distracted from the primary task of research, it should be stressed that the order convenient for one purpose may be inconvenient for another, and may not be appropriate in the context of the archive as a whole. Sometimes, however, it may be impossible to work on a collection without some minimal adoption of the role of amateur archivist. In such cases care should be taken to

- leave letters with their enclosures, wrappers or envelopes as found
- avoid the use of metal paper clips (ordinary metal clips rust and corrode the papers to which they are attached; even brass clips can tear)
- use undyed legal or archival tape if available rather than string or rubber bands to tie or re-tie bundles
- as in the repository, resist the temptation to over-fill boxes or other containers (air to breathe is particularly important if conditions are damp)
- replace papers tidily on shelves, avoiding sources of possible future damage such as hot-water pipes or window sills where condensation may form
- explain to the owner what has been done, and leave evidence with the papers themselves, in the form of notes, slips or dockets.

Acknowledgements and references

There are certain facts to be established and procedures to be followed before manuscript material can be used in a thesis or publication. An owner's permission may be required, or if not absolutely required it may be tactful to seek it. Use of material may be conditional on a particular form of acknowledgement. Whether required or not, acknowledgement to the owners of such material is an expected feature of the preliminary matter of a publication. (In the case of material in the Royal Archives, or royal correspondence in other collections, it is customary to begin a list of acknowledgements by thanking HM the Queen for her gracious permission ....)

Before making due acknowledgement it is of course necessary to be certain who the owner is. In the case of material in a library or record office the owner may be the library or record office itself, or its governing body. Where a collection is merely on loan to a repository the depositor will retain the ownership, and it is to the owner (either directly or, if so arranged, through the custodian) that application should be made.

The owner of the manuscript may not be the owner of the copyright in it. Copyright resides for a period defined by law in the author of a document, or in the author's heirs or successors at law. (If the author has acted as the employee of an institution, however, in writing a document, the copyright may reside instead with the institution.) Thus in the case of a letter, the ownership may reside with the owner of the collection of which the letter is a part, but the copyright may belong to the descendant of the writer. Copyright can also be assigned (ie sold), or it may pass with a bequest of papers to an institution. In the case of papers in a repository the custodian should be able to advise.

Under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 copyright in unpublished original literary, dramatic, musical or artistic works (including manuscripts, photographs and computer programs) lasts for fifty years from the death of the author, or from the end of 1989, whichever is the longer. Thus although `perpetual' copyright in unpublished works has been abolished, most such material will remain in copyright for the next few decades. There are two main exceptions, Crown copyright, which lasts for 125 years from the end of the year in which the work was created, and copyright in anonymous works, which lasts for fifty years from the year in which the work was made available to the public. But this is just the outline of a complex piece of legislation insofar as it affects manuscripts (drawings are slightly different), and for further information the student may wish to consult JB Post and MR Foster, Copyright: a hand-book for archivists (Society of Archivists, 1992). One grey area is the amount of a copyright work that can be reproduced without infringing copyright. The use of brief quotations, suitably acknowledged, does not normally require permission, but it is a matter of quality as well as quantity, and advice should be sought if in doubt. Another question is how far the student should go in the attempt to identify copyright holders, in cases where there is no obvious person to whom application should be made. This, again, may depend on the quantity and importance of the material as well as the likelihood of a claimant appearing. At the very least the custodian should be consulted.

A list of copyright-holders for literary and other authors, developed by the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the Univeristy of Texas jointly with Reading University Library, and known as WATCH (Writers and their Copyright Holders), is now available on the Internet.

Under the 1988 Act a library or record office may make single copies of documents in copyright for a reader who needs them for research purposes, provided that the copyright owner has agreed. The reader is required to sign a declaration regarding their use, and he or she should not re-copy them for the use of others. If he or she is allowed to make his or her own copy then the onus of complying with the law falls on him or her, but the concept of `fair dealing' (again not very clearly defined) may allow copying for research purposes.

For thesis-writers there may be a prescribed way in which to cite references and present a bibliography. But the author of any book or article using manuscript sources should aim to cite those sources in a clear, consistent and informative way. At the first appearance of a particular source it is helpful to give the location, the name of the collection and the reference (e.g. Lincolnshire Archives, Dixon papers, DIXON 1/A/4), followed if necessary by a brief description of the document itself. In any extended work it is more instructive to provide a brief discussion of the manuscript sources, including an account of any surveys undertaken, gaps identified or evidence of destruction uncovered, than merely to list the sources as if they were the equivalent of so many printed books.

Such a discussion of the sources not only adds to the credibility of the work, but assists those historians who may on some future occasion need to follow the same or similar paths of enquiry. Another way in which the historian can repay those who have rendered assistance is by communicating to the local archivist or Local Studies librarian or to the Historical Manuscripts Commission any discovery of fresh material made during the project, provided of course that no confidence is thereby broken. It is by the sharing of knowledge, and not by the squirrelling away of material or the creation of private `corners' in collections, that the study of history is advanced.

Bibliographies

General works

1. *Bibliography of British History* (6 vols, Oxford, various edns, 1951-77). (Arranged by period, these volumes begin with sections on editions of sources, guides to repositories, palaeography and diplomatic, biography and genealogy, etc. Especially full are the sections in the volumes for the periods up to 1485 and 1851-1914.)
2. *Royal Historical Society, Writings on British history 1901-1933* (5 vols, 1968-70); continued with annual supplements to 1973-4 (1937-86); continued as *Annual Bibliography of British and Irish history for 1975 onwards* (1976-). (A separate section called 'Archives and bibliography' from 1975.)
3. *English Historical Review*. Includes notices of periodical and occasional publications. (For specialist bibliographies in journals see eg *Agricultural History Review*, *Economic History Review*.)

Other works

4. Mullins, ELC, compiler, *A Guide to the Historical and Archaeological Publications of Societies in England and Wales 1901-1933* (Institute of Historical Research, 1968). (Complements 2.)
5. Somerville, (Sir) Robert, *Handlist of record publications* (British Records Association, 1951).
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7. Mullins, ELC, *Texts and calendars: an analytical guide to serial publications* (Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks nos 7 and 12, 1958, 1983). (A guide to the Rolls Series, PRO and HMC calendars, etc.)
8. Stevenson, David and Stevenson, Wendy, *Scottish texts and calendars: an analytical guide to serial publications* (Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks no 14, 1987).
9. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Surveys of historical manuscripts in the United Kingdom: a select bibliography* (2nd edn, 1994, updated in the Commission's Annual Review). (Includes typescript as well as printed surveys, and work in progress as well as completed.)
10. Martin, GH and McIntyre, Sylvia, *A bibliography of British and Irish municipal history: volume I, general works* (Leicester, 1972). (Includes categories of record, record office guides, and material arranged by region and county.)
11. International Council on Archives, 'International bibliography of directories and guides to archival repositories' (*Archivum*, vol xxxvi, 1990).

(See also 195.)

Surveys and General Reference Works

Historical Manuscripts Commission

12. Accessions to repositories and reports added to the National Register of Archives (1957-92). (Earlier lists of accessions were published in the *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 1923-53 and the *Bulletin of the National Register of Archives* 1954-6. Since 1993 returns from repositories have not been published in this form, but subject lists appear in a number of specialist journals. Lists of reports added to the NRA, published with Accessions 1972- 93, now appear as appendices to the HMC's Annual Review, which also carries short articles on individual collections.)
13. Government publications, Sectional List 17: publications of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts (last revised 1984). (Although not recently reprinted, still a useful guide to the complexities of the Reports and Calendars series. Her Majesty's Stationery Office, UNIPUB (HMSO's North American agent) or the HMC itself can supply details of titles in print.)
14. Guide to the location of collections described in the Reports and Calendars series 1870-1980 (*Guides to Sources for British History* no 3, 1982).

(See also 119, 141, 212-216, 221.)

Journals

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Other works

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London University

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(See also 173, 196, 217, 218.)

Personal papers

166. Batts, John Stuart, *British manuscript diaries of the 19th century: an annotated listing* (1976).
167. Burnett, John, Vincent, David and Mayall, David, eds, *The autobiography of the working class: an annotated, critical bibliography* (3 vols, Brighton, 1984-9). (Includes MS diaries).
168. Gard, RM, *The observant traveller* (1989). (A catalogue of travel diaries in county record offices.)
169. Huff, Cynthia, *British women's diaries: a descriptive bibliography of selected nineteenth-century women's manuscript diaries* (New York, 1985).
170. Matthews, William, *British diaries: an annotated bibliography of British diaries written between 1442 and 1942* (Los Angeles, 1950, repr Gloucester, Mass, 1967).
171. New *Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, forthcoming). (Each article will include information on surviving papers, where known.)

(Some bibliographies of individuals include archival material, eg Cavie, Leonard W, William Wilberforce 1759-1833: a bibliography (1992), and Parker, James G, Lord Curzon 1839-1925: a bibliography (1991), both in the Bibliographies of British Statesmen series. See also 119, 123, 185, 187, 207, 208, 210-216, 220, 221, 224, 233.)

Registration

172. Humphery-Smith, Cecil R, *The Phillimore atlas and index of parish registers* (Chichester, 1984). (And see also 196.)

173. Ifans, Dafydd, ed, *Nonconformist registers of Wales* (Aberystwyth, 1994). (For nonconformist registers in the Public Record Office see List and Index Society vol 42. See also 137.)
174. Yeo, Geoffrey, *The British overseas: a guide to records of their births, baptisms, marriages, deaths and burials, available in the United Kingdom* (Guildhall Library, London, 2nd edn, 1988).

(See also 30-32, 193-196.)

Title deeds

175. Alcock, NW, *Old title deeds: a guide for local and family historians* (Chichester, 1986).
176. Cornwall, Julian, *An introduction to reading old title deeds* (Federation of Family History Societies, 1993).
177. Dibben, AA, *Title deeds* (Historical Association, 1971).
178. English, Barbara and Saville, John, *Strict settlement: a guide for historians* (Hull, 1983).

(See also 63, 88, 102, 119, 202.)

Topographical collections

179. Barley, MW, *A guide to British topographical collections* (Council for British Archaeology, 1974).

Trade union and labour records

180. Bennett, John and Tough, Alistair, compilers, *Trade union and related records* (University of Warwick Library Occasional Publications no 5, 6th edn, Coventry, 1991).
181. McDougall, Ian, compiler, *A catalogue of some labour records in Scotland and some Scots records outside Scotland* (Scottish Labour History Society, Edinburgh, 1978).
182. Storey, Richard, 'Labour archives in the United Kingdom' (*Archivum*, vol xxvii, 1980, pp 147-67).
183. (*The Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History* is one of the journals that annually publishes lists based on Accessions to Repositories (12 above), in this case from 1974. See also 83, 167, 208, 210, 260.)

Wills

183. Camp, AJ, *Wills and their whereabouts* (4th edn, 1974).
184. Gibson, Jeremy, compiler, *Probate jurisdictions: where to look for wills* (Federation of Family History Societies, 4th edn, 1994).

(See also 109-112.)

Subject areas

This section comprises mainly works of the `Sources for the history of ...' variety, generally ranging over more than one category of record. It also includes works arranged biographically, for instance papers of economists, politicians or scientists. For works relevant to particular subject areas reference should also be made to other sections of this bibliography.

Architecture and buildings

185. Colvin, Howard, *A biographical dictionary of British architects 1600- 1840* (1978, new edn forthcoming). (For the earlier period see Harvey, John H, *English medieval architects*, 2nd edn, Gloucester, 1984.)
186. Harvey, John H, *Sources for the history of houses* (British Records Association Archives and the User no 3, 1974).
187. Kamen, Ruth H, *British and Irish architectural history: a bibliography and guide to sources of information* (1981, new edn forthcoming).

(See also 40, 41, 70, 192, 200.)

Education

188. Chapman, Colin R, *The growth of British education and its records* (2nd edn, 1992).
189. *History of Education Society, Archives and the historian of education* (Occasional Publication no 1, summer 1975). (And see the Society's *Bulletin*, 1968-.)
190. Pugh, RB, 'Sources for the history of English primary schools' (*British Journal of Educational Studies*, vol I, no 1, November 1952, pp 43-51); Tate, WE, 'Some sources for the history of English grammar schools' (ibid, vol I, no 2, May 1953, pp 164-75, and vol II, no 1, November 1953, pp 67-165).
191. Stephens, WB and Unwin, RW, *Materials for the local and regional study of schooling 1700-1900* (British Records Association Archives and the User no 7, 1987).

(For a local guide see Davey, CR, ed, *Education in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*, Winchester, 1979).

(See also 126.)

Garden history

192. Lambert, David, *Record of documentary sources for British gardens, gardening and landscape design held on computer at the University of York: report on the pilot study 1989-1990* (York, 1991).

Genealogy and family history

193. Colwell, Stella, *Dictionary of genealogical sources in the Public Record Office* (1992).
194. Moulton, Joy Wade, *Genealogical resources in English repositories* (Columbus, Ohio, 1988); Supplement (1992). (A directory summarising the holdings of individual repositories.)
195. Raymond, Stuart and Gibson, Jeremy, *English genealogy: an introductory bibliography* (Federation of Family History Societies, 1988).
196. Steel, DJ and others, *National index of parish registers* (1973-). Includes General sources of births, marriages and deaths before 1837 (no 1, 1976), Sources for nonconformist genealogy and family history (no 2, 1973), Sources for Roman Catholic and Jewish genealogy and family history (no 3, 1974), and Sources for Scottish genealogy and family history (no 12, 1970). (And for Wales see Rowlands, John and others, ed, Welsh family history: a guide to research, 1993.)
197. Wagner, (Sir) Anthony R, *English genealogy* (2nd edn, Oxford, 1972).

(See also 104, 116-118, 130-133, 141-143, 157, 172-174, 183, 184, 249.)

Legal history

198. Winfield, Percy H, *The chief sources of English legal history* (Cambridge, 1925).

(See also 121.)

Local and regional history

199. Aylmer, GE and Morrill, JS, *The Civil War and Interregnun: sources for local historians* (Standing Conference for Local History, 1979).
200. Elton, Arthur, Harrison, Brett and Wark, Keith, *Researching the country house: a guide for local historians* (1992).
201. Emmison, FG, *Archives and local history* (1966).
202. Keene, D and Harding, V, A survey of documentary sources for property holding in London before the Great Fire (*London Record Society*, vol xxii, 1985).
203. Riden, P, *Record sources for local history* (1987).
204. Stephens, WB, *Sources for English local history* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1981).
205. Turner, M and Wray, T, 'A survey of sources for parliamentary enclosure ...' (*Archives*, vol xix, no 85, April 1991, pp 257-88). (And for enclosure awards see above 138.)
206. Whyte, ID and Whyte, KA, *Sources for Scottish historical geography: an introductory guide* (Historical Geography Research Group Research Paper no 6, Norwich, 1981). (And for Scottish sources more generally see Moody, David, *Scottish local history, an introductory guide*, 1986.)

(Footnote references in the more recent volumes of the Victoria History of the Counties of England (VCH) indicate the range of sources available for local studies. See also 18, 27-29, 125-140; for taxation records, 104-107; for Wales, 6, 64, 65, 173, 196, 208; and for Scotland, 6, 8, 28, 29, 66-68, 82, 181, 196, 208.)

Political, official and institutional history

207. Baylen, Joseph O and Gossman, Norbert J, *Biographical Dictionary of modern British radicals* (3 vols, 1979-88).
208. Cook, Chris and others, compilers, *Sources in British political history 1900-1951* (6 vols, 1975-85) (I: A guide to the archives of selected organisations and societies, 1975; II: A guide to the private papers of selected public servants, 1975; III-IV: A guide to the private papers of members of parliament (1977); V: A guide to the private papers of selected writers, intellectuals and publicists (1978); VI: First consolidated supplement, 1985). (Volume I includes trade union, religious and other bodies, and has appendixes on Ireland, Wales and Scotland).
209. Cook, Chris and others, compilers, *The Longman guide to sources in contemporary British history* (2 vols, 1994) (volume 1: Organisations and societies; volume 2: Individuals). (A continuation of 208 above for the post- 1945 period. An appendix to volume 2 includes some military, Indian and colonial figures.)
210. Harrison, JFC and Thompson, Dorothy, *Bibliography of the Chartist movement 1837-1976* (Hassocks, 1978).
211. Hazlehurst, Cameron and Woodland, Christine, compilers, *A guide to the papers of British cabinet ministers 1900-1951* (Royal Historical Society, 1974.) (A second edition, extended to 1964, is in preparation.)
212. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Papers of British cabinet ministers 1782-1900* (Guides to Sources for British History no 1, 1982).
213. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Papers of British Politicians 1782-1900* (ibid no 7, 1989). (Includes Irishmen.)
214. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Papers of British diplomats 1782- 1900* (ibid no 4, 1985). (And see also 255.)
215. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Papers of British colonial governors 1782-1900* (ibid no 5, 1986).

(For MPs see *The History of Parliament*, passim. See also 74, 132, 171, 248.)

Religious history

216. Historical Manuscripts Commission, <>Papers of British churchmen 1780-1940 (Guides to Sources for British History no 6, 1987). (Includes nonconformists.)
217. Mills, Susan J, *Sources for the study of Baptist history* (1992).
218. Mullett, Michael, *Sources for the history of English nonconformity 1660-1830* (British Records Association Archives and the User no 8, 1991).

See also 108-113, 164, 165, 208.)

History of science

219. Bridson, GDR, Phillips, VC and Harvey, AP, *Natural history manuscript resources in the British Isles* (1980).

220. Harper, Peter, *Guide to the manuscript papers of British scientists catalogued by the Contemporary Scientific Archives Centre and the National Cataloguing Unit for the Archives of Contemporary Scientists* (Bath, 1993).
221. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *The manuscript papers of British scientists 1600-1940* (Guides to Sources for British History no 2, 1982).
222. Jayawardene, SA, 'Western scientific manuscripts before 1600: a checklist of published catalogues' (*Annals of Science*, xxxv, 1978, pp 143- 72).
223. Jeffreys, A, 'Manuscript sources for the history of science' (*Archives*, vol vii, no 34, October 1965, pp 75-9).
224. MacLeod, RM and Friday, JR, *Archives of British men of science* (microfiche, Mansell, 1972).

(See also 48, 49, 61, 135, 156.)

Social and economic history

225. Alford, BWE, Lowe, Rodney and Rollings, Neil, *Economic planning 1943-1951: a guide to documents in the Public Record Office* (Public Record Office Handbooks no 26, 1992).
226. Comfort, AF and Loveless, C, *Guide to government data: a survey of unpublished social science material in the libraries of government departments in London* (1974).
227. Cox, Richard William, *History of sport: a guide to the literature and sources of information* (1994).
228. Glennie, Paul, *Distinguishing men's trades: occupational sources and debates for pre-Census England* (Historical Geography Research Series no 25, 1990).
229. Land, Andrew, Lowe, Rodney and Whiteside, Noel, *Development of the Welfare State 1939-1951: a guide to documents in the Public Record Office* (Public Record Office Handbooks no 25, 1992).
230. Schurer, Kevin and Arkell, Tom, eds, *Surveying the people: the interpretation and use of document sources for the study of population in the later seventeenth century* (1992). (Deals with the hearth tax, poll taxes, etc.) (See also 104, 106, 130.)
231. Scott, John, *A matter of record: documentary sources in social research* (Cambridge, 1990). (A sociologist's approach to the evaluation of manuscript sources).
232. Storey, Richard and Madden, Lionel, *Primary sources for Victorian studies: a guide to the location and use of unpublished materials* (Leicester, 1977); Storey, Richard, An updating (Leicester, 1987).
233. Sturges, RP, *Economists' papers 1750-1950: a guide to archive and other manuscript sources for the history of British and Irish economic thought* (1975).
234. Swann, Brenda and Turnbull, Maureen, *Records of interest to social scientists 1919 to 1939* (Public Record Office Handbooks nos 14, 16 and 18, 1971-8).

(See also 33, 78, 89-101, 166-170, 236.)

Women's history

235. Barrow, Margaret, *Women 1870-1928: a select guide to printed and archival sources in the United Kingdom* (New York, 1981).
236. Kanner, Barbara, *Women in English social history 1800-1914: a guide to research* (3 vols, New York, 1987-90).
237. Manchester Women's History Group, *Resources for women's history in Greater Manchester* (National Museum of Labour History, Manchester, 1993).

(See also 55, 169.)

World Wars

238. Hall, Hubert, *British archives and the sources for the history of the World War* (1925).
239. Mayer, Sydney L and Koenig, WJ, compilers, *The two world wars: a guide to manuscript collections in the United Kingdom* (1976).
240. Public Record Office, *The Second World War: a guide to documents in the Public Record Office* (Public Record Office Handbooks no 15, 1972).

(See also 158.)

Republic of Ireland

Repositories

241. Helferty, Seamus and Refausse, Raymond, *Directory of Irish archives* (2nd edn, Dublin, 1993). (Includes Northern Ireland.)
242. Griffith, M, *A short guide to the Public Record Office of Ireland* (Dublin, 1964).
243. Trinity College, Dublin. Abbott, TK, *Catalogue of the manuscripts in the library ...* (Dublin, 1900, repr 1980).
244. University College, Dublin. Holland, AC and Helferty, S, *Guide to the Archives Department* (Dublin, 1985).

Other works

245. Edwards, RW Dudley and O'Dowd, Mary, *Sources for early modern Irish history 1534-1641* (1985).
246. Hayes, RJ, *Manuscript sources for the history of Irish civilisation* (14 vols, Boston, Mass, 1965, 1979). (The most accessible account of the individual holdings of the National Library of Ireland and other repositories. For manuscripts in private hands, some later deposited in the National Library, see also Analecta Hibernica and the published reports of the Irish Manuscripts Commission.)
247. Prochaska, Alice, *Irish history from 1700: a guide to sources in the Public Record Office* (British Records Association Archives and the User no 6, 1986).
248. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. Eighteenth-century Irish official papers in Great Britain: private collections (*Belfast*, vol 1, 1973; vol 2, ed Malcomson, APW, 1990).
249. Ryan, JC, *Irish records: sources for family and local history* (1988). (And see also Grenham, John, Tracing your Irish ancestors, the complete guide, Dublin, 1992.)

(For other publications covering Ireland see especially 10, 12-14, 19, 20, 39, 78, 123, 164, 165, 198, 233.).

Other countries

Repositories

250. International Council on Archives, International directory of archives (*Archivum*, vol xxxiii, 1988). (And see also 11.)
251. Sargent, RJ, ed, *The National Register of Archives: an international perspective. Essays in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the NRA* (1995).

UK manuscripts relating to other countries

For a considerable number of published surveys, mainly by region or country, see 9 above.

Manuscripts in other countries relating to the UK

252. *Archivo General de Simancas: catalogo xvi, Secretaria de Estado, documentos relativos a Inglaterra* (1254-1834) (Madrid, 1947).
253. Baker, JH, compiler, *English legal manuscripts in the United States of America* (2 vols, Selden Society, 1985, 1990).
254. Barraclough, G, 'A report on material for English history preserved in the archives of the Crown of Aragon at Barcelona' (1953, typescript at Institute of Historical Research).
255. Black, Jeremy, 'The papers of British diplomats, 1689-1793' (*Archives*, vol xx, no 88, October 1992, pp 225-53); Appendix II (ibid, vol xxi, no 92, October 1994, pp 205-13).
256. Brown, Rawdon, *L'archivio di Venezia, con riguardo speciale alla storia inglese* (Venice and Turin, 1865). (And see the *Calendars of Venetian State Papers* published by the Public Record Office.)
257. De Ricci, S and Wilson, WJ, *Census of medieval and renaissance manuscripts in the United States and Canada* (2 vols, New York, repr 1961); Supplement (1962).
258. *A Catalog of manuscripts of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC* (3 vols, Boston, Mass, 1971); Supplement (1988).
259. Hamer, Philip M, ed, *A Guide to archives and manuscripts in the United States* (New Haven, 1961). (Continued in the National Union Catalog of manuscript collections in the USA, Michigan, 1959-).
260. Huntington Library, San Marino, California. *Guide to British historical manuscripts* (San Marino, 1982). (Includes descriptions of large collections such as the Ellesmere, Hastings and Stowe MSS.)
261. International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, *General index of archives and collections* (nd). (Includes a number of British collections for labour history.)
262. Morriss, Roger, *Guide to British naval papers in North America* (forthcoming). 262 UNESCO, Guide to the archives of international organisations: part one, the United Nations system (Paris, 1979).
263. United States of America. *Guide to the National Archives* (Washington, 1987). (Some modern papers relating to British foreign policy are available in Washington before their release in the Public Record Office in London.)

264. *Union list of manuscripts in Canadian repositories* (Ottawa, 1975-).

Other useful works

Chronology and office-holding

265. Cheney, CR, ed, *Handbook of dates for students of English history* (Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks no 4, repr 1970).
266. Powicke, Sir FM and Fryde, EB, *Handbook of British chronology* (Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks no 2, 2nd edn, 1961).
267. Haydn, JT, compiler, *The book of dignities* (3rd edn, 1894).

For particular offices see, eg, Sainty, Sir John, general editor, *Office-holders in modern Britain*; Greenway, Diana and Horn, Joyce M, eds, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*; and Bindoff, ST and others, *British diplomatic representatives 1789-1852* (Royal Historical Society, Camden Third Series, L, 1934).

Dictionaries and Word Lists

268. Latham, RE, *Revised medieval latin word list* (1965). (A new Dictionary of medieval latin from British sources is in progress under the auspices of the British Academy.)
269. Mayhew, AL and Skeat, Walter W, *A concise dictionary of Middle English 1150-1580* (1888).
270. Godefroy, Frederic, *Lexique de l'ancien francais* (Paris, 1901).
271. Standing Conference for Local History, *A handlist of medieval ecclesiastical terms* (1952).

Heraldry

272. Aveling, ST, *Heraldry ancient and modern, including Boutell's Heraldry* (2nd edn, 1892).
273. Chesshyre, A and Woodcock, T, eds, *Dictionary of British Arms: medieval ordinary* volume one (Society of Antiquaries of London, 1992).

Palaeography and interpretation

274. Dawson, GE and Kennedy-Skipton, L, *Elizabethan handwriting 1500- 1650* (1966).
275. Gooder, Eileen R, *Latin for local history: an introduction* (2nd edn, 1978).
276. Hector, LC, *The handwriting of English documents* (1966).
277. Johnson, Charles and Jenkinson, Hilary, *English court hand* (2 vols, 1915).
278. Martin, Charles Trice, *Record interpreter* (2nd edn, 1910).
279. Simpson, Grant G, *Scottish handwriting 1150-1650* (Aberdeen, repr 1986).

(See also 176.)