

8

ADMINISTRATION OF ARCHIVES

The term 'archives' denotes the organised body of records produced or received by a public, semi-public institution, business or private entity. Although the institution of archives and something of archival administration may be traced from antiquity, as they are understood to-day they date from the French Revolution. Since then there has been tremendous development and to-day archival administration is a well-developed science adopted and advocated all over the world. Records are tools of administration and therefore they are the evidence by which a government is accountable to the people. Accordingly making of adequate arrangements and accommodation of the record for use is an important duty of a civilized state. The creation and the rapid growth of records have created a big problem to the Archivists throughout the world.

Archival administration falls into two aspects namely the administration side and the technical side.

The administrative side for its most part deals with the officials connected with the Archives. Each archives has its own team of administrators to administer the records. They are in charge of the archives under the overall governmental direction. Their main duties are to collect, to register, to index, to organise, to preserve, and above all to supply to different agencies and to scholars. On the other

hand, the technical side consists of trained personnel whose main duty centres around arrangement and preservation of the archival collections.

The administrative side of Archives administration

Accumulation of records and records control:

Archivists all over the world are faced with the problem of accommodating the records which go on increasing day by day. Rigorous attempts are made to reduce the accumulation of records. There should be a rational method for the destruction of records periodically. Records marked for destruction, after three reviews should be destroyed forthwith. The first review is after 10 years and the second one is fixed after 20 years. The final review is arranged after 20 years of the second review. This method of review is followed as a precaution against wrong judgements. After the third review all documents meant for permanent preservation should be microfilmed and the original destroyed. Through this method, the size and bulkness of the records can be reduced to a large extent.

A preventive measures :

As a preventive measure, it is suggested to take measures to control the creation of records. Experts are of the opinion that it is necessary to apply a form of birth control to unnecessary record creation.

Three elements are essential for the archival control of modern records. They are,

1. The determination of the type of records to be removed from the agency of origin.
2. The time of disposition and
3. The manner of disposition.

Varied procedures are followed in different countries regarding elimination or destruction of records. In some countries elimination usually had occurred before records are transferred to record offices from the agency of origin. Some countries especially those whose history dates back to many centuries have prohibited the elimination of records before a specified time or date.

Work of the Creating Agency :

It is necessary to give first aid to the newly created records. This includes proper stitches, prevention from fraying of edges elementary repair, mending and periodical fumigation.

After the first aid, it is necessary to prepare subjectwise list of each paper. This is followed by the preparation of index to papers in a scientific manner which may be helpful to both the administrator and the researcher. The agency is expected to select the records meant for preservation and to destroy the useless records. This destruction is done after obtaining the approval of the agency.

TECHNICAL SIDE OF ARCHIVAL ADMINISTRATION :

The functions like preparation of accession registers, arrangement of records, fixing of descriptive labels on the shelves, bundles or boxes of records are also carried out. This sort of scientific arrangement is essential for the proper use of records.

Accession:

The records, documents and maps are assigned for accession. They include government papers, bills, semi public records and private papers. Further, the department of archives keeps its regular programme of acquiring micro-films of records of government interest from other countries.

Appraisal, checking and arrangements:

In the sphere of record management the programme of appraisal of unappraised records is followed. Time to time the work of checking, arranging and cataloguing are also carried out. Docketing and classification of records are also done. The checking of private papers and their proper arrangement are also periodically carried out. All these are done at the various government departments.

Immediately after the arrival of the records in the archives, trained technical person in the concerned aspect are engaged in the task of arrangement of records. Preservation of records without arrangement makes the researcher to thrive in the task of searching the black cat in a dark room.

Compilation of reference media:

It is an important duty of the administration to prepare an elaborate reference media to help the researcher to locate the source he is badly in need of. All the archival establishments do possess many well-prepared reference media. Compilation of guide to records is continued.

In this abstract list the record series are compiled, giving, the relevant information regarding their contents in benefit, inclusive of years, gaps, and shelf space occupied by them. The work regarding preparation of summary, inventories and subject list of records are also looked into by the staff. Further subject lists are also prepared for the different branches of departments.

Register of records:

Registers of public, semi-public and private records are brought out. It covers the materials received from the different departments of government institutions,

organizations and private parties. They are compiled and sometimes edited and printed.

Research and Reference Service:

During a year, the number of research scholars who have availed themselves of the facilities offered by the archives for consulting records, published sources, micro films and collection of private papers are prepared. Archives attend to requisitions for records from the research scholars, members of the staff, and various private and public agencies of the government. The library attached to the archives offices facilities for consulting books, old periodicals etc. A large number of enquiries received from the various government departments, semi-government organizations, private institutions and individuals are attended to.

Inspection and Advisory work:

Central archives deputed trained individuals to provincial and other regional archives for inspection and advice. Sometime archivists are sent to study diverse problems connected with record management. Officers of the records management division also inspect record room and advise the concerned people regarding safeguards against insects and pest damage to records.

Protection:

National and Inter-national measures especially in times of war have been adopted to the protection of archives. The UNESCO in 1950 prepared a manual for the protection of cultural properties in peace and war. Past experience showed that records were not taken proper care of by governments during war.

The Administrative side: T.N. Archives

The administrative side mainly deals with the officials

who work in the Archives. Let us take the Tamil Nadu Archives to illustrate the administrative side of Archival administrative framework. The Tamil Nadu Archives, is the biggest archives in South East Asia. It preserves important historical records belonging to the past three centuries. The Madras Record Office as it was originally known was first under a curator. This office in 1967 was renamed as Tamil Nadu Archives and a director was appointed in the place of the curator.

In 1972 a commissioner was appointed above the director to supervise all the functions of the Archives. The Tamil Nadu Archives functions under the jurisdictions of the Education Department of the Tamil Nadu Government. The Commissioner who is usually an I.A.S. officer is the head. The commissioner is assisted by a director. There are research assistants, referencers and record clerks.

The research assistant supervises the work of two or three referencers besides attending to cases of search for information from the records. The referencer is assisted by record clerks in collecting and restoring paper required for reference and in keeping the records in a good state of preservation. For all the activities relating to the technical side in the archives administration, the Director is the head.

Technology and special type of records:

Computer kept records and microfilm are the result of advanced technology. Microfilm is a practical medium for making additional copies of records as security against risk through acts of war for preservation against normal deterioration or damage; for use in international exchange; in lieu of loan or as a convenience to scholars; for reducing costs of repair, binding and storages; and as a form of preservation.

As the concepts of social, economic and cultural history developed as industrialization played an increasingly prominent role, in national and international affairs, as industrialization spread over the surface of the globe, so there was an increasing awareness of the significance of business archives, institutional archives and the papers of person not necessarily distinguished. Germany was the first country to recognize the value of business archives. Belgium, Switzerland and Netherlands followed suit. England, Denmark and the U.S.A. recognized it late.

Administrative Legislation:

In India no archival legislation has been enacted so far. But the constitution of India has provided ample scope for legislation to protect historical records and monuments of national importance. Part IV, Article 49 of the constitution says that the State Government protect every monument and Part XI, Article 246 provides a good ground for a beginning of archival administration by,

- 1) Declaring a particular class or group of records not covered by and as provided by the constitution as records of national importance and its preservation.
- 2) Defining records.
- 3) Establishing central, departmental and regional records offices.
- 4) Giving accessibility to the public records for academic, legal and other purposes.
- 5) Eliminating and destroying some public records.
- 6) Providing for microfilming of records of secondary importance before destruction of originals.
- 7) Providing penalties for violation.

- 8) Authorising the union and state Government to issue executive orders not covered by law.

Rules of Archival Administration:

Archives is also an official place which is subjected to certain rule and regulations. The archival administration underwent a process of change from time to time. The creation and growth of records at a rapid rate has created a big problem all over the world.

The archivist should be an administrator and historian. The archivist is the servant of the archives. He should know how to arrange the historical documents without external help. If he has leisure and interest he may use his time for research. He will be a general guide to the contents of the repository. Archives is an official place which is subjected to certain rules and regulations.

Problems:

Record management has created a lot of problems. Some of them are the following:

- 1) No legislation policy in central authority controlling the requirement and disposal of records.
- 2) Demand for more personnel, space and equipment for records.
- 3) Uncontrolled and continuous procurement of equipment and supplies, filling, duplicating and microfilming records.
- 4) Lack of facilities for low-cost average inactive records.
- 5) Lack of written procedures or chart covering many records operation.
- 6) Inability to locate records when needed.

According to the Act of 1935, records of the post mutiny period are classified under three heads viz, Post Mutiny, federal and useless. Destruction of records has been the joint responsibility of the Archives and the administrator. When a file comes to a close, a note reading "Keep or destroy" will be there. If both the archivist and the administrator agree, then the paper will be destroyed.

The next aspect of administration of archives includes training, technical and advisory service, preservation and repair of records, research laboratory and publication.

Training:

Imparting training in the science of archives keeping is organised. This is a workshop on care and preservation of archival materials. Trainees are deputed from various archives to learn the recent developments in archives keeping. In addition to the above mentioned training, special facilities for observation cum-training in the various techniques of repair and reprographic methods are also used. Besides leading archives extend facilities for the study of records and microfilms.

Technical and advisory services:

Besides attending to its normal conservation and restoration work, important archives rendered technical advice and service to a number of institutions and individuals for preservation and rehabilitation of records. Technical advice connected with repair etc. are given to smaller archives.

Scientific experts are also deputed to inspect records and recommend various methods in the preservation of records.

Repair and rehabilitation is another work. Photo duplication service is rendered to a number of institutions and individuals. As part of the regular programme, micro-filming of the records of different departments is carried out.

Research Laboratory:

To find out their suitability for use, in the repair and rehabilitation of records, the research laboratory of the archives continues testing various materials available in the country like chiffon, ledger paper, glue, naphthaline, cellulose, foil, tissue paper etc. Testing of waxed paper, cover paper and leather is also undertaken to ascertain their durability for binding volumes.

Publication:

In addition to their regular works, Archives undertake publication. By identifying certain areas, the Archives publish works. Compilation of reference media like indexes and guides to records are also done. Further conferences and exhibitions are conducted.

The administration of Archive is a complex problem which involves care and attention. Better administration leads to better utilization of archival materials since facts fall from archives to the pool of history when a historian has to quench his thirst for facts to re-write history.



14

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA (NAI)

The National Archives of India is the chief repository of the records of the government of India. It is the biggest archival institution in Asia and one of the leading archival establishments in the world. It serves as the custodian of all Government records both past and present. It is a main source of information for understanding past administrative machinery as well as a guide to the present and future generations related to all matters. It contains authentic evidence for knowing the political, social, economic, cultural and scientific life and activities of the people of India. It was started in 1891 as a result of the efforts of the Government of India to find an adequate and permanent solution to the problem of storage and preservation of their ever increasing bulk of records. The National Archives of India (NAI) is situated in Janpath, New Delhi.

Origin of NAI :

Archival activities on a scientific basis started in India in the 18th century. The first organised effort was taken by the Supreme Court which was under the public department. The record office existed for about fourteen years from 1797 to 1811 with the introduction of permanent land revenue settlement in Bengal, archival activities became inevitable as the British Raj was 'a paper raj' and had a habit of recording every thing. So records had accumulated quite

beyond the storing resources of the various departments. For this purpose a general record office was then established at Fort William, Calcutta.

James Hume :

In 1847, James Hume, one of the judges at Calcutta who was for sometime, the Honorary Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal had charted out an excellent plan for the establishment of a Central Record Office where all records could be maintained well. But his proposal was not materialized.

Hitherto abortive steps finally materialized in 1860, as government of India felt that it's old records were not properly looked after. Mr. Sandeman, the Civil auditor, emphasized in his report the need for relieving various offices of the congestion by destruction of papers of ephemeral value and advocated transfer of all valuable records to a Grand Central Archives.

Record Committee: 1861

On the basis of the report of Sandeman, a Record Committee was constituted in 1861 to examine and deal with the relevant questions regarding old records which had been accumulating for years together in various departments of the Secretariat at Calcutta and other offices. Seton Carr was appointed as President of the Committee and Talboys Wheeler who had perior experience at Madras, as it's secretary.

The committee in a memorandum submitted its report on 20th December, 1862. It recommended for the mention of scattered valuable public records in a single muniment room. But the recommendations was not implemented.

Instead the committee bogged down in a publication programme of records. (The publications are 'Selections from unpublished records', Records of Home and Foreign department and Calendar of India's State papers. Thus the object behind the creation of the committee remained unrealized.

General Chesney's initiative:

The deplorable condition of the records attracted in 1889 the notice of general Chesney, Military member of the governor general in council who urged upon the government the necessity for taking some action before the records were completely destroyed. While matters were slowed down like this, George William Forrest, Professor of Elphinstones College, Bombay, who had already earned the reputation as an archivist, by his personal interest took the lead. He was invited by the government in 1889, and was appointed as an officer on special duty to examine the records of Foreign Department of the government of India.

Report of George William Forrest :

The report submitted by G.W.Forrest on 17th August, 1889 impressed upon the government of India the imperative necessity of establishing a Central Record Office. Forrest recommended that all records relating to the administration of East India Company should be placed in one 'Central Record Office'.

Then the question of establishing a central record office was discussed in the Governor General in council which also recognized the need for a record office. Accordingly on 11th March 1891 the Government of India employed G.W.Forrest as officer in charge of the records of the Government of India for examining old records in each

of the department as well as organising a Central Library in place of different departmental libraries. Thus Imperial Record Department (IRD) came into existence in Calcutta in 1891. It was located in the six rooms of the ground floor of the new imperial secretariat buildings opposite to the government house in Calcutta. It was placed under the administrative control of the Home Department.

Growth of NAI

G.W.Forrest : 1891-1899

Forrest can rightly be called as the Father of National Archives of India. He started his work with a limited staff which consisted of an assistant, 8 clerks, 18 draftists and coolies. By June 1891 all the records of the Home Department were transferred and the Central Library was organised. Gradually records of other offices were also deposited. With these meager strength and amateur staff G.W.Forrest by 1899 was able to arrange chronologically as well as in accordance with their origin. The records were arranged under the following seven headings.

- 1) Home (1752-1879);
- 2) Foreign (1764-1829);
- 3) Military Board (1777-1858);
- 4) Military (1786-1893);
- 5) Medical Board (1845-1859);
- 6) Surgeon General (1845-1859);
- 7) Public Works (1850-1871).

A valuable and precious accession made by Forrest was the 'Foreign Department's Correspondence with Indian rulers'. They are in Persian and in other oriental languages. These letters have historical philosophical and literary values. Some of them are illuminated gold sprinkled documents. These specimens speak loudly of the excellent Indian Calligraphy in medieval days.

S.C.Hill : 1899-1902

Forrest was succeeded by Samuel Charles Hill. He was an eminent scholar and a creative genius. He carried on the records publication work and unearthed a mass of materials which formed the nucleus of his monumental 'volumes on Bengal' in 1756-57. The books on 'Yusufkhan' and the History of the Maratha people were also published.

Just like his valuable research work, S.C.Hill showed much interest in the preparation of the reference media. He successfully compiled the 'Abstract of the Farley Records of the Foreign Department (1756-62). Secondly he prepared a calendar of the proceedings of the Select Committee for the period 1750-1760. As he knew the details of the work, he very well understood the problems connected with it and introduced a less elaborate and simple plan of press-listing.

S.C.Hill also took effective steps for the rehabilitation of fragile papers. He also undertook the programme of flattening the entire series of folded documents, repaired them, and placed them between docket covers. He also introduced a superior quality of tracing paper for repairing the records. Thus under S.C.Hill the Imperial Record Department made substantial progress both in rehabilitation of documents and preparation of reference media.

C.R.Wilson: 1902-1904

After S.C.Hill the work was taken by Charles Robert Wilson. He continued the work of C.S.Hill and brought out six volumes of Public Press List which covered 8000 manuscript pages and a press list of Bengal and Madras papers. It was he who rooted the proposal of calendaring the Persian Correspondence. But before giving shape to his idea he passed away due to illness.

archives management, he was able to contribute much to the building up of the central record Office.

A.F.Schotfield: 1914-1919

After Ross, Alwyn Fober Schotfield became the head of the Archives in 1914 under the new title 'Keeper of Records'. Schotfield was an archivist unlike his predecessors who were scholars. Schotfield was an excellent indexer, so, he released a pamphlet entitled indexing of records, which dealt with the rules of indexing for the benefit of learners and as a guidance for archivists. An index to the entire series of public press lists was launched. He compiled a staff manual too.

Scotfield replaced the old method of tracing paper mending of the documents with that of more enduring Chiffon and less expensive Japanese tissue paper. He was fond of repairing and rehabilitating the old records himself and also trained others in the art of mending. During his time, the preservation branch was put on the sound footing.

The most important milestone of his tenure was setting up of Indian Historical Records Commission in In 1919 to advise the Government of India in matters connected with the acquisition, preservation and historical research. Schotfield was succeeded by Richard Henry Blaker who served the office for 15 months. He started the preliminary work on a 'Hand book to the pre-Mutiny records', as suggested by the Indian Historical Record Commission. Press listing of Mutiny papers was completed during Blaker's time.

J.M.Mitra: 1920-22

In November 1920, Jamini Mohan Mitra assumed charges from Blaker as the keeper of records. He was the first Indian appointed as the head of the Imperial Record Department. The first challenge that he had to respond was the termite menace. He took effective measures for the eradication of termites. The press lists of the secret and separate department records were revised

go with it. So the present building was opened at New Delhi on 1st November, 1926. The transit was very slow and had to be cautiously done. The transport charges had to be kept as low as possible. Thus in a snails slow speed, the transfer of records was completed by March 1937.

As per the recommendation of the IHRC, the publication of a series of monographs on Indian History were undertaken. As a first step in this direction, Dodwell's 'Sepoy Recruitment in the old Madras Army' was published in 1922. Though completed in 1920, the consolidated Index to the Press Lists of the Public Department of India, (1748-1859) saw the light only in 1924. The Hand books to the Records of the government of India, 1748-1859 appeared in 1925. During Abdul Ali's regime two volumes of calendar of Persian Correspondence were placed before the public.

Dr. S.N.Sen: 1939-1949

Dr.Surendra Nath Sen who succeeded Abdul Ali was a man of vision and foresight. Under him, the activities of the Imperial Records Department was reoriented to the core. Sen understood the fact fully that the archives should provide easy access to the genuine seekers of knowledge. In December 1939, the portals of Archives were opened to bonafide scholars although excerpts from these records were released only after proper scrutiny. All the pre 1902 records were made available for researchers.

To facilitate the use of these records more detailed reference media became necessary and as a pilot project two volumes of detailed indexes to the Land Revenue Records (1830-'59) were published and were welcomed well by the researchers. Finding the response and encouragement another 'Index to select committee and secret department records (1756-'80)' was initiated.

'A manual of rules regulating access to archives in India and Europe' was compiled and published in 1940. The calendaring of Persian correspondence was speeded up and two more volumes were compiled with elaborate introductions and copious notes. The entire correspondence between the Fort William authorities and India House in London (1748-1800) in 21 volumes was taken up.

Sen was confronted with the problems of conservation also. A laminating hydraulic press was installed to repair brittle and fragile documents in large scale. The introduction of vacuum fumigatorium facilitated speedy disinfection of documents infested by insects and moulds. The micro photographic laboratory conversed the department's valuable collections on microfilm.

A laboratory to conduct researches on problems relating to conservation under tropical conditions was also established. It was the first of its kind in the whole of Asia. The lab soon invented the insecticide paper and a method of repairing palm leaf manuscripts. Researches in the laboratory have established them as a very effective insecticide. As a fungus killer, it has been found to be infinitely superior to white arsenic.

The ascendancy of archives made the presence of the trained personnel inevitable. A band of well trained and qualified staff had to replace the existing untrained staff. Hence, persons either with History or Chemistry degrees were given training in the scientific treatment of records. As imparting training to staff became a permanent feature, a formal course in archival training in the department was initiated in 1943.

A quarterly journal on Archival, 'Indian Archives' was started with the object to provide the new profession with

the medium for self expression. The 'keeper of records' was designated as Director of Archives in 1944. England, though prepared to part from India was not prepared to part with Indian records of historical significance. The government of England took a decision to the effect of handing over such Indian records to her government immediately on the transfer of power. However, fortunately a greater part of records was reserved ultimately for India.

After independence through the timely efforts of the Indian Government a greater part of these records was saved for the nation. And the partition kick was to be a formidable foe to the entire archival assets as it was threatened with physical amputation. But it was covered by an immediate settlement by both Indian and Pakistan governments agreeing to respect the integrity of the archival wealth.

Further, the Imperial Record Department was renamed as National Archives of India in 30th August 1947. The change was not to be just nominal. It emphasized the fact that the repository was no longer a mere store house of records but a proud custodian of a nation's heritage in documentary form containing the experiences of India and Britain for the past two hundred years. Hence for the National Archives of India had to play a more dynamic, inspiring and creative role in the archival field of the whole country. Thus the archival ascendancy was not an abrupt but a very steady and gradual one.

Growth of National Archives of India after 1947

Dr.S.N.Sen retired on 31st October 1949. He was succeeded by Dr.Purnendu Basu. Then Dr.Saletore served from 1952-1957. On 1st September 1953 a committee of archivists of India was constituted with eminent archivists members, to evolve ways and means by which those who were concerned with archival

administration in the country could meet occasionally and exchange ideas relating to the technical problems facing them.

On 19th August 1959, the government of India constituted a committee on Archival Legislation. Though the committee submitted its report in 1960, and on 11th December 1972, the government passed the 'policy resolution'. Then several archivists like K.D.Bhargava, Dr.S.N.Prasad, Tirmizi and others served as Directors under whom the NAI witnessed a steady growth. NAI has become the biggest archival institution in Asia and of the leading archival establishment of the world.

Regional Centres of National Archives of India:

a) Bhopal:

The NAI established regional offices in important cities. The first regional centre was started in Bhopal on 23rd November 1954. This office came into existence as a result of an offer from the former princely state of Bhopal to hand over all its records to the government of India as a gift. This offer was accepted and a keeper of records with other necessary staff was sent to Bhopal to take charge of the records. The major collections contain pre-mutiny and mutiny papers, original authenticated copies of laws written on parchment, the rules of Bhopal bearing seals, bundles of Persian records and books in different languages.

b) Panaji

The second regional centre was started in 1965 at Panaji in Goa. The major collections of archives were Portuguese Military records, including Military Court, judicial court of Savestee; village community books of Ponda, Books of Pemeum, Travel registers and so on. It also did all routine work of archival keeping. The research scholars are also permitted to consult them.

c) Jaipur

The third regional centre of National Archives was started

at Jaipur, in Rajasthan on 3rd January 1977 for housing the non-current records of the central government.

d) Puthucherry:

In 1979, the National Archives of India started the fourth regional centre at Puthucherry. It accommodated the records pertaining to the French administration in Puthucherry.

ARCHIVAL WEALTH (Holdings)

The NAI is the biggest and best equipped repository in India and in the whole of Asia. It has in its custody mainly non-current records, which include public records, maps, micro films and books. The total holdings are approximately 1,10,000 bound volumes, 6,00,000 loose documents, 18,000 maps, and thousands of authenticated copies of bills passed by the various state legislatures and affirmed by the President of India.

a) Public Records:

National Archives has a series of government ministry records. Among the records the following are important.

- 1) Archives of the Ministry of home affairs and its predecessor bodies (1748-1957).
- 2) Ministries of external affairs (1756-1950).
- 3) Ministries of Finance (1811-1948)
- 4) Ministries of Agriculture (1871-1948)
- 5) Ministries of Education (1910-1951)
- 6) Ministries of Railways (1905-1955)
- 7) Ministries of Defence (1771-1938)

Records of the various departmental bodies, boards, councils, agencies etc., of the government are also under its custody. Some of the records may be mentioned.

- 1) Directorate of general health service (1885-1948)
- 2) Survey of India (1777-1902)
- 3) Indian council of Agricultural Research (1929-1945)
- 4) Central Board of Revenues (1923-1946)
- 5) Mewar and Southern Rajaputhana State agency (1829-1914).

In recent years there has been a huge and unprecedented accession of records to the NAI. A million of files which are previously housed at Simla have also come to NAI. The archives has a very huge collection of public records which runs into a shelf space of nearly thirty kms.

b) Maps:

The map section was created on 26th October, 1953 with the object of organising a separate repository for the maps, mostly received from the survey of India. The map section was engaged in acquisition, arrangement, supply of maps and for preparing reference media to the cartographic records.

On 19th March 1957, the map section was reorganised and it was renamed as Records-4 (R-4). This section has a rich collection of more than 18,000 printed and manuscript maps form a part of great archival wealth. The total holdings include 1,05,000 bound volumes, 53,81,200 loose documents which are only a part of 140 million folios preserved in the NAI.

c) Private Papers

After independence, NAI has embarked upon the collection of private papers, as these are also considered as an important source of historical research. The present collection includes private papers of more than 90 eminent Indians from all fields. The list includes names of persons

like Dadabai Naroji, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Rajendraprasad, Badruddin Tyabji, P.S.Siva Swami Iyer, Netaji Subash Chandra Bose, Lala Lajpat Rai and N.B.Khare.

Papers of eminent scientists such as Shanti Swaroop Bhatnagar and mathematician Ramanujam are also the prized possession of the NAI. Meerut conspiracy case papers are also available in the National Archives. In 1985, Shri Iqbal Chagla donated private papers of his father late Shri.M.C.Chagla An eminent category of private collection comprises the records of the Provincial Government of Deccan and Aurangzeb and his successors. These records have been acquired through donations and purchase by the historical records purchase committee of the NAI.

d) Micro films from abroad:

Another jewel in the archival fecade is the micro film collection. In 1948, the National Archives initiated a project for obtaining micro film copies of documents of Indian interest from various repositories in the world. These micro films provide researchers with valuable supplementary data. Further this new technique save upto 90% of space.

United kingdom has been a major source and has furnished microfilm copies of the private papers of Secretaries of State for India, Viceroys and senior public servants. The British Museum, the Public Record Office, The Indian Office Library, University Libraries and some other repositories in U.K. also helped to enrich collections in the NAI.

Other countries like Netherlands, France, Australia, Brazil, Germany and Russia also have given us micro films. These are acquired through exchange agreements with individual archives as well as under cultural exchange

186

programmes between the government of India and others. The present collections of micro films acquired under this programme exceed 5000 rolls. The micro film collection had proved to be a big facility and boon to research scholars who are able to consult the relevant materials in the research room of NAI, without having to go abroad for this purpose.

e) Library

The library contains on mainly rare books and documents. Many of them date back to the 18th century. Among the rare, one can find a copy of the original constitution bearing signatures of its framers; the famous minute of 1835 on English education by Macaulay, letters from Clive and Warren Hastings; the Farman of the Mughal emperor Shah Alam granting the Diwani of the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the East India Company and several other invaluable documents.

The library has a rich collection of publications in various languages. Some of the notable collections are Fort William College Collection; proscribed literature, complete files of Persian and Urdu newspapers of early 19th century, British Parliamentary papers since 1807 and Bibliotheca Indica series.

The other notable titles in the library are Calcutta Gazette, Daily Gazette (since 1860), Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal (since 1844), Statistics at large (since 1814), Calcutta Review (since 1791), Census report of India (since 1801), Settlement reports and Bengal past and present (1907).

At present there are more than two lakhs of volumes in the library. Besides the normal duties of acquisition and supply of books and journals the library is to guide the research scholars in regard to published materials. The

library branch is saddled with the additional responsibility to scrutinize the extracts taken from confidential and proscribed literature before their release to the research scholars.

Thus endowed with rare and old collections, the NAI is a sea of sources for researchers. Even the most insatiable intellectual mind will be satisfied by the archival wealth of NAI and research scholars 'in search of fresh lands and pastures new' will find the ample materials for investigation and research.

Administration :

There had been an increasing flow of records and documents in the National Archives. Those are to be properly checked and arranged as most of the records are in a disorderly condition. To keep them in proper shape for consultative purpose they were examined and rearranged according to the principle of provenance.

The National Archives incorporated the isolated records and restored the broken records to their original order. For easy location and restoration, the work of docketing, numbering, labelling and pagination was done. By the introduction of requisition slips and movement registers arrangements were thoroughly made to restore files taken from the parent body back to their proper place. The quantity of documents and volumes treated thus in the National Archives is more than eight million.

The archival administration faces numerous problems mainly on account of irregular and unsystematic retirement of records. For example, records from various departments are sent to the National Archives with indexes to record the series. But the records listed in the indexes are not actually transformed. Likewise, records of permanent value are

mixed with those of an ephemeral nature. The archival legislation committee appointed by the Government of India in 1959 brought these problems to light. It gave systematic suggestion, for the retirement of records.

Record Management

In 1962, the National Archives launched a pilot project of records management to guide the government agencies to relieve them of their burden of ephemeral records. It advocated appraisal methods for the identification of permanent records. It was highly welcomed by the creating agencies.

In 1972, the Government of India adopted an Archival Policy Resolution in order to streamline the heavy accumulation of records. This resolution suggested certain measures in respect of appraisal and retirement of records. The suggestions were as follows :

1. Appointment of trained personnel to govern the departmental muniment rooms.
2. Improvement of the storage conditions.
3. Preparation of indices.
4. Revision of departmental manuals regarding record management; and
5. Improving the relation between the departmental Record and the National Archives of India.

Some States of the Indian Federation destroyed indiscriminately their records and they were condemned by the archivists and the Historians. The attention of the Government was drawn to prevent such recurrence in the future. In response, the Government of India set up a Record Management Committee in 1975 to protect records from

being indiscriminately destroyed. The Committee reaffirmed the Archival Policy Resolution. It further added some more recommendations to add strength to the cause of record management. Those recommendations were :

- (1) The Governments should give priority to the archival building in their construction programmes.
- (2) The state Governments should create and maintain interim repositories.
- (3) The Historical Records Commission should be consulted before the disposal or destruction of non - current records. These recommendations were implemented and thus the process of record management developed to a considerable extent.

Preservation of Records in NAI:

Preservation of records is the principal function of the archives. Since records are the memory of the past administrations and their activities the archivist has to preserve them for future evidence. The National Archives being the head of the archival institutions in the country, it is functioning as a guide and guardian to other archival organizations in the matter of accumulation and conservation of records and other documents.

a) Research Laboratory:

The traditional conservation methods have been replaced by modern scientific methods one after another. For fostering better preservation techniques, the National archives installed a research laboratory in 1940. All the repairing materials such as Japanese tissue paper, chiffon and others are tested there and analysed before they are used for the rehabilitation and repair of records. Research have been carried out in this labouratory to find out the effect of

different chemicals to kill the insects, the impact of climate on the life of the records, the quality of the writing materials on which the records were transcribed and so on.

The repair of palm leave manuscripts, the preservation of paper manuscripts, methods of destroying the enemies of the manuscripts such as white ants and other insects are the main topics of research. Periodically the scientists in this laboratory were deputed to various technical institutions and research laboratories in India and abroad for acquainting themselves with the latest developments in the means of preserving records.

The department made a great advance in the indigenous manufacture of high grade tissue paper for the repair of the documents. To achieve this, the laboratory has been working in close cooperation with the Khadi and village industries commission and tests have been conducted on a few samples to determine their suitability. Besides this, the laboratory gives technical information and guidance on various aspects of conservation and preservation of records and other reading materials to many record offices, libraries, museums and individuals.

b) Reprographic Services:

Reprographic means reproduction of the records in different forms such as micro film, xerox, reprint, photo duplication and so on. For purposes of preservation, the brittle and decayed records could be reproduced by xeroxing or micro filming for future use and can be saved in this fashion for a long time.

The national archives has a well equipped reprographic unit having a number of micro film cameras, including mobile camera units, automatic processors, reader printers, positive duplicators, xeroxing machines etc. The mobile micro film unit

of the department visited Ahmedabad to complete the micro filming of Sardar Patel papers. It also visited Mysore at the request of the Archaeological Survey of India to micro film the copies of inscriptions at the office of the chief epigraphist.

Keeping in view that life and quality of micro film depend mainly on processing, storage and handling the NAI has evolved a few standard in the direction, in collaboration with Bureau of Indian standards. The reprographic service is often availed of by various state archives and other record centres for meeting their needs.

c) The Hydraulic Laminating press

The setting up of the Hydraulic laminating press marked the shift system from the conventional methods to the modern scientific process. It made possible a large scale repair of the old and brittle documents. Every page is sealed with cellulose acetate foils using of heat and pressure. This process affords them immunity against deterioration. More than sixteen lakh foils of old manuscript documents underwent this process and got strengthened.

d) Vacuum fumigatorium:

The documents are generally immune to moulds and insects. Negligence to protect the archival wealth at the proper time through proper means would result in an irreparable loss. The documents will be prey to the hungry pests, insects and the like. Hence the National archives installed as vacuum fumigatorium to provide safety and security to the records from the attacks of moulds and insects. This fumigatorium provides large scale treatment of the records affected by the attacks from moulds and insects. The fumigation chamber of the NAI is capable of fumigating three hundred cubic feet of records at a time.

15

TAMILNADU ARCHIVES

Tamil Nadu Archives occupies a unique place in the annals of the archival world. It is mainly a Government archive. It was established in 1806. It was reorganised as a repository in 1909 with a separate building of its own. Until 1968, it was called as Madras record office when it was christened as Madras State Archives. When Madras state was changed into Tamil Nadu, it was renamed as 'Tamil Nadu Archives'.

The Tamil Nadu Archives is situated in Chennai, opposite to Egmore railway station, being a red building like the National Archives of India, New Delhi. It is a place where public and private records connected with the people are kept and preserved systematically.

Tamil Nadu Archives enjoys the distinction of being the first and well organised archive in India. Being the biggest archive in South East Asia it houses the records relating to the period of three centuries. The earliest series of British records in its custody dates back to 1670. John Bruce, the keeper of State papers and Historiographer recorded early records of the Fort St. George prior to 1670 in his 'Annals of the Honourable East India company' in three volumes, in the year 1870. The printed copy of this book is available in Tamil Nadu archives. The archives preserved here reflect the origin, growth and expansion of British rule by territorial conquest and the final

establishment of supremacy over all rival powers both foreign and India.

The archives preserved here also contain a mine of information of the aspiration and achievements of British Government on all matters of administration covering all aspects of socio-economic problems, besides throwing light on the views and ideas of able and experienced administrators, statement and legislations of the past of all matters of public interest. The mass of records in the Tamil Nadu archives of course in English but the collection includes series of administrative records in Dutch, Danish, Persian and Marathi while that are a few documents in French, Portuguese, Tamil and Urdu. In addition to this, the Tamil Nadu archives contains records relating to contemporary affairs of Tamil Nadu.

Origin and growth of Tamil Nadu Archives:

In the middle of the 17th century, the East India Company established its factories and offices in Madras. Correspondence was very few and therefore, documents were also few. As trade of the East India Company developed and it's political activity increased, more records came into being. In those days records were kept in Desks.

Under the guidance of the Governor of Madras, Mr. Stereynham Master (1678-1681) a system of keeping registers were first introduced. Mr. Master worked to draw up rules for the secretary's guidance including to enter all the consultation in a book designed for that purpose, to keep a diary of all the concurrences and observations and to take two copy books of the letters to and from English. These records were kept in chests in the Council's Chambers. This was situated in the Fort House, which at that time stood in the middle part of fort. Thus the Madras Presidency played

the leading role in the matter of records keeping in the early days of company's rule.

The volume of records increased year by year, thereby compelling the British Government to plan the expansion of suitable building and their internal arrangements to store the public records in 1738. During the reign of Queen Victoria no serious efforts had been taken by the Home Government in Great Britain to centralise and preserve records which were kept in unsuitable buildings. But the East India Company's Government in Madras realized the importance and need for the centralization of provincial records more than thirty days earlier to the enactment of queen Victoria.

Lord William Bentinck : 1805

The credit of bringing all the records of the administration goes to Lord William Bentinck who in 1805 proposed that all but the most recent records should be lodged together, under the charges of a special establishment, in the apartments numbered 18 to 21 on the north side of the fort square.

In his memorable minute dated 18th November 1805, Lord William Bentinck, President and Governor of Fort.St.George observed as follows. "The consequence of preserving the records of this government which are now become exceedingly voluminous and the connections which every member of the Government in general upon this appointment of a perfect stranger to the details of the former transaction would derive from having a regular index of volume induce me to recommend that a record keeper should be appointed; the obvious reason that the person to be selected should be a nature conversant with the business of the office and be likely to remain in the situation. I beg to

recommend for that situation, Mutiah, who had been engaged the respect of every Government”.

The Board of Directors promptly responded to the recommendations. “Resolved that the appointment recommended by Lord Bentinck to take place and that the salary of Mutiah, the principal native servant in the political and military department be augmented to the sum of 80 pagoda per month in consideration of the increased duty which will be entrusted to him”.

In order to carry into effect the arrangement suggested to the board in continuation dated 18-11-1805, it was ordered that a large and commodious office should be immediately prepared for the reception of the whole of the records of this government interest of their being kept as it then existed, in separate and distance rooms. It was recommended that certain apartments on the north side of the fort square be appropriated for keeping the records. This was the nucleus of an organisation to be developed into Madras record office, now known by the name Tamil Nadu Archives.

Talboys Wheeler: 1858

In 1823, all the records were moved into the rooms of the first floor of the ‘Government House in the Fort and again into the pillor godown in 1825. In 1837 George Gaerrow was appointed for the purpose of arranging the records of Madras Presidency. William Hudleston was appointed in 1858 for the short period. Subsequently in 1860, Talboys Wheeler was appointed to sort and classify the records of Fort. St. George from 1960 to 1854.

Talboys Wheeler made through examination of records. He submitted his report on the records in 1861 and he established a new classification system not on the basis of subject but according to the nature and format of the

records such as dispatches, consultations etc. Talboys Wheeler's examination of records resulted in the publication of two great books on Madras Presidency and British India namely 'Madras in the olden times' (in three volumes) and 'Early records of British India. A History of English settlement in India as told in the government records' etc. The record office was shifted to the ground floor of the secretariat building in 1888.

New Building for Tamil Nadu Archives: 1909

At the same time, the Government felt the necessity to have a separate spacious building to accommodate all the records. Sir Murray Hammic, the then Secretary to Government selected a bungalow and its site known as "Egmore" near the southern railway station, to be suitable for constructing a new building to house the records. In 1906 the consulting architect was requested to prepare plans and estimates to construct a building to house the records. A building costing Rs.2,20,323 and record racks costing Rs.1,16,981 was ready for occupation by October 1909, with a permanent staff of one superintendent, two assistants, five referencers, three clerks, two typewriting clerks and nine attenders.

Henry Dodwell: The First Curator, 1911-1922

The Madras record office was opened in October, 1909 and C.M.Schmidt was put officer incharge of the newly formed Record office at Egmore. By this time, the Government of India was addressed to depute an officer, preferably a member of the Indian educational service to be incharge of the records. Accordingly the Government of India deputed an officer who was to be designated as "Curator" of the Madras record office. Henry Dodwell who was acting as Vice-principal, Teacher's College, Saidapet

was appointed curator, Madras Record Office from 15th April 1911, for a period of two years. Consequent on this appointment the work of preparing calendars of records beginning from the year 1740 was ordered to be resumed.

Dodwell's work in Tamil Nadu Archives:

The government allotted some special work to the curator in addition to his routine work. The curator was to properly arrange and catalogue various papers and records of the government periodically. He had to examine the condition of the old records and send them for printing. At the outset the government entrusted Dodwell with preparing the calendars of the old records.

Accordingly Dodwell prepared with great effort and the first issue of the calendar of Madras records was published in 1917, which covers the period of four years from 1740-1744. An equally note worthy feature of the calendar is that it was comprehensive in nature. Dodwell also prepared the calendar of Madras dispatches which covers the period from 1744-1755, and the first issue was published in 1920.

Dodwell is considered as the guardian of the records. He spared no time in preserving the old records by introducing a new system called 'Mending'. In 1913, he inaugurated the mending system. As per the orders of Madras government, Dodwell studied and analysed the nature and conditions of the records preserved in the Tamilnadu Archives and submitted his report in 1916. In this report, he made a physical and content analysis of the records and explained measures to be taken in future for the records.

Dodwell was highly interested in encouraging historical research. As far as South India is concerned he

was the first man who instigated the government to open Tamilnadu Archives for historical research by admitting scholars for perusal of records. Dodwell left for England in 1922. Dodwell was not only an efficient administrator but also an eminent historian,

His literary contributions ranged wide and deep. His untiring work in Tamil Nadu archives resulted in the publication of some valuable books in London.

In 1920 he wrote a famous book 'Dupleix and clive : The beginning of Empire'. For writing this book he made use of the records of the Tamil Nadu archives. Dodwell wrote 'A sketch history of India 1858 - 1918' which was published in 1925. His other contribution to Tamil Nadu history is 'the Nawabs of Madras'. He wrote these books mainly based on sources of Tamil Nadu Archives.

1927 Dodwell edited book entitled 'Warren Hastings letters to Sir John Mecpherson' out of the documents he had collected from private papers. The also wrote 'Mohammed Ali the founder of modern Egypt in 1931.

Though the Tamil Nadu Archives lost the services of Dodwell, it gained innumerable immortal works in the form of books and other administrative reforms. He was the first achitect to lay the foundation for the growth and development of TamilNadu Archives. He opened a new chapter not only in the history of TamilNadu Archives but also in the professional study of history.

Dr. B.S. Baliga: 1934-1958

Macqueen was succeeded by Baliga in 1934. Baliga's curatorship in the Tamil Nadu Archives contributed greatly to the development of Record Management and Historical research. His untiring endeavours in acquiring and preserving the records and his research works earned name and fame to the Tamil Nadu Archives. He was the first Indian trained in England for archival administration.

After his appointment the government deputed him to England for undergoing training in arrangement and preservation of records. After the training, Baliga joined duty on 1st April 1935. After joining duty, Baliga continued the works of Macqueen and earned fame for him and the Tamil Nadu Archives.

Baliga paid special attention to adding new records to the record office. The District records from Salem, Malabar, North Arcot and Chittor were transferred to record office. The survey records upto 1857, and the records of erstwhile Pudukkottai, Banganapalli and Sandur states were acquired during his period. Baliga tried to preserve the

records even if they had some merit. He started weeding work in October 1937. During the course of weeding several interesting documents were discovered.

During the second world war, the records of the Madras Government preserved in the record office were transferred to Chittoor district in 1942. All the original records of the company's period (upto 1857) and the records of the crown's period (from 1857) were transferred to Chittoor. It was a epoch making event in the annals of Tamil Nadu Archives. After the war was over, Baliga was able to transfer the records to Madras in 1950.

Baliga was well versed in records. He knew their administrative value. He was of the view that archives could play a vital role for the reconstruction of a nation. Baliga was also an eminent writer. His efforts resulted in the publication of compendiums books, catalogues, gazetteers etc. He published a book entitled 'Studies in Madras administration' in 1942. He also contributed valuable articles in journals. In 1936, Baliga prepared the Library catalogue. He also took efforts to publish the catalogues of Danish records. His demise on 21st September 1958 created a vacuum in the administration of Tamil Nadu Archives.

Later Developments:

After the death of Baliga, S.Chidambaram was appointed as curator. The post of curatorship was declared equivalent in status and responsibility to that of a Deputy Secretary of Government of the IAS cadre. After the death of Chidambaram, C.P.Velu Evady IAS was appointed as curator in 1963. The period between 1963 and 1968, the Archives saw little growth, because all the curators during this period were not academicians but administrators.

13

PRIVATE ARCHIVES

The activities of the Government and the people could be studied and assessed, if traces have been left in the form of Archaeological evidences and records. Fortunately man has got an in-born desire to perpetuate his memories of the past. He wants to have some link with the happenings and events of his past life and hence he preserves things. Records of important personalities are maintained and preserved by the Government. However some records are privately owned and maintained. Between these two categories of records, it is true that considerable attention was paid to that of government achieves. However times are fast changing and due to recent developments towards the microscopic study of History, private archives in the form of business archives, institutional archives and the like received much attention from the scholars.

Definition :

A private archives may be defined as a repository of documents, resulting from the activities and transactions of individuals and institutions and access to which is by grace and not by right. It can also be defined as those records which accumulate through the activities of the individuals, institutions, industrial undertakings etc. The private archive materials consist of sonnads, firmans, lease deeds, diaries, personal letters, manuscripts, photographs, paintings etc.

Sometimes they include portions of institutional or official records and business correspondences.

The stimulus to know about private archives in detail comes from the sociological aspect of history. In this attempt to do justice to the common people in historical works, the historians in recent times have bestowed greater attention upon the social and economic aspects of history. Private records throw a flood of light on socio-economic conditions of our past. They provide ample material to write the real history which can be reconstructed completely with the aid of private archival materials.

Difference between Public and Private Archives :

Indian archives can be conveniently divided into two broader categories. One is government archives and the other is private archives. Government archives are as a rule deposited in the government constructed repositories and they are managed by the Government. Private archives are in the houses of old historical families, in the custody of temples and monastries as well as in masjids and churches.

The most important distinction is that access to the public archives is by right, where as entry to that of private archives depends solely on the whims and fancies of the custodians.

There is centralized and unified structure of administration in public archives, while private archives is marked by decentralization.

The public archives is of immense help for the study of macroscopic aspect of history while the private archives is of importance to know the microscopic aspect of history.

The categories of Private Archives :

The archival wealth in private custody falls into six major categories.

- 1) Archives of business and industrial houses like T.V.S., Ramco, Parry Compay, Lakshmi Group, Sakthi Group, PSG Groups etc.,
- 2) Archives of religious and communal institutions like London Missionary Society, CMS, R.C.Church, Nadar Mahajana Sangam, Brahmins Association, Devar Peravai etc.,
- 3) Archives of political parties and trade unions (e.g.) The Sathyamoorthy Bhavan is managed by the Congress Party, Arivalayam is managed by DMK party, P.R.Bhavanam is managed by CPI(M) and All India Trade Union Congress, Indian National Trade Union Congress etc.,
- 4) Archives of educational institutions like Madurai Kamaraj University, Annamalai University, Madras University etc.
- 5) Archives of former princely classes and aristocrats like the Maharajas of Trivancore and Nawab of Bengal.
- 6) Archives of eminent personalities and families. Besides the above mentioned six categories considerable amount of Archival material relating to India are found in private archives in other countries. The above mentioned divisions may be some of the identified categories of the private archives. Many of the old private archives might have been destroyed or devastated due to various factors.

Business Archives :

The documents in the custody of the business archives are of immediate use for the firms themselves for writing their own history. The history of the business houses when compiled will throw light on the economic history of the

city. Further the records could serve as material for the history of specific industries such as steel, textiles and ship industry. Business archives may also elucidate the successful stages in the industrialization of the country.

Archives of Religious and Communal Institutions :

Religion and Religious practices dominated traditional Indian life which can be understood only in the light of these archives. It is a fact that the real economic, social, political and cultural life can be understood only from these records.

The Mutts in earlier times were states within states. They have a longer history than many dynasties which have ruled our country. These mutts discharged some of the Governmental functions also in the medieval times. Such functions included punishment of criminals. They looked after the under privileged class of the society such as the slaves, orphans, widows and untouchables. The Mutts promoted learning by maintaining schools and libraries. The gurus of Mutts were learned men.

The Mutt archives are one of the most important but neglected source of medieval and early modern History. Like state records they contain genealogy of the rulers, the pontiffs and their system of administration. Further we can get materials regarding the economic conditions of the different classes of the people and their professions. These records infact throw light on the socio-economic-and cultural conditions of that age. The mutts had records in various languages like, Persian, Tamil, English etc., Besides these archival wealth, certain non-archival wealth like idols, jewellery, coins, vessels of older times, arms of earlier days, different types of dress, weights and measures etc.

These are of considerable value for the historians in reconstructing the past history. In short, most of the records of mutts are essential for writing regional history but the problem is in regard to access to mutts archives. No mutts would like to throw open its archives to a follower of rival mutts. By and large, persons connected with the management of mutts do not appreciate the value of archives to the historians. If the scholar is a disciple of the mutts, and the need of the mutts is liberal, then access to the archives becomes easy. If the scholar is not a disciple then the best way is to approach the mutts authorities. The scholar has to give assurance that nothing will be published without mutts knowledge and no damage will be done to the image of the mutts.

The Protestant Christianity in Kanyakumari district and other areas have well organised records and record administration. Each district has got a separate record centre in the district Bishop's office. Another example for the archives of the religious institution is the N.V.K.S.D. (Nallur Vettumon-Kantan Sasta Devoswam) in Kanyakumari district managed by five Nair families of the Nallur Desam. A Central Hr.Sec. School is attached with it along with a good number of landed properties. The devoswam has a very good archives with records of varied nature.

Melmaruvathur Sitthar Peedam at present emerged as an influential religious institution with its branches all over South India and abroad. It has well organised system of administration. It performs many social welfare activities. It owns charitable institutions, hospital, schools and colleges. It's records are real archival wealth to the oncoming historians. Thus many religious archives throw light a various aspects of human life.

The religious records are generally not under the custody to the government. They are kept and preserved by the creating agencies. It is the discretionary power of the custodian of such archival material either to open them for public access or to permit a few. But it is the duty of a true researcher to try all possible means to get access to them. Those should also be utilised to the extent of their relevance to the subject taken for study.

Communal Archives :

The various communal organizations also have such private archival repositories. Though each communal organisation aims at promoting the welfare of its own community, its social activities will benefit other communities too. The minute books of the annual reports or some other documents of all the organizations apart from the correspondence are an important source illuminating the contribution of each to the social welfare. In India there are several communal organizations. (Example, Nadar Mahajana Sangam). This Nadar organisation has its headquarters at Madurai. It has got several colleges, schools and industrial establishments under its management. Other communal organizations like Devar Peravai, Naidu Mahajana Sangam, Yadava Mahajana Sangam, Raju's Mahamai Fund, Pallar Peravai are also in Tamil Nadu and are keeping records of its activities.

Archives of Political Parties and Trade Unions

Archives of trade unions and political parties have abundant materials. Records of trade unions are useful to trace the relations between capital and labour. From these records we can understand the rise and growth of trade union movement in a particular locality. In India there are several

popular trade unions. Among them AITUC and INTUC are important unions. They have a permanent headquarters and keep the records of their activities.

The records of the political parties are also of immense help to the scholars. Political parties and democracy are inseparable. All the democratic movements are associated with political parties. These parties also maintain records of their activities. The records of Indian National Congress clearly depicting the development of National consciousness during the time of independence movement. It also explains the economic trends of nation. The present political parties like Congress, BJP, AIADMK, DMK are having their own archives at the party headquarters.

Archives of Educational Institutions :

Every Educational Institution maintains its own records. Private and Government Colleges in Tamilnadu, Madurai Kamaraj University, Annamalai University, Madras University are keeping and maintaining their records in their own offices. The records of these institutions will throw light on the methods of the subjects taught, problems related to the students, about the members of the staff and the full particulars about the alumni. From these records we can understand the development of education not only in that particular institution but also in the whole of the country.

Archives of Princely Families and Landed Aristocracy

The records of the princely families and landed aristocracy will be of much use for the reconstruction of history. For instance the Maharajas of Travancore used to have records of different nature and still they are kept properly under the control of His Highness Sri Chittrai

Thirunal in the name of Matilaken record. Many of the Matilakan records are unique in nature and are of great value to the scholars, who intend to write the history of Travancore.

Archives of Eminent Personalities and Families :

The Family archives provide mass information for socio-economic history. They may contain documents of individual members of the family. They may have papers relating to litigation. A medieval family is likely to possess some case books and valuable documents relating to legal matter. Above all there may be diaries, memories and travel accounts kept by individual which throw light on local as well as national history.

Besides these, archival material relating to India are available in foreign countries. From the early days of Portuguese contact with India, till the time of independence the European powers had extensive contact with India. A large number of European administrators, traders, missionaries, army officers, on their return to their native places were likely to have taken away the records with them. These accumulated records are useful historical materials relating to India.

Nehru Memorial Museum and Library : NMML

The Nehru memorial museum is located in New Delhi near the Rashtrapathi Bhavan. It is housed in Theen Murthy Bhavan, a bungalow owned by the Nehru family, later converted to a memorial. If we go to this museum we will feel like a pilgrimage. It is having a lot of items. There are three wings in the administration of NMML 1) Memorial Museum; 2) Library on Modern India; 3) Centre of research and Modern Indian History.

a. Library :

It is one of the best libraries in India. It has got extensive collections of books which serve as varieties of source material to research scholars. Books published in 19th and 20th century are available. Books related from Rajaram Mohan Roy to contemporary leaders are stored here. Books on 14 Indian languages and 30 foreign languages are available. On Gandhi alone there are 1500 books. More than 5550 roles of microfilms on individuals are preserved here. 440 micro fish-plates are also stored in this library. It is also having a large number of research dissertations.

The library is subscribed for 326 journals and get 180 journals on receiprocal basis. It is also subscribed for 170 news papers. The library is housed in a separate building which is 5200 square feet in size. It was opened in the year 1974. The stacks in these building can accommodate more than one lakh books. The library is also having an auditorium which has got the capacity to accommodate 3000 persons.

b. Manuscript Collections :

The MMML is having two types of manuscript collections. 1) Institutional collections; 2) Individual Collections. Until 1986, it has got 33 institutional manuscript collection which included All India Congress Papers, Indian National Congress Papers, Madras Mahajana Sabha (1884) papers, All India Congress Committee papers, Socialist Party of India papers, All India Hindu Mahajana Sabha papers, Deccan Sabha papers, Servents of India Society papers, Home Rule League papers, papers on the work of Burton Stein, papers on Annie Besant and working class, All India Trade Union Papers and so on.

C. Individual Collection :

The NMML has got a lot of papers of individual collections. Until 1-10-1986, the NMML was able to collect 566 papers. The most important collection are collection of pattam Thanu Pillai, Pattabi Seetharamiah, Srinivasa Shastri, Muthukrishna Reddy, Srinivasa Iyyengar, Dadabai Nowroji, M.M.Roy, P.C.Roy and so on.

d. Library of Photographs :

The NMML has got more than 57,000 beautiful photographs of Nehru and his eminent contemporaries. These photos have been arranged according to a theme. For example, all the photos related to "Civil Disobedience Movement" are arranged in one place.

In the Nehru Memorial Museum facility for reprography is also available. An important aspect of this museum is that it has taken the "oral history project". It is a maiden effort.

Interview with 820 great scholars and persons who had taken part in the freedom struggle have been recorded.

American Study Research Centre :

The post second world war period witnessed the cold war beaten the super powers, Russia and America. They allocated more funds towards spreading their political ideologies in all parts of the world. They tried to acquire as many satellite countries as possible on their side. As a part of such attempt they established libraries and study centres in important countries. Their primary aim was that of creating an awareness about their ideologies and leading the people towards their ideologies. They also aimed to mobilize positive public opinion in favour of their policies and ideas.

The American study research centre was started in April 1966 in Hyderabad. A library of American civilization was first started with 4000 books. Now the total volumes of books exceeds 2 lakhs. This ASRC is a reputed American study centre, known for extensive collections on American subject. It provides materials for teacher's research. It provides teachers research grant and teachers study grant. It conducts two seminars in every year which starts from 15th February and 15th August. The administration of ASRC is under a Director and few technical assistants. The ASRC is located in Osmania University Campus, Hyderabad.

Parry and Company : 1788

Messers. Parry and Company Ltd. has a reputed Private archive. It was established in Madras in 1788, at Parry's Corner in Madras by Thomas Parry who was just 20 years old. He stayed in India for about 35 years spending all his time in business dealings. The firm is now 228 years old and is still functioning. Since its inception the firm started maintaining its records. There are more than 20 volumes available. Those are mostly the letter - correspondences during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. There are more than 21 photographs of the senior partners of this firm.

The life history of the founder of the Company is evident in the book, "Thomas Parry, free merchant, 1768 - 1824 by G.H. Hodgson (1938). The products of the firm are of different variety. Ordinary consumer products like chocolate and heavy products like ships are being produced. The records of these firms throw light on the generous charitable endowments made by Parry. The accounts were maintained mostly in pagoda, fanam and cash. One pagoda was equivalent to Rs. 3.50. In the accounts from 1819, those currencies except rupee are not mentioned. Hence, it is clear that rupee was the only permitted currency after 1819.

The experiments done in the production of a variety of consumer items, indigo processing, the challenges confronted by the firm etc. could be learnt from the records. They throw light on the commercial policy of the Government and the economic condition of the people. Karnatik scandal issues are also found in them as Parry was unwantonly made to interfere in it. The archive is at present under good preservation and sound administration. Access to the research scholars is permitted.

Asiatic Society of Bengal : 1784

It was founded in 1784, due to the sincere efforts taken by Sir William Jones who was a Judge by profession but had much interest in research endeavour. With the association of his friends he succeeded in establishing the Society in Bengal. Initially the members of the Society met at the Grand Jury Room. They felt the need of a permanent location for the Society and reiterated their demands to the government. Ultimately a plot was allotted in 1805 and a building was constructed by 1808 at the cost of Rs. 30,000 on Park Street. By its valuable activities, the number of subscribers increased. Membership was open to all. Many committees were formed in 1808, for Natural History, Philosophy, Medicine, improvements of the arts, Physics, and for literature, Philosophy, history and antiquities. There are a library and a museum.

The library holds in it a large collection of books and more than 30,000 manuscripts are in oriental languages. The Seringapatnam Prize Committee gave the library of Tipu Sultan that was looted by the Company, as a gift to this Society on 3rd February 1808. The gift included many old and rare books and a number of illuminated manuscripts of the Quran. Another presentation also was received from the college of Fort William and the General Committee of Public Instructions. On the abolition of the college its

Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and Urdu works mostly in manuscripts were presented to the Society.

The Society established a Museum in 1814. As it experienced financial problems, in 1866, a law transferred its collections to an officer of the Board of Trustees. It became the Indian Museum at Kolkata.

The Society brought out many publications, which are highly estimated all over the world. Its notable publications are Memoirs, Journals, Bibliotheca Indica series and a large number of Oriental publications. They are highly useful to the researchers doing research on Asian culture, arts, science, history and religion.

The society is still functioning. Its archival wealth is open for bona fide research. They are being properly arranged, managed and preserved.

Bengal Club : 1827

Bengal club was established at Calcutta in 1827. It was first located in a four storeyed building in Esplanade East, known as Gordon building. Its location was shifted several times until a permanent building was constructed in 1845. The present building is at Chowringhee, which was once the official residence of Mecauly. It has invaluable source material relating to social, economic and political history of India. The club has published a very interesting book 'A Short History of the Bengal Club'. Many eminent personalities were its members. Ladies were also admitted as members. The book besides furnishing valuable information regarding socio economic condition of that period contains appendices. They are under four heads -

1. Biographical notes of original members
2. List of presidents of the club

3. Resolutions passed on 12th February 1827 and
4. Original rules of the club.

The Club also possesses some portraits and painting of historical value, It keeps its records under due care. They are not open to all but only to the club members.

Vishva Bharathi :

It was prominent during the time of Rabindranath Tagore. He started a school and an abode of peace at Santiniketan. In 1951 a Central University was started. It has got Ravindra Bhavana collections. 522 volumes of manuscripts of Rabindranath Tagore are available here. 95 volumes of his correspondence in Bengali language is also available. 435 volumes of works of Rabindranath Tagore in English and in other languages are available. These materials are useful for constructing history of Indian culture.

Srinageri Mutt :

This Mutt become prominent during the time of Vijayanagar period. The materials in this mutt deals with Vijayanagar and post-Vijayanagar period. Records relate to the correspondence between the Mutt and Tippu Sultan is available. The material in this Mutt is useful for knowing social and economic life of India. Kovillore Mutt in Tamil Nadu is also having lot of records. More over the Thiruvadudurai Mutt, Kanji Mutt and Kundrakudi Mutt, possess a large quantity of records of historical importance.

Indo-Portuguese Archives :

This archives is located in Banaji, Goa. In this archives there are five categories of records. 1) Correspondence of Arch Bishops and Governor; 2) Paper

concerning with the clergy; 3) Pastoral documents; 4) Papers concerning the Christian life and 5) Paper concerning with religious orders. We can get so much information from the documents regarding portuguese settlements in India.

Arch Diocese of Madras and Mylapore :

In this centre, records of as early as 1704 A.D. are available. All the records in this centre are classified into important categories. 1) Official documents from Rome; 2) Official Correspondence of Bishops and Governors; 3) Correspondence related to financial matters; 4) Official letters of the clergy to their superiors; 5) Parish papers and so on.

Archives of the Society of Jesus :

This archives is located in Shenbaganoor near Kodaikanal. Most of the documents are in Latin Language. However English translation of that documents are also available. Photographic copies of the original Jews documents are available. It gives us a clear picture of the presence of Jews of India. There is a small collection of Parish register. A good collection of books in various languages on South Indian Christianity is also available in this archives.

Apart from these above private archives individuals also are in possession of good number of rare books and records. Kanagasabai Pillai of Mannargudi collected 3700 rare books. In South Arcot District Vilvanayanathan and Sundarà Mudaliar started a small Library in 1932. Kottur Rangasamy Mudaliar and Andipatti Balasubramanian Iyer are also to be mentioned as they are able to collect rare books and records.

Problems of Private Archives :

Because of the negative attitude of the owners, private archives possess various and complicated problems. We can divide it into two categories viz., general problems and specific problems.

1) GENERAL PROBLEMS :

a) Problem of Location :

The first major and complex problem is related to that of ascertaining the location of the private archives especially of the records in the hands of individuals. Research scholars are not aware of the existence of different private archives, scattered in different parts of the country. The lack of information on the existence and contents of private archives is the major problem being faced by the historians.

b) Problem of Accession :

Another greater concern to the scholar is the problems of accession. The owners are mostly ignorant of the value of the records which are under their custody and as such fail to appreciate the anxiety of the scholars to exploit them for the purpose of research. Some of the owners do not allow access to their places under the plea that papers are in a poor state of preservation. Now a days the owners understanding the anxiety of the scholars demand money from the scholars. Visiting to the private archives outside India is very difficult to the scholars as it requires lot of formalities and expenses. If the content of the private archives is in another language, the research scholar find it difficult to translate the records.

c) Problem of Preservation :

It is the biggest problem being faced by the private archives. Generally the owners of private archives neglected the records which are under their custody. They do not know

how to preserve these records. This caused irreparable damage to the rare records. They have been eaten by insects. Moreover excessive heat and cold accelerate the decay of private archives which are very precious. The owners of private archives do not know the scientific methods of preservation. Moreover they are not in a position to spare their time and spend money towards the preservation of records.

2) Specific Problems :

Apart from these above general problems there are many specific problems faced by the private archives.

a) Problem of determining the importance of records :

The important problem is of determining the importance of the records and of finding out of less important or unimportant records. This is very essential since no institution could hold all of its records in perpetually. Generally universities and colleges preserve records only for a period of specific years. Individuals are not able to determine the importance of the records due to their ignorance.

b) Problem of destroying less important papers :

Then comes the problem of destroying certain documents and papers after preserving them for some years. This is in true a psychological problem born out of changing mood of a person who sometimes feels the futility of preserving certain papers. In such cases the owners of the records should be given proper advice to think twice before destroying the records.

c) Records which are against the interest of the owners are destroyed :

Some of the papers being of a very private nature could not be shown to others due to the damage remarks it

contain. If such papers come to light that would tarnish the image of the holders. Such documents are likely to be destroyed or suppressed by the owners. After the demise of the owners we cannot get informations regarding several aspects of his activities.

d) True significance of the records is not realised :

The owner of the records and members of his family are not realised the true significance of the records under their custody. They are ignorant of the language in which such papers are written. So they tend to destroy the papers. For example the early revenue records and documents of the K.K.District are in old styled Malayalam which are very difficult to be read.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF PRIVATE ARCHIVES

1) Publication of the list of private archives :

A district wise list of the important persons owning the records of archival interests may be prepared with the help of National archives of India and through some other agencies. A preliminary descriptive list of private archives which are scattered in India should be compiled. It is very important for solving the problem of accession. Moreover the list may contain informations among other things, address of the custodians, language of the materials etc. This informations likely to stimulate interest in the use of private archival material. This list may be published in the Internet. The other way is to make publicity through radio, press and public offices.

2) Owners may be requested to give access :

With regard to the problem of accession the owners may be requested to give access to the archives to the scholars. The private owners must be made conscious of

the importance of archives and a relationship should be established between the government and the other private archives, so that they may be ready to allow the research scholars. They may welcome the assistance and advice of the government.

3) Technical assistance and general advice may be given to the private archives :

The private archives may be requested to consult the experts in the field before they destroy and document in their possessions. Likewise a committee of experts may be formed at district level to approach individuals and institutions for examining the records and advising them on proper weeding out operation. Experts and interested persons in archives keeping can be invited for periodical meetings to instruct the methods of categorizing and cleaning the records. Training in the maintenance of records may be imparted in short-term courses of desirous individuals and institutions. Discussions can be had on the organisation and preservation of records through conference at regular intervals in important towns and centres. Further, archives exhibition in district head quarters can be held periodically to encourage the people and make the people to realize the importance of archives making.

Officers of the archives department with technical knowledge must be deputed at regular intervals to give instructions to protect the records against dampness, fire, insects or other risks. If the owner is not financially in the position to meet the expenses incurred in the preservation and safety of his collection, adequate financial assistance may be supplied to the needed individuals.

Institutions may be requested to maintain their records properly and technical guidance may be provided to them.

They should be asked to open archival rooms or cells for the preservation of important documents.

4) Individuals and the families may be persuaded to give the records :

On the demise of a prominent person a tactful approach to his relatives can some times ensure the handling over of important papers which would otherwise be immediately destroyed. The princely families should be persuaded to part with the documents by emphasizing its national importance and re-assuring them that they would be never used as to prejudice their interests. The government may persuade them to donate the collections or sell them at reasonable price to the government. If the individuals are very particular of keeping the papers as family assets, arrangements for photo-copying or micro filming may be made. If every thing becomes impossible nationalization of the private archives is the only solution.

5) Formation of Local Historical Societies :

Local historical societies should be entrusted with the task of taking of local records in private custody as was done in Australia, USA and certain countries of Europe. Such societies should involve professors of history and these societies should form a valuable link between the local intelligentsia and the state archives.

6) Creating archival consciousness :

The problem of private archives could be solved only by creating archival consciousness in the public. Unless a major and earnest effort is made in this direction by the historians and the archivists there is the chance for the destruction of the archival heritage in the private custody.

Government Efforts :

From time to time the government of India is taking a series of measures to solve the problems relating to private archives. Systematic survey of private archives by the government of India was started in 1942 at the instance of the Indian historical records commission. In the same year it set up several regional records survey committee. At present such committees exist in 13 states of India. The efforts are misinterrupted by private holders as an attempt to deprive them of their treasure.

National Register of Private Records :

The government launched the programme of National register of private records in 1959. It initiated central grant in aid of Rs.3,000/- to each state to conduct survey and meet private people for the purpose of National Register of private records. A separate unit was also formed in the National Archives. This unit brought out volumes of National register of private records comprising material perceived between 1959 and 1960, 1967 and 1968.

The Government in 1947 enacted the Antiquity Act which included only manuscripts but left out all records which are not in manuscript. This was set right by Antiquity and Treasure act of 1972. It provides for compulsory acquisition by the Government of such materials which was of high value. This act does not suggest any measure for proper maintenance and preservation of antiquities even after registration. Thus from time to time the government of India is taking a series of measures to solve the problems relating to private Archives.

