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FEDERATION OF NIGERIA

Annual Report
of the
National Archives of Nigeria

1959-60

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F O R E W O R D

It is fitting that at the time of Nigeria's emergence as an independent nation, there should be in existence, a flourishing Department of Archives to preserve the records of those who have contributed over the centuries to the development of our country.

In the National Archives there is an expanding collection of documents which reveal the exploits of our people and of explorers, traders, missionaries and administrators. Over the past year the activities of the National Archives have been increased enormously, and a tried system of acquiring documents has now been established. Though still handicapped by lack of adequate accommodation in Kaduna and Enugu, the department has succeeded in restoring and accommodating in its repositories a far larger number of documents than in any previous year.

I congratulate the Director and his staff on the hard work they have carried out to keep pace with this influx, and on their efforts to ensure that, while Nigeria enters upon a new epoch, the records of our country's development towards independent nationhood shall be preserved in a manner befitting our traditions.

Federal Minister of Education.

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INTRODUCTION

The National Archives of Nigeria was established by Federal Ordinance No.43 of 1957. The actual founding of the department dates back to 1951 when Dr. (now Professor) K. O. Dike was commissioned as Supervisor of Public Records to undertake a survey of Nigerian public records and to report on the feasibility of establishing an archival service in Nigeria. His findings, which were submitted under the title of "Report on the Preservation and Administration of Historical Records and the Establishment of a Public Record Office in Nigeria" laid the foundation of the organisation.

This report was accepted by the Federal Government and in accordance with its recommendations, a Public Record Office was set up by an administrative order of the Governor-General on the 1st of April 1954. The staff that assisted Dr. Dike and the documents assembled during the survey became the nucleus of the new department of state.

The main recommendations in the Report were implemented during the period 1954-57. Professional and technical officers were trained; a provisional Archives Committee was appointed; temporary repositories were established in three principal regions of the country viz. Ibadan, Enugu and Kaduna; work began on the design of the first permanent building of the department and on the drafting of a Nigerian Public Archives Bill.

The first important results of this planning were the enactment of the Public Archives Ordinance on the 14th of November 1957 and the formal opening of the first permanent block of the department at Ibadan on the 9th of January 1959 by Lord Evershed, the Master of the Rolls of Great Britain.

This building is the first of its kind in Tropical Africa and provides adequate facilities for all the processes connected with the administration, preservation, rehabilitation and the exploitation of records by searchers. These include a repository designed to accommodate 15,000 linear feet of records on open steel shelving placed back to back; a bindery and a paper repair workshops; a photostat and photographic laboratories; a processing area for newly accessioned documents; a reference library; search rooms;

a board room and an office area. The building was erected at a cost of £61,000.

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY

The general policy that has guided the development of the organisation is the recognition that the problems of an archival service in a tropical country are unique and can best be solved by the experience gained from the actual running of our own organisation. This recognition implies, among other things, that the lessons derived from foreign archival institutions must be modified to a very great extent to suit the peculiar circumstances of this country.

With the recent constitutional changes which created five largely autonomous governments (including the Southern Cameroons) the original idea of centralising Nigerian Public Records was abandoned in favour of a decentralised organisation with repositories at Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna and Enugu. Under this arrangement, the repository at Lagos would cater for federal records and the other repositories would cater largely for records accessioned in the regions in which they were well situated. These offices in the Regions would remain branches of the Federal organization which has its headquarters temporarily at Ibadan. When the headquarters of the department ultimately shifts to Lagos, this repository will become the Western Region Branch of the department.

PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Dike's report, which was embodied in the Public Archives Ordinance, assigned the preliminary work of record administration to the bodies which produced the records, namely, the various Ministries and Departments of State, Missionary Societies, Public Corporations and other semi-public and private bodies. They were to process their non-current papers, arrange them in their archive fonds, list these units, and transfer the records to the National Archives. The function of the National Archives in the work of record administration was limited to advising ministries and departments as to how to prepare their records before transfer. This division of functions between record agencies and the National Archives which is consonant with the best principles and practices of archive administration, was never realised in Nigeria.

In practice, the Nigerian National Archives undertakes all the duties described above in addition to its statutory duties

of record custody, preservation, rehabilitation and reference. It is now evident that a check cannot be put to this development and that the department must be expanded to cope with these new responsibilities. Given the necessary staff and equipment we hope to cope with the task.

STAFF

Our Estimates for 1959/60 provided for 9 Professional posts, 4 Executive posts (all ranks), 21 Clerical posts (all ranks), 1 Library Assistant, 11 Craftsmen (including trainees), 4 Typists, 4 Driver/Mechanics and Motor Drivers, 2 Hall Porters and 2 Messengers i.e. 63 all told. (See Appendix A of this Report). The actual strength of the department as at 31/3/60 including the unestablished staff was 78. Three professional posts were vacant during the year.

One encouraging development in the year was an increase in the strength of professional officers. Mr. E. J. Alagoa and Miss R. E. Iyo (now Mrs. R. E. Nwoye) joined the department in June and Mr. S. O. Sowoolu in July. This recruitment offset the loss sustained by the resignation of Mr. F. N. Eke in June. (The list of the professional and executive staff of the department forms Appendix B of this Report).

THE RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, CUSTODY, PRESERVATION AND REHABILITATION SERVICES
RECORDS ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

Record Administration Divisions in our various repositories are responsible for our liaison duties. These mobile teams, led by professional officers, undertake continuous tours of the record centres in the Federation and arrange for any non-current records located to be transferred to our repositories for permanent preservation. The duties involve long distance touring and require tact and initiative.

The tradition we have evolved with regard to our liaison activities is as follows:-

- (i) A preliminary inquiry is sent to the organisation to be visited to ascertain their record storage conditions, the bulk of their non-current records and whether they want their records preserved.
- (ii) On the receipt of a positive reply, an appropriate liaison team is despatched to the centre and under favourable circumstances the records are examined, listed, parcelled and removed to the National

The tours organised from our branch office at Kaduna include visits to Kano (four times), Katsina (three times), Minna, Bida, Zaria (three times), Ilorin, Daura, Kafanchan and Yola. Over 20,000 miles were covered during these tours and over 160,000 documents were assembled.

RECORD ACCESSIONS

The astronomical increase in the number of records in our repositories is the best testimony of the activity of the department during the year under review. At the beginning of the financial year, the records in our custody occupied under 4,000 linear feet (i.e. less than a mile) of shelving space. At the close of the year the figure rose to over 35,303 linear feet (i.e. over 6 miles). In the last few months of the year, the average rate of accumulation was 10,000 documents a month. Of these figures, the headquarters office at Ibadan accounted for 31,016 linear feet of records, Kaduna 1,087 and Enugu 3,200 linear feet. Since this 9 fold increase in our record accessions in 1959/60 was not accompanied by a corresponding increase in the strength of our staff, we were immediately confronted with the problem of understaffing.

THE NATURE OF THE DOCUMENTS ASSEMBLED

The bulk of the documents in the National Archives represent the main phases of British Enterprise in Nigeria from 1824/-1960. These are

- (i) Records of British Pre-Consular Activities on the West Coast 1824-1849;
- (ii) Records of British Consular Activities on the West Coast 1849-1906;
- (iii) Records of the Government of the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos (1861-1906)
- (iv) Records of the Government of the Oil Rivers and Niger Coast Protectorates 1882-1900;
- (v) Records of the Government of Southern Nigeria Protectorate 1900-1906;
- (vi) Records of the Government of Northern Nigeria Protectorate 1899-1913;
- (vii) Records of the Government of the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria 1906-1913;
- (viii) Records of the Government of the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria 1914-1960.

These records were assembled from 89 administrative and departmental units, 2 commercial firms, 3 ecclesiastical bodies and 5 private sources throughout the Federation.

About 1,000 Arabic manuscripts, acquired through gifts and purchases, add to our growing volumes on the Arabic manuscripts of the Northern Region. The activities of the Royal Niger Company are represented by about 100 documents presented to the National Archives by the U.A.C. (Nigeria) Limited in 1959. Other important accumulations are the records of the C.M.S. (Niger) and (Yoruba) Missions, the Methodist Mission, the Hunter Collections, the John Holt, the U.A.C. and the private papers of King Jaja of Opobo.

The predominant language in our records is English. But some documents are written in French, German, Portuguese, Spanish and Nigerian languages - Hausa, Efik, Ibo and Yoruba. (The list of bodies or individuals who have made deposits of documents in the National Archives forms Appendix C of this Report).

ARRANGEMENT AND CLASSIFICATION OF RECORDS

The arrangement and classification practices in our organisation are designed to ensure that the documents in our repositories are arranged in an order approximating very closely to that of their original arrangement in the offices of their creators. This aim is in accord with the best universally accepted archival principles. In practice, the operations work out as follows:-

- (i) All documents assembled from one particular agency are treated as a group;
- (ii) The group is arranged in classes;
- (iii) The classes are subdivided into series and sub-series in accordance with the particular order discovered among the class of papers under review.

The main effect of these arrangements is that our classification practices comprise mainly in the production of lists - lists of groups or depositors; lists of classes of documents in a group; lists of series and sub-series in a class. A general feature of these lists is that they give some indication of the bulk and the years covered by the documents described.

Other lists prepared include accession lists, describing the documents assembled from particular places at particular times; shelf lists, showing the arrangement of documents on the stacks; and room lists, showing the groups of documents assembled in particular rooms.

The production of these lists is largely in arrears on account of the vast

number of documents that were accessioned during the year.

CUSTODY AND PRESERVATION SERVICES

In matters pertaining to record custody, preservation and rehabilitation, the National Archives may be likened to an hospital with facilities for research into, prevention, and cure of document diseases.

Our research and preventive services are carried out by our custodial staff in our Repositories. All new accessions are cleaned to remove dirt and treated with fungicides and insecticides to eliminate insect and fungus pests.

STORAGE

Our storage areas are proof against rat attack, fire out-break, overflowing and extremes of temperature and humidity. Maintenance of the mechanical devices designed for these purposes carried out by our Repository staff. During the year, over 200,000 documents were cleaned and fumigated in our repositories.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Our curative and rehabilitation services are carried out in our repair and bindery workshops where sick documents are restored to health in a series of processes technically known as "chiffoning," backing, pressing, sizing, guarding and filing. During the year, our workshops were manned by one binder/repairer and four apprentices. 203 volumes of books and other publications were bound, cased and lettered; 2,205 folios were repaired with silk gauze; 3,170 folios were backed with hand-made-rag-paper; 3,983 sheets were collated, sewn and guarded; and 5,746 folios were sized. These figures are impressive and indicate the industry and efficiency of our binder/repairers. If it is recognised, however, that about 50% of the documents received in our repositories are in poor condition, then the urgent need for expansion in our workshops cannot be overemphasized.

The mechanical developments in the workshops during the year include the acquisition of 3 additional document repair tables, a Funditor Blocking Machine and a Vickers Stitching Machine used for assembling card-board boxes.

At the moment, only the headquarters office possesses the necessary equipment for rehabilitation operations and until similar facilities are provided for our offices at Kaduna and Enugu, the preservation activities in these offices will be limited to research into, and prevention of, document diseases.

REFERENCE SERVICES

SEARCHES AND ENQUIRIES

The activities described under the general heading of "Record Administration and Preservation Services" constitute our primary functions. Our secondary activities consist in the various activities connected with making public records available to scholars, administrators and others. In this connection, it is important to emphasize that the records in the National Archives are not yet open for inspection by non-official searchers and will remain technically closed until the regulations provided for non-official access in the Public Archives Ordinance are made. Pending the enactment of these regulations, permission to examine papers relating to the open period of Nigerian history i.e. pre-1910 can only be granted to non-official searchers with the consent of depositors. These restrictions do not apply to publications and copies of legal records may be made available to litigants on the payment of the appropriate fees prescribed by law.

Enquiries in our Repositories during the year ranged from the usual requests for materials for a doctoral dissertation to such enquiries as to why somebody's ~~great-grand father was not considered eligible~~ for "comey" subsidies! 'Comey' was customs dues paid to chiefs in the Coastal Ports in the days preceding the British occupation.

Whilst enquiries from non-official sources are always welcome, it must be pointed out that it is not properly our function to act as searchers for the general public. Persons requiring information from public records are expected to conduct the search themselves or to employ someone to do it for them. We shall always assist all genuine searchers by making the relevant records available to them. 39 searches were conducted in our Search Rooms during the year.

RECALL OF DOCUMENTS

During the year, about 100 documents were recalled by depositors.

PHOTOSTAT AND PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES

Our photostat and photographic services are primarily established for the purpose of making copies of documents available to searchers. When these laboratories are properly manned, all requests for copies of documents will be met by photostat or microfilm at the expense of those who need them. Since these services constitute our main revenue earning activity, we consider the develop-

ment of these laboratories a matter of some importance.

Our photostat and photographic services operated for only two months during the year when we secured the services of a London trained photographer, Mr. S. O. Johnson. In October, we lost his services to the University College, Ibadan.

THE LIBRARY

Our reference libraries are largely repositories of rare "Africana" and government publications. Over 5,000 books, periodicals, magazines and newspapers have been assembled in our reference libraries at Ibadan, Kaduna and Enugu.

GENERAL

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Although the National Archives provides facilities for historical and other allied researches, it is not in itself a research organization and its professional staff are not expected to indulge in research activities during official hours. Exceptions have been made, however, with regard to researches connected with the administrative history of Nigeria because the materials assembled in this respect will be embodied in our proposed "Guide to the Records in the Nigerian National Archives." Work will begin in compiling this publication when all the sources of Nigerian public records have been exploited and the records assembled classified.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

A frustrating proportion of working time has inevitably been absorbed by routine administrative duties. During the year, over 6,000 items of correspondence passed through our registry.

TRAINING SCHEMES

As has been emphasized in previous reports, there are no local facilities for training recruits in our professional and technical work and all holders of these appointments will be trained abroad. Mr. B. C. Okafor, the second Binder/Repairer trained by the National Archives returned from Ghana in April, Mr. A. B. Shofu, Executive Officer Grade I, who was sent for training in the Public Record Office, London, returned in May. Mr. M. U. Eriavbe, Photographic Assistant Grade III, proceeded to the United Kingdom in September on scholarship to undergo a course in document photography.

WEST AFRICAN GUIDE COMMITTEE

In previous reports, mention was made of this Committee founded by British scholars with the aim of preparing a Guide to West African historical source materials in European Archives. The Nigerian Federal Government made available to this Committee a sum of £8,500. Two scholars employed by this organization have completed their work in the archives of Portugal, Belgium and Holland and their findings will soon be published.

THE ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

There was no meeting of the Archives Committee during the year owing to the reconstitution of its membership in accordance with the provisions of the Public Archives Ordinance.

ARCHIVE EXHIBITION

At the request of the Historical Society of Nigeria, an exhibition was held at our Enugu Branch Office in December 1959 to mark the 5th Annual Congress of the Society.

BUILDING PROJECTS

The provision of adequate accommodation for the documents in our custody at Kaduna and Enugu continued to be our major problem. The permanent office at Ibadan, which was constructed to accommodate 15,000 foot run of documents, now holds over 30,000 foot linear feet of records. The temporary repository at Keffi Road, Kaduna is inadequate in all respects. There is no electrical supply, every available space is fully stacked with documents and the building itself is one vast termitory. To a certain extent, the major work at Kaduna has become that of combating the termites attacking the building. With the transfer to Enugu of all the records assembled from the Eastern Region at Ibadan during the survey years (1951-53), there is very little room left in the two storey repository.

The provision of properly equipped permanent buildings at Kaduna and Enugu and expansion in the Headquarters office at Ibadan are matters of urgent necessity.

PURCHASES

The following important purchases of documents or copies of documents were made during the year:-

- (i) Edgar Papers: Two box loads of Arabic and Hausa manuscripts belonging to the late Major Edgar of the Northern Nigeria Administrative Service were purchased from the executors of his estate, Messrs. Kirk Mackie and

Elliot of Edinburgh at a cost of £75.

- (ii) Papers relating to the Niger Expeditions: Photostat copies of important despatches relating to the Niger Expeditions of 1857/58 were purchased from the Public Record Office, London, through Dr. C. C. Ifemesia at a cost of £13. 6/-.
- (iii) Cromer Papers: Microfilm copies of Cromer Papers were purchased from the Public Record Office, London.

VISITORS

The Important visitors to our offices during the year included Dr. Amber Prasad, Reader in History, Delhi University; Mr. Herbert Passim, Congress of Cultural of Freedom, Paris; Dr. Saunders, London University; Sir Adetokunbo Ademola, K.T., Chief Justice of the Federation; Mr. Justice Quashie Idun, Judge, High Court of the Western Region; His Excellency Sir Gawain Bell, Governor of the Northern Region; Dr. and Mrs. R. Taylor Cole, Professor of Political Science of Duke University, United States of America.

CONCLUSION

Some effort has been made in this report to describe very briefly the progress made in the general work of the department and some of the problems connected with the administration and preservation of public records in Nigeria. This was considered necessary because the activities of the department are largely unknown. The year 1959/60 has, however, a special significance in the history of this organisation. It was the end of a period of experiments and the beginning of a new epoch in which our goal has become clearer and therefore more easily attainable.

(K. O. Dike, M.A., Ph.D.)
Director of National Archives.

APPENDIX A
STRENGTH OF STAFF

Director of National Archives

3 Senior Archivists

5 Archivists

Executive Officer

4 Assistant Executive Officers

Chief Archive Clerk

2 Archive Assistants Grade I

15 Archive Assistants, Grade II and III

Library Assistant

Binder-Repairer, Grade I

2 Binder-Repairers, Grades II and III

6 Binder-Repairers-in-Training

2 Photographic Assistants

4 Typists Grades I, II and III

4 Repository Assistants

3 Clerical Assistants

2 Driver-Mechanics

2 Motor Drivers

2 Hall Porters

2 Messengers

32. District Office, Ughelli
33. District Office, Western Ijaw, Warri

COMMERCIAL BODIES

1. John Holt Papers
2. U.A.C. Papers

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

1. Arabic Manuscripts (assembled from 48 different sources)
2. The Private Papers of King Jaja of Opobo
3. The Private Papers of Sir Kitoyi Ajasa
4. The collections of H. H. Hunter of the British and Foreign Bible Society
5. The Private papers of the late J. C. O. Clarke, a former Administrative Officer of the Northern Nigeria Government.

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15 Archive Assistants, Grade II and III
Library Assistant
Binder-Repairer, Grade I
2 Binder-Repairers, Grades II and III
6 Binder-Repairers-in-Training
2 Photographic Assistants
4 Typists Grades I, II and III
4 Repository Assistants
3 Clerical Assistants
2 Driver-Mechanics
2 Motor Drivers
2 Hall Porters
2 Messengers



APPENDIX B

OFFICERS OF THE PROFESSIONAL AND EXECUTIVE GRADES

Professor K. O. Dike, Director

Mr. S. S. Waniko, Senior Archivist

Mr. L. C. Gwam, Senior Archivist

Mr. F. N. Eke, Archivist (resigned in June)

Mr. E. J. Alagoa, Archivist

Miss R. E. Iyo, Archivist

Mr. S. O. Sowoolu, Archivist

Mr. A. B. Shofu, Executive Officer (Transferred from the Department in July)

Mr. L. N. Ashikodi, Assistant Executive Officer

Mr. J. E. Nwaguru, Assistant Executive Officer

Mr. O. C. Amah, Assistant Executive Officer

Mr. N. Ata, Assistant Executive Officer.

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УЧЕБНИК ПО МАТЕМАТИКЕ ДЛЯ ДЕТЕЙ

ЧАСТЬ I

APPENDIX C
LIST OF DEPOSITING AGENCIES

FEDERAL TERRITORY

FEDERAL CAPITAL, LAGOS

1. Government House
2. Chief Secretary's Office
3. Ministry of Commerce and Industries
4. Ministry of Works and Surveys
5. Ministry of Labour
6. Federal Information Service
7. Attorney-General's Office
8. Lands Department
9. C.M.S. Mission
10. Methodist Mission

EASTERN REGION

REGIONAL CAPITAL

1. Civil Secretary's Office
2. Land Office
3. Enugu Local Authority

OTHER CENTRES

4. Provincial Office, Calabar
5. Provincial Office, Ogoja
6. Provincial Office, Onitsha
7. Provincial Office, Port-Harcourt
8. Provincial Office, Umuahia
9. District Office, Aba
10. District Office, Abakiliki
11. District Office, Ahoada
12. District Office, Brass
13. District Office, Calabar
14. District Office, Degema
15. District Office, Itu
16. District Office, Ogoni
17. District Office, Orlu
18. District Office, Owerri

19. District Office, Umuahia
20. C.M.S. (Niger) Mission, Onitsha

NORTHERN REGION

REGIONAL CAPITAL. KADUNA

1. Governor's Office
2. Premier's Office
3. Civil Secretary's Office
4. Ministry of Animal Health and Forestry
5. Ministry of Education
6. Ministry of Health
7. Ministry of Internal Affairs
8. Ministry of Land and Survey
9. Ministry of Local Government
10. Ministry of Works
11. Agricultural Department
12. Prison Department

OTHER CENTRES

13. Provincial Office, Bauchi
14. Provincial Office, Bornu
15. Provincial Office, Ilorin
16. Provincial Office, Jos
17. Provincial Office, Kano
18. Provincial Office, Lokoja
19. Provincial Office, Minna
20. Provincial Office, Yola
21. District Office, Abuja
22. District Office, Azare
23. District Office, Bida
24. District Office, Gombe
25. Divisional Office, Jos
26. Divisional Office, Kabba
27. Mines Department, Okene
28. Veterinary Department, Kano
29. Veterinary Department, Vom

WESTERN REGION

REGIONAL CAPITAL. IBADAN

1. Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources
2. Ministry of Home Affairs
3. Ministry of Justice and Local Government
4. Ministry of Lands and Labour
5. Co-operative Department
6. Department of Forest Research
7. District Office
8. Education Department
9. Labour Department
10. Moor Plantation
11. Provincial Office

OTHER CENTRES

12. Provincial Office, Abeokuta
13. Provincial Office, Akure
14. Provincial Office, Benin City
15. Provincial Office, Ijebu-Ode
16. Provincial Office, Oyo
17. Provincial Office, Warri
18. District Office, Abeokuta
19. District Office, Auchi
20. District Office, Badagry
21. District Office, Benin City
22. District Office, Epe
23. District Office, Forcados
24. District Office, Ijebu-Ode
25. District Office, Ikeja
26. District Office, Ilaro
27. District Office, Kwale
28. District Office, Oshogbo
29. District Office Sapele
30. District Office, Shagamu
31. District Office, Ubiaja

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