

Letters to the Editors

We received the following from Margot van Opstall of the *Algemeen Rijksarchief*, The Hague:

Researchers Beware:

The *Algemeen Rijksarchief* (Public Record Office) is housed in a building dating from 1902 at Bleyenburg 7, The Hague. This neogothic monument, with a dark interior of painted ceilings and high vaults over the stairs gives the impression of a monastery - although the collections like those of the trading companies are of a rather profane nature. Especially conceived to store archives, it was much admired at the time, on account of its construction. The burden of paper is not carried by the walls, but by the shelving itself and the roof and walls only have a protective function. Especially the system of locking up the documents during the night by means of steel hatches moved by an ingenious hydraulic system, is a masterpiece of vintage technology.

Nowadays the building is old, a bit dilapidated and much too small to house the documents, the researchers and the archival staff. Materials are stored in a branch-repository (Schaarsbergen near Arnhem) and several branches of the archival service are scattered over the Hague.

Consequently a new building is now under construction next to the Central Station, easily accessible for travellers coming from outside the city. The new building will be several times larger than the old one and can also house other historical institutions, such as the *Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie* and the *Iconografisch Bureau*. The *Archief-school* (school for the training of archivists) will be housed in the new building too.

We plan to start the removal from Bleyenburg on November 1st, 1979. From that date onwards, visitors should expect difficulties with research and limited service. It is not yet clear whether the Archives will be closed down completely for a short period, or if only the section actually moving will be out of use. It is not yet possible to state anything definite but we shall try to keep the difficulties for visitors to a minimum. All the same it will be wise, if you plan to come to the *Algemeen Rijksarchief* in the end of 1979 or in 1980, to reckon with considerable delay in getting your material as a result of circumstances which will in the end certainly lead to better service.

M.E. van Opstall

We received the following from Mr. Ralph L. DeGroff, of Baltimore, Maryland:

New York Colonial Manuscripts

Dr. A.J.R. Russell-Wood (of the Johns Hopkins University) suggested I write you because he thought our activities would interest *Itinerario* readers.

Historians and genealogists have long been concerned by the lack of information relative to The New Netherland era in this country. This is in sharp contrast to New England and the southern colonies where there is a vast amount of material available. A project initiated in 1971 by The Holland Society of New York gives excellent promise that the gap may be filled by the translation and publication of the New York Colonial Manuscripts: Dutch, which since the 1600's have been domiciled in manuscript form in The State Archives in Albany, N.Y. Other supporting documents will be included.

With the assistance of New York State and the Asiatic Petroleum Corporation the Holland Society has already published three volumes of Minutes of the Provincial Secretary (1638-1660) and one volume of Council Minutes (known as The van Laer transcripts 1638-1649), two volumes of Kingston Papers, one volume Delaware Papers, and the Register of Salomon Lachaire. Seven volumes of The Records of New Amsterdam have been reprinted. In preparation for early publication are Patents and Deeds, Nicolls and Lovelace Papers, General Entries and a second volume of Delaware Papers. Six manuscripts of Council Minutes will take precedence in translation for they are expected to reveal extremely important data relating to the early Dutch.

The National Endowment for the Humanities has made a substantial grant to enable the continuation of this project. Associated with it are Peter R. Christoph, Assistant Archivist of The New York State Library; Dr. Charles H. Gehring, Translator of Dutch Documents of the same Library; Dr. Kenneth Scott and Dr. Kenn Stryker-Rodda, well known authorities in the field. The Consul-General of The Netherlands in New York, Leopold Quarles van Ufford, has taken an active interest in this project which will near completion in about ten years.

Ralph L. DeGroff

Editors' note: Mr. DeGroff did not include purchasing information in regard to the three volumes already published, but we are sure he would be happy to pass inquiries on to the Holland Society. His address: c/o Alex. Brown and Sons, 135 East Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Maryland, 21202, U.S.A.