

BOOKS

ARCHITECTURAL RECORDS

NANCY CARLSON SCHROCK, ed., Massachusetts Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records, *Architectural Records in Boston; A Guide to Architectural Research in Boston, Cambridge, and Vicinity*, New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1983, 286 pp. \$35.00.

PATRICK MEEHAN, *Frank Lloyd Wright; A Research Guide to Archival Sources*, New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1983, 715 pp. \$100.00.

AGNES SAGVARI, ed.-in-chief, International Council on Archives, *Capitals of Europe; A Guide to the Sources for the History of Their Architecture and Construction*, Munich: K. G. Saur, 1980, 359 pp., 145 illus. \$80.00.

The problem of locating original materials can be a major obstacle to conducting architectural research. In most cases the primary objects of study are buildings, with related drawings, photographs, and papers playing a supporting role. As buildings are demolished or extensively remodeled, these visual and written materials become essential for an accurate study of the subject. Of chief concern to architectural historians, then, has been the discovery of and access to written and drawn documents. The question has been: how to uncover the original materials one needs for research when they are scattered throughout many locations?

Traditionally, this problem has been answered by historians themselves. They spread the word of important collections of original source material through both informal discussions with their colleagues and through scholarly footnotes. As librarians and archivists have achieved control over book materials, however, they have turned their attention to nonbook materials. Several projects have been begun which attempt to locate and describe special-format collections, including architectural records. One of the first of these was the *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections*, begun in the 1960s by the Library of Congress. This listing of manuscript collections, including those for architects and others involved in building, provides brief descriptions of collections of papers. Each entry is indexed by subject, name, and place. Still in operation today, it is a valuable aid in locating original materials for research use.

One of the first attempts to locate and describe architectural collections was George Koyl's *American Architectural Drawings; A Catalog of Original and Measured Drawings of Buildings of the United States of America to December 31, 1917*, published by the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1969. Alarmed by the destruction of Frank Furness's original drawings by his successor firm, the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA determined that action had to be taken to publicize the

importance of architectural records. To that end a grant was obtained from the Kress Foundation to collect and publish information about drawings for 6,000 buildings. While the scope of this work was limited, it ignited the dream of a unified catalog to architectural materials. The establishment of such a catalog was part of the goal of the Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records (COPAR), formed in New York City in 1973. COPAR began a National Union Index to Architectural Records, published guides to architectural repositories in New York State, New York City, and Philadelphia, and used a quarterly newsletter to encourage the location and preservation of architectural documents of all types. The efforts of this group coincided with the attention focused on drawings by the Museum of Modern Art's 1975 landmark exhibition, "Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts." At the same time, demand for original material to document the renovation of buildings increased with the preservation boom of the 1970s. Architectural records began to receive bibliographic and preservation attention.

The three works reviewed here are partial results of this attention. All attempt to describe collections of architectural records, but they do so in various ways and from various approaches. One discusses repositories within a limited geographic area; another, the collections relating to a specific architect; and the last, the archives supporting research on European capitals. Not only do they differ in the ways they approach and describe collections, but they represent the variety of ways in which collection guides are initiated and published: respectively, as the product of a group effort to describe the architectural records within a specific geographic area; as a compilation by an individual with a keen interest in the original documents relating to the work of one architect; and as the result of co-operation between government offices in several countries. Together they tell us something not only about architectural repositories, but about the state of bibliographic control over architectural records.

The first work, *Architectural Records in Boston; A Guide to Architectural Research in Boston, Cambridge, and Vicinity*, comes out of the publishing tradition begun by the New York-based Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records. In 1979 the committee's national work was assumed by the Library of Congress, which has been successful in maintaining the National Union Index to Architectural Records and publishing the *COPAR Newsletter*. The Library has not attempted, however, to compile publications similar to the New York City, New York State, or Philadelphia guides, instead leaving that work to local COPAR-inspired efforts. Such efforts have produced Kathleen Roy Cummings's *Architectural Records in Chicago; A Guide to Architectural Research Resources in Cook County and Vi-*

city (Art Institute of Chicago, 1981) and Sally Hanford's *Guide to Architectural Research Materials in the District of Columbia* (American Institute of Architects Foundation, 1983). *Architectural Records in Boston* is essentially one of this informally linked series. Used in conjunction with the previously published guides, it provides another piece of the picture of architectural holdings in major American cities. Used separately, it provides an in-depth discussion of the architectural riches found in Boston archives.

The guide opens with an essay suggesting methods of conducting architectural research in Boston, a discussion which can be applied usefully to other cities as well. This essay is followed by three sections describing architectural records: (1) Guide to Active and Retired Firms with Pre-1970 Records; (2) Guide to Repositories; and (3) Guide to Governmental Agencies. Each section lists the name, address, telephone number, and contact person of the repository being described, cites the scope of its holdings, and provides a narrative description of its major collections. The sections are unified by comprehensive indexes to personal names and architectural firms, allowing the guide to be used not only as a description of Boston-area repositories, but as a finding aid to locating materials for architects and firms. The vexing question of multiple names within firms is handled by providing cross-references from each name to the main firm name. The inclusion of records within architectural offices broadens the scope of the guide, and serves to remind both historians and architects of the importance of records and record management within firm offices.

The work of compiling this guide was supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Historic Publications Records Commission from 1979 to 1983. The grants were obtained chiefly through the efforts of Nancy Schrock, a bookbinder and conservator, who administered them and saw the work through to fruition. Published by Garland Publishing Company, the work is an excellent complement to similar guides to other cities, as well as being a useful guide to Boston-area repositories and to original materials by architects and architectural firms.

Patrick Meehan's *Frank Lloyd Wright; A Research Guide to Archival Sources* is the result of an ambitious individual effort. For reasons not made clear in the book's Introduction, Mr. Meehan, an architect, became interested in locating records relating to Wright and compiled this guide to 55 collections, primarily in the United States but in the Netherlands, Great Britain, and Australia as well. The guide begins with a discussion of the Frank Lloyd Wright Memorial Foundation at Taliesin West, followed by an alphabetical listing and description of 54 smaller repositories and a chronological listing and description of Wright manuscripts found in those repositories. It has four separate indexes: (1) buildings, designs, projects, and places; (2) names, titles, and topics; (3) correspondents; and (4) archives and collections.

While the guide is a useful introduction to original material dealing with Wright's work, and is a major step forward in the location and description of records supporting the study of his life and buildings, it has a serious fault: it does not describe the holdings of the major Wright archives, those at the Frank Lloyd Wright Memorial Foundation at Taliesin West. The Introduction states that the Foundation is "of extreme importance" and that "it is an unfounded myth perpetrated by some scholars that

access to the Frank Lloyd Wright Memorial Foundation archives was not possible." But the description of the Foundation tells us only that this is "the most extensive collection of Frank Lloyd Wright archival materials, including more than 19,000 Frank Lloyd Wright drawings, thousands of letters, hundreds of original manuscripts, numerous photographs, as well as other related materials. . . . It is not possible in this guide to list all the items; instead, a brief general discussion of each type of archival material in the collection is presented." Unfortunately, the promised general discussion is not forthcoming. Instead, a general description of the Foundation's activities in cataloging and preserving its holdings is given. This is accompanied by a description of how access to these riches is obtained (request permission in writing) and at what cost (fees are individually determined based on the time needed to assist the reader and on the reader's funding sources). Finally, there is a warning that all of the Foundation's materials, as well as unpublished materials in other collections, are copyrighted by the Foundation and may not be published without its permission.

Considering that this book is priced at \$100.00, it is disappointing that this is all we are told about the largest and most important collection of Wright materials. If Meehan couldn't have used the publication of this guide to coax the Foundation to provide even a partial listing of its holdings, one can't help but feel he should have warned readers of the lack of this information.

Following this discussion of the Foundation's policies are descriptions of 54 other Wright collections. Here we discover some interesting information, and we are indebted to Mr. Meehan for his obviously painstaking work to record the contents of smaller, lesser-known Wright collections throughout the country, including not only architectural drawings, but manuscripts, furniture, rooms, and ephemera. For example, the Milwaukee Public Library houses the F. Schumacher and Company catalog for the Taliesin Line of Wallpaper and Interior Finishes, published in 1955 by E. W. Bredemeir and Company Sample Books, accompanied by 21 samples of wallpaper from that line. Mr. Meehan not only describes the catalog, he also gives a complete description of each fabric design. He then points the way to further research by citing bibliographical references to support the study of Wright's fabric design. Such information is not only useful, but shows that the author has a clear interest in providing direction for users of the guide. The descriptions of archival repositories are easy to use and could be of great help. The reader should be warned, however, that university collections are alphabetized by the geographical part of their name. For example, the University of Kansas is alphabetized under Kansas.

These descriptions of Wright collections are followed by what is clearly Mr. Meehan's forte, individual descriptions of letters found within those collections. These summaries are arranged by the date of the letter and tell us to whom the letter was written, the archive in which it is located, the number of words included, and the letter's medium and size. A brief abstract of each letter's contents is provided.

These descriptions of Wright's letters fill up 466 pages of the 681-page guide and are the real substance of the publication, with the descriptions of secondary Wright archives forming a sort of appendix to these detailed summaries of individual items. The information appears to have been carefully collected, de-

scribed, and indexed. The major fault of this work—that it does not acknowledge that the chief depository of Wright materials at Taliesin West is not actually included—does not negate the important contribution Mr. Meehan has made by describing other sources for the study of Wright's life and work.

The Capitals of Europe; A Guide to the Sources for the History of Their Architecture and Construction was developed by UNESCO's International Council on Archives. Conceived by that group in 1972, work began under the direction of the Budapest City Council and the City Archives of Budapest in 1975, and in 1980 a 350-page illustrated publication describing the resources available for the study of 28 European capitals was published. Although it has received little attention, it may prove to be the architectural "sleeper" of this decade since it is an excellent guide to a topic of interest to most architectural historians.

The purpose of the work, as stated in the Introduction, is to "provide a basis and a methodological aid for the study of comparative urban history. . . . Along with a sketch of the topographical and architectural development of today's European capital cities, it seeks to present the archives (documents, plans and maps) which reflect the development of these cities." To this end, a brief history of the planning of each capital city is provided along with a related bibliography, a list of primary sources (including the locations of architectural drawings and maps), and illustrations of the city and its layout at various periods of its history. About half of the entries are in English, the other half in French. With 28 capitals included, it is clear that more than just the major cities are covered. Included are: Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Ankara (Turkey), Athens

(Greece), Belgrade (Yugoslavia), Berlin (German Democratic Republic), Bern (Switzerland), Bonn (Federal Republic of Germany), Brussels (Belgium), Bucarest (Romania), Budapest (Hungary), Dublin (Ireland), Helsinki (Finland), Copenhagen (Denmark), Lisbon (Portugal), London (United Kingdom), Madrid (Spain), Moscow (Soviet Union), Nicosia (Cyprus), Oslo (Norway), Paris (France), Prague (Czechoslovakia), Reykjavik (Iceland), Rome (Italy), Sofia (Bulgaria), Stockholm (Sweden), Valletta (Malta), Warsaw (Poland), and Vienna (Austria).

Each city's entry provides a useful introduction to its history and planning, and points the way to further research by describing both published and original sources for research. The 11-page discussion of Budapest, for example, includes a five-page introduction to its history, design, and architecture. This is followed by a one-page bibliography of published histories, plans, and city records, and a five-page description of original materials available in 12 archives. The eight illustrations that accompany this entry include one 15th-century engraving of the city, one 17th-century map, two 19th-century maps, an engraving of the city hall, one modern aerial view, and two modern photographs showing the river and streets from the air.

If all this isn't enough to satisfy researchers, the work itself is attractive in its layout and design. Unlike the Garland works noted above, which are useful but utilitarian in design, this book is a pleasure to handle and use. The layout and typography unify the separated entries, the illustrations are large and clear enough to study, and the paper quality is unusually pleasing.

MARY ISON
Library of Congress

AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM

ROBERT A. M. STERN, GREGORY GILMARTIN, and JOHN MASSENGALE, *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism 1890-1915*, New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1983, 502 pp., 422 illus., bibliographical notes. \$60.00.

The views among architectural and urban historians as to when New York emerged from the status of a busy seaport to that of the foremost metropolis of the nation are as numerous as the historians themselves. Edward Spann, for example, believes that the transformation occurred over the years 1840 to 1857, by which date the city had assumed the unprecedented character of a "new metropolis." The phrase apparently originated with E. Idell Zeisloft, who used it to designate the city as it existed during the last decade of the 19th century. The authors of *New York 1900* adhere to the long-established view that the metropolis came at the end of the Civil War and thus coincided with the triumph of the new industrial capitalism. Like all such complex events, however, the evolution of New York from seaport to first city covered a long period of time and reveals no clear-cut division into acts and scenes. One essential fact must be established at the outset, for it is reflected

in the city's architectural development as well as in all other of its aspects. New York is more than the dominant metropolis; it is a world city, one that affects and is affected by world currents, and it is one of very few such cities in Western civilization.

The chief stages in the process of reaching this position, paralleling the often frustrating efforts to create appropriate political and legal institutions, are marked by technical and economic events that left extraordinary consequences in their wake. The first events are related to the city's status as the world's greatest harbor: steam-operated ferry service came in 1810, to begin the knitting together of the scattered areas of the future metropolis; this was followed in 1815 by the introduction of regularly scheduled packet vessels in the coastwise trade and in 1818 by regular transatlantic service; the Erie, Delaware and Hudson, and Morris canals were completed within the six years of 1825 to 1831, bringing unparalleled prosperity for the urban economy. The benefits of water transportation were so great and so obvious that New Yorkers showed little enthusiasm for railroads. The first of these offered only local service when it opened in 1832, and the midcentury passed before a genuine intercity line was completed. The culmination of this evolution—the establishment of electrified street railway, rapid trans-