

# The American Imprints Inventory in North Carolina

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It was a tremendous task that required the assistance of librarians, historians, and relief workers throughout the country. In 1937, under the auspices of the Historical Records Survey of the Works Progress Administration, bibliographer Douglas Crawford McMurtrie organized the American Imprints Inventory to survey the contents of hundreds of libraries and repositories, establish a union list of American imprints published prior to 1876,<sup>1</sup> and publish check lists of state and local imprints extracted from the union list. By 1942, when the project ended, American Imprints Inventory staffs in most states had assisted McMurtrie and his successors in achieving impressive progress toward the three goals.

North Carolinians who directed the state's contribution to the inventory failed to achieve one of the goals established by McMurtrie and completed in many other states: no check list was published. The failure of North Carolina's capable Historical Records Survey staff adequately to support the publication of a check list chiefly resulted from three factors. Under the leadership of historian Charles Christopher Crittenden, the survey emphasized the publication of archival inventories. The concurrent work of Mary Lindsay Thornton, librarian of the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina, to compile and publish a bibliography of state publications likely mitigated the urgency of preparing an imprints check list. Finally, World War II siphoned resources and personnel from the Historical Records Survey before enough headway toward preparing a complete check list had been made.<sup>2</sup>

The American Imprints Inventory grew from the Historical Records Survey, a program designed by the United States government to provide employment for white collar workers who had lost their jobs during the Great Depression. Luther H. Evans organized the survey in 1935 and 1936. His plans for examining state and local archival repositories, classifying and rehabilitating the records, and publishing inventory reports incorporated the ideas of notable historians, librarians, and archivists. Evans and his staff

viewed the survey, whose scope eventually broadened to embrace a wide variety of historical materials, as a means of providing scholars with sources for rewriting local history.<sup>3</sup>

The HRS established the imprints inventory to fill significant gaps in the knowledge of the history of American printing. When the project began, scholars had access to Charles Evans's *American Bibliography*, which recorded imprints published between 1639 and 1799,<sup>4</sup> and Frederick Leypoldt's *United States Catalog*, which commenced in 1876. Additional sources of bibliographic information included *Dictionary of Books Relating to America*, compiled by Joseph Sabin. The works of Evans and Sabin were somewhat flawed because they listed books published primarily in the eastern states and because they often omitted books' locations.<sup>5</sup> The HRS envisioned a cooperative effort of the states to collect data for imprints that would supplement the work of Sabin and provide complete coverage for the period between 1800 and 1876.

The result would be a boon to scholars. The union list produced by the American Imprints Inventory would provide a very thorough record of printing in the United States. Check lists of books, pamphlets, and broadsides published in a state or city would help historians interested in that locality or in a specialized subject to locate previously unknown primary resources.<sup>6</sup>

## Douglas McMurtrie

Douglas McMurtrie, who served as Luther Evans's consultant for the inventory from 1937 until July 1941, possessed excellent qualifications for making these raw materials available. An engineer by training, McMurtrie became an authority on technical aspects and the history of printing in America. He obtained instruction in bibliographic methodology from Wilberforce Eames, a specialist in Americana at the New York Public Library. McMurtrie served as director of the Columbia University Printing Office from 1917 to 1919 and established his own printing firm in 1924-1925. After the firm's failure, McMurtrie moved to Chicago to become director of typog-

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raphy for Ludlow Typograph Company. By the late 1920s he had begun his impressive series of scholarly works on printing. These included *The Golden Book* (1927), a complete history of printing and bookmaking; numerous articles on the history of publishing in localities in the United States; and volume two of a projected four-volume series, *A History of Printing in the United States* (1936), which discussed printing in the southeastern states beginning with the colonial period.<sup>7</sup> Utilizing this experience, McMurtrie developed precise procedures for accomplishing the goals of the American Imprints Inventory.

Considerable work had to be undertaken in the states before McMurtrie's staff at the Illinois Historical Records Survey office in Chicago could compile the inventory. Field workers apportioned to districts in the states received training from area supervisors. The supervisors, who sometimes were assisted by local sponsors, obtained permission for workers to examine the holdings of libraries or other repositories. Workers precisely recorded bibliographic information, including title-

page endings and printers' devices, on 3" x 5" slips of stiff but flexible paper. Each card also noted the location of the imprint it represented. Supervisors then approved the work and forwarded the cards to the state HRS office for preliminary editing. The state office either returned the cards to the localities for further checking or mailed them to McMurtrie's headquarters in Chicago. There the imprint slips were carefully examined for accuracy and uniformity. If approved, the central office staff made several copies of each acceptable title and created master author and title files. One copy of the slips reflecting imprints published in a particular state was sorted and arranged in a separate file.<sup>8</sup>

McMurtrie designed several publications to insure accuracy and uniformity. Five editions of his *Manual of Procedure* guided workers, supervisors, and editors toward the production of acceptable imprint slips. McMurtrie also issued *Location Symbols for Libraries in the United States* (1939), *Instructions for the Description of Broadside*s (1939), and *Instructions for Examination of*



Douglas Crawford McMurtrie supervising work of American Imprints Inventory worker in Chicago. (Photograph from Douglas McMurtrie Collection, Special Collections Division, Michigan State University Libraries, East Lansing, Michigan.)

*Newspaper Files for Materials Relating to the History of the Press (1939).<sup>9</sup>*

Printed check lists for states or localities utilized imprint slips uniformly produced throughout the country. Initially, the AII central office edited "Style A" entries, which included printers' devices, title-page line endings, and bracketed insertions, and worked closely with state offices in publishing check lists. The publication usually included a brief history of printing in the state or locality, a key to symbols of libraries in which the imprints were located, an index of printing points, an index of printers, presses, and publishers, and a general index. By 1941, after it became clear that the project was progressing too slowly, the HRS required the AII central office to abandon the use of "Style A" descriptions in favor of a simplified "Style B" description and to decentralize the editing of check lists. In April 1941 a manual of editing was sent to the states for use in preparing publications.<sup>10</sup>

The inventory achieved impressive results. Hundreds of workers (about 1,800 annually for several years) examined approximately ten thousand libraries—more than 95 per cent of those in the field—and recorded some fifteen million titles. Many of them were previously unknown. Considering duplication of titles and the presence of different editions of works, slips for approximately eight million separate imprints were compiled. By May 1942 fifty-one check lists of state and local

imprints had been published.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, the project failed to achieve McMurtrie's lofty expectations. Preparations for World War II depleted manpower available for HRS projects. The survey officially ended in April 1942, when the Service Division of the WPA focused on contributing to the war effort, and although states were given permission to complete publications then in progress, McMurtrie's projected 250-volume, indexed imprint series never was completed. The massive file of slips was moved to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin for safekeeping during the war. In succeeding years the increasingly disheveled inventory was moved several times until transferred to its present location at Rutgers University in Piscataway, New Jersey.<sup>12</sup> The AII lapsed before North Carolina's project could publish a check list, even though HRS officials in Raleigh had allocated relief workers for inventory work at the beginning of the program.

#### Imprint Work in North Carolina

The imprints work, as well as other projects of the HRS, was sponsored by the North Carolina Historical Commission. Luther Evans, on December 19, 1935, appointed Dr. Charles Christopher Crittenden, secretary of the commission, as assistant state supervisor of the survey. Crittenden directed the HRS even though Edwin

Baptists. North Carolina. Chowan Association.

[Line of type headband] / Minutes / of /  
the North-Carolina Chowan Baptist / Associa-  
tion, / holden at Camden meeting-house, on  
the 4th, 5th and 6th days / of May, 1810. /

[Wavy rule] /

8 p. 16 x 19.5 cm.

Caption title; imprint on p. 8: Edenton:  
Printed by James Wills./ 1810.

NHC-S

Works Progress Administration. WPA Form 22HR

Typical slip utilized by the American Imprints Inventory. This entry, located in a file preserved by the State Archives, shows title-page line endings and describes the devices used by the printer. (Photograph from files of the Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.)

Bjorkman, director of the Federal Writers' Project in North Carolina, was the nominal supervisor. The HRS ceased to be an autonomous unit of the Federal Writers' Project in November 1936, and Crittenden assumed the duties of state director of the survey.<sup>13</sup>

The placement of the HRS in the hands of the commission and its secretary was a logical decision. Created by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1903 as a result of prompting by the State Literary and Historical Association of North Carolina, the commission collected newspapers, documents, and manuscripts pertaining to the state and sponsored the publication of collected manuscript material.<sup>14</sup> Crittenden began work as secretary in 1935 after serving for nine years as instructor and assistant professor of history at the University of North Carolina.<sup>15</sup>

The quarters of the commission proved to be inadequate to accommodate HRS workers properly, but the attitudes of persons involved in the survey and other federal projects eased the inconveniences they encountered. Further, the staff of the commission, many of whom had worked under the direction of R.D.W. Connor and Dr. Albert Ray Newsome, another distinguished historian, were dedicated to the historical profession and realized the significance of the WPA projects. Most of them cheerfully accepted the crowding caused by the addition of WPA workers and harbored no ill feelings toward their new colleagues. The majority of the persons engaged in project work at the headquarters in Raleigh were in their twenties and thirties; as a result, a spirit

of camaraderie prevailed. One of the Survey of Federal Archives officials recalls that "In addition to the optimism of youth, there was the friendly cheerfulness, a sort of light heartedness, that characterized so many of the young adults then living through the Depression, who took the days as they came and did the best they could with them, leaving the worries of tomorrow for tomorrow." Nevertheless, these men and women took their work seriously, and many of them worked at night and on weekends.<sup>16</sup>

One of these youthful historians was Dan Mabry Lacy, who assumed chief responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the HRS. Though only twenty-two years of age in 1936, Lacy served as Crittenden's executive assistant. Later, he held the position of assistant state director and, on July 1, 1937, succeeded Crittenden as state director. From the beginning, however, Lacy received only very general supervision from his superior.<sup>17</sup> This pair, with the assistance of area historians and librarians, established priorities and approaches for the HRS work.

Tentative plans evolved soon after the program was organized in North Carolina. Interested scholars from the University of North Carolina, Duke University, and Wake Forest College met with HRS officials to offer suggestions for managing the projects. Crittenden thought that it would be best to undertake and complete one project at a time. Luther Evans initiated the HRS under the assumption that it would continue indefinitely, but it is clear that Crittenden and Lacy were not as optimistic. Consequently, they placed emphasis



University of North Carolina Department of History and Government, 1934. Charles Christopher Crittenden stands next to left on the back row. Robert Digges Wimberly Connor, with hands at his side, stands in the center of the front row. (Photograph in 1934 *Yackety Yack*, 29. From copy in the North Carolina Collection, UNC Library, Chapel Hill.)

on the publication of guides to records and manuscripts. They considered the preparation of printed inventories of county archives their most important task.<sup>18</sup> The three hard-cover volumes of county archives inventories, published with financial assistance of the North Carolina Historical Commission between March 1938 and October 1939, proved to be perhaps the most impressive series of its kind undertaken by any state.<sup>19</sup> Before the HRS passed out of existence in 1942, North Carolina had published, in addition to the county archives inventories, twelve volumes of state archives inventories, six guides to collections held by manuscript repositories, seven inventories of church archives, and a guide to vital statistics records.<sup>20</sup>

### Accomplishments of the Survey

In May 1939—two years after the beginning of the American Imprints Inventory—Dr. Crittenden described to Works Progress Administration officials in Raleigh the chief accomplishments of the HRS in the state. He used almost two typed pages to describe archival and manuscript inventories, care given to uncataloged records, the

preparation of a card index of tombstone vital statistics, and inventories of church records. The listing of early American imprints was not mentioned.<sup>21</sup> Not surprisingly, therefore, when North Carolina undertook the imprints work in 1937, it received relatively little attention.

Nevertheless, Dr. Crittenden and his colleagues recognized the importance of the American Imprints Inventory. When Crittenden learned about the project in May 1937, he told McMurtrie that the inventory in North Carolina should be successfully completed. Crittenden undoubtedly was acquainted with McMurtrie and with the usefulness of the project he organized, because McMurtrie had published articles and pamphlets concerning early North Carolina imprints.<sup>22</sup>

Crittenden informed McMurtrie in May 1937 that most of the imprints dating between 1800 and 1820 (the date limits used when the project began) would be found at major college libraries, the North Carolina State Library, the North Carolina Supreme Court Library, the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches at Montreat, the Sondley Reference Library at Asheville, and the Greensboro Public



State Administration Building, located south of Capitol Square in Raleigh. The State Library occupied the first floor, and the Historical Commission utilized the second floor. The third floor housed the Supreme Court. (Photograph [circa 1914] from files of the Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.)

Library.<sup>23</sup> Dan Lacy began North Carolina's inventory at these institutions.<sup>24</sup>

The inventory commenced with the pamphlets and newspapers of the Historical Commission and the holdings of the Supreme Court Library. For the latter work, the survey secured the services of a man of extraordinary intelligence. According to Lacy, this worker—a "tall gaunt Ichabod Crane-like man"—previously had psychiatric problems but performed his duties with great precision.<sup>25</sup>

The holdings of the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches at Montreat were among the first to be inventoried. Doing so presented a problem, however, because the foundation was not associated with a college or university. Consequently, National Youth Administration students who would be used to inventory collections at their colleges and universities could not be utilized. And, owing to the severe restrictions on the use of "non-certified" workers (those who were not considered needy), it was difficult to find anyone to do the inventory. Lacy solved the problem by curtailing the travel funds allotment for the county records project and using the money to send Viola Burch, a research supervisor on the Raleigh staff, to Montreat in January 1938.<sup>26</sup> Mrs. Burch made valuable discoveries there, including the "third known Tennessee imprint, hitherto regarded as 'lost.'"<sup>27</sup> She was unable to complete the work, but Lacy found a local woman who finished the inventory of the foundation and the Sondley Reference Library, also begun by Mrs. Burch.<sup>28</sup>

Other valuable imprints were discovered in Winston-Salem. Lacy, by November 1937, had received from Miss Adelaide Lisetta Fries, archivist of the Archives of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province, a list of titles held by the archives. McMurtrie evaluated these as a "veritable treasure-trove of eighteenth century North Carolina imprints," six of which had never been recorded. Among them was the proceedings of the Committee of Correspondence of Craven County, published in May 1775.<sup>29</sup>

Work proceeded apace during 1938. By November approximately ten thousand imprint slips had been recorded, and three thousand of them had been typed and sent to Chicago. In addition to the libraries at Raleigh, Montreat, and Asheville, the collections of the Greensboro Public Library, the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina library at Greensboro, and the library of Appalachian State Teachers College at Boone had been completed. Eleven workers labored at the catalogs of other academic and



Albert Ray Newsome. (Photograph from files of the Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.)



Dan Mabry Lacy. University of North Carolina, senior class photograph in 1933 *Yackety Yack*, 105. (From copy in the North Carolina Collection, UNC Library, Chapel Hill.)

public libraries, including those at the University of North Carolina, Duke University, and the Carnegie Negro Library in Greensboro. If catalog cards were adequate, they were copied. If information on them was incomplete, the imprints were inspected. Two typists in Raleigh edited and typed the slips sent from the field and forwarded them to Chicago for further processing.<sup>30</sup>

### Problems and Frustration

Progress came at the expense of considerable frustration. Most problems arose because of the inherent conflict between the professional objectives of the HRS and the relief objectives of the WPA. Raleigh WPA and United States Treasury officials often differed with the HRS over interpretation of directions from Washington. Furthermore, county welfare offices, which were responsible for assigning workers to specific projects, sometimes failed to select reasonably competent persons; on many occasions, they had no qualified

workers to assign. To make matters worse, changes in the economy often necessitated swift increases or reductions in the number of relief workers.<sup>31</sup> It is no wonder that Dr. Crittenden in July 1937 resigned as state director of the HRS and SFA. He described his feelings in the first verse of a poem sent to his superior in Raleigh:

Long years ago my heart was gay,  
Before I heard of SFA,  
Was full of joy and happiness,  
Until I joined the HRS.<sup>32</sup>

Other problems occurred frequently. Staff in Raleigh occasionally postponed sending imprint slips to McMurtrie until they could learn how problem books should be recorded. Lacy in June 1937 sought advice on how to treat journals of the North Carolina General Assembly that were bound together—with or without common title pages. This and such other problems as how to capitalize parts of titles arose because no printed instructions existed. Manuals were needed especially to train NYA student workers, but they were not available until June 1938. The lack of sufficient typists and typewriters also hampered progress, resulting in a backlog of untyped slips. During 1940 McMurtrie urged the state to complete the project so that the central office could edit a check list, but the enormous accumulation of untyped slips prevented compliance with his wish.<sup>33</sup>

Despite these problems, the inventory thoroughly covered libraries throughout the state. The North Carolina Historical Commission assumed legal responsibility for the inventory after the HRS ended as a national project of the WPA in September 1939;<sup>34</sup> during 1939, 1940, and 1941, administrators repeatedly asked McMurtrie for the proper locational symbols for scores of small libraries, including collections housed in county courthouses, schools, and churches. Batches of slips representing books, newspapers, and broadsides were sent to Chicago regularly. Dan Lacy, Colbert Crutchfield, and their staff spent time also in supplying the Chicago office with "Style A" data for books not fully described at the time the imprint slips first were sent to Chicago.<sup>35</sup> By September 1940 over sixty thousand titles had been inventoried, even though only thirty-five thousand typed slips had been completed. The AII central office learned in April 1942 that 197 libraries in over one hundred communities had been inventoried; inventories were partially complete in forty-eight additional libraries. In June 1942 Historical Records Survey State Supervisor M.A. Rushton considered the field work to be 99



Rare books preserved by the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in Montreat were among the first to be inventoried. (Photograph, "A Corner of the Vault," in *A Great Collection of Presbyterian and Reformed Literature* [Montreat: Historical Foundation Publications, 1944], 3. From copy in the North Carolina Collection, UNC Library, Chapel Hill.)

per cent complete. When the project ended in the summer of 1942, 76,721 imprints had been listed, and slips for 72,433 of them had been sent to Chicago.<sup>36</sup>

A year before the inventory reached this stage of completeness, Mrs. May E. Campbell, state director of Community Service Programs, planned with the national office of the HRS and the AII central office a check list of North Carolina imprints. Mrs. Campbell informed the HRS in July 1941—several months after the HRS mandated that McMurtrie accelerate the decentralization of check list editorial work—that her state wished to prepare a publication. Accordingly, the Illinois office of the survey sent to Raleigh slips covering the period between 1801 and 1820.<sup>37</sup> During the summer and fall, Campbell worked to resolve editorial problems encountered by the HRS staff. By December the list of approximately 250 titles awaited only minor editorial work. Because such a short list hardly merited publication, Thomas R. Hall, state supervisor of the Illinois Historical Records Survey, suggested that

### *The Proceedings of the Revolutionary Committee of the Town of Newbern, North Carolina, 1775*

A newly discovered printed document of the American Revolution brought to light by the American Imprints Inventory of the Historical Records Survey, Division of Women's & Professional Projects of the Works Progress Administration.

*Provided with an introductory note and privately printed by Douglas C. McMurtrie, Consultant to the National Director of the Historical Records Survey, at a workshop for presentative to friends attending the district annual conference of the American Library Association at Kansas City, Missouri, June 13-18, 1938. Privately by students of the Chicago School of Printing, Chicago, Illinois.*

imprints through 1830 be included. The appropriate slips were sent to North Carolina in December 1941. As late as February 1942, however, the North Carolinians anticipated additional slips from among those still being received in Chicago.<sup>38</sup>

The relatively small number of titles to be included in the projected publication resulted from a decision not to compile documentary titles in the check list. By December 1938 Luther Evans was aware that Mary Lindsay Thornton of the University of North Carolina had begun a bibliography of North Carolina state documents. Indeed, Dan Lacy suggested that Thornton's work be published by the HRS. Thornton declined this offer and continued to pursue the project independently. Nevertheless, the trained librarians provided by the HRS who cataloged titles in several important libraries outside Chapel Hill facilitated Thornton's work, as did typists who were paid by the HRS. Thornton's project undoubtedly relieved the urgency of publishing a check list.<sup>39</sup>

World War II ultimately halted the publica-

### PROCEEDINGS of the COMMITTEE for the Town of Newbern, and County of Craven, May 31, 1775.

CIVILIAN LETTER to the several COMMITTEES of this Province.

GENTLEMEN,

WE herewith transmit you a Copy of the Proceedings of our Committee, hoping they will meet with your Approbation, and that you will think it necessary, in these Times of general Danger, to adopt something of the same Nature for our common Safety and Welfare. We think it necessary, upon this Occasion, to inform you, that Affidavits Papers have been circulated through this County (supposed under the Direction of the Committee, as they are in the Hand-Writing of the Person Secretary) with a design to draw off the People from the Cause of Liberty, and to create among the Suppliants and Inhabitants of all those who speak desire to be Free. Some have very generous People in this County were by the Articles of the Oath sworn to be faithful to the Affliction; but we have the Pleasure to acquaint you that they have been lately assured of their Error, with indignation tore off their Names, and now look with Horror on the Traps that was laid for them. If any such Papers have been circulated in your County, we desire not only will, through your Vigilance, be easily and suddenly put a stop to.

We also transmit you a Letter from Christopher Committee, which was sent to the several Committees, as their Duty, for the better Information of the People at large; which explains and sets in a clear Light the real State and Nature of the present Disputes between Great Britain and America, in which this Province is involved as well as the rest. It is, we think, the Duty of the several Committees to inform the People of these Things. We remain most respectfully, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servants, &c.

In the COMMITTEE at NEWBERN, May 31, 1775.

WHEREAS it appears by Letters from the Committees of Correspondence in New York and Philadelphia, and by the Public Papers, that all Exports to Quebec, New York, Georgia, and Newfoundland, or any Part in the Kingdom of Ireland, is prohibited.

Resolved, That the above Motion be recommended by the Committee to the Merchants and Inhabitants of this Town and County, and that those that Trade the Province, or any Part in New York, be first from this Port to the Army or Navy at Blythe, which otherwise directed to the Continental Congress.

WHEREAS having received certain Intelligence that a small Army and barbarous Actions, both lately have committed by the Army under General Gage on the Inhabitants near Blythe, whom they unmercifully kill upon and murdered in cold Blood, and without Prosecution, as they marched through the Country, having no regard to Age, Sex, or Infancy, at the same Time ravaging the Country, burning, destroying, and laying all waste wherever they came, and in which they were met by a few Companies of Provincials, who then thinking themselves aided by the Laws of God and Nations, took up Arms in the immediate Defence of their Lives, and by a timely Execution of the laws upon which a good Cause must always rest, they, though greatly their Inferior as to Numbers, bravely put a stop to their unmerciful Course, and forced them to retreat with Precipitation and great Loss, for near 20 Miles, to their fortified City of Blythe, which unhappy distant Place the Army now consider as their own Property, in open Violation of the rights of the People—From all which it manifestly appears that the British Ministry mean no longer to restrain the Arbitrary and the much abused People of America, on the Subject of their invaded Rights; but we determined, since they will not voluntarily make a total Surrender of their Freedom and Constitution, to seek it from them by the honest Hand of Violence. The People of America are therefore now driven to this last Extremity—either they must totally submit to Slavery, and open for themselves and their Posterity for ever, to work for and maintain, with the Sword of their blood, their grand Masters and Obstructors, the merciful Providence, and the Blessings of every Discrimination wherever; or they must resist firmly and manfully to maintain their Rights, which God gave, and the Constitution warrants. The latter we choose our Father's Liberty have unanimously adopted, and accordingly have sent out our full and full, from the best Americans we have received, then 2000 Men, well equipped, and equipped with a strong Train of Artillery, and every Kind of military Implements necessary for immediate Action.

And whereas due to our Father's Liberty, in their Times of general Turbulence and Confusion, the People may be misled and encouraged by our Government to an Intemperance, which we do hereby distinctly declare single have the most essential Consequences; we therefore, in our most weighty Considerations, do think it most judicious to take every Precaution that Prudence and Foresight can possibly suggest, in so as to

In 1938 McMurtrie published one of the American Imprints Inventory's most impressive discoveries, found at the Archives of the Moravian Church in America, Southern Province, located in Salem. McMurtrie's title page and the first page of the *Proceedings* from copy in the North Carolina State Library, Raleigh. (Photograph from files of the Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.)

tion effort. The task of adding imprints of the 1820s to the edited entries of the 1801-1820 period evidently was not complete when the HRS stopped functioning in April 1942. Dr. Crittenden in July 1942 told Sargent B. Child, Luther Evans's successor as director of the HRS, that M.A. Rushton, Jr., had decided to finish the editorial work as a personal project: "We expect to publish this material in THE NORTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL REVIEW, probably in four instalments, and we will be able to pay him enough to buy him a few pairs of shoes."<sup>40</sup> Rushton's work never appeared.

Through its participation in the American Imprints Inventory, North Carolina contributed to the creation of a national bibliography that, under ideal circumstances, would have been useful to librarians, bibliographers, and historians. Just as McMurtrie's goals never were fully realized, however, the inventory in North Carolina proved to be only partially successful. Although it provided employment for jobless workers hurt by the depression and brought to light interesting and rare publications, the project failed to produce a tangible contribution to the field of bibliography. The realization in North Carolina of McMurtrie's goal of a printed guide to early imprints awaited the subsequent efforts of such dedicated individuals as Mary Lindsay Thornton.<sup>41</sup>

#### Notes

1. Originally the publication date limits extended through 1820 for the states along the East Coast, 1840 for such states as Ohio and Kentucky, 1850 for midwestern states, and 1890 for some states in the Rocky Mountain region and western plains. By 1939 sufficient resources existed to extend publication date limits to 1876 for states with earlier end dates. American Imprints Inventory, *Manual of Procedure*, 5th ed. (Chicago: The Historical Records Survey, 1939), 5, hereinafter cited as *Manual of Procedure*.
2. It should be noted, however, that the North Carolina Library Commission and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction sponsored the North Carolina WPA Library Project. Between 1935 and 1942 this organization utilized hundreds of workers to strengthen existing libraries and to expand library service. For a complete discussion of the project, see Elaine Von Oesen, "Public Library Service in North Carolina and the W.P.A." (M.A. Thesis, University of North Carolina, 1951).
3. David L. Smiley, "The W.P.A. Historical Records Survey," in *In Support of Clío: Essays in Memory of Herbert A. Kellar*, ed. William B. Hesseltine and Donald R. McNeil (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1958), 3-28, hereinafter cited as Smiley, "W.P.A. Historical Records Survey."
4. The American Antiquarian Society eventually achieved Evans's goal of extending the coverage through 1800. Herbert R. Kellar, "Douglas Crawford McMurtrie: Historian of Printing and Bibliographer," in *Douglas C. McMurtrie: Bibliographer and Historian of Printing*, comp. Scott Bruntjen and Melissa L. Young (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1979), 9, hereinafter cited as Kellar, "Douglas Crawford McMurtrie"; hereinafter the book will be cited as Bruntjen and Young, *Douglas C. McMurtrie*.
5. *Manual of Procedure*, 1-3; Kellar, "Douglas Crawford McMurtrie," 9.

6. *Manual of Procedure*, 1-5. Work with early newspapers was undertaken in some states. Don Farran, "American Imprints Inventory—Final Report," 1 May 1942, in Sargent B. Child, "What is Past is Prologue: The Historical Records Survey," 23 June 1942, mimeographed speech in Department of Archives and History, Director, General Correspondence, Box 151, Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, hereinafter cited as "American Imprints Inventory—Final Report"; hereinafter the record group will be cited as Director's Correspondence.
7. McMurtrie (1888-1944), the son of William and Helen Douglass McMurtrie, was born in Belmar, New Jersey. He studied engineering at Massachusetts Institute of Technology before embarking on his colorful career, which included work for such organizations as the Pittsburgh Typhoid Fever Commission, *American Journal of Care for Cripples*, and Federation of Associations for Cripples. A huge man who possessed tremendous energy, McMurtrie was noted for his striking appearance and productivity. Kellar, "Douglas Crawford McMurtrie," 1-23.
8. Kellar, "Douglas Crawford McMurtrie," 9-10; "American Imprints Inventory—Final Report."
9. Kellar, "Douglas Crawford McMurtrie," 11. For a complete bibliography of McMurtrie's publications, see Bruntjen and Young, *Douglas C. McMurtrie*, 142-204.
10. Kellar, "Douglas Crawford McMurtrie," 10; "American Imprints Inventory—Final Report"; Sargent B. Child to Douglas C. McMurtrie, 20 February 1941, Director's Correspondence, box 138. For examples of check lists, see *American Imprints Inventory No. 14. A Check List of West Virginia Imprints, 1791-1830* (Chicago: The WPA Historical Records Survey Project, 1940) and *American Imprints Inventory No. 23. A Check List of Wisconsin Imprints, 1833-1849* (Madison: The Wisconsin Historical Records Survey, 1942).
11. Kellar, "Douglas Crawford McMurtrie," 11; "American Imprints Inventory—Final Report." The check lists, which were mimeographed, varied in size depending on a variety of factors, including the state's or locality's printing history.
12. Smiley, "W.P.A. Historical Records Survey," 23; Bruntjen and Young, *Douglas C. McMurtrie*, xi; Kellar, "Douglas Crawford McMurtrie," 10. It is important to note, however, that scores of Catholic University master's theses, the *National Union Catalog*, a continuing series of check lists initiated in 1958 by Ralph Shaw and Richard Shoemaker, and other projects have relied heavily on McMurtrie's pioneer efforts. Bruntjen and Young, *Douglas C. McMurtrie*, xi-xii.
13. *Sixteenth Biennial Report of the North Carolina Historical Commission July 1, 1934, to June 30, 1936* (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1936), 27, hereinafter cited as *Commission Biennial Report*, with appropriate dates; *Commission Biennial Report, 1936-1938*, 32-33; North Carolina Historical Records Survey, *A Souvenir of the North Carolina Historical Records Survey Project* ([Raleigh]: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1940), [1], hereinafter cited as *Souvenir*.
14. H.G. Jones, *For History's Sake: The Preservation and Publication of North Carolina History 1663-1903* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1966), 272-282, hereinafter cited as Jones, *For History's Sake*. The General Assembly in 1907 expanded the role of the commission and provided for a full-time secretary. Robert Digges Wimberly Connor, an early advocate of the commission and later the first archivist of the United States, was elected secretary. Connor earlier had stated that "The real work [of the commission] lies in collecting, transcribing and editing original sources." Jones, *For History's Sake*, 281-282.
15. Charles Christopher Crittenden (1 December 1902-13 October 1969), a native of Wake Forest, N.C., received a Ph.D. from Yale University in 1930. He headed the N.C. Historical Commission (renamed North Carolina Department of Archives and History in 1943) until 1968, with the exception of the years

1946-1947. Crittenden emphasized programs for the people and instituted sound records management policies at the state archives. He was a founding member and president (1946-1948) of the Society of American Archivists and was instrumental in the creation of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. He edited the *North Carolina Historical Review* for many years and served on the National Advisory Committee of the Historical Records Survey. Crittenden briefly directed the Survey of Federal Archives in North Carolina. H.G. Jones, "Charles Christopher Crittenden," in *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, ed. William S. Powell (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press [projected multi-volume series, 1979- ], 1:461-462; C.C. Crittenden to Sargent B. Child, 25 May 1942, Director's Correspondence, box 151).

16. Mattie Erma E. Parker to Maurice C. York, 2 January 1981, in possession of the author. Miss Mattie Erma Edwards, who had been collector for the Hall of History located at the Historical Commission, served beginning in February 1936 as assistant regional director of the Survey of Federal Archives, a project directed by Dr. Philip May Hamer of the National Archives. Dr. Crittenden supervised Edwards's work, *Commission Biennial Report, 1934-1936*, 26. The Historical Commission occupied the second floor of the new State Administration Building on Morgan Street in 1914. When the HRS began, these quarters were inadequate, but it was not until 1939 that the commission moved to more spacious facilities in the Education Building. The offices of the HRS had been moved to rented rooms prior to that time. Henry S. Stroupe, "The North Carolina Department of Archives and History—the First Half Century," *North Carolina Historical Review* 31 (April 1954): 190, 197; Dan Lacy to Maurice C. York, 15 December 1980, in possession of the author.

17. Lacy to York, 15 December 1980; *Commission Biennial Report, 1934-1936*, 27; *Commission Biennial Report, 1936-1938*, 33. Lacy lived in Rocky Mount, N.C., though he had been born in Newport News, Va., on 28 February 1914. He completed the M.A. in history at the University of North Carolina in 1935 under the direction of Dr. Crittenden and served as instructor at the university until 1935. Lacy was assistant to the national director of the HRS in 1940-1941. Later he held major positions at the National Archives (1942-1947), the Library of Congress (1947-1951), and the American Book Publishers Council (1953-1966). Since 1966 he has held various positions with McGraw-Hill, Inc. (*Who's Who in America, 1980-1981*, 41st ed., 2 vols. (Chicago: Marquis Who's Who, 1980), 2:1,925).

18. C. C. Crittenden, "The Historical Records Survey: Problems and Accomplishments," 21 December 1936, typescript, Director's Correspondence, box 111; "Tentative Plans for Publication of Results of the Historical Records Survey in North Carolina," 17 August 1936, typescript, Director's Correspondence, box 108; Crittenden to Sargent B. Child, 25 May 1942, Director's Correspondence, box 151; Lacy to York, 15 December 1980; Charles Christopher Crittenden and Dan Lacy, eds., *The Historical Records of North Carolina. Volume I: The County Records, Alamance through Columbus* (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1938), 12.

19. *Commission Biennial Report, 1936-1938*, 37: "North Carolina Historical Records Survey List of Publications," appended to *List of the Papeles Procedentes de Cuba (Cuban Papers) in the Archives of the North Carolina Historical Commission* (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Records Survey, June 1942). Hereinafter, this list will be cited as "Historical Records Survey Publications." Crittenden noted in the minutes of the Historical Commission that North Carolina was the first state to complete its inventory of county archives and that the effort had received considerable praise. Francis Samuel Philbrick, a professor of law at the University of Pennsylvania and the originator of the idea for a nationwide survey of state and local archives by relief workers, told Crittenden that North Carolina's performance on the HRS projects was "certainly more impressive than that of

any other state." Minutes of the North Carolina Historical Commission, 25 September 1939, Archives, Division of Archives and History; Francis S. Philbrick to Crittenden, 13 January 1940, Director's Correspondence, box 132; Smiley, "W.P.A. Historical Records Survey," 5-6.

20. "Historical Records Survey Publications."

21. Crittenden to May E. Campbell, 5 May 1939, Director's Correspondence, box 126.

22. Crittenden to McMurtrie, 19 May 1937, Work Projects Administration, American Imprints Inventory, Agency Central Office (N.C.), microfilm reel 4945, National Archives, Washington, D.C., hereinafter cited as AII Central Office Microfilm, with appropriate reel number. McMurtrie's work appeared in the *North Carolina Historical Review* in 1933 and 1936. Douglas C. McMurtrie, "The First Twelve Years of Printing in North Carolina, 1749-1760," *North Carolina Historical Review* 10 (July 1933): [214]-234; Douglas Crawford McMurtrie, "A Bibliography of North Carolina Imprints, 1761-1800," *North Carolina Historical Review* 13 (January 1936): 47-86; (April 1936): 143-166; (July 1936): 219-254.

23. Crittenden to McMurtrie, 19 May 1937, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm. Letters of 1937 and 1938 reveal that Lacy corresponded with McMurtrie and supervised the inventory. By April 1938 the N.C. inventory included books published through 1876. Lacy to McMurtrie, 28 April 1938, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm.

24. Owing to Lacy's hospitalization for a time prior to mid-June 1938, Marcus A. Rushton, Jr., assumed these duties. By May 1940, a month after Lacy resigned as state supervisor, Rushton had undertaken immediate supervision of the project. Colbert F. Crutchfield, who succeeded Lacy as state supervisor, accepted the responsibility of cooperating with the Chicago office of the inventory. Lacy to McMurtrie, 17 June 1938, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm; Lacy to Crittenden, 14 June 1938, Director's Correspondence, box 123; *Commission Biennial Report, 1938-1940*, 38; *Souvenir*, 10-12.

25. Lacy to McMurtrie, 26 May 1937, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm; Lacy to York, 15 December 1980.

26. Lacy to McMurtrie, 26 August 1937, 11 October 1937, 4 January 1938, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm; Lacy to Luther H. Evans, 9 November 1937, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm. Burch, who held the M.S. degree from North Carolina State College, later was instrumental in compiling the guide to manuscripts located at the Duke University Library. *Souvenir*; Crittenden to Evans, 20 July 1938, Director's Correspondence, box 123.

27. McMurtrie to Viola S. Burch, [18?] January 1938; Burch to McMurtrie, 18 January 1938, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm. Lacy had to contend with the foundation's director, Dr. Samuel Mills Tenney, who constantly worried that Mrs. Burch would not have time accurately to reflect the quality of the collection. Lacy told McMurtrie that "Dr. Tenney's letters are always a trifle acidulous, but his bark is much worse than his bite." Lacy to McMurtrie, 21, 24 January 1938, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm.

28. Lacy to Irene Best, [8?] March 1938, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm. Lacy had Mrs. Best type appropriate catalog card entries on half sheets of typing paper. If they were deemed important, imprint slips were filled out and sent to Chicago. Lacy to McMurtrie, 10, 23 March 1938, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm.

29. Lacy to Adelaide L. Fries, 17 November 1937, Director's Correspondence, box 117; Douglas C. McMurtrie, *Eighteenth Century North Carolina Imprints 1749-1800* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1938), [20]. McMurtrie considered the New Bern publication so important that he reprinted it. *The Proceedings of the Revolutionary Committee of the Town of Newbern, North Carolina, 1775* (Chicago: Chicago School of Printing, 1938).

30. Colbert F. Crutchfield to McMurtrie, 12 November 1938, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm; "The Historical Records Survey Program in North Carolina: A Brief Outline," after 4 March 1940, mimeograph, Director's Correspondence, box 132. Crutchfield at this time was technical director of the HRS in Raleigh.

31. Parker to York, 2 January 1981; Lacy to York, 15 December 1980.

32. Crittenden to May E. Campbell, 19 July 1937, Director's Correspondence, box 117. It is interesting to note that both Mrs. Campbell, state director of Women's and Professional Projects, and Dr. Luther H. Evans advised Crittenden that, despite his resignation, they would expect him to offer suggestions and guidance. Even Crittenden admitted that the work of the Historical Commission and the HRS could not be divorced. Campbell to Crittenden, 23 July 1937, Director's Correspondence, box 117; Evans to Crittenden, 25 June 1937, Director's Correspondence, box 114.

33. Lacy to McMurtrie, 7 June 1937, 17 June 1938, 8 September 1939, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm; McMurtrie to Lacy, 11 June 1937, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm; Crutchfield to Crittenden, 28 August 1940, enclosed in Crittenden to J.J. Lund, 31 August 1940, Director's Correspondence, box 135.

34. In August 1939 federal WPA projects ceased to exist on a national level, but many of them, including the HRS, continued as local efforts in the states. The national office of the HRS continued the work of maintaining editorial standards of the varied publications of the survey, and the Illinois office of the HRS maintained the central imprint files. In September 1939 the North Carolina Historical Commission became the legal sponsor of the North Carolina Historical Records Survey Project. Funds were obtained from the State WPA headquarters rather than from Washington. Smiley, "W.P.A. Historical Records Survey," 22-23; Dan Lacy to Maurice C. York, 19 August 1981, in possession of the author.

35. Correspondence reflecting the nature of the inventory work between 1939 and 1941 may be found in reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm. For AII records pertaining to the type and number of imprint slips sent from Raleigh to Chicago on a regular basis, see reels 4941 and 4943, AII Central Office Microfilm. McMurtrie informed his colleagues that the Union Catalog of the Library of Congress did not assign locational symbols for very small libraries, including those located in schools, courthouses, and churches. McMurtrie to M.A. Rushton, [23?] May 1939; McMurtrie to Lacy, 31 October 1939, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm.

36. Crutchfield to Crittenden, 28 August 1940, enclosed in Crittenden to J.J. Lund, 31 August 1940, Director's Correspondence, box 135; "Historical Records Survey Report on Status of Files," 10 April 1942, typescript, enclosed in C.C. McGinnis and May E. Campbell to Florence Kerr, 2 June 1942, Director's Correspondence, box 151; *Commission Biennial Report, 1940-1942*, 43. Rushton succeeded Crutchfield as state supervisor of the HRS in December 1941. *Inventory of the State Archives of North Carolina. Series I. General Governmental Agencies. No. 7, State Planning Board* (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Records Survey, March 1942), [iv].

37. Lacy to McGinnis, 9 July 1941, Records of the Work Projects Administration, Record Group 69, Historical Records Survey (N.C.), file 651.355, National Archives, Washington, D.C., herein-after cited as Record Group 69; Thomas R. Hall to Campbell, 1 August 1941, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm; Child to McMurtrie, 20 February 1941, Director's Correspondence, box 138.

38. Child to McGinnis, 11, 17, 19 September 1941, Record Group 69; Campbell to Hall, 3 October, 4, 12 December 1941, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm; list of imprint slips sent to North Carolina, 1 August 1941-31 December 1941, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm; memorandum of Winifred Schlosser to D.J. Mitchell, 19 February 1942, reel 4946, AII Central Office Microfilm.

39. Thornton's useful bibliography was published in 1954. Mary Lindsay Thornton to Luther H. Evans, 7 December 1938, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm; Child to McGinnis, 16 August 1941, Record Group 69; Campbell to Hall, 4 December 1941, reel 4945, AII Central Office Microfilm; Mary Lindsay Thornton, comp., *Official Publications of the Colony and State of North Carolina 1749-1939: A Bibliography* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1954), x. The publication differed in scope and content from the most comprehensive check lists published by the American Imprints Inventory. The work represented primarily titles from the collections at the University of North Carolina, Duke University, the State Library, the State College of Agriculture and Engineering at Raleigh, and the Woman's College of the University of Greensboro, although some of the titles were culled from Miss Thornton's own research notes, a complete file of the printed cards of the Library of Congress, *The Monthly List of State Publications*, and published bibliographies by R.R. Bowker and McMurtrie (a total of eighteen libraries or repositories held copies of imprints listed in Thornton's bibliography). The book was arranged alphabetically rather than chronologically. The broad time period represented in Thornton's work precluded the inclusion of transcriptions of title pages such as were used in some AII check lists: "Style A" descriptions. Finally, Thornton's bibliography lacked some of the indexes found in most check lists.

40. Smiley, "W.P.A. Historical Records Survey," 23; Crittenden to Child, 22 July 1942, Director's Correspondence, box 151.

41. In addition to her bibliography of official publications, Miss Thornton published a bibliography of general North Caroliniana. Although not comprehensive, the volume lists works about North Carolina as well as periodicals published in North Carolina and works written by North Carolinians. Mary Lindsay Thornton, *A Bibliography of North Carolina 1589-1956* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1958).

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