

issue a much stronger appeal than the Dominion Museum can under present conditions and would, with adequate finance, be in a much stronger position than the well-known Mitchell Library in Sydney. Moreover all possibilities of overlapping between the Turnbull Library and the Museum would be eliminated.' In advising the Librarian of the decision the Under-Secretary added 'This Department has a number of old records on hand and arrangements have been made for these to be gone through at an early date for the purpose of making a selection of those which it is considered should be deposited in the Turnbull Library for reference purposes.' From another source it is clear that the person asked to select the papers concerned was James Cowan. Cowan was instructed to report fortnightly on his progress in sorting material into two categories, retaining if necessary, documents that might contain information 'which it may not be desirable to throw open for public inspection'.²⁸ The reports were to be submitted to Dr Thomson and to Mr Andersen for preliminary approval. As a result of Cowan's labours several parcels of New Zealand Company documents were sorted out and ostensibly handed over, but these appear to have been reunited with the main body of the Company papers some years later. Possibly this occurred in 1928 when the records of the German administration in Samoa, which formed part of the Historical Collection, were passed on to Dr Scholefield as the Controller of Dominion Archives.²⁹

However, the National Historical Collection was transferred on 25 August. Apart from some propaganda dross of the war, it included original manuscript and other material of some value. The Annual Report for 1921/22³⁰ announced that a biographical section had been started but warned that existing staff had more than enough to do in merely completing the cataloguing of the Turnbull collection. The report for the following year, more hopefully, said that the 'library may in time include an Office of Public Records'.³¹

About the same time a Library and Archives Committee of the Board of Science and Art was appointed of which the Chairman was the historian and journalist Guy H. Scholefield. The Sub-Committee held its first meeting on 4 February 1922 and approved the transfer of the Carter collection to the Turnbull Library. It also recommended that systematic efforts should be made to locate and catalogue all local, general government, provincial and ecclesiastical records as well as those of the New Zealand Company. Andersen at the request of the Under-Secretary, had made some general comments on the future of archives but without specifically associating the Library with them.

The report for 1923 stated that 'it had not been possible to do anything towards arranging or cataloguing' the historical records already received and in 1925 the collection and its accretions was still being