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Library Trends, a quarterly journal in librarianship, provides a medium for evaluative recapitulation of current thought and practice, searching for those ideas and procedures which hold the greatest potentialities for the future.

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Introduction

R. W. G. VAIL

**Manuscripts and Archives** are the most important sources of the scholar for only through them, supplemented by contemporary newspapers, broadsides, caricatures, and controversial pamphlets, can he hope to find the facts and the real flavor of the period of his studies. Years ago when manuscripts were mentioned the student thought only of a man’s letters, diaries, and legal papers. Now the field has broadened and has become far more exciting and the librarian finds himself faced with the problem of collecting, processing, and administering the business papers of individuals and corporations, the archives of governments, states, and cities, the manuscripts of authors, the sketchbooks of artists and the scores of musicians. And, added to records on paper, he must now collect significant motion picture films, tape recordings of the careers of the great or of the pioneer, the records of famous singers, distinguished musical compositions, and the elusive folk song of the nation. He is even expected to collect the spoken dialects of vanishing Indian languages, the music of church bells, and the sound of great guns in battle.

The private collector and the dealer does much to preserve the historical manuscripts of the past but the librarian has the chief responsibility and the rare pleasure of bringing together these records and of making them available to the scholar. Not so long ago your editor found in a great mass of manuscripts which had been in storage since the Civil War the original document signed by Napoleon authorizing the sale of Louisiana to the United States. Imagine his delight in helping to save for posterity the parchment which gave us half of the territory of our nation,—one of the great documents of American history! Such adventures make the collecting of manuscripts one of the great joys of librarianship.

Manuscript collecting, as D. C. Mearns points out, is an art. Haphazard gathering of the unimportant letters of the great should be left to the beginning autograph collector. It is better to have an original

Mr. Vail is Director, The New-York Historical Society.

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letter from an obscure soldier telling of his tribulations at Valley Forge than a pass signed by George Washington. Besides, the latter may turn out to be a Spring forgery. Librarians, whether collecting books or manuscripts, should build on strength; they should gather large collections by subject rather than isolated pieces which have no relation with other materials in their libraries.

Though the alert librarian will occasionally find a manuscript in an auction or dealer's catalog which will fill a distinct gap in his collection, he should use his best efforts to gather large collections already assembled. He should make a systematic study of the distinguished families, the famous authors and the great collectors in his own region or, if he is a university librarian, among his alumni, who have such collections and who, generally, would be happy to find a final depository for them. Many an important collection is burned or sold for waste paper because the nearby librarian had shown no interest. If it is pointed out to a hesitant prospective donor that the commercial value of his collection may be deducted from his income tax, he will often decide to make the gift, especially if he is also reminded that if he sells the collection he will have to pay an income tax on the amount received. Personal gain is a great stimulus to generosity.

Most large collections, fortunately, come as gifts and when receiving them the librarian should make sure that the donor's letter of transmittal or deed of gift should relinquish to the library the complete rights to their public use and, if they are the donor's own papers or those of his ancestors, the publication rights as well. Many librarians do not realize that publication rights remain with the estate of the writer unless formally transferred to the owning library.

Having built up a respectable manuscript collection, the librarian is responsible for its physical care and preservation. He must keep his papers out of sunlight and away from artificial light or they will fade. They should never be framed and hung on the wall or displayed for very long in exhibition cases. Look what happened to the Declaration of Independence! They should not be stored where the air is too dry, too damp or affected by fumes, or where there are dust or insects. Frequently they must be mounted or repaired, but not with transparent cellophane tape!

Having insured the physical care of his manuscripts, the librarian must arrange and catalog them so that they will be useful to the scholar. No two librarians will agree as to how this should be done but a brief catalog entry which will help the scholar find the material he seeks is far better than an attempt at complete cataloging for no library has
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the funds or staff to do a thorough job of it and, anyhow, it is the duty of the scholar to select and appraise the manuscripts under his consideration. Of course chronological catalogs and subject entries are valuable and necessary when time permits but in most libraries a single card for a unified collection of hundreds of manuscripts will often suffice until detailed analytical cards can be made.

The growing use of manuscripts makes it necessary, if they are to be preserved for future generations, to protect them not only from dust and rodents but also from thieves and from the wear and tear they will receive at the hands of untrained and incompetent users. As Mr. Edmunds of the Ford Motor Company archives says, "Libraries exist for readers; archives, for writers" and by that he probably means, scholarly writers competent to handle these fragile and irreplaceable materials. For this reason, many libraries insist on proper introductions or assurances of scholarly ability before readers are allowed to use their manuscripts. The thorny problem of inter-library cooperation is admirably covered in H. H. Peckham’s chapter which points out the injustice, in some instances, of wholesale microcopying from the collections of a sister institution. To transfer isolated originals or photocopies to a library already strong in the subject is admirable when possible but the wholesale copying from great collections for use in libraries having little or nothing original on the subject might well be questioned.

It is fortunate that many of our great libraries are publishing guides to their manuscript collections. It is of great aid to the scholar if, having shown him what manuscripts we have on his subject, we can also direct him to other depositories having related materials. The plan of the National Historical Publications Commission for a comprehensive guide to all the archival and manuscript repositories in the United States and the hoped for union catalog of manuscripts at the Library of Congress will be a great boon to librarians and scholars alike. Scholarly books are well covered by bibliographies and by the union catalogs but there is still a great need for a similar record of the whereabouts of manuscripts in American collections.

The bulk of business and institutional archives has made librarians hesitate before admitting them to their crowded shelves. However, there is growing interest in them among scholars as is shown from the steady sale of the three volumes of *Beekman Mercantile Papers, 1746-1799*, just published by The New-York Historical Society. Many large libraries and many individual business houses are now collecting in
R. W. C. VAIL

this field but the problems of storage, weeding, and cataloging are many, as we learn from R. W. Lovett's chapter.

The unique problems of handling the government's vast collections of archives are of great interest to those of us who must refer our readers to the National Archives for aid and the similar, though lesser, problems of the state depositories are also of concern to all of us. Those of us who are mainly engaged in collecting personal and business papers are most fortunate that, in most of our states and at Washington, the bulky but invaluable public records are in the competent hands of others.

To many of us the collecting of films and sound recordings is a new field but one to which we must give our attention for we must all use these more recently developed techniques for the preservation of our history and so it behooves us to study the final chapter of our volume and the further references which J. B. Spear has given us.

The barker outside the circus tent who ballyhoos the performance does not have to be an expert equestrian or a high wire artist but he does need a certain sympathetic interest in the outdoor show business. The present issue editor is in a similar case with the same lack of skill but with a vast enthusiasm for his subject. He has not even had to crack the ringmaster's whip or become a lion tamer, for all of his performers were eager to do their stuff and prompt to come into the ring on cue when the circus band (in Urbana) played the tune.

Our acts may not be death-defying or even breath-taking but we are most grateful to the performers, nevertheless, especially since, in their enthusiasm, they did their parts without other remuneration than the satisfaction of being generously helpful in a good cause. All the editor had to do was to help select the subjects and locate the proper talent to make our circus a success. You, the audience out under the big top, must decide whether we have succeeded.
Historical Manuscripts, Including
Personal Papers

DAVID C. MEARNS

By way of preface, let it be perfectly understood that what follows is written by an individual in an individual's capacity. It is, in other words, not to be construed in any way as an official or corporate statement, or as a reflection of an institutional viewpoint.

Because of the implications of eternity, it is an awesome act when a public repository formally takes unto itself a collection of manuscripts. Certainly the contract “is not by any to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God.” It is the more solemn for the reason that the troth is arranged and plighted by proxies who do not consult the parties of the first and second part. A momentary custodian (either individually or corporately) acts for one and a very mortal owner or donor represents the other, but the life-expectancy of institutions and their holdings is far longer than that allowed to those who commit them. Who then shall say that the union, being, as it is, extremely personal, will, in a long future, prove felicitous? The projected shadows of posterities look down upon the scene; sometimes they seem so hatefully to glower, at others to be shaken with unpleasant laughter.

Even Benjamin Franklin confined his advice to the formation of a transient liaison. To prescribe for permanent preservation what manuscripts to choose and what to eschew is presumptuous, foolish, and insolent: an invasion of the precincts of privacy, a restraint upon the exercise of taste and fancy, a violation of privileges condoned by experience, an affront to jealous license. Worse, it is completely supererogatory.

At the same time, it may be possible to avoid abuse, ridicule and shame (1) by excluding all consideration of the imperious vagaries

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Mr. Mearns is Chief, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.
of private collectors and confining the precepts to the conduct of public or quasi-public repositories, (2) by offering an assortment of tempered generalities, and (3) by gently reporting the state of the art as it is understood presently to be practiced by the votaries. So circumscribed, the result can be, for the informed, only a series of reflections on the obvious.

In a well-ordered world sic, a manuscript collection is not capriciously instituted. There must be a purpose for its founding which is to meet a need neglected altogether or (for whatever reason) inadequately, unsatisfactorily, and inconveniently served elsewhere. This presupposes the existence and continuity of patrons who will find it steadily or recurrently useful.

The field of interest should be narrowly defined and, in accordance with the terms, should consistently receive strictest adherence. This is important if the collection is gradually and logically to increase and develop to that depth where it will constitute a sound basis for research. As a corollary, the temptation to receive "peripheral materials," often enchanting in themselves, should be firmly resisted lest distraction set in and fixed emphasis be forever lost.

The scope of the collection should be distinguishable. To that end it should be closely differentiated, precisely stated, and widely publicized. Even so, it is too much to hope that the bounds staked out for it will be generally acknowledged or that intruders will be found (by the guild-at-large) guilty of any trespass. Free enterprise is healthy, stimulating, and good for the cause. Inevitably, in the hot pursuit of acquisitions, the initiative of one repository will impinge upon the aspirations of another, but not always upon the same repository or for the same reason. Competition may be ineradicable but activities purely duplicative should be carefully, conscientiously eliminated and persistent, acrimonious, extravagant rivalries should be abjured.

Fortunately, most collecting institutions recognize a responsibility, if not to their counterparts, then certainly to the promotion of scholarship, for the considered, purposeful, proper allocation of manuscripts. Related materials can be effectively utilized only when concentrated in one place. They enhance, expound, and explain one another. They give to one another a third dimension. They contrast, confirm, or contradict one another. They quicken one another. They are elements in a Great Experiment.

The converse is true; when related materials are scattered, their research value is likewise dissipated, their substance is diminished,
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their significance languishes, they are unseen by, and unknown to, the very persons whom they best might serve. Moreover, scholars are rarely endowed with affluence; despite grants-in-aid and subsidies of one sort or another, traipsing from pillar to post is expensive to the point of being prohibitive. Large scale single-copy photoduplication is comparably costly.

Now if this holds good—as it is believed to hold—for manuscript collections generally, it is especially good in the case of historical manuscript collections. Yet there are some who dissent. The distinguished librarian of a great university blandly writes: "We assume that any collection of papers outside a well-established repository is vulnerable and in danger of destruction so we accept anything desirable that is available to us."¹ Let the honest fellow go blithely on his way until spatial constrictions reform him.

On the other hand, it is heartening to report that increasingly administrators adopt rules of abstinence, critically and with saffron eyes ponder proffered gifts, and make alternative suggestions looking to "the right material in the right place." From Yale comes word of "a general policy that there are many items which will be more useful elsewhere, and we do not compete in the market when we feel this to be the case."² The University of Virginia has reached "informal understandings with most of the other repositories in Virginia, Washington, D.C., the southeastern states, and in a few instances with institutions farther afield, in accordance with which we frequently refer a would-be donor, depositor, or seller of manuscripts to the institution in which we feel his manuscripts 'belong.' We are convinced that this attitude (it is that informal) pays off very handsomely, not simply because the generous reciprocity of other area institutions adds richly and appropriately to our holdings, but because we thus avoid accumulating inappropriate materials."³

And the Alderman's curator adds: "It seems wasteful, outmoded, and a bit silly to collect items that appear more suitable for (a) the archives of another institution, or (b) the strictly local regional history of an area where another repository is located, or (c) actually form an integral part of a collection already existing in another repository, or (d) has close relationships to a collection or collections existing elsewhere."⁴

Thus the Minnesota Historical Society works "closely with the Archives of the University of Minnesota, the State Archives Commission of Minnesota, the Norwegian-American Historical Association, and the county historical societies;" and has "received materials from

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or sent materials to the Montana Historical Society, the North Dakota Historical Society, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and the New York Historical Society."

Rapprochement extends to the cities. Writes the Chicago Historical Society: "We have turned over to the Newberry . . . some ms genealogies, and have recommended that donors give such material to that library. We are not interested in competing with a fine collection that is seven blocks down the street." In Philadelphia, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania yields Dr. Franklin to the American Philosophical Society in return for proprietorship of the (literary) remains of William Penn. Meanwhile, in metropolitan Boston the Houghton Library concedes to the Massachusetts Historical Society manuscripts connected with New England history while reserving literary manuscripts for itself; the Massachusetts Historical Society surrenders genealogical manuscripts to the New England Historic Genealogical Society; and the Boston Public Library forswwears manuscripts relating to early Boston business history in favor of the Baker Library. Clearly, there are enough papers to go around.

What manuscripts should be collected? An excellent essay introductory to the subject, "Manuscript Collecting for Historical Societies," by R. F. Metzdorf, appeared in the Spring 1956 Bulletin of the Connecticut League of Historical Societies. It is well always for the uninitiated to keep in mind the fact that manuscripts are assembled not because they are physical objects composed of paper and ink, not even because they are autographs, but because they are historical evidence! It is as original sources for the reconstruction of the past, for the interpretation of parallel experience, for the impeachment of false or mistaken or perverted testimony, for the clarification of blurred report, for the detection, identification, and dismissal of fable, and the recovery of reality that they are sought and brought together.

They should be, in the highest degree, authoritative. They should be written contemporaneously by active participants in, or by keen, shrewd, trustworthy, explicit observers of, events and transactions, measures and movements, disputes and consequences, miserable failures, and pervading achievements. The roles, humors, origins, motives, prejudices, slants, and quirks of the writers should be self-evident or readily ascertainable. The more idiomatic, intimate, outspoken, and spontaneous the tone, the more reliable will be the record. Truth has a terrible and an articulate intensity.

History is collective biography and foremost among its sources are
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the personal papers of persons conspicuous in community, state, regional, and national affairs, together with the complementing papers of their close associates and more prominent adversaries. These are composed preponderantly of correspondence (both letters received and retained copies of letters sent); not infrequently they include, in addition, discarded drafts, memoranda, notebooks, orderly books, diaries, accounts, logs, ciphers, scrapbooks, press clippings, and such ephemera as pamphlets, circulars, leaflets, or broadsides.

Preferably, a collection of personal papers should be extensive. It should cover a lifetime and fully relate its incidents. Indeed, content should be so varied as to be important not only to the study of a career but perhaps more important to the study of a series of subjects as well. This places it beyond the peril of exhaustion through the exploitation of a single approach. It must be preserved, in any event, for the benefit of those "revisionists" produced by every generation.

A collection of personal papers should not be divided between two or more repositories. With this principle there is general agreement, but many are the administrators who have sustained the noble anguish which is caused by self-sacrificial "respect for integrity."

The stimulus given by the Historical Manuscripts Commission at the turn of the century and the ensuing spread of repositories throughout the land has probably had the effect of bringing into public institutions most of the collections of the personal papers of earlier outstanding Americans. A few, to be sure, remain in private hands, but the number dwindles daily. Meanwhile historians are conscious of a changing perspective.

In his presidential address, "What's Right with the History Profession," read before the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association in December 1955, J. D. Hicks, of the University of California, noted:

We take for granted what someone wisely called the continuity of history. Thus history becomes an endless procession of human experience marching toward the present and the future. But the only way this procession can reach the current scene is through our recent past. The years just fading from our memories constitute, in a sense, the bridge over which the contributions of earlier ages must pass to make contact with the world of today and tomorrow. One of the things that's right about the history profession is its present determination to keep this bridge in order. Time was when historians regarded the recent past and those who dabbled in it with ill-concealed contempt. To the more conservative writers, history left off at least a hundred years before their time, and they crossed off as current events
what transpired later. The more daring might seek to bring the narrative down to their own birth-dates, but what respectable historian could regard the events of his own lifetime as history? Everyone knew that many of the most valuable documents were concealed, that too recent events were distorted by their nearness and cast too deep shadows, that one might perhaps hope to divest himself of his prejudices when writing of the distant past, but never when the events he described touched him personally and directly. So good historians, determined to keep their perspective right and their vision clear, just skipped the recent past. The result was that the darkest age, historically speaking, was likely to be the age just gone by. Stand at the end of the nineteenth century in American history, for example, and who do we see? McMaster under full sail heading majestically toward the Civil War; Rhodes in volume after volume fighting the battles of the war, both political and military; and Turner wrapped in contemplation on the significance of the frontier. None of these, nor any others with similar competence, had focussed primarily on the recent economic transformations within the United States, changes that were revolutionary in themselves and at the same time made well-nigh inevitable the greater involvement of the United States in world affairs. It is not too much to say that the United States entered the twentieth century historically unprepared.

Recent history has now come into its own.

Indeed it has and the impact upon the procurators of material has been sudden, and severe. There are clamors which cannot be unheeded, demands which cannot airily be waved aside. Fifty years or so ago a bibliothecary of Herbert Putnam’s stature might say with assured impunity that his library “accumulates without reference to present interest, and it considers future rather than present use.” Perhaps then—but no longer. The searchers after yesterday are impatient and impassioned. They will not be denied.

But personal papers of recent origin are a phenomenon consorting with a quandry. They are not comfortably, familiarly holographic; instead they are the wonderfully legible emanations of the typewriter or proliferating machine. They are formidably voluminous. It is not unusual for a single collection to be composed of hundreds of thousands of pieces, and there are some which are reckoned in the millions. They can be accommodated only where shelves are empty or aisles are wide.

When received, they are sometimes found to include such memorabilia as Panama hats, overshoes, unlaunched shirts, old razor blades, revolvers, and empty bottles formerly hidden and forgotten (or overlooked) in a filing cabinet. One shipment actually contained
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an untenanted dog house. How it got there has never been satisfactorily explained. Of course, it is easy to segregate and destroy these outré paraphernalia, but, unhappily, there is no common practice for winnowing the papers themselves. Extra carbons, however, may be safely discarded and, with a due regard for philatelic sensibilities, envelopes may be confidently pulped. There is little argument to support the indefinite conservation of canceled checks or routine household bills and receipts. Again, it is entirely possible that only single copies of form and stereotype letters sent need be retained for the ages. The same consideration may govern advertising matter, publicity literature, autographed menus, or theater programs, picture post cards, and idle doodlings on scratch pads. In the case of political figures, patronage files comprised of applications for minor offices may be carefully screened and radically reduced.

But beyond these simple measures a harassed curator, allaying veneration for the *fonds,* must act upon his own sense of the outlandish and the irrelevant, and cautiously proceed to pare. It is well, however, that donors should understand and formally accept his discretionary authority. Some instruments of gift contain clauses to the effect that materials judged inappropriate for permanent preservation will be destroyed, alienated, or returned. A form of deed devised for the William L. Clements Library goes further, specifying “The said gift to be without any conditions whatsoever and the donee shall have absolute discretion to retain the property herewith conveyed or to sell or to exchange the same or make such other disposition of said property that shall seem wise and prudent to the Director of the said Library.”

Papers of recent origin are rarely secured by purchase. More often they are acquired as the gifts of families and heirs who (disinclined to examine them) are inclined to look upon them with suspicion and alarm, supposing them to contain documents which may conceivably libel the living, slander the lately dead, or prove in some way offensive to the feelings of innocent and excellent friends and relatives. Taste, kindliness, and apprehension make owners reluctant to relinquish control. There is, too, in rare instances, a fear that the papers may divulge improprieties, lapses, or dalliance which would bring vicarious discredit to themselves. If the papers pass into public hands, journalists from the sensational press may patiently pore over them and produce outrageous stories.

These anxieties are not unnatural; on the contrary, compounded as they are of loyalties, sensibilities, and uneasiness, they are at once
decorous, dignified, and intelligible. Their consequence, however, is that in making a gift of recent papers to a public repository the donor is likely to impose conditions. So long as the conditions are reasonable and temporary, they may be accepted, despite the fact that the burden of administration is made more ponderous. Frequently a donor will reserve the right to pass upon applications for access to the collection for a specified number of years, after the expiration of which period it is fully opened to the public. This condition is intolerably onerous only when the time-span of limited access is unduly long or when the donor passes to survivors and descendants his power to grant or withhold permission to examine the collection.

Whenever practicable, instruments of gift should include, insofar as they reside in the donor, a dedication of literary property rights, and blanket authority for making photoduplicates. Such waivers assure the widest potential usefulness of a collection.

Papers are sometimes received on deposit when there is a reasonable expectation that their status will ultimately be converted to gift. The more definite and precise this expectation the better. But as a protection to itself and its constituency the repository should lay down the stipulations that (1) the deposit will not be revoked for a specified period of years, (2) meanwhile the collection may be made freely available to investigators, and (3) in the event of withdrawal the repository may make, retain and service such reproductions of the collection as it pleases.

Prospective donors, as a rule, are not unmindful of, or indifferent to, their taxes. Occasionally one will simultaneously dangle a collection before the bright eyes of several curators and will award the prize to the institution which “outbids” the others in its appraisal. Certainly a donor is eminently entitled to claim a warranted deduction for his gift, but under no circumstances should repositories allow themselves to be placed in a position, undignified at best, at worst reprehensible, where their agents’ actions can arouse the misgivings of revenuers.

So much for collected papers. Turning now to separate letters: these should be acquired only when they “build to strength,” that is to say only when they can be and should be intercalated with collections already existing. As waifs and strays they hold no interest for research. Even as monumenta they can serve only as exhibits or as examples of ostentation and discriminating connoisseurship.

As to diaries: when they are writ “clearly and full upon any gallant subject,” when the entries are consistently made by an eager and competent reporter, and when they flash vivid light on circumstance,
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then they hold a distinguished place as "contemporary evidence." But when they are the dreary recountings of dreary lives, when they are confined to recording the weather or the physical condition of a hypochondriac, when the significance of the world about him is lost to the diarist, then their value is nuisance value only. Good diaries get published; bad diaries encumber shelves. A lively tractate on their dispiriting powers is Margaret Scrivens' "They'd None of 'em be Miss'd," published in the winter 1955 issue of Manuscripts. Here again, as always, content is the only basis for selection.

Subject collections are tantalizing: they are generous purveyors of information; they may be, they often are, the product of persistent, diligent gathering; they sometimes drop a clue or point in a direction; but because they can rarely be exhaustive, and still more rarely attain absolute completeness and finality, they are not ends in themselves but must be used in conjunction with other historical sources.

Manuscript collecting is not for manuals. It is not a technique, not a science; it is an art—perhaps one of the creative arts. It has brought its masters to discouragement and despair, its apprentice-aspirants to grief and folly and sudden exhilaration, but as long as the quest of the past may continue, so too will its fascination and shimmering reward.

References

4. Ibid.
THIS SEEKER AFTER TRENDS in regard to literary, artistic, and musical manuscripts felt keenly his need to supplement the news appearing in the current publications which he sees as subscriber or as an adjunct to his daily labors in these fields. To probe for the most recent attitudes and policies in these collecting areas, a questionnaire comprised of six parts, some of which offered alternate responses, was sent to 107 libraries. The composition or complexion of the list queried may contribute to evaluating the validity of statements advanced in this survey.

The form was directed to forty-four state historical societies or agencies, thirty-three art museums, institutes or schools, twelve leading conservatories or music schools and departments. It went also to thirteen college and university libraries, principally those of more than a million volume book-stock. Five major public libraries of large size, including the Library of Congress, were addressed and four other public libraries were among those in other categories, mainly in larger cities at widely scattered geographic points; these four were included to assure better national and subject coverage.

Eighty-two responses to the form were received. The university and college group and the public libraries had equally excellent records: in each of these classes only one institution failed to answer or acknowledge the inquiry. The poorest showing in returns was made by the historical societies: fifteen of forty-four produced no reaction to the form. Irksome as questionnaires may be,—sometimes because of poorly phrased composition,—one might conclude there is a greater lack of professional spirit or curiosity in these societies than in library circles.

The first two questions propounded were aimed at discovering how actively the institutional groups were collecting, whether some were moved by policies of recent determination and the nature of spatial or administrative provisions.

The author is Keeper of Manuscripts, New York Public Library.
Literary, Artistic, and Musical Manuscripts

Fifteen of the historical societies report they are collecting actively; three of those in the negative column are there because of nearness to large universities which are active, a fact which must be credited to positive thinking and not to neglecting an opportunity. However, only two societies have adopted an affirmative collecting policy for these categories of manuscripts during the past ten years. By contrast, the colleges and universities are exemplary; out of a total of seventeen approached, that were in any way related to this probe, thirteen report positive collecting activity. Among public libraries, those located mostly along the eastern seaboard and having departmentalized organization and endowments, either inherited from long deceased benefactors or local collectors with civic pride, continue to lead in collection of such manuscripts. In the mid-west, the major municipal libraries, of non-endowed character, are not greatly active. In Texas there is a glimmer of interest. On the Pacific Coast the Los Angeles Public Library collects literary and musical materials; but in San Francisco the public library is not seeking such. It appears that the Bay area leaves these matters to the universities.

The "Friends of the Library" organizations appear to be a source of impetus and support for the collecting power of the colleges and universities. Only three of twenty-nine historical societies indicated existence of a group of this kind. Over half of the collegiate institutions reported their presence on campus, and in numerous instances membership was not confined to alumni but was open to the general public—the same field from which the societies might reap assistance. The vigor of this movement is attested by several examples of such support established before World War II which were revived at the close of hostilities as well as many others of unbroken existence. Centers of art and musical instructions do not appear to be convincing those friends who support the gifts of artistic materials and published scores that original sketchbooks, music scores in manuscript, and the papers of the artists themselves are worth collecting, that they are of documentary significance in their respective areas. There is one exception in the art field which will be dealt with later in this section.

The matter of special funds designed to honor work in art, music, and literature appears to have been given a serious set-back by unhappy experiences of some major libraries during this decade. There is a noteworthy lack of special funds or grants in the control of historical societies for encouragement of work above the undergraduate level. Among the older historical societies such funds usually
go to the support of the general publications program. More should follow the Wyoming example of grants-in-aid or scholarships for graduate theses on county history, with the resulting manuscripts earmarked for the society collections. Similar aid funds at the Huntington Library and Art Gallery and a recent grant to the Newberry Library in support of certain cultural studies centered upon Chicago are producing literary studies of significance and merit. The Minneapolis Public Library is completing plans for awards honoring an adult book and a juvenile book, or the author thereof, identified with Minnesota. It would be surprising, indeed, if the librarians directing these programs or awards permitted the original manuscripts of these works to escape. One eastern university is successfully directing an awards program in the field of historical writing. More of this kind of encouragement and recognition of meritorious literary work should be supported by librarians; it can have the double result of exploiting the collections in hand and of bringing new materials to their custody.

The most impressive illustration of the creative power of special funds is the work of the Library of Congress in the music field. The commissioning of new compositions, and their performance before public audiences, has been made possible by three endowed foundations, the Coolidge, the Whittall, and the Koussevitzky, which are administered at that library. Twenty years ago seven such concerts were given, ten years ago they had risen to twenty-six and in 1954-55 to thirty-two. The Library of Congress holdings in music manuscripts have grown apace with these concerts, including modern popular American composers' papers as well as scores and autographic items of classical composers both domestic and foreign. Moreover Mrs. Gertrude Clark Whittall's final bequests provided the funds from which the Library is able to broaden its collecting in the field of poetry and literature. The most recent annual report of the Librarian of Congress records a gift of $25,000 to step up progress in another type of music work, the making of long-playing recordings of American folk-music and folk-lore.

Another recent example of winning financial aid for a special project likewise devoted to an aspect of music is furnished by the Dance Archive of the Music Division of The New York Public Library. A grant of $37,500, to be applied over a three-year period to the indexing and cataloging of about 25,000 items comprising this archive, was received from the Rockefeller Foundation early in 1956. This constitutes recognition of the growing public interest in the ballet especially, and conviction that a special collection of meritorious
character ought to be prepared for more effective use. When an institution presents a well-defined program or project of special significance, support from a philanthropic foundation or benefactor can be found in musical work, it appears. Only two independent music schools or conservatories reported any interest in collecting musical manuscripts; the universities and the large public libraries having separate music departments are carrying this responsibility. Perhaps the conservatories are failing to exploit the possibilities which exist.

The replies from art librarians or institutions show eight of them professing active interest in collecting pertinent manuscripts. Of these, five have reached this decision within the past ten years, which raises higher hope of the salvage and preservation of these sources than prevailed before the decade. In the larger universities and public libraries the existence of art and architecture, or prints and graphic arts, departments may have exercised some influence in favor of gathering them. This survey revealed several instances of local understanding of their value. In Montana, the state historical society at Helena and the Russell Gallery in Great Falls, share the idea that Charles Russell materials should be saved for Montana. At Tulane University, in New Orleans, the emphasis has been on gathering or accepting original drawings, sketches, and papers of locally significant architects. In Washington, at the Library of Congress, Whistler letters may be purchased with income from the Pennell Fund, primarily a prints collection fund. In Washington, too, the American Institute of Architects is displaying interest in gathering data on the architect in American culture. The Art Institute of Chicago professes to collect artists' sketch-books. One can understand a museum director's preference for an engraving, a painting, or statue. However, two instances of the overlapping of manuscript and subject field are supplied by very successful exhibitions of recent years; they should put all librarians and museum officials on guard against the delusion that subject areas of the kind under discussion can be kept rigidly apart.

As an exhibition of medieval art the great display of illuminated manuscripts assembled by Dorothy Miner, of the Walters Art Gallery, in Baltimore in 1949 was highly effective. Four years later the Museum of Art of the relatively smaller city, Toledo, Ohio, presented an excellent show of medieval and renaissance music manuscripts. Surely the works of more recent artists and craftsmen can be studied more understandingly if there is enlightening information about them available from written records left by their creators. Recent years have
witnessed the growth of a project having this objective and now going forward steadily at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The Archives of American Art was nurtured during a year and a half of infancy by approximately 150 financial supporters in the Detroit metropolitan area; by late 1955 it had come to maturity and since then has had the support of a sizeable foundation grant. The fundamental purpose of this archive is to collect in one place (Detroit) original records of American painters, sculptors, and craftsmen. It seeks to become a complete working collection of documentary materials for the convenience of the specialist and for stimulation of serious study of our artistic history. Its major accomplishment to date has been extensive copying in microfilm form of source materials in the Philadelphia and New York City areas. In the former, more than ninety rolls of film (108,000 frames) have been acquired; in New York City, approximately twenty-three rolls had been made from holdings of the manuscript collection in the Public Library alone, by July, 1956. It plans to issue, in due time, a checklist of the microfilms it is gathering; this should be a guide of great value to art historians and librarians. Only one response from an art or museum librarian queried in relation to this survey indicated an awareness of the Detroit project and called attention to its purpose; this positive reaction came from Cincinnati. The increased tempo of exhibitions and restorations work is apparent in demands on manuscript custodians. Programs of training for such work, on the graduate level of the Winterthur Museum-University of Delaware arrangement, or the more popular summer seminar like the one of the New York State Historical Association, will compel manuscript curators to pay more attention to collecting the documentation essential to this related profession.

Whoever scans the bulletins and gazettes published by the libraries of this country or the quarterly reviews of the national associations of those who teach literature and the social sciences cannot fail to be aware of institutional pride over the possession of literary manuscripts. Only a quarter of a century ago the competition for these collections was confined principally to the larger libraries along an arc from Washington to Cambridge. Two decades ago the report of the Librarian of Congress mentioned only two noteworthy new accessions of literary papers. His report of such acquisitions during the year 1955 describes as new gifts the papers of ten "writers," additions to six such collections previously received and another annual installment of the editorial files of a leading American literary monthly.
Likewise, he noted with pleasure, readings, and lectures under the auspices of the Whittall Poetry and Literature Fund. Library professional journals, through their news sections, show clearly the spread of this competition for literary papers into other sections of the land. There are keen-scented trackers in the Chicago area where Newberry Library has the archives of Poetry magazine. In the far South, Florida State University's new library, with suitable exhibition quarters convenient to a modern stack and work area, is sparking a drive for literary manuscripts and papers of Floridian authors. Planning and new building at Indiana and Illinois focus close attention upon better quarters and closer administrative supervision over their greatly expanded manuscript and rare book resources. At Syracuse modifications in the present structure are in process in order to provide an up-to-date "special collections" area. This is representative of the trend in new college or university library buildings to provide a centralized location and better safe-guards for rarities.

However, several of the larger older eastern university and research centers are experiencing a fragmentation of administrative responsibility (due to numerous extensive collections and to departmental stresses) and an embarrassment of riches in materials which is inducing attacks of indigestion. Unhappily, the prescription to remedy this later discomfort is a matter of disagreement among the doctors in attendance, some favoring drastic surgery, others, dietary reform or a mild anti-acid.

In the meantime, the customers, that is, the professors of literature and of American studies, are scouring the country in search of literary sources. They do not want to centralize them in one spot in the manner of the Detroit art project; they just want to record their existence and location.

Under the direction of the American Literature Group, within the Modern Language Association, a Committee on Library Manuscript Holdings circulated a checklist of nearly two thousand names of American writers, from the earliest period of settlement to the present. By a system of symbols this checklist would enable the committee, headed by Joseph Jones of the University of Texas, to tabulate the type and extent of surviving papers of those included in it. As this chapter is written the chairman reports that 116 libraries have returned the checklist and that a total of 1,614 authors are represented by surviving muniments. This census has proven its worth to scholars, despite handicaps which mitigate against its publication for another four to five years.
ROBERT W. HILL

In the field of publishing these documentary records of American literature, there are no tremendous, long-term projects similar to the several underway in purely "historical" manuscripts. While the Yale edition of Horace Walpole's correspondence has issued a total of twenty-one volumes and the same university's new Boswell series has put out five volumes of a planned forty to fifty, these are English literary personages. There is, however, cause for optimism that there shall be, in our time, definitive editions of our literary texts and correspondences. Through the support of a generous gift of money from Gilbert Montague, a New York philanthropist, Harvard has published a painstaking, definitive edition of Emily Dickinson's poems, comprising three volumes. Volume IV of the letters of William G. Simms, prepared for the press by a trinity of editors, was issued by the University of South Carolina Press in 1955; a fifth volume will shortly complete this remarkable collection. Librarians must give these publication projects their approval and recommendation; they cannot subscribe to the theory that our political figures are more significant than our literary ones in shaping our national culture.

To review the trends in these categories of manuscripts, the author shall attempt a distillation of the data received through the eighty-two replies received out of the 107 sources probed and those reports gleaned from personal reading of current news notes in the professional journals. The writer wishes to thank numerous informants who supplemented the questionnaire by full and thoughtful enclosures.

The most active, alert collecting in these categories is being done by the larger university and college libraries, or endowed public libraries. The former are making special provisions in new building plans for closer supervision and up-to-date quarters for manuscript or special collections departments; they are also exploiting the "Friends of the Library" movement more effectively than the historical societies and music conservatories or art institutes and schools. In the encouragement of musical manuscript compositions and collecting, the Library of Congress has advanced to a pre-eminent role. Two different methods of solving the problem of bringing manuscript resources under control are represented by the Archives of American Art, in Detroit, which aims to centralize the material for its subject in one location through the wide use of microfilming, and the census of literary sources being taken by the American Literature Group within the Modern Language Association, a bibliographic form of control rather than a physical one. Generally, interest in literary source materials exceeds that in music or art. Finally, it is clear that monetary

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 incumbent this is for library sponsored projects of real merit, or meeting a new need, can be gotten even for ephemeral materials. With respect to publication of documentary sets or definitive editions, our literary figures are not receiving attention and support on a scale with that being given our political leaders or statesmen.
Collecting Manuscripts: By Private Collectors

RICHARD MAASS

The collecting of autographs or manuscripts (in their purest sense the words are truly interchangeable) in the United States began early in the nineteenth century and the individual collector of today perpetuates the determination, singleness of mind, integrity, and scholarship of the earlier greats: T. A. Emmet, W. B. Sprague, J. B. Thacher, Simon Gratz, and Israel Tefft. Were it not for these earlier collectors, who saved from loss and destruction many important documents of the heritage of this land, some of the better institutions of learning would be poor indeed, in manuscript material; for the bases of their great collections of today are the gifts bestowed upon them by men such as those named. It is discouraging, though amusing at times, to hear the unfavorable criticism which is heaped upon the private collector by uninformed professionals whose jobs may be to acquire, preserve, catalog, or publish manuscripts. The collector of today is neither a hoarder nor a mysterious unknown who keeps his treasures from outside eyes. More often than not, he is willing to cooperate with legitimate scholars and writers by making his collection available. Frequently he will publish monographs, write articles, display publicly or illustrate lectures with his manuscripts as a base. To the extent that this is so, might it not be said that private collections are more easily accessible than many of the larger institutional holdings?

The private collector and institution have available to them the same sources of supply of manuscript material. Generally, however, the individual collector's wants are not as well-known to the trade as are the institution's, so he is less apt to receive special offerings. A cursory examination of the sources of manuscripts with some observations, suggestions, and caveats culled from collecting experience, follows:

The first source is the dealer. Although there are no more than a dozen autograph dealers in the United States, and perhaps as many

Mr. Maass is formerly President, The Manuscript Society.
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throughout the rest of the world, there are several hundred antiquarian booksellers who handle autographs as an integral part of their business. In fact it would be surprising if there is a single rare book dealer who has not at one time sold autographs. The dealers who limit themselves to autographs, publish periodic catalogs, or offering lists, and collectors look forward to their receipt with enthusiasm. Some dealers specialize in American historical material, other in literary and musical items, but the collector cannot afford to overlook any catalog on the assumption that there would be nothing of interest to him in it. A catalog of books mailed by a German dealer recently, listed a fine Longfellow letter, buried among nineteenth century German and French biographies. Items of American historical interest appear in offerings from Denmark, Austria, Sweden, and Holland. Close study of all catalogs will reward the private collector with "finds" related to his field of interest.

Most dealers have nationwide mailing lists and it is virtually impossible for all customers to receive their catalogs on the same day. Staggered mailings, based on geographical sections, are used by some dealers in an attempt to give each prospective buyer the same opportunity to purchase, but even this plan is not always successful. Consequently, if a particularly desirable item is found in a catalog, the collector would be wise to telephone or telegraph the dealer. The "first come, first served" policy is universally applied. The fear sometimes expressed by collectors that by calling or wiring they are placing such importance to the item that the dealer may withdraw it in order to hold it at a higher price, is not valid. Autograph dealers obtain new customers and hold old ones by making sales at the right price and it would be foolhardy for them to cause a withdrawal of offered material. No such experience has been brought to the writer's attention.

The general dealer policy on orders from new customers is to require cash with the order. Where credit has been established this is not necessary. With manuscripts, unlike other collectibles, no two pieces are alike. Condition is important to many collectors and cannot always be adequately described. Full contents of a letter or document are rarely given in the catalog. For these reasons, most sales are on an approval basis. Where such is the case, the collector has an obligation to the dealer to make a prompt decision: either to inform the dealer that he is keeping the material or to return it so that it can be sold elsewhere. When items are returned as unsatisfactory, they should be as securely wrapped as they were on receipt, insured for as much
as the dealer had placed upon them, and shipping charges paid by
the collector—not returned with postage due. Careful reading of
catalog descriptions and knowledge of standard abbreviations will cut
down the quantity of returns. Similarly, more complete and accurate
listings by dealers will accomplish the same result.

Most dealers list only a fraction of their inventory in catalogs, so
collectors desiring submission to them of specific types of autographs
should make their wants known to dealers. This will result in the
obtaining of more and better items. An old canard, frequently re-
peated, is that the dealers will raise their prices to a collector of
specialized material. Perhaps a few may do so, but the collector does
not have to buy if he believes the price is too high. If other collectors
justify his opinion of value by not buying also, then the price may be
lowered. On the subject of price, generally, it may be said that dealer
offerings, either by catalog listing or private quotation, are not subject
to counter-offers. Dealers will price their autographs at figures which
they believe to be correct from the standpoint of market values or
what they “have to get” for them. Dealers make mistakes, of course;
sometimes in the collector’s favor through underpricing, sometimes
the reverse. But offering the dealer less than listed price is not con-
sidered good taste and will in all probability cut down the number
of offerings which the collector guilty of such practice would other-
wise receive. Dealers have said that large institutions such as college
libraries are the more frequent counterbidders among their clientele.

A second source of autographs for the private collector is the public
auction. There are only a few auction houses in this country which
handle autographs regularly and then it is usually incidental to the
major lots put up for sale; namely, old and rare books. In recent
years, there has been but one auction house with sufficient autograph
material at hand to warrant the holding of sales devoted exclusively
to autographs. Despite the current paucity of autograph auctions, the
public sale will continue to be a major source for collectors as it has
been for over fifty years.

In all public auctions, sales are final and purchases may not be
returned. For this reason, it is highly important that the buyer have
full knowledge about the lots on which he is bidding—knowledge
which is not always to be obtained from the catalog listing. If the
collector is interested in a number of lots in a given sale, he may wish
to inspect the material prior to the sale. Certainly inspection by the
buyer or his agent is strongly recommended. Bidding by mail, that is
completing the form sent out by the auction house and allowing it to
Collecting Manuscripts: By Private Collectors

place your bid, is acceptable procedure for minor items but where high prices are expected there can be no substitute for personal inspection, verification, and bidding. The writer's personal preference, despite a more than superficial knowledge of autographs in his field and of auction methods, is to place his bids with an experienced dealer. The dealer's charge for bidding for a client is usually ten per cent of the price brought by the lot. This ten per cent is well worth paying, for the dealer will guarantee authenticity as well as handle the purchase. (Most, but not all, auction houses will not guarantee its autographs.) In addition, the dealer will advise his client as to condition, will estimate the sales price and give other pertinent data. At auction, the private collector is competing with other collectors, dealers buying on order for clients and dealers buying for stock. The collector has an advantage over the last group because he is willing to pay a retail price, whereas the inventory buyer must mark up the price of what he buys. Buying at auction in person is exciting but it does not per se give clues to real or supposed value. A dealer purchase, as indicated above, might be on order from a client; prices may be abnormally high because of the glamour of the particular collection put up (the O. P. Barrett sale of Lincolniana was an example); timing of the sale might be bad and weather, too, might influence prices. Auction buying is good fun as well as a source of supply. It is recommended!

Occasional opportunities will arise for the private collector to purchase autographs away from normal channels. Family papers, land grants, commissions, and sometimes important individual pieces turn up in attic trunks, bank vaults, and less likely locations, and if the collector's interests are well-known, these may be offered to him. In the typical case, an owner will have no fixed price but will ask for an offer. Then he will shop that offer with another collector or dealer. For this reason, most collectors ask the owner to set his price for the papers rather than making an offer which becomes a base price which the owner will use as a lever with others. The literary collector may find authors' letters inserted in books. Browsers in antiquarian bookstores run across autographs in bins or on shelves. Collectors of contemporary statesmen, leaders, and just plain politicians often obtain their material through direct correspondence. Provocative questions posed in these letters may bring worthwhile responses, but the practice is not without its critics even when done with good motivation. In short, there are autograph sources wherever there are people who can read and write. It remains for the collector to seek them out.

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Although there are some collectors whose interests are so catholic that their holdings fall into no particular category, the bulk of today's private collections are in specialized fields. By far the largest single interest among collectors is the Civil War period. There are hundreds of collectors of Union and Confederate military officers, Lincoln and his cabinet, Jefferson Davis and his cabinet, and letters to and from soldiers in the field. Similarly, there are many collectors of presidential autographs, signers of the Declaration of Independence, U. S. military and naval heroes, cabinet officers, and colonial and revolutionary period items. The list of historical fields of interest is endless. Specialization may limit some collections to writings of one man or about one incident. There are many fine musical and literary collections, some general in nature, some restricted. Actually, it would be difficult to think of any field or any reasonably well-known person of the past whose writings are not being collected by someone, someplace.

To a prospective or new collector, no rules can be laid down which would be proper guides for him to follow. Suggestions may be given with the assurance that no two collectors will agree entirely with them. The following, therefore, are merely personal recommendations based on some years of contact with old and new collectors.

1. Select a field of interest which by its nature will provide ample sources of autographs.

2. Stay away from occupation categories such as cabinet officers, presidents, etc. These are S.O.P. (standard operating procedure) for too many collectors and the wallet is the only limiting factor.

3. Conversely, select a period, person or category which has been neglected for unknown cause. For example, the letters of J. C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, and Daniel Webster have been a drug on the market for years. Yet they are frequently interesting and important historically. There are few collectors of eighteenth to twentieth century medical men of note. Letters of western pioneers, Texas heroes, electrical and mechanical inventors of the last one hundred years, all go begging for buyers. Certainly they offer a challenge for the collector and the contribution to scholarship which may result from careful study of his subject may be very rewarding to the collector.

A widely-held belief about autograph collecting is that it requires large cash resources. Undoubtedly this has arisen because of the propensity of newspapermen to affix dollar values on all manuscript material which they deem noteworthy. Varying with the categories selected, individuals can gather compact and important collections to suit limited or liberal means. For example, a collection of Con-
federate letters—to and from soldiers in blue—was put together over a period of years by a collector who was restricted to small cash purchases, generally no more than $5 being paid for any item. Yet this collection is considered an important source of authentic information about contemporary times by writers and scholars of that period in history.

No discussion of price would be complete without a few words about the factors which combine to establish price. Here, as in other phases of autograph collecting, there is no unanimity but at the risk of contradiction there follows a list of those factors in order of importance:

1. Context or contents.
2. Popularity of the person being collected.
3. Rarity.

In explanation of the above, it is apparent that a letter or document of Washington detailing hardships at Valley Forge would bear a higher price tag than his receipt of a bill. Similarly, a letter of Beethoven in which he discusses the merits of his Ninth Symphony would be more sought after than a routine “thank you” note. Thus, contents are most important. As to popularity, the vagaries of time or collectors’ fancies may play a role. Hundreds of Lincoln, Washington, Jefferson, and John Adams manuscripts have changed hands in the last ten years. Yet they always bring relatively high prices when compared with other presidents. They are, of course, highly collectible and the number available on the market, barring a flood of new material, does not appreciably affect the price. It is interesting to note that unpopular figures such as Benedict Arnold, Adolf Hitler, and Mussolini do not bring really high prices even though they may be rare in holographic form. Rarity is of itself no indication of value to a collector. A prominent dealer, recently deceased, gathered together at great pains a collection of the writings of all of the signers of Texas’ republican constitution and offered them for sale as a group. Many of the signers were semi-literate and obscure and anything in their hand therefore extremely rare. Despite this, there were no takers for the lot, and the offering price was within the means of many average collectors. Not even in the land of black gold, where apparently talk is big but interest in origins or history is small, could a sale be made.

Offered two documents of equal importance but in different states
of condition, a collector or institution will naturally select the one in better shape. Since, however, there are very few, if any, “duplicates” in the autograph field, condition becomes a relative matter and unless an item is to be bought specifically for purposes of display, its physical appearance does not materially affect its value. Modern methods of repair and preservation have redeemed many badly damaged autographs for collectors and institutions alike.

On September 24, 1956, a television presentation on the Westinghouse “Studio One” series, told the story of a collector of Lincolniana who bought at auction what was represented as a facsimile or forgery of a draft of the Gettysburg Address but which was in actuality an original. The collector, to the consternation of all, decided to burn the Address as a means of bringing to life the full import of its words. This was to be his way of dramatizing Lincoln’s political morality to a generation which he believed had strayed away from those principles. Against the backdrop of incendiarism an opportunity was given to those who opposed the collector’s action to present their arguments. In the end, of course, “right prevailed over wrong” and the Address was saved by a little boy who first discovered the monstrous error. The show undoubtedly made both collectors and archivists squirm a little, but it was all in good fun. The point of mentioning it here is simple. Collectors love manuscripts for a variety of reasons: for the place in history which they represent; for the views which they express; for the personal contact with the writer which the manuscripts give to the collector; for the knowledge which can be acquired through collecting and owning. These are all valid reasons for collecting—and owning—just as are valid the reasons for the existence of great institutional libraries. But the true collector does not have to burn his holdings in order to call attention to their messages. He displays them, publishes them or writes about them. Above all, he appreciates their value not only to himself but to the public and succeeding generations. He therefore preserves his manuscripts in a manner which ensures their survival.
Collecting Manuscripts: By Libraries

ROBERT B. DOWNS

Technically, the word “manuscript” applies to every piece of writing prior to Gutenberg. The production of manuscripts did not cease, of course, with the invention of printing. In the present day, the amount of manuscript records being created exceeds by many times the material appearing in printed form.

Library collecting interests are not restricted to any period of history, any form of writing, any language, or subject. The vast scope of the manuscript field, however, coupled with the uniqueness of most handwritten records, has forced a considerable degree of specialization upon individual institutions.

Insofar as manuscripts for foreign history and literature are concerned, the most important American library acquisitions have come through the activities of such private collectors as those described by Richard Maas in the preceding article. Any ambitious program in this area is handicapped by the fact that the great mass of such documents are owned by institutions abroad, and are unlikely ever to appear on the market. Fortunately, a great deal has been accomplished to bring reproductions to this country. Millions of pages have been copied, by microfilm, photostat, and other devices, from European, Asiatic, and Latin American manuscript and archival depositories for libraries in the United States. Examples are: the 5,000,000 pages of historical, scientific, and literary manuscripts filmed in England and Wales during the war years; 2,000,000 pages of Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs records, 1868-1945; German Foreign Ministry Archives, 1867-1920; diplomatic correspondence between the Ministry of Foreign Relations and the Mexican Legation in Washington, 1853-1898; 42,000 Vatican Library manuscripts; the 700,000 pages of Mount Sinai manuscripts; and the 100,000 unpublished manuscripts of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz.

For obtaining original manuscripts, the chief opportunity for American libraries is in the American field. These records fall chiefly

The author is Director, University of Illinois Library and Library School.
in literature and history. For every period of American literature there exists a large body of manuscript material which must be investigated before an adequate history of the developments of that era can be written. Included are not only the masterpieces of fiction, poetry, and drama, but manuscripts of unpublished works, letters, notebooks, diaries, lecture notes, travel accounts, and other raw data for literary productions. The field of history is equally broad.

An intelligent acquisition policy for manuscript collections presupposes a definite plan, i.e., what is to be collected. For present purposes, consideration will be confined to manuscripts for historical research—the type with which libraries are principally concerned. In this area, it has been suggested, there are two classes of material that should nearly always be preserved. The first is strictly personal papers and the second is the records of clubs and other organizations. A third class is so extensive that it is not feasible to preserve more than a selected or representative sample: these are the business records of retail stores, industries, factories, and other business establishments.

Concerning the first group, the bulk of most personal papers is composed of letters, and even in the case of unimportant people, collections of letters may contain interesting and valuable data. Historians are no longer interested solely in the personal papers of great statesmen, political leaders, and similar prominent personages. The records left by obscure and unknown persons frequently shed much light on historical events. For example, some of the most important records of the pioneer days in America are contained in the letters, diaries, and autobiographies left by first settlers, explorers, adventurers, farmers, trappers, travelers, and miners—a majority of them relatively unknown figures in national history. The papers they left, however, are primary sources for history, giving a first-hand, day-to-day chronicle of historical developments, which can be gained in no other way.1

The second category of manuscripts which should be saved are the records of clubs, churches, schools, fraternal orders, labor unions, and other organizations. The archives of a club or church, to illustrate, are seldom voluminous, but they may have a good deal of social significance for the community.

The third classification, business records, presents greater difficulties, because of its bulk. The impracticability of keeping all the voluminous records produced by the business and industrial establishments in a large community is obvious. It is probably desirable,
Collecting Manuscripts: By Libraries

though, to preserve a collection which will be representative of various kinds of business and covering different periods. If files can be maintained for a selected department store, a furniture store, a clothing store, a grocery store, and a similar cross-section of other business interests, the ordinary demands of the research worker can be adequately met.

With few exceptions, no matter how much they may vary in interest and importance, manuscripts which libraries receive classify in one of these three groups: personal, organization, and business records.

The acquisition of manuscripts must be approached quite differently from book acquisitions. Books bought by a library are ordinarily procured with the aid of catalogs or lists issued by publishers and dealers. Comparatively few manuscripts are listed in catalogs and only occasionally are manuscripts purchased by institutions. The great preponderance of them are gifts. In the case of historical manuscripts, the vast majority are in the hands of private individuals. Frequently these persons can be persuaded to deposit their papers in a library, where they will be permanently preserved, safe from such destructive elements as fire, rats, insects, and housewives, and where the materials are available to scholars and students.

It is a form of subtle flattery perhaps to suggest to a person that his papers are of sufficient importance to be worth saving for posterity. Nevertheless, it is often an effective method in persuading him to deposit the papers in a public institution, and in making him feel that the library is doing a favor both to him and to coming generations. This plan of acquisition has resulted in the development of a considerable number of large manuscript collections throughout the country, and at relatively low cost. Few of these institutions have had sufficient funds for extensive buying of manuscripts.

There is also the fact that it is difficult to determine the monetary value of manuscripts—far more so, for instance, than books, which can be compared one copy against another. Any large-scale program for buying manuscripts involves the expenditure of substantial sums of money, competitive bidding among libraries and other agencies collecting such records, and a scattering of collections among numerous institutions. The library can be said to have done its part if it saves from destruction valuable documents shedding light upon the nation’s history. Many of these records would be lost except for the efforts of interested institutions.

From the point of view of the scholar, it is preferable not to have manuscripts too widely distributed among libraries, but to have the
major collections concentrated in a few large research institutions. Since manuscripts must nearly always be used with such printed works as encyclopedias, biographical dictionaries, and other reference books, government publications, newspapers, and periodicals, the lack of strong library resources close at hand places the user at a disadvantage. Over against the argument for concentration of collections, however, is the strong feeling of local pride in some states and regions—an attitude that causes them to resent removal of local records to any distant point. And, of course, it is far better to preserve all records locally than not to have them saved at all.

A noteworthy example of what can be accomplished in this field is the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina. Since about 1930, the director of the collection, first J. G. de R. Hamilton and later J. W. Patton, both of whom are trained historians, has spent practically the year around in field work, traveling through the southern states and elsewhere, locating desirable materials, and wherever possible acquiring them. A major portion of several million manuscripts brought together by this project classify as diaries, unpublished reminiscences or other autobiographical writings, letters of every description, plantation records, and the ledgers and other records of industrial and business undertakings. Not only papers and letters of prominent individuals and families are included, but all kinds of records which reveal the life and thought of the masses of the people. That is, the collection presents a comprehensive picture of southern culture and civilization from early colonial days to modern times. It could hardly have been assembled in any way except by field collectors.

The idea of traveling collectors is, of course, not new. As early as 1854, L. C. Draper was journeying through Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and other parts of the South, gathering primary source materials. The Draper collection now forms the foundation for the Wisconsin State Historical Society holdings, helping to make it one of the outstanding organizations of the kind in the United States. A similar function was performed for the Far West by H. H. Bancroft in the 1850's and 1860's, when he accumulated the famous Bancroft collection which eventually reached the University of California at Berkeley. Additional examples could easily be cited.

Where and how would one begin a search for worthwhile manuscript materials? Sources are varied. The systematic collector prepares an index file of prospects, and explores them as opportunity offers. On his list would probably appear such names as these:
Collecting Manuscripts: By Libraries

1. Political leaders, national, state, and local, past, and present.
2. Businessmen and industrialists, especially those whose careers cover a wide span of years.
3. Legal lights, i.e., prominent jurists in courts at all levels, national and state, famous criminal lawyers, and the like.
4. Authors: novelists, poets, dramatists, non-fiction writers, including both those who have achieved wide reputation and those of only local fame.
5. Educators, e.g., college and university presidents, state superintendents of schools, outstanding scholars and teachers, historians, and biographers.
6. Journalists: newspaper and magazine editors, columnists, publishers, etc.
7. Labor leaders, again inclusive of both local and national figures.
8. Farmers, particularly for large farms, where records have been maintained methodically over long periods.
9. Physicians, especially pioneers in communities.
10. Clergymen and other church leaders, of all denominations and creeds.

There are certain psychological moments for approaches to these prospects. In general, an individual is more likely to be interested in placing his papers in a public institution shortly after retirement from active service, and also is apt at this stage to have the time to assemble, sort out, and organize the materials for deposit. Another possibility is to get in touch with the widow or other relatives of an individual, with whose papers one is concerned. This step should be taken as promptly as good taste will permit after the death of the person with whom the collection deals; otherwise, it may be found that valuable records have been destroyed in housecleaning operations. There is the point, too, that during this period a family is usually most receptive to the idea of presenting papers for preservation to a public institution.

A problem frequently encountered in a library’s manuscript department is loan collections. These range from minor to major annoyances. Not infrequently, a family or individual is happy and willing to place papers in safe custody, but hesitates to sign any final release or to make an outright gift. Family pride enters here. Parents feel they should save such personal records, eventually to be handed down to their children, though with rare exceptions the children are quite indifferent.

To meet these situations and at the same time to insure the preserva-
tion of valuable manuscripts, it is occasionally necessary to accept collections on loan, subject to recall by the owner. There is, of course, a considerable degree of responsibility for the custodian in such an arrangement and it is troublesome to withdraw the papers after they have been filed for use. Fortunately, few loan collections are ever withdrawn after deposits have been made.

Two reasonably satisfactory ways to meet the loan problem are open. One is to borrow the material long enough for some form of photographic reproduction, after which the originals are returned to the owner. An alternative is to make copies for the owner and to keep the originals. The second plan is, naturally, to be preferred by libraries, but in either case the records are retained permanently in one form or another.

For all collections except those on loan, an institution should make certain that it has clear title, including, if possible, publication rights. Lacking such legal title, it may at some time find itself involved in embarrassing and costly lawsuits, and forced to give up prize items in its collections.

A prominent university librarian recently described rare book collecting as "the greatest game of all." He offers cogent arguments to support this thesis, but in some respects manuscript collecting is an even more exciting sport. One's quarry may be hiding anywhere: in offices, warehouses, homes, attics or basements, barns and garages—in fact, wherever human beings have lived or worked. In the hunt, there are the disappointments of finding the game lost or destroyed when one reaches its former habitat, but in many other instances one has the satisfaction of discovering riches far beyond one's expectations. To cite a single notable example, it is easy to imagine the thrill experienced by Colonel Ralph Isham as the treasure troves of James Boswell papers were uncovered at Malahide Castle over a period of several years. Such finds hardly come once in a generation, though to the diligent manuscript hunter it is not too much to hope that sometime during his career he will be the proud discoverer of at least a Washington Irving Alhambra or a Samuel E. Chamberlain diary. Such are the goals which urge on the avid collector as he ransacks dusty attics and basements, searches through old trunks and chests, explores rat-ridden warehouses, and travels hundreds of miles to investigate promising leads.
References

Physical Care, Repair, and Protection of Manuscripts

ADELAIDE E. MINOGUE

The purpose of this chapter is to outline briefly the ideal conditions for the preservation of paper records, giving practical recommendations as to how these conditions may be set up, and to give some advice on the repair of materials that have suffered from lack of proper care. No consideration will be given in this article to parchments, book repair, nor to photographic records.

Ideally, loose paper records should be stored in an air-conditioned building of fireproof construction with fewer than average windows and doors. Shelving should be of steel and furnishings in the storage areas should be of some non-textile materials that will not harbor nor produce much dust. A study of paper used for record purposes will indicate the reasons for these recommendations.

Paper is largely made of cellulose fibers derived from wood or rags sized with rosin, glue or casein; and sometimes contains inert mineral fillers or coatings. The cellulose, making up the body of the paper, is the only factor that will be considered here as the strength and durability of a paper is largely determined by the quality of cellulose used in its manufacture. The best grades of paper have a high alpha-cellulose content; that is, cellulose in a purified form. They are made from high quality rags or wood pulps that require little bleaching or other chemical treatment. The poorer grades are made from old or colored rags and pulp that demands longer and more drastic cooking and bleaching. The very worst type of paper from the custodian's point of view, is newsprint or groundwood paper, which contains most of the original lignins and resins of the tree from which it was made. Alpha-cellulose itself is not too much affected by light nor other factors generally considered injurious to paper, and

Mrs. Minogue was formerly, Chief, Repair and Preservation Division, National Archives.
if all records could be made and had been made on high alpha-cellulose paper, there would be less concern for its preservation. Obviously, however, this type of paper is very expensive, and very little has been made or used since the early days of handmade papers. Nowadays paper consumption is so great that every available material is put to use without great consideration for the quality of the end product. The librarian then, is faced with the problem of doing the best he can to minimize the inherent weaknesses of the materials in his charge. He can do a great deal, fortunately, by making himself aware of the problems and following the logical course of action that is indicated in his particular case. It may not always be possible to provide ideal conditions as outlined, but there is hardly an instance where some real improvements in record storage and use cannot be introduced without too much expense for even the small institution.

The useful life of all papers is adversely affected by exposure to heat, light, dry air, sulphur dioxide fumes, excessive dampness, dust, and careless handling. The deterioration resulting from exposure to any or all of these conditions is more noticeable in the poorer grades of paper. Discoloration and embrittlement of newsprint may be obvious in a short period. While deterioration may be less apparent in other papers during the same period, in the course of time all papers suffer and will eventually break down. Thus, after the substantial building and protection from fire and thieves has been assured, air-conditioning is probably the next most important item to be considered. Paper has its greatest strength when its moisture content is in equilibrium with air of 50 to 65 per cent relative humidity, and it has been found in actual practice that the maintenance of 50 per cent relative humidity and a temperature of 70 to 75 degrees summer and winter, day and night, provides good working conditions and an excellent atmosphere for the records. It is a wise precaution to treat the wash-water in the air-conditioning system with a dilute alkaline solution of potassium dichromate to eliminate effectively any sulphur dioxide or other acid gases present in the outside air. Sulphur dioxide is far more highly concentrated in cities and industrial areas than in rural sections and, as it is particularly destructive, librarians in metropolitan locations cannot afford to ignore it. Dust particles are another prime source of acid. They may also be hard or angular and cause an abrasion of the minute paper fibers. Their presence may be minimized by thoroughly washing incoming air as already described, and then filtering through glass wool filters all the air, both fresh and recirculated, entering the storage area. Dust will also be less of a
problem if rugs and other textile furnishings are excluded from storage areas.

Sunlight or any other light, which produces heat or ultra-violet, must never be permitted to fall on papers for any length of time. It is best that storage areas be built without windows or be carefully shaded in some way, and that lights be used only when necessary. It is also well to keep the stored records in light-tight boxes that serve to protect them from dust at the same time. Valuable documents needed for exhibit may be kept safe indefinitely in air-conditioned cases lighted with fluorescent tubes that are shielded with “document glass.” This glass effectively prevents the passage of the shorter wave lengths of light and the little heat that the tubes emit. The filtered light gives a clear yellow illumination of even brightness throughout the display case.

No discussion of storage conditions would be complete without some mention of the obviously destructive forces that have accounted for the loss of practically all of our vanished records. Fire comes to mind first and once it has taken hold little can be done. It is trite to say that every precaution should be taken in building, wiring, and furnishing a records storage house to render the outbreak and spread of fire impossible, but it is wise to provide additional protective devices. An alarm system, not a sprinkler system, may be installed; and carbon-dioxide extinguishers should be readily available at strategic points with the staff trained to use them. Water or soda-acid extinguishers should not be at hand because of the expense of clean-up and the repair problems that would follow their use in an emergency.

Insects and rodents can also be very destructive and any necessary steps should be taken to prevent their depredations. Good housekeeping is the best precaution: allow no food nor trash about the place and examine newly-acquired materials for signs of infestation. Any acquisitions from tropical areas should bear especially close scrutiny or be promptly fumigated to be on the safe side. If a vacuum-fumigating tank for the use of ethylene oxide and carbon dioxide is not available, the papers may be exposed to the vapors of ethylene dichloride and carbon tetrachloride in an air-tight box for twenty-four hours, and then thoroughly aired before placing them in permanent storage.

Mildew of paper is a fungus growth that develops readily in damp stagnant air. Buildings having controlled temperature and relative humidity do not permit the growth of molds, but others may provide favorable conditions during warm damp periods. It is best, unless
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the building is completely air-conditioned, to store all records above ground level, to have the first shelf six inches above floor level with an air space beneath, and a similar air space above the top shelf. Fans should be used to keep the air in motion during the summer-time and, in extremely damp locations, dehumidifiers may be brought into use in addition. It is inadvisable to place any shelves for records against any outside wall where there is always danger of local dampness, or even condensation, whenever the outside temperature drops suddenly. Proper insulation may minimize this danger, but it is good practice to keep this area free for working space. Attics likewise, even if insulated, are usually too hot and dry in summer to be used for record storage. Heat and dry air, as well as drastic temperature changes that might occur in an attic space, will lead to the yellowing and embrittlement of the papers.

Once the reasons behind the general requirements for record storage are understood and proper conditions are provided, it remains for the custodian to select suitable containers for the various types of papers. The function of the containers is to protect the material within and render it easily available for use. They should also be light in weight for convenience and inexpensive for economy. For most material, legal or letter size, cardboard containers with hinged tops provide an excellent solution. The papers may be filed vertically in these boxes, in their original kraft paper folders if desired, or new ones may be provided. They should be packed tightly enough so that all material will stay smooth and upright. For convenience in handling, the boxes should be approximately six inches wide, and they should be placed on the shelves with this narrow side labeled and facing outward. It will be observed that the bottom edges of the papers will be set against this side of the box. Flat-filing may be used if the collection is not large nor active. It has been found that the servicing of flat-filed records requires a good deal more time and handling, and involves a greater risk of damage than does the use of properly filed and labeled, vertically stored records. Maps and other large documents must, however, be filed flat; but it is well, if the materials are of considerable value, to provide individual folders made of heavy kraft paper large enough to enclose the documents completely. By labeling these folders, it is possible to find and extract flat-filed materials without the usual wear and tear on the records on the top of the pile. If the drawers are shallow, or the shelves closely spaced, so that few documents are stored in any unit, there will also be much less danger of damage in handling. Maps should never be
stored in rolls for any length of time as they take up more space than necessary, are difficult to use, and may eventually break in irregular places. It is better to fold over-sized items and store them flat in the usual way. If they should break along the fold lines, it is a simple matter to hinge them neatly and thus maintain the original fold where desired.

If a group of valuable or irreplaceable documents is in constant use, so that even with the most careful attention to storage conditions and handling, there seems to be danger of loss or considerable damage, it is a wise precaution to have the material microfilmed and then take the originals out of general circulation. Such photographic reproduction is available almost everywhere and large prints may be made from the small negatives at little expense. Actually, by the use of suitable lights and filters, and using high contrast fine-grained film, the photocopy, in many instances, may be made more legible than the original. This is certainly a distinct advantage to anyone who must study a batch of yellowed, badly faded papers of an early period. The negatives, made on 35 millimeter film with an acetate base, may be kept safely in metal cans that take up little space in any room suited to the storage of paper records.

Although librarians may set up and maintain ideal storage conditions for the preservation of manuscripts, they are frequently faced with the necessity of providing some sort of repair or reinforcement to certain items that may have suffered from fire or other catastrophe, improper handling, or poor storage conditions in the past.

Papers dating from the last half of the nineteenth century will generally cause the greatest concern, because it was during this period that the paper-making machine came into widespread use and many inferior fibers were adopted at random to meet the needs of the suddenly increased production and the accelerated demand for paper products. Records were made on these papers without much thought of their quality, as the factors affecting paper permanence were not well understood. These records, on inferior paper, were then usually folded and put away in poorly designed containers to be eventually relegated to some attic or equally unsuitable place. When they are brought out for examination now, the dust that may have settled on them must be removed before the papers are disturbed in any way. The safest method is to blow a stream of air along the exposed edges of the papers. Rubbing the records with a cloth or using any suction method may merely spread the dust into the papers or tear them along the edges. After dusting, if the papers are removed
from their file and put to any considerable use, they will usually crack along the fold lines and need some reinforcement to render them serviceable. Maps, too, which have been kept rolled and in a dry atmosphere, will sometimes break when opened.

There are also certain special problems not peculiar to any period or to any type of record, which must be considered. Fire-, water-, or insect-damaged records, and papers with stains or faded, illegible inks, all require individual study and treatment.

The ingenious and careful repairman can develop the means of improving the usefulness and serviceability of practically any paper regardless of its condition. The selection of the best possible method in each instance is not arbitrary, but rather it is based on factors in addition to an objective examination of its physical condition. The value of the paper, the amount of use it is expected to receive, and the way it is to be stored, all enter into the decision. The methods of repair and their variations are many, but the amount of money and equipment available for repair work may impose limitations on what may be feasible.

For example, let us take a few hypothetical cases and see how they might be treated. First, there is a map 40 by 60 inches drawn on heavy map paper, rolled. The map drawer is 36 by 48 inches, and the map must be fitted into the drawer. The map should be carefully dampened on the back with a moist sponge to minimize cracking when it is unrolled, then laid flat between white blotters to dry for 24 hours. There must be enough weight on top to keep the map flat as it begins to dry. After flattening, it is dissected through the middle of the long dimension using a sharp knife with a steel straight-edge as guide. If it seems desirable from the point of view of the context, the dissection may be made a few inches either side of the middle. The two pieces of map are then mounted together on heavy muslin, leaving a space of one-eighth inch between the pieces to act as a hinge for folding. The map, placed in a kraft paper folder, will then fit nicely into its drawer. It is a good thing to bear in mind that the weight of the cloth backing should approximate the weight of the paper. Thin papers should be mounted on very light muslin, or even batiste, if they are to remain perfectly flat without any tendency to curl. A thin white paste is probably still the best adhesive for this type of repair work.

As another example, take a group of folded papers dated about 1870 that crack when opened for examination; but which, aside from the brittleness, are in pretty good shape. If a laminating machine of
some kind that is designed to apply cellulose acetate sheeting to papers by means of heat and pressure is available, lamination of most of the papers in the group would provide an excellent solution. Large quantities of this type of material may be run through the machine at little expense and the cellulose acetate covering will strengthen the sheets without decreasing their legibility in any way. It will also prepare them nicely for either flat or vertical storage. If such equipment is not available, the material should be flattened by dampening and ironing, and only those sheets that are actually broken should be singled out for further treatment. This will usually consist of reinforcing the torn places by pasting strips of a thin but durable translucent paper, such as a light-weight rag manifold, over the breaks on the less important side of each document. Transparent cellophane tape must never be used for such a purpose as it is not permanent, and the adhesive will leave an oily stain as it ages. In whatever manner the group of folded papers has been handled it will, in the end, be placed in a kraft paper folder for filing vertically in a cardboard container. Here it will be accessible yet be well protected.

Another problem which, though not frequent, may be very baffling, is the treatment of fire and water-damaged records. The problems may occur separately or together. Fire-damaged materials may have nothing but charred edges or they may be completely burned all the way through to an ash. The first sort may be laminated, mounted, or treated in some conventional way, but the only thing to do for the latter is to set the pieces up between sheets of glass and have them photographed on infra-red film. Amazingly enough, the print will show light paper and dark ink, somewhat distorted because of the shrinkage, but frequently quite legible. Water-soaked papers must be promptly separated and laid flat between blotters to dry before mildew develops. In addition to the mildew problem, if there is any great delay in separating the sheets, the sizing may soften and stick the sheets together more firmly. In such a case the safest thing to do is to resoak the whole mass before trying to separate the sheets. This will dissolve the sizing, so unless the papers are to be laminated, they might well be dipped in either a thin glue or starch solution before drying to replace the sizing.

Except for oily stains, which may be removed with a drycleaning solvent, it is best not to tamper with stains or discolorations. The chemicals required, mainly acids and bleaches, will seriously weaken the cellulose fibers and destroy the sizing. It is likewise inadvisable
to try to restore the legibility of faded iron-gall inks by chemical means, but if a faded document can be photographed by ultra-violet light using a fluorescence filter, the print will be considerably more legible than the original. If an examination or reading of the document will suffice, it will be observed that the ink residue will fluoresce and become legible to the eye as well as to the camera.

It may be noted that the use of crepeline has not been mentioned in any instance, and it is difficult to think of any repair problem where crepeline is definitely indicated. Its use is attended by many limitations and drawbacks that tend to render it unsuitable for record repair in more progressive institutions. In the first place, it is very expensive, and the labor needed to apply it is expensive and difficult to find. In the second place, the paste used in its application darkens in time, dries out and embrittles the whole sheet. Crepeline triples the thickness of the document and lessens its legibility somewhat. With these facts in view, it is easy to understand why its use has fallen into disfavor in recent years.

There is no doubt but that some form of lamination using transparent plastic sheeting is its modern counterpart. The materials are cheaper, the process is quicker, less highly-skilled labor is needed, and the end product provides excellent permanence and increase in strength without impairing the legibility. As new plastic materials become available, are tested adequately and put to use, there is no doubt but that the process may be improved, that even the present nominal cost will be decreased, and that lamination will find even more widespread acceptance among librarians.
Arrangement and Cataloging of Manuscripts

PAUL S. DUNKIN

Gutenberg's invention was the mass production of manuscripts. Even today a printed book is simply a manuscript in print. As a result the rules for cataloging manuscripts have generally followed the principles for cataloging printed books.

W. C. Ford's brief remarks on manuscripts in Cutter's rules (1904) and the rules for manuscripts in the A.L.A. codes since then (1908, 1941, and 1949) all recognized this fact. The more elaborate attempts to draw up rules only for cataloging manuscripts, such as those of the Library of Congress, the Minnesota Historical Society, and Dorothy V. Martin, all lean heavily upon the A.L.A. principles and even the Library of Congress list of subject headings.

It is true that every manuscript is a unique individual. But that does not justify rugged individualism in their catalogers. In the beginning each library had to work out its own practices for cataloging manuscripts, just as it had to do with printed books. But standardizing influences came early.

Chief, perhaps, has been the union catalog. Union lists from the thirteenth century Registrum Librorum Angliae to Seymour de Ricci's Census, and movements for national union catalogs of manuscripts in Germany, Italy, this country, and elsewhere—each sought first of all a finding guide, but each also pushed steadily if not sensationally toward standardization. Also publications, such as the articles in the American Archivist and other journals and the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Manuscripts of the American Historical Association have shared in the movement to standardize cataloging.

As with printed books, the cataloging of manuscripts has gravitated, sometimes uneasily, but always relentlessly, toward simplification. The describers give way to the finders.

Detailed description of the manuscript as a physical object, like detailed description of the printed book, was a necessary tool for the scholar in the days of private libraries, difficult and expensive travel,

Mr. Dunkin is Chief, Technical Services, Folger Shakespeare Library.
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few and costly methods of reproduction. But champions of detailed description have outlasted its need; witness the rash of articles in the 30's, particularly from German writers, J. D. Cowley's elaborate instructions in 1939, and the forceful defense of detail by Dorothy K. Coveney as recently as 1950.

But, just as with printed books, elaboration collapsed of its own weight. It demands that the cataloger be a scholar and each entry a monograph. This takes time. Cataloging backlogs mounted and acquisitions were stepped up, particularly in the United States. Finally, as with printed books, there was a machine, the typewriter, and an increase in authors to be reckoned with.

Few large libraries which attempted full-scale cataloging on an elaborate plan were able to keep the pace. The debate at the Bodleian in 1890 between E. W. B. Nicholson and Falconer Madan was typical: “Nicholson had the scholar’s dislike of leaving a problem unsolved and would have spent endless time over the details of date, provenance, and questions of text; Madan was convinced of the greater importance of overtaking the arrears of cataloging and of producing a catalogue within as short a time as possible.” At the Bodleian, as at some continental libraries earlier in the century, the debate resulted in a “summary catalogue” rather than elaboration.

Just as with printed books, there has been much talk of the user. Miss Coveney, for instance (like Fredson Bowers for rare printed books and Jesse Shera and the documentalists for all publications) argues perfectionism: the catalog must serve all possible needs of all possible people for all possible time. It must not be concerned only with the needs of the text-seeker. Ranged against them are the champions of the “finding list” idea, currently so popular in the talk of a new code for cataloging printed books.

Thus Miss Martin says that the catalog serves as a “key to the collection as a whole,” and W. H. Bond regards the catalog as simply a “finding index.” After almost twenty years H. H. Peckham’s sturdy creed still holds: “. . . the reader is doing the research; the staff need not do it for him. The curator’s duty ends with steering the reader to the right or relevant collection, wherein the reader’s subject is, or is likely to be, mentioned. Then it is for the reader to discover what he can, and he should be prepared to dig through a peck of chaff to reach his grain of wheat. That is what constitutes research.”

There is some tendency to exempt from these considerations early manuscripts and valuable literary manuscripts. Such an attitude,
however, can be defended only on sentimental grounds. The fact that a manuscript is an 8th century parchment fragment of the Vulgate, or in the hand of Columbus or Ben Jonson means, of course, that it is more valuable than other manuscripts and, therefore, more in need of being made easy to find in the catalog. (And the library will, no doubt, want to record somewhere a few unique features which will be used to identify the manuscript if it should be stolen.) But no scholar worth his salt will take at face value anything that any other scholar—let alone a mere cataloger—may have written of the appearance of the manuscript or any abstract he may have made of its contents. Apart from the error to which everyone, even catalogers, are prone, the cataloger may have thought unimportant the one thing the scholar wants to know—or will be glad to have found when he sees the manuscript.

Who are the users of the catalog? For Miss Coveney they are first of all, the “text seekers, of course, who will always constitute the majority.” But she then enters a strong plea for the minority groups: “art historians” who want “brief descriptions of the miniatures and ornament;” people concerned with “heuristic, heraldry, sphragistic, and the like;” paleographers and those “interested in formats, types of parchment and paper, watermarks, methods of ruling and prick marks, arrangement of text, methods of punctuation and abbreviation, scribes, scriptoria, and the sundry other details of ever increasing importance, which will contribute to our palaeographical knowledge and the dating and location of manuscripts.” 13

But then she goes on to tell of the problems of the cataloger who “without being a specialist in the many subjects covered by the detailed study of a manuscript . . . must be the final judge of what he can omit,” and to complain of defects in catalogs arising from the ignorance or undisciplined knowledge of catalogers: both outright errors and almost meaningless notes such as “in two clear hands, both somewhat current.” Elsewhere she complains that, although the Bodleian Summary Catalogue description of a manuscript “rarely exceeds two lines and is of little use to other than text seekers,” yet the Catalogue “still has no index [one has since been issued] and the last published volume (1924) treats the accessions only up to 1915. In spite, therefore, of its summary nature, it is still thirty-five years behind.”

And here, unknowingly, Miss Coveney has listed the two overwhelming objections to her plea for elaboration: (1) Few, if any, catalogers are able to do that kind of cataloging; and (2) The cost
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even of a "summary catalogue" slows down the work tremendously; the cost of a full-dress elaborate catalog would be, therefore, prohibitive.

The text-seeker, then, is the only user the catalog can serve, even with early manuscripts. But, is he merely the "majority user"? Is he not rather every user?

The finding list is basic. If a manuscript can not be found, then no one—text-seeker, paleographer, or what not?—can study it. In 1890, the very year of the Bodleian discussion the Bodleian catalogs became briefly notorious at Oxford because the existence of a fifth century Jerome, which had come to the Library in 1824, became known to Oxford scholars only in that year, and then, not because of the library catalogs but because of an article by a German scholar.¹⁴

So the cataloging of manuscripts is like the cataloging of printed books: it has moved steadily toward standardization and simplification with accent on the catalog as a finding list.

What are the principles in constructing this finding list? Perhaps they are only two: the "catalogable unit" and "no conflict."

The "catalogable unit" may be a single manuscript or it may be a collection (sometimes rather large) of manuscripts. The collection consists of mutually related items, none of them perhaps individually of much importance but together forming a significant unit. Thus it may be letters written to or by one man and/or his immediate family, or it may be letters of documents relating to some person or event or subject. The only requirement is that the group of items have meaning as a group rather than as individuals.

The collection-device is, of course, also to be found in the cataloging of printed books. The Library of Congress, for instance, began in 1947 collective cataloging of material thought likely to be used in groups rather than individually; and the Armed Forces Medical Library has also used informal group cataloging schemes. Other libraries have pamphlets—sometimes even quite early pamphlets—cataloged as a collection rather than individually. And the composite printed book has always been here.

"No conflict" is the famous Library of Congress decision of 1949 that in the cataloging of printed books entries for personal names are established "in the form given in the work being cataloged without further search, provided that . . . the name conforms to the A.L.A. rules for entry, and is not so similar to another name previously established as to give a good basis for the suspicion that both names refer to the same person." ¹⁵
Even with printed books "no conflict" does not serve well as a rule
to be applied rigidly in every case. Rather, it should be an attitude,
a brake on the cataloger's zeal to find out a man's full name and dates
of birth and death, or the exactly correct form of a corporate entry.
This is even more true of manuscripts. A man with pen in hand,
writing perhaps only for himself or for his friends, will be less formal
than when he prepares a title and text to appear in print where he
who runs may stop and see. Obviously "no conflict" cannot be applied
if the name involved is well-known and the scribe has made an easily
recognizable error or used a form of the name no longer popular.
But the cataloger's "research" to find an exactly correct form of entry
should be as brief as is reasonably possible.

"No conflict" may also apply to the description of the catalogable
unit: generally speaking, only enough detail is needed to set it apart
from all other manuscripts and collections in the catalog. Perhaps
title, collation, and notes might be somewhat as follows:

The title should tell simply and briefly what is involved. If there
is a conventional title by which reference is made to the manuscript
or collection in a printed book, that title should be used. Otherwise,
a brief title may be constructed, using modern spelling and phrasing
regardless of the age or usage of the manuscript. If there is a title to
the manuscript that may be used, but the cataloger should freely
expand or condense it if necessary. If the type of manuscript is im-
portant—e.g., will, letter, commonplace book, lease, inventory, warn-
tag, telegram, etc.—that should be the first word of the title. Brackets
are needed only to enclose information not supplied somewhere in
the manuscript itself.

Collation may be by leaves or pages, following the usage of the
manuscript itself if there is one. For a bulky unit collation may be in
volumes or linear inches or feet. Height should be specified only if
it has some special significance.

Notes should be brief. They may touch on such topics as: (1) sub-
ject of the manuscript if the title is not enough (2) handwriting if
not indicated in the title and if easily determined (3) printed versions
of the manuscript if such information can be secured without long
search (4) register or index or calendar of the manuscript prepared
by the Library (5) former owners if they are important and easily
identified (6) condition of the manuscript if it affects the text.

Ideally an entry should require no more than one catalog card;
in practice, of course, some may be longer. An excellent list, con-
structed along lines somewhat similar to those here advocated is
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W. S. Ewing's guide to the manuscript collections in the Clements Library, although the titles and notes are sometimes more detailed or wordy than might be necessary, and, of course, the long lists of authors of letters and documents in individual collections could not appear on catalog cards.

A few words about the catalog itself. Usually the catalog of manuscripts is kept apart from the catalog of printed books, but scholars have been known to wish for a catalog which might list in one place all material of any kind the library might have relating to, say, Garrick. Certainly, if the manuscript catalog follows the A.L.A.-L.C. principles for cataloging printed books, habits of use learned in one catalog may be transferred with least difficulty to another. Filing may follow the same principles as in the catalog of printed books. The printed catalog of manuscripts has never yielded so completely to the card catalog as did the printed catalog of printed books at one time. Certainly the printed catalog has all the advantages of a book of ready reference in all times and places. But for the printed and for the card catalog the basic principles of construction are probably about the same.

Subject headings may be taken from a standard list such as that issued by the Library of Congress with, as in cataloging printed books, adaptations to fit special needs. Sometimes they are used rather sparingly; Peckham, for instance, suggested that although they were necessary when an obscure author touched on an important event or person, the reader should know the important people connected with subjects and events and be prepared to look under entries for these people rather than under the subjects with which they had been concerned. Added entries for people should be generously provided, but title added entries seldom.

Special additional records are often quite helpful. A chronological catalog is perhaps as useful for historical manuscripts as for early printed books. Registers such as those in the Library of Congress, and indexes, to the extent that the library can afford to provide them, can give much more analytical detail than is practical on catalog cards. Calendars, however, are expensive to prepare and the scholar will seldom accept even a lengthy summary as a substitute for a manuscript which he can look at himself simply by turning in a call slip. The accessions record is of use chiefly to staff rather than readers because its information is more general than that on public records and an accessions collection may have been broken into several catalogable units.
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Arrangement is the point at which manuscript cataloging differs most radically from printed books. The many variant physical forms of manuscripts will not tolerate classification by subject except in the case of the bound manuscript dealing largely with one general subject. (Even such a manuscript may at times be better shelved as part of a catalogable unit.) Moreover, manuscripts are kept on closed shelves, so that any advantage gained by subject arrangement would be lost to the reader.

Classification should be loose, expansive, and easy for staff members to understand. Collections may be divided into broad groups determined by such things as geography, subject, date, or form. Within the group, the collections themselves may be arranged by some arbitrary sequence such as the order of their cataloging, or some general alphabetical, subject, or chronological arrangement. Separate manuscripts may go into a miscellaneous group with such simple subdivision as they may seem to require.

Arrangement within a collection, unlike the location of that collection on the shelf, does come in direct contact with the reader, and thus can make the collection more (or less) useful to him. But here again there is no specific rule, capable of universal application. If the collection is indeed a "catalogable unit" its material will fall naturally into groups and sub-groups. Generally speaking, with literary material alphabetical arrangements tend to be useful; with historical material, chronological arrangements. If the unit comes already arranged, it may be well not to disturb it, particularly if the arrangement has been frozen by an index or by binding.

What about the cataloger of manuscripts? Peckham felt that subject specialization was more important than formal library school training. Undoubtedly subject knowledge helps, but it may not be more necessary in organizing manuscripts than in selecting classification numbers and subject headings for printed books. The chief danger for the man with no more than subject background is that he may take his specialized knowledge as the equivalent of the ability to organize and catalog and be somewhat disdainful of what seems pedantic and clerical skills acquired by the professional cataloger.

Perhaps more important than either specialized knowledge or cataloging training is attitude. No cataloger is a good cataloger if he lacks a profound scepticism and a passion for order. His job is to bring order out of chaos, and he cannot do it well if he follows any rule or person blindly.

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References


ADDITIONAL REFERENCES


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Policies Regarding the Use of Manuscripts

HOWARD H. PECKHAM

Use of unique, irreplaceable, and fragile materials unavoidably entails particular problems for a curator. Manuscripts cannot be administered in the same manner as are printed books. This is apparent in the processing of them, it is obvious in the physical storing of them, and it becomes clear in the servicing of them. Small wonder that some librarians throw up their hands and either leave them uncataloged in cartons (secretly hoping they will disappear or not be called for) or treat them over-solicitiously, like a subnormal child.

Manuscripts, like taxes, are here to stay, and the quantity available to research workers seems to increase as private collections pass into libraries and each state tends to its burgeoning archives. There is a rising demand for use of manuscripts among the increasing number of graduate students and established scholars. Moreover, libraries themselves are growing more interdependent, until the recommendation of the 1956 meeting of the American Library Association was that the resources of the strongest should be available to all.

But if manuscripts are distinctive as library material, so are the users of manuscripts. They are not run-of-the-mill library patrons. As Henry Edmunds, director of the Ford Motor Company archives, perceptively summarized: "Libraries exist for readers; archives, for writers." No one drifts into an archive looking for something with which to entertain himself. The manuscript user is seeking information for something he is writing. Hence, the clientele is small, informed in the field of research, and above average in education. Nevertheless, manuscripts are not thrown open to use by the public in the same free manner that printed books are; they are protected by certain regulations.

Restrictions on the use of manuscripts arise from (1) their fragile and unique nature, (2) the conditions imposed by donors, (3) the content itself, or (4) the policies imposed by the library or archive.

Mr. Peckham is Director, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

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Few institutions experience difficulty in cautioning readers to handle manuscripts with care. The need is self-evident, and the users are mature. Getting files of loose papers out of order is a more likely hazard. Ink is usually banned from fear of accidents or absent minded doodling. The fact that these same papers must remain in a condition for future generations also to use must be emphasized to all readers. Such regulations are often put in printed form and handed to new patrons.

As for restrictions imposed on the use of certain manuscripts by donors, the reader should remember that the librarian also objects to those limitations. Gifts with "strings" attached are not favored by any curator, but sometimes he is faced with the alternatives of not getting a valuable collection, or accepting it under certain conditions. Discretion being the better part of valor here, it would seem wiser to accept the collection under restrictions—which time usually will remove—than to lose it altogether.

Once in a while manuscript material of a scandalous or obscene content requires special handling by a repository. Direct quotation is discouraged. A due concern for the library’s good name and a sense of responsibility must govern the use of such material. At times library policy must be dictated by law. Under the common law, the writer of an unpublished letter or other manuscript has the sole right to publish the contents thereof, unless he alienates that right by direct act. Moreover, this right descends to his legal heirs regardless of who may own the manuscript in question. To avoid trouble in this area, the Library of Congress does not make photoreproductions of manuscripts written during the past fifty years unless the owner of the literary rights gives specific permission or has assigned his rights to the public.

Lastly, the policies invoked by a library or archive are the heart of the matter of regulation. Why does a repository have any restrictions on who uses manuscripts or what for? Why not throw open the doors—"first come, first served"—so long as the material is handled with adequate care? It is ridiculous to think of any stampede developing.

The problem is not as simple as that. Ownership implies an obligation to preserve, not merely against rough handling as mentioned, but against theft or mutilation or misuse. Obviously, kleptomaniacs or known thieves should not be allowed in, nor persons known to be given to clipping or underscoring while they read. This prohibition means that the prospective reader must be able to identify himself.
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Many librarians and archivists go further: they prefer or insist that the user of manuscripts be a competent scholar. Their logic is that since manuscripts are non-expendable, they should be handled by as few readers as possible, and certainly the competent scholar should have priority over the idly curious, the unprepared, or the reader with a trivial purpose. Even so, there is some objection in our wide democracy to the idea that anyone in a custodial capacity shall presume to judge another person’s competence to do what he wants to do. Stiff examinations for the licensing of motorcar drivers are resisted with the same attitude. Yet the duty of a librarian or archivist to conserve the material in his care cannot be avoided or lightly dismissed. He holds it in trust for all the people and for the generations not yet born.

In the screening of readers, preparation and purpose may be legitimately questioned. The student or the hobbyist may have tremendous enthusiasm and high motives, yet be unable to assess the significance of the manuscripts laid before him. A familiarity with secondary material, as found in texts or monographs, is therefore desirable. The newspaper feature writer may want some dramatic or sensational account to arrest the eye of the Sunday reader, especially in a new acquisition. It is hardly fair to allow such persons to pluck the bloom off a collection, leaving scholars to hoe and weed later in order to gain a true appraisal of the material. University manuscript collections are sometimes held inviolate for faculty members of the owner institution first to use. This policy may have some justification at times, but certainly a time limit and a short one should be enforced. If a local professor does not make use of a new manuscript collection within six months, or perhaps three months, after its arrival on the campus, then it ought to be open to scholars outside that campus. Occasionally a local faculty member has been able to tie up a manuscript collection for years and produce nothing, simply keeping his rivals at bay. This is a species of fraud.

On the positive side a library or archive should be able to help a reader make full use of its material. The curator should inform him of other relevant collections in his library or elsewhere. He should suggest other types of sources, such as books, maps, newspapers, broadsides, and prints, which may contain relevant data. He should inform the reader of other persons who are working in the same field, a most important matter to the Ph.D. candidate. And finally he should allow the filming or photostating of material which the reader lacks.
time to take notes on or which he wishes to study over later or even reproduce.

Mention of the camera raises other questions of use. The microfilm is a remarkable development. It makes possible the reproduction of any kind of material at low cost and in compact format. It is probably the only practical way of preserving newspapers which are going to disintegrate anyway. The cheapness of the method has encouraged libraries to collect and catalog film copies instead of originals. It enables scholars to remain in their studies and consult materials abroad. Most libraries permit microfilming of manuscripts wanted by readers. Such requests are of two origins. In one case a reader works through the manuscripts and instead of taking notes or copying whole documents, jots down directions for filming what he wants. His visit to the repository is thus shortened and his travel expense diminished. After he leaves, the curator sees that his microfilm order is filled. The scholar then makes use of the film at his leisure.

In the other case, a reader may write to the library or archive and ask for a film of all the letters and documents signed by a certain person, received by him, or that relate to him, or to some event. He may ask that an entire collection be filmed. Such requests are generally regarded as stretching library and archival courtesy. Aside from the extra burden imposed on the staff, the feeling prevails that such scholars are leaning too heavily on another person's judgment. They are not sharpening their own judgment in selecting what is important. They are missing the thrill of discovery. And they are failing to perceive the tangential relations that are often illuminated by a chance remark buried in an inconsequential paper. It may be argued that such scholars are pursuing research without catching up to it.

Not all readers or users of manuscripts are individuals; other libraries frequently ask to make use of such material by copying.

Institutional requests for microfilms are another matter and a thorny problem. In this situation, another library wants a film of usually a whole collection, not for any immediate and special purpose, but simply to have on hand as an added resource in history or science or literature. What obligations does the institution owning the original manuscripts have in accommodating such requests?

One of the important services a repository renders to a scholar is to inform him if manuscripts of interest to him are being used by others. Obviously, it can no longer perform this service when another library has photocopies of its material. Moreover, the manuscript material in a library is augmented by printed books, maps, broad-
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sides, newspapers, and prints, relating to the same area and period. The scholar who uses a microfilm of only a manuscript collection in another institution is being short changed. Wholesale microfilming is a form of publication and consequently invokes decisions on that kind of enterprise, including such questions as what method of publication may be preferred, absence or presence of editorial notes in a film, effect of film copying on future printing, and the doctrine of literary property rights already mentioned. Finally, there is an ethical problem involved: should one institution ask another for a film of its unique material? Consider the following actual situation:

A few years ago a dealer turned up an almost complete file of a rare New Orleans newspaper. No library had anything approaching a complete file. The dealer naturally put a high price on the newspaper and offered it to three institutions in succession. Institutions A and B declined the purchase, but institution C put forth some effort and scraped up the money with which to buy it. It might even be argued that C recognized the value of this source material more clearly than A or B. As soon as the announcement of C's achievement was made, institutions A and B wrote and requested a microfilm of the paper! There is such a thing, it would seem, as a right of exclusive possession as a reward for diligence, enterprise, imagination, and self-sacrifice. Institutions A and B would defend themselves on the ground that they were only trying to save scholars in their locality the cost of traveling to C. But such scholars and such libraries are overlooking the primary fact that C performed a signal service to all scholarship by bringing the newspaper out of private hands, where no one could see it, and making it available in one place. Scholars have small right to object because it is not available in three or five places.

There are many arguments for “library cooperation” and “democracy in letters”. It is also alleged that film copies do not affect the value, scholarly or financially, of the originals (although they do). The controversy is similar to that over natural resources between the “have” and “have not” nations. But there remains one necessary premise in the argument that libraries should share with others: some few libraries have got to pay out large sums of money to get the originals. Suppose they grow tired of footing the bill for other libraries to benefit and decide they too will collect by means of films? Then the film traffic comes to a halt. The author has heard of one institution that purchased a manuscript collection for $20,000. When another library asked for a film copy, the owner acquiesced but added
that since the collection would now exist in duplicate it seemed only fair that the second library should bear half the cost, or $10,000.

A recent development in this age of specialization is the self-appointed center for research on some particular subject or area. Thus a library will send circular letters to other libraries announcing that it is going to become the headquarters for all source material "on the administration of President Zilphus Q. Titmouse, 1846-50," and therefore "will you please film all of the Titmouse letters and all the correspondence of his cabinet officials that you own." The clinching argument is usually: "We shall be glad to pay the cost of filming." If the inquiring library happens to own the Titmouse papers, plus those of several of his cabinet secretaries, the scheme for completion has some merit. But it does seem a little absurd for a library with less than, say, fifty or sixty per cent of the available source material to project such a plan. The mere announcement of a desire to become a research center on some particular topic hardly confers an obligation on other libraries to help the one library achieve its goal. A much more genuine service to scholarship would be for the ambitious library to seek out and purchase the source materials on its favorite subject that are still in private hands, instead of maintaining a soporific satisfaction with film copies of material that is already available to scholars.

The wholesale filming of manuscripts for interlibrary exchange is perhaps an aspect of a more fundamental problem: institutional cooperation in collecting. This is not a plan, but only a thought that libraries ought somehow to divide the field of manuscript collecting both to avoid competition and to insure coverage. Possible subject fields have not been defined, and few libraries have announced the boundaries of their collecting beyond which they will not stray—especially in accepting a preferred gift.

The Farmington Plan, under which each member library agrees to collect the books published in a given field, is not fully effective, and in manuscripts the difficulties would multiply. It is easy enough to state that each library should collect manuscript material on its own locality or region. So it should. But may it not do anything more? Does the American Revolution belong solely to the thirteen states that existed when it was fought and among which it is local history? Or the Civil War to 35 states? What about scientific libraries where geographical boundaries are meaningless? Could libraries always afford to carry out the responsibilities they wish to assume? The Westward Movement or Gold Rush logically should be the concern
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of a few libraries west of the Mississippi. But it so happens that manuscript material on this episode is alarmingly expensive, and only one library in the West could afford to buy it. The wish and the capacity will not always coincide.

It cannot help but be irritating for Southern libraries to find good Confederate collections being formed in the North. Westerners may wish that Yale's Coe collection had been deposited in the West. The Astor Fur Company papers, so valuable to the history of the Northwest, are in the New-York Historical Society; yet it must be remembered that Astor was a New Yorker. It is no simple matter to say where some manuscript collections genuinely "belong," and even if all the collections in institutions were made available for redistribution, there would still be dissatisfaction, preceded by much quarreling.

Obviously nothing can be done about manuscripts already in library custody. And a library with only a desire to collect in a given field and lacking sufficient funds can hardly expect to be taken seriously or deferred to by other libraries. On top of this, the desire of a donor to give some manuscripts to the "wrong" institution for sentimental reasons is difficult to resist or deflect. Finally, even though libraries should reach agreement on fields of specialization for the future, they could not count on a drop in prices because of the absence of institutional competition; no agreement of this kind will affect the activity of private collectors, who for the most part are responsible for today's price levels.

However, there is a fringe area in which many libraries now act with unselfish discrimination. Institution A may be offered some letters of General X, the bulk of whose papers are already in institution B. A will ordinarily refer the prospective donor or the dealer to B, where the additional items obviously should go. This sending of the right manuscript to the right place is a practice to be encouraged by enlightened curators. Librarians have not yet met together to consider limiting their collecting to mutually agreed upon areas, and as equal sovereigns agreement may be as remote as world government, but the Library of Congress Manuscript Division has indicated an interest in the problem.

Over a period of the last century, libraries and archives have certainly grown more liberal in permitting use of their manuscripts.

*Realizing the special interest of western scholars in the Astor collection, the New-York Historical Society has allowed eight libraries in the Northwest to secure microfilms of this entire collection with no restrictions as to its use by competent scholars. These 15,000 letters and documents and 100 letter books were purchased in 1863 for $80, a fraction of the cost of a microfilm copy.—Ed. note.
The regulations necessary for protection are generally sensible and deserve the respect of all readers. Microfilming has solved one problem and created another. The desire to serve scholars has succeeded mere acquiescence and is at the root of the self-analysis and discussion among research institutions today.
When the large number of reference works in the archival and manuscript fields today are compared with the relatively few of a generation ago, there is evidence for a favorable accounting on behalf of recent historical scholarship. Actually this widespread movement to provide guides and inventories to manuscript sources dates back to the turn of the century. The Reports of the Historical Manuscripts Commission of Great Britain during the latter decades of the nineteenth century inevitably suggested that something comparable ought to be undertaken in the United States. Action came, not from the federal government, but from two private organizations, the American Historical Association (with the benefit of the Government Printing Office) and the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

In 1895 the Association set up a Historical Manuscripts Commission to pool the interests of state and local historical societies and to embark upon a program of documentary publication through the medium of the Association's Annual Reports. In 1899 it established the Public Archives Commission as a clearinghouse of information in a much neglected field, and more especially as a means of promoting inventories of state and local archives throughout the United States. During the following decade both archivists and professors of history engaged in this noteworthy task with very creditable results. The Annual Reports of the A.H.A. of 1900-1917 contain a series of surveys and inventories, varying in detail, of state archives ("records" would be a more apt word for some of the states) and a few municipal archives. Meanwhile the Carnegie Institution, established in 1901, was sponsoring a series of Guides to materials on American history at home and abroad. J. F. Jameson, head of the Institution's Bureau of Historical Research, deserves chief credit as the master planner for its far-flung achievement. Among the first fruits were C. H. Van Tyne

The author is Director, Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia.

During the period between world wars two events of outstanding significance occurred in American archival history: the establishment of the National Archives in 1934 and the organization of the Society of American Archivists in 1936. A third event of more temporary interest, but with far reaching results in aiding scholars, was the organization of the Historical Records Survey as an unemployment relief project in 1936. During its five years of existence the H.R.S. produced through the several state projects hundreds of inventories of county records, most of them mimeographed in limited editions. It also took over the Survey of Federal Archives which issued similar inventories; see its *Bibliography of Research Projects Reports . . .* (Washington, 1943). Rapid acquisition of records by the National Archives and initial problems of archival procedure delayed its publication program. The *Guide to the Records in the National Archives* (2d ed., Washington, 1948) is indispensable, and is kept up to date by *National Archives Accessions*. The Guide replaces for the most part Van Tyne and Leland. *List of National Archives Microfilm Publications* (Washington, 1953) reveals selected records available as positive prints. *The American Archivist*, quarterly of the Society of American Archivists begun in 1938, is in many respects a source book on contemporary archival practice. Its annual "Writings on Archives and Manuscripts," published since 1943 in each October issue, is a great boon to historians as well as to archivists.

Although many of the state archives antedate the National Archives as organized departments of government, those with publication programs, now or earlier, have been more inclined to reproduce documentary texts in series rather than to compile reference works covering a larger proportion of the records as a whole. Even the *Calendar of Virginia State Papers . . .* (Richmond, 1875-1893) is an exceptional case before 1900, and the same may be said for the Maryland Hall of Records' *Calendar[s] of . . . Red Books, of . . . Black
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Books, etc. (Annapolis, 1943—in progress) and the Delaware Public Archives Commission's Calendar of Records (Dover, 1935). Maryland is also exceptional for its Catalogue of Archival Material (Annapolis, 1942). A few state archives issue Annual Reports containing reference material—e.g. Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Illinois, and Wisconsin by the State Historical Society; but generally speaking, little has been done that is comparable to the work through the Public Archives Commission fifty years ago.

The boldest and most comprehensive project in state archival records was A Guide to the Microfilm Collection of early State Records, prepared by the Library of Congress in association with the University of North Carolina, compiled by W. S. Jenkins and edited by Lillian A. Hamrick (Washington, D.C., 1950), and the Supplement in 1951. Here is a new means of access to this complex field, through microfilm copies conveniently classified and analyzed. While this great compilation gives a passing nod to local archives, it seems unlikely that anything comparable to the county inventories of the Historical Records Survey will be undertaken in the near future.

Institutional archives embrace a vast and largely uncharted area where few archivists have trod as yet to organize the records and ultimately to make known their arrangement and content. Pioneering work, with limited accomplishment in publication of reference works, has been done for three kinds of institutions: religious, business, and educational. The Carnegie Institution pointed the way by sponsoring and publishing W. H. Allison's Inventory of Unpublished Material for American Religious History in Protestant Archives and Other Repositories in 1910. However well some church organizations are caring for their official records, they have done little to make known their resources for research; consequently the historian seeks religious materials in general manuscript collections because the archives are unknown and often inaccessible. Exceptional is the “List of Manuscript Records in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society,” Seventh Annual Report of the Archivist, University of Virginia Library, for the Year 1936-37 (University, Va., 1937), in revealing official minute books of such churches and associations in Virginia.

Archival work in the business field got its impetus from the Harvard School of Business Administration and the closely allied Business Historical Society in the 1920's. While a quarter-century of growth has outmoded Margaret R. Cusick's List of Business Manuscripts in Baker Library (Boston, 1932), it laid the groundwork for the more
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comprehensive compilation by Henrietta M. Larson in Guide to Business History; Materials for the Study of Business History and Suggestions for Their Use (Cambridge, 1948). Numerous histories of individual firms have been written, some of them based upon the original records, as they should be; but only in a few cases have such records been inventoried and the inventories published for use by future researchers, e.g. the Guide to the Burlington [Railroad] Archives in the Newberry Library, 1851-1901 (Chicago, 1949), by Elisabeth C. Jackson and Carolyn Curtis.

The organization of college and university archives is often stimulated by the preparation of anniversary histories; yet such archives usually become a part of the institution's historical manuscript collections and are seldom considered as a separate category of archives. Since such archives have won slight recognition as yet, even among many of the older institutions, it is not surprising that little has been published to aid the researcher. A beginning may be seen in W. E. Hemphill's, "A Bibliography of the Unprinted Official Records of the University of Virginia," Sixth Annual Report of the Archivist, University of Virginia Library, for the Year 1935-36 (University, Va., 1936).

Organizations and institutions are legion, of course, and run the gamut of our complex modern society. Only a few are, or have been, conscious of the historical value of their records; no doubt relatively few will ever establish their own archives. However, some records by or about many of them get into the papers of individual persons which are acquired by research libraries. Thus official records as archives become intermingled with so-called "personal papers" the contents of which are partially revealed in guides to historical manuscripts. From this condition may be seen the difficulty of drawing a sharp distinction between archives and historical manuscripts.

The master key to reference works on manuscripts is R. A. Billington's "Guides to American History Manuscript Collections in Libraries of the United States," which appeared in the December 1951 issue of the Mississippi Valley Historical Review, and was reprinted by Peter Smith (New York, 1952). They are analyzed (1) by federal depositories and (2) by states, (a) general and (b) in the several states, alphabetically. Two attempts have been made to provide a national cross-section of manuscript collections, with limited results; a third project in the making is described later (see pp. ). The Library of Congress compiled a Check List of Collections of Personal Papers in Historical Societies, University and Public Libraries, and Other
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Learned Institutions in the United States (Washington, 1918), covering eighty-six institutions out of more than 300 solicited, but the collections are merely listed, not described. An enlarged edition with brief descriptions was issued in 1924 under the title, Manuscripts in Public and Private Collections in the United States. On a more restricted basis the American Association for State and Local History published its Historical Societies in the United States and Canada (Washington, 1944), edited by Christopher Crittenden and Doris Godard, with descriptions of manuscript holdings of each society, but the data were so abridged as to be of very limited value. Several efforts have been made to present guides to manuscript collections on a regional basis, either in connection with printed works or as separate compilations, e.g. R. B. Downs, ed., Resources of Southern Libraries: a Survey of Facilities for Research (Chicago, 1938), but such works are quickly outdated and their long-time reference value steadily diminishes. Since microfilm copies of manuscript materials are becoming increasingly available and library policy has been greatly liberalized in this respect, the scholar should be familiar with Union List of Microfilms (rev. ed., Ann Arbor, 1951) and Supplement (1953), issued by the Philadelphia Bibliographical Center and Union Library Catalog.

Every research library with manuscript resources ought to recognize as one of its primary responsibilities the compilation and publication of a guide to those materials. The Historical Records Survey, although chiefly concerned with inventories of county archives, gave attention to manuscripts collections in some states. The results of these efforts were set in mimeographed works on nineteen of the states under the title, Guide to Depositories of Manuscript Collections in the United States,* with brief notes on the collections in each library. This laudable undertaking gave rise to or provided supplementary aid for more thorough projects in certain institutions which eventually issued separate guides to their own holdings. Furthermore, these projects were carefully planned with the aid of archival and historical experts so that format and collation for each entry became uniform throughout the H.R.S. and subsequently have been generally adopted. The only city whose manuscript resources were presented as a collaborative effort among institutions was New York. This Guide, published in 1941, had been preceded by a more restricted work as to period but


A few institutions have made known their manuscript collections by similar publications earlier in the present century, notably the Library of Congress in its *Handbook of Manuscripts* (Washington, 1918) and supplements prepared by C. W. Garrison and P. C. Powell respectively in 1931 and 1938 and published in the American Historical Association's *Annual Report for 1930* and for 1937. Subsequent lists are found in the annual *Report of the Librarian of Congress*, 1938-1942, and beginning in September, 1943, in the Library's *Quarterly Journal of Current Acquisitions*. Its *Accessions of Manuscripts, Broadsides and British Transcripts* (Washington, 1922-26) was issued in five volumes; a cognate compilation is Grace C. Griffin's, *A Guide to Manuscripts Relating to American History in British Depositories Reproduced for the Division of Manuscripts of the Library of Congress* (Washington, 1946). Miss Griffin's annual *Writings on American History* since 1906 (in the American Historical Association's *Annual Report* beginning in 1909) includes a section on "Archives and Manuscript Collections." (Two earlier reports of *Writings*, for 1902 and 1903, had appeared under other compilers.)

The Virginia Historical Society prepared a *Catalogue* of its manuscripts (Richmond, 1901), not yet superseded. In the same year "Manuscript Collections in the New York Public Library" appeared in its *Bulletin*, and the first "Supplement" was released in February, 1915, also printed separately as V. H. Paltsits', *The Manuscript Division in the New York Public Library* (New York, 1915). Subsequent lists of accessions have appeared regularly in the *Bulletin*. Another early contribution was R. G. Thwaites', *Descriptive List of Manuscript Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin . . .* (Madison, 1906), which included a section on collections in other states of the Middle West; the Wisconsin material has been fully superseded by Alice E. Smith's, *Guide to the Manuscripts of the Wisconsin Historical Society* (Madison, 1944). The latter work is typical of the effective reference tools published since the 1920's by several leading manuscript repositories, some with WPA aid through the Historical Records Survey, as mentioned above.

In California the Huntington Library first presented a descriptive list of its collections in its May 1931 *Bulletin*, which was partially replaced by Norma B. Cuthbert's, *American Manuscript Collections*
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in the Huntington Library for the History of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (San Marino, 1941). Grace L. Nute and Gertrude W. Ackerman’s, Guide to the Personal Papers in the Manuscript Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society (St. Paul, 1935), became something of a model for other institutions undertaking such compilations. It is supplemented by Manuscript Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society. Guide Number 2, compiled by Lucile M. Kane and Kathryn A. Johnson (St. Paul, 1955). One of the more detailed and most attractively designed is H. H. Peckham’s, Guide to the Manuscript Collections in the William L. Clements Library (Ann Arbor, 1942), supplemented by a multilith edition of 1953, compiled by W. S. Ewing. In North Carolina both the Duke University Guide (Durham, 1947), revised and enlarged from the mimeographed edition of 1939, and the University of North Carolina Guide (Chapel Hill, 1941) were begun as Historical Records Survey projects. In Massachusetts two works of more limited scope by leading societies have appeared: A Guide to the Resources of the American Antiquarian Society . . . (Worcester, 1937), and Handbook of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 1791-1948 (Boston, 1949), each of which includes a section on manuscripts. More recently the Ohio Historical Society has published a detailed Guide . . . (Columbus, 1953), compiled by Elizabeth C. Biggert; Colonial Williamsburg has issued a similar volume, by Lynette Adcock (Williamsburg, 1954; and so has the Kentucky Historical Society, by G. G. Clift (Frankfort, 1955). Space does not permit the listing of numerous articles of similar content in learned journals. It should be noted, however, that such data appear regularly in the annual reports of certain institutions. Especially detailed are the University of Virginia Library’s Annual Report on Historical Collections since 1940 (originally . . . of the Archivist, 1931-1940) and Cornell University Library’s Report of the Curator, Collection of Regional History (Ithaca, 1945-?).

The foregoing survey of reference works on archival and manuscript resources suggests that efforts to make widely known what is extant and available for use have been piecemeal, as indeed they have. One may argue that the very nature of the material makes it more difficult to impose uniform procedures and other controls on manuscripts as compared with imprints; that the collections of each library are unique enough to raise issues peculiar to that institution; and that cost factors vary so greatly among diverse institutions having custody of manuscripts that cooperation on behalf of reference projects which are national in scope is impractical. While scholars have been grateful for each additional guide to manuscript collections
that has appeared, they have continued to explore the possibilities of a centralized, unified project to which all such pertinent data might gravitate and from which information might be disseminated on a continuing basis. Arguments have been set forth from time to time on behalf of regional undertakings as being more likely of realization. Fortunately, perhaps, none of these has materialized, since one or more might have forestalled the plan now in the offing.

Two projects raise anew the hopes of archivists and historians. First, well advanced by the National Historical Publications Commission, is a comprehensive guide to all archival and manuscript repositories in the United States, with descriptive material on at least the leading collections of each. Like the handbook of historical societies published by the American Association for State and Local History in 1944, but on a broader scale and more thorough in coverage, the N.H.P.C. Guide, indexed in minute detail, should become the reference tool of prime importance in the field. Publication date has not yet been set.

The second project, though still in the planning stage, has a body of procedures ready for application. The Library of Congress has proposed to develop a national register or union list of manuscript collections which would be somewhat comparable to its union catalog of printed books. Beginning with the collections in its own Manuscript Division, the Library would prepare a standardized catalog entry for each, with a brief description of content, for printing on a standard 3" x 5" L.C. card. The cataloging rules for this procedure, which have been approved, approximate the rules for cataloging printed books, with adequate allowance for peculiarities of manuscript materials. With the cooperation of other libraries in supplying the essential data for their separate manuscript collections, the Library of Congress would likewise print cards for them and make copies available for distribution in the usual way through its Card Division. Once this project is put into operation with the necessary funds, the Library of Congress can soon demonstrate its service to scholars and archivists, so that the cooperation of other institutions will be forthcoming.

The proposed card catalog to be established and continuously expanded in the Library of Congress will become a great reference tool and clearinghouse of information; the sale of printed cards to institutions and individual scholars will make for that flexibility of information in the manuscript field which has long been taken for granted in the field of imprints. A joint committee of the Society of
American Archivists and the American Association for State and Local History has served in an advisory capacity in promoting this project and will at the proper time solicit the cooperation of all repositories of manuscripts to assure a real union catalog approximating that ideal of completeness which can have no terminal date. It is hoped that it can be put into operation sooner rather than later.

The rapid development of microfilming and its application to manuscript materials in the 1930's misled many archivists and historians to the conclusion that microfilm editions would replace letter press editions of documentary texts. Since microfilming is relatively cheap, textual editions in this form could be actually complete, giving the scholar ready access to all documents unadulterated by the subjective judgment of the editor. This reasoning overlooked several points: that even microfilm copy has to be "edited" to some extent; that the text, faithfully rendered in print, can be read more quickly and just as reliably as the manuscript, which may still be consulted to supplement the printed version; that the reliable editor, well versed in the field of his documents, continues to serve an essential purpose for both the scholar and the general reading public; and that tradition, prejudice, and eye-strain still favor the printed book over the microfilm and its reading machine. Thus, while the use of microfilm (and microcards) for research work continues to expand, the edited and printed text in its traditional forms has lost none of its potential for present or future use.

This point is irrefutable in the historical field where the microfilm has been a great boon. So far as American history is concerned, the last half-century of world wars and revolutions has aroused a new consciousness in the people. Not only is American history taught more widely than ever before but it commands the interest of a broader segment of the public; and this growth has been simultaneous with more exacting standards of historical scholarship. When bicentennial and other anniversaries of American statesmen have been made occasions for patriotic celebrations in recent years, publication of their papers is deemed appropriate and desirable, edited by well-qualified scholars. Beginning with the *Writings of Washington*, edited by J. C. Fitzpatrick and published by the federal government (Washington, 1931-44), this movement gathered momentum from the impact of World War II upon American democracy, well-symbolized by Jefferson (1743-1826), least appreciated of the founding fathers until his bicentennial. The *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, edited by J. P. Boyd and others (Princeton, 1950- ), has not only become a land-
mark in historical editing but inspired other similar efforts for publishing in full the papers of American statesmen. Boyd quickly proved himself the editor par excellence; and it is worth noting that he put microfilm to work as the means of providing projection prints of all Jefferson documents from which the editing was done. In another, but related, field, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, edited by W. S. Lewis (New Haven, Conn., 1937-54) deserves special recognition among the leading editorial works of these years.

Presentation of Volume I of the Jefferson *Papers* to President Truman in 1950 provided the occasion for him to recommend that the papers of other distinguished Americans, political, industrial, educational, etc., be edited for publication and that the National Historical Publications Commission serve as the promotional agency. The Commission forthwith compiled a list of leading Americans of the past, gathered information on the whereabouts of their papers, and urged that editorial projects be initiated by institutions where able editors and important manuscript collections were available in convenient proximity. The Commission's activities were presented in *A National Program for the Publication of Historical Documents; a Report to the President* (Washington, 1954). One of its own projects, described therein, is the Guide to archival and manuscript repositories, referred to earlier. In the same year, was launched the editing of the Writings of Benjamin Franklin by L. W. Labaree and W. J. Bell, Jr., to be published by the Yale University Press; and in 1955 the editing of the Adams papers by L. H. Butterfield with the Harvard University Press as publisher, and the Papers of Alexander Hamilton by H. C. Syrett with the Columbia University Press. Meanwhile selected *Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* were ably edited by E. E. Morison and staff (Cambridge, 1951-1954) and Lincoln's *Collected Works* by R. P. Basler for the Abraham Lincoln Association (New Brunswick, N.J., 1953-1955). Other projects under way are the Writings of J. C. Calhoun by R. B. Meriwether, University of South Carolina, and of Henry Clay by James F. Hopkins, University of Kentucky. An edition of James Madison's writings is to be sponsored jointly by the University of Virginia and the University of Chicago. To all these projects the N.H.P.C. has given publicity and encouragement; for all it serves as an office of information and advice.

It is significant that none of these American statesmen projects are being edited or published by the federal government. This is not to suggest that strong precedent exists against national appropriations for such undertakings. Every period of history has witnessed certain

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large-scale editorial works with federal support: e.g. Peter Force's *American Archives* (1937-53), *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (1880-1901), *Documentary History of the Constitution of the United States* (1894-1905), *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies* (1894-1922), and the *Territorial Papers of the United States* (1934- ), edited by C. E. Carter. Nor has the government lacked able editors in the Library of Congress or the Department of State, or the National Archives; indeed, one of the most distinguished editors is Carter of the *Territorial Papers*, now on the staff of the National Archives. Many of the state governments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have financed the editing and publishing of documentary series from their archives, the most notable recent project being *The Colonial Records of South Carolina* (Columbia, 1951- ), superbly edited by J. H. Easterby.

The diverse support of current large-scale projects is convincing evidence of widespread interest in historical scholarship and a wholesome dispersal of talent among numerous institutions, some of which have preserved the manuscripts in the very area of the statesman's public and private life. These are appropriate ventures, too, for the university press with its intimate scholarly connections. The prospects of profit are too dim for the commercial publisher today, although he had found such works a good risk at the turn of the century.

Most significant is the influence of these textual publications on historical scholarship. While they reflect its high standards in the careful planning of each project and in the thorough research that accompanies editing, the work of these editors may be expected to reach new levels of achievement. Without assuming too much from the far reaching influence already exerted by the Boyd edition of Jefferson, it can be asserted with confidence that the present generation is adding more to its inheritance of manuscript resources and to the tools for utilizing them than any of its predecessors. As long as archivists are historians, the archival edge of scholarship cuts both ways and the benefits are mutual. Too many aids to research may dull the curiosity and persistence of some historians, but manuscript records will continue to challenge the inquiring scholar because their unique quality will persist.
Care and Handling of Non-Governmental Archives

ROBERT W. LOVETT

To the purist, the topic of this chapter might be considered somewhat of a contradiction in terms. But the word "archives" has come to be used broadly to include not only government records, but also the records of business firms, institutions, and even families. And those records are often called archives even when they are no longer in the custody of the person or institution creating them. Properly speaking, such records would then be historical manuscripts, but they will be considered as legitimate subjects for discussion here.

Non-governmental archives, then, are the records of business firms and institutions of all kinds, whether in the custody of the firm or institution itself or transferred to a collecting library or similar depository. They may be distinguished from historical manuscripts in many ways, aside from the primary characteristic that they were once part of an organic unit. One of their important properties is likely to be bulk. For example, Baker Library, of the Harvard Business School, has a number of collections of the records of business firms, any one of which would number over a thousand volumes or the equivalent. Associated with the point of size, is the importance of series. The ledgers, journals, and cash books of the nineteenth century firm, or their twentieth century equivalents, possess the maximum research value only when found to be complete for the life-span of the firm. On the other hand, it is a characteristic of such records that some are often found to be of marginal value, and that judicious weeding is desirable. Finally, a greater portion of such collections is apt to consist of recent materials than is the case with historical manuscripts; and they are likely to contain more varied forms, including bound and unbound records, pictures, maps, printed items such as employee magazines and advertising, and the like. Logically, Mr. Lovett is Head, Manuscript Division, Baker Library of the Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University.

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all of these distinguishing characteristics of non-governmental archives affect the way in which they should be handled; some of these effects will be considered later.

The interest in archives, both governmental and non-governmental, has increased tremendously in this country since the turn of the century. The Public Archives Commission of the American Historical Association began active work in 1899 and sponsored meetings of persons interested in archives from 1909. The Harvard Commission on Western History, under the leadership of F. J. Turner and others, was actively collecting manuscripts in this field during the years just after 1909. The establishment of the National Archives in 1934, accompanied by growth in the number and strength of state archival agencies, has had important benefits for the whole records field. The Committee on Archives and Libraries of the American Library Association was active in the early 1930's, and the Society of American Archivists was founded in December, 1936. This Society issues The American Archivist, the most important quarterly in this field published in this country, and early set up committees to represent interests in business records, church records, college and university records, and more recently in labor union archives. Courses in archives and records management have been established at American University, including a popular and valuable summer course, and at New York University; and a summer Institute on Historical and Archival Management, sponsored by Harvard University and Radcliffe College, was started in 1954.

The most extensive field of non-governmental archives, and that with which the author is most familiar, is that of business records. The Harvard Business School Library began collecting in 1916, and with the establishment of the Business Historical Society in 1925 (now inactive) and the building of Baker Library in 1927 its collecting increased rapidly. The value of business records for historical purposes has come to be more and more appreciated; for example, two institutions, which had deposited material in Baker Library in the 1920's, with the assurance it would never be removed, have now reclaimed it. At the same time the care of business archives within the firm has received attention, in a development paralleling that in the area of governmental archives. As the National Archives, now part of the General Services Administration, is at present concerned with records management, as well as with archival techniques, so the management of current records is an important part of the business archives field. In fact, some of the most active consultants in that field obtained
their first records experience with the Navy records program during
and just after World War II. The connection between current records
management and archives in the area of business has always been
close; witness the contributions of the filing systems experts and the
typewriter and office equipment companies. But the emphasis now
is different; it is more concerned with the complete records picture,
from first creation of a form (in fact, there is an area known as records
birth control) to final disposition.

One of the organizations which has had a great deal to do with
the application of modern techniques to the care of business records
is the National Records Management Council. It was organized
in 1949 by the Committee on Business Records of the American
Historical Association as a non-profit organization with headquarters
in New York City. The Council has made numerous studies of the
handling of business records and has come up with some useful con-
cepts. They are prepared to survey records of a business firm or other
institution and to set up a modern records system. They tend to
emphasize the monetary savings resulting from a great reduction in
the bulk of the records and the storage of a large portion of the re-
mainder in less expensive buildings and containers. But the Council
has not forgotten the values for historical research possessed by some
of the records and has made studies of those which historians and
others would consider worthy of permanent preservation. It has pub-
lished useful articles and a bibliography, and has sponsored a two-
day seminar conducted each fall by New York University. It has
also spawned at least two private consulting firms in the field of
business records. Of course there are many others, including one
which has refurbished a Pennsylvania mine for storage of valuable
records from firms in the area.

How is all this of benefit to a company librarian who has been asked
to look after some of his or her firm’s records, or to find information
on the subject? It is obvious that the answer depends partly on how
far the company intends to go in the preservation of its records. Per-
haps the librarian is given only a few of the treasured pieces, the act
of incorporation and by-laws, an early account book or minute book,
the founder’s picture, or a few letters. Even so, he should preserve
them carefully with enough cataloging so that they can be found,
for they may be the beginning of a true archives. If ammunition as
to the value of the company’s records for its own administration, for
its public relations, and for the recording of its history is needed,
the librarian could write to a business school where a course in
business history is taught. The list of worthwhile company histories published by such institutions is growing all the time. For instance, the Harvard Studies in Business History now number nineteen volumes. Current business histories in process are listed in an occasional news bulletin from the Sheraton Group which has its headquarters at Harvard Business School. Or if the company is ready to embark on a complete records program, the librarian can suggest the publications of various of the advisory firms mentioned earlier. In large metropolitan areas some of these are prepared to offer warehouse storage for little used yet important records, complete to the provision of reference service and recommendation as to the length of time which they should be kept. Perhaps the company has reached the point of setting up an archives of its own. Again the records management consulting firms can help, and the experience of such firms as Ford and Firestone which have already established archives will be useful. The Ford Archives has issued articles and pamphlets descriptive of their procedures, and The American Archivist frequently contains pieces illustrative of individual company experience.

If the company is going out of existence the librarian is urged to suggest that some library might be interested in the records. The author, in connection with a project of the Business Records Committee of the Society of American Archivists, has recently made a survey of such institutions. Out of seventy-six returns, sixty-six indicated that they had accepted business records. Some thirty-six of these even said that they would take records of companies still in existence. As two or three suggested, it would be helpful if the company would make money available to defray the cost of handling such records. And although some thirty-three would place restrictions on the use of the records if asked, most would probably wish a free hand to discard earlier material which might prove valueless. It is from firms going out of existence that Baker Library, and probably the others, have obtained a large proportion of their business record holdings. But with space becoming scarce, it is likely that these institutions will become still more selective in the future. Regional cooperation is being increasingly practiced; for example, within the past three years Baker Library has sent four collections to institutions in areas to which the materials more closely related. The University of Florida has started a Southern Business History Center; the Longwood Library, established by the Duponts in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, has embarked on a collecting program for that region; and
the University of Oregon is interested in Pacific Northwest business records, to mention a few widely scattered examples.

The question of what to collect is a problem facing also the librarian suddenly asked to look after his institution's archives. While the writer speaks from the standpoint of a university archives, many of the suggestions given here apply to the collections of other types of institutions. Generally it is the library which is chosen to collect these materials though archival experts recommend, at least in the case of college archives, that they be made administratively independent. The librarian, or whatever his position may be, might well start with the publications of his institution. He could consider his set of the catalog or yearbook or whatever the title may be as the official archival set. If the title is to be much in demand by users, it would be well to have a second set for lending. As the purpose of the collection becomes known, other materials will start to come in. Archives tend to attract supplementary materials, which may not be official but are none the less important. The librarian should not neglect the records and publications of student societies, of alumni groups, selected student notes and papers, and similar materials. He may eventually want to classify and house these items separate from, but adjacent to, the official records. The time will come, if only when offices are cleaned out, that the original records of his institution are turned over to him. Then he will have a full-fledged archives, and some hints on their handling are to be considered next. The American Archivist has carried articles relating to the collecting of college, church, and labor union archives. Harvard, which has the oldest and probably the largest university archives collection, has published a pamphlet for the guidance of its faculty, and descriptive articles.

The handling of archival materials presents special problems. The first principle, and one which applies to both governmental and non-governmental records, is to keep the records of a given unit, whether it be a firm, a department or office, or family, together. A companion principle is to preserve, if possible, the order in which the records were originally arranged. Sometimes unbound records, in particular, come to one in such disorder that this is impossible. Then it is best to arrange these materials in that order which seems most suitable to them, whether it be chronological, alphabetical, or other.

In the handling of business records it is usually convenient to develop an order for the arrangement of a series within a collection. This places the minutes of directors (in the case of a corporation) first; followed by records of stockholders; then by the general ac-
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counting series (ledgers, journals, cash books, trial balances, notes payable and receivable, semi-annual accounts, and the like); next come property records, including deeds, inventories, and surveys; then production records, with labor series placed here as well as series relating to amounts produced; followed by sales records; and finally correspondence, miscellaneous unbound records, and diaries or scrapbooks. This order will not fit all collections, but it suggests a logical arrangement.18

It is well to have for each collection, or for each separate unit within a single large collection, a shelflist or summary descriptive card. However, for the large collections it is obvious that complete details cannot be put on cards. Here the inventory or descriptive list in sheet form, such as is used in the National Archives and similar large institutions, becomes invaluable. Each series should be recorded, with enough description so that the user will know what to find therein. It is best to note each volume and its dates within a series, but the total number of volumes and inclusive dates only need be given if a short-cut is desired. This record of the contents of a given collection may then be placed, together with other pertinent materials, in a collection folder. The curator need not despair because he cannot index every name mentioned; although this may still be done in the case of a few rare historical manuscripts, it is impossible for the large modern collection of business records. The curator should, however, be making preparation for the day when he can issue a guide to his collections, and for this he can prepare an index listing the most important names and places.19

One of the characteristics of modern business records noted earlier was their bulk, and the fact that they might be weeded. There are few hard and fast rules to follow here, but a few suggestions may be helpful. Selection may be exercised in the matter of what to take in the first place. In this matter the increasing evidence of regional cooperation has much significance. The custodian may also look for representative examples of particular industries. At least one industry, through the Forest History Foundation, is prepared to place important collections in this field with selected libraries. Even the person responsible for his institution’s archives may, through the records management programs mentioned, insure that only records of permanent value end up as archives. The removal of duplicate material is an obvious procedure. Sometimes it is found that the information in a primary record, such as a waste book or day book, has been copied into a final journal; the earlier record may then be discarded.
Sampling is another possibility, especially adapted to long runs of a routine record, such as payrolls. Microfilm is really rather an expensive way of reducing bulk; it too is especially adapted to long runs of one type of record. Few libraries have found it economical as yet to use film for this purpose. However, if a firm wishes to make a security copy of its records to store at another location, in case of fire or bombing, microfilming is the obvious answer.

The weeding of correspondence files is a difficult process, and unless the series is entirely of a routine nature, it is perhaps best to keep it intact. Or, to look at it another way, the higher the man is in the chain of command, the more reason there is to keep his files intact. It is often difficult to segregate, in a purely business collection, the business material; or in an institutional archives to remove the official records from the private. It is better to err on the side of keeping too much than to find need later for something which has been discarded. Various titles are available on the subject of the legal and governmental requirements for the keeping of business records; but little has so far been done on what records the historian would like to find preserved. Perhaps that is because they have not been able to agree among themselves. The other side of the coin is represented by the question as to whether sufficient, significant records are being created in the first place. Minutes and correspondence have become increasingly stereotyped, and the business man would be doing historians a service, if he had the time, by keeping an office diary or journal. The practice of adding recorded interviews with older persons to the archives of a given organization or area is becoming increasingly common.

The records, once collected and organized, should be made as widely available as possible. Printed guides, or even annual report listings, are ways of making collections known. The proposed National Register of Manuscripts will be valuable, though it is likely that entries for single collections, whether they consist of one or a thousand volumes, may need to be limited to one card. The questionnaire previously mentioned carried some questions on this subject. Some forty-one replies indicated that the persons would be willing to report such collections to a national listing. The individual company may need to place restrictions on the use of certain records, but many have found it advantageous to make their files freely available to the qualified scholar. Anniversaries are not the only times when such records may be of use; however, they do furnish excellent opportunities for exhibits and appropriate publicity. Libraries and historical
societies which have acquired the records of other units should also make them as freely available as possible. Occasionally, especially in the case of records of a company still in existence, the library may have to agree to a restriction of some sort. In the case of deposited materials, some libraries have a useful provision that, if their return is not asked for within a specified time, the materials become the property of the library. This provision is incorporated in a form filled out by the firm, or its successor, at the time of the transfer of a large collection of records.

There remains but to sum up the present state of non-governmental archives in this country. They are still the pressing problem which A. H. Cole, retiring this year as librarian of Baker Library, described in an article written in 1945. However, an attack on the problem is being made on several fronts, as the present paper has tried to point out. In the case of present-day bulky records, it still appears that the individual company must bear the responsibility and cost of preserving its own archives. But even here organizations like the National Records Management Council are ready to help with procedures for the reduction of the cost of the whole records program. In the case of companies going out of existence, the industry (such as the Forest History Foundation) and private collecting institutions should stand ready, on a regional basis, to insure the preservation of historically important materials. The questionnaire, to which several references have been made, provided a place for reference to special problems presented by business records. The most frequently mentioned were their bulk, creating space problems, and a lack of staff to handle them adequately. At least two replies noted that persons trained in accounting or business subjects would be valuable staff members, but with the present state of library financing, it seems unlikely this suggestion will be followed. The low use value of such records was another factor mentioned. However, the very interest in such materials indicated by these replies is an encouraging point. One can be hopeful that, with the cooperation of business itself, and of historians and other users of the records, some way will be found of segregating the valuable materials from the chaff and of making the former more widely available. Much is being done, but much more still needs to be done.
References

Care and Handling of Non-Governmental Archives


Federal Government Archives

WAYNE C. GROVER

Two phases can be distinguished thus far in the history of federal government archives as a centrally controlled aggregation of permanently valuable records. In the first phase, which ended about 1946, the ground work of organization was laid, the over-all record situation of the government was surveyed, the majority of the older records in federal offices in Washington were centralized in the National Archives Building, the first Presidential Library was founded, and experience was acquired in the wholly new field of handling modern archives.

In the second phase the National Archives in Washington, with its single outlying Presidential Library at Hyde Park, New York, has expanded into a comprehensive organization for dealing with all aspects of the records and record problems of the federal government, in the field as well as in Washington, and for the administration of a system of Presidential libraries. In this period too, great progress has been made toward the embodiment of our acquired experience in a solid professional literature.

The first phase of our history began with the approval of the National Archives Act on June 19, 1934, and the appointment some months later of R. D. W. Connor as first archivist of the United States. Connor, as secretary and later member and chairman of the North Carolina Historical Commission, had become thoroughly familiar with the then accepted methods of archival administration and had been a leader in the movement for the National Archives. He promptly recruited a small staff of assistants, trained especially in the field of history, to survey the records of the government, stored in hundreds of offices, cellars, attics, and warehouses in and about Washington, to determine their quantity and nature and to make a rough appraisal of their relative value for permanent preservation. Later with the aid of the WPA, this survey was extended to all offices and establishments of the government in the field.

Mr. Grover is Archivist of the United States.
The transfer of records selected for permanent preservation into the National Archives Building started slowly in 1936 and 1937. Then as the government expanded for defense and for war, and other federal agencies became pressed for space, records were brought in at a rate that taxed our physical ability to handle them and far outran our ability to bring them under full administrative control. But all through the process of organization, survey, and hasty acquisition members of the National Archives staff studied critically the problem of how best to handle large masses of recent archival material and debated with each other on every question of policy and procedure.

As soon as the volume of records in the building warranted it, custodial divisions were set up under the deputy examiners who had surveyed them in the agencies and negotiated for their transfer. At first these divisions had no other responsibility than the physical placement and shelving of the records in the stacks. The functions of disposal, classification, cataloging, and reference service were assigned to separate functional units. But gradually this organization, predominantly functional, gave way to an organization which was predominantly by record aggregates. The wastefulness of having records of a single agency appraised for accessioning purposes by one group of persons (the custodial chiefs, who had initially surveyed them and presumably knew most about them) and for disposal by a different group of special examiners, traversing essentially the same areas of investigation, became apparent, with the result that each special examiner was assigned to work in a custodial division under the direction of its chief. The physical layout of the building, moreover, made central reference service so cumbersome that it had very soon to be modified, step by step—first to allow agencies which had transferred records to go direct to the divisions where they were kept, and later to allow any private researcher to go direct to the division that held the records he was interested in. Gradually the central reference unit narrowed its function to that of serving mainly persons interested in genealogical problems and providing a supervised place where scholars could work at night or on Saturdays with records brought out for them during regular office hours.

After several years of experiment the conclusion was also reached that no uniform scheme of classification or cataloging could be applied with profit to the widely various kinds of material in the different divisions. Finally the idea was dropped, and the custodial divisions were made responsible under a minimum of central direction for preparing such finding aids as would be most useful for the control
of their particular holdings. Broad policies were laid down to govern the general pattern of these finding aids, but wide latitude was left to the divisions to adapt their organization and style to suit the different kinds of records and the often very specialized nature of the reference that was made to them.

All records in the building were assigned according to their latest active provenance to record groups—typically the records of a government bureau, with exceptions to take care of the records of small or short lived agencies that fell outside the typical bureau organization. Two-page registration sheets were issued for each record group defining its scope and briefly outlining its contents.

Beyond the record group registration sheet, the usual next step in description was the inventory—technically referred to as the preliminary inventory—describing in greater detail the records within each record group. A few such inventories were completed and processed during the war. Their unit of description was the series, which might range in size from a thin sheaf of papers or a single volume to a giant alphabetical name file or a classified subject file running to several thousand linear feet. The determining fact about the series (as the term came to be used in the National Archives) was, as a rule, that when it was active in the agency of its last provenance, it should have been regarded and treated as a unit complete in itself, containing records filed together for some administrative purpose. The arrangement of series in an inventory followed the most convenient logical order—usually an order reflecting the organization of the agency but sometimes corresponding rather to its functions.

Government records, as a rule, must be approached for purposes of reference through a knowledge of the historical functions of the government and the agencies that discharged those functions at different times. Agencies are in effect the corporate authors of their records; and their records are usually so intimately related to each other that if removed from their context, their full meaning would be difficult to discover. The records of agencies that dealt with related problems were assembled conveniently under the care of the same division or section, but for any subject approach to them the National Archives relied on the devices of special subject guides and, in a few cases, indexes to the inventories.

In 1940 the National Archives brought out its first over-all printed guide describing in general terms its entire holdings. And a series of special subject guides—usually initiated in response to some specific reference request or recurrent type of request—was instituted. Most
of these special subject guides bearing the generic title of *Reference Information Circulars*, were thin little pamphlets, very limited and general in their identification of pertinent records. A beginning was made in the program of copying on microfilm important series of documents in the National Archives and offering positive prints of them for sale. As the phase drew to a close, work was also started on a larger, more informative guide to all the records in the National Archives.

Toward the end of the war, members of the staff made a limited survey of the records of temporary war agencies and, in cooperation with those agencies developed plans for the orderly disposition of their records. The National Archives took over a large volume but very small proportion of the records that had been created during the emergency and assisted in drafting disposal schedules to cover the vast remainder.

The second phase of our history has brought no basic change in the internal organization of the National Archives. But an act of Congress in 1949 incorporated it with its appurtenant organizations in the newly created General Services Administration, where it was given larger responsibilities and bureau status as the National Archives and Records Service. The function of advising and assisting other agencies in the solution of their record problems, which was greatly expanded, was assigned to a new Division of Records Management, coordinate with the National Archives, the Federal Register Division, and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library. The new division, in collaboration with the National Archives staff and records officers in the agencies, proceeded methodically to get all agencies of the government to bring their records, insofar as practicable, under the control of comprehensive schedules. Such schedules are intended to identify the small portion of records that are worth permanent preservation and to set time limits on the retention of the rest. This task largely completed, the division now is placing greatest emphasis on the enormously complex problem of bringing about greater economy and efficiency in the creation and maintenance of current records throughout the federal government.

A system of regional record centers under staff supervision of the Records Management Division has been established to provide inexpensive space for the storage of semi-active records, most of which are of temporary administrative or legal value only and are eventually destroyed. And in place of the single existing Presidential Library, Congress has, by an act approved August 12, 1955, authorized the
acceptance of all such libraries as may be offered to the government in the future and their establishment as a "part of the national archives system." Thus provision is now complete for a coordinated management of all federal records and for the orderly preservation of all valuable records of the government, in the field as well as in Washington, and also the papers of men whose high office imparts to their archives a quasi-public character.

The Federal Register Division, which had been created as a part of the National Archives Establishment in 1935, has rounded out its registry and editorial functions by taking over from the Department of State the responsibility for publishing the slip laws and Statutes at Large of the United States.

Other activities have been broadened and deepened. In 1950 the National Historical Publications Commission, which had been inactive from the time of its creation by the original National Archives Act, was brought to vigorous life as an agency for stimulating and facilitating the publication of historical documents. An executive director was appointed and now supervises, among other things, the compilation of the indispensable Writings in American History and the preparation of an authoritative guide to all manuscript depositories in the United States. And the very important, scholarly enterprise for the selective publication of the Territorial Papers of the United States has been taken over with its editor, C. E. Carter, from the State Department and is now one of the regular activities of the National Archives.

Finding aids have multiplied in number and improved in quality, and the microfilm publication program has been greatly enlarged and developed. By July 1, 1956, a total of nearly 100 preliminary inventories and 6,400 rolls of microfilm publications (reproducing about 4,750,000 documentary pages) had been issued. Two ambitious subject guides were nearing completion—one, a guide to records in the National Archives relating to Latin America and the other, a guide to materials of interest to genealogists. The second Guide to the Records in the National Archives was completed and published in 1948, and a large two volume handbook entitled Federal Records of World War II, begun in 1946, was published in 1950-1951. A guide to the still picture holdings is now being edited for publication, and a guide to the cartographic records is well under way. A card catalog of motion picture holdings has advanced to about the halfway point and should be completed within two or three more years.

Particular stress has lately been placed on the training of archivists
and the development of professional literature. **Staff Information Papers** on the various techniques employed in the National Archives have been prepared and issued. Most important among these are the following: No. 14, "The Preparation of Preliminary Inventories"; No. 15, "The Control of Records at the Record Group Level"; No. 18, "Principles of Arrangement"; and No. 19, "The Preparation of Records for Publication on Microfilm." Another paper in this series is about to be released on the subject of archival sampling, and yet others are in preparation on the appraisal of fiscal records and the appraisal of motion pictures. A larger pamphlet, in the series of **National Archives Bulletins**, covering the subject of appraisal standards generally, is now in press. T. R. Schellenberg, a long-time staff member and official of the National Archives, has recently completed a full length treatise on the whole broad subject of **Modern Archives: Principles and Techniques** which has been published by the University of Chicago Press. Instructional pamphlets in the field of records management have also begun to appear, including three on correspondence management (entitled *Plain Letters, Guide Letters, and Form Letters*), and others have been planned for issuance in the near future.

In conjunction with the Maryland Hall of Records and the National Archives and Records Service, American University has instituted an intensive course of full college status in archival method—primarily for the training of archives recruits. Summer institutes, also jointly sponsored, have been held for several years, originally dealing only with archives administration, but now including records management.

An archival institution also has a task to perform in public education. From the beginning the National Archives has displayed in its public exhibition hall documents of popular interest. Since December 1952, however, when the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence were transferred to it from the Library of Congress, it has given increasing emphasis to its program of exhibits and to the publication of facsimiles and popular expository pamphlets such as the brochure entitled *Charters of Freedom*. Today the majestic Hall of Archives with its shrine containing the three great charters—the Declaration, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights—and the Circular Gallery, lined with documents relating to every state in the Union, has become one of the great attractions of Washington for tourists and students who visit here.

But the searcher after documentary evidence, in all his myriad forms as scholar, lawyer, government official, genealogist, scientist, and plain John Doe, remains the principal focus of effort. His interest is attested
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in reference service statistics that seem never to level off—some 414,000 in the National Archives alone last year, more than 2,200,000 for record centers, National Archives, and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library combined.

All records in the National Archives that are not restricted by law or executive decision are open for use, not only for scholars in the recognized academic disciplines but for any other person who is able to use them in support of some right or claim or in pursuit of a mere desire for information that cannot be so well satisfied by reference to books in a library. The restrictions that exist are based chiefly on considerations of national security, friendly foreign relations, and respect for the legitimate desire of most citizens and business establishments that the government maintain the privacy of information obtained in confidence which may touch upon their private lives or businesses. But under a provision of the Federal Records Act of 1950 all restrictions on records in the National Archives are automatically voided after fifty years unless they are extended by the Archivist of the United States, and very few restrictions have been so extended.

On the whole, federal government archives are probably more accessible to the public, and are put to more use, than those of any other national government in the world, despite our relative youth as a nation. Other countries, looking back on generation after generation of secrecy in governance as a vested right, may and do at times regard us with dismay. We look upon it as simply another evidence that the government of the United States is the property of the people of the United States.
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EDNA L. JACOBSEN

The problem of collection and care of state and local government archives has long been recognized by historians, who have realized their value for research. But it was not until 1938 that the Society of American Archivists was formed, the first American professional organization whose prime purpose was stated to be to give the subject of preservation and care of public archives, on federal, state and local levels, the attention they deserve. Today even the small public library is aware of the importance of local archives in preserving and writing the history of the community, and local history sections or local history rooms are prominent features of local libraries.

In 1955 the Committee on State Archives of the Society of American Archivists issued a Comparative Study of State and U.S. Territorial Laws Governing Archives, which summarized the situation with regard to depositories of governmental archives. According to that publication, over half of the depositories of state records are state libraries or libraries of state historical societies. It might be supposed that the newer states would have separate depositories, but such seems not to be the case. Idaho, Kansas, Nebraska, Nevada, North and South Dakota, Utah, and Wisconsin are among those in which the state historical society is the depository; in Illinois, Indiana, New York, Oklahoma, and Oregon among others it is the state library. Maryland and Delaware, two of the original thirteen states, have separate archival establishments. Practically all of these library depositories have local records as well as state; and, also, private papers or manuscripts collections. In most cases the governmental archives are received on a voluntary basis, although some states have public records laws—generally permissive rather than compulsory in their provisions.

This quasarchival nature of the library poses a number of problems for the librarian-archivist which do not confront him in his administra-

The author is Associate Librarian (Manuscripts and History), New York State Library.
tion of the private or unofficial manuscript holdings of the library. Two administrative problems seem foremost: one, how should or may collections of government archives be assembled by the library; the other, how may they serve effectively not only historical scholarship, the primary purpose of collections of personal or unofficial manuscripts, but also the business of government. Their processing also has unique features.

It has already been noted that in most instances where a library has become the depository of state archives transferred from the department of issue such transfer is governed by some sort of legislation. But the legislation of necessity varies as the history and development of the political units have varied. The library which is a depository for governmental archives is concerned not only with those types of records which have research value, but to a large extent with those that have been designated for preservation and transfer because of their administrative or legal value.

If the librarian-archivist is so fortunate as to be a member of the board or commission charged with the responsibility of records disposition, he can bring to the discussion his knowledge in the fields of history, political science, and the social sciences, and of research projects in progress, all of which will aid greatly in reaching a sound decision in the matter. This is important; for once the library has received the records, it is held accountable for them and has no authority to liquidate them, yet the sheer bulk of official records requires that they be reduced in quantity as much as possible. Also the librarian's knowledge of records already in his keeping enables him to recognize records under consideration as filling gaps in certain series or as furnishing information long sought by scholars. No doubt all who are charged with governmental archives have experienced the thrill of coming upon an elusive survey book, a missing volume in a series of minute books of a board or commission, or in the case of local archives, a record book showing school district boundaries.

The librarian needs to be familiar with the history of the state government in all its phases in order to be able to exercise sound judgment in building the archival collection. For, as Philip Brooks has so well said, governmental archives consist of "series of records continuously maintained in the offices of origin or transferred to archival agencies without disarrangement so that they will represent accurately the functions of their offices."

In states where the decision to transfer records is voluntary with the departments of issue the librarian must exercise the utmost tact
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and consideration in broaching the subject. He feels a responsibility for the preservation of records of value and therefore for keeping the matter of transfer before the departments. On the other hand, some consideration must be given to the personnel who throughout many years have had charge of the records and have willingly—and in the main efficiently—serviced them both for official business and for research. Staff, space, and equipment problems have been theirs, as they are and will be the library's. But the library, having embarked on a project of building up a governmental archives collection on a state or local level, or a combination of the two, has the problem of keeping alert to the possibility of important accessions, of acquainting department personnel with the willingness of the library to accept them, and of preserving good relations so that the librarian will be apprised whenever disposition of records is being considered.

Margaret Norton, state archivist of Illinois, has defined current and noncurrent records, and has added a third category, semicurrent records. Current records she describes as "those which because of their frequent use in the department of origin must of necessity be kept under its immediate jurisdiction"; semicurrent, "those to which reference by the department of origin is only occasional but over which that department desires to keep immediate jurisdiction"; noncurrent, "those which generally, because of age, tend to be of relatively greater historical than legal interest." ¹

The library depository of archives might therefore be thought to be very little concerned with the administrative and legal aspects of the records transferred. In actual practice, however, this is far from the case. Time and again records which may have been classed as noncurrent at the time of transfer have, in the course of events, assumed a current character and have figured in cases of paramount importance in current governmental affairs. In fact, one of the most challenging phases of reference work in archives is that of producing old records pertinent to present-day affairs with which the state is vitally concerned. The St. Lawrence Seaway project, for example, in which both Canada and New York State are involved, has brought forth a claim by the St. Regis Indians that they own Barnhart's Island in the St. Lawrence, maintaining that the state of New York never paid them the $5,960 they were to receive in compliance with a law of 1856. In one of a series of ledgers transferred to the New York State Library by the Department of Audit and Control, covering that year, is a record of the payment of that obligation. New York State census records, the latest of these for 1925, acquired major
administrative value when the national social security program was inaugurated. Land records transferred to the New York State Library from the Department of State dating back to the early seventeenth century continue to play an important role in state affairs. The colonial patents are still scanned by personnel of the state Departments of Law, Public Works, and Conservation in the settlement of title questions in such current projects as the New York State Thruway and other state highways, and state parks. The federal government, too, has sought such records in connection with its plan to enlarge the West Point Military Reservation. Similar examples can be drawn from other states. The particular point to be stressed is that the library as a depository of government archives performs an important function in connection with the business of government as well as historical scholarship.

The Archivist of the United States in his Third Annual Report wrote that "In determining . . . what records should be preserved, there is no conflict between the interests of government and the interests of private investigators." Many records of little or no apparent historical value must be preserved because of their potential administrative value. Many obviously have both values. Often the former take on considerable interest to the historical scholar. This transition from administrative to historical importance has been noted in the past as the scope of historical research has broadened and social and economic history has achieved an importance equal if not surpassing that of military and political history. One instance can be cited where the papers of a governor were cleared of all that pertained to his land holdings and dealings as being of no importance to the scholar, who, it was thought at the time, would be concerned only with his public life.

Hilary Jenkinson, the eminent English authority on archival work, has said: "Fundamental is the organic unity of the documents, expressing the life of the organization which created them. Archives accumulate naturally in offices for the practical purposes of administration"—they are not collected artificially because it is thought that they will be of use or interest to students. Although they are of immense value for research, nevertheless Jenkinson's description should be kept in mind in processing governmental archives, and respect des fonds must be a guiding principle—for two reasons: (1) they may be needed for "practical purposes of administration," and (2) the organization maintained as the records were being made—the filing system employed, if one may use the term—may prove to
be sound and in the main the best for purposes of research as well. Cooperation with the department in the transfer of archives is essential if respect des fonds is to be possible. Too often records are taken from filing equipment, packed promiscuously in cartons or baskets, and unloaded unceremoniously in even worse disarray. Re-arrangement is a time-consuming task, with much chance for error. The ideal situation is one in which the librarian-archivist confers with the department, and arrangement is made whereby the serial identification is maintained.

The volume of records in any one transfer makes it imperative to employ methods of processing whereby they may in a short space of time be made available for consultation. Descriptive lists, accompanied by histories of departments, bureaus, investigating commissions, etc., can be prepared only after a detailed and scholarly examination, which will as a rule have to be spread over a considerable period of time. Jenkinson has pointed out that "any Archive is potentially related closely to others both inside and outside the group in which it is preserved" and that "its significance depends on these relations." The librarian-archivist must familiarize himself with the contents of the record groups so that he can set forth these relationships in the comprehensive descriptive guides and other reference tools. This is where the special archival knowledge of the librarian comes into service, so that he may bring organic unity into the great masses of records of the various departments of government. A useful single-sheet form of inventory, filed by department, is the following adapted from one employed by the Historical Records Survey in New York State. It provides a quick means of determining whether the various series of department records which have been transferred are of a nature or period to offer possibilities of material pertinent to a research or administrative problem:
1. Department of origin .................................................

2. Series (with variations of title) ..........................................

3. Dates ........................................................................

4. Number and size of volumes, packages, boxes ..................

5. Subtitles, with dates .......................................................

6. Obvious gaps (by number, group, date, etc.) ......................

7. Contents: types of records; summary of forms; arrangement;
   remarks ........................................................................

8. Indexing ........................................................................

9. Recording (handwritten, typescript, photostats, microfilm, etc.)

10. Condition ........................................................................

11. Transfer data ....................................................................

12. Processing ........................................................................
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Some archivists have expressed the opinion that the only step in processing besides the descriptive inventory is indexing, which, they admit, is unpractical under present budgetary conditions. They maintain that such library techniques as cataloging and shelflisting are superfluous, even detrimental, and that library training is an actual handicap to the archivist. They claim that the method of preparing governmental records for use is so different from processing books that the librarian must unlearn all he has been taught. This seems an unsound judgment. Book classification is by subject, whereas archives are classified by agency of origin. However, there seems no valid reason for omitting official archives from a manuscripts catalog; and the more knowledge the librarian-archivist has of library techniques in cataloging books and printed government documents—choice of corporate entries, collations, notes, subject headings, and other details—the more expeditiously and efficiently will a most useful tool for locating available material on a subject be prepared, namely, a good catalog.

It is a safe assumption that no archivist who, it is agreed, is one who combines scholarship with records administration, would advocate not cataloging non-official manuscripts. Surely the catalog should indicate, for example, that material on the Erie Canal is contained in the library's collection of papers of Elkanah Watson. Should it not indicate, also, that the minutes of the Canal Commissioners during the period of its construction are among state archives now deposited in the library? A subject card for the Erie Canal would quickly yield that information. The catalog entries for archives will not take the place of the detailed descriptive list, but they are a convenient additional key to the location of source material in the library's holdings, and without them the catalog would be misleading. A similar case can be made for the shelflist entries. In libraries which have both official and non-official manuscript material, the cards for both types should be filed in one dictionary catalog. One chief difference in the processing is that governmental archives received by transfer are not accessioned as are private manuscripts or archives acquired by purchase or gift. Theoretically the department of issue retains title to the records transferred. Libraries which maintain separate archives departments, such as the Illinois State Library and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, do not have the problem of integrating official archives and personal or private manuscript material in a single series of processing records.

Since the library does not have title to archives transferred to it,
they may be subject to recall—unless some restriction is imposed at the time of transfer. Sometimes only a single item or volume may be requested, and may be returned shortly. As a rule, departments are happy in knowing their records are safely housed and efficiently administered, and ask to take particular documents only if a current administrative problem can best be handled that way. In some instances records have been microfilmed before being transferred; but occasions have been noted when the microfilm is used only as an index, the original records being called for from time to time. Close cooperation between the depository library and government departments is essential in any smooth-working archival program. Confidence in the library's handling of the program and an understanding of department needs and problems are prime requisites—whether it be a state library, a municipal library such as the large Municipal Reference Library in New York City, a county archival library such as that for Montgomery County, New York, or a small village library with only a few local records in its collection.

Someone has said: "Posterity is entitled to a full written report of the past." The establishment of safe depositories for private manuscripts and public documents in the custody of intelligent guardians is important. State and local governmental archives in libraries have historical value in addition to administrative value. They deserve the same professional and scholarly treatment as that accorded important family papers or individual holographic documents. Bulk and less attractive outward appearance, and pressures of other work, are apt to give them low priority; but in such cases the depository is apt to become, as one writer has said, "a warehouse for used paper." Irving P. Schiller continues: "Indeed, it may well be asked what is the point of seeking and preserving policy records, documents that not only have an obvious legal or administrative use, but that have a potential historical significance." This observation, although directed to strictly archival depositories, applies equally to the libraries under discussion here. Rapport with departments of government which results in voluntary transfer of records can be maintained only if it is known that such records are efficiently administered to serve the business of government as the need arises, as well as historical research. C. V. Langlois and Charles Seignobos, in their Introduction of the Study of History, state the case for the historian: "The historian works with documents. Documents are the traces which have been left by the thoughts and actions of men of former times. . . . For want of documents the history of immense periods in the past of humanity is
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destined to remain for ever unknown. For there is no substitute for documents: no documents, no history.” And, one may add, one of the most important types of documents is government archives.

References

4. Ibid.
Films and Sound Recordings

JACK B. SPEAR

Today's historian has a new dimension in which to view people and events in their intermingling in the caldron of history. For centuries past, historians have looked at fragments of source material, or even fragments of fragments, often worn and weathered by centuries of time, and from them reconstructed a historical sequence. In most cases it can be assumed that the early authors who wrote on clay tablets, parchment, and paper, rarely thought they were writing for tomorrow, and consequently, when their era is recreated from their fragments, much guesswork is, of necessity, included. Today man is recorded as he appears, moves about, and even as he talks and sings. His culture is shown through a camera lens that faithfully records anything moving in front of it, and through a microphone that painstakingly holds all sounds within its range and in their correct dimension . . . the dimension that recreates the aura of "You Were There."

Recently the 93rd anniversary of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address was celebrated. From the reconstruction of this event, it is known that the President left Washington, rode a train, delivered his short address, was poorly received by the crowd, and had some pictures taken. Many other bits of information about that day that have come to mean so much to the peoples of the world have been pieced together. Yes, a great deal is known about the actual event, but there is no evidence of how Lincoln sounded as he spoke these compassionate and compelling words. True, accounts were jotted down at the time, others years later by people who were there. Several stirring renditions were recorded rather recently by actors who have given his immortal words new life and meaning. But the fact remains, Lincoln's own voice cannot be heard, and he died less than a century ago.

Contrast this, with the comings and goings of the Chief Executive today, where all his movements and sayings are covered in minute

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Mr. Spear is Head, Traveling Libraries, Library Extension Division, New York State Library.

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detail. The slight pauses in his delivery are noted with great effect by the newsreel and television cameras. The sound equipment faithfully records his words as he delivers them, including his accent, any errors or omissions, and those sparkling bits of dialogue that occasionally appear when a speaker reaches a consonance with the audience and each utterance brings a more complete synchronization of thought.

Yes, the contrast is phenomenal and at the same time almost unbelievable. This elapsed period of time has seen great developments in what is casually called the audio-visual field of factual presentation and with its coming people in libraries, who for so many years have thrashed around with the problems of using, and at the same time preserving, ideas in printed form, suddenly find themselves facing a full-blown technology that has been developing these same ideas in a different way—a way that brings them to life. Librarians must take their methods of presenting and preserving ideas into this relatively new field which moves almost, it seems, with the rapidity of sound itself, and revise their old slogan of "The right book for the right person at the right time," to "The right material..."

From the standpoint of making this material available for future use librarians should take a look at several of the things that are being done and think of each of them as a media of today and the future, and consider the librarian's responsibility for having, keeping, or knowing of these various services in fulfilling the responsibilities of the profession.

The early versions of modern day films were designed to give an audience a short sequence of a familiar scene.

The very first film ever made [1895]—La sortie des usines Lumière, à Lyon-Montplaisir (Workmen leaving the Lumière factory at Lyon-Montplaisir)—was in a way a newsreel subject. It was soon followed by L'arrivée du train en gare de la Ciotat (The arrival of the train at LaCiotat station), La rue de la République à Lyon (The Rue de la République, Lyons) and a number of similar films, never exceeding 65 feet in length.

From here it was only a short step to the filming of topical events as such—official visits, catastrophes, etc., and the film producers were not slow to take it.¹

Pathé and Gaumont, it may be noted, went further than mere everyday street scenes, for their catalogues include such true newsreel subjects as The Czar's Arrival in Paris and the March Past of the Light Cavalry (Pathé), a Fourteenth of July Procession and the Ar-
rival of the President of the Republic at the Enclosure (Grand Prix 1896) (Gaumont).

"Reconstructions" of topical events were much in vogue in the United States. Film makers were frequently compelled by circumstances to use this method. The film camera was not then admitted everywhere as it is today, and especially not in theatres of military operations. This may explain why the American, Amet, had to stage in his bath a re-enactment of the destruction of the Spanish fleet during the Spanish-American War of 1898. The film had a tremendous success and was, it seems, so well made that the Madrid Government was said to have bought a copy to preserve in its military archives. This same Amet again created a sensation by reconstructing on waste ground in Brooklyn realistic battle scenes from the Boer War.2

In the early days of cinema, the news was not presented as it is today—in journal form. Until about 1907, cinema programmes were made up of comics, dramatic or news shorts. To begin with, their maximum length was 65 feet, but this tended gradually to increase. At that time exhibition of films was for the most part in the hands of travelling showmen; films were not returned as they are to-day, but sold by the film agencies directly to exhibitors, who screened the prints until they were worn out.

The birth of the first news films coincided with two revolutionary changes in the industry. One was the change-over from travelling shows to permanent halls, where, since the audience remained largely the same, the programme had to be renewed frequently. The other change-over was that from outright sale to film-renting. This occurred sometime about 1905 in the United States, and about 1907 in France. Also in 1907 Charles Pathé created his Journal. He was followed in 1908 by Leon Gaumont and the Societe Eclair. In 1909 the Pathé Frères went to London and pioneered news reels there with Pathé Gazette.3

In this period the newsreel came into being. A newsreel is a factual information film that depicts actual happenings in which the sequence of events is usually arranged as they transpired, although on occasion the film may remain unedited as source material. Some of the general characteristics of newsreels are:

(a) They appear regularly, at relatively short intervals, being issued monthly, fortnightly, weekly or even bi-weekly, according to the country in which they appear.
(b) Each of these issues includes several topics which are not directly related.
(c) In principle, each of the topics presented relates to current events of general interest at the time of presentation.
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(d) The films are generally of a standard length.
(e) The presentation is straightforward, whereas that of screen magazines and documentaries is interpretative or didactic.4

During World War I the newsreel came into its own. Today in the National Archives rests some of the first official footage taken by the U.S. Signal Corps entitled Army Scenes 1914 and Prior to 1914 and Ohio River Flood, 1915-16.5 In 1918 came a stronger recognition of the value of movie cameras in the military when actual assignment of all photographic and cinematographic work of the War Department was to be done by the Signal Corps except pictures taken from aircraft, which would be performed by the Air Service. This general division of photographic work for the War Department has only recently been changed and only then because of the magnitude of the work involved.

From these early newsreels today's historian can see the somber crowds lining the streets of London at Queen Victoria's funeral in 1901, the exuberant pilot Louis Blériot after the first aeroplane crossing of the English Channel in 1909, the disastrous results of the flood in Paris in 1910, the Kaiser with his Generals during World War I. More recently he can view the pomp and splendor that attended the coronation of King George VI in 1937, the tense foreboding mood that hung over the invasion troops at Normandy Beach Head, and the joyous crowds in New York City when the peace treaty was signed in 1945.

These and many more factual newsreels filmed by commercial and governmental camera men are, for the most part, well preserved as national archives in the countries of their origin and are source material that can be used today by the competent writer. Also copies of many of these historic newsreels are on deposit in the Museum of Modern Art Film Library in New York because they are examples of the early phases of the industry.

What is the future of the newsreel as it is in the theatres today? By today's standards of television news coverage, the distribution of these films to theatres has seemed progressively slower. "Indeed, some maintain that television will cause the disappearance of news films as we know them, that daily visual news television will perhaps oust the bi-weekly news issues, already criticized for slow distribution. There is a real possibility that newsreels, unless they evolve in the direction of screen magazines, will not be able to survive the advent of television."6 With these thoughts in mind are librarians not forced into lines of thought directed at preserving the older newsreels as
such, and keeping their newer counterpart, the television news film, as source material for the future.

The next stage of the film industry was marked by "talkies" which came into being in 1927. With the advent of sound, the movies became more and more of a social force working on the, at that time, ever increasing audiences. The historian cannot overlook the impact of these on our people, but he must exercise caution in choosing from the vast quantity of films produced commercially purely for entertainment and enjoyment. His own evaluative standards must be well defined and he must know of the material that has been written about films before attempting to assess their impact. Librarians anticipated this problem and in 1941 Volume I of *The Film Index* came into being with the following stated purpose: "The Index for the first time makes useful and accessible to the layman the enormous accumulation of information about films housed in the many libraries all over the country...." 7

For the more select films of this period librarians and historians alike turn to the Museum of Modern Art Film Library.

The Film Library, founded as a Museum department in 1935, has formed the most important collection of films in existence, covering the short but extraordinarily rich history of the moving pictures. Its possessions come from all over the world and are in some cases unique surviving examples. Until the Film Library began to collect and preserve them, extremely important films were being destroyed or lost or neglected once their commercial possibilities had been exhausted. And quite apart from the question of preservation, the films were formerly in drastic need of the scholarly attention to content, meaning and chronological system which had long been given the other visual arts. Under expert curatorial supervision the Museum's vast collection of films has been put in order. . . . Today . . . the films—surely the most influential visual medium of communication of our period—may be studied in the Film Library's daily programs and in its archives. The collection now forms a codified body of reference material in which professionals are naturally interested and in which laymen, by the thousands, find pleasure. As humanist documents, as sociology, history, esthetics—the films of the Museum's collection are among its most precious treasures. 8 The historical motion picture library of the Theodore Roosevelt Association in New York City, begun in the 1920's to gather all known motion picture films of Roosevelt, was, perhaps, the first such library in the country.

Only recently have large public libraries started using the documentary, educational or informational film as a material resource in
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their collection. As late as 1953 there were film collections in only 49 of the 107 public libraries that served communities of over 100,000 people in this country. The high unit cost of a film, when compared to that of a book, and lack of experienced personnel to give a film program proper direction, are two factors that militate against a more widespread use. Successful solutions to both of these problems have been worked out in several places. Cooperation through circuits and larger units of service have not only cut down the unit cost of films when measured in amount of use, but have made it possible to attract and train people to properly handle film as another needed material resource for use in an area. Isolated rural areas must depend on the State Library for this type of help.

Where these programs have operated, it may be interesting for the writer of tomorrow to note that they have had very widespread use in the community and perhaps he can document the effectiveness of the dollar spent for films compared to that spent for printed material.

Film selection is a major problem facing any public or university library, or historical society with an active film program.

... there are comparatively few reviews of 16mm films, and often all one can find in print about a film is what is contained in a distributor's announcement, a listing in an audio-visual periodical, or an entry in Educational Film Guide. Since the days when Kurtz Myers was reviewing for the Library Journal, we have not had reviews of 16mm films regularly in a major library periodical. (Editor's note: A.L.A.'s The Booklist began reviewing 16mm films once a month with the issue for January 1, 1956.) There are excellent reviews in Educational Screen, but they are often of classroom films which most public libraries will not be purchasing. Reviews and reports in Film News, Film World and A-V World, and Business Screen should certainly be read. Periodicals in the subject fields should be watched for they sometimes contain film reviews. Educational Film Library Association evaluations should be considered, but remembering the primary interests of the evaluators who in many instances are from classroom centered institutions such as teachers colleges. Cecile Starr writing in the Saturday Review, more than most reviewers, looks at films in terms of the general audience which is the library's public.

This year has seen the establishment of what promises to be the most comprehensive evaluative film selection aid available, entitled Bertha Landers' Film Reviews. Miss Landers of the Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library staff is well-known in the audio-visual field.

... It is highly recommended, even essential, that films be pre-
viewed before they are purchased, rented or borrowed. Previewing outside the library has the added advantage of bringing one in touch with others working with films.

In May of 1948 Allan Nevins of the History Department of Columbia University launched a project aimed at recording interviews of important and illustrious personages of this era. Selected graduate students trained in interview techniques have been carrying on this work and have amassed many lengthy tapes which have been carefully filed away for use by historians.

Some of the memories reach far back—Lawyer Charles C. Burlingham's dimly to the Civil War draft riots; Ella Boole's over the long history of the W.C.T.U.; Henry L. Stimson's over many administrations. Movers and shakers like Herbert Hoover, Henry Wallace, John Foster Dulles and the widow of Fiorello LaGuardia have given their time. Many of those interviewed are less known to the general public but have played important parts, often behind the scenes, in political, economic and social history. In fact, when the students have finished with this material—if they ever do—there will have to be revisions, and additions, in many textbooks.

Since 1951, Lou Blachly, of the Pioneers Foundation, Inc., has been tape recording the reminiscences of the oldest pioneers of New Mexico; the men and women who were part of the life of the frontier. The recordings are preserved at the University of New Mexico.

Phillips Bradley of the Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University has a project underway to tape some interviews with prominent and influential labor leaders of this country. Their personal ideas, as well as their reactions to his well-chosen interview questions will soon be available for some future historian.

Librarians and historians, following the idea of these projects, can perform a most useful function in their localities by recording, or arranging for tape recorded interviews with some of the important local personages, touching on their personal reminiscences of the area, the local catastrophes and problems of the past and their reaction to them, what they remember of the older landmarks that are perhaps now gone, etc. G. I. Will, librarian of the Yonkers, New York, Public Library, has seen the value of taping speeches and important events as they happen in his community and keeping the record for the future.

Many people who could give much factual data on the yesterdays live in rural areas without local public libraries or historical societies.
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In New York State, as in most others, library service is extended to these people through the State Library or its Traveling Libraries or Library Extension Division. Does not the State Agency, then, in the absence of the local agency, have the responsibility of recording these "nuggets" for posterity just as it has of furnishing materials for their alert minds?

Another fascinating phase of recording sound has taken the more recent form of phonograph discs. The beginnings of this are accredited to Thomas Edison, who in 1877 applied for a patent on a "phonograph or speaking machine." The first contrivance cost $18, and consisted of a cylinder covered with tinfoil, turned by a simple hand crank. Ten years later he developed a motor driven version that recorded on a wax cylinder, and finally a disc that reproduced music with a diamond point. From these simple machines have come the complex phonographs of today capable of reproducing several sizes of discs recorded at various speeds.

Many public libraries have collections of symphonic and popular music, folksongs, famous speeches, and plays available to the people in their communities. Another segment of the population, the blind and visually handicapped, enjoy "Talking Books" which have been provided for their use by the Library of Congress and distributed through twenty-eight regional libraries in this country since 1934. These titles generally are not source material, but a few have been recorded by the author himself, and in these cases could be so considered.

Looking to the phonograph disc as source material, the largest and most fruitful collection for the librarian and historian rests in the Archive of American Folksong in the Library of Congress, which drew its inspiration from John Lomax.

He has heard America singing, not in the Metropolitan Opera House, not in her fashionable churches, but out of her heart. John A. Lomax has corralled the cowboy at the round-up, at the bunkhouse, and in saloons. He has combed the penitentiaries, the Mississippi Delta, and the cypress swamps of Louisiana, and in all of these places the people—at times lonely, at times gay—have sung to him.

He has lived with Kentucky mountaineers, Mexican vaqueros, Great Lakes sailors, and these untutored people in singing for him sang for America too. For the Library of Congress has recordings of thousands of songs which, but for his forty years of untiring efforts, might have been lost forever. It was under the spell of his enthusiasm that the Library started its Archive of American Folk Song, and now all of us,
by writing in to the Library, can get records and enjoy the stirring, spontaneous songs Lomax has found.14

Because of the growing popular demand for information about folksongs, the Archive of American Folksong published in 1953 A List of American Folksongs Currently Available on Records,15 which lists recordings and their sources.

No critical evaluation of the recordings has been made, nor is any distinction here noted between recordings made in the field of untrained singers and those made under studio conditions by professional artists. Such distinctions and evaluations are properly the province of the professor and student studying the material.16

Adrienne Claiborne writing on folk recordings for the library noted that:

A library collection of recorded folk music can serve the community in many ways. With the growing interest in this field, a great deal of material is being recorded by companies all over the country, some of it good, some very bad, and much indifferent. The library interested in starting a collection is faced with a bewildering number of unknown labels, singers and song-titles.

. . . Records of authentic folk performers are of primary interest to the musicologist, the historian, and the student. They provide spontaneous performances of songs in action as part of the daily lives of the singers. As historical documents and basic source material, they are unexcelled. However, the uninitiated should be warned that the singing is often wavering and rough, the enunciation sometimes unclear, the recording un-professional.17

Turning a moment to the field of ethnology, the study of the various spoken languages of the American Indians were originally printed in phonetic transcriptions—which to the outsider appear as a completely different written language. Franz Boas, a most distinguished American anthropologist, published the pioneering work in this field in 1911.18 With the coming of recording devices the language could be more easily studied and today, for instance, there exist many collections of tapes of the various Indian languages. Large collections exist at Cornell University, the University of Indiana, Northwestern University, Yale, the New York State Museum, Smithsonian Institution, Columbia University, and the Library of Congress. Listening to these gives the ethnologist the true feeling of the rhythm of a particular language—but only he can understand what is said. To be meaningful to other scholars it still must be placed in a written or printed phonetic transcription.
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A most interesting new bibliographical tool entitled Ethno-Musicology Newsletter has recently made its appearance. This publication contains news of various studies, field recordings in progress, and current bibliography in this field and supplements the continued publications in this general field by the Smithsonian Institution in Washington and the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia.

Another resource for the musicologist, and source of pure enjoyment for the general public, is the large collection of folk music on long playing records made available by the Folkways Record and Service Corporation in New York City. Among their ethnic series are recordings of many of the country's Indian dances and chants that answer well as source material for the writer.

With all of the technological advances in the field of audio-visual materials in the past few decades, it is becoming more and more of a challenge for librarians to acquire an acquaintance with these newer resources, know how they can best be used in their situations, and ever be aware of the calling of the profession and its opportunities for dealing with ideas, regardless of the physical format of those ideas.

In summary, librarians have found help in the guidelines established by the compilers of the new standards for public libraries that point up to them that:

The library in the community collects the materials needed to conduct the individual and group life of its constituency. Further, it organizes and makes available these resources so that they are convenient and easy to use. Still further, it interprets material and guides reading to enable as many people as possible to apply the record of what we know in their daily lives.

References

2. Ibid., p. 10.
3. Ibid., pp. 10-11.
4. Ibid., p. 9.
Library Trends

Forthcoming numbers are as follows:

April, 1957, Rare Book Libraries and Collections. Editor: Howard H. Peckham, Director, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.


October, 1957, Research in Librarianship. Edited by Association of American Library Schools Committee on Research.

January, 1958, Library Cooperation. Editor: Ralph T. Esterquest, Director, Midwest Inter-Library Center.

The numbers of LIBRARY TRENDS issued prior to the present one dealt successively with college and university libraries, special libraries, school libraries, public libraries, libraries of the United States government, cataloging and classification, scientific management in libraries, the availability of library research materials, personnel administration, services to readers, library associations in the United States and British Commonwealth, acquisitions, national libraries, special materials and services, conservation of library materials, state and provincial libraries in the United States and Canada, American books abroad, and mechanization in libraries.