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State and Local History in Libraries

CLYDE C. WALTON
Issue Editor

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The Continuing Significance of Local History

VICTOR HICKEN

IN THE CURRENT pecking order among historians, the top level of prestige is occupied by those who teach African or Asian history, or by those who do serious research in the same fields. Below these are the scholars who give themselves over to the study of various phases of European history. Then follow the Latin-American historians, with American scholars of a national specialization close behind. The next few levels are occupied, in order, by American social and cultural scholars, American economic historians, and American regional specialists. After a considerable interval, finishing a poor last, are those who plow the fields of state and local history. These are the unfortunate individuals who obtain the least prestigious positions, who carry off the fewest and smallest loans and grants, and whose pay increases and promotions come from college administrations mainly as afterthoughts. As it has so aptly been phrased by one writer: "It is perhaps no twisted figure of speech to liken local history to the smallest box in one of those old fashioned nests of boxes that years ago delighted so many children at Christmas. . . ." ¹

The complaints concerning the writing and studying of local history are much easier to define than those pertaining to history written on broader aspects. One noted book on historiography, written by no less than six of America's most prominent scholars, states that local history is too often in the hands of ". . . dedicated amateurs. . ." Furthermore, it continues, the field is too often lacking in fundamental research, it is plagued with a ". . . clumsiness in composition . . .," and it is overcome with too much ". . . parochialism . . ." in its approach. The whole field is then dismissed by the six scholars with the

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claim that it is filled with too many “. . . irrelevancies,” as well as with space which is given over to “. . . local figures in wars. . . .”²

One can scarcely deny that many of these complaints are quite valid, but it must be quickly asserted that the same criticisms are valid and proper when applied to any level of historical research. How often have even the best or most noted historians composed a poorly written paragraph? How many times have some of the most famous historians given themselves over to the study of some phase of history which, in the long run, amounted to only a minor aspect of a larger problem? And one may quickly add that, beginning with Homer, scores of myths have been introduced into the mainstream of history by dedicated professional historians. Did Helen of Troy really exist, and was Achilles really the child of an immortal? Lest one may think that the question is not applicable, it may be pointed out that the myths and irrelevancies created and accepted by professional historians concerning Abraham Lincoln are too numerous to mention.

Nor should the local historian cease his reply at this point. It should be hastily added that one of the six historians who was so critical of local history, Samuel Eliot Morison, later turned his many talents to the writing of local history and produced such books as *The Rope-makers of Plymouth* (1950) and *The Story of Mount Desert Island, Maine* (1960). One may presume that others of the six also dabbled occasionally in the same field.³

Needless to add, the possibilities of counterattack by the local historians are numerous indeed. How many horrible interpretations of history which are too ridiculous and ponderous to refute are made on the grand scale? One needs only to read the critical comments of *The American Historical Review* in order to gain an insight into these errors of fact or fancy. It is a simple truth that the local historian, if he is ever conscious of the pecking order in his field or the criticisms of it, must remember that a study of Hitler's "Beer Hall Putsch" in Munich in the 1920's is nothing more than local history to the German, or that the writer of American social and cultural history is merely placing local events and personalities into a larger pattern.

Without local history—that is, well-researched local history—the larger pattern could never be completed. One must inevitably search for examples of this in the story of Abraham Lincoln, whose life not only represents the great turning point in American history but also the Christ-like theme in the national tradition. Here is the poor boy

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who made good—the Kentucky born, Illinois cultured young man who lifted himself above his class and its prejudices and saved his nation. Countless analyses of Lincoln's character have been made, and there is a seemingly endless supply of biographical material about the "Great Emancipator."

Yet, how much would be known about this great President were it not for a little, almost insignificant, lawyer by the name of William Herndon, Lincoln's law partner from 1844 until the President's death. Herndon, as it has been told by several professional historians, became a self-appointed local historian who literally leaped onto a horse and rode off into all the areas in which Lincoln had traveled. He eventually gathered what is now considered one of the best of all available manuscripts on Lincoln's early life. Did he put the material together well? One can hardly criticize Herndon's style—in fact it is considerably better than many of those who place scorn upon the study of local history. Did the Herndon papers contain a few well contrived myths? Yes, they did, the Ann Rutledge story for example. Yet, for almost ninety years, professional historians eagerly included this romantic tale in their Lincoln biographical studies. Surely Herndon, in the far reaches of eternity, must have immensely enjoyed the sight of so much gullibility among supposedly learned scholars.

Actually, as in the case of Herndon, many of the early, significant American historians were of the local or regional variety. An excellent prototype of these ardent scholars was Hubert Howe Bancroft (to be distinguished from George Bancroft). Bancroft actually was a bookseller by profession, though in 1858 he managed to open his own publishing firm in San Francisco. Slowly, and almost intuitively, he began to gather an important collection of materials relevant to the western half of the United States. After spending some time at this, he began to publish a series of volumes concerning the history of the Pacific coast line. By 1875 he had published the first of an additional set of volumes dealing with the native races of the western states of the nation. Over the next fifteen years, he wrote numerous volumes on Central America, Mexico, Texas, California, Oregon, and other such states and areas. By the time he had finished his writing on the West, he had produced twenty-eight volumes.⁴

There is little doubt about the value of Bancroft's works. Although plodding in style, he was a prolific writer, and he gave posterity a picture of the Great West as he knew it. One may well question whether Frederick Jackson Turner could have written his influential

studies of the American frontier without such sources as those presented by Bancroft. Thus does the local historian achieve a place of immortality.

While Bancroft was gathering material for his studies of the West, other writers, once again of the local or regional variety, were presenting relevant articles on other subjects. One, Richard Frothingham, an eastern lawyer and businessman, applied his apparently limitless energies to a professional study of the Boston phases of the American Revolution. Treating the Battle of Bunker Hill in particular, Frothingham gave that brief but bloody encounter the benefit of his keen, legal eye. He was quick to find numerous and flagrant errors which bloomed free within the mystique which surrounded the battle. When Frothingham finally published his work, he launched the whole study of American history on a road far removed from the filiopietistic writings of previous decades. American historical interpretation was, to say the least, never quite the same.⁵ In fact, even when reading Frothingham's skillfully-handled treatment with the critical, modern eye, one is reminded of that succinct little remark made by Georges Clemenceau concerning Claude Monet. He was not so sure about the eternal verity of Monet's paintings, Clemenceau implied, but "what an eye" the artist had.

Thus did the impact of the study of local history grow in significance. Soon, in the Midwest, there emerged a whole admixture of state and local historical societies. In Wisconsin, in particular, Lyman C. Draper helped to organize an amazingly vital local history movement. Other state and local societies vied to equal the activity and output of this organization. It may be emphasized that much of the work of the newly-born state and local publications was highly professional in quality, and invaluable in terms of long-range effect. John Gilmary Shea, for example, contributed numerous items dealing with the settlement of the Mississippi Valley and with the activity of early French missionaries in the same region. In Illinois, C. W. Alvord and Theodore C. Pease, both nationally recognized scholars, gave their support and time to the production of materials on the history of that state.⁶

Perhaps the most important influence upon the development of local history in the mid-nineteenth century was the Civil War. There are, of course, numerous reasons for this. First, the war was essentially one which brought about the emergence of personality. The American newspaper, being itself a cultural development undergoing transi-

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tion, produced endless columns of information concerning Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, U. S. Grant, John A. Logan, William T. Sherman, and others. All of these luminaries, as they appeared in print, drew an understandable emotional response from the people who knew them best, the folks back home, so to speak. The previously mentioned example of William Herndon, who felt a special kinship to Lincoln, has already been well explained.

After the end of the war, local presses worked overtime to produce little volumes presenting aspects of the lives of these important men. It may be taken for granted, of course, that much of the information included in these biographical treatments was fallacious. But then again, it must also be added that good or bad, the material found a ready market not only with the general public, but with the professional historian as well.

Another important reason for the impact of the war upon local history was rooted in the very system by which the conflict was fought. States were asked to raise volunteer units. The states in turn passed the request for volunteers to either congressional districts, counties, or towns. Companies in each regiment were raised in specific localities and, as they were forwarded to the front, some of them played significant roles in battles of major importance. The same would be applied to regiments themselves. One may be reminded, for instance, of the 55th Illinois Infantry, which was raised in western Illinois, which had a most decisive part in the Battle of Shiloh. No less could be written about the actions of forty or fifty other western regiments in the war.

Invariably, at the end of the conflict, regimental associations were quickly formed in order to keep alive a semblance of the comradeship of the previous four years. In almost every instance, these regimental organizations eventually sponsored the publication of unit histories. Such books, usually put together by a committee of the regiment, were published in great profusion by local presses in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, New York, and Massachusetts. As one would suspect, some were excellently written and became, in time, classics of their type; others were unbelievably bad. In almost every instance, however, there was a liberal recounting of local history—the origins of the men who composed the regiment, life stories of the men who raised the regiment, and a prideful narration of the accomplishments of the regiment.

The total result of the impact of the war was that during the remainder of the nineteenth century there was a veritable deluge of reminiscences. Through state and local societies, these found ready

publishers as well as markets for their dissemination. Men and women who were early pioneers in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana rushed memoirs of their early years into print. Many of the same people coupled the story of these experiences with the events of the war to present individualistic interpretations of nineteenth century America. And, as in the case of the regimental histories, some of these productions were landmarks of their type; others were worthless. One of the former is Leander Stillwell's *The Story of a Common Soldier*. Here is a masterfully-written account of the author's life from childhood on a farm near Carrollton, Illinois, his service in the army, and his return home at the end of the conflict. One would be hard put to find anywhere in print a more vivid description of the emotions and sentiments of the time.⁷

How valuable were these works to later historians? Extremely so! One finds time and again a liberal (and sometimes unannotated) recounting of Stillwell's experiences in the uniform of his country. Bruce Catton and Bell Wiley, as examples, both turned to regimental histories for colorful and vivid descriptions of the conduct of the war.

Around the turn of the century, the various small publishers, plus an occasional large one, turned to the publication of the so-called "mug books." These were county or local histories, ponderous in size and bound in such a way as to last for eternity, and which contained the pictures or "mugs" of locally-prominent citizens. They sold extremely well; in fact, it is not at all difficult to produce large numbers of these in almost every small town in the Midwest. Needless to say, they were very profitable to the publishers, for the drawings of farms and pictures of local citizens inspired a ready sale.

Depending upon the publisher responsible for the volume, these county histories usually followed an almost invariable pattern. The first four or five chapters of each book, no matter which county was under description, related the early history of the nation, the settlement of the state involved, and the climatic and geographic features of the specific region. Then the book got down to the necessary essentials. There were descriptions of each town or hamlet in the county, plus liberal dosages of information about the more substantial people who lived in them. The last was never served raw, or even flavorfully presented. It was almost always on the overdone side, for this was what sold the books.

Despite their faults, these oversize volumes have a continuing value in many ways. Any good small town lawyer should have one, for they

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have a certain handiness in land cases. Nor should the high school instructor be unaware of their existence. Not only do they prove interesting reading for social science or English classes, but they often prove important in understanding the true physical and social structure of each town. Lastly, the historian of all levels may find them of occasional use; for not only do they give a real insight into the times in which they were published, but they contain valuable references to climatic or geographic conditions of the same period.

Accepting the value of all such publications, one may well wonder about the sources for descriptive material on the mid-twentieth century. Radio and television have blunted the publication of much possibly valuable material about the last two world wars. Small town publishers no longer turn their talents to contemporary reminiscence. Who, for example, has written or published a volume on the rise and fall of the coal mining industry in Illinois? Who has an "eyewitness" account of such events as the "Herrin Massacre" in Illinois, or of what it was like to live in a small midwestern town during the Great Depression? It is fortunately true that some libraries, the Illinois Historical Library for example, have begun the collection of some of these materials, particularly of World War II personal correspondence.

In fact, for the present, local history has been shoved into the background. This is not the wish of the numerous and vigorous local historical societies, it is the result of school policy on the study of history in general. The ordinary small-town midwestern high school still clings to an outmoded and unpalatable course of study called social studies in which even national history is mixed with other subjects, such as economics and government. If local history is taught at all, it is because of the initiative of the individual teacher. Frequently, however, the teaching assignment is given to men and women who have little knowledge of state or local history and who, therefore, cannot supplement the prescribed social studies courses without extensive research during their off-duty hours. Too often, even if the inclination to pursue local history exists, the teacher is inadequately prepared to undertake the search.

But the blame does not rest entirely upon the high schools. The colleges must also bear their share. And this leads back to the discussion of the pecking order of historical research. A few years ago this writer, while doing a small article on the general area of local history, conducted a survey among the colleges and universities of Illinois relative to the teaching of local history. The results were both

surprising and revealing. In the publicly supported institutions such as the University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University, state and local history are given what may be considered adequate emphasis. In the smaller liberal arts colleges, however, the courses had all but disappeared. One liberal arts college responded that the courses had been dropped because of insufficient demand, a poor excuse because a month later a state college local history course in the same area drew an amazing number of students. Not only did some sixty students enroll in that particular class, but the same people have since organized an exceedingly prosperous and vital local history society.⁸

It is entirely possible that many privately supported liberal arts colleges are making a serious mistake in treating the study of local history in such an offhand manner. In the case of the example cited above, the college very likely lost a rather substantial bequest which may have fallen in its direction had the college acted differently. Instead, the local history enthusiast willed his donation to a nearby town.

Monetary considerations aside, however, there are a multitude of reasons why local history should reach a higher status among the history faculties of colleges and universities. For example, the historian must admit to the possibilities for training which lie in the writing of local history books. As has been pointed out, Samuel Eliot Morison was given a good start to fame and, one may add, fortune, with his various studies of local history. Allan Nevins was another who launched his career in the field of history with such research, in his case a history of the University of Illinois. Paul Angle, the Lincoln historian, has written a good deal of what would be considered local history; and Benjamin Thomas, writing within the Lincoln context, produced an excellent little volume upon the early Illinois town of New Salem. Others, also of national importance, have either obtained their start by writing local history, or by examining it later in their careers.⁹

Bringing the problem of local history down to the simpler approaches, one inevitably reaches a conclusion that the subject allows for a good deal of down-to-earth understanding of the broader phases of national history. Down the street from any high school is part of the history of the nation. It may be in the form of an old house, a remnant of the Underground Railroad. The very road which passes by an eighth grade classroom may have been the pathway for pioneers moving westward. An abandoned local cemetery may tell the

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story of cholera epidemics of the nineteenth century, or of immigration patterns of the past. A nearby street may tell the tale of Victorian fads and fashions through its architecture—the gingerbreading on the front porch roof, or the Turkish “minaret” tower which anchors one corner of a building.

But local history should be far more encompassing than this. One may need to be reminded that local mannerisms, modes and manners of speech, and traditions are all part of the larger pattern. This writer is aware of one small town which rests squarely upon the joining point of the southern and northern cultures which settled the area over one hundred years ago. South of the city one finds distinct tonal inflections which had their roots in Kentucky and Tennessee. The word “tired,” for example, emerges as “tord”; the words “fire” and “for” are pronounced exactly alike; and the use of “tote” for “carry” is not uncommon. North of the same town, habits, customs, and, indeed, the general outlook of the population are entirely different.

Knowing that such differences may exist in a community is half the victory in achieving an understanding of local history. This is particularly true in view of the fact that, through television and radio, speech patterns and traditions are gradually conforming to a national pattern. The network announcer from New York City speaks with the same inflections and uses the same pronunciations as the newscaster from New Orleans. Eventually the regional differences will disappear, just as they have already disappeared in certain sections of the country. The high school instructor or the college professor who manages to tape-record what is left of these differences may well be thankful in years to come. And furthermore, allowing students of history actually to listen to such dialects may create an understanding of their culture and their past which could not have been achieved any other way.

Thus it must be that the local historian not only has the responsibility to investigate phases of the broad pattern of the past, but to detail and to understand the slow unfolding of the present. This responsibility goes far beyond tape recording voices and events of the present, of course. The local historian who writes of the complicated agricultural problems of today serves well the national historian of tomorrow. Will the future really understand the reasons why farm populations show a steady and unchanging decline? Will the economic historian of the future emotionally comprehend the impact of the American agricultural revolution upon American foreign policy? Per-

haps not—that is, unless the local historian does his work now, and does it well.

One does not have to search hard to find other directions in which the local historian of the present should move. What are the other major problems of the day? Naturally one is the great Negro revolution of the 1960's. When one attempts to comprehend the role of the local historian here, the result is almost staggering. The researcher who enters into the task of compiling biographical material about Martin Luther King or other influential Negro leaders is serving both local and national history. The local historian who attempts to describe the emotional impact of the Birmingham, Alabama, transportation boycott will most certainly be looked upon as a valuable source a century from now. There is, as one may quickly perceive, a kind of immortality awaiting the young and able historian who wishes to tackle these great issues.

It is easy to see here that one may leave himself open to much criticism by attempting to define the limits of local history. The examples already given quickly prove the point, for most certainly there are those who will say that Martin Luther King, because of his association with the Negro revolution, and William Herndon, because of his association with Abraham Lincoln, are part of the mainstream of national history. Therefore, they will continue, the local historian should turn his talents elsewhere, leaving these figures for those who research the broader aspects of American history. There are others who would imply that the local historian who does a piece upon the Swedish settlement in Minnesota, or the German immigration into Kansas, is violating some sort of unstaked boundary marker constructed by the regional historian.

It goes without saying, almost, that this is all rubbish. Local history does not include all of those aspects of history considered to be worthless by others. When a person originally of purely local significance attains something of a national eminence, this does not mean that he graduates from the realm of the local historian to that of the national or regional researcher. Dred Scott ended his days as a porter in a St. Louis hotel. Does that mean that the local historian should devote himself only to that phase of Scott's life, and not to his role in the emergence of the slave issue? The answer in every case would be negative.

In fact local history is so significant and so vastly important that almost every literate American must give something of himself to

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its study. When one speaks of the national heritage, he is not using empty or meaningless words, for it is part of the duty of every American to pass it on to future generations. The local historian, wherever he may be—in Texas, California, or New York—must continue to promote the local historical societies to which he may belong. Local and university libraries must continue their efforts to preserve the documents and records of the present so that historians may continue to understand the pattern of history. The same institutions—the libraries, that is—must even go beyond that traditional task by actually promoting the understanding of local history. Book displays, as well as collections of historical materials, serve to accomplish this task. After all, who knows but what a future Allan Nevins or Henry Steele Commager may be the end product of this kind of effort.

There is no real hard core to an appreciation or understanding of local history. One cannot assert with authority, as a dentist may in respect to dental school, that to know local history is to open some door to economic success. There is, however, a little of something for everyone in local history, whether he is actually a dentist, or an antiquarian, or just a good citizen. If one is to say that the past is deadly, and that the study of American history is worthless, then he implies, in effect, that the American dream is without validity. If that is so, then all we have ever done, or all that we shall ever do, may be without meaning.

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tablished in the newer territories and states, sometimes before there was any substantial body of history to record. In such surroundings, support had to come from the state, if at all. The practice of consistent legislative appropriation for historical societies, first developed in Wisconsin during the second half of the nineteenth century, soon became general throughout the Middle and Far West. As Massachusetts is the prototype of the earlier privately supported historical society, so the State Historical Society of Wisconsin may be considered that of the publicly supported one. Notwithstanding this century-old tradition of legislative support in at least two-thirds of the states, many state historical societies along the Atlantic seaboard still operate entirely upon private funds, as does the California Historical Society in San Francisco. Also, in certain large and prosperous inland cities, like Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Louisville, and St. Louis, privately supported historical societies maintain libraires that are of more than local interest.

Since the autumn of 1959, when I began for the Council of Library Resources, Inc., the investigation that led to the publication last year of *Independent Historical Societies: An Enquiry Into Their Research and Publication Functions and Their Financial Future*,¹ I have visited such organizations in many parts of the country. They are as varied as they are numerous, ranging from groups without possessions and premises, that simply meet for the reading of papers and the interchange of ideas, to institutions with extraordinary books and manuscripts that are made available to scholars in well organized libraries. No two are exactly alike, or ever will be. There is no common measuring stick by which one can rationally compare them, for their resources in books, manuscripts, funds, and scholarly effort vary according to the age, economic prosperity, and intellectual tradition of the region.

Leaving aside all questions of personal effort and inclination, the field of local history is wider and more varied in New England than farther west, in Virginia than in California, simply because it covers a longer period of settlement; it is more complex in heavily settled than in sparsely settled areas. Thus, the Essex Institute in Salem, although concerned with only a single Massachusetts county, has collections, endowment, and a century-long record of continuous scholarly publication, that considerably surpass those of many state historical societies. But in regions of all ages, the health and prosperity of such organizations has always depended upon a small number of devoted individuals whose efforts have been concentrated upon col-

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lecting, preserving, studying, and publishing the sources for the history of the scene in which they live. In the first half of the nineteenth century, people of this kind, unaided by other than private funds, were responsible for nearly everything that was accomplished in American history. In the last hundred years colleges and universities, public and private libraries, federal and state governments, and historical museums and restorations have entered the field of American history with vastly greater resources. These newer allies have not, however, supplanted the older historical societies. This is largely because the privately supported societies collected broadly and aggressively in an earlier period of little competition; most of them have retained their early acquisitions, and many of them have consistently continued to collect.

For accounts of most of the privately supported state historical societies and a selected group of more local institutions, I refer the reader to my *Independent Historical Societies*. There is an immense number of historical societies throughout the country. Some are extremely valuable; others all but worthless. Of the two thousand listed in the 1961 edition of the American Association for State and Local History's *Directory of Historical Societies and Agencies*, only a little over a third report the ownership of libraries. Many of these "libraries" would prove to be a few shelves of miscellaneous books that might include somebody's set of the Waverley novels. Others contain valuable local imprints that have never reached the catalogs of larger institutions. Only a very small number of privately supported local historical societies have the means to permit the employment of a full-time professional staff. Many local organizations which preserve books and manuscripts from destruction are able to do little to make them available to those who might need them. There are, however, a few dozen societies whose libraries and publications are of paramount importance to the American historian. It is of this small group that I shall attempt to speak in general terms, and to comment upon a few of their significant achievements in recent years.

The chief difference between the privately and publicly supported historical societies is that while both strive to serve the scholar, the latter group also attempts, through museum displays and other devices for popularization, to bring history to a wider audience. In the privately supported societies, where less is attempted in popularization, the library is frequently the paramount objective. Only the New-York Historical Society, the New York State Historical Association,

and the Chicago Historical Society maintain extensive museums that are adequately and professionally staffed. It should be noted that these are the only three private societies in the country with an annual income in excess of \$150,000. When collecting figures for my study in 1959-1960, I found only half a dozen other institutions—Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Connecticut, the Missouri Historical Society in St. Louis, and the American Antiquarian Society—with incomes in excess of \$100,000 a year. At the other extreme, thanks to able and devoted people who do not reckon their time at commercial rates, the Georgia Historical Society's accomplishments are amazing on an annual budget of less than \$8,000.

The larger private societies rely heavily upon the income from endowment, much of which they have acquired within the twentieth century, generally from a relatively small number of sizable gifts and bequests. The Massachusetts Historical Society and the American Antiquarian Society still maintain their original concept of a limited semi-honorary membership, without dues. Their members, however, who include not only practicing scholars but interested friends and well-wishers of history, are expected to contribute either work, books and manuscripts, or money, and generally do, in generous fashion. Otherwise membership is generally open to any interested person, although numbers of members do not necessarily bring financial stability. I have the impression that increased membership usually becomes an appreciable monetary asset only in organizations that, like the California Historical Society and the New England Historic Genealogical Society, have minimum annual dues of \$15.00.

With their meager incomes, privately supported societies have generally concentrated and narrowed their fields of interest in the attempt to build upon obvious strengths. In the nineteenth century everything seemed grist for their mills; in the twentieth most of them have become increasingly selective in order to make the best use of their resources. When the late Clarence S. Brigham became librarian of the American Antiquarian Society in 1908, he found a library of about 99,000 volumes containing important collections of early American newspapers and imprints, obtained largely by its founder, Isaiah Thomas, and by Christopher Columbus Baldwin, its librarian from 1832 to 1835. But aside from these valuable early imprints, a great part of the library consisted of miscellaneous books, many of which were in foreign languages or on subjects with no bearing on American history. The building was crowded by equally irrele-

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vant archaeological and ethnological collections, to say nothing of a substantial quota of idle curiosities.

Brigham introduced a rigorous delimitation of fields and had the grandmother of all house cleanings. By concentrating on the collection of every possible early American imprint, and of newspapers, almanacs, genealogy, and American local history, he achieved a collection of national usefulness within a limited field. Today the library contains some 600,000 titles, plus an additional 500,000 manuscripts, maps, broadsides, and prints. The funds at Clarence Brigham's disposal were always infinitesimal in comparison with those available to many other librarians. But by recognizing the importance of certain types of material well in advance of general trends in collecting, by attracting the interest of private collectors who soon became close personal friends and warm supporters of the society, he made what he had go a very long way. Collecting and bibliographical investigation were interwoven in his activities. Thus he not only built in the American Antiquarian Society the largest collection of American newspapers before 1820 in the United States, but also wrote the two volume *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers: 1690-1820*, published by the Society in 1947. Similarly his definitive *Paul Revere's Engravings* that appeared in 1954 was based upon decades of collecting Revere's work for the Society.

Lyman H. Butterfield began an address before the 1960 annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists with a pertinent observation:

The two-legged pack rat has been a common species in Boston and its neighborhood since the seventeenth century. Thanks to his activity the archival and manuscript resources concentrated in the Boston area, if we extend it slightly north to include Salem and slightly west to include Worcester, are so rich and diverse as to be *almost* beyond the dreams of avarice. Not quite, of course, because Boston institutions and the super-pack rats who direct them are still eager to add to their resources of this kind, and constantly do.²

Clarence S. Brigham was definitely of this breed. His successor, Clifford K. Shipton, justly wrote of him:

Considering how much he achieved with the funds available to him, Clarence Brigham was certainly the greatest collector in his generation. His genius in selecting fields which were to become popular for collectors was amazing. No historian himself, he recognized

fields of potential source material before most of the professionals, and was the first to collect them. I have often seen him in a state of exasperation at a visiting professor who had to have his nose rubbed in a kind of source material which he was determined to ignore because his predecessors had not used it. Certainly no librarian in Brig's generation was a better and more willing guide and counselor to anyone engaged in research.³

The New-York Historical Society, which today has a library of half a million books, 18,000 broadsides, 3,000 manuscript and printed maps, 1,200 atlases, 35,000 prints, 150,000 photographs, and 750,000 manuscripts, originally defined its fields as ". . . the natural, civil, literary, and ecclesiastical history of the United States in general and of this State in particular."⁴ In 1804, when Lewis and Clark had not yet crossed the continent and when libraries and learned institutions were few in number even in the most settled parts of the country, this was a reasonable aspiration. Although the passage of time constantly reduced the practicability of this original purpose, the collections continued to be assembled on so broad a basis that it was not always clear whether the society's objective was state or national history. In 1956, on the recommendations of Lawrence C. Wroth, the Society adopted a more restricted acquisition policy based on the view that it was fundamentally a state historical society located in New York, but that its strong collections of various special fields of United States history other than New York would be recognized by continuing acquisitions in those fields, within certain limits. Similarly the Massachusetts Historical Society has recently undertaken a drastic weeding of its printed holdings in order to concentrate on materials printed in Massachusetts through 1825, early items relating to Massachusetts printed elsewhere, and the important basic materials on Massachusetts and New England history after 1825.

While no privately supported historical society can today buy widely and competitively in the open market against all comers, some of them still make frequent major additions to their holdings. Stephen T. Riley, who is the present director of the Massachusetts Historical Society, another super-pack rat, increases his manuscript collection as dramatically and as economically as Clarence S. Brigham did the early American imprints and newspapers of the American Antiquarian Society. Having inherited a great collection, begun in Washington's presidency, Stephen Riley constantly adds papers of equal quality. In the spring of 1956, to have received simultaneous gifts of the papers

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of Paul Revere and of four generations of the Adams family is evidence of the continuing vitality of his collecting. In similar fashion the important manuscript collection of the Virginia Historical Society has twice in recent years been enriched by major additions of Lee papers, for John M. Jennings has a magnetic attraction for manuscripts that resembles Stephen Riley's.

The Massachusetts Historical Society occupies a building constructed for it in 1899. The New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Chicago societies similarly have buildings designed for them in the present century. Adapted houses or historic buildings, with additions, accommodate the Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Columbia (District of Columbia), South Carolina, and California societies, the Filson Club in Louisville, and the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland. The Cincinnati Historical Society (formerly the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio), after lodging with the University of Cincinnati Library for some decades, is about to move to a new wing of the Cincinnati Art Museum. Most of these societies are chronically crowded and driven to improvisation. Only the Virginia Historical Society, which in 1959, with the aid of the Old Dominion Foundation and local friends, added a library wing to Battle Abbey in Richmond, has thoroughly convenient quarters with ample elbow room and the enchanting vision of vacant shelves in its stacks.

As a rule, help is scarce. Few of these libraries would claim that they have all their possessions under satisfactory control by orthodox library methods, but as they are generally staffed by people, however few in number, who have a keen interest in the history of their region, they are usually able to be extremely helpful to the scholar who knows what he wants. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania and the New Jersey Historical Society have published useful guides to their manuscript collections. Until time can be found for the preparation of similar guides to other libraries, the National Historical Publications Commission's, *A Guide to Archives and Manuscripts in the United States* is the principal key to the holdings of privately supported historical societies. Some reporting has been done to the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections, but far more awaits the acquisition of additional hands.

In addition to maintaining their libraries, many of the older privately supported historical societies have published great numbers of the documents in their possession and studies of the history of their

regions. In the nineteenth century, publication generally took the form of volumes appearing at irregular intervals. The Massachusetts Historical Society has printed seventy-four volumes of its *Proceedings* from 1791 to 1962, seventy-nine volumes of *Collections*, as well as close to a hundred titles outside these numbered series. The pattern of *Proceedings* and *Collections* was generally followed in the nineteenth century, but since 1877 when the Historical Society of Pennsylvania inaugurated *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* the alternative, or the supplement, of a quarterly has been widely emulated. The Virginia Historical Society began the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* in 1893. At the turn of the century the South Carolina Historical Society began publishing a quarterly, and in 1906 the Maryland Historical Society established the *Maryland Historical Magazine*. From the decade of 1910-1920 date the *Georgia Historical Quarterly* and the *New-York Historical Society Quarterly*; from the 1920's the *New York History* of the New York State Historical Association and the *California Historical Society Quarterly*; and from 1946 *Delaware History*.

In an effort to make rare sources more easily available to scholars, the Massachusetts Historical Society issued two series of Photostat Americana. In the first of these, edited by Worthington C. Ford in the decade immediately following World War I, were 261 titles of carefully chosen imprints, ranging from the discovery of America to the close of the Revolution, reproduced for eleven subscribing libraries. The second series of 169 numbers brought the total of titles reproduced to 430. Between 1915 and 1933 the Society similarly reproduced, in somewhat larger quantities, five colonial newspapers, *The Georgia Gazette*, 1763-73, *The Domestic Intelligence*, 1679-80, *The Boston News-Letter*, 1704-76, *The New-England Courant*, 1721-26, and, in collaboration with the Virginia Historical Society, *The Virginia Gazette*, 1736-80. In addition, photostats were produced of George Washington's Ledger A, from the original in the Library of Congress, of the records of the West Parish of Barnstable, Massachusetts, of Pierre d'Ailly's *Imago Mundi* with annotations by Christopher Columbus, and, in collaboration with the Rhode Island Historical Society, of the letters and papers of Roger Williams, 1629-82.

With the coming of World War II large-scale photostatic undertakings became impossible; by the end of the war it was clear that microphotography offered a more economical and manageable solution for the dissemination of historical sources. Thus the Historical

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Society of Pennsylvania has prepared and offered for sale some 130 reels of microfilm of eighteenth century Pennsylvania newspapers as well as the *New-York Journal*, 1766-76. The most comprehensive contribution of this nature by a privately supported historical society is the American Antiquarian Society's *Early American Imprints, 1639-1800*, edited by Clifford K. Shipton, which is a microprint edition of every extant book, pamphlet, and broadside printed in what is now the United States from 1639 to the end of the year 1800. Keyed to Charles Evans's *American Bibliography*, it not only reprints in full the texts of more than 30,000 titles, but includes all of Dr. Shipton's very substantial revisions of Charles Evans's pioneering effort. The work, which is sponsored by the Committee on Documentary Reproduction of the American Historical Association, is published by the American Antiquarian Society by the Readex Microprint process, which offered an edition savings superior to any of the other micro-reproduction processes. Its cards are issued in boxes of a size and shape to facilitate shelving like books. The subscription price of \$8,000 begins to seem reasonable when one remembers that *Early American Imprints* furnishes usable reproductions of works seldom if ever to be readily found in the book trade, at a cost of scarcely more than twenty-five cents each.

The Massachusetts Historical Society has recently used microfilm as the means of disseminating two of its major manuscript collections. The papers of President John Adams, his son President John Quincy Adams, his grandson Charles Francis Adams, together with those of their wives and children, were deposited in the Society in 1905, and in 1956, on the termination of a family trust, made an outright gift. The Society reproduced these on 608 reels of 35 mm film, offering sets of positive film for sale at an advance subscription price of \$3,000. Forty-five sets (including those required for copyright purposes) were produced. The \$120,000 from subscriptions made the project self-liquidating so far as materials and photographic expenses were concerned; it did not, however, reimburse the Society for the considerable amount of time spent by its staff in arranging the papers for filming. On completion of the project, the subscription price was raised to \$4,500 per set. The papers of General Henry Knox (1750-1806), deposited in the Massachusetts Historical Society by the New England Historic Genealogical Society, have similarly been micro-filmed in fifty-five reels. These are offered for sale, with an index volume, at \$375 a set.

In 1954, while the microfilming of the Adams papers was still in its early stages, the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press offered to print and publish, at its expense, a selective edition of some one hundred volumes of the Adams papers, provided the Society would undertake the editing. Such a task would have been beyond the normal current resources of the Society, but through the interest of Roy E. Larsen, who was both president of Time, Inc., and chairman of the visiting committee of the Harvard University Press, a solution was found. Time, Inc., agreed to give \$250,000 to the Massachusetts Historical Society, payable over a ten-year period, in return for the advance serialization rights for *Life* magazine of the Adams volumes that were to be published by the Belknap Press. The Society was thus able to persuade Dr. Lyman H. Butterfield to join its staff as editor in chief of the Adams papers. The six volumes that have appeared under his editorship have been received with national acclaim. Seven others are in press at the moment of writing, but as the project will extend many years beyond the expiration of the initial Time, Inc., grant, permanent financing of the editorial work is now being sought with the aid of the National Historical Publications Commission. An evidence of the wide interest in the undertaking is the agreement by Atheneum Publishers, to reprint in high-grade paperbacks, after the passage of a set time, all the volumes of the Adams papers published by the Belknap Press.

Another major editorial project in which a privately supported historical society actively participates is *The Papers of James Madison*, jointly sponsored by the University of Chicago and the University of Virginia, of which three volumes have thus far appeared. Coeditor of the Madison papers is William M. E. Rachal, editor of the *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, who carries out his part of the Madison enterprise in the library of the Virginia Historical Society.

On another floor of the Virginia Historical Society, William J. Barrow maintains the laboratory, supported by a grant from the Council on Library Resources, Inc., in which he investigates, for the benefit of librarians and readers everywhere, the durability of book papers and bindings. With an array of ovens, iceboxes, and ingenious machines, he simulates in a few hours conditions that normally would require decades or centuries of use, proposes cures, tests his hypotheses, and then makes his findings widely available. Thus a society founded for the preservation of the local past has a share in projects

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that are of universal future significance for the preservation of general knowledge.

In a recent report of the American Antiquarian Society, Clifford K. Shipton tells how

. . . a member of the Supreme Court of Tasmania walked in to ask me to explain a rumor heard on the other side of the world to the effect that in the eastern part of the United States, librarians "like little birds in their nests agree" instead of crouching, vulture-like, waiting for the death of prospective donors, to drop on their collections and rend them with bloody talons into unrecognizable fragments, to be carried back to their own particular nests. I told the Judge that, if only to avoid indigestion, we librarians had formed the habit of cooperating, in order to centralize research collections in the institutions where they would be most useful.⁵

An outstanding example of such cooperation is the statesmanlike and imaginative manner in which the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and the Library Company of Philadelphia are at this moment moving forward with plans that will advance historical scholarship.

The library, which is the pre-eminent function of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, contains something over half a million books, pamphlets, newspapers, and broadsides, as well as a great manuscript collection. When the second edition of the *Guide to the Manuscript Collections of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania* appeared in 1949, it stated that ". . . some 4,000,000 items are to be found in 1,609 collections . . ." and that ". . . whereas in 1940 only 30% of the manuscripts were arranged for ready use by students, . . ." in 1949, 98 per cent were in that order.⁶ While the collection deals primarily with Philadelphia and with Pennsylvania, nevertheless, because of Pennsylvania's importance to the United States, there is much that is of national interest. The library is adequately housed in a fireproof building at 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, which was completed in 1910.

The Library Company of Philadelphia, founded in 1731 by a group of merchants, tradesmen, and artisans that included Benjamin Franklin, soon became a significant part of the city's intellectual resources. As Edwin Wolf, 2nd, its present librarian, has observed:

The collection of the Library Company reflects a unique picture of American life. Franklin's first electrical experiments, which were performed in its rooms, are recalled in its rich collection of scientific

books. Its fascinating old works on natural history came over from England in the same boxes with seeds for James Logan and John Bartram. Logan's brother and two of his grandchildren, and Benjamin Rush and his son James were physicians. Their interests remain on our shelves in a remarkable group of medical books. The Company's members were active in politics and its rooms on the second-floor of Carpenters' Hall were open to the members of the Continental Congress which had met downstairs. Impressive rows of political pamphlets and broadsides issued from the time of the Stamp Act to the establishment of the Constitution survive from those days. . . . Here then are the records, the raw material of history.⁷

In 1851 when Charles Coffin Jewett published the first survey of American libraries, the Library Company of Philadelphia ranked with Harvard, Yale, the Boston Athenaeum, and the Library of Congress, as the only five in the United States containing more than fifty thousand volumes. Although its usefulness to the city continued undiminished for several decades thereafter, the Library Company took an unfortunate step in the late seventies. It abandoned its building on 5th Street near Independence Hall and accepted instead a great new neoclassical structure at Broad and Christian streets, provided under the will of Dr. James Rush, and named the Ridgway Building in grateful acknowledgment that Dr. Rush's fortune had come from his father-in-law, Jacob Ridgway. At the time this seemed an admirable move, but it proved to be exactly the opposite. The new location was always remote, so remote in fact that it became necessary to build a supplementary library for current reading at Locust and Juniper streets. With the establishment of the Free Library in 1894, the unique usefulness of the Library Company to citizens of Philadelphia was diminished. The neighborhood of the Ridgway Building deteriorated. Its approaches and surroundings became grubbier by the year; its rich treasures were gradually forgotten by all but a handful of scholars. The depression of the early 1930's diminished the Library Company's income to a point that in 1940 required the abandonment and demolition of the Locust Street library and the consolidation of all the books in the Ridgway Building. The site of the Locust Street library became a parking lot. From 1943 to 1955 the Free Library of Philadelphia served as the corporate librarian of the Company, responsible for the administration of the library in return for a fee.

This interim time-marking counsel of desperation, which amounted to making the Ridgway Building a branch public library in a par-

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ticularly sordid slum, was hardly the ideal means of caring for the great scholarly resources of the Library Company. It ended after a surprising and wholly delightful improvement in the Library Company's fortunes from a most unlikely source. In 1952, by building a four-story parking garage on the site of the former Locust Street branch, the income of the Library Company improved to a state where its directors were once more able to make their own plans for the future, with an assurance of being able to carry them out. Edwin Wolf, 2nd, formerly with the rare-book firm of Rosenbach, was engaged as librarian, with the mission of retrieving the early treasures of the library from the Augean stable that the Ridgway stacks had become. By 1959 when Mr. Wolf had discovered, recataloged, reshelved, and rehabilitated some 50,000 rare books and pamphlets, it became clear that the Ridgway Building was a totally unsuitable home for the revived research institution that he was creating out of the shambles. While this work of revivification had no official connection with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, it should be noted that Nicholas B. Wainwright, head of the research department at the Society, was also president of the Library Company of Philadelphia, and that he and Mr. Wolf were like-minded and energetic scholars who instinctively moved in step. So it came about that, with the hearty concurrence of a group of non-Philadelphian librarians and scholars, the Library Company in 1960 determined to abandon the Ridgway Building and construct a new library on Locust Street, adjoining the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The immensely complicated legal and organizational aspects of this move have now been cleared away, and final plans for the building are in process of completion. By this juxtaposition the great imprints of the Library Company and the great manuscripts of the Historical Society will become increasingly useful to scholars, and both institutions will be making better use of their resources. This is a remarkable example of the imagination that old privately supported societies can, on occasion, bring to the solution of their problems.

As such institutions are never likely to have their financial resources multiply at the rate of those of schools and other public institutions, indefinite expansion on all fronts is out of the question. But by thoughtful consideration of their greatest strengths, in relation to the good of learning, they can, and often do, achieve a specialization within manageable limits that brings high returns on each dollar expended. Thus American historians continue to find the libraries of

privately supported historical societies fruitful hunting grounds as well as pleasant places to work.

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Acquisition and Organization of Local History Materials in Libraries

RICHARD B. SEALOCK

A LIBRARY'S LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION includes a variety of resources in addition to books, and this usual emphasis is on older materials such as out-of-print books, newspaper files, clippings, pamphlets, historic maps, and broadsides. Because of this variety and the fact that most of these items are hard to find and difficult to care for, the usual methods of library acquisition and organization cannot easily be applied.

Before discussing the practices to be recommended, a few comments are in order regarding the local history function within a larger, more comprehensive library. A single purpose library is less restricted in establishing procedures and classification. However the recommendations made here for the local history collection within a more general library, will, it is believed, be more suitable than variations found in the library say of a local history society.

In contrast to the historical society, which may be responsible for the history of an entire state, the local public or college library can make a special effort to concentrate on a much smaller area. If it is to do a detailed job and to be prepared to answer a broad range of questions, it needs to confine itself to a definite and logical local area, an individual city or perhaps the city and the county in which it is located. The materials which reveal the place of this city in the general history of the state are not to be omitted, but the staff is free to do a more intensive job on the many minute subjects properly represented in local history reference work. The public or college library can serve as a center of information about its own locale and, even with a limited collection, can be more effective and immediate in service than the historical society with its larger area of responsibility. In spite of its strong emphasis on research and the long term preservation of

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primary sources, the historical society might have difficulty in meeting the constant demand for quick information and general reference work which is so distinctly a part of the public library's program.

In the first place, the relationship of this general library to the functions of the historical society library must be defined. The society library is concerned with the development of primary resources as well as of a major reference collection; in most cases it will be better prepared to manage and service such difficult materials as historical manuscripts and personal papers. The society will probably have on its library and editorial staff specialized individuals who can aid the serious worker in the field of historical research.

In contrast, the public library can provide the school boy, the interested citizen, the local journalist, the amateur genealogist, the advertising man, the business man, the casual reader, and many others with satisfactory but less specialized information regarding the community. This type of reference and information service is a typical function of a public library.

In the second place, the heart of the local library reference and information program revolves around a carefully assembled collection of secondary works, particularly those chosen for reliability and scholarship. Frequently the nature of the questions asked by readers in this area of local history makes necessary a more involved plan than merely bringing new, good, historical and supplementary works together. Local history reference work deals typically with minutiae, and this is not to express a criticism regarding its value. Many detailed and specific questions must be answered. The librarian who is going to render this service must prepare in advance to handle the questions quickly and accurately.

Ordinary library practices of acquisitions and classification serve only as a starting point in assembling and analyzing the materials that will furnish the answers. Solutions to such questions are to be found in sections of books or in special articles and pamphlets. The major reference tool that makes the information readily available is a comprehensive and detailed index, which will be discussed later.

A major field of American history which appeals to a current group of dynamic writers and investigators is that of urban history. This relatively new interest is placing in its proper perspective in American life the role of the city and its many special facets. Important new works published on the urban complex need not be enumerated here, but the work of the local history librarian can be made more meaning-

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ful if he is aware of this growing interest and is prepared to support any local project or survey. Working with such a program or special project can become a most important step in evaluating the sources of materials held and in developing a community-wide effort to bring from hiding many important items. Thus the Kansas City, Mo., foundation-supported program in recent years, of research and studies on various aspects of that city, intensified the organization and collection of materials at the Public Library as a result of the need for supporting the project.

An effective program of acquisitions and cataloging calls for more specialized methods than do the library's general collections and services. Among matters to be considered are the various techniques for preserving and making useful the categories of source materials, excluding those items treated in separate chapters here, i.e., maps, pictures, manuscripts, and newspapers. Little help can be found in the professional literature on the acquisition and organization of local history materials. The only thorough and comprehensive discussion of this particular field is an excellent English publication by John L. Hobbs¹ which is concerned with libraries having more specialized responsibilities than do those of a similar nature in this country. Archival and public record functions are carefully explained. The preservation of all types of manuscripts is a major concern of the author, although museum work and archaeology receive some attention. The author continually keeps in mind the user of the materials and includes directions in the use of local research materials.

Acquisition and Preparation

The Enoch Pratt Free Library of Baltimore has a fine local history department devoted to collecting and to making available materials about the entire state of Maryland. "It is the general policy of the Maryland Department to acquire, as far as is practicable, one copy for reference use of all printed items—fiction and non-fiction—contributing to a knowledge of state and local history."² The aim is to attain a fair degree of inclusiveness with certain exceptions. Since the material is also frequently of interest to the subject departments in the general library, both these departments and the branches may add duplicates of any necessary Maryland items.

The Maryland Department makes a special effort to secure materials of the social, civic, religious, economic, and cultural fields, both past and present. Genealogical materials are not collected, nor much music,

primarily because of the fine collections of these materials in the Maryland Historical Society which is only a short distance away. The Department does acquire duplicate books which can be circulated.

The policy of excluding certain material is particularly important, since this permits the Maryland Room to do an excellent job within the scope of the collection. For instance, manuscripts, paintings, and museum objects are generally excluded. On the other hand, the Department emphasizes printed material including books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers, serials, documents, maps, atlases, clippings, and post cards. In addition, photographic negatives, microforms, and prints constitute an important section of the resources. The Department has followed a vigorous policy of obtaining materials free when possible; older materials are purchased as they become available.

A few policy notes, some quoted in their entirety and others quoted in part, regarding special categories illustrate further the careful thought the Department has given to its function and service. They are:

Authors

The published writings of Marylanders on Maryland subjects are added in accordance with the policy of adding at least one copy of most printed items about Maryland.

The writings of Marylanders on non-Maryland subjects are left to the subject departments concerned. . . .

Collectors' Items

Rarely is a large price paid for a work that would be interesting to have but which would have little reference value, such as an early imprint of which a reprint is already in the collection. The presence in other libraries of such works is also taken into consideration, and expensive, unnecessary duplication avoided. Occasionally, however, books and fine prints that might be considered collectors' items are purchased from special gift funds.

Music

Little music is bought. The official state and city songs, music connected with outstanding Maryland events, persons, or organizations (as school and college songs, campaign songs, etc.) and occasional sheet music with illustrated cover of special local interest are added unless they are very expensive. Music of outstanding Maryland composers, which has no Maryland subject interest, is left to the Fine Arts Department.

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Law

The Code of the state, counties, and cities, session laws and ordinances, and compilations of laws on specific subjects are important parts of the Maryland Department collection.

Fiction

The Maryland Department adds, as it is published, fiction (except for the very trivial) that concerns, solely or primarily, historic Maryland people or has sufficient local color to make it useful from that standpoint. . . . also adds older novels in the same categories, including, . . . some novels of slighter value, in order to preserve them.

Pictures

The Maryland Department aims to have a representative collection of glossy photographs of outstanding Maryland persons, buildings, outdoor views, and subjects such as agriculture, industry, etc., both past and present. . . . Photographic negatives are acquired occasionally by gift and even more occasionally by purchase in order to preserve useful material of this sort that might otherwise be lost. Fine prints of Maryland subjects are collected for their reference value, e.g., the Cator Collection of about 200 views, primarily of Baltimore, which was a bequest to the Library. Other fine prints are acquired by gift and occasionally by purchase, but usually only from special funds.

Maps

The Maryland Department attempts to have a representative collection of maps of the state and its counties, cities and towns, for all periods.²

The Baltimore Library's newspaper policy calls for inclusiveness in the case of Baltimore newspapers and an adequate representation of Maryland papers.

Since local papers are indispensable sources for local information, some of it available in no other printed work, the Library acquires, by gift or purchase, all known Baltimore newspapers, at least one daily from each of the Maryland cities other than Baltimore which have such papers, and one or more weeklies from each of the counties of Maryland. Before the purchase of old files, offered at a considerable price, availability of files elsewhere and of other papers of the same locality are taken into consideration. In order to preserve fragile back files, especially of important papers representing

various parts of the State, and add to the Library's files of such papers when they are incomplete, and to save stack space, an effort is made to acquire microfilm files of such newspapers.²

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin is guided in its collection policy by seven brief points:

1. All materials of a monographic character of a descriptive or historical nature relating to the state or any of its regions or political subdivisions. This includes pamphlets of any content. We do not generally collect advertising materials unless they originated in the early history of the state.
2. All periodicals (magazines) issued by state organizations, religious, fraternal, political, etc. Also annual reports.
3. All newspapers published in Wisconsin.
4. The publications of governmental bodies, state, city, and county, if any.
5. We do not collect "Wisconsin authors," except for a small collection of outstanding ones that classify as literature.
6. We do collect intensively pre-1865 Wisconsin imprints.
7. In general we collect all state and local atlases.³

Regardless of one's acquisition policy, plans must be prepared to accommodate, to preserve, and to make useful a group of supplementary materials which accumulate in ever increasing quantities. Pamphlets, a slight and elusive type of printed matter, frequently defined as not having more than five sheets or eighty pages, must be given more consideration than when destined for general collections. Many such local history items are extremely valuable sources of information, are frequently much sought after by collectors and therefore highly priced, and often give a contemporary flavor to the past which ordinary books cannot portray. It must be admitted that pamphlets were propaganda pieces or strongly partisan and that more current ones are pure public relations devices. Nevertheless each pamphlet should be given a quick appraisal and treatment appropriate to its value in the collection. Many can be disposed of rapidly by placing them in vertical files under subject headings suitable for local materials; included in this category would be advertising pieces received by the hundreds each year. At the other extreme will be pamphlets of lasting value received from dealers and collectors in handsome bindings and slip cases; as appropriate, the item should be treated as a book with full cataloging, and in many cases put with other rare and valuable volumes.

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Arrangements must be devised for the many less valuable pamphlets which are worth preserving more carefully than the first group described, but which should not be handled individually as books. For these, the scheme of grouping by broad subjects and binding in "p.v.s." (pamphlet volumes) is recommended. The volumes for each class are numbered consecutively and the minimum cataloging necessary—an author, or a subject entry, or both—would lead to the correct volume in the series. There are many examples which might be cited, but a few will suffice: railroad materials, denominational publications, sermons or addresses by a single author, and municipal or county documents of a non-serial nature.

Binding insures long-term preservation, whereas subject grouping in pamphlet boxes, classed or alphabetically arranged, leads to early loss and heavy wear and tear. Pamphlets should be bound together, after they have been sorted, within a minimum date range, of approximately the same size, and of a similar quality of paper. Irregular edges lead to early deterioration of paper; a pamphlet printed on paper of poor quality may break out of a binding and the whole volume must be discarded, while uniform quality in the paper of the pamphlets will result in a longer life for the bound volume. A detailed description of this "p.v." (pamphlet volume) process as practiced at the New York Public Library whose rich and extensive collection this writer has used many times over the last thirty years may be found in an article by Robert B. Downs.⁴

Among the "printed ephemera" described by John Wyllie,⁵ the most interesting are broadsides. Usually maintained in a chronological file, these supplement other records and frequently add unique information. In some libraries, broadsides have been included in the manuscript collection, because they had originally been enclosures in correspondence. One hesitates to recommend the separation of these, but for those lacking such a relationship, the physical care and cataloging is simplified by placement in a broadside file. Large, full-size folders, of acid-free paper, filed flat, insure the greatest protection. Full cataloging of broadsides, with particular attention to subject headings, is necessary if their value is to be exploited. In the first place, broadsides are nearly always offered to a library folded as though to be sent in the smallest of correspondence envelopes. They must be carefully unfolded, particularly if very dry, to prevent breaking at the folds. In many cases it will be necessary to let the paper reach normal

humidity while the sheet itself is gently pressed to remove folds or wrinkles.

A major source of local history information is to be found in a well-organized file of clippings taken from newspapers. Fine examples of such a reference tool are found in the "morgues" which exist in the better newspaper libraries. Librarians have failed to take advantage of the methods developed in this area. Based on the clipping of multiple copies of newspapers and the filing of duplicate articles under several subjects, newspaper librarians have available to them a variety of subject approaches and thus can produce quick answers to reporters' questions. Clipping limited to one copy of the newspaper cannot produce the same results. Since a major portion of the file will pertain to individuals, a separate alphabet for biography is desirable. Other material should be arranged under very specific headings chosen, if possible, from the list used for the card index described later.

The practice of microfilming the articles in the file on special subjects ensures the long life of the information, keeps the material in correct order, reduces the space problem, and makes available a tool that can be duplicated for other libraries. Frequently consulted stories usually have been chosen in the filming program conducted by the Kansas City, Mo., *Star*, and these films have been of great value to the Public Library. Regular discarding also simplifies the use of the files and helps eliminate space problems. The practice of including clippings with other vertical file material is not acceptable because of size and other differences involved. Instead, envelopes approximately 4¼ x 9½ inches, opening the long way, have proved most satisfactory.

Newer media have been added to library collections in recent years, and several of these suggest new dimensions in preserving records and highlights of a community's history. The Fort Wayne (Ind.) Public Library has for years made its own motion pictures of local events of importance and interest.

Magnetic tape now makes possible the storage of the spoken word, the sound of a city, the stirring historical drama, the reminiscences of an old settler, or even the last clang of an old trolley bell caught by a buff as he participated in the last trip of a streetcar. Battery-operated recording equipment permits the capturing of sound under the most difficult situation.

As pointed out by John Knoepfle, many a person who has trouble writing of early experiences, can through conversation and interview ". . . deliver a lively description of the days he knew as a boy and

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the work he performed as a man.”⁶ This new field of history recording helpfully is discussed by Corinne Gilb in an article in *The American Archivist*.⁷ She recommends not only the making of tape recordings but also the transcription of interviews for more convenient use. Full cataloging of the transcriptions and recordings will be necessary, although difficulties will occur in the choice of subject headings because of the possible miscellaneous or even rambling nature of many such interviews.

A final special category which requires consideration is that of rare books. Some of these volumes are found in every collection. Original and early editions of Americana, frequently desirable for reference use, have become collectors’ items and are therefore scarce and highly priced. Those volumes which are also valuable for local history content should be identified for that purpose; fortunately, many such works have been reprinted so that less use needs to be made of the originals.

One of the gravest problems existing in special collections is the inadequate attention given to rare books. Unusual and early editions are not only heavily stamped and marked, but are improperly used by readers.

Priceless rare volumes are disfigured when call numbers and ownership marks are applied generously. No marks or labels should be placed on the outside of the volumes, nor should the pages be marred by embossed seals or stamped-in names. The call numbers should be lightly pencilled in, preferably on a page or end paper added by the binder. To aid shelf placement, many libraries now use long slips of paper, placed in but not pasted to the book, which display the call number on the portion projecting above the book. Heavy marks of ownership will not deter the persistent rare book thief. The best help on the care and repair of these books is to be found in the volume by Harry Miller Lydenberg and John Archer.⁸

Organization of the Collection

The acquisition of the various source materials already described is the first step in establishing a local history collection. The second and perhaps more important step is to make known to those who use the local history department the extent of the collection and the exact location of specific detailed information. This result is achieved through cataloging and classification, and through indexing much more information than can be indicated by the catalog.

The basic tool for identifying and locating the books, periodicals,

and other items in the local collection is the dictionary catalog. Its importance and inadequacy, and its relation to the index is noted by Hobbs.

. . . most local catalogues are not detailed enough to serve as authoritative guides to the stock, that many are extremely imperfect, and that there are very few local collections in which the material is so closely indexed that all the available material on a subject can be produced readily and rapidly. This material is so diverse in its nature and content that only by the most minute indexing can the fugitive items be brought to the notice of readers. This is especially true of the non-bibliothecal material which can be such an important part of a "live" Local History department. The tendency is to rely upon the knowledge gained by the local librarian in familiarity with the books and records in his charge, rather than on detailed catalogues and indexes, with the result that when he or she leaves or is absent for any reason, the efficiency of the department drops alarmingly.⁹

In spite of excellent variations developed by some libraries to make the catalog more useful, adherence to standard library practices is recommended. The high cost of cataloging and the expense of adding variations from standard practice make the use of Library of Congress cards an absolute must for economy and efficiency. All original cataloging of books not covered by these cards should conform to the same principles. Variations made to increase the catalog's usefulness make it difficult to include the cards for the historical collection in a general library's main catalog. Many of the additional entries can be included more economically in the departmental index, while the catalogers devote their efforts to keeping up with the current receipts.

A major contribution to the problems of cataloging for a local collection was made in 1934 by Florence B. Murray.¹⁰ Another brief discussion by Alberta Pantle emphasizes the need for making the most of the collection through comprehensive analysis of materials in the card catalog.¹¹ Unfortunately their suggestions do not coincide with the experience of the present writer while in charge of the Long Island Collection at the Queens Borough Public Library in New York City. An index, maintained separately from the catalog, exceeded the latter in size by four times. The basic bibliographical data on the books in the library collection would have been completely buried if the two files had been merged. Catalogers could be more generous with added entries, but they should not try to include many which could instead

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be placed in the comprehensive card index of the local history collection.

The American Library Association published many years ago a list of *Subheads to Be Used Under Cities*,¹² and more recently the English librarian James Ormerod included a similar list in his pamphlet on cataloging.¹² Both of these are helpful, but they are far from being inclusive enough to furnish all the specialized subject headings needed for local materials. This problem of adequate lists of subject headings is even more acute for indexing and vertical files.

Many libraries, feeling the inadequacies of standard classification schemes, have attempted expansions and modifications to permit a more useful arrangement of local history books. Some of these used in the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library have been described by Gracie B. Krum.¹³ Sub-numbers, from the Decimal Classification, are used with the shortened history number for any given area. Thus 74D4/813 is used for fiction about Detroit. The 74 are from the Dewey number for Michigan, after eliminating the preceding two digits 97 which are common to all states; the D4 is the Cutter number for Detroit, and 813 indicates fiction. Other interesting and ingenious examples of changes in standard classification procedure could be cited. Each such change made creates more difficulties as new editions of standard classification schemes are issued; and many problems are created if the special collection is part of a general library, or, if it is in a historical society library some ease of use is lost for the reader who is acquainted with the Dewey or Library of Congress classification.

In spite of the importance of the card catalog, the most frequently used file will be the home-made card index which supplements the catalog in great detail. It takes both of these to reveal the detailed contents of the local history collection. It is, of course, not necessary that the index for all types of materials be in one alphabet. For instance, Barbara Westby of the Detroit Public Library lists six major reference index files maintained in the Burton Historical Collection, covering periodicals, newspapers, genealogy, Michigan biography, local history, and pictures.¹⁴ Only old newspapers are included in the newspaper index since current issues are clipped and filed.

The need for detailed analysis of books within the department will be illustrated by just one example, *The Heritage of Kansas; Selected Commentaries on Past Times*, by Everett Rich.¹⁵ The catalog subject headings are "Kansas-History" and "Frontiers and pioneer life—

Kansas." An index would include the following subjects among others: Wagon trains, John Brown in Kansas, Underground railroad, Drouth, 1860, Battle of the Arickaree, Grasshopper plague, Dalton gang, and Kansas Jayhawk. Surely these should not be included in the dictionary catalog. Another major use of the index is to record the successful search for questions which have been difficult to answer. Cases of this occur daily, and the same question has a way of returning; work thus recorded need not be repeated.

It has already been indicated that subject headings for the local collection are not as easily identified as those for general books. Libraries have frequently used *Readers' Guide* subjects for the general vertical file. Some have prepared basic lists of subject headings to use in an index and also in the filing of pamphlets and clippings. The Denver Public Library has an 83-page subject heading list for its Western History Collection; emphasis is on the subjects most important in Colorado, *e.g.*, mining, mountains, forts, and water supply. It is desirable to formalize these headings in an authority file with cross references, starting perhaps from the general list used in *Readers' Guide* with supplementary headings as in the case of Denver. Such a list should then be used as much as possible in the various files—the one for pamphlets, clippings, and above all the card index.

The librarian's responsibility obviously does not end with the collection of the many unusual items of value to a local history collection. His responsibility is to make them available as quickly as possible and to coordinate them with the general library, if the special collection is part of such a library. Many additional steps, such as the preparation of a clipping file and indexes, should be taken. Yet with all these aids—and especially without them, one must agree with Hobbs when he says "The tendency is to rely upon the knowledge gained by the local librarian. . . ." ¹⁸ The librarian's intimate knowledge of and acquaintance with local history materials is indispensable for best service to the public.

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The Use of Local History Materials in Two Public Libraries

A. IN THE PEORIA (ILL.) PUBLIC LIBRARY

BY WILLIAM W. BRYAN

THE ACQUISITION, ARRANGING, cataloging, and use of local history materials is one of the most fascinating areas of public library work. The reason, of course, is obvious since every community and region has its own history. The history materials for any one community are, for the most part, limited to that community, its local library, and its historical society. Local librarians are among the very few with knowledge of a community's history and its historical materials. The preservation of local history materials is the responsibility of the local public librarians. No one else can do it for us.

Who uses a local history collection? John L. Hobbs, in *Local History and the Library*,¹ states, "a live local history collection will be used not only by the historian, genealogist and general students, but by workers in economics, sociology, political science, public administration, geography and science, and by writers and literary historians." It is uncertain how live the local history collection of the Peoria (Ill.) Public Library is, compared with those of other libraries. However, there is no doubt that its collection is live enough to bring in not only the type of person mentioned by Mr. Hobbs, but also a few others.

The largest group to use the biographical materials of the Peoria Public Library local history collection, as probably with all collections, are those seeking knowledge of their ancestors. This includes the professional genealogists, who do their own research, and the amateur genealogists, who all too often seem to want the staff to do the research for them. Included in this group is the letter writer who would be very thankful if a staff member would find the obituaries of his grandfather and his grandmother who lived in Peoria between 1875 and

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1855, moved west, but probably had their obituaries published in the local paper because they had so many friends in the area. This, of course, is an exaggerated example, but it does not exaggerate the intense interest that members of this group, often grandparents themselves, have in their forbears.

Several years ago the Peoria Public Library started an index of local residents, listing on cards any biographical material which was found. It soon grew to considerable size, proving its usefulness early. The library has what is believed to be a complete file of Peoria city directories, the earliest dated 1844, and a complete microfilm file of Peoria telephone directories, given by the Illinois Bell Telephone Company. The city directories are heavily used; duplicate copies of many of the directories, even some of the earlier years, are available. Because of the difficulties of using microfilm reading machines and because students use them from 4:00 P.M. to closing time throughout much of the year, the use of the telephone directories is not as great as it might be. Nevertheless, they are in much more permanent form than the ink print copies of the phone book, and they have been useful in locating names not listed in the city directory.

The student group, ranging from children in elementary school to students in graduate school, uses the local history materials quite heavily. The younger part of the group includes boys and girls in the middle and upper elementary grades, Boy and Girl Scouts, and Indian Guides. Their subject-interest most often concerns the Indians who lived in the Peoria area, those who were pushed out by settlers, and the much earlier inhabitants who were called Mound Builders. To answer these questions, papers written by local historians, usually for meetings of the historical society, or popular newspaper articles are used. The latter often take the form of interviews with local historians or hobbyists. Booklets published by the State Museum and articles by amateur and professional anthropologists supply the need for materials on the earliest known residents of our area.

Research papers being prepared by juniors and seniors in college and by graduate students are not numerous, but they are certainly much more time consuming and interesting for the staff. Among the topics for which information has been sought over the past few years are public health facilities, crime in Peoria, and early stagecoach routes. Help has also been given to students writing papers on manufacturing in general, on specific types of industries, and on specific companies. Peoria has been and is a center for the distilling industry

and, years ago, was a center for the manufacturing of handrolled cigars.

The needs of the student researchers are often difficult to fill because they wait too long before starting their project; also, the staff desires to protect unduplicated materials which are available only in the Peoria Public Library. The photocopier has helped to some extent, but the reproduction of many pages of materials is too costly for most students. A quiet place to work is another problem in the too small, too old, public library building. Last winter, a microfilm reading machine was carried into the Librarian's office each Saturday morning for weeks for the use of a graduate student working on his master's thesis. This left only four machines for the crowds of high school students who used them all day long, 30 minutes to a student. One high school student asked why five readers were available during the week and only four on Saturdays, but he appeared satisfied when he learned that the user receiving special attention was not another high school student.

Materials used for the students' papers include governmental reports, most of them annual reports, newspaper articles, and Works Progress Administration historical project files. There was a WPA local history project in the Peoria Public Library during the depression years, and much good work was done. Included are an index of Peoria newspapers from 1837 to 1864, and three file drawers of historical materials on a wide variety of subjects, such as authors, general biographies, charities, clubs, court records, businesses, and industries of all kinds. Many of the files found in most public libraries are also available in Peoria. All too often compiling these has to be categorized as busy work and falls behind during library emergencies; often the work is never caught up. Included in this area are the vertical files of clippings, pamphlets, pictures, scrapbooks, etc. It is requested that the Library be given a copy of any serious paper or speech on any phase of Peoria history, but these materials are not always obtained.

Another group, whose numbers are all too few, who uses our materials to a considerable extent is made up of local history researchers and hobbyists. Individuals in this group prepare papers for the historical society, compile lists, make scrapbooks, and take pictures. In Peoria, there have been a few genuinely professional local historians and a number of amateurs. These persons usually give the Library copies of their work; however, sometimes they must be purchased. The accuracy of the work varies from that of the highly meticulous,

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experienced local researcher to that of the beginning amateur whose interest is only his own enjoyment or who is trying to prove a preconceived opinion. Actually, most of the work is serious and accurate, although the librarian who almost never can take the time to become a local historian in his own right is sometimes in difficulty here.

All communities have, or should have, the local newspaper columnist who takes an interest in and writes about local history. The public library provides him with material and then receives the columns to add to its collection for the benefit of others. Such a columnist also provides the library with a friend in the newsroom.

In recent years, the Peoria Public Library staff worked with a retired businessman who compiled an illustrated history of Peoria up to 1900. This was taken almost entirely from existing printed sources, but in its present form it has become an extremely useful and valuable source for others. *The Peoria Story*, by A. W. Oakford,² is made up of twelve looseleaf volumes and now rests in the Public Library's vault.

Another local historian has been at work for years, with the Public Library's help, on a history of streetcar and interurban transportation. Publication is expected sometime in the not too distant future. A third, a retired motion picture projectionist, is doing a history of theatres in Peoria. The Library staff has found for him a number of pictures to add to his collection; it is hoped that eventually the Library will be the recipient of this work.

All communities have some persons who achieved national prominence, either as residents or visitors. Occasionally, professional writers correspond with our reference staff, and even come to Peoria to do some research themselves. Usually, however, these queries come by mail and result in a correspondence back and forth which may last several months.

Colonel Robert A. Ingersoll lived in Peoria for about twenty years, both before and after his Civil War service. Another person of prominence who lived part of his life in Peoria was Octave Chanute, railroad civil engineer and noted for his early interest in manned flight. Professional writers have shown interest in Charles Duryea who built the first successful gasoline-powered automobile. There are still Peorians who state that the first automobile was made there rather than in Springfield, Massachusetts, to which place Duryea moved and built his famous machine. Other persons for whom information is requested are Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, Charles J. Correll of "Amos and

Andy," Charles A. Lindbergh, who stopped here regularly during the period he flew air mail, and J. B. Greenhut, a leader of the "whiskey trust" of the 1890's. Correspondence, over the years, has been held about these persons and others. It is both interesting and a matter of some pride to see the results of the Library's work and the materials which appear in print. It is disappointing when nothing more is heard about a project, and the Library is left wondering if the book or article was ever published.

There is a group of persons who can be known only as "the general public," people who take a temporary interest in some phase of local history, delve into it a bit and then, as far as one knows, drop it. Sometimes the library knows the reason for the research; just about as often, they do not. Possibly the reference librarian's problem of getting a person to express exactly what he wants holds more for questions of local history than any other subject. Perhaps some of us are too proud of our ancestors, others are a little worried. Nevertheless, the questions asked cover every conceivable local subject, person, place, and date.

One man, a building contractor, became interested in an old house which he thought an ancestor had built. The answer was found in an old scrapbook given the Library many years ago, virtually impossible to catalog, and indexed by a local genealogist. More recent material has been added from time to time. Incidentally, the contractor did not say whether or not his ancestor built the house, only that he found what he wanted.

Anniversaries, those of churches, business establishments, and clubs, and sometimes schools, always bring some interested persons into the library. The WPA Newspaper Index, vertical file materials on churches, and the biographical index are the usual sources of material. These efforts usually bring the Library pamphlet histories printed for the occasion.

Recently a new courthouse was built for Peoria County, and the Library provided both a list of what was to be found in the old cornerstone prior to its opening and suggestions for material to be placed in the new one. For the latter much of the material was laminated in plastic; some library publications were included.

Businessmen make other uses of the local history collection. Advertisers periodically use it for yesteryear advertisements, both in newspapers and on television. They search the newspapers for old products, particularly locally made ones, old fashions, and old

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scenes. One restaurant had the walls of its dining room decorated with paintings of local scenes of early Peoria. Another used the Library's collections for general scenes which would be typical of any Midwestern river town.

Our holdings, particularly the picture collection, have also been used by television stations for local documentaries. One, a documentary on bus service, featured a strike of several months' duration, the purchase of the company by local business men, and the reestablishment of service, all of which will provide an interesting story for future local historians. Unfortunately, the Library does not have the documentary film.

In thinking about those persons who use local history materials, probably the least advertised of all library collections, one notices that the materials are used by a great variety of people, in short, the general public. These are the students, both elementary and advanced, the professional local historian, independent researcher, hobbyist, and business man. In view of such varied interest and use, one wonders if public libraries are giving adequate attention to their community's local history.

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B. IN THE DAYTON (OHIO) PUBLIC LIBRARY

BY ELIZABETH FARIES

SOME YEARS AGO a general survey of local history collections in American public libraries was made,¹ based on reports that appeared in library literature from the earliest records through

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1948. Accounts of active local history collections in public libraries came from all over the country. Some of these libraries had had long years of service in collecting local history, others reported activities of the World War I period, and still others began their collections at the impetus of a recently celebrated centennial or in an effort to preserve records of the community's activities during World War II.

The Dayton and Montgomery County (Ohio) Public Library belongs to the group of middle western cities that for many years has been giving service in collecting, preserving, and using local historical materials. As in Peoria (Ill.), the most common group to use the biographical materials of the local history collection are those wanting family histories. Dayton Public Library also serves the professional genealogist, the amateur, and the letter writer. It is very common to have patrons ask for obituaries or for other information on grandparents and great grandparents in cases where families living west of Ohio have traced their lines back to earlier generations who lived and died in Montgomery County or in the surrounding area, or to ancestors who were born in this region of the Miami Valley.

A WPA project of the 1930's in the Dayton Public Library was the formation of a name index to all of the Dayton and Montgomery County histories, and to four of the five surrounding counties (the project ended before the fifth county was covered). This has been invaluable in helping patrons find genealogical information. Other valuable tools are indexes to county records—wills and marriages, and indexes to the village and farm cemeteries of Montgomery County and a neighboring county, prepared by a professional genealogist of Miami Valley families. There are also collections of Miami Valley genealogies compiled by this genealogist which the Library was permitted to copy for its collection.

For many years the Dayton Public Library has maintained a card index on Dayton and Montgomery County subjects. This local bibliographical file covers biographies, specific subjects not analyzed in the local history catalog, answers to hard-to-find local history questions, and subject index entries to two scrapbooks on local materials that are used frequently. There is also an obituary index covering several years in the 1950's, particularly death notices about Daytonians who died outside Montgomery County, and many obituaries from newspapers of the 1800's discovered from time to time in local history reference work. Toledo (Ohio) Public Library

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for many years has maintained an obituary index which is used heavily, not only by genealogists, but by all types of searchers.

Dayton Public Library has a complete file of city directories dating from the first one of 1850, and an almost complete file of telephone directories. As Ohio has a number of independent telephone companies, a few of the smaller towns in Montgomery County are not represented in the city and suburban telephone directories; therefore, the Library makes an effort to build a collection of them, especially as these smaller places have no city directories.

As in Peoria, Dayton has many questions on the Mound Builders and the Indians, not only from young people, but from readers of all ages. Recently the Local History Librarian was asked to speak to a group of Senior Citizens on this subject, as it related to their particular township. The introductory sections of Ohio county histories, local feature news articles, magazine articles, the numerous publications of the State Museum, and the few books and pamphlets by individual authors are all put to use.

Research papers on local history subjects by college juniors and seniors, graduate students, professional historians, reporters, and authors have been on a decided increase in Dayton, especially since the manuscript collection has been enlarged and partially organized. Part of this increase is due to a growing interest on the part of schools in using local history subjects for term papers and graduate theses; part of it is due to easier access to a greater amount of primary source materials. Dayton's manuscript collection includes family and business letters of leaders in Ohio canal matters, Dayton's civic and educational affairs, post Civil War Republican politics, Copperheadism under the Daytonian Clement L. Vallandigham, and soldiers' diaries and letters to families and friends for the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the Civil War. Various parts of this manuscript collection have been used not only by local students, but by students, writers, and historians from all over the country. The collection of letters dealing with Vallandigham and his followers was used several years ago by a historian for his book on this movement in the middle west.² These papers were cited in the author's notes as an outstanding collection on the subject.

Part of the manuscript collection has been calendared and indexed by the Library staff, but much more needs to be done. To aid in this work and to increase their knowledge of working with primary source materials, some of the upperclassmen in the History

Department of the University of Dayton last year took as their semester projects the calendaring and indexing of some of the Civil War letters in the Dayton Public Library manuscript collection. This work was done under the guidance of their professor and with suggestions from the Local History Librarian. Moving into a new building in 1962 solved many of Dayton's problems in regard to space for patrons to work with these special materials and provided highly improved facilities for the organization and shelving of the collection.

Graduate students and historians have spent weeks in the Dayton Public Library combing the old local newspapers for all references to their subjects, either to supplement material found in other sources, or to use these contemporary records because other materials on the subjects were not extant. Most local history collections have clipping files of local subjects, and Dayton's files, dating back to 1930, have proved to be an important part of the collection. However, even the best of these files is inadequate, as time and a staff burdened with the pressure of other duties limit the coverage of subjects. This coverage is further limited by the fact that such files cannot be all inclusive; they are and must be selective to be usable, but selection varies also according to the knowledge on the part of the person responsible for this work, as to the type of material likely to be needed.

The crying need of most local history collections is for an index of the local newspapers. Such indexing is a big project beyond the ability of most libraries to carry by themselves, especially with the great backlog of indexing to be done. Rather it is a community cooperative project in which the library, newspaper publishers, local foundations, and groups of citizens might be involved. The WPA Newspaper Indexing Project of the 1930's made a good start. In Dayton this Project provided a four-year printed index and a number of years of uncompleted indexing for one local newspaper. The four printed volumes³ are among first sources consulted for local subjects of the period covered. Cooperation between a public and a local foundation to set up the *Flint Journal* newspaper indexing project has been reported,⁴ so one step in the direction of indexing current volumes of a local newspaper under the public library's sponsorship has been taken.

When churches, business establishments, schools, and organizations celebrate anniversaries and turn for help to the Library's local history collection, newspaper clippings, booklets on earlier anniversaries, and city and county histories are great aids in finding materials, but there

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are always questions and gaps for which answers and connecting links are probably buried in newspaper records. If the local historian is patient and does a good research job for his publication, the resulting booklet can become a valuable reference source for the local history collection.

In the Dayton Collection, local periodicals, especially house organs and bulletins of local institutions and organizations, have proved useful. Businessmen have studied house organs for ideas for their own publications and for other information. Bulletins of local institutions and organizations are good sources for biographies of new staff members or new officials. Often the biographical sketches are fuller than such notices appearing in the local newspapers; they are easier to locate than newspaper material as they are usually front page articles in weekly or monthly publications.

Maps are used by patrons of all types. Students want to locate places about which they are making studies; older citizens use them for locations of places they remember from their youth; genealogists want to locate farms or town plats of great grandparents, or cemeteries no longer on public roads; church, school, or organization historians want to locate early buildings of their institutions; local historians and reporters doing feature articles want to locate old roads, early buildings, or early residences; lawyers want certified reproductions of certain sections of early maps for evidence in court. Pictures are used for many of the same reasons.

A soldier's monument erected in Dayton in the 1880's in the center of a main intersection became a traffic hazard and was moved to a park. City engineers turned to descriptions of the erection of the monument in newspapers and magazines of the day, giving size and weight of each base stone, pedestal, and statue, to help them plan for equipment and method to be used in the moving project. Groups fighting to save the 1850 Court House in Dayton, which is one of the finest examples of Greek architecture in the Midwest, repeatedly used local historical materials to prove not only that it is of value architecturally, but also that much of the history of the city and county is centered around this building.

Dayton is the birthplace of aviation and the home of the Wright brothers. Students of early aviation history and authors of biographies of the Wright brothers have been patrons and correspondents of the Dayton Public Library which is fortunate to have the genealogies of the Wright and allied families (in manuscript) compiled by Orville

Wright and based on family history collected by his father, Bishop Milton Wright. The Library receives many requests for Wright family history and for information on incidents in the early life of these brothers. It also receives requests for materials on Benjamin and John Van Cleve (early settlers), Gen. Robert Schenck, Robert Steele (local and state educational leader), Paul Laurence Dunbar, James M. Cox, Charles F. Kettering, and John H. Patterson—all prominent Daytonians and most of them nationally and internationally known. An excellent biography of Paul Laurence Dunbar was written by a former Dayton teacher, using the local history collection.⁵ Four years ago the first novel based on the 1913 flood in Dayton was written by an author of books for young people, a former Dayton children's librarian, and again the local history collection in the Dayton Public Library had extensive use.⁶ The latest history of the city of Dayton, a small book primarily for use in the public schools, was written recently by a retired Dayton journalist;⁷ for a time he had a desk in the Public Library so that he could use the local history materials easily.

The local history collection is a small library in itself, covering every type of subject and including every known type of record of human activities. The local history librarian has a fascinating job, involving detailed reference work in all the fields of endeavor in which the activities of the community fall, and detailed cataloging and classification work in organizing and shelving the ephemeral materials that so often constitute the collection. Such a service can fill a definite need in any community.

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Ownership of Local Historical Materials

WILLARD L. KING

THE LEGAL OWNERSHIP of historical documents is elusive. My discussion will be reminiscent of the Irish constable on point duty (we say "traffic cop") whom I asked how to get to a certain village. He said, "Ye go ahead four miles. Ye'll see a church. Take no note of it. Go ahead three miles. Ye'll see a castle. Take no note of it."

Old letters are the raw material of history. Most of the attics in America have gone unfishd for them. Local libraries should collect them. I am envious of the piscatorial delights that await all of you and the incalculable contributions you can make to American history. But when you have caught your fish, who owns it? I can give you the answer, but take no note of it. Legal title to the piece of paper was originally in the recipient, but legal title to the literary content of the letter was in the writer. And this even though the writer of the letter was illiterate. The writer could have prevented the recipient from publishing it. The recipient could have destroyed it. He could have sold it, but the buyer would have had no right to publish it without the consent of the writer.

However, except in the rarest case, all this is changed with the lapse of time. If you caught your fish 100 years after the death of both the writer and the recipient, their respective titles are scattered into infinity. Let us say that the writer died leaving four children. If he had a will, title may have passed to his residuary legatee. In the absence of a will, title passed to his four children. If none of them left a will, their titles passed to their respective heirs and so on ad infinitum. Except in an unusual case, no one now alive can prevent you from publishing this ancient letter nor hold you accountable in any way, if you do. Of course, the writer, in his lifetime or by his will, may have transferred all of his literary properties to an assignee who has preserved

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the title for the 100 years that have elapsed. It is reported that title to Mark Twain's letters has been preserved in this way. What I have said with respect to the title of the writer of the letter applies also to the recipient's title. In practically every instance no one can prevent the possessor of such a letter from giving it to you, and no one can prevent you from publishing it. Furthermore, the public interest is emphatically in favor of throwing all possible light on our history.

Of course, contemporary letters from persons now living or who have recently died stand in a different situation. Until a letter is at least twenty-five years old, it is rarely regarded as historical material. You may accept a recent letter from the recipient or the possessor, but you should not publish it without the consent of the writer or his heirs, and letters in an estate of a deceased person require the consent of the proper heirs for complete legal transfer to you.

Do I hear someone ask, "What about the right of privacy? Suppose the letters disclose private affairs of someone other than the writer?" In 1890, Louis D. Brandeis and Samuel D. Warren, brilliant young lawyers, moved by the agony of a friend threatened with a scandal, published in the *Harvard Law Review* an article suggesting the existence of a right not to have one's private affairs publicized.¹ They based it largely on the ancient right of an individual not to have his letters or pictures published without his consent. A few states adopted this view by court decision or by statute, but nearly fifty years later an eminent authority in this field publicly regretted that the campaign to have such a right recognized had "almost completely failed."² It had come into conflict with the constitutional liberty-of-the-press and the press had prevailed. In 1952 an Appellate Court decision in Illinois asserted the existence of such a right,³ but a few years later the same court had to limit the decision to the rule that a private person could prevent the publication of his picture in commercial advertising⁴—a rule recognized long before anyone had used the term "right of privacy." Again I must advise you, "Take no note of it."

But suppose the big fish that you hook in someone's attic is a letter written by a public official in the course of his duty. Do not the public authorities have a paramount right to that letter? On that subject recent litigation throws revealing light.

In 1953 a granddaughter of General John Henry Hammond went to St. Paul to dispose of the contents of a house long occupied by his daughter who had recently died. An old desk in the attic appeared

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to contain ancient papers, and the granddaughter called the Minnesota Historical Society whose curator of manuscripts came to look at them. The General's granddaughter told the curator to select anything of historical interest that the Society might want. General Hammond had been an officer in the Civil War, and the curator returned to the Society with some 11,000 papers. Two days later the curator found among them 67 papers which proved to be original records of the Lewis and Clark expedition made some 150 years before. Most of these were in the handwriting of Captain William Clark, though a few contained notations by Meriwether Lewis. The executor of General Hammond's widow then brought a suit to quiet title to these papers. The United States secured leave to intervene and claimed a paramount title to the Lewis and Clark papers as documents made in the course of duty by an officer of the United States. A three-day trial ensued in which several experts testified. President Jefferson in his written instructions to Meriwether Lewis had explicitly ordered him to keep records such as these. But these were rough notes or work sheets from which the official record, made in pursuance of Jefferson's directions, had been compiled. These notes also contained some personal notations of Captain Clark not included in the official record.

How did General Hammond get possession of them? The government offered a plausible speculation. General Hammond in 1878, on government orders, had closed up the office of the General Superintendent of Indian Affairs at Lawrence, Kansas. As directed, he shipped the books and other property there to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, describing them as material accumulated in St. Louis, Atchison, etc. These included a map which Lewis and Clark had with them on their expedition. Clark had been Superintendent of Indian Affairs in St. Louis and Governor of Missouri Territory.

The court rejected the government's claim. These papers had been for seventy-five years in the possession of the Hammond family and possession raises a presumption of ownership. Other notes of Clark, more official than these, had been in possession of Clark's heirs for fifty years, had been published, and the government had made no claim to them. Jefferson's instructions did not embrace papers such as these rough notes. If General Clark wilfully abandoned these papers, or forgot them, or turned them over to others, this would not enhance the government's claim to title if no such title existed when they were in Clark's hands. The litigation terminated five years later when the Court of Appeals affirmed the District Court.⁵ By this time all of the

Hammond descendants had assigned their interest to one of their number and the historical society had withdrawn its claim of a gift, reserving only its lien for expenses incurred in organizing and preserving them.

Another recent litigation throws more light on the ownership of literary productions by government officers. Vice Admiral Hyman G. Rickover had delivered twenty-three speeches on such subjects as atomic submarines and the American system of education. A publisher asked leave to quote from them. The Admiral denied permission since another publisher was about to publish them. The first publisher then filed suit contending that since the speeches were an outgrowth of Rickover's governmental activities and were in part prepared on government time with the aid of government facilities, the Admiral had no literary property in them and might not secure a copyright on them. Both the trial court and the Court of Appeals held that a government officer did have private literary property in such speeches as these.⁶ The trial court cited as precedents Gideon Welles' diary, Harold L. Ickes' diary, and Admiral Mahan's famous book, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*. Admiral Rickover had mimeographed the speeches and distributed them to the press and to the organizations sponsoring his speeches, and it was argued that by this publication he had lost any literary property that he might have had, even though he had marked some of the mimeographed copies as copyrighted. The trial court held that the Admiral had not lost his literary property by this limited publication, but the Court of Appeals held that by such publication he might have destroyed his literary property in the speeches, and reversed the case for further evidence on this point. The Supreme Court, after granting an appeal, held that the record was insufficient for a determination and sent the case back to the trial court.⁷ Again I advise, "take no note of it."

A question that frequently arises for librarians is the extent to which copyrighted books may be quoted without infringing the copyright. The usual rule of thumb of leading publishers is that a quotation of fifty words or more of prose requires the consent of the copyright owner. Even then, however, publishers usually suggest to an author that his book will be more readable if he will paraphrase the quoted portion, perhaps quoting only the three or four crucial words.

With the recently discovered methods of reproducing books in great numbers from old books without resetting the type, it may be anticipated that librarians will be asked to furnish rare old local his-

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tories for this purpose. Usually in such a case either the twenty-eight years of the copyright's original life or the additional twenty-eight years of its extended life will have expired, and a librarian will render a service to students of history by permitting its reproduction. But if a copyright still exists, a librarian might incur liability for loaning the book, knowing that a borrower intended to reproduce it in this way. It has been held that the owner of a plate from which a picture could be reproduced incurred such a liability.⁸

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Trends in Preservation

HAROLD W. TRIBOLET

SEVERAL YEARS AGO the head librarian in a suburban public library opened the safe in his office, reached into the farthest corner of the lower shelf, and withdrew a carefully wrapped but badly worn volume. It was, he believed, the only available copy of a book of great regional importance. Its leaves were torn and loose, and its ragged leather cover was disconnected from the body. Because of its poor physical condition, the book was never used or exhibited, even though it would have been a valuable addition to a collection of regional literature.

Here was a significant book being neglected because the librarian did not know what to do about its poor condition; the farthest corner in the safe appeared to be the best solution. Thousands of books, manuscripts, documents, broadsides, drawings, prints, and similar important pieces are stored away in like manner because the persons in charge are unaware of the preservation techniques which would put them into condition for exhibit and, more important, use.

During the past decade a number of books and articles on preservation and restoration have appeared. Some of them were written by scientists or professionals who are making positive contributions in this field, and others by advanced amateurs who are willing to share their enthusiasm and know-how. Most of this is good because it focuses attention on the problems of disintegration. Despite the enthusiasm of the amateurs, however, do-it-yourself repair projects must be limited to unimportant items or postponed until more professional skills are developed. Far too many rare books have been "repaired" with questionable adhesives and inferior materials; far too many tears in scarce maps have been supported with plastic tape that was never meant for this purpose. Such well-intended, interim measures frequently reduce the value of the item and create difficult

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problems for the professional restorer when he is later asked to repair the piece.

Today it is possible to find a bookbinder qualified to undertake any kind of job ranging from the simplest cloth recasing to complex extra binding involving maximum skills and permanent materials. The librarian must determine the value or importance of the book before deciding what type of binding or repair would be justified, and then he must place the job with the right person. Obviously, an extra binder qualified to do the most difficult job should not be expected to use his highly developed and expensive skills on a cloth rebinding. Conversely, a binder who specializes in the binding of circulated books should not be given rarities.

For many years the larger libraries have maintained their own binderies for frequently used books, but they usually send their valuable books out to an extra binder. A few libraries have found it possible to add an extra binder to their staff. Although our country has no school for the training of certified extra binders, a few institutions offer such classes, and seminars relating to the subject are attracting an increasing number of participants. In addition, experienced binders are taking time from their full schedules to offer individual and group instruction.

The efforts of the Guild of Book Workers, an organization which has successfully raised the standards of the binders by conducting lectures, field trips, educational programs, and exhibits and by maintaining a supply list of great value to the scattered practitioners, also helps keep the craft healthy and alive. The International Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works has supported a more general program for the dissemination of information. The Institute publishes *Conservation* and frequent bulletins.

Should an important book in poor condition be rebound or repaired? Although some bibliographers would promptly say "neither!" this is not a realistic answer. Since deterioration is progressive, the condition of the binding will get worse, not better. A protective case and ideal atmospheric conditions will retard aging, but these precautions are not enough to prevent deterioration absolutely. If the existing binding is significant and can be saved, a sensitive repair should be made, utilizing as much of the original material as possible. The alternatives are a new binding, a replica of the original binding, or a period binding.

One fairly recent development of interest reported in newspaper

and magazine articles concerns a process for the preservation of vellum, parchment, and paper. These stories report that Dom Mario Pinzuti of the Institute for the Scientific Restoration of Books at the Vatican has found that vitamins, injected or sprayed, will prolong the life of these materials. The Institute reports that the introduction of vitamin B will halt the increasing rigidity of vellum and parchment caused by aging, and that vitamin PP will equalize the absorption of gelatin, a glutinous sizing solution applied to weak paper.

Most old books, particularly heavy ones, have broken board corners; the leather is worn and the fiber of the board has lost its earlier rigidity. Rebuilding such a corner usually involves the use of an adhesive to impart stiffness, the addition of fiber, and finally the application of matching leather. Recently, Thomas A. Patterson, hand binder of The Hunt Botanical Library, Pittsburgh, designed a triangular, tapered wedge of plastic for rebuilding a broken corner, and it appears to be very useful. The wedge is glued between the board fibers, and pulped fiber is added to provide the necessary thickness before the leather is applied. The completed corner is strong and slightly flexible, two important goals of such a repair.

There is a growing tendency to air-condition buildings in which rare books and related objects are housed, for it is apparent that such material will live longer and better if it is not exposed to atmospheric pollution, variable temperatures, and fluctuating humidity. Prolonged high temperatures and low humidity will promote the dehydration of paper and the other materials used in books; excessive humidity is responsible for foxing and the growth of mold; and the acid air in urban communities ravages paper and leather relentlessly. All of these enemies can now be controlled by air-conditioning. Modern technology has made it possible to provide ideal air, either by means of a central system or window and floor units, in older buildings as well as new ones.

The disintegration of folding maps, particularly those with a multitude of folds in both directions hinged to the inside of a book, has always been difficult to repair. Mounting an entire map on linen or cotton provides lasting strength, but these fabrics also create excessive bulk. Thinner supporting materials, such as paper, silk, and plastic film, are not able to withstand repeated folding. Within the last few years, however, numerous tests have shown that polyester web, a synthetic tissue-like material, overcomes these objections and provides a mounting with strength, thinness, and permanence.

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Many broadsides, drawings, documents, and similar single sheets of paper in need of rigid support have been mounted to or placed against fiber board made of acidic wood pulp. Inferior board of this kind turns brown as it ages, then ultimately crumbles when it is subjected to mechanical stress. The short life of the material is in itself a major defect, but more important is the chemical injury and discoloration it causes to the paper it is intended to protect. The migration of acids from the board to the paper is a definite hazard that is causing serious damage to countless items of worth. Fortunately, there is now a growing interest in the use of a safe domestic board made of all-rag, chemically pure fibers, that costs only slightly more than its inferior counterpart. Progressive libraries, historical museums, and art galleries now use all-rag board, and informed private collectors increasingly request it when they have materials to be mounted.

This serious problem of migration of harmful substances extends to other materials frequently misused for the protection of valuable objects. Paper folders, plastic envelopes, storage boxes, and protective cases can be as detrimental as the board previously described if they are not made of approved, quality materials.

Although thick transparent plastic plates have been used during the past few decades for the protection of documents exposed to handling and display under abnormal conditions, the development of the Plexiglas filter provides a new facet of safety. This plastic, chemically safe and durable, eliminates much of the danger due to light, natural as well as artificial, and it does not shatter. Frequently, it is placed on both sides of the paper to be protected and held together with small screws anchored in the extreme margins. In some cases, two mat boards are added to the sandwich, with rectangular or contour apertures, and the document is suspended in the opening by means of thin threads. A matted subject mounted in this way is visible from both sides and substantially protected from the hazards of atmospheric pollution.

A word of warning: The movement of air on plastic creates static electricity. This is not highly important unless a piece of plastic is placed on an unfixed chalk drawing. In this case when a charge develops, some of the chalk tends to leave the paper and transfers to the plastic, giving a new, though unwelcome, dimension to the picture. Plastic, therefore, should always be cleaned with an anti-static liquid cleaner, applied with cotton or a soft cloth that will not scratch its relatively soft surface.

The injurious effect of both natural and artificial light in rooms where valuable materials are displayed is receiving increased attention. Paper, especially inferior kinds, discolors rapidly, and many inks and binding materials fade easily when exposed to light for prolonged periods. Strategically placed draperies and paint on the windows can help control the amount of direct or reflected sunshine in a room. Filters installed over incandescent light fixtures will minimize damage from that source, and the Fadex tube, which has a filter coating, affords the same protection in fluorescent systems.

Much of the paper worthy of preservation, made of rags, wood, or any of the other natural fibers, is highly acidic, due in most instances to the manufacturing process and in some cases to poor environment. It is now possible, through the efforts of W. J. Barrow and others who have recognized this major cause of deterioration, to subject such paper to a deacidification process involving liquid baths. Barrow introduced the process as a necessary treatment before lamination with plastic film, but today it is equally important for the preservation of paper that is not to be laminated.

Currently, under the auspices of the Council on Library Resources, Inc., the W. J. Barrow Research Laboratory is hopefully working on the problem of deacidifying bound and unbound books by means of a sprayed chemical. The purpose is to increase the strength of the paper and to prolong its life. Single sheets are not difficult to treat with chemicals atomized into the fibers, but a book securely fixed in a binding is troublesome. When sprayed with any chemical carried in water, the leaves will cockle. The firm construction at the backbone makes it difficult to eliminate this distortion. Experiments are continuing; Barrow hopes to establish a pilot operation within the near future.

Progress in the field of leather preservation is, indeed, very slow, yet the last decade or two have seen considerable headway. Years ago there were those who said the rubbing of a banana peel over the leather of a binding was the best treatment; others said shoe polish, bacon rind, thin paste, milk, and so on. Secret formulas, passed from father to son, were claimed by their exponents to be superior to anything else, but they could not tell you why. Patented commercial preparations, as well as those in the public domain, seem to improve the leather, but after a few months in many instances a deposit of stubborn white substance appears in the depressions of grainy leather. The well-known British Museum leather dressing has not been suc-

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cessful in this country. Some binders report that it remains tacky, causing books to stick together; or that it glazes the leather with a hard finish, foreign to the natural supple qualities of the skin. The total picture has been confusing to those who recognize the importance of a maintenance program.

H. J. Plenderleith,¹ formerly with the British Museum Research Laboratory, and R. Faraday Innes, also of England, made a significant contribution when they suggested that vegetable-tanned leather bindings be sponged with a 7 per cent aqueous solution of potassium lactate, a salt selected to retard chemical decay. They also said that oily leather dressings do not arrest chemical deterioration but do keep the fibers supple.

At the present time many binders favor a dual treatment: first, the potassium lactate; next, after the first solution has dried, the application of the well-known No. 6 dressing, made of 60 per cent Neat's-foot oil and 40 per cent lanolin, as described in leaflet No. 398, issued by the United States Department of Agriculture.² Some day the two applications may be reduced to one by the combination of ingredients that will retard decay and lubricate at the same time, with a mold inhibitor and insecticide included for additional protection.


The polyvinyl acetate emulsion type adhesive is used in our country and in Europe for many restorative operations because it bonds materials with a tenacity not always found in pastes and animal glues; however, the important question of whether it should be used on books and other material of lasting value has not been settled. Some say it is too acid, others claim the acidity leaves the adhesive during the aging process and has no deleterious effect on the material to which it is applied. Perhaps all the existing commercial products are unsafe and binders will be dependent on a carefully-formulated custom-made adhesive for the qualities being sought. This problem is being studied in the W. J. Barrow Research Laboratory and by adhesive manufacturers who recognize the need for conclusive answers.

The hand bookbinder, the restorer, or anyone applying himself to the field of preservation must collaborate with the scientist and chemist if he is to progress, and most of the practitioners are doing this today. Craftsmanship is essential, but skill alone is not enough. On the other hand, many of the traditional techniques, materials, and adhesives are still important, and should not be replaced without a careful appraisal of their worth, for they are time-tested. Progress has been slow, but the pace is getting faster and better.

HAROLD W. TRIBOLET

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The Problem of Maps

LLOYD A. BROWN

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS was founded in 1800, but, writes the historian, "the only evidence there was of an interest in the collection of maps before 1865 was the vote in the committee, March 20, 1830, that the Librarian be instructed to procure Burr's County atlas of the State of New York, and the best maps of the several States which were not already in the Library; . . ." ¹ This general indifference on the part of the founding fathers in Washington was reflected in the libraries of most countries. Not only did they lack interest in maps and atlases, they deliberately shunned them—even when the maps were offered as gifts. But there are sufficient if not good reasons back of this attitude of indifference to maps and atlases, reasons which go back hundreds of years.

At the beginning of the Christian era only the brave and the pagan indulged in geographic speculation. It was a sin to probe the mysteries of the universe, and the explanations set forth by the church in regard to the heavens and earth were sufficiently vague and awe-inspiring to satisfy all but the most skeptical observers of natural phenomena.

Maps have long been associated with military intelligence as well as adventure and intrigue. Because they were potential sources of information to the enemy, it was dangerous to plot on maps and charts the location of roads and navigable streams by which an army might approach a city. It was equally dangerous to inform the hostile world of the location of military objectives such as arsenals, barracks, dockyards, and public buildings. Therefore many rulers were afraid to make good maps and charts and even more loathe to collect and to preserve them. Georg Kohl relates that the Roman Emperor Augustus locked up the maps that resulted from his extensive survey of his realm, and that he issued only partial copies to the imperial councillors of his provinces.

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As late as the nineteenth century it was considered an act of high treason to divulge the information on official maps, and it is safe to say that every government agency, both here and abroad, has maps of a confidential nature which are guarded as carefully as international boundaries themselves. Sea charts, too, have been jealously guarded for ages, especially those made during and after the discovery of the New World. Maritime trade routes, avenues of wealth as well as lifelines were, and still are, vital to certain nations, and charts which plotted the courses of merchant fleets across the seas were very important documents indeed. Early navigators, especially the enterprising and venturesome Spanish and Portuguese explorers of the sixteenth century, made a practice of weighting their charts with lead; and when their ships were boarded by the enemy, they jettisoned them overboard rather than let the foe profit by their hard-earned information about the high seas. Such a custom was not favorable to the dissemination of geographical information, nor did it contribute to a wide appreciation of the value and importance of maps and charts.

Map production received its first real impetus in the fifteenth century. Within the short period of fifty years, the printing press was invented and developed, Ptolemy's *Geographia* was revived, and the New World was discovered. But at this very time, when maps were being published in rapidly increasing quantities to meet the demand and to keep up with the "new discoveries" in the Western Hemisphere, a new trend appeared which threatened and delayed for years the systematic collecting of maps. This was the tendency to discard old maps for new.

It is not strange that people should assume that the latest will naturally be the best, whether it be automobiles or maps; but it is unreasonable, in the case of a map, to think that because it is out of date it is of no value and therefore should not be allowed to take up valuable space. The best maps and charts are nearly always compilations of data taken from earlier reliable maps or charts. Keeping this fact in mind, let us suppose that it is possible to produce a perfect map, embodying all the information which could be gleaned from previously compiled sources. Would there be any excuse for discarding and destroying the sources from which it was compiled? If there were, the same reasoning applied to books and manuscripts would eliminate most libraries and all archival collections. And yet there is evidence which indicates that this destructive tendency has

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operated continuously for hundreds of years and still persists to a certain extent.

Maps did not come into their own and did not attain the dignity of "historical documents" according to Kohl, until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when a few far-sighted European scholars began to search musty book stalls for the long lost items of historical cartography. They found some, but many were apparently gone forever. Baron Charles Athenase Walkenaer (1771-1852) is usually given credit for arousing interest in historical cartography because of his writings and the exploitation of the remarkable collection of source material he assembled in his Paris home. Edme Jomard contributed much toward the formation of a branch of the Imperial Library in Paris, in which were gathered remarkable examples of early cartography which had been forgotten and "lost" for many years. The Polish scholar Joachim Lelewel and the Portuguese Visconde de Santarem stimulated the interest of scholars by publishing facsimiles of important maps and charts, accompanied by learned dissertations.

The vigorous efforts of a few scholars, supported by a generally awakened interest in antiquities, resulted in the formation of many fine collections in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and others have since been formed. Today it is being constantly reasserted that the civilized world is becoming more and more map conscious. But, in spite of the alleged status of maps at the present time, there has been a definite lag between the growth of interest in the subject and the development of administrative technique. This situation is due, in large measure, to the traditional attitude of considering maps as minor publications and administering them as such. As reference tools, maps are seldom given major consideration. As minor publications, maps are cataloged and classified after all other material has been taken care of, which means that they seldom receive the attention they deserve. Maps cannot be properly administered as adjuncts to the newspaper or periodical collection of a library.

Taking into account these various inhibiting factors, it is not strange that there is a lack of well established rules and procedures governing the administration of maps and charts, nor is it surprising that a card catalog and system of classification are not considered essential aids to the use of the map collection. History proves that a casual attitude toward ancient cartographic material is not justified, especially among the members of the library profession.

Prior to the twentieth century few, if any, maps and charts were reproduced solely for decorative purposes. Every decade of the past two thousand years has produced maps and charts which were compiled and executed for the purpose of imparting geographical information in picture form. To the men who made them, they were not amusing or quaint. On the contrary, such geographical products were serious attempts to portray the earth or parts thereof, with accuracy and clarity. If the end product happened to be artistic, so much the better, but it was a purposeful kind of artistry aimed to please several different audiences.

Good or bad, accurate or inaccurate, the maps of a given period tell a story such as few written documents can tell. Often they supplement—for the historian, the geographer, and the lexicographer—the narratives and memoirs, the personal letters and diaries, the official pronouncements of the famous and infamous people who have had a part in history making. Time and research have proved the validity of Captain John Smith's often quoted statement that ". . . it is fit . . ." for historians to offer to our view the stage whereon the pageant of history is and has been acted. ". . . for as Geography without History seemeth a carkasse without motion; so History without Geography, wandreth as a Vagrant without a certaine habitation." 2

In addition to the obvious uses of maps and charts—the location of obsolete towns, cities, and countries, the spelling of proper names that have changed throughout the centuries, the verification of political boundaries that have long since lost their identity—old maps offer a great deal of extra-geographical information which is not apparent to the casual reader. Usually they serve as representative examples of current art forms: the skill of the engraver or lithographer and the use or abuse of color, either as a decoration or an aid in the identification of geographical areas or geological formations. Decorative features such as cartouches and decorative border ornamentation often reveal the costumes of the times, the natural resources of the area involved, and the prominent buildings (shown in profile) which a geographer and traveler would like to know about. Only in modern times have maps and charts been shorn of adornment in favor of more utilitarian lines and letters.

Intelligent evaluation of maps and charts is the first and most important factor in the administration of the material. Such an obvious statement of fact would not be worth repeating except that

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the true value of cartographic material has gained recognition only by slow and painful degrees.

A favorite protective device employed by librarians when faced with unfamiliar material such as maps and charts which do not fit neatly into the library scheme of storing things is to point out the prohibitive cost of maintaining the collection. It is not a very good device, however, and does not always represent the true state of affairs. The importance of administrative costs dwindles with the proper appreciation of the intrinsic and extrinsic value of the material under consideration. For example, the great elephant folio edition of John James Audubon's *The Birds of America* is probably the largest format ever produced by a publisher in this or any age. These four volumes are heavy, awkward to handle, and difficult to store. Yet what librarian would complain about the problems of handling or storing such books if he were to receive them as a gift? And what librarian would not make a strenuous effort to see that the money was forthcoming to do it properly?

Methods of preservation and classification have been devised throughout the years to facilitate the use of library materials. If the methods fail or prove inadequate for the handling of materials such as maps, do not blame the maps; be thankful that the day of the papyrus scroll and the cuneiform tablet is over.

No subject could be more appropriate for discussion today among librarians concerned with present-day working problems than maps and map administration. The interest of the public in the geography of the world has increased steadily during the past fifteen or twenty years. It is no longer the casual interest of neutral observers; it is the interest of persons who have come to realize that world geography is our geography, and that it is high time to learn a little more about it. And from official government sources we find that today the need for maps and charts of various parts of the world is both vital and urgent.

The interesting thing about this urgency in connection with maps is that it seems always to have existed. For centuries explorers, travelers, and military men have complained about the lack of good, accurate maps and charts. George Washington, our first military commander-in-chief, whose field of operations extended from Quebec to St. Augustine, found himself handicapped time and time again by the lack of good maps of the country over which his troops had to move and to fight.

In 1813, when control of the Great Lakes was being contested, the United States naval squadron under Oliver Hazard Perry had to depend on a few crude charts of the more important harbors to sail by; very few of them even pretended to be accurate, and a complete set of lake charts was nonexistent.

In 1849 there was a rush for the gold fields of California. The road to wealth lay beyond the wilderness of the plains and the Rockies; consequently, map makers and publishers sold out entire editions of maps and "tourist guides" in a very short time. Old maps were refurbished and corrected, more or less, and new ones were hastily drawn and then redrawn many times over. People would take almost anything in the way of a map which would show them an overland route to the riches on the other side of the mountains. The West, and the ways to get there, had not been well mapped. Up to that time there had not been an urgent need for careful surveys, and the maps which existed were full of errors. Vast areas were virtually unknown to white men. Hostile Indians and precarious transportation facilities added to the hazards of the overland route.

Sea captains sailing from New York to San Francisco were equally handicapped by the lack of good charts of the coast of South America, the Strait of Magellan, and the west coast of North America. Good charts of San Francisco were so rare as to be practically nonexistent. But so pressing was the demand for ships to carry passengers and freight to California that some captains sailed out of New York harbor with nothing more than an elementary school atlas to guide them around Cape Horn, an 18,000-mile voyage which sometimes took as long as five months.

An alternate route to California, avoiding the wilds of North America and the perils of Cape Horn, was established across Mexico. Starting at Veracruz the way led through San Blas to Acapulco on the Pacific Coast. From there, parties went by boat to San Francisco. This route cut the time to about sixty days. However, all those who took it were warned to go in parties of not less than fifty, in order to avoid the danger of attack by robbers.

The United States, you see, was still so huge that the unmapped territory in the middle and western parts of it would never be needed. Even as late as 1868 there was still a great deal to be learned about the West. In that year while returning with General Ulysses S. Grant from a trip to the Rockies, William Tecumseh Sherman wrote his friend Admiral Bailey bemoaning the fact that there

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were so few good maps of the region through which they were traveling.

I mention these incidents of United States history because once again history is repeating itself, in more ways than one. Today we are faced with the same shortage of geographical and cartographical information as Christopher Columbus, George Washington, and Dwight Eisenhower faced; for, in spite of the tremendous advances which have been made in geographical and cartographical research, the information is scattered and spotty.

The geographical world has shrunk in size until it has reached a point where we Americans can no longer ignore any part of it. To keep informed of the affairs which concern our welfare and safety, it is not enough to be familiar with the geography of the United States and its dependencies. Regardless of our political sentiments regarding isolation, and whether we like it or not, the world is closing in around us, and it behooves us to examine it more closely—every part of it.

Today we are obliged to recognize the importance of small islands which used to be nothing more than tiny dots on the map, unnamed and often poorly located with reference to other places. The strategy of our times is a strategy of world geography, with both sides probing the far corners of the earth for harbors which might be useful as naval bases, and giving careful consideration to every acre of level ground which might be used for air bases.

The result of all this feverish activity is a growing shortage of maps and charts. Publishers cannot keep up with the current demand for them, and huge stocks of what the public once considered as "obsolete" maps, and which publishers had accepted as heavy liabilities, have long since been sold out. Cartographers are hopelessly behind in the task of keeping up with world events, and the clamor for detailed maps of remote parts of the world continues unabated.

The shortage of geographical material extends even to some departments of our government in Washington. Today there are at least two departments of our government that are engaged in surveying the map resources of the country. Both agencies have been instituted, incidentally, since December 7, 1941. Librarians are the traditional guardians of our cultural heritage. What about preserving our defensive resources as well? Why should it be necessary for the federal government to make a state by state survey of our map

collections, when there might have been a union list of maps and charts started years ago?

If maps are relegated to the library storeroom, or if they receive only incidental consideration in the library budget and the distribution of labor within the library staff, no other problems need be discussed. However, many librarians would like to do more with maps as reference material if some of the other problems relative thereto could be solved without too much trouble, and the problems are not as overwhelming as they seem.

The problem of selection—supply and demand—is one of the chief concerns of the reference librarian. Aside from the limitations on all library budgets, there is always the question of what to buy and when to buy it. On the one hand is the theory that the appetite is created by what it is fed. On the other hand is the theory that the librarian should hold off buying until there is a demand for material on a given subject. Both schools of thought have sound, logical reasoning behind them, and both factions have evidence to prove the wisdom of their policies.

Let us consider briefly the policy of buying map material only when and if the need arises. Librarians are not the only ones who have questioned the interest of the public in maps and charts. A few years ago I talked with a group of newspapermen about the use of maps in their medium, a custom, by the way, which dates back to 1733. These editors were not at all sure about the reactions of their readers to maps used to illustrate a complex story. They knew, and every librarian knows, that the public is often unpredictable in its tastes, and that the demand for, and response to, certain types of material may change in a very short time and for no apparent reason. Moreover, public wants are so multifarious that the librarian is hard pressed to spread the collection so that it will cover the majority of requests that come in.

Unfortunately, demands for a new type of material come in waves of public sentiment, and waiting for the demand to hit the library sometimes means waiting until it is too late. The current shortage of maps illustrates this point.

Instead of waiting for the demand for particular types of material to arise, many librarians prefer to dig their wells *before* their public gets thirsty, following the principles of an old Chinese proverb. Given a specific sum of money with which to build up a general reference collection, very few librarians would have any difficulty in spending

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wisely one to five thousand dollars—until they came to the purchase of map material. For example, you would all buy an unabridged dictionary, the *United States Catalogue*, the *Readers' Guide*, an encyclopedia, one of several biographical dictionaries, Bartlett or some other book of quotations, etc., etc. But sooner or later the question of geographic tools would come up, because every library must have a few fundamental references to cover the subject. Now the *World Almanac* will answer just so many questions and no more. A pronouncing gazetteer is extremely useful for locating and spelling geographical place names, provided such places are still on the maps (figuratively).

The selection of map material for the collection presents an interesting problem. Unfortunately, the A.L.A. *Book List* does not contain a section on current map publications. The American Geographical Society issues a very useful list called *Current Geographical Publications* which covers geographical literature pretty thoroughly. However, this list does not include detailed descriptions or critical notes which might help the uninitiated librarian select maps for purchase. Two general considerations will be involved in the selection of maps and charts for the small library: cost and lasting value. The safest investment in map publications is an official map published by some branch of the United States government. Government maps are also publications of lasting value. They are well printed on good paper; the type is clear, and they tell the story they were designed to tell. They are produced at cost, and up to a few years ago their sale was practically unrestricted.

However, it is as difficult for the working librarian to keep up with government map publications as with other government documents. But, in the case of maps, the reward is well worth the effort. There is a movement afoot to prevent wasteful duplication of effort in the federal government as well as in state and civic mapping agencies. Just a few years ago an organization was created, calling itself the National Congress on Surveying and Mapping. Its membership is composed of persons who are interested either directly or indirectly in surveying and mapping, or in the end products of these fields. All sections of the country are represented in this body, and its general purpose is to coordinate the efforts of twenty-eight federal agencies (each of which is receiving a substantial annual appropriation) engaged in making surveys and maps. Another general purpose of the Congress is to see that the material is available to those who need or want it. Although this National Congress is the eighteenth attempt

made by various groups over a period of years to plan and to institute a coordinated mapping program, there are indications that this one may actually succeed.

Meanwhile there are hundreds of excellent government maps and surveys available to libraries at a nominal figure. Which of these have permanent value, or the most nearly permanent value? Which are best adapted to the use of the small public library?

One of the most obvious, of course, and one with which we are all familiar, is the series of United States topographical sheets. These maps, are on a scale of one mile to an inch, which is large enough for most needs. They are probably the most accurate maps of their kind that we shall have for many years. Frequently they combine data obtained by more than one government agency. The maps and charts issued by the U.S. Coast and Geodetic survey, and the charts of the Hydrographic Survey are well known and widely used for reference in many parts of the country. The General Land Office wall map of the United States, revised from time to time, is a boon to librarians. There are lists issued periodically by the U.S. Superintendent of Documents, which explain the important features of each map and how it may be used. Official maps of other countries, when and if available, are usually well made and equally desirable.

If a librarian must be limited in the purchase of map material, he should have a good general atlas of the world and a few sheet maps on a larger scale of the various continents, countries, and smaller political subdivisions. A good wall map of the world and a good-sized globe would be highly desirable additions to any collection.

In buying sheet maps from a commercial publisher, it is necessary only to follow a few simple rules which also pertain in the selection of books and other library material. A map is supposed to convey a picture. If it does this clearly, without confusing the reader, the chances are it is a good map. And if a map is drawn to scale, with clean lines carefully laid down, with parallels of latitude and meridians of longitude indicated, the chances are it will be a fairly accurate map, though not necessarily so. Whether we realize it or not, all of us are capable of editing a map or chart which is badly done. Good maps are almost never badly printed!

The storage of sheet maps is an old problem which has been simplified in recent years by the construction of several types of map storage drawers. They now have certain things in common. They are usually narrow, from top to bottom, not more than two inches or close

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to it. They measure 26½" from front to back, and 43½" from side to side. They come in banks of five drawers apiece, are interchangeable, and can be stacked high without danger. The dimensions are arbitrary, but they are the ones that have proved most generally acceptable among librarians who have purchased them.

Everything said here about maps and map administration has been said before, in one way or another, and the problems today are essentially the same as they were seventy-five or a hundred years ago. But these remarks will have been justified if they encourage librarians to go ahead, if they reassure the profession regarding the fundamental value of the material, and if they help to discourage the publication of such fatalistic literature as "Floundering Among the Maps."³

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Manuscript Collections

ROBERT L. BRUBAKER

MANUSCRIPT RESOURCES for a study of state and local history are available in a wide variety of institutions in the United States. The largest and most important collections are in major historical societies, university libraries, a few state libraries, larger public libraries, and independent research libraries. Smaller collections can be found in a profusion of local historical societies, historical museums, historic houses, and smaller public libraries.

Collection and preservation of manuscripts has always been an important function of major historical societies. When Jared Sparks, history professor, president of Harvard, and a collector and editor of the papers of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, wrote in 1826 about the need to save the papers of important men from further neglect and destruction, he suggested that “. . . no better plan could be adopted, than that of societies in the several states expressly established for the purpose.”¹ J. Franklin Jameson, then a professor at Brown University, was thinking primarily of manuscripts when he reminded the members of the American Historical Association at the the end of the century that “. . . there is no other country in the world in which the libraries of historical societies have so important a place as they have among the libraries of the United States.”²

American historical societies began collecting manuscripts before the end of the eighteenth century. Jeremy Belknap of the Massachusetts Historical Society wrote to a friend in 1795 that he was “. . . prowling about like a wolf for the prey . . .” for manuscripts and other historical materials for that recently organized society.³ The New-York Historical Society, the Pennsylvania Historical Society, and societies in several New England states were collecting manuscripts by the time Jared Sparks made his plea for preservation, and other societies were established in the Midwest and the South during the

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1830's and 1840's.⁴⁻⁶ By 1905, thirty-seven major historical societies reported to the American Historical Association that they had manuscript holdings, and at least four others had deposited manuscripts in another library.⁷

Historical societies were the only institutions that made a sustained effort to collect manuscripts during most of the nineteenth century. The federal government acquired the personal papers of a few presidents and statesmen, but these were stored at the Department of State and (except for some papers that were published) were not available for research. The Library of Congress acquired a few important manuscripts after the Civil War, but the Library did not begin an active collecting program until a separate Department of Manuscripts was created in 1897.⁸⁻⁹

University libraries began collecting manuscripts about 1890, and became most active after about 1920. Harvard University Library paid little attention to manuscript collecting until 1914, when the Harvard Commission on Western History began acquiring material on western expansion.¹⁰ Hubert Howe Bancroft began gathering his private collection of manuscripts and books during the 1860's, but the University of California did not acquire it until 1907.¹¹ Duke University Library began extensive manuscript acquisitions in 1929.¹¹ The Southern Historical Collection was established as a division of the University of North Carolina Library in 1930, although J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton previously had acquired the nucleus of the collection during his years as head of the department of history.¹² Indiana University Library began the large scale acquisition of manuscripts during the 1950's.¹³ Collections of personal papers occasionally came to university libraries during the nineteenth century, but they usually were unsought and rarely were processed for use. The collecting programs that enabled the larger university libraries to rival the larger historical societies as manuscript depositories were twentieth-century phenomena.

Survey of Holdings

Some perspective on the different institutions that collect manuscripts can be gained through an analysis of the statistics reported to Philip Hamer in 1960 for his *A Guide to Archives and Manuscripts in the United States*.¹⁴ Libraries provided descriptions of their manuscripts and rough estimates of their total holdings, usually by the number of manuscript pieces, but occasionally by linear or cubic feet. A few libraries did not give estimates of total holdings. To facilitate

comparisons in this paper, linear feet have been converted into number of pieces by assuming that there are 900 manuscript pieces per linear foot. Archival institutions have been excluded from the totals, although state historical societies that house both the state archives and a manuscript section or department are included.

The size of a library's manuscript holdings, of course, is only one indication of the importance of the library's manuscripts. One southern library, for instance, has a collection of the papers of a single iron works that is over twice as large as the entire manuscript holdings of a midwestern library that specializes in materials on the American Revolution and has one of the most important collections on the subject. Quantity and quality are obviously not synonymous, but statistics on quantity do give some indication of the manuscript resources of the various types of libraries.

Four major sections of the country are mentioned in the following discussion. The Northeast includes New England, the Middle Atlantic States, Delaware, and West Virginia. The Midwest includes the states created from the old Northwest Territory, and Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska. The South extends to Arkansas and Texas. The West includes North and South Dakota, Oklahoma, and the states farther west. As thus defined, the states in the Midwest all achieved statehood by 1867, while those in the West, except for California, Oregon, Nevada, and Colorado, did not achieve statehood until after 1888.

Thirty-three libraries reported to Hamer that they had one million or more manuscripts each. At least six other libraries that did not report totals probably had holdings as large as this, and some libraries have undoubtedly reached the one million mark since 1960. Among the libraries that probably had one million or more manuscripts in 1960 were twelve major historical societies, twenty university libraries, six major public, state and independent research libraries, and the Library of Congress.

A number of other libraries had at least 500,000 but less than one million manuscripts. These included five historical societies, two university libraries, and two other libraries.

The Library of Congress, which had over sixteen million manuscripts in 1960 and now has over twenty million, is the largest manuscript depository in the country. The New York Public Library and Yale University,¹⁵ which had about nine million manuscripts each, appear to have the next largest accumulations. Six other libraries reported that

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they had at least four million manuscripts. Among these were the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, and the libraries at Princeton University, the University of Virginia, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Oklahoma.

The most extensive system of manuscript collecting by historical societies, university libraries, and a few state and public libraries is found in the Northeast, with neither historical societies nor university libraries clearly dominant. Large manuscript depositories are particularly numerous in New York and Pennsylvania. The New York Public Library, the New York State Library, the libraries of Cornell University, the University of Rochester, and probably Columbia University, each contain over one million manuscripts. The New-York Historical Society has about 750,000 manuscripts.¹⁶ Four libraries in Pennsylvania contain at least one million manuscripts each. These are the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the University of Pennsylvania Library, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College.

Elsewhere in the Northeast historical societies are dominant in collecting manuscripts pertaining to local and regional history, although several university libraries have extensive collections of manuscripts on other subjects. The Massachusetts Historical Society, the Connecticut Historical Society, libraries at Yale, Harvard, and Princeton universities, and the University of West Virginia have over one million manuscripts, and the New Hampshire Historical Society has over 500,000 pieces. Four other historical societies in the Northeast have less than 500,000 manuscripts, and two did not report their total holdings.

Historical societies dominate manuscript collecting in most of the Midwest. The Ohio Historical Society, the Western Reserve Historical Society, the Illinois State Historical Library, the Missouri Historical Society, the Minnesota Historical Society, the Nebraska State Historical Society, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, and probably the State Historical Society of Iowa each have over one million manuscripts. Indiana University, with over one million manuscripts, has the largest collection in Indiana, although some collecting is done by the Indiana State Library and the Indiana Historical Society. The Historical Society of Michigan is the only major historical society in the Midwest that has not collected manuscripts. The largest manuscript depositories in Michigan are the Michigan Historical Collections at the University of Michigan and the Burton Historical Collection at the Detroit Public Library, both of which contain over one million

manuscripts. The William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan is also highly respected for its holdings of eighteenth and nineteenth century manuscripts. The only other libraries in the Midwest with one million manuscripts or more are the Newberry Library (Chicago) and the University of Chicago Library.

Historical societies play a secondary role today in manuscript collecting in the South. Numerous societies were established during the nineteenth century, and those in Virginia, Maryland, South Carolina, Georgia, and Texas have had a continuous existence.¹⁷ All of these have important accumulations of manuscripts, but they are relatively small compared to the holdings of six major university libraries and several state departments of archives and history.

The Maryland Historical Society is the only society in the South that reported over one million manuscripts in 1960. The Virginia Historical Society is highly respected for its research facilities and publications, but it had only about 500,000 manuscripts. Other major historical societies in South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Louisiana had considerably less than 500,000 manuscripts each.

Some southern historical societies have given their manuscripts to other institutions. The Alabama Historical Society gave its holdings to the Alabama Department of Archives and History when the latter was founded in 1901,¹⁸ and the Mississippi Historical Society followed this example the next year when the Mississippi Department of Archives and History was established.¹⁹ The Historical Society of North Carolina gave its manuscripts to the University of North Carolina for inclusion in the Southern Historical Collections,¹² and the Texas State Historical Association has deposited its manuscripts in the University of Texas Library.¹⁴ The Florida Historical Society's collections are now administered by the University of South Florida Library at Tampa,²⁰ and the Tennessee Historical Society plans to have its manuscripts processed by the Tennessee State Library and Archives.²¹

The major impetus to manuscript collecting in the South was provided in the twentieth century by J. G. de Roulhac Hamilton, who traveled throughout the section acquiring materials for the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina. Partly because Hamilton showed what could be done, both historical societies and universities began collecting more extensively.²² Four university libraries now have holdings of over three million manuscripts each, and two others have at least one million manuscripts. These include the University of Virginia, the University of North Carolina, Duke

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University, the University of South Carolina, Louisiana State University, and the University of Texas. As Thomas D. Clark stated in 1953, "the South has come a long way in 50 years in the preservation of its records."²³

Nearly every western state has a state historical society that collects manuscripts. Many of the state universities and a few other libraries also do some collecting. With a few important exceptions, however, all of these libraries have extremely small holdings.

In 1910 the secretary of the Nevada Historical Society advanced several reasons for the paucity of historical materials then in western libraries. She pointed out that the West was more recently settled, that the migratory habits of westerners had destroyed much that once existed, and that the inhabitants of the region did not yet consider history important. "Unlike the East," she continued, "we have no prospect of large private endowments; unlike the central region, we have no certain support from the State."²⁴

There is greater public and private support for western historical agencies today, but only two university libraries and an independent research library have holdings of manuscripts comparable to those of larger libraries in the East and Midwest.

None of the western historical societies reported having as many as 500,000 manuscripts in 1960. Only the Historical Society of Colorado and the State Historical Society of North Dakota had as many as 400,000 manuscripts. Historical societies in California, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington had approximately 100,000 items or less, and societies in Nevada, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Utah did not report totals. The Historical Society of New Mexico deposited its manuscripts some years ago in the Museum of New Mexico, which recently transferred them to the New Mexico State Records Center and Archives.²⁵ The Wyoming State Historical Society leaves manuscript collecting to the Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department.

The same situation prevails in most other western libraries. The Bancroft Library at the University of California, the University of Oklahoma, and the Henry E. Huntington Library in California are each well past the one million mark. All other western libraries, however, reported totals of less than 500,000 manuscripts each.

Many libraries in the United States have manuscript holdings ranging from a few items to 500,000 manuscripts. Among these are twenty-one major historical societies. Thirteen societies reported that they had at least 100,000 but less than 500,000, five had more than 10,000

but less than 100,000, and three had less than 5,000 manuscripts in 1960. Twelve major historical societies gave no estimates of total holdings.

Approximately 780 other libraries reported to Hamer that they had less than 500,000 manuscripts in 1960. These figures do not include ethnic and religious historical societies, archival institutions, seminaries, and medical and scientific libraries. Approximately 390 of the 780 libraries are located in the Northeast, 190 in the Midwest, 110 in the South, and 90 in the West. About 260 are colleges and universities, 200 are local historical societies, 90 are historical museums or historic houses, 220 are public libraries, and less than 20 are state libraries.

The vast majority have extremely small manuscript holdings. About 320 libraries reported that they have less than 1,000 manuscripts. Another 220 did not provide estimates of total holdings, but the descriptions in Hamer indicate that most of them have less than 1,000 items. Fifty libraries reported holdings as large as 25,000 manuscripts per library, and the holdings of about 200 libraries ranged from 1,000 to less than 25,000 manuscripts.

College and university libraries with moderate quantities of manuscripts are located in all sections of the country. There are approximately 75 college and university libraries in the Northeast with less than 500,000 manuscripts, 80 in the Midwest, 60 in the South, and 45 in the West. About 25 of these have over 25,000 manuscripts, 55 have holdings ranging from 1,000 to 25,000 items, 75 have less than 1,000 manuscripts, and 105 did not report estimates.

Local historical societies with manuscript holdings are located mostly in the Northeast and the Midwest. About 135 societies in the Northeast, 50 in the Midwest, 10 in the South, and 5 in the West have some manuscripts. A few societies have fairly sizeable holdings. About 10 societies have over 25,000 manuscripts each and 80 have holdings ranging from 1,000 to 25,000 manuscripts. Approximately 65 of the 90 societies that have at least 1,000 manuscripts are located in the Northeast, and 15 are located in the Midwest.

Approximately 40 historical museums and historic houses in the Northeast, 20 in the Midwest, 10 in the South, and 20 in the West have small holdings of manuscripts. Only 30 of them have as many as 1,000 items.

Public libraries with small holdings of manuscripts are also concentrated heavily in the Northeast. Approximately 135 public libraries

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in the Northeast, 40 in the Midwest, 25 in the South, and 20 in the West have holdings of less than 500,000 manuscripts. Only about 45 of these libraries reported that they had over 1,000 manuscripts, and about 135 public libraries reported that they had less than 1,000 manuscripts each.

Only a few state libraries collect private manuscripts. Four state libraries in the Northeast, in addition to the New York State Library, three in the Midwest, four in the South, and three in the West reported manuscript holdings to Hamer. Seven state libraries either did not give estimates for their total holdings or did not give separate estimates for private manuscripts and archival materials. Only one of the others had over 25,000 manuscripts. Five state libraries reported total holdings of between 1,000 and 25,000 manuscripts, and one had less than 1,000 manuscripts.

The size of the manuscript holdings of the various libraries has been affected by at least nine major factors. The length of time that a library has collected manuscripts, its total economic resources, and the goals of the library with the resulting allocation of available funds are of obvious importance. Also of some importance are the length of time that a state has been settled and the extent to which its inhabitants are aware that manuscript materials are important and should be preserved.

Three factors have been crucial: whether a library has had one or more directors who were intensely interested in collecting manuscripts, whether the collecting program has been active or passive in nature, and whether there are nearby institutions with strong collections of manuscripts and vigorous collecting programs. One can often find periods of rapid growth or stagnation in collecting that resulted primarily from a particular individual's interest or apathy. An institution that prepares a file of leads to possible sources of manuscripts and employs staff members to travel through the state to examine and acquire them will build its manuscript holdings more rapidly than an institution that relies primarily on chance information about the existence of manuscripts. When other institutions are able to obtain most of the manuscripts of a region, a historical society may decide to devote its resources to publication, a historical museum, school services, or some of the other important functions of historical societies. Other libraries may make similar decisions.

Finally, the quantity of a library's manuscript resources will depend on the extent to which the library seeks bulky twentieth-century

collections. A library that specializes in eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century manuscripts will inevitably accumulate a smaller quantity than a library that attempts to preserve important twentieth-century materials.

Scope of Collections

Major historical societies usually collect manuscripts pertaining to the state in which the society is located. Some of the early private societies followed the example of the Massachusetts Historical Society, whose first constitution called for the collection of manuscripts and other historical materials that helped to “. . . mark the genius, delineate the manners, and trace the progress of society in the United States.”²⁶ Most societies have since adopted a more limited collecting policy, although they sometimes continue acquisitions in special fields of general American history in which they are strong. The New-York Historical Society, for instance, collects primary material on slavery, travels in America before 1850, the Civil War, naval and military history through 1898, and circus history, as well as New York history.²⁷ The constitutions of most state historical societies specified from the beginning that they were to collect manuscripts concerning their respective states, although these limitations were frequently ignored, particularly when there was no collecting program in a neighboring state.

Despite the statewide focus of their collection policies, most major historical societies have sizeable quantities of manuscripts pertaining to other states. These manuscripts usually concern the region in which the state is located, but frequently concern distant states. This results partly from broader collection policies in the past, and partly from the nature of most manuscript collections. The papers of a relatively obscure family in Illinois, for example, contain letters from a son describing an overland trip to California and gold mining in 1849, and letters from another relative who was a merchant in Pennsylvania. Families and individuals move from one state to another, and men who become prominent on a national or even a state level usually correspond with men of similar interests in other states. Few manuscript collections of any importance are exclusively concerned with one state.

Within their geographical limitations, major historical societies now collect manuscripts on a broad variety of subjects. At the end of the nineteenth century, professional historians criticized historical societies

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for being preoccupied with the period of settlement, the colonial or territorial period, early statehood, and with political and military matters.²⁸ Many societies are still strongest in these areas, but most societies now collect materials for social, intellectual, economic, agricultural, business, and recent history. One of the most extensive collection programs has been that at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, which has carried out special projects to collect manuscripts pertaining to business history, labor history, education, medicine, and mass communications with the aid of grants from the University of Wisconsin, the Rockefeller Foundation, the state Medical Society, and the state Federation of Labor.²⁹

When the Library of Congress began collecting manuscripts actively at the end of the nineteenth century, the Library sought to avoid competition with other libraries. Herbert Putnam, then the Librarian of Congress, suggested in 1901 that material pertaining to particular states or localities should be collected by local libraries, but that anything pertaining to the origin, history, and operations of the federal government should be left to the Library of Congress.³⁰ Later policy statements were similar, except that the Library's interests expanded beyond government and politics. A statement in 1950 expressed interest in acquiring ". . . papers of individuals or families or records of organizations that have played significant roles on a national scale," and particularly ". . . material of national significance in such fields as government and politics, diplomatic and military affairs, literature, music, and aeronautics. . . ." ³¹

Many major historical societies, nevertheless, have substantial quantities of manuscripts that are of national significance. Some of these were accumulated before the Library of Congress began collecting manuscripts on a major scale. Even today, however, many administrators do not accept, without some reservations, the thesis that state historical societies should limit themselves to materials of state or local significance.³² Important national events or developments usually take place within particular states, and the papers of nationally prominent individuals and organizations are often vitally important to the study of a state's history. When a man has been both governor of his state and an important United States Senator, therefore, the location of his papers is likely to depend on whether a major historical society, a university, or the Library of Congress approached his heirs first. The prestige of having family papers in the Library of Congress, however, often gives that Library a decided advantage.

The collection policies of many state universities are quite similar to those of major historical societies, although universities usually acquire manuscripts concerning English and American literature as well as manuscripts concerning the history of the state or a part of the state in which the university is located. Some major private and state universities acquire manuscripts concerning a region rather than a state. Harvard, Yale, and the Bancroft Library at the University of California have important collections concerning the Far West, and the manuscripts at Duke University and the University of North Carolina pertain to the entire South. Many major universities also have substantial collections relating to the history of early and modern Europe, Asia, Latin America, and general American history.

There is inevitably some competition in manuscript collecting between historical societies, other libraries, and private collectors. There have been occasional complaints from historical societies about competition with the Library of Congress.³² A questionnaire returned by major historical societies in 1962, however, indicated that they encounter competition with universities and other local libraries more frequently than with the Library of Congress.³³

Cooperative agreements have occasionally been worked out to reduce competition. In New Jersey, for example, the state historical society, the state university, a major public library, and several of the larger local historical societies agreed on specialized areas of collection.³⁴ Elsewhere, the State Historical Society of Missouri participated in a joint collecting project with the library and the department of history at the University of Missouri.³⁵ Joint collection programs between two different manuscript depositories are rare, but informal agreements similar to the one in New Jersey exist in other states.

Although efforts have been made to reduce competition, there is by no means general agreement that competition is wholly undesirable. One undesirable consequence of competition, at least from the point of view of libraries, is that competition increases the price of manuscripts. (Most libraries acquire the vast majority of their manuscripts through donations, but some manuscripts that are otherwise unobtainable are purchased.) Cooperative agreements are desirable because they ensure that manuscripts are placed in the most appropriate library. But lack of competition can mean that the libraries in an area are neglecting their responsibilities, and that manuscripts remain in private hands, frequently disintegrating from lack of proper care. L. Quincy Mumford, the present Librarian of Congress, conceded in

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1956 that there is considerable competition between the Library of Congress and other libraries, but he believed that competition is “. . . healthy for the reason that it provides the surest guarantee of the survival and preservation of historic papers.”³² Similar attitudes have been expressed by administrators in historical societies and university libraries.³⁶⁻³⁷

Staff

Numerous monographs have discussed the administration of manuscripts during the last several decades. Most of this literature, however, does not attempt to discover the extent to which recommended policies and procedures are actually practiced by major libraries, and much of the information about specific libraries is no longer current.

In order to obtain systematic current information, the author sent a questionnaire to forty-seven major historical societies and fifteen major universities. All of the major historical societies that reported manuscript holdings to Hamer were queried. Only major university libraries with holdings of at least one million manuscripts were included. Questionnaires also were sent to fifteen other libraries with extensive manuscript holdings. Forty-one historical societies, fourteen university libraries, and twelve other libraries returned the questionnaire. Eleven of the responding historical societies are located in the Northeast, thirteen in the Midwest, six in the South, and eleven in the West.³⁸

Information was requested about the size of the staff working with manuscripts, the nature of the card catalog and other published and unpublished guides to manuscripts, and policies on the use of manuscripts, literary rights, and photoduplication. Most questions could be answered with one word, but five required brief descriptions. Manuscript specialists in the various libraries filled out most of the questionnaires, but a few were answered by head librarians or directors.

Eighteen of the forty-one historical societies and all of the fourteen university libraries reported that they have a curator of manuscripts or a manuscript librarian devoting full-time to manuscripts (other titles are used in some libraries). Four of the societies with full-time manuscript specialists are located in the Northeast, ten in the Midwest, two in the South, and two in the West. Only two societies with one million or more manuscripts, one in the Midwest and one in the South, reported that they do not have a full-time specialist. These societies and the other twenty-one societies with smaller accumula-

tions rely on one or more staff members who spend part of their time on manuscripts. In some societies one librarian does all of the work in the library, including care of manuscripts. Eleven societies rely partly on volunteer workers to process manuscripts, but none relies entirely on volunteers. All but one of the university libraries have part-time student help available from time to time, but only eight historical societies have any student assistance.

A few libraries have had manuscript curators or librarians for long periods of time, but in most libraries this specialization is a relatively recent development. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin has had a manuscript librarian for about sixty years, and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania has had one for about fifty years. Libraries that have had a manuscript curator or librarian for at least forty years include the Minnesota Historical Society, the New York Public Library, the American Antiquarian Society, and the Henry E. Huntington Library at San Marino, California. Two historical societies and one university library have had manuscript specialists for about thirty years, three historical societies and nine university libraries have had specialists for periods of ten to twenty-five years, two historical societies and one university library have had specialists for periods of five to nine years, and six historical societies have had specialists for less than five years. A few libraries did not indicate how long they have had manuscript specialists.

The manuscript staff in most libraries is relatively small. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin has six to eight full-time staff members for its Division of Archives and Manuscripts, and the Kansas State Historical Society has a staff of five for such a combined operation. One university library reported that it has a full-time staff of six, one has a full-time staff of five, and two university libraries have a full-time staff of four. Three historical societies and five university libraries reported a full-time staff of three, and four historical societies and three universities have a full-time staff of two. The other libraries do not have a full-time assistant for the manuscript curator or librarian, although many have part-time assistants.

Most libraries undoubtedly need a larger manuscript staff than they now have. A questionnaire circulated in 1944 to some of the larger historical societies revealed that nearly all of them had large backlogs of unprocessed manuscripts.³⁹ The author's present questionnaire did not specifically ask for such information, but several societies com-

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mented that 30 per cent or more of their manuscripts are not yet adequately cataloged.

The State Historical Society of Wisconsin furnishes one of the best examples of the backlog that can accumulate when a society exerts itself to obtain twentieth-century materials. In the early 1950's, a staff of two professionals and one half-time student assistant processed from 15,000 to 25,000 pieces annually. Because of the numerous collection projects, manuscript accessions increased to an average of over 200,000 pieces per year during the 1950's. By revising processing methods and adding two full-time staff members and several part-time assistants, the Society was processing 300,000 to 500,000 pieces per year during the early 1960's. Nevertheless, the Society still had a large backlog of unprocessed materials.⁴⁰

Most libraries acquire less than 200,000 manuscript items per year, but annual accessions of 100,000 items are not uncommon. The papers of a single major public figure frequently contain over 200,000 items. The small manuscript staffs characteristic of most libraries serve as a bar to large-scale acquisition of twentieth century materials, and make it inevitable that most libraries will continue to have large quantities of unprocessed manuscripts in the foreseeable future.

Catalogs

The best recent discussion of manuscript cataloging is in Lucile Kane's *A Guide to the Care and Administration of Manuscripts*.⁴¹ Her discussion was based partly on the "Rules for Descriptive Cataloging in the Library of Congress . . . for Collections of Manuscripts,"⁴² distributed to libraries in 1954 to help standardize cataloging and facilitate submission of entries to the projected *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections*. Paul S. Dunkin's⁴³ article in an earlier issue of *Library Trends* is another useful discussion of changes in cataloging procedures. Kane and Dunkin provide bibliographies of writings on the subject up to 1960. Several other articles have been published since that time.⁴⁴⁻⁴⁶

A few decades ago the ideal, if not the reality, was that card catalogs to manuscripts should contain at least three cards for each manuscript piece or item in a collection. These included cards for author, recipient, and date, and sometimes added entries for subjects. Such a system was suggested in manuals published by the Library of Congress in 1934⁴⁷ and by the Minnesota Historical Society in 1936.⁴⁸

The mounting pressures of unprocessed manuscripts soon forced

most libraries to devise methods of group description for most manuscript collections. This method generally includes a main entry containing a brief description of an entire collection, added entries for authors and subjects (the number depending on the size, nature, and importance of a collection), and occasionally analytical entries for particularly important individual items. A few libraries still retain the ideal of individual item cataloging for all collections, and many libraries use this method for particularly important collections. Individual manuscripts that are not part of a collection, of course, must be cataloged separately.

The "Rules for Collections of Manuscripts" distributed by the Library of Congress suggested the form and type of information to be included on the main entry. Added entries for authors, as developed by other libraries, generally consist of one card for any one author of incoming correspondence in a collection, citing the inclusive dates and the total number of letters by that author. Because of the large number of relatively insignificant correspondents in most collections, added entries for authors are usually prepared only for authors of numerous letters and for single items by more prominent correspondents. Added entries for subjects are generally used more sparingly than added entries for authors.

Because large manuscript collections are frequently so complex that the main entry in the card catalog can provide at best only a superficial description, libraries have also developed various types of more detailed guides to individual collections, usually available at libraries in typescript, and sometimes published for distribution to other libraries. An early form of guide was the calendar, which contained descriptions of individual letters or documents arranged chronologically. Another form was the author index, listing the specific dates rather than the inclusive dates of all letters by each author. A more usual form of guide today is the register or inventory, which contains biographical data and descriptions of manuscripts by containers rather than by individual items. Such guides sometimes contain information similar to that found in calendars and author indexes.

Main entries similar to those suggested by the Library of Congress are used by twenty-four of the major historical societies and nine of the universities that replied to the questionnaire. The systems in several of these libraries, though similar to that suggested by the Library of Congress, were developed long before 1954. Some libraries use the printed cards prepared for the National Union Catalog of Manuscript

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Collections and distributed by the Library of Congress. Most of the other libraries use a system of group description utilizing a main entry and added entries, although the form and type of information may differ from that suggested by the Library of Congress rules.

Individual item cataloging for all collections is still used by five major historical societies, four in the Northeast and one in the Midwest. One society in the Northeast uses the collection cards provided by the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections and makes temporary collection cards until they arrive, but the society also catalogs each piece by author, recipient, and (for the period before 1800) date. One society has only about 1 per cent of its manuscripts cataloged, but the society uses individual item cataloging for recent accessions and hopes to treat the backlog in the same way. Another society has about 60 per cent of its manuscripts cataloged. Individual item cataloging for some of the more important collections is used by two other societies in the Northeast and two in the South.

Added entries for authors of incoming correspondence are prepared by thirty historical societies and all but one of the university libraries that answered the questionnaire. Libraries that do individual item cataloging, of course, are not included in these totals. One society in the Northeast, one in the Midwest, two in the South, and four in the West do not prepare added entries for authors.

Added entries for subjects are prepared by thirty-five of the historical societies, and all but two of the university libraries. Six societies, however, prepare subject entries only to a limited extent. Such entries are not prepared by one society in the Northeast, one in the Midwest, three in the South, and two in the West.

Twenty-five historical societies and all but one of the university libraries have unpublished guides to manuscripts in addition to a card catalog. Eight societies mentioned calendars, four said that they have author indexes to a few collections, and the remaining libraries have inventories, registers, or other types of unpublished guides. Some libraries have calendars and author indexes for a few collections, but inventories and registers for the rest. Unpublished guides are not available in four historical societies in the Northeast, three in the Midwest, one in the South, and eight in the West.

Replies to the questionnaire indicate that many libraries have too limited a manuscript staff even to prepare an adequate card catalog based on the principles of group description. The situation is rarely as desperate as that at one western historical society, where the librarian

lamented that "our manuscripts are in a deplorable condition and have been neglected for years. I don't think any work has *ever* been done on them." But eight out of forty-one societies reported that they prepare no added entries for authors, seven societies prepare none for subjects, and sixteen have no unpublished guides to large collections. Even among the libraries that do prepare such entries and guides, the adequacy of the card catalog varies considerably. Several librarians commented that they consider their card catalogs for manuscripts quite inadequate. Not until funds are available for increased staffs, however, can improvements be expected.

Manuscripts pertaining to almost any subject of research are scattered about the country, often in libraries where scholars would never think of looking.⁴⁹ For many years historical societies and other libraries have publicized recent manuscript accessions in their own journals and news bulletins, and frequently in such publications as the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*. Many libraries have also published comprehensive guides to their entire manuscript holdings, since few scholars can take the time to look through hundreds of statements concerning annual accessions. The majority of the comprehensive guides to manuscripts have been published since 1940, although some libraries published such guides earlier.⁵⁰

Ten of the major historical societies have published comprehensive guides to their manuscript collections. The Virginia Historical Society published a guide in 1901, which has not yet been revised. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin published one guide in 1906, a second guide in 1944, and a supplement in 1957. The Minnesota Historical Society published a guide in 1935 and a revision in 1955. Other guides were published by the Oregon Historical Society in 1940, the New-York Historical Society in 1941, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1949, the Ohio Historical Society in 1953, the Kentucky Historical Society in 1955, and the New Jersey Historical Society in 1957. The South Carolina Historical Society published a guide in a ten-part series in its journal between 1944 and 1947. Other societies have published less detailed guides, usually ten to fifteen pages in length, in their journals. These guides are listed in Hamer's *A Guide to Archives and Manuscripts in the United States*.¹⁴

Most of the universities with one million or more manuscripts have published comprehensive guides to their holdings. The University of North Carolina, Duke University, the University of Rochester, and Louisiana State University published comprehensive guides during the

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1940's, and Columbia University, Yale University, and the University of Oklahoma did so during the 1950's. Bancroft Library at the University of California, the University of Michigan, and West Virginia University have published guides since 1960. Guides have also been prepared by colleges and universities with smaller accumulations of manuscripts. Four of the major universities that answered the questionnaire, however, have never published comprehensive guides to their manuscripts.

Partly because many manuscript depositories have never been able to publish comprehensive guides to their manuscripts, it has long been apparent that a national union catalog would greatly simplify the task of locating pertinent manuscript materials. Plans for such a catalog were developed during the early 1950's,⁵¹ and with the aid of a grant from the Council on Library Resources, the Library of Congress began the work that culminated in the publication of the first three volumes of *The National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections* (NUCMC), by early 1964.⁵²

The usefulness of a national union catalog of manuscripts depends partly on the number of manuscript depositories that submit entries. A national union catalog of books can be useful even though a relatively small percentage of the total number of libraries in the country participate, because most titles will be found in at least one of the reporting libraries. Since manuscripts are unique, complete coverage can be obtained only if all manuscript depositories participate in the project.

Most of the historical societies and university libraries that answered the present writer's questionnaire plan to participate in the *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections*, but a few do not. Twenty-three historical societies and nine of the universities had submitted entries by September 1963, and most of the others expect to do so in the near future. Six historical societies and two universities said they have no present intention of participating.

Two of the societies that do not plan to participate are located in the Northeast, and four are in the West. One has about 500,000 manuscripts, and has had a manuscript librarian for about one year. The others have less than 100,000 manuscripts, and have extremely small staffs. Both of the universities have published comprehensive guides to their holdings, and they apparently believe that participation in the NUCMC is unnecessary for that reason. None of the six historical societies has published a comprehensive guide.

The NUCMC will ease some of the burdens of scholarship immensely, even without information on the holdings of libraries that cannot submit entries because of inadequate staffs. Also, the NUCMC staff will probably be busy for some years to come with processing entries submitted by libraries that are already participating. If the NUCMC is ever to approach completeness, however, some means of assistance, through grants or otherwise, will have to be devised for those libraries that are unable to prepare their own entries.

Use of Materials

Libraries have placed various restrictions on the use of manuscripts in the past, usually because manuscripts are unique, irreplaceable, and often fragile, sometimes because of conditions imposed by donors, and occasionally because sensational use of material might discourage potential donors from giving other collections to a library. Howard H. Peckham has said in an earlier issue of *Library Trends* that the obligation to preserve and the need to keep out thieves and persons who mutilate manuscripts means that a prospective reader should be able to identify himself. Peckham continued: "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."⁵³

The author's questionnaire sought to ascertain the extent of this attitude by requesting a brief description of each library's restrictions on who can use manuscripts. Libraries were specifically asked whether manuscripts can be used by graduate students, undergraduates, local historians, and genealogists.

All but two of the historical societies and all of the university libraries indicated that they do not restrict the use of their manuscripts to scholars and graduate students (two groups that overlap in part), although many libraries do prefer that manuscripts be used only for serious research. Twenty-seven historical societies and seven universities said that any of the named categories can use manuscripts or that there are no restrictions except those occasionally imposed by donors. One western historical society interpreted the laws governing the society to mean that the society is required to allow anyone to use manuscripts under any circumstances. Four other historical societies and five universities indicated that there are no restrictions on

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any of the specified groups of persons per se, although use of manuscripts is limited to anyone with a "serious or legitimate interest," a "bona fide purpose," a "legitimate research request," or to "any serious researcher."

Several libraries said that manuscripts are usually not made available to genealogists, and some libraries that mentioned a serious or legitimate purpose probably discourage genealogists from using many manuscript collections. The general attitude, however, appears to be similar to that of the librarian of an eastern university, who said: "Local historians and genealogists are granted access to manuscript collections if they appear to need them and can use them with profit. My experience is that local historians and genealogists show more respect for manuscripts than many advanced scholars and research workers. Why discourage them?"

The criteria mentioned by other libraries were varied. The manuscripts of one historical society in a major metropolitan area in the East are open to any adult who has proper identifying credentials, can offer a satisfactory explanation of why he is interested, and can prove through conversation that he has performed preliminary research and is familiar with his subject. One midwestern society said that journalists who are looking for a "hot story" are occasionally "restricted by subterfuge," and that certain manuscript dealers and collectors are discouraged from using collections when the staff does not have time to watch them closely.

In general, libraries with restrictions almost invariably make manuscripts available to college and university faculty, graduate students working on theses or dissertations, and others who are working on articles or books for publication, but they will examine requests for use by undergraduates and others a little more carefully before making a decision.

One important problem for libraries and users of manuscripts is the question of common law literary property rights. In a discussion of the application of these rights to private correspondence, Ralph Shaw has said that they are the means by which the author of a letter ". . . or his heirs in perpetuity, may, under normal circumstances, prevent the publication of his letter, or, in rarer circumstances, may first publish it."⁵⁴ Unlike statutory copyright, common law literary property rights are perpetual and are terminated only by "general publication."⁵⁵ Some courts have held that the deposit of correspondence and other unpublished writings in a library where they can be read

by the general public constitutes "general publication" and terminates literary rights. Courts have not ruled consistently, however, and there has been no clear test case in the federal courts.⁶⁶

Because of the uncertainties concerning literary rights, libraries have often been urged to request donors to dedicate to the public whatever literary rights the donor may have in a collection. Otherwise scholars must face the onerous task of locating hundreds of authors and their heirs to obtain permission to quote, or they must publish with the threat of a possible lawsuit hanging over their heads. The problem is most acute with twentieth-century collections; there is considerably less likelihood of legal action resulting from publication of earlier materials. A committee of the American Historical Association recommended in 1951 that libraries should make every effort to persuade donors to surrender literary property rights.⁵⁷ David C. Mearns, chief of the manuscript division at the Library of Congress, said in an earlier issue of *Library Trends* that, whenever practicable, instruments of gift should include a dedication of literary property rights.⁵⁸ Libraries have been requested to include information concerning literary rights in entries submitted to *The National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections*.⁴²

The vast majority of American libraries have totally ignored recommendations that they secure dedications of literary property rights. Only eight of the forty-one historical societies, two of the fourteen university libraries, and seven of the other fifteen libraries now make any attempt to secure such a statement.

Most libraries that request the surrender of literary property rights began doing so after about 1945. The Chicago Historical Society and Louisiana State University have requested surrender of literary rights for about fifteen years, the Kentucky Historical Society has done so for about thirteen years, and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin has done so for about ten years. The Buffalo Historical Society, the Ohio Historical Society, the Illinois State Historical Library, and the Utah State Historical Society have sought surrender of literary rights within the last five years. The Virginia Historical Society reported that it has made such a request for over a century.

Other historical societies will probably begin requesting surrender of literary rights during the next decade. A successful lawsuit, upheld by the federal courts, against a scholar for failing to secure permission from an author or his heirs to quote letters consulted in a library would undoubtedly spur other libraries into acceptance of the practice.

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To guard against such a lawsuit, however, scholars must continue to do over and over what libraries could do once and for all when a manuscript collection first enters a library.

During recent years there have been frequent recommendations that libraries permit more extensive microfilming of their manuscript collections. Most libraries have long provided researchers with photocopies of a few items or parts of collections. Many libraries, however, have been reluctant to provide a microfilm of an entire manuscript collection to another library, particularly when a collection was acquired through purchase.

A committee on manuscripts appointed by the American Historical Association urged in 1951 that “. . . *it is of the utmost importance now and will be increasingly necessary in the future to permit the filming of large groups of manuscripts in order to make them available elsewhere.*”⁵⁹ The attitude of many librarians, however, was expressed by Howard H. Peckham when he said, “I think service is carried to an unfortunate extreme when libraries willingly or in response to a request reproduce a complete collection of manuscripts for deposit in another library.”⁶⁰ Among other things, Peckham pointed out that a library’s economic support depends partly on the number of scholars who come to the library to use its collections. Paul Angle has suggested elsewhere that the time may come when one library will provide a microfilm copy of a manuscript collection to another library only on the condition that the second library reciprocates by microfilming one of its collections for the first library.⁶¹

Replies to the questionnaire indicated that policies on photoduplication of manuscript collections have become increasingly liberal during the past decade or so. Twenty-six of the reporting historical societies and six of the universities are willing to microfilm an entire manuscript collection or a major portion of a collection for another library, and two other societies and one university might be willing to do so under certain circumstances. Only seven historical societies and five universities said that they are unwilling to microfilm a collection for another library. Six societies and two universities said that their governing boards have never established a policy, or that the question is too involved to answer in a few words, or they simply left the answer blank.

Reciprocation does make a difference with a few libraries. Twenty societies and five universities replied that they are willing to microfilm collections for other libraries regardless of whether there is reciproca-

tion. Four societies and one university, however, are willing to microfilm only on a reciprocal basis. Two societies are willing to microfilm on a reciprocal basis and doubt whether they would on a non-reciprocal basis. Two other societies and one university library thought they might be willing to microfilm on a reciprocal basis, and are sure that they would not on any other basis.

When statistics on collections actually microfilmed for other libraries during the past five years are examined, it becomes evident that historical societies have been more accommodating in this respect than major university libraries. Only two of the university libraries microfilmed a collection for another library during the five-year period, and they microfilmed a total of only three collections. Seventeen historical societies microfilmed a total of approximately ninety collections during the same period. The seventeen societies include four in the Northeast, seven in the Midwest, four in the South, and two in the West. Approximately twenty of the ninety collections were microfilmed on a reciprocal basis, and the rest on a non-reciprocal basis. Seven societies microfilmed one or two collections each, two societies microfilmed about five collections each, five societies microfilmed about ten collections each, and one society microfilmed about twenty collections during the five-year period.

The replies should not be interpreted to mean that any library willing to microfilm a collection for another library will honor all requests indiscriminately. Availability of technical staff imposes one limitation. Some libraries are willing to allow a local commercial firm to do the microfilming, provided that the firm can be trusted to handle manuscripts with care. Other libraries will not allow manuscripts to leave the building under any circumstances. Some libraries have their own photographic facilities, but they usually find it impossible to do all of the microfilming that other libraries might like them to do. Preparation of collections for microfilming is time-consuming, and libraries have to decide whether to use staff time for this or for working on manuscripts that cannot be used at all until they are processed. Some libraries are willing to microfilm a collection for a distant library, but they are reluctant to do so for a library within easy driving distance. Libraries occasionally refuse to microfilm manuscript collections because they have found that scholars sometimes give credit in their publications to the institution with the microfilm copy and fail to mention the location of the originals.

Most large libraries will provide photocopies of manuscripts for use

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on specific research projects whenever it would be difficult for the researcher to remain at the library long enough to study pertinent manuscripts adequately. All but two of the reporting historical societies and all of the universities will do a limited amount of photocopying for scholars or will have it done by a commercial firm. Libraries will rarely microfilm an entire collection or a major part of a collection for a scholar, although microfilms of large collections are occasionally available for loan.

Researchers are ordinarily expected to come to a library in person to read and to select pertinent material for microfilming. All but eight of the societies and two of the university libraries, however, will have photocopies prepared and sent in response to a request in a letter, provided that the request is sufficiently specific as to authors and dates, the items can be located in the card catalog or in other finding aids, and the staff time required to locate requested material will not take more than a few hours. Manuscript staffs will rarely read through collections to select items pertaining to a given subject (subject entries in card catalogs generally indicate that material pertaining to a subject can be found in certain collections, but do not list specific letters or documents). The amount of searching that a manuscript staff will do often depends on a subjective judgment as to the merit of the research project. When the amount of time required to answer a request is exorbitant, libraries will sometimes recommend outside researchers who search collections for a fee. There is rarely a fee for the search that the library itself undertakes.

During the last two decades the quantity of manuscripts available for use by researchers has increased enormously. Historical societies have expanded their collection programs, and university libraries have gradually accepted the responsibility of preserving manuscripts as well as printed materials.

There have been impressive advances in gaining bibliographical controls over manuscripts. Adoption of more efficient methods of processing and cataloging and larger staffs have made it possible for most major libraries to prepare fairly adequate finding aids for most of their manuscripts. A substantial number of libraries have been able to publish comprehensive guides to their manuscript holdings. Perhaps the most important development has been the application of the concept of a national union catalog to manuscripts.

In many respects, however, modern manuscript depositories are still in about the same predicament as King Sisyphus of ancient Corinth. If additions to a staff and more efficient processing procedures double the quantity of manuscripts that can be processed, acquisition of bulkier twentieth-century collections is likely at least to triple the quantity of accessions. If the last five years is any indication, more libraries will add a manuscript curator or librarian to the staff, and present staffs will be further augmented. But manuscript staffs are not likely to see a time when the stone stays put at the top of the hill and there is nothing further to do.

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Newspaper Collections and History

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CONTRARY TO POPULAR and professional belief, historians have collected and have used the American newspaper as prime historical source material since the birth of our nation. Early historical societies, in particular, energetically searched for files. In its first twenty years of existence, the Rhode Island Historical Society procured an almost perfect file of every paper published in that state. William Staples' "An Account of the Rhode Island Historical Society" in the *American Quarterly Register* of May 1839 described how the issues of the *Providence Gazette*, the earliest paper in that city, were obtained only ". . . with great labor and at great expense."¹ And in the Midwest, as early as 1856, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin regularly received fifty-two publications issued in that state; pride was expressed in the fact that no other society exerted equal effort to secure a complete series of local newspapers.² However, three years later the State Historical Society of Iowa received almost twice the number of local papers acquired by Wisconsin in 1856. These papers were presented by Iowa editors and publishers in response to a special appeal of the organization. The Iowa society considered its collection of papers of great importance, because ". . . in it is contained almost a complete history of the State. . . ."³ The ties of the Kansas State Historical Society were even more simple and more direct. The founders of this organization were the newspaper editors and publishers of the state, who thought it appropriate to supply the Society with copies of the newspapers published.⁴

The collection of newspaper files had an early beginning even in those institutions where history was not the sole interest. The Charleston Library Society in South Carolina was founded in 1748 and started collecting material immediately. According to Walter Muir Whitehill the Society's ". . . great resource to the historian is its files of early

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Charleston newspapers" which such scholars as Charles M. Andrews used and praised highly.⁵

Many of the early attempts at newspaper collecting could be attributed to the zealous efforts of individuals who foresaw the great use to which this source later would be put. This was particularly true of Isaiah Thomas and Christopher Columbus Baldwin, both of the American Antiquarian Society. Thomas, who had become the chief printer-publisher-bookseller of the United States, petitioned the Massachusetts legislature for permission to transfer his library to a historical educational institution. Thus on October 24, 1812, the American Antiquarian Society was incorporated. Thomas' gifts included a half dozen long files of eighteenth-century newspapers and many single issues of papers from the Atlantic States and the Middle West. This was in keeping with his belief that the objects of collection should include files of newspapers of former times and the present day. Baldwin, who became librarian on April 1, 1832, was a zealous collector of newspapers; he arranged with more than forty persons from different sections of the country to procure newspapers for his library. When in Boston on December 28, 1831, before formally taking office, Baldwin tried to persuade the proprietor of the Tremont House to turn over his files of current newspapers to the American Antiquarian Society. The newspaper collection became one of his passions for he noted in his diary on July 10, 1832:

This day I have shelves erected in the chamber of the north wing of Antiquarian Hall for the reception of newspapers. The shelves are put up, and I load them with six hundred volumes of papers, which comprise about half of our collection of that kind of reading.

It is one of the chief sources of my trouble (being happy enough in all other respects) that only a part of the members of the Council of the Society are willing to increase the numbers of our newspapers. Since I have been here, I have been unwearied in my pains to get good files of papers from all parts of the country. I have made arrangements with some forty or fifty individuals from different sections of the U.S. to procure for me ancient as well as modern sets and to preserve all those they now subscribe for. In this way the collection must become exceedingly valuable. I suffer no traveller to visit me without enlisting him in my cause, and giving him directions how to find them and how to send them to me. Though I may fail of getting as many as I wish, I am sure that I shall entitle myself to the gratitude of future antiquaries.⁶

Henry Stevens, founder in 1838 of the Vermont Historical and Anti-

quarian Society, now the Vermont Historical Society, resolved on his seventeenth birthday to collect 1,000 volumes of newspapers before he reached the age of sixty. "By carefully preserving the files of about ten weekly newspapers, he had acquired nearly seven hundred volumes by 1846, when he had five years, 'God willing,' in which to achieve his goal. To accomplish this, he had 'spared no pains, lived poor and worked hard.'" ⁷

These collections once accumulated were not all consigned to oblivion or obscurity. The New-York Historical Society printed on February 13, 1805, an appeal for needed material including newspapers, especially those prior to 1783. In a catalog prepared in 1814 for the Society, the Reverend Timothy Alden listed the numerous files which had been collected. Alden had performed a similar service for the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1808-1809, thereby informing the public of the existence of its collection of papers. Throughout the nineteenth century the Massachusetts organization, founded in 1791 and the first of its kind in the United States, continued to make a constant, determined effort to obtain such printed matter.

Despite the exertions of such men as Thomas, Baldwin, and Stevens to collect and to preserve papers, detailed use was not made of them in the preparation of early American histories. Allan Nevins, former Columbia University history professor, Pulitzer Prize winner, and newspaperman from 1913-1927, pointed out that a strong prejudice existed among historians against newspapers as sources. "It rested on a feeling that the press was so full of hasty material hastily compiled that it was treacherous—inaccurate, superficial, partisan, and hence slanted in news as well as opinion."⁸ Many historians believed that what was printed was intended to ensure the owner's profit, or social status, or political ambitions, not the public interest or public knowledge. Perhaps, too, as described by Icko Iben in the October 1955 issue of *Library Trends*, it was ". . . not only its form, its mass, its rate of growth . . ." ⁹ that caused problems, but its internal character, its contents. Iben stated that the general attitude toward the newspaper, shared by many librarians and historians, was traceable to the nature of the printed word, ". . . with its gossip large and small, its sensational news and its sensational advertising, and to the casual way in which it is used."⁹

James Ford Rhodes, the noted nineteenth- and early twentieth-century historian of the United States, broke precedent and triumphantly proved the value of the newspaper as historical source ma-

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terial. His history was written on a dignified, scholarly plane, yet he utilized newspapers extensively. When, around 1890, he began his studies of the period immediately preceding the Civil War, he found little to enhance his story with the "flesh and blood" information so badly needed for good narrative. Nevins described Rhodes as remembering how people had eagerly read Greeley's *Tribune* and Bryant's *Evening Post* and the *Cleveland Leader*. Nobody could possibly understand the history of the time without them, and thus Rhodes found the files of the newspapers invaluable. He discovered in the press an enormous amount of material he could not have found elsewhere. "Why was Webster defeated for the Whig presidential nomination in 1852? Why was Winfield Scott nominated instead? He found the whole inside story in the *Boston Courier*, written by a Massachusetts delegate."⁸

After Rhodes, all reputable historians began using newspapers, and books were soon appearing based almost exclusively on the daily and weekly press. "No one would now write history without access to a file of newspapers. They were unrivalled sources, especially after 1840, for news and opinion, and for insight into the spirit of the age."⁸

Rhodes' theories were later enhanced by the works of Lucy M. Salmon, who in *The Newspaper and the Historian*,¹⁰ attempted to indicate the great value of the use of the press in compiling and writing American history.

Thus it was not until the end of the nineteenth century that a more definitive use of newspapers was made. Quite often, before that period, papers were left to disintegrate or were disposed of as useless. With the turn of the century and with the realization of the need of and interest in papers, a number of catalogs of newspaper holdings were prepared by institutions possessing the most noteworthy historical material.

It was this deep interest in and desire to secure information regarding the newspaper collections which had been gathered over the course of the nineteenth century that caused a plethora of printed catalogs. For the first two decades of the twentieth century, in rapid-fire succession, such institutions as the Alabama Department of Archives and History, American Antiquarian Society, Leland Stanford Junior University, Library of Congress, Indiana State Library, Illinois State Historical Library, Kansas State Historical Society, Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Boston Public Library, Rochester (N.Y.) Public Library, New-York Historical Society, Ohio State Library, Pennsyl-

vania-German Society, Bucks Co. (Pa.) Historical Society, Free Library Company of Philadelphia, Newport (R.I.) Historical Society, Virginia Historical Society, Virginia State Library, and Wyoming Historical Society produced some printed listing or catalog of holdings and locations. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin actually produced two editions of newspaper catalogs, one in 1898 and another in 1911, plus a supplementary catalog in 1918.

Professional historical recognition was slowly but surely being achieved during this period. The *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1905* reported the findings of a survey taken of collections in state and local libraries and historical societies. Question thirteen in the questionnaire had asked "To what extent do you collect and preserve newspapers?"¹¹ Only in rare instances was the answer negative. Some replies were awesome, such as the report from the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society (Wilkes-Barre, Pa.) which listed holdings of 1,200 volumes of local newspapers, or from the Essex Institute in Salem, Massachusetts, which had 3,800 bound volumes, especially strong for the period after 1800.¹² For the first time, the *Annual Report* of the Association admonished state, sectional, and local historical organizations and others to seek out, collect, and preserve files. The recommendations were succinct, "Local newspaper files are an important source of information, and should assiduously be collected and preserved."¹³

By 1908, James Ford Rhodes, William Nelson (corresponding secretary of the New Jersey Historical Society), Talcott Williams of the Philadelphia *Press*, and Melville E. Stone (general manager of the Associated Press) were invited to address a luncheon at the twenty-fourth annual meeting of the American Historical Association. Covering the period from 1850 to 1877, Rhodes emphasized the value of newspapers, pointing out that such a source can be readily tested and that it supplies a great amount of detail, color, and circumstantial evidence that is difficult, if not impossible, to find elsewhere. Nelson described in great detail the information which could be gleaned from newspapers in his address entitled "The American Newspapers of the Eighteenth Century as Sources of History."¹⁴ Nelson had previously published, from 1894-1897, a work dealing with American newspapers and the depositories in which they might be found. In 1918 this same work was reissued under the title *Notes Toward a History of the American Newspaper*,¹⁵ containing a substantial 644 pages.

Interest in the cataloging and the use of files continued during the

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period of the 1920's with the publication of such works as George W. Purcell's "Survey of Early Newspapers in the Middle Western States";¹⁶ Yale O. Millington's, "A List of Newspapers Published in the District of Columbia, 1820-1850";¹⁷ and James O. Knauss' *Territorial Florida Journalism*.¹⁸ Even the omnipresent Civil War was represented in R. Lee Brantley's *Georgia Journalism of the Civil War Period*,¹⁹ while David C. Mott concerned himself with the ante-bellum period in his "Early Iowa Newspapers; A Contribution toward a Bibliography of the Newspapers Established in Iowa before the Civil War."²⁰

But it was not until the 1930's that a renewed fervor and interest brought about a resurgence in the number of printed or mimeographed catalogs as well as articles and books dealing with or utilizing greatly the vast files which had been accumulated up to that time. There was, in addition, a factor which added further stimulus to these efforts, the result of relief projects during the depression. Newspapers were seized upon as being all that Rhodes, Nelson, and Salmon had indicated. Because of this crystallization of outlook and purpose, much classifying and indexing of historical data resulted from the listing of available newspaper files by the Historical Records Survey in many states. The actual physical preservation of newspapers also became a matter of great concern, and there were initiated newspaper binding and microfilming programs designed to preserve, to protect, and to make permanent the known issues. The U.S. Government Printing Office in 1934 published Bourdon Walter Scribner's *Preservation of Newspaper Records*.²¹ In 1937, under Winifred Gregory's editorial supervision, the monumental, though obviously incomplete, *American Newspapers, 1821-1936; A Union List of Files Available in the United States and Canada*²² was published. The Library of Congress which in 1912 had published *A Check List of American Eighteenth Century Newspapers in the Library of Congress*²³ issued a new edition of this work in 1936. Interest in newspapers had reached the point where, in 1931, the *Bulletin of the New York Public Library*²⁴ listed alphabetically by cities a series of American newspaper reprints located in libraries throughout the country. During this period Douglas Crawford McMurtrie busied himself with various works dealing with the history of printing and the press in such places as Michigan, Wisconsin, and Utah, providing invaluable bibliographies and check-lists. Obviously, the newspaper had now "arrived" and was fully appreciated and respected not only for its aid in other areas of research, but for its own study as well.

Interest has not abated in the past generation, but actually has generally increased. More and more frequently the non-academic segments of the community as well as academicians in all fields are making use of the newspaper files in each and every depository, be it library, historical society, or newspaper office. Clarence Saunders Brigham's *History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820*²⁵ and the Library of Congress' *Newspapers on Microfilm* (various editions) have made known the files and the locations of many of the extant issues in the United States. Coupled with the catalogs issued by state organizations, the articles in various publications, and the sales catalogs of several microfilming companies, it is becoming more and more possible to determine quickly, efficiently, and accurately the files which may be used for historical purposes and the institutions in which such files are available.

As a rule most institutions will provide for the reproduction of newspapers desired for examination. In cases where microfilm negatives already exist, usually only the cost of a positive film copy is charged; sometimes an additional fee is added to cover part of the cost of the original filming. Prices may vary therefore from \$6.50 to \$14 for a positive roll of film. In those cases where no negative exists, it is the usual practice for the institution owning the original to have a negative and positive copy made, with the negative remaining in its permanent possession and the positive sent to the applicant who pays for both copies.

An example of the largesse for which librarians must be grateful is the decision of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania to make available on microfilm such outstanding files as the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 1720-1789, and a broken run from 1790-1815; *Pennsylvania Journal*, 1742-1793; *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, 1767-1774; *Pennsylvania Packet*, 1771-1790; *New York Journal*, 1766-1776; and several German papers of the colonial period. The Rhode Island Historical Society has microfilmed and widely distributed the files of the *Providence Gazette* begun in 1762.

Although reproduction facilities are readily available, the practice of utilizing interlibrary loan requests is usually followed in the case of libraries adhering to the ALA Inter-Library Loan Code. Such a procedure involves only the cost of mailing and insurance for microfilm reels. There are several exceptions to this relatively universal practice of lending microfilm copies. The North Carolina Department of Archives and History does not engage in such loans inasmuch as it

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provides, at reasonable cost, positive microfilm copies of all of the newspapers which it has filmed. The Georgia Historical Society newspaper file is not open to non-members, while the Long Island (N.Y.) Historical Society charges non-members for the use of newspapers and microfilm.

On the other hand, there has been the recent announcement of a step toward close cooperation in acquisitions and service by five major research libraries in Delaware. A *Union List of Newspapers in Microform* is to be published containing holdings of 106 newspaper titles for the Eleutherian Mills Historical Library, Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Historical Society of Delaware, the Wilmington Institute Free Library, and the University of Delaware Library. The participating institutions are planning to make an annual revision of this list.

That other forms of copying have been utilized greatly in the past is evidenced by the number of printed reproduction copies of the *Ulster Co. Gazette* announcing Washington's death, or of the *New York Herald* proclaiming Lincoln's assassination. Between 1915 and 1933, the Massachusetts Historical Society reproduced through the photostat process five colonial newspapers, the *Georgia Gazette* for 1763-1773, *The Domestic Intelligence* for 1679-1680, *The Boston News Letter* for 1704-1776, *The New England Courant* for 1721-1726, and, in collaboration with the Virginia Historical Society, *The Virginia Gazette* for 1736-1780. The last title went to twenty-three subscribing libraries. An unusual but stimulating and informative variant of this has been the presentation of Ohio, Iowa, and Kansas state history through the use of full-page facsimile reproductions of newspapers with additional pages of commentary.²⁶

A fairly recent innovation has been the use of microcards which utilize the principle of microprint publication. *Early American Newspapers in Microprint* produces microcards at prices that make them available to individuals as well as libraries. The American Antiquarian Society is now issuing runs of colonial newspapers for particularly important periods which may be purchased in small and relatively inexpensive groups.

Under the direction of Ebenezer Gay, Executive Officer of the Boston Athenaeum, papers are assembled, collated, and prepared for filming. The Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and Wisconsin Historical societies, the Boston Public Library, the Boston Athenaeum, the Harvard College Library, and the Library of Congress have lent

originals or furnished photographic copies of newspapers needed to complete files. Gay and his business associates have formed the Micro-Research Corporation to handle the details of printing and distributing the microcards. But it appears highly unlikely that this form of reproduction will replace the microfilm reel because of the convenience in handling, saving of storage space, and lower reproduction costs of the latter.

The following is a listing of newspaper catalogs, compilations, and checklists, which should be readily available to the librarian:

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Unfortunately not all institutions have prepared lists indicating holdings. Some relatively rich collections go unnoticed and unused because of this lack of bibliographic material.

For example, the Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society collections should be consulted when research on the Southwest is being done. The Society has the largest collection of Arizona state papers including files from cities such as Yuma, Flagstaff, St. Johns, Tombstone, Tucson, and Phoenix. One file, *The Weekly Arizonian* from Tubac, begins in 1859.

Moving geographically from west to east we find that small Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, boasts over 1,000 volumes of Norwegian-American newspapers, indispensable in the study of Scandinavian immigration and assimilation in the United States.

Farther east, the Connecticut State Library lists large holdings of

newspaper files from Connecticut while the Forbes Library in Northampton, Massachusetts, claims an extensive file of Connecticut Valley papers. In the small state of Rhode Island, the Harris Collection of the Providence Public Library has an excellent collection of Civil War and slavery papers, while the Rhode Island Historical Society has managed to collect and to preserve an outstanding statewide newspaper file.

The vastness and scope of files located in some states almost defy description. In New York, for example, the State Library collects chiefly state papers, particularly for the upstate area. Much of the collection is of issues from pre-Civil War days although many are now being currently received and bound or microfilmed. In the New York City Public Library over 50,000 volumes and 15,000 reels of film are maintained in a superb collection, strong in New York City papers as well as those representative of diverse sections of the United States and principal foreign countries. The New-York Historical Society maintains a collection of over 12,000 volumes, particularly comprehensive in coverage of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, while the Staten Island Historical Society collects both New York City and Staten Island papers. Over eighty long local files form the significant part of the holdings of the Long Island Historical Society. Numerous special collections also abound in the state, such as the Tamiment Institute Library with its holdings of nineteenth and twentieth century communist, socialist, and labor newspapers. And these are but a few examples of outstanding collections which exist in only one state!

In short, it is absolutely imperative that all available bibliographical resources be consulted in order to determine what files exist, where they are located, and how they might be consulted. But even these noteworthy and necessary guides are not enough since they are incomplete and outdated shortly after preparation. In addition there is a noticeable lack or incompleteness of information received from the newspapers and collecting agencies; both often have extensive files at their disposal but either refuse to provide information or are not capable of doing so. Despite all the guides, one must continue to use the talents of a Sherlock Homes, the doggedness of a Dr. Watson, and the wiles of a James Bond to achieve anything remotely resembling completeness in this field.

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July, 1965, *Metropolitan Public Library Problems Around the World*. Editor: H. C. Campbell, Chief Librarian, Toronto Public Libraries.

October, 1965, *Junior College Libraries*. Editor: Charles L. Trinkner, Chairman, Library Services Division, Pensacola Junior College.