Chapter 1

RECORDS AND ARCHIVISTS

Records[1]

In a complex literate society, people and organizations create and use records as a regular and routine part of daily existence. Historically, records have assumed a wide variety of formats, ranging from clay tablets to Oracle databases, yet despite this diversity, the role that records play has remained constant; they act as a secure and unwavering "extension of human memory."[2] As a memorializing device, records provide evidence of our activities, thoughts, and relationships as well as information about the people, places, and events that we have encountered and experienced.

A record is not a singular thing. It is created, used, and often kept in a broader documentary context as a collection of letters, receipts, checkbooks, financial records, house files, military records, etc. Thus, it is rendered most meaningful, not as an isolated text, but as a part of a documentary stream or mosaic. Of course, there are isolated instances of important singular documents—The Declaration of Independence and North Carolina's Copy of the Bill of Rights, are good examples of records that have great value as iconic documents. Their value, however, is located less in the specific information that they convey, than in some aspect of their uniqueness as an historical item.

All records have value to their creator at the moment of creation, but this value, while indisputably real, is often transitory in nature. Imagine the grocery list that lies crumpled in your pocket; it was truly invaluable while you were shopping, but it serves very little purpose now. Records with a fleeting value are sometimes referred to as temporary records. These sorts of documents are not normally of great interest to archivists. Archivists strive to identify, collect, preserve and make accessible Historical Records.

Historical Records

These documents are generated in the same manner as mere records, but for a variety of reasons their value transcends both the moment of their use and their original intended audience. They are judged to have "enduring historical value" and are normally referred to as Archival or Historical

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[1] This chapter is heavily based on text, exercises and outlines created by Hal Keiner.
[2] The Society of American Archivists maintains an online "Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology." The quote above is taken from its rather extensive definition of records at
http://www.archivists.org/glossary/term_details.asp?DefinitionKey=54

Records. Historical Records have four essential qualities; they are unique, non-current, authentic, and they have "enduring value." Let's examine these attributes in more detail.

- · **Historical records are unique documents.** These original records were normally created as a singular item by their creator to convey information or to record information for later use. This is not meant to imply that copies of a record may not exist, only that the version closest to the moment of creation is the most historical and, thus, from the archivist's point of view, most desirable.

- · **Historical records are non-current documents.** Historical records are no longer being actively used by their creator.

- · **Historical records are authentic documents.** Records that have been created, collected, and preserved in a known manner are accepted as legitimate evidence or proof of past events and decisions. This is especially relevant with regard to documents (marriage records, deeds, legal papers, medical or schools records, etc.) created in an institutional context.

- · **Historic records have enduring value.**[3] Enduring value is the phrase that archivists use to describe their assessment that a record has significance that transcends the original purpose of a document. This significance is normally understood to mean that as a cultural and informational artifact, a record tells us about the past in a manner and fashion that researchers (other than the creator) would find interesting and useful.

Three Types of Historical Records in North Carolina

Three basic types of historical records are typically found in North Carolina archival repositories: Manuscripts, Archives, and Government Records. The distinction among these three groups of historical records is not necessarily immediately apparent and requires a brief discussion

Archivists call the historical records generated by individuals or families "Manuscripts." This designation, as with the two others, is tied directly to the nature of the document or collection's creator. It does not suggest anything about the types of materials that are present. Indeed, the correspondence, financial records, photographs, and other materials likely to be found in a Manuscripts Collection are also found in the two other types of record groupings.

The historical records generated and kept by a public or private organization to document its activities and history are called "Archives." Many organizations, such as hospitals, churches, schools, universities, and businesses, maintain institutional archives of their historical records.

Documents produced by governments are called "Government Records." This is a rigid legal category because state, county, and municipal records are all subject to the North Carolina Public

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[3] The process of evaluating the historical value of records is called, "Appraisal." The importance and process of Appraisal is discussed more fully in the second chapter of this manual.

Records Law.[4] Among this law's provisions is a prescribed set of procedures that manages a record from its creation to its destruction or retention. Only a small percentage of public records are designated for permanent retention. At the local level these records include documents such as deeds, records of the tax assessor, marriage records, and estate and probate records. Pre-1868 records in these categories have been sent to the State Archives for safe storage and microfilming.

Who Uses Historical Records?

In a sense, this is a bit of a rhetorical question. The answer is that at some point almost everyone will need to consult a historical record of some sort. Having said this, there are subsets of the community that will use historical records with a much greater degree of frequency and intensity. Obvious users include:

- Amateur and Professional Historians and other Scholars
- Authors
- Genealogists
- Museum or Historical Society Staff
- Journalists
- Managers and Administrators
- Lawyers
- Students and Teachers

The research projects that can be accomplished using a repository's records are extremely varied and wildly unpredictable. In archival theory, there has been an attempt to group the wide variety of roles that historical records play in the work of their users into three broad categories:

- **Research Value**: This category encompasses such things as: genealogical research into your family's past; conducting scholarly research; uncovering the details necessary to restore your house; determining the proper uniform for an historical drama, etc.

- **Administrative Value**: This category deals with the use of historical records to conduct your current operations. A church faced with a certain set of circumstances might look to its records to see how similar problems were faced in the past.

- **Legal Value**: This category deals with the use of historical records to meet legal requirements. Examples might include: a tax audit; records of product testing, etc.

Given the breadth of possibilities, it would not be exceptional for a large repository to be able to:

- Supply a researcher with the proof necessary to join a lineage society;
- Provide a business with guidance during a labor crisis, by providing copies of internal reports describing previous labor disputes; and
- Uncover evidence that an ancestor had donated land to the University.

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[4] The North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources maintains an electronic version of the North Carolina State Public Records Law (North Carolina General Statutes 132) at http://www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/e-records/ncgs/ncgs132.htm

Where are Historical Records Found?

As the preceding has suggested, because of the ubiquitous nature of records in our society and the corresponding impulse to research and memorialize the past, there are few localities in our state without an historical records collection of some sort. In the past few years, North Carolina ECHO (Exploring Cultural Heritage Online) has surveyed our state to locate and describe all of the caretakers of North Carolina's Cultural Heritage.[5] A quick perusal of this list surely suggests that historical records are kept in all manner of places. An extensive, but by no means exhaustive list includes:

- Archives and Manuscript Repositories
- Businesses
- Educational Institutions
- Public Libraries
- Museums
- Historic Homes or Sites
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Historical and Genealogical Societies
- Government Offices
- Hospitals
- Religious Institutions

Regardless of their size, funding, or institutional mission, all keepers of historical records share three essential goals:

- To identify and collect records of enduring value;
- To preserve these records; and
- To make these records available to their researchers.

Who is an Archivist?

An archivist is a person whose work supports the goals that were expressed above—namely, to identify, preserve, and make available historical records. This definition purposely defines an archivist in functional terms, for archivists are defined more by the work that they do, than by the particular degrees that they have earned. The purpose of this manual and the workshop series from which it evolved is to provide North Carolinians who are engaged in archival endeavors with the information necessary to care for their historic collections. All of the keepers of historical records are archivists.

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[5] The results of NC ECHO's survey are online at http://www.ncecho.org

Exercise: Identifying Historical Records

Are the following documents historical records? Under what circumstances would they be considered historical records? Discuss the role that a document's context plays in assessing its historical nature.

- Last week's grocery list

- North Carolina's Copy of the Bill of Rights

- The latest Britney Spears' Album

- Report, *The Sterilization of Lunatics and Mental Incompetents*, North Carolina Department of Health, 1923.

Chapter 2

COLLECTING MATERIALS

I. INTRODUCTION[1]

This chapter describes the process of acquiring archival materials. In sequential order we will detail the construction of a collection policy, discuss the crucial role that this document plays in the focused selection of historical records, describe the mechanisms employed to secure legal custody of archival papers and secure their physical integrity, and propose a filing system to ensure access to the documentation that is generated in the management of an archival collection.

II. THE COLLECTION POLICY

A collection policy is the foundational acquisition tool. It is a written statement that clearly describes the purpose of your repository, the specific subjects and formats that you will collect, and the procedures and processes that you will employ to acquire records. In aggregate, this information provides your collecting archivists with the context necessary to judge a proposed collection's relevance and value to your mission. Ad hoc collecting in the absence of a collection policy can easily result in a number of undesirable outcomes, including the creation of an irrelevant collection, misuse of resources, and duplication of another institution's efforts. Lastly, a well established collection policy is a very useful document to have when you are explaining your decision not to accept a collection to a disappointed donor.

In order for a collection policy to be an effective tool, it must be grounded in a current and realistic understanding of your institution's particular circumstances. The preliminary step in the creation of this policy is to carry out an introspective examination of your institution's mission, collections, capabilities, and resources. To aid this process you should consider the following broad questions and their collecting implications:

- Is your institution charged with a specific mission? How is this mission served by your historical records program?

- In light of your repository's mission and goals, what are the strengths and weaknesses of your current collections?

- What resources (both material and intellectual) are dependably available to support your collections?

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[1] This chapter is heavily based on text, exercises and outlines created by Tim Pyatt.

Because a collection policy is a comprehensive document about your institution's archival holdings and acquisition practices, the process of writing one is best approached not as the construction of a flowing narrative, but as the assembly of a series of discrete elements. The following fictional example presents the major elements that are included in a fully developed collection policy.

Carolina Azalea Garden Archive
Collection Policy

The mission of The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive (CAGA) is to identify, collect, preserve and make accessible for research and reference use by the staff, scholars and other researchers, the historical records of The Carolina Azalea Garden (CAG). These collections are comprised of non-current records of varying formats having enduring administrative, legal, fiscal, historical, or scientific value created by the staff and volunteers of CAG.

CAGA acquires materials in various formats, including but not limited to papers, notebooks, botanical samples, films, drawings, photographs, maps, and pamphlets. CAGA will select audio-visual, microform, and machine readable records on a case by case basis due to the Archive's limited ability to provide access and proper care and storage for these media formats.

Archival materials may be acquired by The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive by gift, bequest, purchase, administrative transfer, or any other legal transaction that transfers title of the materials to the Archive. CAGA will accept materials as loans or deposits when the conditions for acceptance are judged to be favorable to the Archive. CAGA will not accept collections that are closed to public access in perpetuity and will not ordinarily accept collections that are closed for a period of more than five years.

Duplicates, unsupported formats, and other materials that do not reflect the collection policy of The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive may be deaccessioned by the archivist, subject to the terms of acquisition, Carolina Azalea Garden Archive regulations, and state and federal laws.

I. Repository Name

II. Repository Purpose

III. Subject Emphasis

IV. Acceptable Formats

V. Acquisition Procedures

VI. Removal Procedures

VII. Loan Policy

VIII. Review Process

Having reviewed the elements that comprise a collection policy in context, it may now be helpful to dissect the Azalea Garden's Collection Policy with an eye to better understanding the considerations that underlay the construction of each element.

Identity and Purpose

A collection policy's first paragraph is typically a brief statement that clearly and succinctly states the repository's name, institutional affiliation, and mission. From the above example, we have learned that:

> The mission of The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive (CAGA) is to identify, collect, preserve and make accessible for research and reference use by the staff, scholars and other researchers, the historical records of The Carolina Azalea Garden (CAG). These collections are comprised of non-current records of varying formats having enduring administrative, legal, fiscal, historical, or scientific value created by the staff and volunteers of CAG.

Using this example as a template, the introductory section of your collection policy should be sure to explain your repository's relationship and obligations to its parent institution, the basic archival activities your repository will carry out, the general subject matter it seeks to document and the types of researchers that it will serve.

Subjects and Formats

Because CAGA is an institutional archive that exists to preserve and make accessible the documents produced by the Carolina Azalea Garden, it was not necessary for its archivists to specify the repository's subject foci or collecting themes in great detail. It was sufficient to state that it collects "non-current records of varying formats having enduring administrative, legal, fiscal, historical, or scientific value created by the staff and volunteers of CAG." The focus of your repository's collecting might not be so discrete or so briefly described. Whatever the case, you should provide a level of description detailed enough to guide selection decisions.

Along with a description of your collecting themes, you should describe the types of material formats (e.g., manuscripts, photographs, videotapes, etc.) that your program will consider including in its collection. You may also wish to detail those particular formats that your program will not consider as well as material condition issues (e.g., active mold, extensive reformatting, sticky shed, etc.) that are too problematic for inclusion in your collection. Returning to our sample collection policy, CAGA collects:

> . . . various formats, including but not limited to papers, notebooks, botanical samples, films, drawings, photographs, maps, and pamphlets. CAGA will select audio-visual, microform, and machine readable records only on a case by case basis due to the Archive's limited ability to provide access and proper care and storage for these media formats.

Methods of Acquisition

The acquisition of archival material involves the legal transfer, either permanent or temporary, of private property. Your collection policy should briefly describe the mechanisms that your repository will employ to add archival material to its holdings. Common methods include the solicitation of donations, purchases, loans, and institutional transfers. On occasion, a proposed archival collection will have a series of conditions attached to it. Typically, these sorts of conditions restrict your repository's full control over the material by either limiting researcher access to the collections or by granting your repository temporary custody of the collection. In the course of reviewing your repository's acquisition practices, it is important that you consider the ramifications of accepting a loaned or heavily restricted collection. You may not be able to construct a universally applicable response, but the process will prepare you for addressing these eventualities.

Discarding and Loaning Materials

In the course of reviewing your collections you may discover that your repository has items in its holdings that for any number of reasons (e.g., irrelevant subject matter, duplication, inappropriate format, material condition, etc.) fall outside of the parameters you have established in your collection policy. If these out-of-scope materials are judged to be unworthy of further support, what procedures will be employed to remove or deaccession them? In developing your program's deaccessioning policy it is important to define the process that your institution has established for removing items from its collections. In describing these practices you should be sure to explicitly state who has the authority to remove archival materials. The CAGA collection policy states:

> Duplicates, unsupported formats, and other materials that do not reflect the collection policy of The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive may be deaccessioned by the archivist, subject to the terms of acquisition, Carolina Azalea Garden Archive regulations, and state and federal laws.

Similarly, you should describe the conditions and procedures that will govern the loaning of an item from your collections to another institution. As with deaccessioning, it is crucial that you specify the person or persons who hold the authority to authorize a loan as well as a general set of criteria that the exhibiting institution must agree to meet. In lieu of writing an extensive set of loan conditions detailing such things as expected standards of care and handling or insurance requirements, CAGA has relied upon the American Library Association's "Guidelines for Borrowing Special Collections Materials for Exhibition."[2]

Collection Policy Review

In the collection policy's final paragraph, CAGA describes the review process that it employs to keep the collection policy current and relevant to its institutional mission. Additionally, your

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[2]"Guidelines for Borrowing Special Collections Materials for Exhibition," Association of College and Research Libraries at http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/guidelinesborrowing.htm.

collection policy review process should specify the events (e.g., change in governing authority or passing of a certain date) that will trigger the review and renewal process.

Collection Policy Exercise

Having reviewed the purposes and composition of a collection policy, it is time for you to attempt the construction of some select collection policy elements based on the fictional scenario presented below.

In 1992, the Seagrove Pottery Museum and Archive was established by the Seagrove Pottery Guild to help document the pottery renaissance that has been occurring in and around Seagrove, North Carolina during the last 20 years. While the Museum has focused on collecting and preserving the material culture (e.g., pottery and pottery tools) of this artistic movement, the Archive has been principally engaged with the task of preserving its documentary records. These records include the personal and business papers of individual potters and galleries as well as the official organizational papers of the Pottery Guild. The Archive has also established an oral history program that conducts audio taped interviews with the artists whose works are in the Museum.

Through its Board of Directors, the Guild exercises an oversight role, but it has hired a curator and an archivist to run the day-to-day operations of the Museum and Archive. These two full-time professionals are aided by a number of volunteers, whose ranks typically include several retired potters and two to three students from a nearby library school.

The Museum and Archive are housed together in a modern climate controlled building which is open to the public two days a week and by appointment. The Archive operates a reading room that has two audio tape machines for patrons interested in listening to the oral histories. Photocopying of documents is allowable at the staff's discretion.

Given this scenario and reasoned assumptions, create the following for the Seagrove Archive:
1. Write a Statement of Purpose
2. Describe the various subject foci or collecting themes
3. List appropriate formats

III. ARCHIVAL APPRAISAL

If your collection policy describes your repository's ideal collection, appraisal is the imperfect process of assessing real collections against this hypothetical ideal. As with the collection policy itself, the purposes of appraisal are to ensure that an acquired collection supports your repository's mission and to conserve your repository's resources (e.g., staff time, money, shelf space, etc.) by rejecting materials that are not appropriate.

Stripped to its core, archival appraisal is best understood as a critical review of a proposed collection that seeks to answer two vital questions:

- Is the collection historically valuable?

- Is the collection an appropriate addition to your holdings?

Although seeming clear, these questions raise two critical issues worth brief consideration. First, with the occasional exception, archival appraisal involves the assessment of a collection of records rather than that of an individual document. In archival literature this sort of initial appraisal is generally referred to as collection level appraisal. The second issue raised by these questions is a bit philosophical and thorny: what is value?

As this manual has explained, archival value is contextual. If a collection fits within the parameters that your repository has established, it should be deemed valuable and considered for inclusion in your holdings. But there is a larger discussion of value in the archival literature that can usefully inform your appraisal practice. This discussion essentially parses the holistic notion of value into a series of component values. Archivists refer to these sub-types as informational value, evidential value, and intrinsic value.[3] Informational value refers to the relevance of the content, data or facts that are transmitted by a collection or document. For instance, a collection of newspaper clippings about the Seagrove Pottery Guild or its official correspondence would have a high level of information value for the Seagrove Pottery Archive. Evidential value of a collection rests in its ability to tell us about the activities or functions of its creator. If, for example, the Pottery Archive were assessing a potter's papers, the contents (e.g., paint swatches, leaves or flowers, magazine clippings, chemical formulas, etc.) and order of his files might reveal the manner in which he invented or acquired glaze recipes. Lastly, intrinsic value is an assessment of the collection or document as a unique and irreproducible item that has value independent of either its evidential or informational value. For example, the papers of Ben Owen, one of the most famous of Seagrove's potters, would have a high degree of intrinsic value because they are his papers.

It is well worth noting that archival appraisal is not an assessment of monetary value. Although the monetary value of a collection is often an important acquisition issue, it is not a function that is normally within the professional competence of archivists. In fact, to protect your institution's interests it is best to obtain the services of an independent appraiser when you find it necessary to determine a fair valuation for the purposes of purchase or donation.[4]

The Practice of Appraisal

For the appraisal process to be most effective it is best to approach it in a rigorous and systematic way. This is especially true if you are inexperienced with appraisal. The steps outlined below are a

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[3] For a fuller discussion of the terminology of archival value see, the Society of American Archivist's "A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology," by Richard Pearce-Moses at http://www.archivists.org/glossary/index.asp.
[4] The Manuscripts Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill maintains a list of local independent appraisers at http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/apraise.html.

bit schematic, but they do present a regularized way to gather the information that you need to carry out a well informed evaluation.

Step 1

Gain a fuller sense of the informational and material content of the proposed collection through a combination of speaking with the donor and a physical inspection of the materials. During this review, you should find answers to the following questions:

Informational Content

- **Who created the collection?** Think both specifically and generally. For instance, Thomas Wolfe, North Carolina author, Asheville resident, University of North Carolina alumnus; or Rose's Stores, Department Stores, Henderson, NC businesses.

- **When was the collection created?** Think in terms of an encompassing range as well as dense clusters. For instance, 1905-1972, but the bulk are from the 1960s.

- **Why was the collection created?** What activities of the creator does the collection reflect? Writing novels or selling merchandise.

- **What kinds of information are in the collection**? Drafts of literary works, subject clippings files, correspondence with publishers, diaries; or store accounts, cancelled checks, bank loans, real estate papers.

- **Where was the collection created?** What is the geography of these documents? Asheville, Henderson, New York.

Material Content

- **What formats are present in the collection?** Loose papers, bound volumes, scrapbooks, cased photographs, black and white photographs, negatives, wire recordings, floppy discs.

- **What is the condition of the collection?** Is the collection dirty, water-stained, or infested with pests? Is film showing evidence of Vinegar syndrome or is there mold on the cassette tapes?

Step 2

How does the information that you have gathered about the collection compare with the idealized version that is described in your collection policy? Specifically:

- **Does the informational content fall within the subject and material parameters that have been established in your collection policy?** Does your institution seek to collect drafts of novels by a North Carolinian? Does acquiring the official corporate records of a department store founded in Henderson serve your institutional mission?

- **Does the material content fall within the format and condition limits detailed in your collection policy?** Can your institution support home movies of the Wolfe family or corporate minutes on microfilm? What if the film is suffering from Vinegar Syndrome?

Step 3

If after this process of review, you are satisfied that the papers fall within the parameters that have been established in your collection policy you should probably accept the materials. Similarly, if the papers are judged to be a poor candidate for inclusion, you should probably reject them. But there are some other less tangible, but no less real factors that should be considered before you make a final decision.

- **Are there likely to be broader political effects for your institution if the records are accepted or rejected?** Records can be read as symbols of a larger cultural or political debate and the act of including or excluding them from your holdings could be similarly read as a political or cultural statement. Is making such a statement in your institution's interests? Does it serve your mission?

- **Considering who the donor is, are there likely to be positive or negative effects on your institution if the records are accepted or rejected?**

- **If an exception is made to the guidelines set down in the collection policy, and a collection is accepted or rejected on more than its merits, what precedent will be established?**

Box and Item Level Appraisal

Collection level appraisal is a macro-level assessment of a collection's appropriateness for inclusion. Of necessity, this initial assessment is a cursory review of the materials to assess their condition and reaffirm the description of the materials as presented by the donor. In practice, this means that the processing archivist, who will become the most knowledgeable person about the overall contents of a collection, will be the person best able to appraise the value of materials at the sub-collection level. It is typical for a collection to contain materials that are judged unworthy of being retained. Typical candidates for removal include:

- **Duplicate Materials.** This is especially true for collections created after the wide spread dissemination of the photocopy machine. Also, if you are collecting an institution's official papers, it is important to be aware of the record copy and to avoid collecting the many duplicates.

- **Materials Lacking Research Value.** This is, of course, a variable assessment based on your knowledge of your holdings, collection policy, and the research practices of your users. Typically, this might include: non-unique published materials that exist elsewhere, envelopes, checks, blank paper, memorabilia, etc.

- **Sensitive or Confidential Materials.** It is quite common for collections to contain materials that contain sensitive personal information. Typical sensitive materials include: credit card and banking numbers, social security numbers, passports, identification cards, unredeemed checks, medical and education records, job performance reviews, and recommendations. Depending on your institutional role, control and dissemination of some of these records may be regulated by Federal or State laws.

Disposal of these unwanted materials, especially those of a sensitive or confidential nature, must be carefully handled and carried out in accordance with the conditions specified in the Deed of Gift or other acquisition contract.

Collection Level Appraisal Exercise

For the purposes of this exercise you are the Archivist for the Seagrove Pottery Archive. Based on the earlier scenario and the collection policy elements you created, appraise the following collections for possible inclusion in your repository. You may decide to accept or reject any or all of the collections, but list your concerns and observations. Devise a rationale for your decisions.

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I. The Seagrove Chamber of Commerce Records: The Chamber of Commerce has offered your archive 50 linear feet of records dating from 1975 to 1995. The collection contains minutes of monthly meetings, an extensive correspondence file, photographs of members at local events, publications, and other associated materials. The Chamber has played an integral role in promoting the interests of the Seagrove business community, and currently, it has a number of members who are potters and/or gallery owners. Topically, the papers contain references to local politics, the establishment of the N.C. Zoological Park in Asheboro, and various Seagrove Potteries. The papers are in original chronological order and good condition. The formats represented consist primarily of paper and photographic materials.

II. The Alfred Braxton Foushee Papers: Foushee, who was an art professor at UNC-Greensboro and an early collector and proponent of Seagrove Pottery, has offered to donate 10 linear feet of his personal papers dating from the 1980s to the present. Portions of the professor's extensive pottery collection are on loan to various museums including the Seagrove Pottery Museum, the Ackland Art Museum, and the Mint Museum of Art. In addition to his collecting activities, Foushee wrote a number of works about Seagrove's potters and their creations, including *New Traditionalists: The Potters of Seagrove* (1988) and *Red Clay and Salt Glaze: The Pottery of H. Broadus Crabtree* (1993). The papers he has offered cluster into three topical groupings: teaching files relating to his art courses at the university, research and writing files for his books, and business records regarding his pottery collection. The formats represented in the collection are chiefly paper, photographs, and some audio tapes. The materials are in good shape, but the files are ordered in a very haphazard manner.

III. Oxendine Pottery, Inc. Records: The owner of this now defunct Pottery has offered your archive 30 linear feet of corporate records dating from 1945-1980. During the 1950s and 1960s, this company, which was located in rural Robeson County, was the largest commercial pottery manufacturer in North Carolina. Its main business was the mass production of inexpensive ceramic products (e.g., ashtrays, vases, mugs, etc.) for everyday use, however, a number of its potters, particularly the Locklear brothers, created individual pieces that have had a significant impact on the works of contemporary North Carolina potters and artisans. The offered materials relate to the business operations of the pottery and include business correspondence, personnel records, ceramic design drawings, glaze recipes, photographs of the plant and workers, and the firing records of the kilns. The papers have been kept in their original file cabinets in Mr. Oxendine's basement for almost 25 years and have suffered periodic water damage. In addition to water staining, there is inactive mold and some insect damage.

IV. ACCESSIONING

Accessioning is the term that archivists use to describe the process of adding materials to their repository's holdings. This in-take process has two distinct components. The initial stage involves the legal transfer (either temporary or permanent) of the records to the repository. The second stage involves the preliminary documentation of the content of the materials and the assumption of the physical control of the materials. Pending further archival processing, the accessioning process provides a basic but essential level of control over the materials entrusted to your repository. Our discussion of the process will begin with the problem of establishing legal control.

Legal Control: Its nature and limits

The historical records that archivists seek to collect are legally complex objects. As expressive works, these records are subject to the legal standards and traditions of both physical and intellectual property law. The duality inherent in written or recorded works is easiest to understand when one considers a relatively simple work, such as the book that you are currently reading at night before bed. This book has a physical nature. It is owned, perhaps by you, your neighbor, or your public library. The owner of the book can legally loan it, give it away, or even sell it, but she cannot run off copies of the book for similar purposes. Why not? Because the rights to reproduce the expressions within the book, unless they are in the public domain (a book published prior to 1923), are monopolistically owned by their creator.

What is true for books is true for all written and recorded works, published and unpublished.[5] For instance, if you decided to accept the Foushee Collection and the professor agreed to donate his papers to the Seagrove Pottery Archive, the repository would now "own" the papers in the sense that the library or your friend owns the book that you are reading. Additionally, to the extent that it was made explicit, the professor may have transferred the intellectual property rights that he controlled to the archive, but those intellectual property rights that he did not own would not transfer (e.g., received correspondence, manuscripts of books and articles that he wrote, etc.). In most instances, the implications of this sort of situation are more academic than real, but this example does suggest that the seemingly simple act of giving your users permission to publish excerpts from your holdings is a problematic one. One way of protecting your institution from wasted staff hours and possible legal problems is to explicitly shift the onus of copyright verification to your users by clearly stating in your findings aids and on any copies made the Copyright Notice, which states "Copyright is retained by the authors of items in these papers, or their descendants, as stipulated by United States copyright law."

Lastly, to protect your repository's best interests, you should consult with your legal counsel to make certain that your copyright practices adhere to the most current copyright laws.

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[5] For an indispensable presentation of copyright and public domain see Peter Hirtle's "Copyright and the Public Domain in the United States as of 1 January 2005" at
http://www.copyright.cornell.edu/training/Hirtle_Public_Domain.htm.

Practice of Assuming Legal Control

The transfer of legal custody is most commonly accomplished using one of three types of legal documents: a Purchase Agreement, a Deed of Gift Agreement, or a Deposit Agreement.[6] These legally binding documents serve as a form of legal and scholarly evidence that attests to your repository's right to possess the documents as well as the authenticity and integrity of the collection itself. As such, these contracts must be maintained as a permanent and integral part of your archives' holdings.

The three forms briefly discussed below will need to be tailored to meet your repository's unique needs. You will also need to establish a process to determine who will be vested with the authority to sign legal documents on behalf of your repository. Lastly and most importantly, have your legal counsel review your proposed forms.

Purchase Agreement

A purchase agreement can be used to document your institution's purchase of historical records. Depending upon the standards of documentation required by your repository and its legal counsel, this type of document can range from a formal and detailed contract to a fairly simple Bill of Sale.

Deed of Gift Agreement[7]

A Deed of Gift agreement is used in those instances when ownership of a collection is donated to a repository without the exchange of funds. It is a signed legally binding document that records the fact that the materials being transferred are a gift and it describes the legal relationships that exist between the repository, the donor, and the materials. As with all of the legal documents used to transfer legal custody of records, there is no singular prescriptive form that a Deed of Gift must assume; however, given the functions that the Deed of Gift is designed to play, the elements listed below have become typical and are largely present in the fictional sample form that follows.

- **Name of donor**
- **Name of the receiving repository**
- **Title and summary description of collection**
- **Transfer of ownership statement**
- **Access restrictions**
- **Disposal criteria and authority**
- **Dated signatures of the donor and recipient**

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[6] The Society of American Archivists and ARMA International have published a very useful book, <u>Sample Forms for Archival and Records Management Programs</u> (2002) that contains several paper and electronic versions of these forms that your repository could alter to meet its needs. The volume is available for purchase at http://www.archivists.org/catalog/pubDetail.asp?objectID=719.

[7] The Society of American Archivists has created an online pamphlet, "A Guide to Deeds of Gift," at http://www.archivists.org/publications/deed_of_gift.asp. It explains this document in a very clear style devoid of archival or legal jargon.

Deed of Gift

Seagrove Pottery Archive	2356 North Church Street, Asheboro, North Carolina 27203	(336) 555-4998 Arch@seagrove.org
Date **1-23-2006**	Accession Number(s) **2006-02**	
Donor **Alfred Braxton Foushee**	Street **4526 Main Street**	City/State/ZIP **Greensboro, NC 27401**
Contact Person **Alfred Braxton Foushee**	Telephone / E-mail **(336) 555-1701 or ArtProf@hotmail.com**	

The donation has been received by the Archives as a gift, and the owner or his agent with full authority, desiring to absolutely transfer full title by signing below, hereby gives, assigns, and conveys finally and completely, and without any limitation or reservation, the property described below to the Archives and its successors and assigns permanently and forever, together with (when applicable) any copyrights therein and the right to copyright the same.

Special Note: Discards and duplicate materials are to be returned to the donor.

Description of Donation

The Papers consist of the private collection of materials bought, collected, and produced by ALFRED BRAXTON FOUSHEE from 1980 to the present. This includes correspondence, oral history tapes and transcriptions, newspaper clippings, business records, photographs and slides, notebooks, and manuscripts (published and unpublished).

Credit Line
Received from Alfred Braxton Foushee of Greensboro, N.C., in January 2006.

Signatures

Donor `Alfred Braxton Foushee`   Date `1-23-2006`

Printed Name   **Alfred Braxton Foushee**

Director **M.K. Maxton**   Date `1-23-2006`

Conditions Governing Gifts
1. It is understood that all gifts are outright and unconditional unless otherwise noted upon this gift agreement.
2. Gifts to the Archives may be deductible in accordance with provisions of federal income tax laws.
3. The donor name on this form has not received any goods or services from the Archives in return for this gift.
4. The staff of the Archives is not permitted to furnish appraisals.
5. The Archives gratefully acknowledges your gift.
6. Please indicate on the form beside "CREDIT LINE" how you would like to be acknowledged in any news releases, exhibit labels, or other publicity regarding this donation.

Deed of Gift from "Sample Forms for Archival and Records Management Programs (2002)." Reprinted by permission of the Society of American Archivists (www.archivists.org) and ARMA International (www.arma.org).

Deposit Agreements

 A deposit or loan agreement is used to document your institution's agreement to house and make accessible materials that someone else continues to own. With the exception of temporary loans for exhibition or other limited scholarly purposes, most archivists are wary of deposit agreements. This hesitancy stems from the fear that a depositor may decide to withdraw a collection after the expenditure of a considerable amount of your institution's resources. If it is decided that a deposit agreement must be used, it is often suggested that the repository negotiate some sort of sunset clause fully transferring the materials to it after a set period of time or an event, such as the donor's death.

DEPOSIT AGREEMENT
BETWEEN

SEAGROVE POTTERY ARCHIVE

AND

NAME: **ALFRED BRAXTON FOUSHEE**

ADDRESS: **4526 MAIN STREET**
CITY: **GREENSBORO**   STATE: **NORTH CAROLINA**   ZIP CODE: **27401-3487**

TELEPHONE NUMBER: **(336) 555-1701**

DESCRIPTION OF ITEMS ON DEPOSIT: **This agreement covers the deposit of the "ALFRED BRAXTON FOUSHEE PAPERS," hereafter referred to as "Papers."**

The Papers consist of the private collection of materials bought, collected, and produced by ALFRED BRAXTON FOUSHEE from 1980 to the present. This includes correspondence, oral history tapes and transcriptions, newspaper clippings, business records, photographs and slides, notebooks, and manuscripts (published and unpublished).

APPROXIMATE VALUE OF ITEMS: **A third party appraisal valued the collection at $10,000.00**

INSURANCE WILL BE CARRIED BY: **Seagrove Pottery Archive's Insurance Carrier**

I own the materials described above and voluntarily agree to deposit them with the **SEAGROVE POTTERY ARCHIVE**, with the intention of transferring title to said organization upon my death. At that time all rights, title and interest I possess in these materials will transfer and be assigned to said organization.

No arrangement or preservation work may be performed on these materials without my written permission. The repository is responsible for all damages, accidental or otherwise, that occurs to the material while in its custody. A description of these materials may be added to the access records of the organization.

Access to these records is permitted and unrestricted. The records may be reproduced with the supervision of the Seagrove Pottery Archive.

I agree to the above conditions of deposit and I am authorized to agree thereto:

For the: Depositor   For the: Seagrove Pottery Archive
Signature: Alfred Braxton Foushee   Signature: **M.K. Maxton**
Title: Professor   Title: Seagrove Pottery Archive Archivist
Date: 1-23-2006   Date: 1-23-2006

Physical and Intellectual Control

The second phase of accessioning is intended to provide a basic level of physical and intellectual control over materials that have been accepted into your institution. Perhaps more clearly, this second phase is designed to provide a brief description of what you have acquired and where it has been temporarily stored. Since very few collections come in "shelf-ready," the information and tasks performed during this in-take phase are designed to provide a minimum level of control over the collection until it can be more fully arranged and described. Typically, this phase of accessioning focuses on maintaining the physical integrity of the collection and gathering the collection's vital statistics.

Maintaining the Collection's Integrity

When archivists speak of maintaining the physical integrity of a collection, they are primarily concerned with making sure that the collection remains intact. In this instance, "intact" has two meanings. The first meaning of intact is that the collection must be maintained as a single, discrete unit of materials. The second meaning refers to the preservation and maintenance of any internal relationships or organizational schemes that may exist within the collection (e.g., Original Order). Archivists maintain the integrity of their collections through two related actions:

- **Upon receipt, the collection must be issued a unique identifier or Accession Number.** This code must be clearly written on every container that contains elements of the collection. The careful and thorough labeling of all elements of the collection with its assigned Accession Number is especially crucial if portions of the collection are destined to be segregated from the bulk of the collection because of condition issues (mold or pests) or storage requirements (e.g., size, temperature, etc.).

    Let's pause here to delve a little further into accession numbers. Accession numbers are used to keep track of discrete receipts of records. Thinking about the Foushee collection, it is possible that the Professor might have delivered his papers in multiple chunks over a period of months or even years. In fact, it is entirely possible that Professor Foushee has or will have similar records that he will give the Seagrove Pottery Archive in the future. Each delivery of Foushee materials will be accessioned using a separate accession number. Thus, multiple accession numbers (i.e., accessions of materials) may be cobbled together to form one collection, which has its own unique identifier, a collection number. It is also possible that the records in an accession might be distributed into multiple collections.

    Finally, the construction of an accession number can be done in a number of different manners. In the fictional examples presented in this chapter, the accession number has been assembled using a very basic formula: the accession year, a separating dash, and the order in which the accession was received. For example, 2006-23 would be the accession number for the 23rd accession received in the 2006 calendar year.

- **Review of the collection and careful re-housing of the collection prior to storage.**
  During the process of labeling containers, it is wise to examine the containers that the collection arrived in to determine their suitability as a storage unit; if they are unsuitable, replace them with suitable ones.[8] If there is a meaningful order to the material, you must be careful to preserve it during this re-housing phase. At this time you may also decide that there are a number of discrete components of the collection, such as photographs, correspondence, videotapes, etc. that are made more meaningful if they are gathered together as subunits beneath one accession number. This type of preliminary and recorded sorting or "pre-processing" may help provide better access to the collection pending fuller processing.

Documenting the Accession

During accessioning, you will have gathered some important descriptive information about the collection. This information must be recorded on your institution's standardized accession form which will provide temporary inventory control over your newly acquired holding until it can be more fully arranged and described. As with the other forms presented here, there is no singular prescriptive form that an accession form must assume, however, given the functions that it is designed to play, the elements listed below have become typical and are largely present in the fictional sample form that follows.

- **Accession number**
- **Accession date**
- **Collection title**
- **Donor's name and address**
- **Access restrictions**
- **Storage location(s)**
- **Collection description and condition**
- **Total size of the collection**
- **Accessioning archivist**

Accession Form

Date Received **1/21/2006**	Accession No. **2006-01**	Accession Archivist **M.K. Maxton**
Name of Collection **Oxendine Pottery, Inc. Records**		
Donor Name and Address **Mr. George Herbert Oxendine** **3450 Cedar Lane,** **Red Spring, North Carolina 28377** **(910) 555-1498**		
Restrictions **Personnel Records**	Location **Shelf 1-10, Accession Room**	Total Size **30 Linear Feet (26 Boxes)**

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[8] See Chapter 4, "Safekeeping your Collections" for details on appropriate storage containers.

General Description of Material	Inclusive Dates
Records related to the business operations of a commercial pottery.	**1945-1980, Bulk 1965-1972**

Specific Description of Material:

Type	Size	Type	Size
☐ Audio Recordings	_____		
☒ Correspondence	7 boxes	☒ Printed Materials	1 box
☐ Diaries/Manuscripts	_____	☐ Movie Film	_____
☒ Financial Records	4 boxes	☒ Reports	1 box
☒ Legal Documents	3 boxes	☒ Photographs	3 boxes
☐ Maps/Charts	_____	☐ Scrapbooks	_____
☒ Other **Personnel Records, Design Drawings, Glaze Recipes, Kiln Firing Records.**			

Arrangement of Material:

☒ Alphabetic	☒ Chronologic	☐ Numeric
☐ Topical (Subject)	☐ Not Arranged	☒ Other **Original File Order**

Additional Comments

Stored in Donor's Basement: Some Water Staining, Insect Damage, and Inactive Mold.

Accession Form from "Sample Forms for Archival and Records Management Programs (2002)." Reprinted by permission of the Society of American Archivists (www.archivists.org) and ARMA International (www.arma.org).

V. DOCUMENTING YOUR COLLECTIONS

It should be abundantly clear that the acquisition and management of archival collections generates a substantial paper trail. At a minimum, every collection you accept will generate a legal document transferring legal control of the papers, an accession form, and donor correspondence. Moreover, as time goes by the collection will spawn other important materials such as a descriptive finding aid and additional correspondence from users requesting copies or permission to publish excerpts. In aggregate, these documents provide the legal and scholarly evidence that your repository requires to establish its right to keep these papers and manage them properly and as such, maintaining these documents in an accessible and useful filing system is vital to the success of your repository.

As with any filing system, its success will depend on the degree to which it serves your needs and filing abilities; an overly complicated system will easily fall into disuse. At a minimum, it is important to maintain a set of Collection Files. In general, this sort of system would be filed alphabetically by collection title and it would contain the originals or copies of all the documents related to that collection.

Chapter 3

ARRANGING AND DESCRIBING COLLECTIONS

I. INTRODUCTION[1]

This chapter focuses on the arrangement and description of archival collections. Arrangement is the physical and intellectual process of organizing the documents that belong to a collection and description is the literary act[2] of recording information about the organization and content of a collection. In archival jargon, these activities are often joined together and simply referred to as "processing."

With the possible exception of some institutional records, few, if any collections, will ever come into your repository ready to be placed on the shelf and made immediately available to researchers. In the main, the materials that you accession will be a mess: dirty, dusty, disorganized, full of damaging materials, and housed in inappropriate containers. The processes, techniques, and standards employed by archivists as they arrange and describe collections enable a repository to gain control over its materials so that they can better ensure the physical preservation of a collection as well as provide researchers with a reasonable, but not perfect, degree of access to material relevant to their research.

The accessioning process that we discussed at the end of our last chapter should be understood as the most fundamental and preliminary level of archival arrangement and description (i.e., processing). By maintaining the physical integrity of a collection and carefully recording some preliminary descriptive information, the accessioning archivist has ensured a very basic level of control over and access to a newly acquired collection. In fact, depending on the natural pressures of time, limited resources and staff as well as the uncertain nature of demand for a particular collection, the rudimentary level of control generated by accessioning may suffice. But in those instances when this minimal level of processing is clearly inadequate, you will wish to do more.

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[1] This chapter is heavily based on text, exercises and outlines created by Katherine Wisser and Linda Sellars.

[2] A sample Finding Aid and Catalogue Record are appended to this chapter in Appendix 3A and 3B. If you are unfamiliar with either of these types of archival description, it may be very useful to briefly review them before reading the remainder of this chapter.

II. ARCHIVAL ARRANGEMENT

The arrangement or organization of a collection is more of an art than a science. Every collection is different in terms of its composition and importance and every repository develops its own conventions and practices for arrangement. Having said this, there are a small number of principles and conventions that have been recognized by archivists as having universal applicability. The chief guiding principles of arrangement are *Provenance* and Original Order.

Provenance or What is an Archival Collection?

Let us begin our discussion of the principle of *Provenance* by stepping back and asking a seemingly basic question: What is an archival collection? In simplest terms, an archival collection is a defined set or group of historical records that are maintained and described together. The reason that historical records are grouped together is that any given historic record is made more meaningful by being maintained within a particular documentary context. An obvious example might be a WWII-era letter from your grandfather to your grandmother. By itself the letter and its contents would make some sense, but by being grouped with other examples of their correspondence as well as your grandfather's military papers, the letter will assume a much higher or richer level of informational significance.

The "particular documentary context" that makes an historic record most *meaningful* is chosen by the archivist when he or she decides upon the characteristic trait or attribute that links individual historic records into a collection. Archivists have come to prefer collections of historic materials that are "naturally" or "organically" linked together by their creator. In fact, the principle of *Provenance* states that the records generated by a person or organization should remain together. The strong, indeed almost unconscious, predisposition on the part of archivist for linking historical records through their creator underscores the high degree of acceptance that the principle of *Provenance* has had in the archival world. Thus, returning to our example above, your grandfather and grandmothers papers should probably be maintained as one collection, rather than having the materials apportioned into a collection of WWII letters or Military Papers. Collections that adhere to the principle of *Provenance* are sometimes referred to as "organic collections."

In those instances, when the archivist does decide that an historic record is made most *meaningful* or *useful* by a documentary context other than the one mandated by the principle of *Provenance*, he or she has created an Artificial Collection. Perhaps you are a local history librarian and your library does not maintain or collect many complete collections. Instead, your brief is to create and maintain subject files about the people, places, and events that occur in your town or county. These vertical files will be heterogeneous with respect to the type and source of the documents that they contain. By

organizing your files according to subject matter, you have chosen to create an "artificial collection" that is organized around a trait or attribute that you have deemed to be more important and useful than that of *Provenance*.

In most instances, the decision to create an artificial collection stems from an overriding interest in the informational content contained in the documents. However, it is important to recognize that groups of documents can also tell stories that transcend their mere content. To preserve these other stories, archivists have developed the principle of Original Order.

Original Order

The principal of Original Order, which is often referred to as *Respects des Fonds*, states that historical records should be maintained to preserve the manner in which they were originally used, kept, or experienced by their creator. This principle underscores the idea that a document plays multiple roles. In addition to being a simple "container" of information, it is a tool used by people to accomplish certain goals and tasks as well as an artifact or evidence of their actions or experiences. Moreover, since activities, goals, and experiences are complex and often involve the manipulation or use of a number of documents in conjunction with one another, by preserving the original user's arrangement scheme, an archivist preserves the documentary connections or order that the initial users found to be most useful or meaningful. Thus, in an imperfect way, Original Order acts to maintain and preserve evidence of the original user's work practices and experiences.

The principle of Original Order was initially created in an effort to capture the bureaucratic practices and administrative routines of the large governmental and business institutions that emerged out of the 19th century. And it is still true that Original Order is most commonly encountered by archivists who work with organizational or institutional papers, for the documents created and selected for preservation by businesses and other large institutions end up in an archives as the logical end to an ordered and regularized documentary life-cycle. While this is not often the case for personal papers, it would be foolish to placidly assume that Original Order is never relevant when dealing with personal papers. Returning to the World War II-era letters example above, perhaps your grandmother kept everything that she received from your grandfather and the War Department in the order that she received them, rather than according to date that they were written. By keeping them in the order she imposed, rather than reorganizing them into chronological order, you will have preserved her experiences as a reader on the home front without altering a researcher's ability to retrace your grandfather's experiences as both a writer and a soldier.

In general, the presence or absence of Original Order is fairly easy to discern. A collection that resembles the contents of a series of emptied junk drawers is unlikely to harbor any meaningful remnants of their creator's work habits whereas a collection consisting of a neatly labeled series of folders is likely to reflect some work habits and intentions. In either case, it is important to note in your archival description when

Original Order has been retained and when an arrangement schema has been imposed by the processing archivist. If this information is not noted in your description of the collection, you may inadvertently mislead your researchers.

A final word of caution may be in order. There are collections that are hybrids of documentary chaos and Original Order; and as an archivist you must pay close attention as you process a collection to ensure that that you do not assume away Original Order. Documents vary in importance to their creators and the absence of a coherent order in one section should not be read as the absolute absence of Original Order within a collection.

The Practice of Arrangement

The successful arrangement of a collection is a very physical task that requires a good deal of forethought and planning. After having reviewed the paperwork generated by the accessioning archivist, your initial step as the processing archivist is to survey the collection. Pencil and paper in hand, you should review the entire collection in order to get a more detailed sense of its contents in terms of its informational content, original arrangement schemas, formats, and preservation needs. Using all of this information, you should develop an arrangement plan that:

- Takes into account all of the materials contained within the collection;
- Observes the Principle of *Provenance*;
- Preserves any vestiges of Original Order;
- Or in the absence of Original Order, organizes the materials by function or type;
- And finally, your plan should order the collection in a rational, measured, and accessible manner.

Once you have settled upon a scheme of arrangement, your next task is to organize all of the collection's materials in a manner that reflects the physical order that you have decided upon in your plan.

Levels of Arrangement and the Virtues of Chronological and Alphabetical Ordering

The final bullet point in the section above states that you should strive to arrange your collection into an order that is "rational, measured and accessible." To ensure that this is in fact the case, you should constantly ask yourself whether the arrangement decisions that you are making are helping to present the collection in as clear a way as possible. Conversely, is the order that you have devised obscuring the contents of the collection?

In the effort to make a collection's contents as accessible to researchers as possible, archivists often divide documents into "Levels of Arrangement" or groupings that are described together because they share a common attribute, such as their material form,

informational content, function, or order of arrangement. Depending upon the relationships that exist between these groupings, they can be variously labeled as a Series or Subseries.

A Series is generally understood to be a discrete grouping that is a peer of the other Series divisions that exist in a collection. For instance, an archivist might decide to divide a collection into three Series that have been labeled as "Correspondence," "Writings," and "Subject Files." Each of these divisions or documentary groupings acts in the same way that a chapter functions as it divides a book. That is, each serves as a container for materials united by a common significant attribute.

A Subseries is used by archivists when they want to emphasize that there are meaningful divisions within the materials that they have grouped together as a Series. A good example of a Subseries might well occur within our hypothetical Series, "Writings," which could quite logically be divided into a number of Subseries by genre-type (e.g., Novels, Short Stories, Poetry, Essays, or Articles).

The decision to create a Series or a Subseries should not be taken lightly. Carefully chosen divisions can be used to great effect, but the over-division of a collection can obscure its structure by presenting the researcher with a fractured collection, riven by too many distinctions.

The individual documents that are contained with a Collection, Series, or Subseries are housed within file units (e.g. folders, boxes, etc). These file units should be ordered in a manner that makes sense to the researcher and that is practical for the processing archivist to accomplish. The two most common organizing schemas are to chronologically or alphabetically arrange the file units. Returning to our Series example, the processing archivist could have chosen to order the Correspondence Series chronologically and the Writings and Subject Files alphabetically. In either instance, a researcher would almost instinctively grasp the nature of arrangement.

After you have arranged the materials into file units and nested the files in the order dictated by your plan, you should number and label your folders. Folder numbering should be sequential with no repetitions. This will make it easier for your repository to ensure that collections stay intact.

An example of the information that you should record on a folder label for the hypothetical Alfred Braxton Foushee Papers is as follows:

Collection Title	Series	File Unit Title	Folder Number
Foushee Papers	Correspondence	1964-1968	1
Foushee Papers	Correspondence	1969-1973	2
Foushee Papers	Writings	Articles	12
Foushee Papers	Writings	Monographs	13

Finally, please note that archivists are not compelled to use Series or Subseries to segment a collection. It is perfectly acceptable to arrange a collection into file units without resorting to the use of a Series and Subseries.

Remember: You should only use the divisions that you deem to be useful! Thus, the Foushee Papers could be divided in one of several fashions depending upon your good judgment. Below are several different ways that the Foushee Papers could be arranged employing various levels of arrangement. When you review these sample plans, please assume that the folders listed are select items and that they do not represent the totality of the imagined Papers

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Various Arrangement Plans

Alfred Braxton Foushee Papers

A. Collection Level of Arrangement Schema

Folder 1	Correspondence, 1964-1968
Folder 2	Correspondence, 1969-1973
	[*More Correspondence Folders*]
Folder 27	Writings: Articles
Folder 28	Writings: Monographs
	[*More Writings Folders*]
Folder 50	Subject Files: Clay-Glaze
	[*More Subject Files Folders*]
Folder 76	Subject Files: Oxendine Pottery, Inc.

B. Series Level of Arrangement Schema

Series 1. Correspondence
    Folder 1   1964-1968
    Folder 2   1969-1973
[*More Correspondence Folders*]
Series 2. Writings
    Folder 27   Articles
    Folder 28   Monographs
[*More Writings Folders*]
Series 3. Subject Files
    Folder 50   Clay-Glaze
[*More Subject Files Folders*]
    Folder 76   Oxendine Pottery, Inc.

C. Subseries Level of Arrangement Schema

Series 1. Correspondence
    Folder 1   1964-1968
    Folder 2   1969-1973
[*More Correspondence Folders*]
Series 2. Writings
    SubSeries 2.1 Articles
        Folder 27   A-C (By Title)
    [*More Writings Folders*]
    SubSeries 2.4 Reviews
        Folder 35   F-G (By Author of Reviewed Work)
    [*More Writings Folders*]
Series 3. Subject Files
    Folder 50   Clay-Glaze
[*More Subject Files Folders*]
    Folder 76   Oxendine Pottery, Inc.

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Preservation and Processing[3]

With few exceptions (e.g., reprocessing, microfilming, or digitization), the archival processing or arranging phase that is being discussed in this chapter is the period during which a collection is most intensively examined by your institution's staff. It is also the period during which the collection will be subject to its most intensive and comprehensive preservation review with accompanying preservation actions.

Typical and frequently necessary preservation actions include[4]:

- **Segregating archival materials:** Not every item in a collection will be an 8½ x 11 piece of paper. Different formats have different preservation and enclosure needs to ensure their long-term stability.
- **Removing damaging fasteners and other problematic materials:** Newly accessioned documents often contain a variety of incidental materials that if left in place will continue to damage your collections. Common objects that are typical candidates for removal are: metal fasteners, rubber bands, acidic paper, organic materials.
- **Reformatting unstable archival materials:** Some fragile materials, especially those with little artifactual value such as newspaper clippings, need to be reformatted to ensure their survival.
- **Re-housing archival materials in appropriate enclosures:** To protect loose documents, they should be removed from their native enclosures (i.e., old boxes, envelopes, etc.) and housed in appropriate enclosures such as a folder, envelope, plastic/polyester sleeve, or box. These primary enclosures are then nested in a larger secondary enclosure or container, such as a document case, record center box, or even a stationary map case.

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[3] Preservation is addressed very briefly in this chapter. The next chapter, "Safekeeping Your Collections" discusses the issues raised here in greater depth.

[4] The National Archives Records Administration collectively refers to these actions as "Holdings Maintenance." The Library of Congress provides a detailed description of the component activities that comprise "Holdings Maintenance" in "Preservation of Archival Records: Holdings Maintenance at the National Archives" at http://www.archives.gov/preservation/holdings-maintenance/table-of-contents.html.

Arrangement Exercise

You have received material from Harry Clinton Williams of Williamsville, N.C. Williams is 68 years old and a lifetime resident of Williamsville. He has recently retired after having sold the men's clothing store he owned and operated for nearly thirty years. Williams is a town leader who has been active in his church and other civic organizations. He is married to Natalie Jean Thompson Williams and has two adult children who live out of state.

A cursory review of the materials reveals the following:

1. Two banana cartons full of letters and greeting cards still in envelopes. Most envelopes are addressed to Williams or his wife, Natalie Jean Williams. Also in these boxes are manila envelopes containing bank statements, credit card bills, cancelled checks, and Williams's federal and state income tax returns, 1965-2003.

2. An Absolut Vodka box containing three bound volumes: one of minutes of congregational meetings, 1905-1956, of First Baptist Church in Williamsville, one volume of membership records, 1923-1988, of First Baptist Church, and a volume of essays on religious subjects. Also in this box are minutes of meetings, reports, and financial records relating to organizations in which Williams was active: Rotary materials in red folders, Toastmasters materials in yellow folders, and Masonic materials in blue folders.

3. A Staples box with family photographs, identified and unidentified; newspaper clippings, some about Williams or members of his family and some with no apparent connection to him; three small envelopes, each containing a lock of hair; a large brown envelope containing report cards, diplomas, school papers of Williams and of his children; and one reel of Super8 film with home movies and one VHS tape of an interview with Williams for a local TV show.

    Given this scenario and reasoned assumptions, answer the following questions. If you need additional information to make your decisions, list the questions you would like to ask.

    > 1. How will you organize the papers?
    > 2. What series will you establish?
    > 3. Are there items that you will not keep?

II. ARCHIVAL DESCRIPTION

Archival Description naturally follows Archival Arrangement. After having sorted, arranged, and examined the many documents that comprise a collection, the processing archivist will have become that particular collection's expert. This is a fact that comes with some distinct problems, the chief one being that the archivist must now organize his or her detailed knowledge of the collection into a logical, clear, and concise documentary format that allows researchers to accomplish two essential tasks:

- · To determine whether a collection is likely to harbor documents relevant to their research project; and
- · To locate these pertinent materials.

Thus, archival description functions as both an abstract and an index to a collection.

As with arrangement, the level of detail and effort that an archivist should employ when crafting the description of a collection is extremely variable and depends on the needs and value of the collection as well as available resources. Increasing, because of the finite limits of resources that are available to archivists, it has been widely accepted that some description, even a cursory description based on a very minimal amount of arrangement, is better than no description at all. Rest assured that a more detailed level of description can always be created later when time, resources, and priorities permit.

A Brief Caveat

Archival description is not historical analysis. Your goal is to accurately present a collection's contents as briefly and succinctly as possible. You should focus on describing the subject matter, people, events, locations, document types, and their arrangement. Your goal is to provide access to researchers; the researchers will do the analysis.

Forms of Archival Description: Finding Aids and Catalogue Records

Creating an Archival Finding Aid (a narrative description of a collection) and/or an Archival Card Catalogue (an old fashioned card file) is a process of distilling the universe of information that you have learned about a collection into an established pattern of discrete packets of information. These packets of information or elements of description are combined differently, with a Finding Aid containing substantially more information than a Catalogue Record. In this trickle down model, it should be understood that the information that appears in a card catalogue has "passed through" the finding aid; it is simply the case that not all the information passes through. The following chart lists the chief informational or descriptive elements that are used in archival description and indicates the presence or absence of an element in each of the two forms.

Descriptive Element	Catalogue Record	Finding Aid
Title	X	X
Unique Identifier	X	X
Extent	X	X
Bio/Hist Note		X
Content, Scope Note	X	X
Index Terms		X
Administrative Info.	Some	X
Container List		X

Despite the variable quantity of information presented, the goal of each form of description is to provide the researcher with the information necessary to determine a collection's relevance to their research. This is accomplished through the careful and consistent presentation of information. It cannot be stressed enough that the hallmark of good archival description is consistency. As a repository you should strive to develop in-house practices and conventions that will not vary from collection to collection or from archivist to archivist. One tool that is invaluable in this regard is a recent Society of American Archivists publication, "Describing Archives: A Content Standard." This work covers in depth the elements that will be discussed below. Moreover this work provides multiple examples of each of the elements and could serve your repository as a "style-guide."[5]

Major Elements of Archival Description

Name of a Collection's Creator(s)

The first element of description that must be decided upon is the name of the collection's creator. In this element, it must be understood that the "creator" is the person, family, or corporate entity that was primarily responsible for gathering together the various documents that comprise an archival collection. The creator of a collection is **not** necessarily the same individual, group, or institution that actually created the documents.

For instance, returning to the World War II-era letters example above, your grandfather and the War Department created the documents that your grandmother received, ordered, and kept. Despite the fact that she did not create any of the documents in this collection, your grandmother did create the collection and should be singled out in your description as its "Creator."

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[5] Describing Archives: A Content Standard (SAA, 2004) is available for purchase on-line at
http://www.archivists.org/catalog/pubDetail.asp?objectID=1279

Title and Unique Identifier

Archival Collections do not come with a neatly supplied title. As with the creator element above, on the basis of his or her knowledge of a collection, an archivist must create a title that is unique, descriptive, and precise. Its function, as with monographic titles, is to act as a unique identifier. Additionally, it should convey information about the creator of the collection as well as the collection's content.

The formula for devising an archival title is: [Creator's Name] + [Description of the Materials] + [Date Range of Materials]. Returning to our World War II Letters collection, a possible title would be: the **Veronica Curran World War II Letters, 1942-1945**. Thus, the title directly provides the researcher with specific information about the collection's content and the time frame of its creation.

In a sense, this particular example is a bit anomalous. For while it is perfectly acceptable and quite helpful to place a very specific descriptor [e.g., Diaries, Photographs, Civil War Letters, Field Journals, Maps, etc.] in an archival title, this degree of specificity should only be employed when you are describing a collection that is singular in its subject and format focus.

Most collections are less focused and more diffuse in the materials that they contain. For the construction of titles for heterogeneous collections archivists use the following descriptive conventions:

As was mentioned above, a title uniquely identifies a collection, but for database, index, and other paperwork purposes, titles are clunky, long, and prone to errors of transposition. Although it is seen by some as an unneeded redundancy, we recommend that each collection be assigned a unique numerical or alphanumeric identifier. "MC" (Manuscript Collection) followed by a number that is sequential in nature (i.e., first collection is MC1) is a quick an easy method of generating a locally unique identifier.

Physical Description: Extent and Genre Types

Specific information about the extent or size of a collection serves both internal and external purposes. Typically, repositories measure and track their holdings using several metrics: linear or cubic feet are a measure of the shelving space occupied by a collection; the total number of containers provides a gross system of inventory control; and an estimated item or document count conveys the composition of a collection. Please note that your repository must be consistent in its use of units of measurement; decide upon the metrics that will be most useful and make sure that your staff consistently and correctly applies them.

Administratively, this data is obviously useful as a repository manages the physical needs of its collections. Perhaps less obviously, this information can be of crucial importance to a researcher. Knowing whether a collection consists of 1 letter or 1,000 letters can be helpful to a researcher as he or she is planning a summer of research trips. Quite frankly, some research trips will not be worth the effort or expense and a little information up front will lessen the chance of disappointment and financial loss.

Similarly, specific information detailing the types of formats or genres (e.g., diaries, letters, day books, photographs, audiotapes, etc.) present in a collection, allows the researcher to prioritize the value of a collection. Although seemingly relevant, for a researcher whose sole focus is World War II photographs, the Veronica Curran World War II Letter Collection, 1942-1945, would be as useless as a collection of Civil War Diaries.

Historical or Biographical Note

An historical or biographical note is a descriptive device that archivists use to provide basic factual information about the individuals, groups, and institutions that created the collection and its contents. This information naturally varies in depth, but it represents an attempt on the part of the archivist to explain the context in which the documents were created and used. As with the bulk of the information used to craft your archival description, most of the information will be derived from your review of the collection itself.

Below is the Biographical Note for our World War II Letter Collection. This note focuses on the writer of the letters, rather than the collector, and because Mr. Curran was not an unusually prominent person, all of the information presented about him was culled from the letters he wrote home to his wife.

> **Biographical Note**
> Robert Henry "Jack" Curran of Lake Norman, NC, was a traveling salesman in the Southeastern United States. He was drafted into the United States Army in December 1942 and served as an enlisted man in the Army Infantry during World War II until his discharge in the late fall of 1945. For most of his enlistment, Curran was a noncommissioned officer who served as a platoon sergeant. He served with several units within the US 2nd Infantry Divisions in England, France and Germany. He was captured by the Germans in the Ardennes Forest during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944. After his capture he was transported to a Prisoner of War Camp, Stalag 9B, in Bad Orb Hessen-Nassau, Prussia. In May 1945 he was liberated by Soviet troops and repatriated.

Collection Scope and Content Information

Unlike a Biographical or Historical Note, the Collection Scope and Content Information Note focuses on the materials contained in the collection rather than their direct creator. In this section an archivist will present a description of the formats and subject matter (e.g., people, organizations, events, time periods, etc.) that are present or documented in a collection. This section is also used to single out exceptional documents or information,

unexpected findings, or even a collection's lack of usefulness in an expected area (e.g., a doctor's diary that never mentions the practice of medicine, etc.). Below is a Scope and Content Note for our World War II Letter Collection.

Scope and Content Note

This collection is chiefly letters written by Robert Henry "Jack" Curran of Lake Norman, N.C., to his wife, Veronica Curran (Vera). Prior to World War II, Curran was a traveling salesman in the Southeastern United States, and it was his habit to write his wife on an almost daily basis. Curran continued this routine throughout the war. The near-daily frequency of his letters presents a detailed portrait of the concerns, fears, and activities of an infantry platoon sergeant leading men in combat and in captivity. Formats contained include letters, telegrams, postcards, and V-mail.

Throughout these letters, Curran wrote of his concerns for his platoon as they trained for and participated in combat operations. There are detailed explanations of many United States Army practices including small unit combat tactics, censorship and military secrecy, post-war demobilization, and promotions. Curran's letters also contain detailed descriptions of worries and fears that he had made errors of judgment. This is particularly true in the 120 letters that Curran wrote after his capture. These letters also contain detailed descriptions of his life as a prisoner, including his journey under armed guard through France and Germany into Prussia, prison camp regulations, Red Cross inspections, prison guards, and his liberation and journey back to the United States.

Letters written prior to June 1944 frequently address the financial needs and concerns of his wife and family back home in Lake Norman, N.C. Also included are a few miscellaneous items, including: pay stubs, military identity cards, Red Cross documents, and a post-war health inspection report.

Access Points or Index Terms

Access Points or Index Terms are the carefully chosen words and phrases that archivists and librarians use to link topically similar collections. This is accomplished through the consistent use of a "controlled vocabulary." A "controlled vocabulary" is essentially a bounded or limited set of phrases that are used every time an archivist wants to draw a researcher's attention to the presence of a particular subject matter, format-type, geographical term, person, group, or institution that is contained in a collection.[6] It is

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[6] There is often no need to invent a new "controlled vocabulary" for your collections. The Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine, and others have worked hard to create large lists of useful descriptive terms. NC ECHO maintains a webpage of links to various Controlled Vocabularies that you can and should use at http://www.ncecho.org/ncdc/ncdublincore.htm#subject. In addition to consulting lists of controlled vocabularies, it can also be instructive and useful to search repository and library online

important to stress that a repository must use the same vocabulary when it describes all of its collections. Ideally, a repository will also use standardized and widely adopted sets of index terms so that a researcher will be able to place your repository's collections within the broader range of described collections that are available.

Returning to our ongoing example, perhaps Veronica Curran, the donator of the World War II Letters, is also the church secretary and music director of the Lake Norman Second Baptist Church. Your processing archivist has noted that she appears very prominently in a newly acquired collection, the Lake Norman Second Baptist Church Records, and he would like to mention her in the descriptive section devoted to access terms. Given the foregoing, the controlled vocabulary phrase for Mrs. Curran should always be "Curran, Veronica, 1918-." Similarly, Lake Norman should always be rendered as "Lake Norman (N.C.) and any collection documenting the activities of a traveling salesman or a soldier's letters home should respectively include "Traveling sales personnel—United States." and "Soldiers—United States—Correspondence— History—World War, 1939-1945." A list of controlled access terms for the WWII Letters follows:

Controlled Access Terms

Curran, Robert Henry "Jack," 1915-1962.
Curran, Veronica, 1918-.
Lake Norman (N.C.)
Prisoners of war—Germany.
Soldiers—United States—Correspondence—History—World War, 1939-1945.
Soldiers—United States—Family relationships.
Traveling sales personnel—United States.
United States. Army. 2nd Infantry Division.
United States. Army—Military life.
World War, 1939-1945—Personal narratives, American.
World War, 1939-1945—Prisoners and prisons.

The utility of these terms may seem a bit mystifying, but a simple paper or Microsoft Word Document index scheme that relates all the access terms in your collections with their relevant collection numbers would immeasurably aid your staff and researchers as they work to find materials about specific topics. An example of an index relating controlled access terms and the collection that they describe is below.

Curran, Veronica, 1918-	MC267, MC356
Lake Norman, (N.C.)	MC12, MC267, MC356, MC451
Prisoners of war-Germany	MC2, MC199, MC267

catalogues for Index Terms. If you are going to do this, be consistent in your borrowings and try to borrow from a repository that contains collections likely to mirror your own.

| Traveling sales personnel-United States | MC267, MC561 |
| World War II, 1939-1945 | MC199, MC267, MC342 |

Administrative Information

Administrative Information is a broad rubric that contains information about a collection's restrictions, acquisition history, and alternative forms.

It is prudent to inform patrons of any restrictions that could govern (from their point of view, hinder) their research use of a collection. Typically, this means that you should explicitly state that your collection may be protected under U.S. Copyright Law and it is incumbent on the researcher to secure the requisite permissions. Additionally, your description should state any direct use restrictions that could affect a researcher's ability to view or use the collection or any of its parts. This could include details about restricted materials, the need to secure written permission from a donor, the need to make listening copies, a prohibition against copying, the lack of computer equipment or software to open a specific file, etc. You should include enough information to prevent any ugly surprises for the researcher.

Acquisition information legitimizes your holdings and informs the public about how a collection came into your possession. This information is often referred to as "Provenance" in the art history-sense of the word. Generally, this information is brief: "Received from Veronica Curran of Mooresville, N.C., in January 1997."

If a collection has been microfilmed, published in facsimile form, digitized, or made available in any other more portable and accessible form, this fact should be noted in a collection's description. This information could make it much easier for a researcher to make use of your materials.

Container List

A container list details the arrangement of a collection by briefly listing the type and date range of materials contained within each of the housings (e.g., boxes or folders) used to protect and store a collection. It is literally a list of the materials within all the containers.

A Container List is extremely useful in helping researchers request those discrete sections of a collection that are germane to their research. In the absence of a container list, a patron would have to request and review large sections, if not an entire collection, to find relevant materials. If you refer to the Finding Aid for the Veronica Curran World War II Letters that is fully presented below, you will see a folder list that would allow a researcher to meaningfully and rather easily select and request items of use. For example, a researcher studying Traveling Salesmen during the early phase of the war could limit his request to folders 8 to 11. These folders contain letters that Curran wrote as a traveling salesman between the attack on Pearl Harbor and his induction into the military in November 1942.

Finding Aid and Catalogue Record Exercise

Review the Veronica Curran World War II Letters, 1939-1945
Finding Aid and Catalogue Record that follow this page and answer the
following questions:

- Where did the records come from?

- Why were they created?

- How do they relate to other records?

- Why are they significant?

- How does the information contained in the Catalogue Record and
  the Finding Aid differ?

APPENDIX 3A

Finding Aid

Veronica Curran World War II Letters

Repository:	Lake Norman Historical Society 2762 South Pine Boulevard Mooresville, NC 28115
Title:	Veronica Curran World War II Letters, 1939-1945
Creator:	Curran, Veronica, 1918-
Collection No.:	MC 267
Extent:	About 1,500 items (1.5 linear feet)
Restrictions:	No Access Restrictions
Provenance:	Received from Veronica Curran of Mooresville, N.C., in January 1997.
Copyright Notice:	Copyright is retained by the authors of items in these papers, or their descendants, as stipulated by United States copyright law.

Abstract

Robert Henry "Jack" Curran of Lake Norman, NC, was drafted into the United States Army in December 1942. For most of his enlistment, he served as a platoon sergeant within the US 2nd Infantry Divisions. He was captured by the Germans in the Ardennes Forest at the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944. Toward the end of the war, he was liberated by Soviet Troops and repatriated. This collection is chiefly letters written by Curran to his wife, Veronica Curran, first as a traveling salesman and then as a soldier in World War II. Curran was a devoted letter writer and wrote home almost daily about his experience as a soldier.

Biographical Note

Robert Henry "Jack" Curran of Lake Norman, NC, was a traveling salesman in the Southeastern United States. He was drafted into the United States Army in December 1942 and served as an enlisted man in the Army Infantry during World War II until his discharge in the late fall of 1945. For most of his enlistment, Curran was a noncommissioned officer who served as a platoon sergeant. He served with several units within the US 2nd Infantry Divisions in England, France and Germany. He was captured by the Germans in the Ardennes Forest during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944.

After his capture he was transported to a Prisoner of War Camp, Stalag 9B, in Bad Orb Hessen-Nassau, Prussia. In May 1945 he was liberated by Soviet troops and repatriated.

Chronology

December 1942	Induction into the United States Army at Fort Joseph, Ky.
January-March 1943	Basic Training at Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, NC
April-June 1943	Infantry Training at Fort Bragg, NC
July-December 1943	Assigned as corporal, then sergeant, for the Headquarters Company, 2nd Infantry Division, Durham, England
January-June 1944	Platoon Sergeant, in Kilo Company of the 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, England and France
June 6, 1944	Participated in Normandy Invasion [D-Day]
July-December 1944	Participated in Combat Operations in Northern France and Belgium
December 22, 1944	Captured in the Ardennes Forest during the Battle of the Bulge
December 1944-January 1945	Transported east into Germany
December 28, 1944	Reported "Killed in Action" by the War Department
January 27, 1945	Interned at Stalag 9B, Bad Orb in Hessen-Nassau, Prussia
January 31, 1945	War Department revised "Killed in Action" report to "Missing in Action," presumed prisoner of war.
May 4, 1945	Stalag 9B is liberated by Soviet forces.
June 12, 1945	Repatriated.

Scope and Content Note

This collection is chiefly letters written by Robert Henry "Jack" Curran of Lake Norman, N.C., to his wife, Veronica Curran (Vera). Prior to World War II, Curran was a traveling salesman in the Southeastern United States, and it was his habit to write his wife on an almost daily basis. Curran continued this routine throughout the war. The near-daily frequency of his letters presents a detailed portrait of the concerns, fears, and activities of an infantry platoon sergeant leading men in combat and in captivity. Formats contained include letters, telegrams, postcards, and V-mail.

Throughout these letters, Curran wrote of his concerns for his platoon as they trained for and participated in combat operations. There are detailed explanations of many United States Army practices including small unit combat tactics, censorship and military secrecy, post-war demobilization, and promotions. Curran's letters also contain detailed descriptions of worries and fears that he had made errors of judgment. This is particularly true in the 120 letters that Curran wrote after his capture. These letters also

contain detailed descriptions of his life as a prisoner, including his journey under armed guard through France and Germany into Prussia, prison camp regulations, Red Cross inspections, prison guards, and his liberation and journey back to the United States.

Letters written prior to June 1944 frequently address the financial needs and concerns of his wife and family back home in Lake Norman, N.C. Also included are a few miscellaneous items, including: pay stubs, military identity cards, Red Cross documents, and a post-war health inspection report.

Arrangement of Collection

This collection is arranged into three separate correspondence series based on the original order created by Veronica Curran. She kept the letters in the order that she read them and had divided the letters into groupings based on her husband's status: Civilian Letters, Military Letters, and Prisoner of War Letters. Please note that she received the majority of the Prisoner of War letters in 1962, upon her husband's death. Apparently, he had been unable to mail them during his internment and left instructions to read them in his will.

Controlled Access Terms

Curran, Robert Henry "Jack," 1915-1962.
Curran, Veronica, 1918-.
Lake Norman (N.C.)
Prisoners of war—Germany.
Soldiers—United States--Correspondence--History--World War, 1939-1945.
Soldiers—United States--Family relationships.
Traveling sales personnel—United States.
United States. Army. 2nd Infantry Division.
United States. Army—Military life.
World War, 1939-1945—Personal narratives, American.
World War, 1939-1945—Prisoners and prisons.

Container List

I.   Civilian Letters, 1939-1942
           About 200 items
           Original Order

This Series is comprised of letters written by Robert Henry "Jack" Curran of Lake Norman, N.C., to his wife, Veronica Curran (Vera). Prior to being drafted in November of 1942, Curran was a traveling salesman in the Southeastern United States, and it was his habit to write his wife on an almost daily basis. Letters address the financial needs and concerns of his wife and family back home in Lake Norman, N.C., the difficulties and joys of traveling throughout the Southeastern United States, and the effect of the war on his job as a salesman.

Folder 1	January-March 1939
Folder 2	April-June 1939
Folder 3	July-September 1939
Folder 4	October 1939-February 1940
Folder 5	March-September 1940
Folder 6	October-December 1940
Folder 7	January-April 1941
Folder 8	May-December 1941
Folder 9	January-March 1942
Folder 10	April-September 1942
Folder 11	October 1942

II.   Military Letters, 1942-1944
        About 1,200 items
        Original Order

This Series begins in November 1942 with Curran's induction and is comprised of near-daily letters that present a detailed portrait of the concerns, fears, and activities of an infantry platoon sergeant leading men in combat and in captivity. Formats contained include letters, telegrams, postcards, and V-mail.

Throughout these letters, Curran wrote of his concerns for his platoon as they trained for and participated in combat operations. There are detailed explanations of many United States Army practices including small unit combat tactics, censorship and military secrecy, post-war demobilization, and promotions. Curran's letters also contain detailed descriptions of worries and fears that he had made errors of judgment.

Also contained in this series are telegrams from the War Department notifying Mrs. Curran of her husband's death in December 1944 and the subsequent notification that he was being held as a prisoner of war. This Series ends in December 1944 with Curran's capture by German forces.

Folder 12	November 1942
Folder 13	December 1942-January 1943
Folder 14	February-April 1943
Folder 15	May 1943-June 1943
Folder 16	July-August 1943
Folder 17	September-October 1943
Folder 18	November-December 1943
Folder 19	January 1944
Folder 20	February 1944
Folder 21	March 1944
Folder 22	April 1944
Folder 23	May 1944

Folder 24 June 1944
Folder 25 July 1944
Folder 26 August 1944
Folder 27 September 1944
Folder 28 October1944
Folder 29 November 1944
Folder 30 December 1944

III. Prisoner of War Letters, 1944-1945, 1962
  About 150 items
  Original Order

This Series begins in December 1942 when Curran was captured by German forces in the Ardennes Forest during the Battle of the Bulge. Curran's letters contain detailed descriptions of worries and fears that he had made grave errors of judgment. These letters also contain detailed descriptions of his life as a prisoner, including his journey under armed guard through France and Germany into Prussia, prison camp regulations, Red Cross inspections, prison guards, and his liberation and journey back to the United States in August 1945.

Please note that these Prisoner of War letters were discovered in 1962, upon Curran's death. His will contained instructions for his wife to read these letters which had never been posted. The will which is contained in Folder 31 begins the series.

Folder 31 1962
Folder 32 December1944
Folder 33 January 1945
Folder 34 February 1945
Folder 35 March 1945
Folder 36 April 1945
Folder 37 May 1945
Folder 38 June-August 1945
Folder 39 September 1945

Catalog Record

MC 267   Curran, Veronica, 1918-.
Veronica Curran World War II Letters,
1939-1945, 1962
1,500 Items, 1.5 linear feet.
Unrestricted.

This collection is chiefly letters written by Robert Henry "Jack" Curran of Lake Norman, N.C., to his wife, Veronica Curran (Vera). Prior to World War II, Curran was a traveling salesman in the Southeastern United States, and it was his habit to write his wife on an almost daily basis. Curran continued this routine throughout the war. The near-daily frequency of his letters presents a detailed portrait of the concerns, fears, and activities of an infantry platoon sergeant leading men in combat and in captivity. Formats contained include letters, telegrams, postcards, and V-mail.

Chapter 4

SAFEKEEPING YOUR COLLECTIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

The Problem of Archival Preservation[1]

Safekeeping your institution's archival and manuscript material is a challenging and often problematic venture. The reasons for this state of affairs are many and varied, but there are a number of quite common issues and circumstances that are worth briefly mentioning.

- **Your collections are unique and irreplaceable.** The singularity of archival holdings and the understanding that their loss is an absolute and irretrievable one underscores the importance of preservation.
- **Your collections are comprised of a wide variety of physical formats and media.** The variegated nature and size of archival holdings makes it impossible to devise the optimal preservation strategy for every individual item.
- **Intensive nature of archival use.** An archival collection or series may be used infrequently, but the research use that does occur is often sustained and focused. Moreover, some records because of their historic importance may attract a higher level of interest that results in increased use or display. Such focused attention and handling can damage or destroy fragile materials.
- **Specific condition issues.** Many "new" archival materials come into the archive with old problems such as staining, mold, brittleness, and insect infestation.
- **Retrofitted buildings or storage areas.** Many repositories are physically located in facilities or spaces that were not originally designed to provide the best environment for storing and using archival materials.
- **Budgetary pressures.** Archival supplies and outsourced conservation work can be quite expensive and need to be considered when planning budgets.

Nevertheless, when an institution takes on the task of establishing an historical records program and begins collecting historic documents, it has made a public commitment to its donors, researchers, and indeed future generations that it will act as a good steward of its holdings. This raises the important question: what constitutes good stewardship?

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[1]Ward, Christine. "Preservation Program Planning for Archives and Historical Records Repositories." In Preservation Issues and Planning, edited by Paul N. Banks and Roberta Pilette, 43-62. Chicago: American Library Association, 2000.

Elements of Good Stewardship

The objective of an archival preservation program is to prolong the useful life of historical records by stabilizing the material condition of its holdings. To accomplish this goal, you must provide the conditions necessary to support the long-term maintenance and accessibility of your historical collections. These essential conditions include:

- **Protective housings and enclosures**
- **Controlled environment**
- **Monitoring and security systems**
- **Disaster preparedness and response**

In aggregate, these elements provide a **layered**, **integrated**, and mostly **indirect** approach to preservation that seeks in a very utilitarian way to provide the greatest good for the greatest number of items. It is important to note that good stewardship is defined by a repository's ability to sustain these conditions and actions, rather than by its ability to provide specific and expensive conservation treatments to individual items.

Our discussion of these essential elements will begin with a discussion of those actions that are taken closest to the archival materials.

A Brief Caveat

Even more than the other sections of this manual, the information presented here is only a beginning. The chief goal of this chapter is not to transform you into a well versed preservationist, but to give you a basic understanding of the issues and tactics of preservation and a sense of where to go for good reliable resources that contain more detailed answers to your unique problems.

II. PRESERVATION AND PROCESSING

With few exceptions (e.g., reprocessing, microfilming, or digitization), the archival processing or arranging phase that was discussed in our last chapter is the period during which a collection is most intensively examined by your institution's staff. It is also the period during which the collection will be subject to its most intensive and comprehensive preservation review with accompanying preservation actions. Typical and frequently necessary preservation actions include:

- **Segregating archival materials.**
- **Removing damaging fasteners and materials.**
- **Reformatting unstable archival materials.**
- **Re-housing archival materials in appropriate enclosures.**
- **Providing conservation treatments to stabilize individual items.**

The National Archives Records Administration collectively refers to these actions as "Holdings Maintenance."[2]

Segregating Archival Materials

Because of the variegated nature of collections, processing archivists are often confronted with a mix of materials that may make sense as an intellectual whole, but which are materially difficult to maintain together as one unit. The reasons for this difficulty stem from two separate, but often related, issues. The first involves the need to separate an item from the bulk and flow of the collection because its physical characteristics (chiefly, size and material composition) require a certain non-standard or atypical storage container. Materials typically separated include:

- **Oversize papers.** (e.g., maps, posters, blueprints, broadsheets, etc.)
- **Bound volumes.** (e.g., ledgers, scrapbooks, monographs, etc.)
- **Three-dimensional artifacts.** (e.g., statues, memorabilia, etc.)
- **Textiles.** (e.g., ribbons, samplers, etc.)
- **Photographic media.** (e.g., photographs, negatives, v-mail, movie film, glass plate negatives, cased photographs, etc.)
- **Magnetic and optical media.** (e.g., magnetic audio and video tapes, magnetic floppy and hard discs, laser discs, compact discs, etc.)
- **Friable and very delicate items.** (e.g., charcoal drawings, pastels, tissue paper documents, etc.)

The second common situation requiring a sequestration of materials relates to the potential damage that a problematic item could cause to the archival material neighboring it. Worrisome qualities in this category include:

- **Highly acidic materials.** (e.g., newspaper, blueprints, etc.)
- **Off-gassing materials.** (e.g., photographs, magnetic/optical media, etc.)
- **Moldy or infested materials.**

Use of Separation Sheets

Each item separated from the main flow of the collection must be referred to within the collection using a separation sheet that contains a brief description of the material as well as its current location. The sheet should be placed in the space that the removed document originally occupied. A near twin of this separation sheet should be included with the segregated document, pointing back to its original position. This relocation should also be noted in the collection's Finding Aid. This allows the intellectual context of the item to be maintained within the collection while the

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[2] The Library of Congress provides a detailed description of the component activities that comprise "Holdings Maintenance" in "Preservation of Archival Records: Holdings Maintenance at the National Archives" at http://www.archives.gov/preservation/holdings-maintenance/table-of-contents.html.

distinct storage needs are properly addressed. A sample separation sheet is located in Appendix 4A of this chapter.

Removing and Replacing Damaging Fasteners and Other Problematic Materials[3]

Newly accessioned documents often contain a variety of incidental materials that if left in place will continue to damage your collections. Common objects that are typical candidates for removal are:

Fasteners and Miscellaneous Organic Materials

Damaging fasteners include rubber bands, string, twine, rusting paper clips, staples, straight pins and tape. Metal fasteners crease and stain papers. Rubber bands stain paper and emit sulfur dioxide as they degrade. String and twine can attract rodents that use it as nesting material.

Fasteners may also have been used to secure locks of hair, pressed flowers or plants, and other organic materials to documents. These organic items can cause staining and attract pests.

The removal of a fastener or any other object must be undertaken with a great deal of care to avoid damaging the underlying document. In every instance, the underlying calculus must be whether or not any action you take will result in further damage to the item. **If you have any doubt about the wisdom of taking action to remove an object, do not remove it.** As with physicians, the old adage, "do no harm" should govern your conservation actions.

It should be noted that older documents may be bound together using wax seals, various adhesives (such as tape or glue), and ribbon or other types of lacings; no attempt should be made to separate documents gathered together in this manner.

The preferred replacement for a removed fastener is a stainless steel paper clip placed over a small strip of alkaline buffered paper or a folded sheet of archival quality paper. However, a removed fastener need not automatically be replaced. If the punctuating or dividing role it plays is fairly obvious, it is often unnecessary to replace a removed fastener. This prevents further document creasing and lessens the overall bulkiness of the collection.

Problematic Enclosures

Newly accessioned materials come in an almost infinite variety of archivally inappropriate containers, ranging from infested banana boxes and moldy liquor cartons to acidic file folders and damaging frames. These enclosures, which may foster pest, mold, and acid migration problems, pose an ongoing threat to all of your collections. To mitigate any potential damage, you and your staff should discard and dispose of any suspect folders and

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[3] "Removal of Damaging Fasteners from Historic Document," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/leaflets/clips.htm.

other enclosures. They should be replaced by the types of archivally sound products that are discussed below in Section 4, "Re-Housing Archival Materials in Appropriate Enclosures."

Reformatting Unstable Archival Materials[4]

Unlike problematic enclosures, difficult documents such as thermographic copies, newspaper clippings, telegrams, materials printed on tracing or onion skin paper and other highly acidic or fragile materials cannot and should not be so easily discarded. One option when faced with a valuable, but irreparably tainted or fragile document is to reformat it. Common duplication technologies include microfilming, digitization, and preservation photocopying. Of these three duplication methods, preservation photocopying is probably the most cost effective and simplest requiring only a copy machine and permanent paper.

Re-Housing Archival Materials in Appropriate Enclosures

Archival Supplies

 Housing collections appropriately requires that you secure a sufficient supply of archival quality materials. In the recent past, there has been a marketing fad of appending the phrase, "Acid-free" or "Archival" to a wide variety of materials available in big box stores. However, as with the "fat-free" label, this phrase is not always very helpful, pertinent, or reliable.

You should be sure to purchase your supplies from a reputable source. The Northeast Document Conservation Center maintains an extensive electronic list of trustworthy suppliers of archival materials.[5] The most commonly used supplies include:

- **Lignin-free and alkaline buffered legal sized file folders**
- **Lignin-free and alkaline buffered paper**
- **Photographic Folders (passed Photographic Activity Test)**
- **Archival storage boxes**
- **Mylar (polyester) enclosures**
- **Stainless steel paper clips**
- **Number two pencils**
- **High quality gum erasers**
- **White cotton gloves**
- **Dust brush**

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[4] The Library of Congress maintains a through set of guidelines and standards for Preservation Photocopying on its website at http://www.loc.gov/preserv/care/photocpy.html.
[5] "Preservation Suppliers and Services," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/suppliers/listsup.htm.

Enclosures[6]

To protect loose records, they should be removed from their native enclosures and housed in appropriate enclosures such as a folder, envelope, plastic/polyester sleeve, or box. These primary enclosures are then nested in a larger secondary enclosure or container, such as a document case, record center box, or even a stationary map case.

Let's review the methods and materials used to directly enclose various archival materials:

Loose Papers

Letters, reports, and other typical loose (i.e., unbound) archival papers should be stored in folders that are lignin-free with an alkaline buffer. The size of the folder should be sufficient to completely contain and protect its contents. Folders should not be bulging or overfilled and any labeling should be done using a pencil because inks can migrate and stain papers.

Acidic, Damaged, or Delicate Papers

Problematic individual items should be placed in a more protective enclosure such as a lignin-free and alkaline buffered envelope, a piece of lignin-free alkaline buffered folded paper, or a transparent polyester L-sleeve.

An L-sleeve is made of two polyester sheets welded at the left and bottom. Only a single item should be placed in it. L-sleeves are very good for segregating and protecting delicate materials. Their transparent nature allows researchers to access a document's information while providing additional physical support and protection.

Friable items such as charcoal, crayon, and pastel drawings are best stored in a series of stacked mats that can be stored flat in an appropriately sized box. ***Never put anything Friable into a plastic sleeve! The static charge will lift loose media from the paper damaging the document.***

Oversize papers[7]

Oversize papers such as blueprints, maps, drawings, and posters should be stored in folders that are of a sufficient size to contain and protect the entire document. These folders should then be stacked flat or horizontally in a box or map case. In some instances it may be necessary to store rolled materials around an archival quality tube.

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[6] The National Archives presents a detailed discussion of primary and secondary enclosures at http://www.archives.gov/preservation/holdings-maintenance/procedures.html#folders

[7] "Storage Solution for Oversized Paper Artifacts," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf49.htm.

Volumes[8]

Oversized Bound Volumes

Large ledgers and other heavy bound volumes should be stored flat or horizontally to lessen the stress placed on the binding from the weight of the text block. Stack the volumes no more than three or four volumes high.

Depending upon a volume's value and condition, it may warrant storage in an enclosure. Two common storage containers are an appropriately sized box and archivally sound wrapping paper tied with un-dyed cotton twill tape that is knotted at the book's fore edge.

Scrapbooks and Albums[9]

Scrapbooks and albums present a unique challenge. As composite documents comprised of a variety of materials in various states of material failure, these books are often a threat to themselves and other documents. To best preserve the look and feel of a scrapbook, it should be stored in a box and stored flat or horizontally. Flat storage helps prevent items from coming loose and becoming damaged or misplaced. Rather than re-adhering any items that have become detached, you should store such an item in a folder with a reference back to its original location.

Photographs

The Photographic Activity Test (PAT)[10]

The Photographic Activity Test is the accepted international standard for archival photographic materials. This test is designed to predict the likely negative interactions between photographic materials (e.g., photographs, negatives, motion picture film, etc.) and the materials that are used to house them. If an archival material has failed or omits mention of having passed the PAT, it should not be used to enclose any of your photographic materials.

Photographic Prints and Negatives[11]

Ideally photographic prints and negatives should be stored in individual enclosures (e.g., interleaf with paper, paper envelope, or polyester L-sleeve) that are foldered and/or boxed.

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[8]The Library of Congress provides extensive instructions about the care and proper storage of Bound Volumes at http://www.archives.gov/preservation/formats/bound-volumes.html.

[9] The Scrapbook Preservation Society maintains a series of on-line articles that are useful in understanding many of the preservation issues that you may face at http://www.scrapbookpreservationsociety.com/articles/.

[10] The Image Permanence Institute fully describes the Photographic Activity Test (PAT) at http://www.imagepermanenceinstitute.org/sub_pages/8page8.htm.

[11]For a detailed discussion of photographic storage see "Storage Enclosures for Photographic Materials," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf411.htm.

Large prints and negatives (i.e., >11" x 14") should be stored flat or horizontally. Cotton gloves should be worn during handling; avoid touching the image or emulsion.

Glass Plate Negatives, Cased Photographs (such as daguerreotypes), and Other Fragile or Vulnerable Formats

These fragile items should be stored separately in individual enclosures (e.g., paper envelope) that are stored in a close fitting box. They should be stored vertically on their longest edge with a spacer being employed to reduce any jostling during handling. It is also a very good idea to clearly label the container as being both fragile and very heavy. It should be noted that large glass plate negatives should be stored flat in an appropriate box.[12]

Providing Conservation Treatments to Stabilize Individual Items

In addition to the conservation treatments discussed above, there are a number of other in-house actions that might be undertaken by you and your staff. The discussions of conservation treatments described below are incomplete and reductive; moreover, each of the actions described entails a certain amount of risk. Prior to attempting any of these actions, thoroughly read the cited documentation and carefully consider whether or not you should proceed. If you have any doubts, you should defer action and where warranted, consult a conservator.

Surface Cleaning of Paper[13]

If a relatively simple paper item such as a book page, manuscript leaf, or map is heavily soiled and dirty it may be advisable to clean the document using a soft brush. On a large clean smooth surface begin to clean the document by gently brushing the paper with up-and-down strokes working across the face of the paper. Carefully work around tears to avoid enlarging any holes. If cleaning a book, avoid pushing dirt towards the gutter.

Mold Removal[14]

Before dealing with mold, you should contact a conservator. Never try to remove active (i.e., soft and fuzzy) mold. Dormant or inactive mold can be removed manually using a brush or appropriately filter equipped vacuum.

Humidification and Flattening of Paper[15]

Over time, folded or rolled papers may become difficult to open or flatten. One in-house solution is to "relax" the paper by briefly exposing it to a high level of humidity. The

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[12] "How Do I House Glass Plate Negatives?," National Archives at http://www.archives.gov/preservation/storage/glass-plate-negatives.html.
[13] "Surface Cleaning of Paper," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf62.htm.
[14] "Emergency Salvage of Moldy Books and Paper," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf39.htm.
[15]"Relaxing and Flattening Paper by Humidification," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf64.htm.

Northeast Document Conservation Center provides detailed instructions on the construction and appropriate use of a humidification chamber.

Finding a Conservator

When faced with any situation that causes doubt or concern you should contact an expert conservator. The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) maintains an informative web site that includes a database that can be used to search for expert conservators. Additionally, this database allows you to limit your search results to conservators that are practicing locally.[16]

III. CONTROLLING THE ENVIRONMENT

Temperature, Relative Humidity, and Light (Cool, Dry, and Dark)[17]

Archival materials naturally deteriorate over time, but by changing and controlling your environment with respect to temperature, relative humidity, and light you can slow the inevitable deterioration process. To a certain extent the process of enclosing your collections has helped to create dark micro-climates around your stored materials, but the protection afforded by simple enclosures, while often sufficient with regard to light, is insufficient with regard to temperature and relative humidity.

Archival materials are composite or laminate objects made up of multiple materials that react very differently to temperature and humidity. To reduce the mechanical stresses and chemical reactions that result from exposure to these factors, it is crucial that you maintain *stable* levels of temperature and humidity. Ideally, the *stable* levels that you maintain will be within the parameters listed below, but if these values are unrealistic given your situation, the most important action that you can take is to create a *stable* environment even with higher than ideal values.

Mixed Collections of Archival Materials

Ideally, you should strive to maintain a temperature value within the range of 68 and 72 degrees Fahrenheit and a stable relative humidity value in the 30-50% range.

Photographic Materials

If your facility has the ability to support multiple storage climates and segregates photographic materials here are some additional numbers:

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[16]American Institute for Conservation Expert Database at http://www.aic-faic.org/guide/form.html.

[17] "Temperature, Relative Humidity, Light, and Air Quality: Basic Guidelines for Preservation," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf21.htm.

- For **Black and White photographs** the temperature should be no higher than 68 degrees Fahrenheit.
- For **Color photographs** long-term storage below 35 degrees Fahrenheit is recommended. In both cases, the RH should be 35%.

Assessing Temperature and Humidity

Monitoring the temperature and relative humidity levels present in your institution's storage areas is an essential task. To accomplish it you will need to have accurate thermometers and humidity monitors or hygrometers located in your storage areas. The key to successfully monitoring your climate is to record the measurements systematically and consistently for at least a year. This will give you a very good sense of your HVAC system's capabilities and provide a significant body of data that can be used to argue for improvements in your environmental controls. One dramatic way to represent the harmful effects of temperature and humidity to your superiors is to plug your numbers into the Image Permanence Institute's "Preservation Calculator" which allows you to quickly assess the impact that specific temperature and relative humidity values will have on the long-term survival of your collections.[18]

Acting to change your climate[19]

If your climate lies outside of the desired range you should consider taking the following actions:

- **Upgrade your building's insulation.**
- **Employ portable air conditioners, humidifiers, and dehumidifiers.**
- **Install centralized environmental controls.**

Light[20]

Light accelerates the chemical processes that cause historical materials to deteriorate.   It is important to minimize your collections' exposure to light, especially Ultraviolet (UV) light. Common sources of UV light include natural light through windows and common fluorescent lights.

Measuring light is not essential, but limiting your collections' exposure to light is a priority. Typical actions to limit light exposure include:

- **Store archival materials in light-tight enclosures.**
- **Windows should be covered.**
- **Use incandescent bulbs or UV light filters on fluorescent lights.**

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[18] The Image Permanence Institute's free "Preservation Calculator" is available at http://www.imagepermanenceinstitute.org/sub_pages/8page20.htm.
[19] "Low-Cost/No Cost Improvements in Climate Control," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/leaflets/locost.htm.
[20] "Protection from Light Damage," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf24.htm.

- **Keep storage areas as dark as possible.**
- **Limit a document's display in an exhibit case.**

Fire Protection[21]

Libraries, archives, museums, and historic structures contain books, manuscripts, records, artifacts, film stock, magnetic media, combustible interior finishes, cabinets, furnishings, and chemicals. All of these materials are a possible fuel source for a fire. Additionally, the older buildings that typically house historic collections provide numerous possible ignition sources. Typical steps to protect your collections from fire damage should include:

- **Hold regular fire drills and staff training.**
- **Locate and regularly service fire extinguishers and smoke detectors throughout repository.**
- **Install manual alarm stations.**
- **Request that your local fire marshal conducts an inspection.**

Water Protection

To state the obvious, historical record collections are highly susceptible to water damage. Wet and damp materials are also likely to foster mold growth which can be a hazard to your staff, researchers, and other collections. Typical steps that can be taken to avoid water damage are:

- **Regularly inspect, repair, and clean roof, gutters, and drains.**
- **Keep historical materials elevated at least 4" off the floor.**
- **Staff should be trained to locate and operate water mains and shut off valves.**
- **Do not store historical collections in areas that are vulnerable to flooding.**
- **Do not store historical collections beneath water or moisture sources.**

Pest and Rodent Control[22]

Within the last generation or so, cultural institutions have adopted and adapted the tenets of Integrated Pest Management (IPM). IPM's key components consist of modifying the environment and procedures to exclude pests, regular inspection surveys for signs of pests, and controlled and limited direct treatments such as traps or chemical poisons to eliminate any localized infestation.

Archival materials are attractive to pests. Their components—cellulose, paste, glues, sizing, emulsions, and adhesives are a food source for many pests. Paper is also an attractive nesting

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[21]"Protection from Loss: Water and Fire Damage, Biological Agents, Theft, and Vandalism," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf31.htm.

[22] "Integrated Pest Management," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf311.htm.

material for rodents. Moreover, both pests and rodents are attracted to the food, drinks, and plants that staff members often bring into the repository. To prevent an infestation you should strive to make the repository environment less appealing to pests by removing attractive elements and altering your practices and procedures to ban the import of these attractive elements (e.g., food, drinks, plants, etc.).

If trapping and environmental changes fail to control the infestation, you might resort to chemical pesticides. These compounds can damage historical materials and should be used with caution. Protect boxes from spray with plastic sheeting and never spray anything directly on the storage boxes.

Cleaning[23]

A regular program of basic housekeeping tasks should be carried out to maintain clean storage and work areas. Regular maintenance will help reduce pest and rodent problems and aid with fire prevention by regularly removing rubbish. Your cleaning tasks should include:

- **Regular rubbish removal.**
- **Dry mopping or vacuuming floors with a HEPA filtered vacuum.**
- **Dusting of shelves, storage boxes, exteriors of bound books with a clean, soft cloth or brush.**

DO NOT USE cleaning products containing petroleum distillates, bleach, or ammonia.

IV. SECURITY PLANNING[24]

The protection of your historic collections from theft, vandalism, and other nefarious human acts is best accomplished through systematic security planning and the consistent application of procedures, policies, and rules. In aggregate, these preventative actions should act to help:

- **Secure your facility.**
- **Control your collections.**
- **Educate your staff and researchers.**

Secure your Facility

At a minimum, your security measures must prevent unauthorized and unmonitored access to your building and the collections it houses. There are a few simple measures that can be undertaken to secure your collections.

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[23] "Cleaning Books and Shelves," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf43.htm.

[24]"Collections Security: Planning and Prevention for Libraries and Archives," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf312.htm.

- **Doors and Windows** should be secured with high quality locks. The issuance of keys should be limited to appropriate staff and tracked using a key log.
- **Burglar and Fire Alarms** should be tied into a central monitoring system to ensure a rapid response to any potential emergencies.
- **Close your Stacks.** By tightly limiting access to your collection during your research hours, you naturally limit opportunities for theft and damage.

Control your Collections

Unfortunately, as recent events involving a former National Security Advisor make clear, everyone is a potential security risk. The end goal of tightly controlling your collections is to always know where your various collections are—for without this knowledge, you will not know if something is missing. Specific tactics for keeping tabs on the locations of your materials can include:

- **Conduct an annual inventory.**
- **Neatly shelve and label collections so that a gap is immediately noticeable.**
- **Document all the use and internal movement of collections.**
- **Have staff review a collection both before and after researcher use.**
- **Never allow researchers unsupervised use or access to collections.**

Educate your Staff and Researchers

Staff and researcher compliance with your repository's security rules and procedures lies at the heart of a successful security program. To secure the buy-in of these two groups, you should strive to make your rules as transparent, fair, and reasonable as possible. By providing written documentation of your security policy, ensuring its even-handed application, and providing a thorough rationale for its promulgation, researchers and staff will come to see that rather than an individual affront to their honesty, your security rules are a necessary tool to protect your materials from theft and your staff and researchers from unfounded accusations.

V. DISASTER PREPARDENESS AND RESPONSES

Disaster Planning[25]

Disaster planning is a set of planned and practiced measures that are designed to lessen the impact that a disaster would have on your archive and its collections. As with many actions, successful disaster planning is grounded in a solid understanding of your institution's deficiencies and resources and it begins with the identification of known hazards, salvage priorities, lines of authority, and available resources. Proactively, you should strive to mitigate known hazards and establish a plan that will cause your resources and personnel to react in a logical and priority-driven

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[25] "Disaster Planning," Northeast Document Conservation Center at http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf33.htm.

manner. To ensure that this is the case, you and your staff must practice your plan and regularly update it to take account of changing priorities, resources, and personnel.[26]

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[26] "Worksheet for Outlining a Disaster Plan," Northeast Document Conservation Center at
http://www.nedcc.org/plam3/tleaf34.htm.

APPENDIX 4A

SEPARATION SHEET

TO REQUEST THE ITEM DESCRIBED BELOW, REQUEST:

_____

FILE IN THE PLACE ORIGINALLY OCCUPIED BY THE SEPARATED ITEM

Collection Number:_____

Collection Title:_____

Brief Description of Separated Item (Include a description of its format and subject matter.):

Item Originally Filed (Specify exact location: box number, folder number, etc.):

Item Currently Filed (Specify exact location: box number, folder number, etc.):

Separated By:_____   Separation Date:____--____--____

Chapter 5

THE PUBLIC AND YOUR COLLECTION

I. INTRODUCTION[1]

Prior to this final chapter, our manual has focused on the ways that archivists collect, arrange, describe, and preserve historical documents. Indeed, given the material-centric nature of an archivist's concerns and actions, it is sometimes difficult to remember that archivists are not in the business of keeping archival materials solely for the material's sake. We purposefully collect, arrange, describe, and preserve historic materials so that they can be used by future researchers.

This chapter introduces the broad range of considerations and activities that archivists commonly employ to facilitate and promote the use of their collections. In aggregate, these public service activities represent a core archival function and play an important feed-back role for monitoring the appropriateness and effectiveness of other archival functions such as appraisal, arrangement, description, and preservation. Moreover, the development and adherence to well considered access policies is vital to ensuring the long-term preservation and security of your collections.[2]

II. PUBLIC SERVICES

Public or Researcher Services are rubrics that are employed to label the types of research assistance and facilities that a repository provides to support researchers as they use historical records. Good researcher service and document access practices have two essential, if slightly opposed objectives: first, to support researcher access to your collections and second, to monitor and control researcher use in a manner that mitigates any harm or damage that may result from document use.

To best serve these two goals, an archival repository should strive to provide the following services and resources to its researchers:

- **Direct and supervised access to archival materials.**
- **Duplication services.**
- **An appropriate research environment.**
- **Remote reference via email, surface mail, and telephone.**

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[1] This chapter is heavily based on text, exercises and outlines created by Hal Keiner.
[2] Mary Jo Pugh, Providing Reference Services for Archive and Manuscripts, (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005): 24-25.

The Reference Policy

Your reference policy is the document that describes the rules and conditions under which researchers may access your collections and research services. It should be specific enough to avoid confusion and misunderstandings, while avoiding overly legal or archival jargon. In addition to publicly posting this policy in your repository and, when applicable, on the web, it is a good and common practice to repeat key elements of this policy in your researcher registration form or application. Requiring researchers to sign this form helps to ensure that they have taken the time to read your repository's access rules and agree to abide by them.

Because a reference policy is a comprehensive document about your researcher services and collection access procedures, the process of writing one is best approached not as the construction of a flowing narrative, but as the assembly of a series of discrete policy elements. Moreover, because archival security concerns and access practices are less unique than internal collection practices, it is often possible to borrow and apply policies and procedures that have been developed elsewhere. The websites of many well established archival repositories such as the Bentley Historical Library or the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library contain extremely useful documentation of their researcher policies and procedures.

Let us now review the key policy elements and considerations that should be reflected in your repository's Reference Policy.

Identity and Purpose

As with your collection development policy, a reference policy's introductory paragraph is typically a brief statement that clearly state's the repository's name, institutional affiliation, and mission. From the fictional CAGA example below, we learn that:

> The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive (CAGA) identifies, collects, arranges, and preserves the historical records of The Carolina Azalea Garden. CAGA's collections are comprised of non-current records of varying formats having enduring administrative, legal, fiscal, historical, or scientific values that were created by the staff and volunteers of the Garden. These collections are made available to CAGA staff and scholars as well as other researchers in accordance with the stipulations recorded in their accession records.

Using this example as a guide, the introductory section of your reference policy should be sure to explain the basic archival activities that your repository carries out, the general subject matter contained in its collections, and the types of researchers that it will serve.

Location, Hours, and Other Useful Information

Provide information about your repository's location (street address if possible to allow for online mapping), research hours, parking lots, and dining facilities as well as any other information that a

prospective researcher will need to make a successful research trip to your repository. If your research hours are somewhat limited and you are willing and able to accommodate a researcher's schedule make this clear.

Registration Requirements and Procedures

Clearly and succinctly state your repository's registration requirements and procedures. To ensure the security of your collections, your institution must create procedures and forms to monitor and document researcher activity. You should design your registration form to capture basic information such as a researcher's full name and contact address as well as more detailed information about their collection use and reading room visits. Many repositories require researchers to present a current photo ID as a part of this process. The information you collect should allow you to retrospectively determine collection use and identify researchers who were present during a specific period. You should maintain and keep registration and call documents for several years after they have been created so that you are able to retrace collection use in the event of theft, loss, misfiling, or damage.

Additionally, the registration form and reference policy should be used to convey information about fees and any other access conditions or procedures that may delay a researcher's access to materials. This may be especially useful if using a collection requires securing advance permission from the donor or paging materials from an off-site storage location.

Reading Room Rules[3]

Include a listing of the regulations and procedures that will govern a researcher's access to your collections. As a general rule, it is wise to create a series of regulations that are clear and directly applicable to the researcher's likely experiences at your institution. Avoid cluttering the list with incidental rules. Common rules include: no food or drink, no smoking, pencils only, restrictions governing the use of laptops or cell phones, and hints for document care and handling (e.g., gloves for photographs, using the table to support oversized materials, etc.)

Always remember that historical records have material value and that there are unscrupulous individuals who will steal them. To avoid such an unpleasant situation, you must always supervise and control the use of your documents by strictly and evenhandedly enforcing your repository's registration and document use rules. Train your staff to recognize that there are no exceptions.

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[3]A Google search of the phrase "special collections reading room rules" will result in a fair number of relevant examples of common reading room rules and procedures. Additionally, the previously mentioned publication, Sample Forms for Archival & Records Management Programs, includes a comprehensive listing of reading room rules.

Copying Services[4]

Providing researchers with copies of historic records is a valuable and extremely popular researcher service. However, when considering whether or not to offer duplication services you should realistically consider the direct and indirect costs of such a service in terms of potential document damage from handling and light exposure as well as increased administrative and material costs. If your repository does decide to offer duplication services, there are a number of copying policy considerations that should be addressed:

- **What types of documents will be copied? Are there types of documents or collections that you will not copy? Will your staff allow copies to be made of items that are oversized, bound, fragile, or damaged?**

- **Are there limits to the number of copies that a researcher can request? Will you copy entire collections?**

- **How will you make copies?**

- **Will you charge for copies? What is the exposure cost?**

- **Will you permit researchers to make their own copies using a photocopy machine, digital camera, or other device?**

After considering these issues, clearly state your institution's copying policies and procedures. This section should include specific details such as copy limits, duplication costs, and expected delivery time-frames. Additionally, this section commonly includes a blanket statement reserving the repository's right to refuse or limit a researcher's duplication request. An example of the wording of such a statement might be:

> The Repository reserves the right to refuse or to limit a duplication request in whole or in part. As a general rule the Repository will not duplicate entire collections nor will it fill duplication requests that exceed 100 pages.

Copyright Warning

As was discussed earlier, ownership of a document or collection does not equate to ownership of a document or collection's copyright (i.e., the right to produce and distribute copies of an item). Never assume that your institution holds an item's copyright. In your reference practices, make sure that it is clear in all policies, correspondence, and interactions with researchers that it is their responsibility to determine the copyright holder and to obtain permission to publish copyrighted materials. If necessary, you can stamp or mark all copies with a copyright statement such as "Copyright is retained by the authors of items in these papers, or their descendants, as stipulated by United States copyright law."

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[4] A number of special collection duplication policies are available on the web. The University of Michigan's Bentley Historical Library has a comprehensive website with downloadable forms at http://www.umich.edu/~bhl/bhl/refhome/duppol.htm.

Below is a fictional example of a complete reference policy. For a very good example of a researcher registration form that incorporates key elements from a reference policy, see the form used by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Manuscripts Department; it is reproduced at the end of this chapter in Appendix 5A.

CAROLINA AZALEA GARDEN ARCHIVE
Information for Researchers

The Carolina Azalea Garden Archive (CAGA) identifies, collects, arranges, and preserves the historical records of The Carolina Azalea Garden. CAGA's collections are comprised of non-current records of varying formats having enduring administrative, legal, fiscal, historical, or scientific values that were created by the staff and volunteers of the Garden. These collections are made available to CAGA staff and scholars as well as other researchers in accordance with the stipulations recorded in their accession records.

Hours and Location:

The CAGA's reading room is open to researchers on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 am to 1 pm. Access at other times may be arranged with the archivist. We are located in the basement of Surry College's Hecht Library.

Registration:

Prior to receiving access to CAGA's archival holdings, all researchers must complete a registration form and provide valid photo identification (i.e., an institutional ID, passport, driver's license, etc.). Additionally, researchers must sign the daily research register.

Regulations:

1. Coats, briefcases, parcels, and personal books are not permitted in the research area.

2. No ink of any kind may be used in the research area. Use Pencils only.

3. Smoking, eating, and drinking are prohibited in the repository.

4. All archival materials must be handled carefully. Use only one folder at a time and keep the papers in their existing order. Do not lean or press on archival materials. Do not trace maps or other records.

5. No materials may be removed from the research area.

6. Researchers requesting access to restricted materials must contact the person or agency imposing the restrictions to secure permission for access. The archives cannot permit access to these materials without written authority.

7. Researchers are advised that it is their responsibility, not the archives, to obtain copyright clearance to publish or otherwise reproduce or distribute archival material.

8. When using the materials for research, please credit the archives by giving a full citation that includes the document title, date, folder number, and collection name. An example of the preferred form is: From Greenhouse Log No. 45, 17 August 1998, Folder 31, in the Coker Laboratory Papers #102, Carolina Azalea Garden Archive, Hecht Library, Surry College, Dobson, NC 27017.

Your compliance with these rules will help us in our efforts to preserve our collections for future use. Thank you for your cooperation.

Photocopying:

All photocopies must be made by archives staff. Researchers are not allowed to copy archival materials using their own equipment. Researchers must fill out a photocopy request form and flag materials that they want to have copied. Photocopies cost $0.25 each. We can fulfill no more than 50 copies per researcher per week. Certain fragile items may not be photocopied. Researchers requiring copies of photographs, oversized papers, and AV materials should consult the archivist about conditions and charges.

Providing an Appropriate Research Environment

Repositories and historical museums tend to be located in buildings that were not originally designed to support the needs or concerns of archivists and manuscript collections. Despite this seemingly inevitable fact of archival life, the staff of repositories needs to create a suitable research environment for their users within the space that they are allocated. Ideally, your research area is one that provides:

- **A registration area where researcher forms and registration procedures can be completed.**
- **A space where researchers can securely store their coats, briefcases, purses, and other personal belongings while they conduct their research.**
- **Copies of your Finding Aids, Catalogues, and any other guides to your collections.**
- **A dedicated space for the use of historical records by researchers that includes comfortable chairs and tables large enough to fully support oversized items.**
- **Access to appropriate reference materials.**

Finally, your reading room should be a welcoming and user-friendly environment that is quiet, well lit, and accessible to researchers who may require the use of a wheelchair or other assisting devices.

Successfully Working With Your Users

Repositories are fairly intimidating places; they are full of rules, alien bibliographic tools, and seemingly arcane administrative procedures. Moreover, they house rare and valuable historic collections. In short, you work in the type of environment that could easily frighten off or intimidate a potential user. To counter the effects of the "mysteries of the archives" you should greet your users, especially unknown or first-time users, and help usher them through the registration process, secure their valuables, and explain the nature of your collections and the rules and procedures for using them.

You will probably need to take the time to introduce novice users to the systems that your institution employs to catalog and request collections. A printed handout detailing the usual search and request steps is a valuable aid, however, it should be noted that a printed set of instructions, in and of itself, is not a sufficient replacement for the role played by a patient, well informed, and engaged archivist.

The Reference Interview

Once a researcher has been registered or logged in, your role is to help him or her locate relevant materials. The library science terminology for the interaction between you and the inquiring patron is "the reference interview." Stripped to its essential the Reference Interview is best understood as a continuing conversation between you and the researcher about their research needs and the resources and services available in your repository. The end goal is to match your institution's

resources with the researcher's needs. For a novice researcher this may be a very involved process involving a considerable amount of discussion about their research question, archival research processes, bibliographic tools, and repository procedures. In contrast, the experienced researcher may simply want you to pull a particular folder, box, or collection. The key to making both interactions successful is for you to carefully listen to a researcher's needs and craft an appropriately measured and nuanced response.

If a researcher's requirements extend beyond your local collections be prepared to direct the user to other collection's or resources that may be of use. Keep addresses and telephone numbers of other institutions ready for quick reference.

Calling or Paging Collections

Your historical records should be securely housed in an area that is not directly accessible to researchers (i.e., closed stacks). Records should be retrieved and re-shelved by your staff. To request a collection, all researchers, including staff members, must complete a Call Slip that includes the collection's title and unique number, the unit requested (e.g., box or folder), the date of the request, and the researcher's name. During this paging process your staff should be instructed to examine the papers requested to make sure that they are not under any access restrictions. If the papers are restricted, a researcher should not be allowed to review them without having first secured the appropriate permissions. Your staff should also review the materials to determine whether the materials are fragile or so valuable that they require special handling. If this is the case, it may make a great deal of sense to replace the original with a reading copy. Finally, have your staff check to see if the materials are unprocessed. Most repositories will not make unprocessed and uncontrolled collections available to researchers.

The information contained on your Call Slips should allow you to monitor collection use and identify researchers who were present during a specific period. You should keep and maintain registration and call documents for several years after they have been created so that you are able to retrace collection use in the event of theft, loss, misfiling, or damage. Quite often the slips are filed by date or collection number for ready reference. A sample Call Slip is presented below.

Azalea Garden Carolina Archive	Request Date 2/24/06	Collection Item No. 102
Collection Title Coker Laboratory Papers #102		
Box # 2		Folder # 31
Last Name Coker	First Name Stephanie	
Signature Stephanie Coker		

Remote Reference

Inevitably, your repository will receive reference and research questions from users via telephone, email, and surface mail. At a minimum, your institution should be willing and able to impart basic information about your services, reading room hours, holdings and finding aids over the telephone. However, many of these inquiries will go beyond general administrative or procedural questions and request detailed information or copies of items; in short, tasks that will require substantial amounts of your staff's time. In defining your institution's policies for handling such requests, you may want to consider the following issues:

- **What is the role of your staff?** Archivists, like librarians, are information intermediaries whose essential role is to support the work of others by providing them with the information that they need to use the collections in pursuit of their specific goals. Always remember that the researcher is the one who should be doing the research.

- **What are the limits to the level of service that your staff will provide? (i.e., How much research will you do for people?)** Some research tasks are very simple, while others may involve the need to carry out extensive research and analysis. What sort of tasks will you allow your staff to carry out?

- **Is there a fee for this level of service?** Given the normal constraints of time and money, will your institution charge a fee for research services? If so, you should develop a fee schedule and secure a patron's agreement to pay these charges prior to undertaking any research tasks. To avoid disappointing your patrons and increasing your staff's workload, you may want to consider creating a list of local professional researchers that you could recommend to your patrons. These researchers should operate independently of your institution and arrange their own financial terms with the contacting patron.

Public Service Exercise: Working with Patrons

<div style="border:1px solid black; background:#ccf5cc; padding:1em;">

Four Scenarios to Consider

I. You are responsible for the local history collection at the public library. A young woman accompanied by a three year old arrives. She asks to use a collection of rare maps of the town.

- How family friendly can an archive be?
- Should you add a new restriction concerning young children to your reading room rules?

II. You are a corporate archivist. Your office is 5 blocks away from headquarters. The Corporate Secretary calls, and asks you to bring over immediately the company's first minute book.

- Do you violate your own rules and allow material to leave the reading room?
- How does your role as unit in a private commercial enterprise impact your archival operations?

III. You are the reference archivist for a North Carolina genealogical society. An

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APPENDIX 5A

M a n u s c r i p t s   D e p a r t m e n t

S o u t h e r n   H i s t o r i c a l   C o l l e c t i o n
S o u t h e r n   F o l k l i f e   C o l l e c t i o n
U n i v e r s i t y   A r c h i v e s

Today's Date _____

Your Name _____

Street Address _____

City/State _____   Postal Code _____

Country (if not USA) _____   Phone _____

Email Address _____

UNC Chapel Hill Affiliation?   ☐ *YES*   ☐ *NO*

Other Institutional Affiliation (if any) _____

Current Academic Status (if any)   ☐ Undergraduate Student   ☐ Graduate Student
                                     ☐ Faculty   ☐ Staff

How did you learn about the Manuscripts Department and our holdings?

☐ Citation in published work   ☐ Online catalog   ☐ Word of mouth

☐ World Wide Web   ☐ Instructor   ☐ Printed guide

☐ Referral from other library   ☐ *National Union Catalog of Manuscripts Collections* (print)

Subject of Research _____
_____

Research Area

☐ African Americana ☐ Business History   ☐ Civil War   ☐ Family   ☐ Folklife   ☐ Journalism

☐ Legal   ☐ Literary   ☐ Media   ☐ Antebellum plantation era ☐ Political

☐ Publishing   ☐ Southern   ☐ UNC   ☐ WWI   ☐ WWII   ☐ Other

Research Director/Instructor (if any) _____

R e s e a r c h   A g r e e m e n t

- ❑ Manuscripts are used in the Search Room during the Department's hours of operation.

- ❑ The Department provides notepaper, note cards, and pencils for researchers.

- ❑ You may bring the following items into the Search Room: laptop computers, PDA's, pencils, and the department's finding aids

    All other items, including purses, bags, folders, binders, notebooks, and outside paper are prohibited. Lockers are provided to store your belongings.

Requesting

- ❑ Use call slips to make requests.

- ❑ Complete one call slip per collection or call number.

- ❑ Make all requests before 4:30 p.m. or 12:30 p.m. on Saturday.

Handling

- ❑ Be gentle.
- ❑ Keep the documents flat on the table.
- ❑ Do not place any items (e.g. laptops, note cards etc.) on top of the manuscript material.
- ❑ Keep manuscripts in their original filing order.
- ❑ Bring any misfiled items to the attention of the staff.   Do not re-file any misfiled items.
- ❑ Do not remove metal fasteners (e.g. staples, paper clips) from the manuscripts. A staff member will remove them for you.

Duplication

- ❑ Please see staff for instructions and details on copy requests.
- ❑ We reserve the right to refuse any copy request.

Search Room

- ❑ Do not exit the Search Room with manuscript items.
- ❑ Ring the doorbell next to the Public Services window for assistance.
- ❑ Keep conversation in the Search Room to a minimum. **No** cell phones.
- ❑ Return materials to the Public Services window.
- ❑ Exit the Search Room at least ten minutes prior to closing (M-F 4:50 p.m. and Sat. 12:50 p.m.).
- ❑ Present all items (computers, notes, note cards, etc.) brought in or out of the Search Room to a staff member for inspection.

I have read, understood, and by my signature below, agree to comply with the regulations set forth

above, in order to use the material in the custody of the Manuscripts Department.

Signature _____   Date _____

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