

Annotation

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If You Catalog It, They (the Researchers) Will Come

BY NANCY M. SHAWCROSS

Several years ago I became fascinated with the nature of biography. I proposed a graduate course at the University of Pennsylvania in which students would write a biography of a woman whose papers could be found in a repository in the greater Philadelphia area. Entitled "Unpublished Histories: Women's Lives in Search of an Author," this course revealed both the good and the bad concerning the documentation of women's lives.

On the one hand, a survey not only of Penn's archival holdings, but also of the repositories in the area, made me and my students aware of an arresting diversity of famous and not famous women whose papers (particularly diaries) or other memorabilia (often photographs) proved insightful and culturally valuable. The down side, however, was the often inadequate nature of the arrangement and description of women's papers, as well as the relative paucity of holdings in area repositories. As excited and intrigued as many of my students have been consulting the primary papers of a given female subject, they have invariably been frustrated by the fact that more was not kept and cataloged.

It was in this context, therefore, that I sought the assistance of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to allow me to improve access to some of the manuscript collections at the University that record the achievements of women. Having years ago recognized the under-documentation of women's history, the Commission has been a supportive colleague in identifying and making available primary source materials concerning women's lives. I proposed a 15-month project to the NHPRC to arrange, preserve, and describe three manuscript collections held by the Rare Book & Manuscript Library. All three collections contain the papers of individuals who, although born in the 19th century, were working women of the 20th century. The three individuals were Wanda Gág, Margaret Naumburg, and Elizabeth Robins Pennell.

In 1972 the papers of artist, illustrator, and writer Wanda Gág (1893-1946) found their way into the manuscript holdings of Penn's Library. One of the executors of her will, Carl

Zigrosser, was a writer, editor of *The Modern School Magazine*, founder and director of the Weyhe Gallery, and Curator of Prints at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Zigrosser had kept the papers of Gág (whose name is pronounced as though it rhymes with "bog") at his place of work. Upon his retirement, he recognized that Gág's materials remained at risk in their informal home at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. He therefore donated (continued on page 10)



TOP: Wanda Gág, ca. 1916-1919. BOTTOM: "Siesta" by Wanda Gág, 1928. Soft ground etching; impression printed by Carl Zigrosser. Photographs courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania's Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

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Material accepted for publication will be edited to conform to style and space limitations of *Annotation*, but authors will be consulted should substantive questions arise. The editor is final arbiter in matters regarding length and grammar. Published material does not necessarily represent the views of the Commission or of the National Archives and Records Administration; indeed, some material may challenge policies and practices of those institutions.

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For those of you who thought last New Year's Eve marked a major watershed in time, welcome to the first issue of *Annotation* in the new millennium. And for those of you who think the millennium actually changes at the end of 2000, don't be surprised if a similar sentence opens our March 2001 editor's column. *Annotation*'s March 2000 issue focuses on archival processing projects that the NHPRC has funded in recent years.

We begin with an article by Nancy M. Shawcross on the University of Pennsylvania Rare Book and Manuscript Library's processing of the papers of educator and art therapist Margaret Naumburg, artist Wanda Gág, and travel author Elizabeth Robins Pennell. In the first of two such pairings in this issue, this article is complemented by a piece on processing collections in the Archives for Research on Women and Gender at the University of Texas at San Antonio Library. Jill U. Jackson explains how the Archives came into being, as well as telling us about the processing of the papers of the Woman's Club of San Antonio, local woman's activist Laura Burleson Negley, and the Pan American Round Table, which was established in 1916 to foster friendship and understanding between the women of the United States and Mexico.

Then we're off to the west coast, where Dennis Parks of Seattle's Museum of Flight tells us about the early days of the Douglas Aircraft Company and the processing of fragile engineering drawings of early Douglas aircraft. For a change of pace, we turn to Nancy Gallagher and Gregory Sanford for their account of how an NHPRC regrant to the Vermont State Historic Records Advisory Board helped fund the processing of the records of the Vermont Eugenics Survey.

Our second pair of articles on similar subjects focuses on labor records. Janet Wells Greene describes how the Harry Van Arsdale Labor History Project at New York University's Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives went about acquiring and processing records that document the history of New York City's building and construction trades. David Richards explains how an NHPRC grant to process certain collections in the Ozarks Labor Union Archives at Southwest Missouri State University attracted media attention that garnered additional support from the Ozark labor community.

We pay a visit to the Bluegrass State, where Lynne Hollingsworth of the Kentucky Historical Society tells us how an NHPRC grant helped process 660 new manuscript collections, including those of the Carpenter and Chescheir families. We conclude this issue with a trip to Alabama, where John Hudson of the Mobile Municipal Archives describes how his organization benefited from an NHPRC regrant administered by the Alabama Department of History and Archives, as well as an NHPRC grant to revise the guide to its collections.



THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

THIS ISSUE OF *Annotation* contains several articles about NHPRC processing projects, conducted in a variety of types of archival repositories. *Processing* is a term archivists use to lump together a number of functions including collection, accessioning, arrangement, description, and secure placement of records in an archival facility.

Archivists tend to fall into two categories: those who love processing, and those who loathe it. The latter group will complain at length about the tedium of paper clip- and staple-removal. I happen to belong in the former category. To me, processing is the quintessential archival activity: the means by which the archivist makes papers intellectually accessible to those who wish to use them.

The importance of processing was driven home to me several years ago, at a time when I was working as the archivist of a large international organization. I learned that one of the organization's programs had been discontinued. This program had maintained its own "archives" of files relating to its activities. This collection, I was told, would now revert to the organization's archives, and so I arranged to view the material. The staff person who had been responsible for maintaining the collection informed me that, in his opinion, all the material could be thrown away. "Nobody uses it," he said. When I asked for an inventory of the files, or any other sort of finding aid, he said

there was none. "No wonder nobody uses it!" I said. "Nobody knows what's here!" Once the archives' staff processed the collection, it became one of our most heavily used holdings.

Thus, it is a pleasure for me to introduce this issue of *Annotation*, which spotlights several NHPRC-supported projects focusing upon this basic archival function. These articles suggest the great scope of archival activity, for the projects in question were involved with the processing of the papers of private individuals, of municipal archives, and of labor unions and businesses. They excellently illustrate the fact that it is not enough to save records at risk from physically hazardous conditions, from attics and basements, from less-than-sound storage conditions, and from the wastebasket or shredder. Additional work, performed in accordance with professional archival standards and practice, must be done in order to make the records intellectually accessible if the effort is to be fully realized.

NHPRC processing grants have enabled numerous archival institutions to address sizeable backlogs of unprocessed records: one grant alone enabled the Kentucky Historical Society to increase its percentage of processed records from 8 percent to 33 percent in a 2-year period. But, lest we get carried away with self-congratulation, it is important to remember that the processing of backlogs remains a significant problem in archives and manuscript collections across the nation.

John W. Blassingame

John W. Blassingame, founder and editor of *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, an NHPRC-funded documentary editing project, died at his home in New Haven, Connecticut, on February 13, 2000. He was 59. Dr. Blassingame, who was Professor of History and African and African-American Studies at Yale University, was born in Covington, Georgia, in 1940. He received his B.A. from Fort Valley State College and his M.A. from Howard University, then earned his doctorate at Yale in 1971. His works included *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South* (1972, revised edition 1979), *Black New Orleans* (1973), and the edited volume *Slave Testimony: Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews, and Autobiographies* (1977). Dr. Blassingame directed completion of the five-volume first series of the Douglass papers, subtitled *Speeches, Debates, and Interviews*, from 1979 to 1992. He stepped down as project director in 1994, but continued to play a role in the ongoing editorial work on Douglass' autobiographies.



NHPRC Application Deadlines

THE COMMISSION'S MEETINGS FOLLOW THE FISCAL YEAR OF OCTOBER 1 TO SEPTEMBER 30. CONSEQUENTLY, THE FIRST MEETING OF THE FISCAL YEAR IS IN NOVEMBER AND THE SECOND IS IN MAY.

June 1 (for the November meeting)

Proposals addressing the following top priorities:

- The NHPRC will provide the American public with widespread access to the papers of the founders of our democratic republic and its institutions by ensuring the timely completion of eight projects now in progress to publish the papers of George Washington, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and papers that document the Ratification of the Constitution, the First Federal Congress, and the early Supreme Court
- The NHPRC will promote broad public participation in historical documentation by collaborating with State Historical Records Advisory Boards to plan and carry out jointly funded programs to strengthen the nation's archival infrastructure and expand the range of records that are protected and accessible
- The NHPRC will enable the nation's archivists, records managers, and documentary editors to overcome the obstacles and take advantage of the opportunities posed by electronic technologies by continuing to provide leadership in funding research and development on appraising, preserving, disseminating, and providing access to important documentary sources in electronic form

OCTOBER 1 (for the May meeting)

Proposals not addressing the above priorities, but focusing on an activity authorized in the NHPRC statute as follows:

- collecting, describing, preserving, compiling, and publishing (including microfilming and other forms of reproduction) of documentary sources significant to the history of the United States
- conducting institutes, training and educational courses, and fellowships related to the activities of the Commission
- disseminating information about documentary sources through guides, directories, and other technical publications
- or, more specifically, documentary editing and publishing; archival preservation and processing of records for access; developing or updating descriptive systems; creation and development of archival and records management programs; development of standards, tools, and techniques to advance the work of archivists, records managers, and documentary editors; and promotion of the use of records by teachers, students, and the public

APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND FORMS MAY BE REQUESTED FROM NHPRC, NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, 700 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW, ROOM 111, WASHINGTON, DC 20408-0001, 202-501-5610 (VOICE), 202-501-5601 (FAX), nhprc@arch1.nara.gov (E-MAIL), OR BY ACCESSING OUR WEB SITE AT www.nara.gov/nara/nhprc/

N e w s o f N o t e

E. B. "Burt" Knauft, a longtime NHPRC Volunteer, contributed an article entitled "The Question of Slavery" to a series on the bicentennial of George Washington's death that appeared in Town & County magazine of the Fredericksburg, Virginia, newspaper, *The Free Lance-Star*. Burt's article, which appeared in the newspaper's February 19, 2000, issue, dealt with the procedure established for freeing the Washington slaves after George and Martha's deaths. The article derived from knowledge gained while working on *The Emerging Nation: America, 1783-1790*, the education kit that was part of NHPRC's The Emerging Nation project.

Documenting the Lives of the Women of South Texas

BY JILL U. JACKSON



*I*t is an understatement to say that San Antonio, Texas, is rich in history. Known for the Alamo and its unique confluence of cultures, San Antonio has long been of interest to scholars. Much has been written about the actions of the men who fought for and settled South Texas, but relatively little has been written about the women who helped shape the history of the area. One reason for this may be that although women compose the majority of the population in South Texas, their historic materials have been largely neglected in the southern part of the state.

The Archives for Research on Women and Gender project at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) seeks to address this gap in the historical narrative by ensuring that primary sources about women in South Texas are preserved and accessible for future generations.

In 1992 UTSA initiated a project to collect materials for women's history after it was offered over 90 years' worth of historic records from the Woman's Club of San Antonio. The club is the oldest women's civic and social organization in San Antonio, and was the first woman's

club in Texas to endorse women's suffrage. Prior to contacting UTSA, the Woman's Club had offered its records to two private universities in San Antonio; each had declined the gift. However, when the club contacted Dr. Linda Schott, then an Assistant Professor of History at UTSA, she readily accepted the materials. A historian of women in the United States, and familiar with the growing body of research about women's voluntary organizations, Dr. Schott recognized immediately the historical importance of these records.

In 1994 Dr. Schott became the Director of UTSA's newly created Center for the Study of Women and Gender, and began collaborating with the University library to create the Archives for Research on Women and Gender. This project was designed to document the lives of women, constructions of gender, and expressions of sexual identity in South Texas. From the beginning, the underlying goal of this project was to reflect in the Archives' holdings the diversity that is evident in South Texas' rich multi-cultural history. Six years later, the Archives for Research on Women and Gender project has acquired over 60 collections from

LEFT: *Members of the Pan American Round Table at a meeting in Mexico City, 1921. Photograph from the Pan American Round Table Records, Archives for Research on Women and Gender, University of Texas at San Antonio Library.* RIGHT: *Eleanor Brackenridge, co-founder of the Woman's Club of San Antonio, ca. 1900. Photograph from the Woman's Club of San Antonio Records, Archives for Research on Women and Gender, University of Texas at San Antonio Library.*

African American, Mexican American, European American, Jewish, Christian, atheist, lesbian, and heterosexual women.

The processing and collecting efforts of the Archives for Research on Women and Gender project were greatly expanded in 1998 by a grant from the National Historic Publications and Records Commission. This grant complemented the University's investment in staff and in a newly renovated 7,000-square-foot archives facility, and enabled the Center to hire a processing archivist devoted to making the women's collections available to researchers.

In the first year of the NHPRC grant, the processing archivist for the Archives for Research on Women and Gender project dealt with collections from African American women's sororities and service groups, a freedom-from-religion activist,

a pioneer of Tejano music, and several political organizations and politicians. The papers of Laura Burleson Negley are one such example.

Negley's papers document her political involvements, business affairs, and family life. The week before she married on Easter Sunday, 1912, Laura Burleson, the daughter of United States Postmaster General Albert S. Burleson, gave her first speech at a Washington, DC, women's suffrage convention. Sixteen years later, Laura Burleson Negley, a wife and mother, became the first woman from Bexar County elected to the Texas State Legislature. Mrs. Negley's papers reveal both the uniqueness and the ordinariness of her life. Sadly, like many women, Mrs. Negley lost two of her three sons during World War II, and after the war she retired from public life to attend to the family businesses.

Archivist Jill Jackson worked with local community groups and families, as well as UTSA faculty, to acquire the Laura Burleson Negley collection and many others that were previously, quite literally, hidden in basements and attics. As part of the NHPRC grant, the Archives for Research on Women and Gender project is currently working with the Hispanic community to identify and collect records that document the lives and interests of Hispanic women in South Texas. This effort is modeled on the collaborative outreach efforts of the Archives for Research on Women and Gender project with the African American community, which was very successful in identifying and acquiring both organizational records and personal papers.

In addition to preserving the history of women in South Texas, making these papers and records known to researchers is a top priority of both Dr. Schott and Ms. Jackson. In a recent presentation to a community group, Ms. Jackson said, "I like to think of what we archivists do as adding value to the historical record. It is one thing to collect materials and store them for posterity; but if no one knows they are there or has access to them, what is the real benefit of saving them?"

To promote the use of the women's collections, both Dr. Schott and Ms. Jackson attended the Berkshire Women's History Conference in the summer of 1999, where they were able to speak

with scholars and Ph.D. candidates interested in 20th-century women's history, particularly in the activities of women of color. Already, several of the graduate students they met with have visited the Archives and are using the collections to analyze the involvement of European American and Mexican American women in public life.



Laura Burleson Negley, ca. 1915. Photograph from the Laura Burleson Negley Papers, Archives for Research on Women and Gender, University of Texas at San Antonio Library.

A collection that has attracted the attention of several historians is that of the Pan American Round Table (PART). PART began in San Antonio in 1916, in response to the flight of hundreds of women and children from the Mexican revolution of 1910 and their arrival in South Texas without any social network or support. PART's goal was to foster friendship and understanding between the women of the United States and Mexico. The founder of PART, Florence Terry Griswold, led the organization from 1916 to 1941, and nurtured PART into becoming an international organization that continues to exist today. A precise record keeper, Mrs. Griswold's extensive correspondence file—over 2½ feet of letters—reveals her no-nonsense leadership

style. The records thus provide insight into how Mrs. Griswold was able to gain the respect and admiration of not only the women of PART, but of leaders of governments and organizations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

The PART records and several other collections not only reveal the internal workings of specific organizations; they also document the interaction of women in San Antonio with national groups and activists. Contact between San Antonio women and national activists—such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Margaret Sanger, and Mabel Veron—is documented in letters in several of the collections. The records that make up the Archives for Research on Women and Gender project thus help to place the activities of women in South Texas within a national context.

When future scholars work to construct and understand the narrative of history from old diaries and memoranda they find in the Archives at UTSA, they will use the materials that are being saved today. Because of the Archives for Research on Women and Gender project and the support it has received from the NHPRC, this documentary record will include a wide range of different women from South Texas, women whose history had previously been under-documented and essentially unknown.

For more information about UTSA's Archives for Research on Women and Gender project, go to www.lib.utsa.edu/Archives/arwg.html. ❖

JILL U. JACKSON IS ARCHIVIST OF THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO LIBRARY.

EARLY DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT DRAWINGS AT THE MUSEUM OF FLIGHT

BY DENNIS PARKS

JUST AS TALL OAKS FROM LITTLE ACORNS GROW, from humble beginnings mighty enterprises develop. Such was the case in 1920 Los Angeles, where the back room of a barbershop saw the roots of an industrial giant develop. Douglas Aircraft, which for 20 years was the dominant manufacturer of piston-powered airliners, had such a modest start.

From the 1930s DC-3 to the 1950s DC-7, Douglas produced more than 13,000 passenger airliners. This all began in 1920 with a private order for one airplane designed for a record attempt to fly coast-to-coast nonstop. This first Douglas was known as the *Cloudster*, the first aircraft built that could carry a load equal to its own weight.

A 28-year-old Donald Douglas, his wife, and two boys arrived in Los Angeles early in 1920. Douglas had been the first graduate of the aeronautical engineering program at The Massachusetts Institute of Technology. A few years later, as the Martin Company's chief engineer, he had designed a highly successful twin-engine bomber. With the end of the First World War, the aircraft industry hit a severe slump, and with the cutting of government contracts, most of these factories closed their doors. Worse, the Government was selling war surplus aircraft for as little as \$300.



The Cloudster, designed for a nonstop transcontinental flight, was the first Douglas production aircraft. Photograph courtesy of the Museum of Flight.

Douglas, who believed he was as talented as any aircraft designer in the country, came to Los Angeles hoping to launch his own aircraft company. Douglas knew that California would be a good location, as factories on the west coast were easy to construct. Heating was a minor problem, much of the work could be done outside, and the mild climate provided for good flying weather year-round. Also, outside of Boeing in Seattle, which at the time was manufacturing furniture, there were no other major aircraft manufacturers on the west coast.

After months spent in a search for the necessary financial support to start his enterprise, Douglas was introduced to a wealthy, adventuresome young man named David Davis, who aspired to be the first transcontinental airplane passenger, and was willing to put up the money to finance such a venture. In June 1920, they agreed to form the Davis-Douglas Aircraft Company. The agreement to build one airplane fell short of Douglas's ambitions, but it was a start.

On June 27, 1921, the *Cloudster*, with Davis as a passenger and Eric Springer at the controls, took to the air from Riverside, California, for the attempt to be the first to complete a transcontinental flight nonstop. Springer got off safely

with 660 gallons of gas aboard, and the two men headed east hoping to arrive in New York 30 hours later. The attempt ended in Texas after just 8 hours due to an engine failure. After repairs, the aircraft was flown back to Los Angeles for modifications. While this work was being undertaken, a Fokker airplane flown by the U.S. Army completed the first nonstop transcontinental flight. Davis withdrew support from Douglas, who was left to hunt for new backers.

Meanwhile, Douglas designed a torpedo plane that won him a three-aircraft order from the Navy. With backing from Harry Chandler, publisher of the *Los Angeles Times*, and nine other local businessmen, Douglas formed the Douglas Company. A follow-up contract for 18 more torpedo planes saw the company move into a facility in Santa Monica that had been designed as a movie studio. With six of the DT torpedo planes delivered in 1922 and *(continued on page 11)*

Regrants & Regeneration

The NHPRC and Records of the Vermont Eugenics Survey

BY NANCY GALLAGHER AND GREGORY SANFORD

In 1931 Vermont's Commission on Country Life published *Rural Vermont: A Program for the Future by Two Hundred Vermonters*, a plan for the regeneration of Vermont. This remarkable report examined the character of Vermont and Vermonters, laying out a comprehensive framework for the state's economic and social development. The Commission was the embodiment of contemporary progressive thought. As the report's authors asserted, "scientific planning" leads "towards higher goals . . . A vision of the possibilities gives new courage. The execution of well-laid plans makes that courage fruitful." Among the recommendations were plans for developing Vermont's recreation and tourism potential; plans that helped shape what is now a major component of the state's economy.

Also in 1931, the Vermont General Assembly passed *An Act for Human Betterment By Voluntary Sterilization* "to prevent the procreation of idiots, imbeciles, feeble-minded or insane persons." That *Rural Vermont* and Vermont's sterilization law were contemporaneous was not coincidental. Both derived, in part, from the Vermont Eugenics Survey.

The Eugenics Survey of Vermont (1925-1936) was a privately funded organization directed by Henry F. Perkins, chairman of the University of Vermont's Zoology Department. Its purpose was to conduct eugenic studies of Vermont families and communities and to publicize its findings in support of a broad range of

social reforms, particularly in the areas of child welfare, education, charities, and corrections. One such "reform" was sterilization. Another was to strengthen local communities and their "good old Vermont stock," through a variety of efforts, including attracting the "right sort" to Vermont through recreation and second-home development.

Eugenics, the study and promotion of human population improvement through better breeding, was enthusiastically embraced by scientists, scholars, and statesmen in most of the industrialized world during the first third of the 20th century. American sterilization laws (1907 to the present) and the restrictive immigration quotas of 1924 were inspired and justified on eugenic grounds. Eugenics provided inspiration for Nazi Germany's racial hygiene measures.

In Vermont the Eugenics Survey was transformed into broader sociological community studies during the 1930s. Elin Anderson's *We Americans: A Study of Cleavage in an American City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937), a study of ethnic, religious, and class tensions in Burlington, Vermont, marked this transition. Anderson was assistant director of the Eugenics Survey. Her study endures as an indictment of the ethnocentrism and social prejudice that resonated through previous publications of the Eugenics Survey.

Henry Perkins retained custody of the Eugenics Survey's archives after the project ended in 1936. In 1936 he received

funds from the Historical Records Survey of the Work Projects Administration (WPA) to preserve and describe the records. In 1952 the entire archives, consisting of 36 cubic feet of records, was transferred from the University of Vermont to the State of Vermont's Public Records Commission (currently the Public Records Division of the Department of Buildings and General Services).

The Survey's archives contains a comprehensive record of the internal deliberations and activities of the Survey and the Vermont Commission on Country Life and documents the diverse connections among local, regional, and national enterprises devoted to child welfare, eugenics, rural development, and mental health. The archives holds the official records of the organizations (minutes, memoranda, and correspondence); case records of individual family and community studies; and a "Eugenics Survey Library" of books, pamphlets, serials, and ephemera of the American eugenics movement.

The records remained untouched and largely unused in the state record center for 35 years. In the past 10 years, they attracted the attention of the Abenaki Indians, who have used the records to research their own family history and to verify, in written records, stories that had been passed down through oral tradition.

In 1996 the NHPRC awarded the Vermont Historical Records Advisory Board (VHRAB) a regrant (96-041), under which VHRAB awarded Nancy Gallagher and the Public Records Division a grant

to begin processing the records as part of developing a plan for their long-term care.

Ms. Gallagher, a high school science teacher and graduate student in history at the University of Vermont, applied an educator's vision of the potential of the records as sources for interdisciplinary instruction, as well as her concerns that the archives' integrity be preserved and that the records become more accessible. Her archival work was conducted under the close tutelage of one of Vermont's preeminent archivists, Connell Gallagher, Director of Research Collections at the University, who is also her husband.

Ms. Gallagher's knowledge of eugenics history and the 1940 WPA guide were essential to restoring original order, which had been disturbed over the years. She produced an updated inventory and summary descriptions and created a plan of work to complete processing. Public Records now has an action plan for completing the processing and preservation work.

Following her work on the grant, Ms. Gallagher published *Breeding Better Vermonters: The Eugenics Project in the Green Mountain State* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999). The book received international coverage and sparked further discussion not only about the eugenics movement in Vermont, but also about broader issues on the application of science, notably genetic engineering, to social programs. Since publication of *Breeding Better Vermonters*, additional material on the eugenics movement has begun surfacing in Vermont and elsewhere.

Ms. Gallagher is now working with other educators at the University and at

Vermont's Continuing Education-based "Web Project" to develop a prototype web site for teachers based on the Eugenics Survey and the Commission on Country Life Commission records. The re-established provenance of the Survey and Commission records will serve as a guide to designing the web interface and will allow educators to utilize the records for teaching in a variety of content areas.



Nancy Gallagher poses in the University of Vermont library with some of the books she used in her research. Photograph by Jeb Wallace-Brodeur.

The records project underscores the value of the NHPRC's regrant program. The Eugenics Survey and the Commission on Country Life records, after decades of neglect, were beginning to receive sustained research use. Such use, given the disarrangement and condition of the records, created problems from preservation to security. It is unlikely that control and care of the records would have been improved without Nancy Gallagher's interest and the availability of regrant funds. The NHPRC's program allowed the Vermont Historical Records Advisory Board to use its knowledge of the value of the records, their condition, the need for processing, and local expertise (Ms. Gallagher's abilities and her husband's willingness to serve as a mentor) to grant \$1,760, which continues to

provide valuable returns for Vermont's historical records.

The regrant program is designed to improve recordkeeping within the states, but that does not mean, as the above confirms, that regrants only address records of local interest. The Vermont Eugenics Survey records are local, but they document one aspect of a national and international movement. Following publication of *Breeding Better Vermonters*, news media from *The Boston Globe* to the British Broadcasting Company ran stories on the records and on the eugenics movement. There have been inquiries about the records from as far away as Australia.

Given the widespread interest in eugenics nationally, in the past and the present, this "local" project also suggests the possibility for broader collaborative archival projects to develop a national view of the records generated by the eugenics and country life movements. The NHPRC should be celebrated for its efforts to stitch local records and record-keeping into the national fabric. ❖

NANCY GALLAGHER IS HEAD OF THE VERMONT WEB PROJECT. GREGORY SANFORD IS STATE ARCHIVIST OF VERMONT.

Wanda Gág's collection to the University of Pennsylvania Library along with his own personal and professional papers.

Gág was born in the town of New Ulm, Minnesota, a German-speaking community of free-thinking artisans and farmers. The untimely death of her father when she was 15 (she was the oldest of seven

than simply American letters. In the 1910s Naumburg founded the Walden School, which was at the forefront of the progressive education movement, with its emphasis, in Naumburg's words, on "the development of [children's] capacities," rather than on "the accumulation of knowledge." The arts were an important part in the Walden program, and the school was dedicated to the use of psychoanalytic principles to help normal children deal with their problems.

After leaving Walden, Naumburg turned her attention to the discipline of art therapy. Through art, she argued, a patient's psychological conflicts and concerns could be understood and analyzed. She is considered the founder of the art therapy movement in the United States.

The Pennell Family Papers were acquired through the foresight and interest of friends of Elizabeth Pennell, who wanted to preserve Pennell's letters, prints, and other memorabilia in a research institution. Joseph Pennell (1857-1926) was an artist and illustrator who married Elizabeth Robins (1855-1936) in 1884. Both native Philadelphians, they became a highly successful and prolific team, researching material for their travel books, which were written by Elizabeth and illustrated by Joseph.

The Pennells spent much time in Europe, where they socialized with writers and artists such as Robert Louis Stevenson, John Galsworthy, James McNeill Whistler, Henry James, George Bernard Shaw, and Aubrey Beardsley. In her memoir, *Nights: Rome, Venice in the Aesthetic Eighties; London, Paris in the Fighting Nineties* (1916), Elizabeth



children and had to care for her siblings), as well as her earliest studies at art schools in St. Paul, are among the principal events chronicled in her 1940 autobiography, entitled *Growing Pains*. Gág was also the author and illustrator of several successful children's books, including *Millions of Cats*, which remains in print today. But her primary career and identification was as an artist who specialized in drawing and printmaking.

Gág's personal papers contain a remarkable series of diaries, beginning with her youth and extending almost to her death. She moved east as a young woman, and her diaries and letters present a fascinating report on the New York art scene in the Twenties and Thirties. They also reveal the difficulties faced by a woman on her own trying to survive as a working artist.

In the early 1990s, a researcher using the Waldo Frank Papers at Penn informed me that the papers of Margaret Naumburg (1890-1983), Frank's first wife, were languishing in a storage facility in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Thomas Frank (the only child of Margaret and Waldo) and his wife had tried unsuccessfully to find a repository for this collection. One institution, for example, indicated that it would be willing to receive those aspects of Naumburg's papers that concerned her pioneering career in education, but would not accept those files related to her equally groundbreaking career in art therapy.

Here was an opportunity not only to coordinate with existing collections (an extensive amount of Naumburg's letters can be found in the Frank Papers), but also to develop a body of primary source materials for other academic disciplines



TOP LEFT: Margaret Naumburg, ca. 1930s. MIDDLE: Artwork done by one of Margaret Naumburg's patients, a teenaged girl who was schizophrenic. This example is characteristic of schizophrenia, according to Naumburg, because of the fragmented body parts used to represent persons, the extreme condensation of thought or feeling into symbols, and the incorporation of written words into visual images. BELOW: Elizabeth Robins Pennell, ca. 1895. Photographs courtesy of the University of Pennsylvania's Rare Book & Manuscript Library.



Pennell provides an account of the lively Thursday night salon that she and her husband hosted.

Our NHPRC-funded project has essentially been one of arrangement, description, and general preservation. It will result in hard-copy registers that we anticipate mounting on the World Wide Web; collection-level cataloging records, available through RLIN/Eureka as well as Penn's local online catalog, known as Franklin; and correspondent-level cataloging records searchable in the same catalogs.

Perhaps the greatest challenge faced by the project staff has been the storage and description of art materials, which include original drawings and sketches, prints, and sculpture. These materials range in size from the rather small (ca. 3 by 5 inches)

to the oversize (e.g., 20 by 24 inches) to the elephantine (a piece of sculpture weighing hundreds of pounds and standing over 4 feet tall). With regard to the collections completed so far, we have already noticed increased inquiries due to the better access and visibility afforded by our cataloging records in RLIN/Eureka. Our experience demonstrates once again that if you catalog it, they (the researchers) will come! ❖

NANCY M. SHAWCROSS IS CURATOR OF MANUSCRIPTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA'S RARE BOOK & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY.

MUSEUM OF FLIGHT (continued from page 7)

15 more in the following year, the Douglas Company was on the move.

In 1923 the Army Air Service decided it was feasible to fly around the world, and that the Army should be the first to do it. The reputation of the Douglas torpedo planes led the Army to approach the company for a bid. In the fall of 1923, work began on the airplanes that were to take the name of Douglas around the world. During April 1924, the four Douglas World Cruisers departed for the first circumnavigation of the globe. Although two of the aircraft were lost on the flight, all crewmembers survived. The two remaining aircraft returned to Seattle in September. The World Cruisers flew an equivalent of 15 days, 11 hours, and 7 minutes in the air at an average speed of 72½ miles per hour.

Aviators from other countries had tried to fly around the world, but American airmen in Douglas aircraft had done it first. The flight also provided the famous Douglas slogan "First Around the World." From this success, Douglas received an order for 50 observation planes, as well as its first overseas orders. By early 1925, employment at the factory reached 500 people. Douglas was reaping the rewards of his World Cruiser fame, and there would be no looking back.

The Museum of Flight is fortunate to have obtained documentation of these early days of Douglas in the form of account and payroll ledgers, photographs, and rarest of all—over 1,200 of the original engineering drawings for the aircraft produced from 1920 through 1925. These are unique pencil-on-paper construction drawings covering the *Cloudster* of 1920; the first Douglas military aircraft for the Navy, the DT; the first transport for the Army, the C-1; and the first Douglas multi-engine design, the Navy D2T torpedo plane.

The existence of these drawings is basically unknown to the public at this time. The drawings have been unavailable to the public for decades. They are in very poor condition, since they were stored tightly rolled, and the paper suffered acidic damage, leaving them very brittle. Thanks to support from the



In 1920 a room in the back of this barbershop on Pico Boulevard in Los Angeles served as the first home of the Douglas Company. Photograph courtesy of the Museum of Flight.

National Historic Publications and Records Commission, we have been able to treat about half the collection.

The drawings processed were first humidified so that they could be unrolled and microfilmed on high-contrast film. From the microfilm, full-size bond copies were produced. The microfilm images were also scanned, cleaned, and recorded as TIFF files on a CD-ROM. A database is now being developed that can be searched and that will automatically pull up the matching drawings from the CD-ROM.

Copies of the database and the CD-ROM will be given to The Boeing Company, which now owns Douglas, and to the National Air and Space Museum. Sample images and a finding aid will eventually be placed on our web site. ❖

DENNIS PARKS IS SENIOR CURATOR AT THE MUSEUM OF FLIGHT IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.

LABOR HISTORY IN NEW YORK CITY

BY JANET WELLS GREENE



Members of Ironworkers, Local 197, Stone Derrickmen and Riggers hoist the 17-ton statue, Columbia Triumphant, to its base at Columbus Circle in Central Park, New York City, in 1980. Photograph from the Stone Derrickmen and Riggers, Ironworkers, Local 197, Collection, Robert E. Wagner Labor Archives.

"My father had a gift," said Ron Nicastrì of his father, Vito, a marble carver who was born in Bari, Italy, in 1917. "He had very, very good hands. . . . He was able to carve letters into stone and granite. . . . There is a way that you can cut [marble] with a hand tool. I would do it, and mine would be a little serrated, . . . which is easily removed with sandpaper. But my father would cut that and it would look like it was a laser cut, right on through, with hand tools. It was amazing. He was truly amazing. . . . They don't do that anymore."

Ron Nicastrì followed his father and grandfather into the marble industry in New York City as a member of Local 4 of the Marble Carvers, Cutters and Setters. Like his father and grandfather before

him, Nicastrì learned his trade as a union apprentice, building New York City in the 20th century. The members of Local 4 have been responsible for cutting and setting marble in some of the most important buildings in America. Nicastrì and his father both worked on the World Trade Center. Vito Nicastrì was photographed at work on the altar of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Newark, New Jersey. John Powers, former Business Agent of Local 4, restored the marble fireplaces in the White House. Recently, Local 4 ceased to be an independent labor organization and merged with the Tile, Marble and Terrazzo Workers, Local Union No. 7, of the Bricklayers and Allied Trades, where Ron Nicastrì is now Marble Industry Representative.

Changes in technology have affected the structure of work in all aspects of contemporary society, and these changes have also transformed the organizations of skilled craftsmen. In the marble industry, computers and sandblasters have replaced marble carvers, and as marble carvers died, so did their skills. Many local unions have merged, and with these mergers, the history of their craft, and their organizations, is often lost, even though the names of unions and crafts that have disappeared in mergers live on in the hearts and minds of members and family.

With help from a grant from the National Historic Publications and Records Commission, the records of these

labor organizations will be preserved for the future at the Robert E. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University. In 1998 the Archives received a 2-year grant from the NHPRC to find and acquire records documenting the history of the building and construction trades in New York City.

The Robert E. Wagner Labor Archives was established in 1977 by New York University's Division of Libraries as part of the Tamiment Institute Library, a special collection documenting American radicalism. The Archives has the dual mission of preserving historical records of New York labor organizations and disseminating information about labor history through extensive outreach programs. All together, the Tamiment/Wagner holdings include some 300 archival and manuscript collections spanning 7,500 cubic feet; 500,000 photographic prints, negatives, posters, buttons, and other nonprint items; and over 3,600 hours of oral history interviews. Staffed by five professionals, one collections assistant, and a changing roster of project archivists, the Tamiment Library and the Archives are open to the public and serve some 5,000 researchers each year.

The Archives has been systematically searching for and preserving trade union records in New York City for more than two decades. For over 10 years, the NHPRC and the State of New York have supported the Harry Van Arsdale Labor Records Documentation Project at the Archives. The project was partly funded by the NHPRC when it began in 1984. Field archivists for the Van Arsdale Project conducted onsite surveys of the records of more than 400 of 600 extant New York City trade unions. As a result, the Archives acquired over 150 new collections. Surveys of the building and construction trade unions continue to guide the Archives staff today as they work to locate, resurvey, appraise, and negotiate for collections.

While the records of many labor and working class organizations have been preserved in archives across America, the building and construction trades are underrepresented in those collections, according to the Report of the Task Force on Labor and Working Class History organized by Debra Bernhardt, Director of the Robert E. Wagner Labor Archives. Archivists in two dozen labor repositories polled by the Bentley Fellowship Program's Labor Archives Appraisal Project in 1997 also indicated that their documentation of building trades history lagged behind other sources.

Currently, New York City building and construction trades records are being ferreted out with funding from the NHPRC and gathered into new space granted to the Archives by New York University. The project, called "Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives II" (OPEL II), operates with assistance from

Edward J. Malloy, President of the New York City Building and Construction Trades Council. With the support of the Council, project staff members have contacted individual local unions and have gained access to union basements and storerooms to search for the historic records of union locals. Such records may have been submerged through mergers or forgotten in the day-to-day work of a labor organization. Oral histories compiled with the help of officers and retirees augment the written records.

The 16 labor organizations comprising the building and construction trades have played a central role in the history of New York City and the nation. Peter McGuire, a New York City cabinetmaker, helped lead the movement for the 8-hour day in the 1880s. He was also a force in founding the American Federation of Labor (AFL) with New York City cigar maker Samuel Gompers in 1886. New York City union plumbers, bricklayers, sheet metal workers, painters, and electrical workers were among the earliest members of the AFL. George Meany, a plumber from the Bronx, led the AFL-CIO from 1955 to 1979. Painter Peter J. Brennan served as president of the New York City Building and Construction Trades Council before he was appointed Secretary of Labor by Richard Nixon in 1973. The building industry has served as the first rung on the economic ladder for thousands of the city's immigrants and minorities; it has been a locus of economic, racial, and political struggle.

Some New York City trade unionists are better known by their work than by their names. Among records recently transferred to the Archives are those belonging to the Stone Derrickmen and Riggers, Ironworkers, Local 197. Members of this organization built the Brooklyn Bridge, the pedestal for the Statue of Liberty, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, and "almost every building made of stone in New York City," according to Ronald Gallagher, past president and unofficial historian of the local union. The Stone Derrickmen and Riggers formed their organization in 1866 on the Brooklyn Bridge itself. The union started as a benevolent society, formed by the Irish workers who lived at Five Points in lower Manhattan and in Central Park. Today, in addition to hoisting stone, members of Ironworkers Local 197 also hoist statues. When *Columbia Triumphant* at Columbus Circle was removed for cleaning in 1980, the Stone Derrickmen and Riggers were there to take her down and put her back again.

As employees of Artkraft Strauss, Incorporated, members

of Sheet Metal Workers, Local 137, dropped the ball on New Year's Eve in Times Square for most of the 20th century. In collaboration with members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 3, and Painters Local 230, they also fabricated the ball itself, as well as the spectacular moving electric signs that gave the "Great White Way" of Broadway its name.

Sheet Metal Workers, Local 137, and the Stone Derrickmen and Riggers, Ironworkers, Local 197, each had offices in the Broadway Central Hotel, which collapsed in 1970, destroying many of their oldest records. Other unions were more fortunate. Bricklayers Local 1, for example, retained handwritten minute books written in German and dating to 1888.

The response to the OPEL II project from building and construction trades unionists has been overwhelming. Many local union officers have expressed an interest in having staff members visit their offices to search for historic records and to consult on their preservation. Thus far, the records of 21 local unions have been transferred to the Archives, as well as the historic documents belonging to two New York City employers' associations in the building trades industry, the New York Building Congress and the New York Building Trades Employers Association, whose contracts with New York City unions date from 1903.

Some of the acquisitions of the Archives will soon be on view at the Museum of the City of New York. The exhibit, which opens in April, is entitled "Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives: 100 Years of Labor in New York City." It includes photographs and artifacts of the history of labor organizations and working people's movements in New York City. Gathered by the Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives during the past two decades, the exhibit was organized by Debra Bernhardt and Rachel Bernstein. Their book of the same name is also forthcoming in April. For more information, contact the Archives at 212-998-2640. ❖



Marble carver Vito Nicastrì, left, was born in Bari, Italy, in 1917. As a member of Marble Carvers, Cutters, and Setters, Local Union Number 4, he was one of many skilled New York City craftsmen who helped build the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Newark, New Jersey. Photograph from the Tile, Marble, and Terrazzo Collection, Local Union Number 7, Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives.

JANET WELLS GREENE IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE HARRY VAN ARSDALE LABOR HISTORY PROJECT AT THE ROBERT F. WAGNER LABOR ARCHIVES OF THE TAMMINT INSTITUTE LIBRARY, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY.

Documenting Labor in the Ozarks

BY DAVID RICHARDS

Brochures, postcards, and tourism boards portray the Ozarks as a paradise of rolling hills, secluded valleys, and pure mountain springs. Popular images of the Ozarks include rural, isolated homesteads, idyllic resorts, and Branson music theatres. The region's bucolic image is based on the region's agrarian society. This traditional view of the Ozarks ignores the region's industrial development, the existence of trade unions, and the struggle of the working class.

For almost 20 years the Ozarks Labor Union Archives (OLUA) has attempted to broaden the traditional view by preserving and providing access to the region's labor and working class history sources—a history that has long been neglected. Popular opinion in the Ozarks denied the existence of organized labor in the region. This belief was challenged by Neal Moore, a retired union printer and publisher of the Springfield, Missouri, *Springfield Labor Record*. Author of the newspaper's history column and co-founder of OLUA, Moore endeavored to document labor's heritage in the Ozarks. He was assisted by the late Dr. J. David Lages, a Professor of Economics at Southwest Missouri State University (SMSU).

In one of his many columns, Moore stated that some of the most dynamic trade union organizational efforts in America took place in rural, isolated areas of the country. The Ozarks, as one such area, was home to workers desperate for higher wages and safer working conditions. Starting with the Ozark Branch of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, chartered in 1871, the region hosts a long list of unions and labor leaders, many of whom played important roles in national labor affairs. In the early 1880s, Taney County Knights of Labor leader Henry Sharpe was instrumental in advocating the national cooperative movement. Reuben T. Wood, a Springfield, Missouri, cigar maker and former member of the Socialist Party, served aggressively as the president of the Missouri State Federation of Labor from 1912 to 1953. He remained president even during his tenure in Congress from 1932 to 1940. Charles Wilkerson, Felix Snow, Russell Prince, and Joe Bailey were all international vice-presidents of the Molders, Stage Hands, Bakery Workers, and Typographical unions, respectively.

The dangerous conditions of the mining and railroad industries in the region led to the establishment of the earliest unions. By the early 1900s, the region was home to dozens of trade unions ranging from carpenters and teamsters to brewery workers and bartenders. When the city of Springfield suffered a bloody streetcar strike in 1916 lasting 252 days, both the community and the city government rallied behind the workers. Organized labor in the Ozarks grew during the 1940s and 1950s, and so did labor's social, economic, and political agenda in the region.

Records from various locals and from the Springfield Labor Council echo national declines in union membership in the 1960s and 70s. Internal disputes, competitive organizing drives leading to failed elections, and the loss of jobs from automation and overseas production conspired to further depress union



United Grain Processors, Local 20692, of Springfield, Missouri, during the Lipscomb Grain & Seed Co. Strike of 1937.

membership in the Ozarks during this period. During the past decade, Southwest Missouri has suffered additional job losses due to industrial migration, in addition to lower wages, job insecurity, and well-funded union-busting campaigns.

Despite such issues, few repositories in the region actively collected records documenting organized labor and working class history in the Ozarks. Moore and Lages recognized the problem, and together launched the Ozarks Labor History Project in 1981. The following year they established the Ozarks Labor Union Archives on the campus of SMSU. The two made a complementary team. Moore, the retired union publisher, was an ambitious amateur historian and a trusted member of the labor community. Lages, whose dissertation and field of study utilized labor records, legitimized and justified OLUA's existence to a skeptical, financially conservative academic institution known more for its business college alumni than for its love for the working class.

Throughout the 1980s, OLUA undertook an aggressive acquisitions program. Fueled by small internal grants from SMSU and from the 11th District office of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, OLUA brought in collections from Springfield and the surrounding area. These collections ranged in size from a few file folders to hundreds of linear feet, and included shop files, contracts, negotiation records, grievances, and correspondence. Some collections also included audiotapes, scrapbooks, parade banners, photographs, and convention pins.

Financial support was erratic during the early years, and the archives was moved around the SMSU campus. OLU also suffered from inconsistent appraisal and accessioning procedures, mainly due to the lack of professional staff. OLU's early years were marked by the enthusiasm of its founders, who actively



ABOVE: Neal Moore, Pat Taggart, Jack Moore, and J. David Lages accepting a check from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in support of OLU in 1982. RIGHT: Edna McFarland and Pauline Musgrave picketing a Springfield, Missouri, job site in 1950. Photographs for this article courtesy of the Ozarks Labor Union Archives, Southwest Missouri State University.

collected materials and expanded its holdings. Access and processing activities failed to keep pace with the aggressive collecting campaign.

By 1987 the IBEW had created the first of several endowments to support the Archives. The Jack F. Moore Labor Studies Endowment was established to provide a permanent foundation for OLU's activities. OLU's endowment program now consists of over five separate endowments supporting a wide range of needs, including supplies, equipment, travel expenses, and educational incentives, such as the biennial American Postal Workers Union Paper Prize for the best labor history paper written by an SMSU student.

But neither endowment funds nor the SMSU Economics Department could meet the staffing and space needs of the rapidly growing archives. In 1996 administration of OLU was transferred to the SMSU Library, which was establishing a new Special Collections and Archives Department. As a unit within the fledgling Special Collections Department, OLU could receive the support and attention it deserved. A survey of OLU's collections determined the need for an intense, focused processing project to correct several years of collecting, but little in the way of access.

Accordingly, in 1997, OLU applied for an NHPRC grant to process, arrange, and describe 18 select collections. The grant would serve as a model for OLU's arrangement and description program, provide access to some of OLU's more important collections through traditional and electronic finding aids, and provide leverage for a permanent full-time archivist position following the grant.

The grant uncovered the problems of a fast-growing archives with nonexistent appraisal standards and no professionally trained archivists. Project Archivist Trina Yeckley discovered

moldy documents, boxes infested with book lice, collections that lacked gift agreements or any accession records, materials that failed to meet archival appraisal standards, and collections that had been arbitrarily reorganized. In some cases, files had been refoldered in acid-free folders but not relabeled, thus



destroying information regarding original subject headings or record series. The earlier efforts of OLU's well-intentioned but untrained staff hindered processing and arrangement activities and delayed the project's schedule.

Once processed and described by Ms. Yeckley and Special Collections Associate Jenni Boone, the collections revealed important documentation unique to the region. The collections illustrate labor's struggle for social, economic, and political justice from an Ozarks perspective. Some collections, such as the records of the Springfield Labor Council, reflect the Ozarks labor communi-

ty's concerns over civil rights, social security, and health care. Other collections record union involvement and interest in fair trade and other global economic issues. The records of IBEW Local 1453 document the union's exhaustive but ultimately unsuccessful efforts to prevent Springfield's Zenith television plant from moving to Mexico. Political struggles are vividly portrayed in the files of the Missouri State AFL-CIO, which mobilized grassroots support to defeat a right-to-work initiative in 1978. The collections also indicate the diverse economy of the Ozarks and include the records of unions of bartenders, garment workers, plumbers, moving picture machine operators, and locomotive engineers. OLU's collections help dispel the perception of the Ozarker as the happy farmer. Ozark laborers also struggled for higher wages, improved safety standards, and social justice.

Besides preserving and improving access to OLU's collections, the grant attracted media attention, which garnered additional support from the labor community. OLU's outreach efforts were strengthened, inquiries regarding holdings increased, contributions to the OLU endowments grew, and the grant enabled SMSU to invest in a permanent, full-time archivist position. Administratively, the project served as a model for how OLU will perform its mission. Professional archivists will now promote and provide access to the collections, continuing the efforts of Neal Moore and Dr. J. David Lages to preserve the often overlooked story of workers in the Ozarks. ❖

DAVID RICHARDS IS HEAD OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND ARCHIVES AT SOUTHWEST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY. PROJECT ARCHIVIST TRINA YECKLEY AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS ASSOCIATE JENNI BOONE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS ARTICLE.

PROCESSING MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

in the BLUEGRASS STATE

BY LYNNE HOLLINGSWORTH

In 1995, the Kentucky Historical Society's Manuscript Archives contained approximately 756 cubic feet of records. Only 8 percent of the manuscript collection was both physically and intellectually processed. We ascertained that if processing and cataloging proceeded at the current pace, and if no other collections were accepted into the repository, it would take 126 years to process the backlog.

This was a totally unacceptable state of affairs for an archive repository that considers research use as one of its main functions. Moreover, in 1994 a special session of the Kentucky State Legislature increased state support for the Society by approving funding for a new History Center to include special collections research facilities, a research library, and permanent museum exhibits. Therefore, in order to fulfill statewide expectations when the doors of the new Center opened, the Society needed to have the most complete physical and intellectual control possible over the records in the Manuscript Archives.

The Society accordingly applied to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission for a grant to process these records. NHPRC Project 96-090 set in place policies and procedures that would bring backlogged collections to use and expedite processing of new acquisitions. We also hoped that these newly processed collections would facilitate research use, which in turn would promote increased awareness of and appreciation for the Commonwealth and its heritage.

Case Studies

The following are case studies of two of the larger collections processed under the NHPRC grant. The first study is of the Carpenter Family Collection. This is a fairly typical collection of 18th- and 19th-century family papers. Its main creator was Catherine Carpenter, although the collection contains the papers of other

family members. The collection is interesting because of the life and career of the woman it documents and the way it was processed.

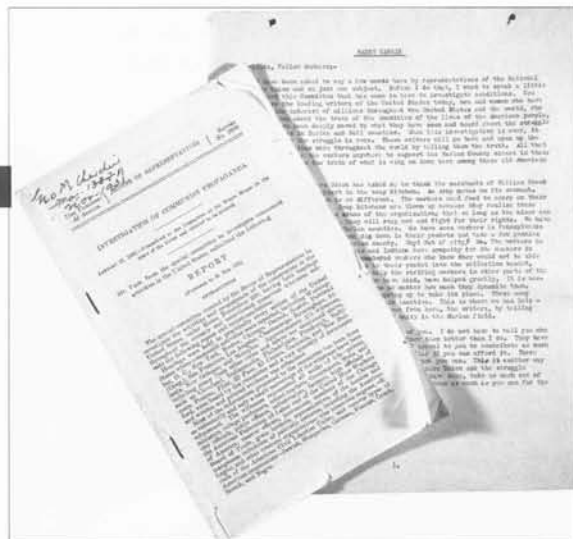
The second study deals with the Chescheir Family Collection, which is composed primarily of 20th-century materials. It is interesting and notable because of the circumstances of its original accession.

Case Study One: Carpenter Family Papers, 1704–1995 (bulk 1788–1928)

Catherine Spears was born on September 6, 1760, in Rockingham County, Virginia. Her father made sure that all of his children could read and write, even his daughters. Catherine was also taught to be a weaver, and eventually she became very skilled in this craft. Around 1776, Catherine married John Frye. Shortly thereafter, the urge to own their own land prompted Catherine and John to migrate into the western Virginia county of Kentucky. About 1779, they settled at Carpenters Station. However, John Frye was one of the casualties in the last battle of the Revolutionary War, fought at Blue Licks, Kentucky, on August 19, 1782. Catherine, then the mother of two, was widowed for the first time at the age of 22.

In 1784 Catherine married Adam Carpenter, one of the founders of Carpenters Station. Adam and Catherine made their home in the Frye Creek valley, and Catherine was kept busy bearing ten more children to Adam and managing their growing household. Life went well until 1806, when Adam died.

Catherine became a widow again at the age of 46, only this time she had nine minor children under the age of 18 to care for. Catherine inherited a widow's third of the estate, with the remainder divided among Adam's children. Besides



Part of the original Chescheir Family acquisition, the 1931 Report on the Observation of Dreiser Investigating Committee in Harlan and Bell Counties and all accompanying documents were, at some point over the years, removed from the bulk of the accession and accidentally processed separately. Photograph courtesy of the Kentucky Historical Society

the 667 acres of land and various farm animals and tools, Catherine also retained possession of a slave boy named Joseph. Joseph remained with Catherine for the rest of her life, eventually becoming the supervisor of her plantation.

Catherine did not marry a third time. She died in 1848, at the age of 87. Shortly after Adam's death, Catherine began buying land, an activity that enabled her to become a well-to-do woman.

As Catherine's property holdings increased, her need for labor also increased, and she began to purchase slaves. She did not, however, sell slaves. At the time of her death, Catherine owned 20 "negroes," including Joseph, the slave she inherited from her husband's estate.

Although Catherine was a slaveowner, the idea of slavery does not seem to have sat comfortably with her. Well-educated, she seems to have been aware of the social debates raging on the issue, and was definitely a supporter of the American Colonization Society. Her will consisted of 20 articles, the first 8 of which dealt not with her children, but with the disposition of her slaves. Articles One through Three, Seven, and Eight freed and provided for her elderly slave Joseph. Article Four made provisions for her other slaves to earn money to purchase their freedom and passage to

Liberia. Article Five clearly stated that Catherine wished to free all of her slaves, but emancipated only the children of freed slaves.

For all her good intentions, Catherine seemed uneasy with the idea of freedmen living in Kentucky. In Article Six of her will, she specified that if a slave refused to go to Liberia, that slave was to be sold and the proceeds divided among her heirs. Catherine apparently believed that freed slaves should be returned to Africa, and that "negroes" remaining in the United States should continue in slavery.

The papers of the Carpenter family of Casey County pertain primarily to the life and business affairs of Catherine Spears Frye Carpenter, and secondarily to those of her son George "Red-Face" Carpenter. Included in the collection are deeds, wills, estate lists, correspondence (personal and business), weaving patterns, surveys, indentures, receipts, court orders and other legal documents, bills of sale, distilling recipes, notices, vouchers, journals, medical accounts and cures, school memorabilia, maps, newspaper clippings, architectural plans and instructions, and photographs. The collection also contains a deed signed by Gabriel Slaughter, documents of a court case involving Simon Kenton and Catherine Carpenter, Catherine's complex weaving patterns, and records concerning the Stanford and Milledgeville Turnpike.

Stephen and Virginia Carpenter donated the original collection to the Kentucky Historical Society. Additions to the collection were donated by Mary McCormick. Although Virginia Carpenter did the initial organization and arrangement of the original donation, which was retained during processing, this order mainly reflects Mrs. Carpenter's organization of her book, *The Carpenters of Carpenter Station*. It does not reflect the order in which the papers were created or kept by the family, or even the ideal order for use.

However, this order was maintained for two reasons. First, it was the only known organizational structure available to the processor. Trying to recreate the original order of the documents would have been impossible, and a waste of time. Second, the collection was transcribed in an electronic environment by a researcher, which therefore became the best use

condition. Arrangement was based on this transcription, and an extensive finding aid, complete down to the item level, was created to facilitate use, thus making this is one of the most used manuscript collections in the Society.

Case Study Two: Chescheir Family Collection

George Maynard Chescheir was born on August 23, 1889, in Springfield, Kentucky. He married Elizabeth Owsley Booker in 1917, and they had four children. Chescheir enlisted in the 1st Kentucky Infantry, National Guard, in 1911, and became an agent of the New England Mutual Life Insurance Company in 1922.

While in the National Guard, Chescheir participated in the Mexican border fighting of 1916-1917 as 1st lieutenant and then captain in command of a machine-gun company. He served in France during World War I (1917-1918), commanding Battery F of the 138th Field Artillery, and was discharged in 1919. After the war, the National Guard was reorganized. Chescheir was made major of the 1st Battalion, then lieutenant colonel and executive officer of the 138th Field Artillery, National Guard.

During the Depression, Chescheir and the National Guard participated in flood relief efforts during the 1937 flood, as well as other public service missions. Chescheir also served, in a semi-official capacity, as an emissary between the state government and visiting dignitaries. In one instance, he served as liaison between Governor Flem Sampson and the Dreiser Committee, a group of prominent private citizens who hoped to discover the truth about violence in the eastern Kentucky coalfields. (See KHS Special Collection

number 97SC159).

At the start of World War II, Chescheir was promoted to full colonel and given command of the 138th Field Artillery. During the war, National Guard units were attached to regular army divisions. Colonel Chescheir was later placed in command of all prisoner-of-war camps in the southeastern United States, with headquarters at Fort Benning, Georgia.

After World War II, Colonel Chescheir retired from the military and returned to Louisville, Kentucky. He remained active in state and national military affairs, and served as a civilian aide to the Secretary of the Army. Colonel Chescheir died on November 13, 1971, in Louisville.

This collection contains the military, business, and family records of George M.

I Catharina Carpenter of Casey County and State of Kentucky being in usual health, and of sound and disposing mind do make, publish, and ordain this, my Last Will and testament, in manner and form as follows to wit

1st I Will and direct that the whole both real and personal that I have been blessed with in this life be disposed of in the following manner & way of first paying my funeral expenses and just debts.

Item 1st I Will and direct to my friend James A Fisher the sum of two hundred Dollars to him in trust, and which I have handed over to him as my trustee, for the purposes herein after mentioned and to be expended for the uses of this Will and the remainder to my ordinary legatee.

Item 2nd It is my Will and desire that my negro man slave Joseph shall be free, and I do do and bequeath to him his freedom to be by him enjoyed after my death with all the rights, privileges and immunities belonging to free persons of Colour in this Commonwealth.

Item 3rd It is my Will and desire that my said trustee James A Fisher expend so much of the above said two hundred Dollars to him as he shall think fit to purchase for me such and such slaves as he shall think fit to purchase for me such and such slaves as he shall think fit to purchase for me

This is the first page of Catherine Carpenter's will dated May 7, 1846. Catherine died April 10, 1848. The second, fourth, and fifth articles deal with the freeing of her slaves. Photograph courtesy of the Kentucky Historical Society.

Chescheir, Sr., and his immediate family. In the records is correspondence from 1916 to 1946 that includes accounts of daily military life. Also included is correspondence from 1914 to 1964 concerning the insurance business and Chescheir's early-20th-century endeavor to sell electric automobiles. Personal correspondence includes letters between various Booker family members;

Chescheir's letters to his parents, wife, and children; letters from former POWs; and a series of letters from Sister Mary Alfreda (a family member of one of the POWs).

Photographs make up a large part of the collection, and cover all aspects of Chescheir's military service. The business photographs pertain mostly to Chescheir's interest in electric automobiles. Family photographs include glass-plate negatives of the Booker family; Chescheir family albums; and photographs of Chescheir, his wife, sons, and daughter.

Another George Chescheir Collection is also held by the Kentucky Historical Society. See collection number 97SC159, *Report on the Observation of Dreiser Investigating Committee in Harlan and Bell Counties*.

The original donation included records, maps, photographs, and numerous artifacts. The collection came to the Society at a time when military records were greatly valued, but units within the Society itself were highly territorial. The original acquisition was thus dispersed to various units within the Society, although some of everything went to the Society's Military History Museum. To complicate the acquisition saga, additional donations were made to the collection over a period of time. Different personnel, in different areas of the Society, using different procedures, handled these accretions.

Once processing of the collection began, it was noticed that some parts of it had already been cataloged and given a separate accession number. This led to the discovery of the dispersal problem, which led the project to gather all the disparate pieces together, physically organize and arrange them, and describe the rest of the collection as one entity.

Conclusion

Generally speaking, historical society manuscript collections are not like those of other repositories, although those repositories most likely have similar problems. In historical societies, record schedules are rarely used for the organization or arrangement of the records. The term "artificial collection" is often used to describe records and even provenance. One-document and one-file collections are the norm and not the exception. Good provenance is often hard to come

by, original order is a concept found only in textbooks, and "arranged for use" is the preferred term. While descriptions must be usable by a diverse research constituency—anyone from a novice genealogist to lawyers working on land disputes—the society must maintain professional standards.

Physical processing is somewhat generic to all repositories. In this project, the description or "intellectual" processing presented the greatest challenge. At the outset, it was decided that the way to meet the "typical" Kentucky Historical Society researcher's needs was to concentrate, at the very least, on describing who did what to whom, where, and how many times. It was then left up to the researcher to discover the how and why. Any more description than that was a bonus. This policy enabled our archivists to overcome the idiosyncrasies mentioned above and raise the quantity of processed collections in the Manuscript Archives from 8 percent to 33 percent in 2 years.

In total, the project processed 660 new collections, or 243 cubic feet of records, versus the 629 collections, or 238 linear feet of records, estimated in the grant proposal. All of the processed collections were cataloged in accordance with MARC and APPM standards, all were sent to OCLC, and all are accessible on the Society's Endeavor/Voyager OPAC.

It would be gratifying to report that the project uncovered the missing Kentucky State Constitution of 1850. It did not. It would be thrilling if the project had found definitive proof as to who killed Kentucky Governor William Goebel, who was assassinated in 1900. Again, it did not. What mostly came to light in the course of the project were the papers and records of some very interesting, although not very prominent, people. On the other hand, the papers of the "famous" that did come to light during the processing, while not revolutionary in their information, do add insight for researchers. ❖

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A City Archives Keeping in Step with the Times

BY JOHN HUDSON

Old Mobile, founded in 1702 by New France's greatest hero, Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, was the first capital of La Louisiane, which embraced nearly half of the present United States. Some of Canada's and Louisiana's greatest and most renowned men were among the founders and builders of Old Mobile, including Iberville's brother, Bienville, Henri de Tonti, St-Denis, Charles Levasseur, Jacques Gravier, and numerous others. The renowned *Pelican* girls were here, and four members of the famous 1682 La Salle expedition are buried in the Old Mobile Cemetery. In March 2002, Mobilians will celebrate the 300th anniversary of its founding as Louisiana's first capital.

The city records document the development of one of the South's oldest ports and municipalities through the periods of the Old Southwest, the Antebellum South, Reconstruction, and Redemption. During these years Mobile utilized several forms of government. A mayor-alderman form of government was used after Alabama granted Mobile its charter in 1819. The aldermen were elected from wards, and the mayor was selected from their number. In 1826 the mayor became an elective post. In 1840 a seven-member Common Council was created whose members were elected at large and who served along with the Board of Aldermen.

With several variations, the Mayor-Aldermen-Common Council form was continued until 1879. In that year the city was reincorporated as Port Mobile. This change is generally attributed to the incurring of a large city debt. Port commissioners were appointed to manage this debt, and a police board was elected to handle day-to-day operations of the city under a severely constrained budget. In 1887 the Mayor-Alderman-



Mobile Municipal Archives Building, Mobile Alabama. Photograph courtesy of the Mobile Municipal Archives.

Common Council form was reinstated, and the City Charter of Mobile was re-established. In 1911 the city changed to a Commission form of government which was, in 1985, changed by a court order to a Mayor-Council form.

In 1973 the City Commission of Mobile appointed Jay Higginbotham, Head of the Local History Department of the Mobile Public Library, as project director to formulate a plan to deal with the vast amount of municipal records then being housed at various poorly secured locations around the city. These original records, some dating from the late 1790s, numbered in the millions. Following the plan's acceptance, the city began looking for permanent site for the proposed Mobile Municipal Archives, but innumerable obstacles, including hurricanes, floods, financial problems, and political controversies, prevented the plan from being put into operation.

In 1982 the project finally moved forward, and the Archives was opened to the public in September 1983. It was the first municipal archives in the state of Alabama, and one of a small number in the entire nation. In 1991 the Archives moved into a spacious new building downtown, and opened to a broader public following the dedication, attended by the Archivist of the United States and the Director of the Alabama State Archives. By late 1999, the Archives housed over 29 million documents, and had been used for research purposes by patrons from 43 states, 613 cities, and 23 foreign countries, as well as local public officials and city department heads.

The city records are unique possessions of the Mobile Municipal Archives. They include petitions from Mobile's citizens that reflected their concerns, vouchers that show the kinds of supplies the city needed and the labor it had done, and bonds that help to explain how the city financed its debts and improvement ventures. The collection also contains ordinances, tax records, resolutions, a number of standing committee reports that reflect the decision-making processes of city government, and passenger lists from ships and steamboats that arrived in Mobile during the 1840s and 1850s. Beginning with 1899, the collection contains stenographers' reports that record General Council discussions and votes. These materials constitute a valuable source of primary materials for historians and social scientists, especially those interested in urban studies and changing forms of government.

The chief goal of a project begun in 1985 was to treat 10,000 documents out of a total of 100,000 pre-1911 documents. Conservators examined papers that came before the governing officials of Mobile in the execution of their duties, such as ordinances, resolutions, reports, letters, and petitions. Items that would most benefit from cleaning, that were especially fragile, or that needed mending were selected for preservation measures. Dirty records were cleaned to remove abrasive dirt and improve the quality of microfilm images that were made upon the completion of the project.

After the documents were cleaned, deacidified, mended, or encapsulated, they were returned to their original locations in the collection. There, they were interleaved with a buffered paper having a pH of at least 8. Treating 10,000 documents also provided an opportunity to meet other long-term goals. In implementing this project a conservation laboratory was set up that will remain at the Mobile Municipal Archives after the project's completion.

In 1993 the Archives applied to the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) for funds from the Local Government Historical Records Grant Program. This was a grant program set up by ADAH with funds from an

NHPRC regrant. The program was an arrangement and description project of the collections of archives made necessary by the increasing volume of records that had not been accessioned. This was a two-phase grant program. The Archives received a second-phase grant. In the second phase, we concentrated on rehousing records and correcting other problems identified in the first phase.

In 1998 a project was undertaken to revise and update the *Guide to the Mobile Municipal Archives*, published in 1986. Since publication of the first edition of the *Guide*, the volume of city departmental records housed by the Archives had increased from 3,400 to over 8,000 cubic feet. A revised edition would allow historians, genealogists, sociologists, political scientists, students, writers, and other researchers better access to the collections in the Archives. By putting the *Guide* on the Internet, an even wider audience will be able to gain access to the Archives. As a result of the grant, the Archives has produced 500 copies of the revised *Guide*. We have sent 400 of them to major U.S. archives and libraries and foreign institutions such as the Public Archives of Canada, the Public Record Office in London, the Archives Nationales in Paris, and the Archivo General de Indias in Madrid.

Mobile is approaching its 300th anniversary. It is one of the oldest cities in the United States. The records in the Mobile Municipal Archives are the city government records from 1814 to 1995. The city is the only seaport in the State of Alabama, and has played a major role in its region during its 300 years. Because of its obvious and well-known value, the collection in its current state has been utilized by scholars and researchers from all over the United States (from 45 states, 619 cities) and from 26 foreign countries. Revising the *Guide* has made the Archives collections even more accessible. ❖

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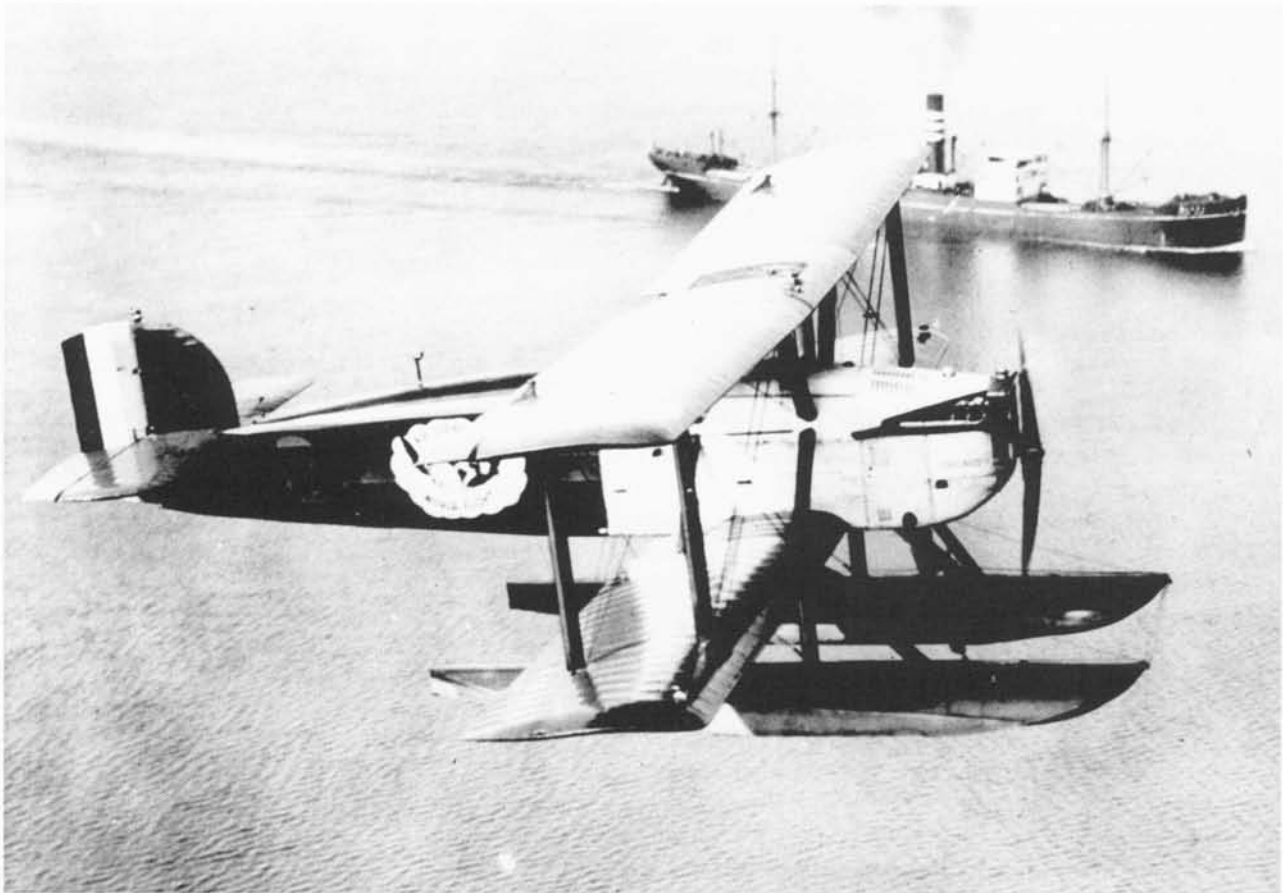
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Four large Douglas two-seat planes were built for the Army round-the-world flight of 1924. Two succeeded in circling the globe, covering 27,553 miles in 175 days. Photograph courtesy of the Museum of Flight. A related story on the preservation of early Douglas aircraft drawings begins on page 7.