## Procurement and Evaluation of Materials for a University Archives

This paper describes the methods by which materials in a university archives should be procured and evaluated. A brief description of the archival movement in the United States and the present status of university archives is given to provide perspective for subsequent discussion. Since the major problems in university archives are caused by archival and historical manuscript collections, they are discussed in some detail. Other materials are considered in a more summary fashion. The paper indicates what is possible in archives with the proper administrative and financial support.

THE PURPOSE of this paper is to describe the methods by which the various materials in university archives should be procured and evaluated. It is not a study of the existing university archives in the United States, but rather it is an attempt to indicate what could be done with the proper financial and administrative support. Since the present literature concerning university archives did not adequately cover the topic of this paper, it was necessary to consult articles and books dealing in general with archival and historical manuscript collections. The methods of procuring and evaluating as well as handling archival and historical manuscript collections present the major problems in university archives and will be discussed in some detail. Other types of materials in university archives will be considered in a more summary fashion. No effort will be made to discuss finding aids, such as calendars, guides, inventories, and registers, which facilitate the locating of

Mrs. Tweedale is a cataloger in the manuscript section of the Descriptive Cataloging Division, Library of Congress. specific items in archival and historical manuscript collections.

A brief description of the development of the archival movement in the United States and the present status of university archives will provide perspective for the subsequent discussion. The movement got under way with the formation of the American Historical Association in 1884, and then was primarily concerned with the establishment of state and federal government archival depositories. By 1900 the association had an annual conference of archivists which in 1936 became the Society of American Archivists. The American Historical Association in 1908 stressed the importance of an archival establishment "for researches in American history."1 The great symbol of the success of the archives movement, however, was the opening of the National Archives in 1935.

The predominant interest of the Society of American Archivists has been with governmental archives. The appearance of its official journal, *The American Archivist*, in 1938, however,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Theodore R. Schellenberg, *Modern Archives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 8.

"invigorated activity in all spheres of archival interest."<sup>2</sup> At the end of February 1949, the Committee on College and University Archives was established to meet the need for "working relationships among college archivists."<sup>3</sup> In the summer of 1949 the committee conducted a survey "to determine the extent of archival awareness in institutions of higher learning in the United States and Canada."<sup>4</sup> Questionnaires were sent to 150 institutions, of which 115 replied and 103 showed "definite awareness of the need for keeping official records." The answers are summarized as follows:

56 had archives and archival programs;

- 15 preserved most of the official records, but had no unified program;
- 11 kept some records (usually trustee and faculty minutes and publications);
- 7 were then studying the problem with a view to establishing archives;
- 14 had scattered records and were interested in archives;
- 35 had not answered at the writing of this report.<sup>5</sup>

In 1961 the committee decided to follow up the 1949 survey "to determine trends in archival programs operating in 1962–13 years later." This time 350 institutions were sent questionnaires, and of that number 268 replied. The following facts were revealed:

- 113 of the institutions had archival programs with full- or part-time archivists:
- 70 of the institutions designated the library as the depository for archi-

<sup>2</sup> John Melville Jennings, "Archival Activity in American Universities and Colleges," American Archivist, XII (April 1949), 158.

<sup>2</sup> Society of American Archivists, Committee on College and University Archives, "The Report," *American Archivist*, XIII (January 1950), 62.

<sup>4</sup>Dwight H. Wilson, "Archives in Colleges and Universities: Some Comments on Data Collected by the Society's Committee on College and University Archives," American Archivist, XIII (October 1950), 343.

<sup>5</sup>Society of American Archivists, Committee on College and University Archives, op. cit., p. 63. val materials, although they had no systematic program to collect records of enduring value;

- 54 of the institutions left it to the individual offices to preserve their own records;
- 31 had no programs whatsoever to preserve their institutional records.<sup>6</sup>

According to Philip Mason, both the 1949 and the 1962 surveys reveal amazing misconceptions regarding the nature of archival collections. The inherent differences between archival collections and historical manuscripts have not been recognized, and a definite confusion has developed in the administration of the two types of materials. Also, in many institutions, the emphasis placed on the acquisitions of historical manuscripts has impeded the development of sound archival programs.<sup>7</sup>

The need for a distinction between archival and historical manuscript collections can best be met by defining the term "archives." The term itself has led to some confusion in the professional literature because it indicates not only a body of records, but the place where they are preserved. To alleviate this problem, T. R. Schellenberg in his book, Modern Archives, uses the term "archival institution" to designate the place and "archives" to refer to the records themselves.8 To clarify the situation further, Arthur Leavitt in his translation of the Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives by S. Muller, J. A. Feith, and Robert Fruin has used the terms "archival collection" and "archival depository." Since Leavitt's terms, derived from the Dutch archivists, lead to less ambiguity, they will be used in this paper.

Since the definition of an "archival depository" is somewhat obvious, the

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 163. <sup>8</sup> Schellenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Philip P. Mason, "College and University Archives: 1962," American Archivist, XXVI (April 1963), 162-63.

next step is to define an "archival collection." The essential feature of an archival collection, according to Henry J. Browne, is that it comprise "official records of a noncurrent nature, that is, documents produced in carrying on the work of a given office or agency, which are no longer required for the conduct of the day-to-day work of that office or agency but still are of enduring value."9 This includes printed materials. The key words are "noncurrent" and "official," since records "received or produced by members of an administrative body or by officials in another capacity," do not belong to an "archival collection."10 An "archival collection" then is an organic whole which reflects growth and changes in the producing agencies or offices. Records no longer in the custody of the persons or institutions creating them are considered historical manuscripts.<sup>11</sup>

A university archives, as far as this paper is concerned, is an archival depository, whether it is a division of the library, a manuscript depository, the president's office, or an independent agency within the structure of a university.<sup>12</sup> As is the case in other depositories, university archives generally contain both archival collections and nonarchival materials.

The archival collections in a university archives include the official records of the various offices, departments, and schools; the official publications of the university such as circulars of information, catalogs of course offerings, and bulletins; theses and dissertations; monographs and serials published by a university press; and official publications of

<sup>9</sup> Henry J. Browne, "An Appeal for Archives in Institutions of Higher Learning," American Archivist, XVI (July 1953), 215.

<sup>10</sup> S. Muller, J. A. Feith, and R. Fruin, Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives, translated by Arthur H. Leavitt (New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1940), p. 15.

Wilson Co., 1940), p. 15. <sup>11</sup> Robert W. Lovett, "Care and Handling of Non-Governmental Archives," *Library Trends*, V (January 1957), 380.

<sup>12</sup> See Jennings, op. cit., for a discussion of the relative merits of the various locations of university archives. the student body and alumni associations. The university press publications and the official student and alumni publications may be considered borderline cases; to simplify the present discussion they have been designated as archival items since they can be obtained by procedures similar to those used for official records and publications of a university. That is, they are transferred to the archival depository by arrangements made with the issuing body rather than through a formal gift procedure or purchase.

Nonarchival materials most commonly found in university archives are historical manuscripts; books and pamphlets about the university and general reference books; clippings and ephemera about the university and persons connected with it; photographs of buildings, personnel, and events; faculty publications; and ephemeral student publications. Occasionally a university archives will also contain tape recordings of major addresses delivered at the university and of other events. Nonarchival materials are generally acquired by either a formal gift or purchase. It is possible that some items are obtained by exchanges; however, it is not likely to be the normal procedure.

Since the procurement procedures for archival collections and nonarchival materials are different, it will facilitate matters to discuss each category of materials separately. The largest and most important type of materials in an archival collection and, in fact, in the university archives are the official records of the university. Schellenberg defines records as

All books, papers, maps, photographs or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any public or private institution in pursuance of its legal obligation or in connection with the transactions of its proper business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by the institution or its legitimate successor as evidence of its functions, policies, decisions, operations, or other activities or because of the informational value of the data therein.13

Thus official university records would include the correspondence, policy statements, and printed matter produced as a result of daily activities in the President's or Chancellor's office, the registrar's office, the office of public relations, and the individual academic departments and professional schools.

These official university records are transferred to university archives as a result of agreements between the university archivist and the various administrative officers of a university when an effective archival program is set up on a university campus. These agreements can be formalized and most effectively carried out by a comprehensive records management program for the whole university.

A records management program involves more than merely transferring official, noncurrent records to an archival depository. It involves taking a records inventory of all offices and divisions of the university, appraising the various records, establishing retention periods, and developing and applying disposition schedules.<sup>14</sup> A records disposition schedule is merely a written statement of procedures to be used for all records produced or maintained by a particular office. It aids the office in determining the disposal of records no longer needed, the storage of noncurrent records which must be retained for a limited time for legal or administrative purposes, and the transfer of noncurrent records of lasting value to the university archives.<sup>15</sup>

The final judgment as to which records will be retained permanently must be made by the university archivist in consultation with the administrators in

charge of the various university offices. There are, however, some basic criteria upheld by the archival profession. The first consideration is the "evidential values" of records. To determine these values, it is necessary for the archivist to be very well acquainted with his university and its subdivisions. He selects those records for permanent retention which contain evidence of how the university is organized and how it functions. The "evidential values" of these records are judged by their relationship to other records produced by the university, and these records are evaluated in groups rather than individually. Schellenberg points out that "by a judicious selection of various groups and series an archivist can capture in a relatively small body of records all significant facts on how the agency was created, how it developed, how it is organized, what functions it performs, and what are the consequences of its activities."16

The records produced in some offices are more important than others. In general, the "evidential values" of records can be assessed according to their place in the hierarchy of the university and their significance for a particular function of administrative importance.17 Certainly those records which discuss policy matters are more important than those of a routine or housekeeping nature. The latter are not usually retained unless a limited quantity would provide evidence about an important procedure. In such a case the technique of statistical sampling may be applied.18

The second consideration is the "information values" of records. The only thing that matters here is the amount of factual data records contain regarding persons, places, events, and subjects. Such records may, therefore, be evaluated piecemeal. In appraising "informa-

<sup>13</sup> Schellenberg, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> California, University, Records Management Com-mittee, Records Management Handbook: Records Disposition (June 1963), p. 5. <sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Schellenberg, op. cit., p. 140.
<sup>17</sup> Paul Lewinson, "Toward Accessioning Standards -Research Records," American Archivist, XXIII (July 1960), 299.

<sup>18</sup> Schellenberg, op. cit., p. 158.

tion values," it is necessary to have a knowledge of research sources, needs, and methods as distinct from the knowledge of administrative history required to determine "evidential values."<sup>19</sup>

Once records have been selected for permanent deposit in a university archives, Mabel E. Deutrich suggests that an accession folder should be maintained by the university archives. The folder should contain all correspondence preceding the transfer of records for a university office, correspondence regarding the actual transfer and a form sheet summarizing the accessions information. Subsequent correspondence relating specifically to the records should be added to the accessions folder. Also the accession should be recorded in a "single line entry in a register of record holdings or a master accession record."20

It is important that the official university records be properly arranged. If sound archival principles are followed, the records will be retained office-byoffice and activity-by-activity. According to the principle of respect des fonds. there should be no fusion of separate files or creation of new ones. Furthermore, the principle of provenance dictates that "records should be kept in separate units that correspond to their sources in organic bodies."21 As far as the internal arrangement of each group of records from a particular office is concerned, the principle of the "sanctity of original order" should be observed. It is maintained that the order of the records themselves provides evidence as to the organization and functioning of an office.

The official records of a university are usually divided into record groups.

<sup>20</sup> "Workshop on the Administration of Archives and Manuscript Collections," in American Theological Library Association, 15th Annual Conference, June 13-15, 1961, Washington, D.C., Summary of Proceedings, p. 87.

<sup>21</sup> Theodore R. Schellenberg, "Archival Principles of Arrangement," American Archivist, XXIV (January 1961), 14. Each record group contains the records of a particular office, department, school, or governing body of the university. Each record group may be divided into series representing various activities of the office or new administrative officers. These records should be stored in inexpensive document boxes rather than in expensive metal filing cabinets.

A second type of archival materials to be included in the archival collection of a university archives are theses and dissertations produced to fulfill requirements for advanced degrees. Once they are approved by the academic department involved and the graduate division, an archival copy is usually deposited by the degree candidate. The only measure the university archives takes in this matter is to enforce standards of format and quality of paper for ease in storage and preservation.

Theses and dissertations may be considered a record group; however, they are not acquired through the regular records management procedures. Furthermore, they are not usually arranged by academic departments. They are frequently arranged alphabetically by author; chronologically by the year the degree was awarded, then alphabetically by author within each year; or by the classification number, if a classification system is used. These materials may be stored in document boxes or bound.

Other archival materials include official university publications, university press publications, official student publications, and official alumni publications. These items are usually obtained by an agreement with the issuing body. These materials may or may not come under records management programs. In any case, it is necessary to have current as well as noncurrent copies in the university archives to answer reference questions and for research purposes. The official university publications and official student and alumni publications can simply be arranged by issuing office.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 148.

If integrated with a reference collection, they may be fully cataloged and classified for arrangement. The university press publications may be retained as a unit and arranged alphabetically by author, with or without the aid of a Cutter number.

Whereas the university archives is obligated, especially if there is a records management program, to take all archival material, an evaluation policy covering materials already received, rather than a selection policy, is necessary. In the case of nonarchival material a selection policy determining what the university archives will acquire is necessary, especially in regard to historical manuscripts. The largest bulk of nonarchival materials frequently comprises historical manuscript collections, not necessarily related to the university. The 1962 survey of college and university archives by the Society of American Archivists indicated that over half of the institutions collected "the papers of political figures, prominent citizens, business leaders and others."22 In many institutions the archivist has responsibility for both the archival collections and the historical manuscript collections.

The selection of historical manuscripts for the university archives should, strictly speaking, be limited to personal papers of officers, faculty, students, and other personnel of the university. Usually papers produced after such a person is no longer affiliated with the university are not relevant to university history.23

The chief means of acquiring such historical manuscripts is by gifts. This involves the launching of a public relations operation by the university archivist. He must make his program known to faculty, staff members, and students of the university. Newspaper notices, publicity in university publications, and circulars attract attention to the archivist's endeavor. Also an occasional exhibit of manuscripts or archival material stimulates interest and may even bring in back issues of student publications to fill out incomplete files as well as manuscript materials. Talks by the university archivist before local historical societies, professional groups, and student societies also aid in creating awareness. Groups, such as a friends of the university library organization, may also be used as a means of contacting possible donors. Attention can also be focussed on the university archives by the university archivist publishing historical essays based on unrestricted materials. Also if students are encouraged to use the university archives to do term papers and theses, the collection will come to the attention of faculty members as well as benefit the students.

The university archivist can do some field work through contacts in the community. He should be aware of the death of prominent university officials and alumni and within a reasonable time contact their heirs. The danger here is that the heirs may have already destroved the desired papers. A good time to make a plea for an individual's papers is when he is retiring and moving into smaller quarters. The Harvard university archives periodically writes to all officers holding permanent positions asking them to put a provision in their wills making the university their literary executor and leaving all their manuscripts to the university archives. Harvard also sends circular letters to "old grads" inabout student diaries and quiring notes.24

Since the real selection of materials to be retained begins after a collection of historical manuscripts reaches the archival depository, the letter of trans-

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Mason, op. cit., p. 163.
<sup>23</sup> Clifford K. Shipton, "The Harvard University Archives: Goal and Function," Harvard Library Bul-letin, I (Winter 1947), 106.

<sup>24</sup> Clifford K. Shipton, "College Archives and Academic Research," American Archivist, XXVII (January 1964), 397-98.

mittal or deed of gift should include "clauses to the effect that material judged inappropriate for permanent preservation will be destroyed, alienated or returned."25 The deed of gift should also include the giving of literary property rights and blanket authority to determine public use and photocopying of the materials to the university. When there is reasonable indication that papers will ultimately be given to the university archives, provisions may be made to receive them on loan or deposit. R. W. G. Vail points out that "personal gain is a great stimulus to generosity," and that a hesitant prospective donor may be primed by reminding him that the commercial value of his papers or collection can be deducted from his income tax.26

It is only rarely that a university archivist would find historical manuscripts in an auction or dealer's catalog which would fill a gap in his collection. An archivist, if he had the funds to do so, would only select for purchase collections or individual manuscripts which would supplement existing historical collections in his university archives. Such manuscripts as letters from the founder of the university describing the original building plans would be in this category.

It is important for the university archives to keep adequate provenance records which indicate the donor and the gift, or the names of individuals and dealers from whom manuscript material has been purchased. A separate manuscript acquisition ledger in which collections are entered as acquired is useful.27 Also an accession folder should be maintained for each gift or purchase.

Just as in the case of official university records, it is necessary for a university archives to set up standards of evaluation for materials acquired. Historical manuscripts are not like books. For the most part, they do not come prearranged in nice, neat packages. It is frequently necessary to remove unrelated material or museum items from a collection. The methods of determining what is of permanent value differ somewhat from those used for strictly archival materials since historical manuscript collections are less susceptible to evaluation by class or record type.

The evaluating process begins when the collection is examined to decide whether it will be rejected or accepted and continues throughout all stages of processing.<sup>28</sup> While unpacking the collection, materials can be set aside if their value is in doubt or if they are archival in nature and should be integrated into a record group of official university records. If the university records and personal papers of a university official are too intertwined, it is not advisable to disturb the collection. Although an historical manuscript must be evaluated both as part of a collection and as an individual piece, there are several types of materials which Lucile Kane, curator of manuscripts of the Minnesota Historical Society, feels can be rejected. They are fragmentary account books; diaries unimportant due to author or content; multiple copies of letters, speeches, programs, etc.; records that contain duplicate information; subsidiary documents when essential data is in summary records; housekeeping records; and envelopes or covers which are not important parts of letters and not important for stamps or postal markings.29

As in the case of official records, large and unwieldy collections may be re-

<sup>25</sup> David C. Mearns, "Historical Manuscripts, Including Personal Papers," Library Trends, V (Janu-

cluding Personal Papers, Library Trends, ary 1957), 319.
<sup>20</sup> R. W. G. Vail, "Introduction," Library Trends, V (January 1957), 310.
<sup>27</sup> Julia H. Macleod, "Care and Treatment of Manuscripts," in American Theological Library Asso-ciation, 17th Annual Conference, June 17-21, 1963, Mill Valley, Calif., Summary of Proceedings, p. 156.

<sup>28</sup> Lucile M. Kane, "A Guide to the Care and Administration of Manuscripts." Bulletin of the American Association for State and Local History, II (September 1960), 333-88. 29 Ibid., p. 360.

duced by sampling techniques. It is important, however, to record the essential data on the scope and technique of sampling. Although Miss Kane notes that sampling is a subjective and, so far, unproven method,<sup>30</sup> space limitations in most depositories necessitate devising some means of reducing bulky collections.

Historical manuscripts are usually placed in document boxes after they are arranged. Michael Jasenas points out that there are various methods of arranging manuscripts within a collection. They can be arranged by form-correspondence, diaries, and manuscripts of an author's works; by date; by place; by subject; by size; or by any combination of these.<sup>31</sup> The current tendency, however, is to arrange items by "catalogable units." Except for the necessity of arranging the material, this makes the catalog of manuscripts, a finding list or aid. Paul Dunkin defines the "catalogable unit" in the following manner:

The "catalogable unit" may be a single manuscript or it may be a collection (sometimes rather large) of manuscripts. The collection consists of mutually related items, none of them perhaps individually of much importance but together forming a significant unit. Thus it may be letters written to or by one man and/or his immediate family or it may be letters or documents relating to some person or event or subject. The only requirement is that the group of items have meaning as a group rather than as individuals.32

Under this procedure, one collection may be broken into several "catalogable units," or manuscripts acquired at different times from different sources may be brought together. Other finding aids and descriptive devices used for historical manuscript collections are guides, calendars, and registers.

30 Ibid., p. 361.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Jasenas, "Cataloging Small Manuscript Collections," Library Resources and Technical Services, VII (Summer 1963), 370.
<sup>32</sup> Paul S. Dunkin, "Arrangement and Cataloging of Manuscripts," Library Trends, V (January 1957),

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Books and pamphlets about the university and reference books in the university archives are acquired for the most part by standard library procedures for acquiring books. They are usually fully cataloged and classified and arranged by their call numbers. Faculty publications and writings of the alumni may or may not be a part of a university archives. They can usually be acquired through the courtesy of their authors or the usual book trade channels.

Clippings, ephemera, and photographs relating to the university, and to faculty or student activities are frequently acquired haphazardly in university archives. These items are often kept in vertical files and arranged chronologically or by subject. They are usually gifts to the archival depository or can be obtained without charge if the archivist is at the right place at the right time. Some university archives might decide to collect such materials actively. To insure that there is no duplication of effort, it would be well to check with the office of public relations, particularly on a large campus. If that office collects such materials as part of its publicity functions, these materials will become part of the university archives when the noncurrent records of that office are deposited in the archives.

In conclusion it should be stated that the primary purpose of a university archives is to preserve and service the official records of the university, and as such it is "primarily a tool of the administration and has been aptly described as the official memory of an institution."33 Some university archives have found it necessary to furnish sound records management programs in order to justify their existence.34 University archives also serve a research function for scholars and students of the university. The organization of some university ar-

34 Shipton, "College Archives . . . ," 395-96.

<sup>(</sup>Continued on page 531)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Browne, op. cit., p. 216.

Ellsworth writes about school libraries, the reader may well take issue with his thesis that school libraries were moribund until the 1960's. The American Association of School Librarians' Standards for School Library Programs was based on levels found through research in good school libraries, yet Ellsworth seems to imply that until 1960 good school libraries were virtually nonexistent.

Ellsworth rightly criticizes the quality of the literature of school librarianship, but at the same time ignores important and influential documents. One publication of great import, and one that would have strengthened his case but which he has not mentioned, is Responsibilities of State Departments of Education for School Library Services; a Policy Statement issued by the Council of Chief State Officers in 1961. The council's policy statement, defining the school library as a part of instruction, is one of the most important publications in creating a favorable attitude toward improving school library services. Mr. Ellsworth has overlooked other important contributions to the description of goals for school library programs. Nowhere does he indicate that he is familiar with the writings of Mary Helen Mahar, nor for example, of the original and significant research of Mary V. Gaver.

Ellsworth begins with an enumeration of the factors which have hastened the recent development of school libraries, following with an analysis of "negative forces" which hindered them. Subsequent chapters deal with the proper role and characteristics of school libraries. The book closes with a short look into the future.

Two sections dealing with censorship give disproportionate weight to this problem. The chapter, "The School Library and Community Relations," except for its opening and closing paragraphs, relates exclusively to censorship. More than half of the final chapter is also concerned with censorship and is out of keeping with the tone and method of the rest of the book. If included at all, the final ten pages should have been an appendix.

As a book for school administrators, *The School Library* will be valuable in presenting a modern and lively concept of library service for secondary schools. Since it is a part of a subscription series, "The Library of Education," in which individual volumes are not sold separately, it may not, however, reach many of the administrators who most need its message. For school administrators seeking a rationale for elementary school library programs, it will not do at all. A book which encompasses school library services at elementary, junior, and senior high school levels remains to be written.—Richard L. Darling, Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland.

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and incomplete printing, publishing, and distribution programs are serious. The problems connected with these programs, while not susceptible to easy or cheap solutions, can be overcome provided vigorous, high-level attention is focussed upon them. In any case, their resolution should not be beyond the capacity of a government which can count the number of chickens in Sagadahoc County and send rockets to the moon.

## PROFESSIONAL OR

CLERICAL . . .

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ly complained that their job duties were not adequately represented among the professional items on the questionnaire. In this case it is not reasonable to expect the proportion of professional duties indicated to be a true representation.

In conclusion, the findings of the study seem to verify the results obtained by Griffith and Hart that librarians probably perform more nonprofessional duties than they should.

## . . UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES (Continued from page 524)

chives has been stimulated by the writing of a history of the university.<sup>35</sup> The archival collection in the university archives is as helpful to the historian as the supplementary nonarchival materials attracted to it.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Fulmer Mood and Vernon Carstensen, "University Records and Their Relation to General University Administration," *CRL*, XI (October 1950), 339-40.