

OBERLIN COLLEGE AND THE MOVEMENT TO ESTABLISH AN ARCHIVES, 1920-1966

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ABSTRACT: Acquiring an appreciation for an archival program's history is one of several steps to be taken by an archivist when involved in planning or self-study exercises. This is an especially important step for a new appointee who succeeds an archivist who held the position for a long period of time. This article describes the conflict and issues surrounding the establishment of an archives at Oberlin College. As a case study, Oberlin is considered somewhat atypical. While the study will add to our understanding of the development of archives in the United States, it was written in order to educate institutional resource allocators on past issues and to advance specific archival program objectives.

The origins of academic archives are as varied as the institutions they serve. The historical consciousness of an institution is sometimes heightened by the need to plan for a commemoration or an anniversary celebration. An intentional or unintentional consequence may be the creation of an archival program. In other cases college and university archives or archival programs emerge because a history professor or an administrative officer holds a strong interest in preserving the "memory" of the institution. Archival programs started on a part-time basis or by a distinguished faculty member in retirement ultimately are sustained on a full-time basis because these pioneers showed the way and confirmed the importance of the archives to both administrators and faculty. These and other paths can lead to the founding of an archives.

The establishment of the archives at Oberlin College resulted neither from a celebration nor the insistence of a single strong voice. Nor was it a case of following Harvard's example where the librarian is also the archivist and the archives is a branch function of the college library.¹ Oberlin College, with its proud and distinguished history in liberal arts higher education, made its decision to employ a trained archivist in a different way. The decision-making process to establish an archives spanned nearly half a century and reflects the interactions of both complicated political forces and varying perceptions of the value and purpose of an archives.

Early Collecting—From the “Golden Age” to World War II

Oberlin College was scarcely a year old when one of its founders, Philo P. Stewart, was assigned responsibility for keeping a record of actions and collecting materials documenting the history of the academic community.² In the decades that followed, institutional records and manuscripts accumulated. Concern for the safe-keeping of the noncurrent college materials led to construction of a vault in the college chapel building in 1876.³ Most institutional records, such as board and faculty minutes, official publications, and the files relating to students, faculty, and staff were maintained by the powerful secretary of the college. Two men held this office from 1899 to 1962: George M. Jones (1899 to 1938) and Donald Love (1939 to 1962). They were instrumental in managing administrative offices' files and they sustained the college's commitment to keeping track of its alumni by publishing regular alumni catalogs.⁴

The records or papers problem, however, extended beyond the office of the secretary. With the erection of Spear Library in 1885—the college's first building designed specifically to be a library—interest in Oberliniana grew, as did individual efforts to fill the library with such historical materials. For example, in 1885 President James Harris Fairchild appealed for items of historical interest and William Goodell Frost wrote, “Here will be deposited the Oberlin Covenant, President Finney's manuscripts, and the relics of the ‘big tent’ and Tappan Hall. Here we shall,” he added, “build up the great collection on Slavery.”⁵ At Oberlin, as elsewhere across the nation, little distinction was made between college records and manuscript collecting.

During Azariah Smith Root's service as librarian between 1887 and 1927, Oberliniana source materials were actively collected. In addition to the papers of presidents Finney, Fairchild, and Henry Churchill King and of statesmen James Monroe, class of 1846, and Jacob Dolson Cox, class of 1851, the library held by 1930 the papers of many former faculty members and prominent alumni. There were photographs, student lecture notes, and other materials relating to the development of Oberlin College and the community as well.⁶ These manuscripts and archives were stored in locked compartments in the “Oberlin Room” of the Carnegie Library, the latter built in 1908 to replace Spear Library.⁷ The process of gathering archival materials, however, could be quite haphazard. Mary Cowles, now emerita catalog librarian, recalls that during the four decades before the establishment of a college archives, a wire basket existed in the cataloging department in which individuals were invited to deposit Oberlin related memorabilia and miscellaneous archival materials.⁸

As scholars and alumni increasingly demanded access to these historical materials, librarians Julian Sabin Fowler, 1928-1955, and Eileen Thornton, 1956-1971, improved services for special collections, including better storage and security. Both librarians advocated putting the use and interpretation of the archives in the hands of a knowledgeable, trained person. A “sub-Committee on the use of the Library,” reported in 1944 that, “[We] need someone in charge of our growing manuscript collection—preferably a trained archivist.”⁹ Four years later, in 1948, an effort to employ an archivist fell short when the college's Committee of Appointments failed to recommend

funding for the position.¹⁰ During the next fifteen years other needs, including the completion of a rare books room in Carnegie Library,¹¹ were placed ahead of appointing a trained archivist.¹²

Sources of Information: How Are They Replaced?

By early 1960 some of the “drift” ended as the librarian organized a number of small groups to discuss organizing an archival program. Thornton was concerned about the care of 300,000 pamphlets and important bodies of archival materials as well as the fact that the other agencies on campus had left the entire burden to fall on the library. Between 1960 and 1962 a number of factors contributed to the renewed interest in the management of the college’s archival holdings. First, the librarian exerted professional leadership and continued to hammer away at the administration on the matter of employing an archivist. Second, the 1959 death of Robert S. Fletcher, author of the respected two-volume *History of Oberlin College: From Its Foundation Through the Civil War* (1943),¹³ deprived Oberlin of a “major source of wisdom” on the archives deposited in the library.¹⁴ The pending retirement of Donald M. Love, unofficial archivist, further illustrated this loss of wisdom.¹⁵ Third, for the first time, records administration and scholarship were linked; proponents of an archives argued that an archivist was needed to serve both the needs of historical researchers and the records-keeping needs of the college administration. On this point Thornton wrote, “Many [colleges] have plans which include the handling of college financial, student, and departmental records as well as what we have always considered archival—manuscript materials and the like.”¹⁶

Finally, the librarian successfully cultivated several alliances or partnerships in her campaign. She reached out to college secretary Love, offering him the opportunity to take credit for the development of the archives.¹⁷ Thornton even asked Love whether he would be interested in serving as the archivist on a part-time or free lance basis, since he would be pressed into the business anyway, being the “local expert.”¹⁸ She also organized—despite some foot-dragging by the administration—an *ad hoc* committee to define the problems and needs of a college archives. Of this group only history professor Thomas LeDuc, author of “Arcana Sirvash: The Function and Need of a College Archives” appearing in *The American Archivist* (1943), held any preconceived appreciation for the values of archives and their role in a college setting.¹⁹

Meeting in April 1960, the *ad hoc* group concluded that advancing a solution to the so-called archives problem fell within the librarian’s purview and that the librarian should propose, as a first step, the employment of a trained archivist who possessed a good knowledge of Oberlin.²⁰ Thornton and her committee noted that the “hit-or-miss” growth of the archives and the “ill-defined” manner of serving these valuable collections was owing to three factors. There was no single person in the college charged with responsibility for the archives, there was no space for new historical materials, and, finally, there was no system for the acquisition or cataloging of archives because no one had developed procedures or policies.²¹

Placement of an Archives Program

The physical and organizational location of the proposed archives was a delicate matter. Initially, the librarian proposed that the archives program be attached to the library, given the fact that large quantities of archival materials had already been incorporated in the library collection and it further made some sense to retain the archives as part of the total holdings and of the library operation. Claiming no interest in building an empire or seeing the president's office burdened with this responsibility, Thornton rationalized the case made by saying that someone had to take the initiative and the college library seemed to be the "most satisfactory initiator at this time."²² Recommended was the appointment of an archivist who was to operate as a unit head, the assistance of a full-time clerk/typist, and the establishment of an advisory committee.

However, unlike her predecessors, Julian Fowler and Azariah Smith Root, Eileen Thornton was not personally interested in the daily administration of special collections materials. In her 1959-60 annual report she said that the need for an archives was an "all-college matter rather than a library matter" and urged the participation of the president or provost in the planning of a program.²³ Thornton wanted the library to stop being a dumping ground for historical materials. This was more important than to whom the archivist reported. For all this, however, the college administration did not act on recommendations contained in Thornton's 1960 archives program proposal, which included the appointment of an advisory board.

Hoping that an outside expert might command more attention, in February 1962 the *ad hoc* committee sought funds to recruit Philip P. Mason as an archival consultant.²⁴ Thurston E. Manning, who had been appointed provost in 1960, was responsible for gaining President Robert K. Carr's approval. The provost seems to have tied this request to the administration's effort "to work out [the problem] of alumni records." Taking up the subject of archives in his first annual report, Manning reported, "Here is one place where I believe that expansion of the administrative staff could be well justified not only from a point of view of additional operating efficiency but also from the point of view of the obligation of the College to provide a suitable record of its own activities."²⁵ Although the president considered Mason's consultant fees to be "pretty stiff," he gave his approval "as long as the total cost of this project remains reasonable."²⁶ In the end, personal funds of the college's secretary and librarian may have supplemented the college's to make possible the consultant's visit.

Impressed with the important nucleus of extant archival materials dating from the founding of Oberlin College, in his report Mason concluded that this rich heritage deserved to be preserved in a professional manner. He noted that hundreds of other colleges and universities since World War II had established such programs.²⁷ He also argued for an archival program that gave the archivist a role in current records administration. He therefore suggested that the "program be broad in scope, encompassing the management of current records and practices, as well as the preservation and servicing of those records with research value."²⁸ Finally, he recommended that the archives be administratively a division of the office of president because "it is fundamentally and primarily a tool of the administration."²⁹ This was an important point. It helped to clarify whether an archivist or an Oberliniana librarian would be appointed.

Report's Immediate Impact

Meeting at President Carr's request, the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Oberlin College Archives on 24 April 1962, endorsed Mason's report in principle and recommended that the president take steps "to establish a permanent archival program at Oberlin College, to begin in [academic year] 1962-63." The committee suggested further that a trained archivist be appointed and that space in Burton Hall be designated as the quarters. Leaving no stone unturned, it attached a tentative budget for 1962-63 to the memorandum.³⁰ The prospect of success was such that the committee, without administrative approval, began to screen candidates.³¹

Clearly Mason's consultant report, calling for an integrated records program, was well received. It was so widely circulated among college administrators that additional copies of the report had to be requested. "I think you would be cheered to know," Thornton wrote Mason, "that your report was received with great enthusiasm here."³² But not all was well. The college administration as well as the board of trustees responded rather casually and indifferently.³³

On 8 June 1962, the board of trustees deferred action on the *ad hoc* committee's recommendation for an archives program. Instead the board, showing a lack of archival understanding and a greater interest in rewarding secretary Love, requested that further discussions be held by a committee consisting of Donald Love, J. Robert Williams, and Lewis R. Tower. The latter was the all-powerful business manager of the college. Commenting on this outcome, Thornton hoped that next time the archives issue would be "more forcefully presented than on the first go-around."³⁴

Further Delays, 1962-66

Four more years elapsed before the first archivist was appointed. Without documentation one can only speculate on the reasons for this delay. First of all, the college was going through a period of rapid change in organization and personnel. Robert K. Carr, appointed president to succeed William E. Stevenson on 1 January 1960, initiated a comprehensive review of structure and functions for administrative reorganization at Oberlin College.³⁵ In addition to the uncertainty caused by President Carr's reorganization, Donald Love left office during the summer of 1962. The proponents of the establishment of a college archives lost an influential supporter in the highest echelons of the administration.³⁶ Assistant Secretary Robert R. Barr, who had been selected by the board of trustees to succeed Love as secretary, died.³⁷ In his place J. Robert Williams, director of public relations and a newcomer who lacked the political clout of his predecessors, became secretary in September 1962. Williams witnessed between 1962 and 1968 the gradual dispersal of the functions of the office that had dominated the college administration between 1899 and 1962.³⁸ Responsibility for alumni records was transferred to the office of development. Apparently student records had come to be valued more for their use in college development and fund raising than for their archival qualities.

Second, the appointment of a trained archivist was a matter that could not compete with more visible and urgent issues. There were old buildings to be renovated and new ones to be planned. There were major development cam-

paigns.³⁹ Now, as before, administrators realized that the question of appointing an archivist could be put aside without offending a large constituent interest. Summing up this view, Thornton confessed during the fall of 1964 that archives "has been too low on the crowded totem pole to get as much attention from me or the President [as] it really deserves."⁴⁰

Third, action on the archives recommendation was held up because basic parts of the enterprise remained unresolved. The administration remained undecided about the placement of the program on the administrative chart and about the designation of space. These were unsettling issues, and they came at a time when Thornton—who occasionally waffled on the consultant's recommendations—seemed prepared to absorb the archives within the college library. "I shall be only too glad," Thornton wrote, "to do anything I can to help get this moving. Every year that passes compounds our difficulties." Paradoxically, the "relative modesty of the whole proposal and its costs" to hire an archivist made it easy to overlook.⁴¹ The fact that plans for the new library included an archives was another excuse for delay. But this planning, in the mid-1960s, was still very much up in the air and a new building was many years in the future.

Finally, the board of trustees had two alternative historical projects placed before it in 1962. One was to establish a formal archives program by appointing an archivist, and the other was to underwrite the "production of a book which would be in effect a third volume of the Fletcher *History of Oberlin College*".⁴² When the executive committee of the trustees opted for the second project, by asking departing secretary Donald M. Love to write volume three, the board doubtless felt it was rewarding Love for his considerable service to the institution while meeting its obligations to Oberlin's past. However, the board apparently never followed through on this action.⁴³

An Archivist Appointed

In 1966 Thornton finally prevailed. After a prolonged search, William E. Bigglestone was appointed the first archivist in May 1966.⁴⁴ As recommended by consultant Mason, the archivist reported to the provost (as the archivist does now; from 1976 to 1986 Bigglestone reported to the college secretary). Housing, a critical issue, was awkwardly met. A room on the third floor of the Cox Administration Building, measuring 18 feet by 21 feet, became the first home for the archives program. During the first year the archivist resisted moving into the library because the space available was no more suitable, while moving could have led to a takeover of the program by the library. A year later, in July 1967, the archives moved to the basement of Bosworth Hall.⁴⁵ This was larger space, but still not so ample as the cavernous basement of Burton Hall, recommended by Mason and the ad hoc committee.⁴⁶

A second concern was staffing. The administration agreed with the consultant that the archivist needed a full-time assistant. However, the college administration acted upon this need without input from the new archivist. Thus Gertrude F. Jacob, the former executive secretary of the Graduate School of Theology, became the assistant to the archivist.⁴⁷ The administration ignored another recommendation of Mason's, and did not appoint an archives advisory

group. Bigglestone never pursued it, and consequently this recommendation was never implemented.⁴⁸

The uncertain, prolonged birth of the archives weakened its prospects. The heightened interest and momentum created in 1962, as well as the concept of a records program meeting the twin needs of researchers (archives) and college administrators (records management), was lost by 1966. Richard F. Seaman, executive assistant to the president, was among those who thought the archivist should have nothing to do with current records. Commenting on the archivist's position description, he wrote, "The Archivist is an institutional historian concerned with the ultimate collection and preservation of records and documents of the College." Side-stepping the fact that today's records are tomorrow's history, he commented that the best way was to refer to such things as the trustees' minutes as "official records" as opposed to "official historical records." In almost every instance Seaman tried to minimize the archivist's position and diminish his scope of responsibility by using phrases such as "subject to the approval of the president." Pencil along the margin of his copy of the Oberlin College Archives Plan of Organization was the word "No" on the appointment of an archives advisory committee.⁴⁹

By 1966 action had to be taken because the library did not want to be the depository of the college archives unless a trained person was appointed to do the work. The college was forced to realize that the institution itself could no longer function without a Fletcher or Love to serve as its "memory." Eileen Thornton, who prided herself on being a forward-looking administrator, needed to clear up the disorganized state of historical materials lacking bibliographical control to pave the way for automation (OCLC).⁵⁰ She realized that the library could have assumed control of the archives, but she probably was unsure about taking on records management. This proved to be a moot concern since the administration did not want the archivist to concern himself with current or semi-current records. Thornton repeatedly showed concern over how the archivist would spend his or her time. "What we need," she again reported in early 1965 to President Carr, "is an expert in modern archival and records management administration."⁵¹ Unlike Mason and Leslie H. Fishel, Jr., former executive director of the Alumni Association, member of the department of history, and later executive director of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Thornton did not see a need to give faculty status to the archivist. Such status might make it "easier for the archivist to command the necessary respect and authority," she concluded, but at the same time it took away available time when you "need 4/3 of a person to get the archives into going order."⁵²

For the moment responsibility for the archives was to be placed in the hands of the provost, or administration, and not in the hands of the library or the department of history. This the librarian accepted graciously. In 1969 she reported that archival materials were getting better care and oversight and that "we've had an archivist, on my urging, for about three years now." The library was transferring, on a piecemeal basis, manuscript collections to the archives.⁵³ She understood, however, that many of Mason's recommendations had not been embraced. The delays in appointing an archivist weakened the appreciation for the archives role in administration. Consequently the archival

program itself was forced to operate in its first two decades on a thin base of support and with an underdeveloped understanding of its mission.

Lessons to be Learned

What practical lessons can be drawn from the Oberlin experience? There are a number of salient points. First, no matter how rich the history of an institution and even when sizable bodies of historical research materials exist, archival programs for colleges and universities are not established without delays or struggles. Archives tend to be a low priority.

Second, although no single developmental strategy worked for Oberlin College, it appears that the persistence of the college librarian Eileen Thornton made a critical difference. Perhaps had there been an anniversary celebration to commemorate or a celebrated history professor on hand to finish out his or her academic career by founding an archives, the effort to establish an archives program would have been easier. Surely it might have been accomplished in less time and with less fanfare. "My main worry", reported Thornton on the eve of consultant Mason's visit, "is that almost everyone seems to think this is just a narrow matter of how the library should manipulate the papers of Joe Dokes."⁵⁴ In creating a larger view of the issue or in identifying model archival establishments, however, Thornton was unprepared to look to Harvard University (the program was too big or elaborate) or to other model programs ("they are horrible examples which I hope we will not follow").⁵⁵ Instead the librarian, using her contacts within the profession, sought the advice of Lester J. Cappon, Philip P. Mason, and colleague Thomas LeDuc.

Third, the employment of a consultant was important in the process. In contracting with Philip Mason, Thornton was able to get an outside expert to identify the archival issues and needs and also to elevate the whole question to the highest level of the college bureaucracy. Even though the administration considered Mason's fee too high, the consultant was well worth the money. He gave authority to the objectives of the *ad hoc* archives advisory committee.

Fourth, the advocates of a college archives program faced a situation typical in higher education. They had to somehow justify a new program to the administration. The archives probably could not count on the support of the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the dean of the Conservatory, the two main divisions of Oberlin College. Important questions were raised that had to be answered: Where was the program to be placed on the administrative chart and to whom would the archivist report? What would be the scope and jurisdiction of the archivist (archives, records management, or both)? Where would the program be located physically?

Although not all of these questions were answered as fully or clearly as they should have been, there was ample momentum built up to establish a college archives. Yet, because the need to preserve Oberlin's historical materials was taken rather lightly, during the first two decades the archival program was forced to operate with inadequate resources and an indifferent administrative appreciation for the role of a college archives. In this respect, perhaps, Oberlin suffered the fate of other college and university archives programs.

OBERLIN CHRONOLOGY

- 1834 Philo P. Stewart assigned responsibility to keep a record of the Oberlin Colony.
- 1876 Vault constructed in the college chapel building to store institutional records.
- 1885 Spear Library built. First library on campus.
- 1903 College chapel fire destroys building and some records.
- 1908 Carnegie Library built.
- 1887-1927 Azariah Smith Root (1862-1927) serves as librarian.
- 1930 Charles Grandison Finney (1792-1875) papers given to the college.
- 1943 *A History of Oberlin College*, 2 volumes, by Robert S. Fletcher published.
- 1944 Sub-committee recommends appointment of a trained archivist.
- 1948 Effort to appoint a college archivist fails.
- December
- 1959 Robert S. Fletcher, college historian, dies.
- 1960 Librarian Eileen Thornton submits proposal to President Robert K. Carr for an archives program and employment of a trained archivist.
- March
- 1962 Consultant Philip Mason visits the college.
- June
- 1962 Donald M. Love, Oberlin's "unofficial archivist," retires.
- June
- 1962 Board of trustees defers action on appointment of an archivist.
- May
- 1966 William E. Bigglestone appointed first archivist of Oberlin College.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Roland M. Baumann became archivist and department head of the Oberlin College Archives in early 1987. Between 1977 and 1986 he was chief of the Division of Archives and Manuscripts of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in Harrisburg. The author is interested in the uses of written institutional history in achieving program goals with resource allocators.

NOTES

1. The Northwestern University Archives, established in 1935, was tied to Professor James Alton James's writing the definitive history of Northwestern. See Patrick M. Quinn, "Profile in Purple: The Northwestern University Archives," *Illinois Libraries* 57 (March 1975):220-22. On Harvard, see Clifford K. Sipton, "The Harvard University Archives: Goal and Function," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 1 (Winter 1947):101-08. Archival programs were established at Dickinson College (Carlisle, Pa.) in 1932 and Franklin and Marshall College (Lancaster, Pa.) in 1983 in anticipation of anniversary celebrations.

2. Statement appears in the brochure of the Oberlin College Archives, which was first issued in 1977. Philo P. Stewart wrote by hand the minutes of the first trustee meeting held in March of 1834. J.R. Williams to President Carr, 18 July 1968, Office of the Secretary. Unless otherwise cited, all succeeding references are to materials held by the Oberlin College Archives.
3. *Oberlin Weekly News*, 20 January 1876.
4. As secretary of the college both Jones and Love had great command of the records, either created or received, since they attended all meetings of the board of trustees and their office was copied on nearly all pieces of hierarchical college business.
5. [Oberlin College], *Order of Exercises at the Dedication of the Spear Library* . . . (Boston, 1885), 16-17. The author is indebted to Mary Cowles for this lead.
6. Keyes D. Metcalf, "The Oberlin College Library," *Oberlin Alumni Magazine* 19 (January 1923):14. John Mark Tucker, "Librarianship as a Community Service: Azariah Smith Root at Oberlin College" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, 1983), chapter 4. This statement on the growth of archives is based on a reading of the annual report prepared by the librarian appearing in the *Annual Reports of the President and Treasurer of Oberlin*, begun in 1876. Good examples are the College Reports for 1929-30, 94-95; and 1930-31, 154-55. Root even convinced the Union Library Association, for example, to give its collection of 14,000 volumes and its card catalog to Carnegie Library as well as all source materials (i.e., records of the school board, village, churches, and student organizations).
7. "Annual Report of Librarian, 1917/18," in *Oberlin College Annual Reports* (Oberlin, 1918), 154. Azariah S. Root had not anticipated space being set aside for archives or special collections in Carnegie Library. See "Plans for the new Library," *Oberlin Alumni Magazine* 1 (March 1905):147-49.
8. Mary Cowles, oral history interview by author, 7 July 1987.
9. See especially memo, Thornton to President Carr, 24 January 1962, Office of the President; and Thornton to Leslie H. Fishel, Jr., 10 February 1965, Office of the Provost.
10. "Post War Problems Committee, 1944-46," in the files of the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The committee consisted of Frederick B. Artz, Robert S. Fletcher, Julian S. Fowler, Chester C. Shaver, and Warren Taylor. See also the Annual Report of the Librarian, 1944-45 (20 October 1945). After reporting the need to employ a trained archivist in 1945, Julian Fowler did not work very hard to get the appointment. This fact is evident in his subsequent reports. In his defense the library had many needs, and because staff salaries were low it was difficult to keep good people. See the Librarian's Annual Reports for 1945-48, Annual Reports of the Librarian, in the Office of the Director of the Library. In 1948 the board made only seven permanent appointments; see Committee of Appointment File, Office of the Secretary.
11. *Annual Report of Oberlin College, 1946-47* (Oberlin, 1947), 16. Preservation and Special Collections Committee, Oberlin College Library, *Report for 1978-79* (typescript), appendix p. 1. Mary E. Cowles kindly brought this document to the author's attention. R. T. Miller, Jr., class of 1891, provided the gift to build a rare book room.
12. This point is based on a reading of many sources cited throughout this study. In particular examine the Reports of the Librarian, 1945-60, Office of the Director of the Library, and the printed *Annual Reports* of the college.
13. Earlier, in 1954, Robert S. Fletcher tried to convince the college to take some action on publishing the calendar of the Charles G. Finney Papers. Fletcher wrote: "I would suggest that an *ad hoc* committee should be appointed to go into the matter thoroughly." Fletcher to President W.E. Stevenson, 23 July 1954, Office of the President (file labeled "Cole, Charles C.").
14. Thornton to Donald Love, 16 November 1959, Office of the Secretary; *Annual Report of the Library, 1958-59, 1959-60* (Oberlin, 9 September 1960), 43-44.
15. Thornton to Donald Love, 19 April 1960, Office of the Secretary. Love, an Oberlin graduate in 1916 and on the faculty since 1926, was the author of *Henry Churchill King of Oberlin*, a biography of Oberlin's sixth president (1902-27), which was published by Yale University Press in 1956.
16. Thornton to Donald Love, 19 April 1960, Office of the Secretary. Paragraph four of the letter is worth quoting at length because it explains the situation:

My guess is that there are little or large clutches of what might be called archival materials dotted all over campus in various offices. I am fairly sure

that there is needless duplication in some instances, and inadequate collection in others. I think it's possible that many persons are involved in receipt of gifts of this sort and many are in doubt as to what to do with such gifts. Deciding what to do about each item is fearfully costly of time, precarious where some items are concerned, and increasingly risky as a College "policy." As we grow more complex and as we grow older, the record becomes more voluminous and complicated. At this point, it must be very difficult to retrieve records of our past and I believe those records of *all sorts* (not just within the old narrow confines of the word, "archives,") will be more and more important for us to have in good order, and with relative completeness.

17. See especially Thornton to Love, 19 April 1960, Office of the Secretary. She writes, "Probably I shouldn't press you at this point, but I turn to you because I know of your personal interest and really feel that it is up to you and me to take the leadership."
18. Thornton to Love, 27 April 1962, Donald Love Papers.
19. The committee consisted of historian Thomas LeDuc, secretary Donald Love, provost Ted Manning, business manager Lewis R. Tower, and librarian Thornton. The relationship between LeDuc and Thornton was somewhat prickly. This committee superseded the informal work done in late 1959 by Robert Barr, Robert Fletcher, Doug Polhemus and Eileen Thornton. Thornton to Love, 16 November 1959, Office of the Secretary. See also Thornton to Carr, 29 November 1960, Carr Papers; Thornton to provost Manning, 20 April 1961, Office of the Secretary (file labeled "Archives, 1959-68"). Thornton to Tom LeDuc, n.d. and 6 March 1962, Thomas LeDuc Papers. This writer has not been able to establish how many times the *ad hoc* committee met.
20. C[h]arles R. K[eesey] to Robert K. Carr, 25 April 1960, Office of the President (file labeled "Archives").
21. *Ibid.*
22. Attachment of Thornton to Donald Love, 19 April 1960, Office of the Secretary. Thornton to Tom LeDuc, 19 May 1960, Thomas LeDuc Papers.
23. Annual Report, 43. It appears that the librarian had urged the participation of the Oberlin Historical Society as well. Thornton to Ernest Chamberlain, 28 February, 4 May 1962, and Chamberlain to Thornton, 15 March 1962, Oberlin Historical and Improvement Organization Papers.
24. Two consultants had been approved for consideration: Philip P. Mason of Wayne State University and Lester J. Cappon, director, Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia. Thornton to Carr, 24 January 1962, Office of the President: Thornton, telephone interview with author, 7 July 1987.
25. Memo of Manning to Carr, 29 January 1962, Office of the President (file labeled "Archives"). See also Annual Report of the Provost, 1961-62, 5, in Office of the President.
26. Robert K. Carr to Thornton, 7 February 1962, Office of the President (file labeled "Archives").
27. Philip Mason, Report of Survey of Archival Needs [of] Oberlin College, 26-28 March 1962, 1.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*, 6.
30. *Ad Hoc* Committee on Oberlin College Archives to President Carr, 30 April 1962, Office of the President.
31. Ernst Posner to Phillip P. Mason, 10 April 1962 (copy); Thornton to Provost Manning, 3 May 1962; Thornton to Mason, 3 May 1962, and to others, Office of the Secretary.
32. Thornton to Mason, 3 May 1962, Office of the Provost (file labeled "Archives").
33. Thornton to Williams, 25 June 1962, Office of the Secretary. See also Thornton to Carr, 5 February 1965, Office of the President.
34. Quoted words in Thornton to Williams, 25 June 1962, Office of the Secretary. Action on the recommendation for an archives is to be found in Minutes, Board of Trustees, 8 June 1962, 6.
35. *The President's Report* (12 November 1960), *Oberlin College 1959-1960*, 8ff. The reorganization is detailed in the Report of Trustee Committee on Administrative Organization, November 1962.
36. Based on a file memo, 11 September 1961, prepared by Richard F. Seaman, respecting a meeting held on 9 September 1961, it is reported that Donald Love held strong feelings "that Alumni Records is [a] proper function of [the] Secretary's Office, sees them as archive."

37. Minutes, Executive Committee of Board of Trustees, 23 April 1962 (D.F. 732 IIIb); Staff File (Robert R. Barr), Alumni & Development Records.
38. Williams to Carr, 18 July 1968, Office of the Secretary.
39. Based on a reading of President Carr's *Annual Reports* (printed) for the years 1960-65.
40. Eileen Thornton to Ralph [Ellsworth], 26 October 1964, communicated to Dick [Seaman?], on same date (copy), under "Library," Office of the Provost. Oral history interviews by author with Thornton and Ellsworth Carlson, respectively, in July and August 1987.
41. All quoted material is from Thornton to Carr, 14 January 1965, Office of the President. According to the postscript in Thornton to President Carr, 5 February 1965, a Carr presidential file memo, there had been money in the budget to employ a trained archivist for a number of years.
42. Minutes, Board of Trustees, 8 June 1962, 6. Also, it is reported in News Release of Public Relations Office, 27 June 1962.
43. The author is unable to document that Love accepted the money. According to William E. Bigglestone, Donald Love informed him that "no positive offer was ever made concerning the publication of the school's history." Bigglestone understood this to mean "both payment [of stipend] and publication," and he presumed that Love received nothing in writing about the project. Bigglestone to Baumann, 14 September 1987, correspondence file in the office of the College Archives.
44. News Release of Public Relations Office, 25 April 1966.
45. Note (n.d.) by William E. Bigglestone, administrative file in the office of the College Archives.
46. Before Burton Hall could be used by the archives the space was allocated for other use. Thornton to Carr, 5 February 1965, Office of the President. In late 1966 the newly appointed archivist was asked to accept space—two seminar rooms—in the library but he found the space "not suitable." Thornton to J.W. Kneller, 8, 17 November 1966 and W.E. Bigglestone to Jack [Kneller], 10, 17 November 1966, Office of the Provost (file labeled "Archives"). See especially an attachment to a letter, Kneller to Thornton and Tower, 8 November 1966.
47. Staff file of Gertrude F. Jacob, Alumni & Development Records.
48. Seaman to President Carr, 22 June 1966, Office of the President.
49. *Ibid.* For another viewpoint on the position description for the archivist, see Thornton to Manning, 22 June 1966. Thornton emphasized the need to develop a definition of official records, to prepare a catalog for the archives, and to distinguish library materials from archives.
50. Mary Cowles, interview with author, 18 August 1987.
51. Thornton to Carr, 14 January 1965, Office of the President.
52. Thornton to Carr, 5 February 1965, Office of the President. Carr transmitted the February memo to J.W. Kneller (provost) and L.R. Tower (business manager).
53. Thornton to J. Periam Danton, 18 March 1969, George E. Woodberry Papers ("Administrative file"). The Woodberry papers, which had been given to the library in 1930, were being turned over to the archives. The transfer of materials to the college archives was a major project of the library. President's Report, 1967-68, presented to Board of Trustees, 9 November 1968, 26. The author is indebted to Alexandra Weil for this lead.
54. Thornton to Tom LeDuc, 6 March 1962, Thomas LeDuc Papers.
55. Thornton to LeDuc, n.d., Thomas LeDuc Papers. For a view of archival programming being imposed from the top down see Mary Lynn McCree, "Good Sense and Good Judgment: Defining Collections and Collecting," *Drexel Library Quarterly* 11 (January 1975):21-33.