



Using Collections Level Control to Reassess Archival Collections

The Perfect Storm

KABOOM

**Long term
archivist retires**

**New
collections
management
software**

**New
collaborating
agency heads**



Things Are a Little Out of Control

The Project:

Develop a long-range plan for the *Maine State Museum Archives* that includes recommendations for intellectual access, storage, policies, and long-term staffing

A mission statement

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INSTITUTE *of*
Museum and **Library**
SERVICES

N:

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Facility and security recommendations



**We needed an
overview of the
archival collections**

**Collections level
control gives you
a high-level view**

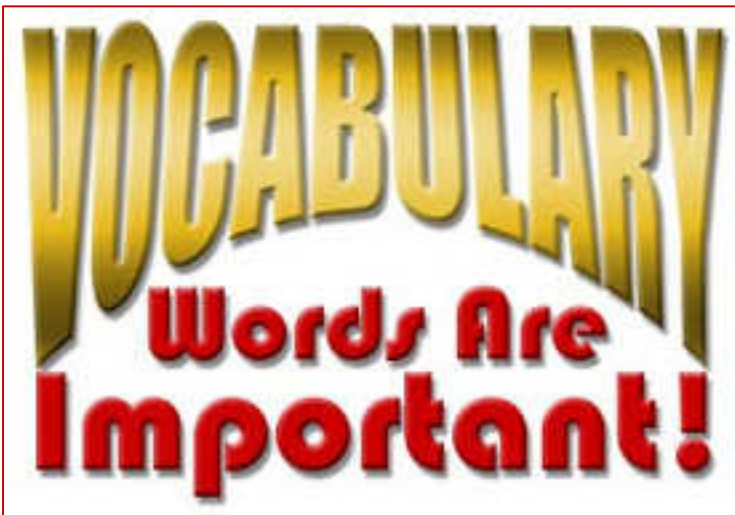


Get Everyone On The Same Page

From *Society of American Archivists Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*

<http://files.archivists.org/pubs/free/SAA-Glossary-2005.pdf>

Manuscript collections: A collection of personal or family papers. Although manuscript literally means handwritten, 'manuscript collection' is often used to include collections of mixed media in which unpublished materials predominate. They may also include typescripts, photographs, diaries, scrapbooks, news clippings, and printed works.



Artificial collection: A collection of materials with different provenance assembled and organized to facilitate its management or use. They typically do not grow out of a single, specific function, and are often arranged for the convenience of description or retrieval rather than in an order originally established by the creator.

Don't Get Lost in the Weeds

Object (short summary)

- 2004.101.1; Sign: Whitneyville Post Office; Sign/Visual Communication T&E/T&E For Communication
- 2004.101.2; P.O. Boxes: Whitneyville Post Office; Box, Post Office/Regulative & Protective T&E/T&E For Science & Technology, Box, Post Office
- 2004.101.3; [REDACTED]
- 2004.101.4; [REDACTED]
- 2004.101.5; [REDACTED]
- 2004.101.6; [REDACTED]
- 2004.101.7; [REDACTED]
- 2004.101.8; [REDACTED]
- 2004.101.9; Mail Bag Key: US MAIL 117; Key, Mail Bag/Regulative & Protective T&E/T&E For Science & Technology
- 2004.101.10; Tray; Tray, Serving/Food Service T&E/Food T&E/T&E For Materials
- 2004.101.11.1; Canister and Lid; Canister, Food-Storage/Food Processing T&E/Food T&E/T&E For Materials
- 2004.101.11.2; Canister and Lid; Canister, Food-Storage/Food Processing T&E/Food T&E/T&E For Materials
- 2004.101.11.3; Biscuit Cutter; Cutter, Biscuit/Food Processing T&E/Food T&E/T&E For Materials
- 2004.101.12; Flour Sifter; Sifter, Flour/Food Processing T&E/Food T&E/T&E For Materials
- 2004.101.13; Pair of Pot Holders; Potholder/Food Processing T&E/Food T&E/T&E For Materials
- 2004.101.14; Apron; Apron/Clothing - Outerwear/Clothing/Personal Artifacts
- 2004.101.15; Doily/Trivet (Hot Pad); Pad, Hot/Food Service T&E/Food T&E/T&E For Materials
- 2004.101.16; Book: Eat-Well Diet Book; Cookbook/Documentary Artifact/Communication Artifacts
- 2004.101.17; Framed Certificate: Blanche S. Holland Commission as Postmaster; Certificate, Appointment/Documentary Artifact/Communication
- 2004.101.18; Certificate: Blanche Palmer; Whitneyville Post Office; Certificate, Achievement/Documentary Artifact/Communication Artifacts
- 2004.101.19.1; Tin Box; Box/Container/Distribution & Transportation Artifacts
- 2004.101.19.2; Black Stamp Handle; Stamp, Marking/Written Communication T&E/T&E For Communication
- 2004.101.19.3; Postal Marking Stamp: AIR MAIL; Stamp, Marking/Written Communication T&E/T&E For Communication
- 2004.101.19.4; Postal Marking Stamp: INSURED no. _____; Stamp, Marking/Written Communication T&E/T&E For Communication
- 2004.101.19.5; Postal Marking Stamp: Whitneyville, Maine; Stamp, Marking/Written Communication T&E/T&E For Communication
- 2004.101.19.6; Postal Zip Code Marking Stamp: 04692; Stamp, Marking/Written Communication T&E/T&E For Communication
- 2004.101.19.7; Postal Marking Stamp: Special Handling; Stamp, Marking/Written Communication T&E/T&E For Communication
- 2004.101.19.8; Postal Marking Stamp Part: Whitneyville, Maine; Stamp, Marking/Written Communication T&E/T&E For Communication, Rubber
- 2004.101.19.9; Postal Marking Stamp Part: Whitneyville, Maine; Stamp, Marking/Written Communication T&E/T&E For Communication, Rubber
- 2004.101.20; Patch: Post Office Dept, U.S.A.; Patch/Personal Symbol/Communication Artifacts
- 2004.101.21.1; Ballpoint Pen; St. Croix Postal Museum; Pen, Advertising/Advertising Medium/Communication Artifacts, Pen, Ball-Point/Written
- 2004.101.21.2; Ballpoint Pen; St. Croix Postal Museum; Pen, Advertising/Advertising Medium/Communication Artifacts, Pen, Ball-Point/Written
- 2004.101.22; [REDACTED]
- 2004.101.23; [REDACTED]

More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing

Mark A. Greene and Dennis Meissner

Abstract

Processing backlogs continue to be a problem for archivists, and yet the problem is exacerbated by many of the traditional approaches to processing collections that archivists continue to practice. This research project reviewed the literature on archival processing and conducted surveys of processing practices to identify the scope of the problem and its impacts both on processing costs and on access to collections. The paper issues a call for archivists to rethink the way they process collections, particularly large contemporary collections. It challenges many of the assumptions archivists make about the importance of preservation activities in processing and the arrangement and description activities necessary to allow researchers to access collections effectively.

**DONE IS
BETTER
THAN
PERFECT**

Don't Get Lost in the Weeds II

Mabie, Janet. Papers of Janet Mabie, 1912-1960: A Finding Aid

Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History, Literature and Life Institute for Advanced Study

Harvard Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Descriptive Summary

Location: Collective used of this repository accession

Call No: MS 851

Repository: Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History, Literature and Life Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Title: Papers of Janet Mabie, 1912-1960

Extent: 181.096L

Quantity of boxes: (15) 12 letters, 13 photographs

Types of materials: Manuscripts, Photographs

Abstract: Photographs, diaries, drafts of biographies about Janet Mabie, journals and notes.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Accession number: 93-053, 95-059, 06-067

These papers were given to the Schlesinger Library by Janet Mabie in 1960, and Jane and Nancy in 1967.

Processing Information

Processed: May 1994

By: R. Lee Day

Access Restrictions

Access: On location for research.

Conditions Governing Use:

Copyright. Copyright in the papers owned by Janet Mabie is held by the President and Fellows of Harvard College for the Schlesinger Library. Copyright in other papers in the collection may be held by third parties, or the author's estate or agents.

Copying. Papers may be copied in accordance with the library's special provisions.

Preferred Citation:

Janet Mabie Papers, 1912-1960, Harvard University, access 80-045, Harvard Institute for Advanced Study, Cambridge, Mass.

SEPARATION RECORD

The following items have been removed from the volume:
+ "Tom Mc-Paul" by Margaret N. Doyle.

BIOGRAPHY

Janet Mabie was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1894. In 1912 she married Paul Tolson, a Yale lawyer, the U.S. Solicitor General in Boston (1919-1925), the Harvard source for his book of oral interviews with the FBI, the wife of the first, and the second Director of the FBI. She was one of a number of women, including Helen and Ann, who were active in the development of D. L. K. for the FBI, the (D. L. K.) organization, which was founded in 1923. She worked in the FBI as a professional typewriter. In 1923 Mabie and Amelia Barham, she and her mother, writing, and a staff of the FBI, she worked in 1917. Mabie Palmer, Nancy, Barham's husband, on a biography of Tolson. Their collaboration ended in 1929, and Mabie became Barham's secretary. Amy Clark (Barham), gave her correspondence Barham papers, MS 28, #112. The original manuscript, "I" requested by Mabie's publisher, H. P. Dalton & Co., in 1942, an interview. By 1959, she had finished the revised manuscript. A problem with writing with D. L. K. on New York in N. for her work on the book with her mother. I was never published.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The bulk of this collection consists of Janet Mabie's correspondence, including the manuscript "Study in the Different Dimensions" which was published about the biographical photographs of the city's first woman. While most items in the "High Wind" collection. One copy of each chapter has other explanatory editorial notes. The notes were prepared by...

The collection also contains Barham's diary photographs, many with notes in blue ink on the reverse in Amy Clark's handwriting. Amy Clark's diary includes some of the photographs of Janet Mabie.

CONTAINER LIST

- Box 1: 1, 2, 3
- Box 2: 25-29

Container List

- 1. Biographical including obituary, 1948, 1960
- 2. U. S. Remembrance Harvard Square, by Kenneth D. Clegg
- 3. Typeset issue, signed, Amy Clark's letters to Janet Mabie, 1930
- 4. Photographs, mostly 1912-1915. Includes: Margaret's portrait, Alfred Clark, Anna Clark Barham, Amy Clark, Amy Clark's, **BUILD WITH PHOTOGRAPHS.**
- 5. Photographs, Amelia Barham and Paul, includes Amelia Barham in her book, and her letters to Margaret, Lucia de Schweinitz, 1913-1915, and **BUILD WITH PHOTOGRAPHS.**
- 6. Photographs, High Wind photographs, 1920, and **BUILD WITH PHOTOGRAPHS.**
- 7. Clippings, Amelia Barham, 1930, and
- 8. Clippings, Amelia Barham, 1957-1960, and
- 9. Clippings, Amelia Barham's High, 1910-1913, and
- 10. Clippings, Sounding Wings by George Frazier Palmer
- 11. Clippings, Women's press, 1924, 1925
- 12. Clippings, Anecdotes, 1924-1929, and
- 13. "Lang in the High Wind" Correspondence, 1945-1948, includes a long letter to Amy Clark from Janet Mabie.
- 14. "Lang in the High Wind" Research notes
- 15. "Lang in the High Wind" News and media items
- 16. "Lang in the High Wind" Clippings on letters and descriptions, 1910-1938, and
- 17. "Lang in the High Wind" Acknowledgments, chapters I-III
- 18. "Lang in the High Wind" Chapters III-V
- 19. "Lang in the High Wind" Chapters VI-VIII
- 20. "Lang in the High Wind" Chapters IX-XI
- 21. "Lang in the High Wind" Chapters XII-XIV
- 22. "Lang in the High Wind" Chapters XV, XVI (longhand) and XVII (in typeset)
- 23. "Lang in the High Wind" Drafts of revised manuscript
- 24. "Lang in the High Wind" A revision chapter

Collections Level Control

Accession number: 2004.101

Name: Whitneyville Post Office collection

Size: 548 Items – 1 records carton, 1 Hollinger, 1 flat box

Date: 1923-1992

Biographic: Blanche S. Palmer (1909-2003) was a graduate of Woodland High School in 1927 and Washington State Normal School in 1930. She was a school teacher in the towns of Holmes Bay, Southwest Harbor, and Whitneyville. From 1940 to 1992, she served a distinguished career as Postmaster of Whitneyville, retiring at the age of 82. During World War II, she volunteered for service in the WAVES, the women's naval reserve.

Retrieved from: <http://www.legacy.com/Obituaries.asp?Page=LifeStory&personID=1337748>

Whitneyville is a town in Washington County, Maine, United States. The town was named after Colonel Joseph Whitney, a mill owner. The population was 220 at the 2010 census.

Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whitneyville,_Maine

Co-Donors Susan Palmer and Edwin Palmer, Blanche Palmer's children, donated the Whitneyville Post Office collection to the Maine State Museum.

Overview: The Whitneyville Post Office collection includes a sign, P.O. Boxes, books, newspaper articles, insured mail register, wooden trays, money order number stamps, rubber stamp, magazine, magazine article, newspapers, announcements, bulletins, booklets, photos, letter and envelope, Christmas cards, envelope and contents, membership cards, business card, decals, bar code cards, copy of newspaper clipping, newspaper clippings, poster, U.S. Postal Money Orders, worksheet, change of address form, C.O.D. form, envelopes, stamp, annual report, plastic binder, program, photocopies, form letter, report of ratings, post office inspection results form, leave of absence request form, oath, tax calendars, receipts, awards, newsletter, sign, letterhead, slipcover for book, map, record of articles for special delivery, account record, account and cash books, stamp requisition, office memorandum, cash books, insured parcel post, form no. 3336, bills, certificates of deposit of surplus funds, Postmaster's Certificates, and ephemera.

What purpose will the archival collections serve?

- **Adjuncts to the object collections**
- **Historic context to the object collections**
- **Voices and stories for use in exhibits**
- **General research collection for Maine history**

What specifically will the museum collect moving forward?

- **Materials related to objects or anything Maine-related?**
- **Any subject specialties?**
- **Any particular type? Diaries, glass plate negatives, etc.**

What resources need to be put in place?

- **Appropriate staffing level**
- **Adequate storage space and research facilities**
- **Security measures**
- **Technology**
- **Priority collections in need of treatment**

How will the archives relate to other agencies' collections?

- **Recognizing each other's specialties**
- **Sharing information about acquisitions**
- **Sharing information about auctions**
- **Considering what collections should go elsewhere**



Collections Level Control Promotes Good Planning





I'm In Control!