
Foreword

Edward G. Holley

When Maury York told me he planned to edit an issue of *North Carolina Libraries* on archives, manuscripts, and library history, I was delighted. The library profession, so concerned with amassing and organizing the records of other disciplines, has often shown a curious indifference to its own records. I welcome Maury's effort to capture the impressive stories of North Carolinians who have made significant contributions to the advancement of both library and archival work in the state and the nation. One can only hope that this *North Carolina Libraries* issue, along with the recent interviews of Elaine Von Oesen and Mattie Russell published in *Ms Management* (NCLA Round Table on the Status of Women in Librarianship), will encourage others to make their own contributions to an understanding of our professional past, not only in preserving the historical record in manuscript and archival form but also in sharing the results of their investigations into those sources with us.

Budd Gambee's study of the publications of Mary Peacock Douglas reminds us once again of giants the North Carolina library profession can claim. His essay represents that thoroughness to which we have become accustomed from his pen. He has distilled from her writings a picture of one of the vital persons in school librarianship. Mrs. Douglas moved from the state to the national scene in tune with the times. From the technical to the philosophical her mind continued to develop over a period of four decades. She unashamedly combined a commitment to professional standards with a personal touch. Her contributions led her from the *High School Journal*, a state-based effort, to other journals in the field of professional education, to major library journals and nationally recognized books in her field. Yet she left all too few personal records. We can be grateful for what has been preserved and lament that there is not more. A warning to other librarians: don't go and do likewise.

York's own essay tells a little-known story of the American Imprints Inventory in North Caro-

lina as a part of the state's distinguished record in preserving its past. One reads with amazement the significance of North Carolinians in archival progress in the United States: R.D.W. Connor, Charles C. Crittenden, Dan Lacy. As Morgan Barclay notes at the beginning of his paper on H.G. Jones, "During the first seventy years of this century, North Carolinians dominated national archival leadership." He does not overstate the case.

Barclay's interview with Jones reminds us that the earlier leadership has not diminished. H.G. Jones emerges not only as a distinguished scholar, but also as a shrewd politician. The major archivists and manuscript curators, like the major librarians, knew their people and were not reluctant to use the political process to achieve their ends. Both the Gambee and York essays show how that process worked in different spheres: Mary Peacock Douglas in preaching the gospel of school librarianship, and the American Imprints Inventory by taking advantage of New Deal programs that employed jobless historians to make the country's bibliographical record more complete. The North Carolina record in archives was more impressive than the same record in bibliographical control, but both were significant.

Most of all, these essays reveal that we need to do more oral history interviews. Gambee made use of some interviews. York had access to a tremendous amount of microfilm records and also used personal correspondence. The Barclay interview with H.G. Jones is an example of the kind of oral history we need. Historians rejoice especially in interviews, like that of H.G. Jones, which express frank and uninhibited views. They are rarer than we would like, and our understanding is the worse for their rarity.

As I learned when one of my students interviewed Mollie Huston Lee, we must make greater efforts before earlier leaders pass from the scene. Doris C. Dale, in conjunction with the ALA Library History Round Table, will soon publish *A Directory of Oral History Tapes of Libraries in the United States and Canada*. As often occurs with the publication of such a directory, we can expect additional oral history records to be subsequently reported.

Edward G. Holley is a Professor and former Dean of the School of Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

So I commend this effort of Maury York and the editor of *North Carolina Libraries*. If we wish our interpretation of our past to be better, we must preserve more personal and institutional records than we have achieved thus far. These authors have shown us the way. Let us build on their work.

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