

# DACS Workshop: Pre-Workshop Reading

Familiarize yourself with these two description samples (A & B) on pages 1-4 of this PDF file, and with the Archives R Us Processing Manual excerpt on pages 5-12. None of this may make sense at this point, but you'll be working with these two description samples and the processing manual excerpt in the last two exercises during the workshop and it is very helpful if you've looked over them ahead of time. **There is no need to bring a printout of this PDF along to the workshop – everything you'll need during the workshop is included in the workbook and handouts.**

## Description Sample A: Overview of an Archival Collection (Exercise 4)

Feverish Archives  
123 Main Street  
Workville, WV 22222

FA-002

Pergammon's Restaurant was established circa 1866 at 144 Jefferson Street, Workville. Proprietors during period covered by the records were Divot and Stadler (Dewey Divot was the Secretary/Treasurer of the Fractured Glass Company in 1927 when it moved headquarters from Workville to Mingo Junction, Ohio, and brought the restaurant records with him). The business was known variously as Pergammon's City Restaurant and Oyster House, Pergammon's Cafe Polonia, and Pergammon's Cafe during the period covered by the records, and was operating under the latter name when it closed in 1921.

Material was donated to the Archival Collections Center, Warm State University, Scholarville, West Virginia on August 1, 1982 by the Mixed Industry Development Corporation of Charleston, as a part of the records it acquired with the purchase of All-State Glass Company, which was a successor to the Fractured Glass Company. The Archival Collections Center, in turn, donated the Pergammon's materials to the Feverish Archives in Workville in September, 1993, because of their locally relevant content.

Boxes 1 and 2

Financial Records in bound volumes

Expense record

Mar 31, 1894-July 27, 1897

Aug 31, 1897-Apr 30, 1903 (May 31, 1905)

May 1, 1905-Nov 30, 1906

Dec 1, 1906-Nov 14, 1908

Nov 19, 1908-Feb 6, 1911

Feb 15, 1911-Mar 14, 1912

[gap]

Apr 12, 1915-July 12, 1916

July 14, 1916-Nov 24, 1917

Letterpress copybooks containing outgoing typescript correspondence of Dewey Divot with several Workville financial institutions regarding the restaurant's business operations

Jan 27, 1894-Dec 12, 1900

Jan 15, 1900-Oct 22, 1907

### Box 3

Expense Ledger (Accounts payable)

Apr 30, 1894-Nov 29, 1902

[gap]

Aug 1905-Feb 1913

Cash Book

May 14, 1894-Mar 20, 1903

[gap]

June 1, 1918-Feb 6, 1919

Payroll Record

Feb 24, 1912-Jan 16, 1915

Jan 23, 1915-Feb 1, 1919

Menus

circa 1910 (Pergammon's City Restaurant)

Mar 21, 1917 (Pergammon's Cafe Polonia)

Mar 20, 1918 (Pergammon's Cafe)

## **Description Sample B: Overview of Archival Materials that You Must Accession (Exercise 5)**

Archives R Us, B-52 Overly Gothic Library, Fiat Slug University, City by the Sea, CF 98765

The next available collection number is MSS 5015

The Legislature of the State of Confusiana enacted a bill for the creation of an Indian Department in 1855, in response to increasing tensions between new settlers of European American descent and Native American communities, especially those along coastal areas of the state. Elmer McClintock (1805-1892) served as the first and only Secretary of this department, which during its brief existence was a cabinet-level position reporting directly to the Governor. McClintock proved to be an inept

administrator, interested more in accumulation of personal wealth at the expense of those his department was charged with protecting, and political scandals resulting from his actions resulted in an official legislative act decommissioning the department in 1872.

Mainly correspondence, reports, and financial records of the Indian Department. Includes important correspondence from elders of various Native American communities in the state of Confusiana detailing economic and social conditions and hardships within those communities, and depredations at the hands of white settlers nearby. Much of this correspondence was written by missionaries, and a small amount of it is in Spanish. The remainder of the collection material is in English. Material dates from the earliest legislative act founding the department, to a series of reports and correspondence documenting a half-hearted investigation into the scandals surrounding McClintock's administration of the department, conducted by the state's Attorney General two years after the department was dissolved. The department produced a series of detailed profiles of various communities of Native Americans in Confusiana in the mid-nineteenth century, which are a valuable snapshot documenting white perceptions of natives during the time period and providing valuable statistical information about those communities. McClintock used departmental funds to hire spies, who were planted in or near twenty-seven native communities and who submitted voluminous daily diaries and summary reports to him, which are included in the collection. Correspondence includes letters from Samuel Sutter, Franklin Polk, Aloysius Nederlander, and a rare set of correspondence from United States President Andrew Johnson detailing his government's post-Civil War plans for revamping federal approaches to Native American communities.

From 1906-1907, Professor Dorset Donnelly of the University of Confusiana interviewed a number of people still living at the time regarding the scandals associated with McClintock's administration of the Indian Department, audiocassettes (34 of them, each in its own case) of which are included in the collection. There is also a small set of personal and family correspondence, contemporaneous with the department records, which was maintained by Mrs. Belle Barth McClintock, wife of the Secretary. These are unrelated to Indian affairs but came to Archives R Us with the Indian Department materials. Finally, there are approximately 800 breathtaking photographic prints taken between 1868 and 1871 by the noted Confusianan photographer Seagram Mendocino of members of the Yahi and Yurok tribes. Most of these photographs are studio portraits of individuals, but several are taken in social settings within the villages and provide a rare visual glimpse into life in a mid-nineteenth century native village in Confusiana.

Significantly, there is a gap in the materials contained in the collection. Nothing exists for the period between 1862 and 1865. According to the donor of the collection, the Confusiana State Archives decided to deaccession these materials in 1967, and boxes were placed on the loading dock to be collected by a vendor for shredding. The vendor randomly loaded the boxes containing the records for the years 1862-1865, possibly

with materials from other years, in an initial pick-up, and those were actually shredded. Alert staff of the Capitol City Historical Society seized the opportunity and rescued the other boxes containing Indian Department records from the loading dock before the shredding vendor could return to pick up the remainder of the materials.

The accession is housed in 17 Paige boxes: the Indian Department materials are in 12 of them, the Donnelly audiocassettes in 1, the McClintock family materials in 2, and the Mendocino photographs in 2. A use copy, to be kept by the repository, of the Donnelly audiocassettes must be produced at the researcher's expense when none exist. The collection was donated by Francine Fishpaw, who was a volunteer at the Capitol City Historical Society and removed the collection from that institution when it was closed in 1975. It is unclear whether Fishpaw removed materials from the collection prior to donating it to Fiat Slug University, but it was donated in two accessions between 1986 and 1989. There is circumstantial evidence that several letters from Abraham Lincoln to Secretary McClintock were removed from the collection and separately auctioned at some point. Peripheral descriptions suggest that these items match several Lincoln letters in the collections of the library at Western University in Pacifica City, Confusiana, donated by an anonymous alumnus. At the request of elected officials of the Chumash tribe, 0.1 linear feet of material documenting that community's religious practices has been closed to researchers, pending resolution of ethical claims being pursued by the tribe. The collection was processed by an intern during the summer of 2006 according to basic-level processing guidelines in use by the repository. This was done as part of a concerted effort to provide access to all of the materials in the repository's unprocessed backlog. Materials were refoldered only when original folders were in poor condition. In an exception to the basic processing approach, photographs have been individually sleeved and housed in appropriate conditions. The collection falls into the scope of the repository's Early Northern Confusiana collecting area.

# ARCHIVES R US PROCESSING MANUAL

## EXCERPT DETAILING LOCAL INTERPRETATION OF *DACS* RULES FOR ELEMENTS OF ARCHIVAL DESCRIPTION

### Archives R Us, Fiat Slug University Libraries, City by the Sea, Confusiana 98765

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Processors should use these instructions in conjunction with the rules for each element in *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2007). Where there is an apparent conflict, follow the local interpretation of the DACS rules in this manual. Consult the Head of Technical Services if you have questions.

## 2.1 Reference Code Element

- Record a local identifier (2.1.3). Archives R Us local identifiers comprise MSS + a sequential 4-digit number assigned by the Accessioning Coordinator.  
Example: MSS 0128
- Do not record a repository identifier (2.1.4) or a country identifier (2.1.5) when using the template; these are supplied in the encoding upon output from the template.

## 2.2 Name and Location of Repository Element

- Supply the following boilerplate text  
Archives R Us, B-52 Overly Gothic Library, Fiat Slug  
University, City by the Sea, Confusiana 98765

## 2.3 Title Element

### Titles at the Collection Level

- For collection-level titles, supply, at minimum, a *name segment* (2.3.4-2.3.17) and a *nature of the archival unit segment* (2.3.18-2.3.19) in the supplied title. For collections intentionally assembled by Archives R Us, follow instructions in DACS rule 2.3.6. We have made a local decision not to utilize DACS rule 2.3.20 in Archives R Us collection-level titles.
- Use DACS rule 2.3.21 to supply a *topical segment* only when a collection documents a single, very specific topical concept, geographic area, or person. If the topic is a person, use DACS rule 2.3.22 to insure that the supplied title is structured in such a way as to make clear the topical function of a personal name.

### Titles at the Series Level

- For series-level titles, always supply a *nature of the archival unit segment* (2.3.18-2.3.19).

- Supply a *name segment* (2.3.4-2.3.17) for a series only in two cases. First, when the person, family, or organization primarily responsible for the accumulation, maintenance, and/or use of the materials in the series differs from the name(s) included in the collection-level title. Second, when the actual creator (i.e., author, photographer) of all of the materials in a series is different from the name(s) included in the collection-level title (i.e., when there is one person or organization uniformly responsible for the intellectual content of every item included in the series).
- Use DACS rule 2.3.21 to supply a *topical segment* at the series level only when a series documents a single, very specific topical concept, geographic area, or person. If the topic is a person, use DACS rule 2.3.22 to insure that the supplied title is structured in such a way as to make clear the topical function of a personal name.

## 2.4 Date Element

- Supply an inclusive date range comprising the dates of creation of the earliest and latest materials in the collection, separated by a hyphen (2.4.7).
- Supply bulk dates (2.4.10) only when that 'bulk' includes more than 75% of the collection materials and when the gap between the bulk dates and outliers is 25 years or more.
- Do not record anomalous dates (2.4.11) at the collection or series levels. At other levels, never record more than a single anomalous date outside of the dates of creation range. Do not record anomalous dates when the gap is less than 25 years.
- Estimate dates whenever possible (2.4.12, 2.4.15); use *undated* sparingly, when estimation is absolutely not feasible; never use the abbreviation *n.d.* (2.4.16).
- If dates are estimated, use *circa* to indicate this; always spell out *circa*.
- Do not record exact single dates (2.4.13) at the collection or series level. If recorded, do so in Year Month Day order (2.4.14) and abbreviate all months using their first three letters, with no trailing period.

Example: Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

## 2.5 Extent Element

- At the collection level, record a parallel expression of physical extent (2.5.4, 2.5.7) with number of linear feet followed in parentheses by number of boxes. Do not abbreviate *linear feet*.  
89.25 linear feet (105 boxes)
- If a collection includes born-digital material, express the total extent of that material in megabytes, in addition to the linear footage. If a larger expression of digital extent (e.g., gigabytes) is appropriate, use it.  
17 linear feet (21 boxes) and 75 megabytes
- Round all decimals to the nearest quarter (.25) and never record more than 2 decimal places.
- If the linear footage for a collection is less than 1.0, record a zero (0) in front of the decimal

0.75 linear feet *not* .75 linear feet

- Record Paige boxes as 1.0 linear foot each, and Hollinger boxes as 0.5 linear foot each

## 2.6 Name of Creator(s) Element

- Record, at minimum, the name(s) used in the *name segment* of the supplied title (9.8).
- If the repository is responsible for the creation of an intentionally assembled collection and not noted in the *name segment* (2.3.6), record the name of the repository here.
- Also record others named in the Administrative/Biographical History Element if they have a significant role in the *provenance* of the collection (9.9). Do not record here those whose role is simply responsibility for creation of the intellectual content of materials in the collection.
- Record names as they appear in the Overly Gothic Library's name authority file, or if not found there, use DACS chapters 12-14 to formulate the name in an authorized way.
- Record as many separate names as necessary to capture responsibility for the archival provenance of the materials being described.

## 2.7 Administrative/Biographical History Element

- Use DACS rules 10.14-10.24 to provide succinct background information on individuals or families named either in the Title (2.3) or Name of Creator(s) (2.6) elements.
- Use DACS rules 10.25-10.36 to provide succinct background information on corporate bodies named either in the Title (2.3) or Name of Creator(s) (2.6) elements.

## 3.1 Scope and Content Element

- Use the bulleted list of scope and content information components under "Purpose and Scope" in DACS chapter 3.1 (p. 35) to guide composition of the content of this element. Evaluate the need for the inclusion of additional information based on its importance in assisting users in assessing the relevance of the collection.
- At the collection level, compose a brief initial paragraph that summarizes in the first sentence the nature of the collection and the role and/or importance of the creator(s) (e.g., "The personal papers of [named individual or family] ...." or "The organizational records of [named corporate body] ...." The final sentence of this paragraph should summarize, at a broad level, the types of materials in the collection. Follow this, if necessary, by additional paragraphs providing more detail about important aspects of the collection. Write in complete sentences.
- In cases where DACS rule 2.3.19 was used to supply the *nature of the archival unit* segment of the collection title, use the same terms in the first

sentence of the first paragraph, in place of papers or records (e.g., "The photographs and diaries of [named individual or family] ....").

- For intentionally assembled collections, craft a first sentence in the first paragraph that appropriately reflects the title of the collection (e.g., "This collection documents the history of City by the Sea, Confusiana, with particular emphasis on ....").
- In the Archives R Us Finding Aid Tool Template, copy the first paragraph of the Scope and Content Element content into the section labeled "Summary."

Example of a two-paragraph Scope and Content element, the first paragraph of which would be copied into the Summary section of the template:

The organizational records of Don't Trash Oakland, a community organization in Oakland, Confusiana, dedicated to improving living conditions in the city. Collection materials document, among other things, the organization's pivotal role working with Mayor Jerry Brown in the late 1990s to attract commercial and residential development projects to a historically blighted inner city. The collection contains correspondence, reports, photographs, minutes, financial materials, and the contents of a community blog used by the organization to keep residents informed about important issues.

The collection is especially significant because it documents grass-roots community activism among African American residents not typically involved in the city's leadership prior to the founding of this organization. It contains a significant amount of documentation regarding the organization's active outreach to develop community leadership in troubled parts of Oakland in response to rising drug- and gang-related violence during the 1990s.

## 3.2 System of Arrangement Element

- Insert the following sentence, if the collection is arranged into series.
  - Follow this with a listing of each series, using upper case Roman numerals to designate each series.

The collection is arranged in 3 series:

- I. Correspondence
- II. Photographs
- III. Organizational records

- If the collection is not arranged in series, compose a sentence or two characterizing the primary arrangement scheme.
  - Example: The collection is arranged chronologically.
- If original order has been maintained or enhanced in some way during arrangement, add a sentence indicating why the original order was significant. If a usable order was imposed during processing, in the absence of a meaningful original order, add a sentence indicating this.

Example: The collection is arranged chronologically, as it was received from the donor. The sole exception is the correspondence with certain individuals that was maintained



by the creator separately, for unknown reasons, from the overall chronological filing sequence of her papers. These files have been arranged alphabetically by surname following the chronological sequence of correspondence.

## 4.1 Conditions Governing Access Element

- If there are no access restrictions, use the following sentence:  
The collection is open for research.
- If there are restrictions, use as many of the following sentences necessary to provide information about the restrictions:  
Access to [state relevant part of the collection] requires written permission of the donor. Contact the reference archivist for further information.  
Access to [state relevant part of the collection] requires that the researcher sign a non-disclosure agreement.

## 4.2 Physical Access Element

- If the collection includes original audiovisual materials, use the following sentence:  
Use of audiovisual materials requires the creation of a use copy, if none exists, at the researcher's expense. The use copy will be maintained as part of the collection.  
Researchers desiring a use copy for their own use outside of the repository should consult the Copying Services information on the Archives R Us web site.

## 4.4 Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use Element

- At minimum, provide one of the following statements concerning copyright, depending on the situation in a specific collection:  
Copyright has been transferred to Fiat Slug University for materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.  
Unpublished materials authored or otherwise produced by the creator(s) of this collection are in the public domain. There are no restrictions on use. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

Copyright is retained by the creator(s) of this collection for materials they have authored or otherwise produced. After the lifetime of the creator(s), copyright passes to Fiat Slug University. Copyright status for other collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

## **4.5 Languages and Scripts of Material Element**

- Supply a sentence listing the languages and, if relevant, scripts of the collection materials.  
Example: Collection materials are in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
- If material in a specific language(s) is only extant in small quantities, give an indication of this in the sentence.  
Example: Collection material is in Spanish and Russian, with a small amount of material in English.

## **5.1 Custodial History Element**

- If information about the custodial history of the collection between its maintenance and use by the donor and its acquisition by Archives R Us is important to future users of the collection, compose a succinct paragraph summarizing the relevant information.
- If the contents of the collection itself have been changed in any way by a former custodian of the collection, include that information here and not in the Appraisal, Destruction, and Scheduling Element.

## **5.2 Immediate Source of Acquisition Element**

- Compose a sentence indicating the immediate source of the collection and the year acquired. Do not include acquisition numbers.  
Example: Gift of Jane Q. Doe, 1976.  
Example: Purchased with funds from the Fiat Slug Endowment, 1983.

## **5.3 Appraisal, Destruction, and Scheduling Information Element**

- At minimum, provide in a succinct paragraph as much information as possible about why the collection was brought into Archives R Us. Consult with the appropriate archivist if documentation is not available in the collection file.
- Additionally, if the decision was made not to accept certain types of material from the donor, provide this information.
- Additionally, if during processing archivists at Archives R Us made decisions about removing significant amounts of material from the collection (e.g.,

material was out of scope, sampling), provide the rationale for that decision and enough information so that future researchers can understand the relationship of what was removed to what remains in the collection.

Example: The collection originally included four linear feet of financial information, primarily checkbook stubs and monthly bank statements. During processing, in order to reduce the amount of information deemed inessential for long-term retention, the final bank statement for each year was retained and others discarded. Also, checkbook stubs were sampled, with one random book of stubs retained for every five years.

## 7 Notes Element

- Supply the following boilerplate statement regarding the format in which Archives R Us prefers researchers to cite archival collections (replace the bracketed parts with information relevant to the collection you are describing):  
[Name of collection] ([Collection number]), Archives R Us, Overly Gothic Library, Fiat Slug University, City by the Sea, Confusiana 98765

## 8 Description Control Element

- Compose a sentence indicating the name of the person(s) who processed the collection and provide the year in which processing was completed. If finding aid has been revised, state this in an additional sentence.  
Example: Processed by Ima Archivist, 1992. Description revised, 2005.

## Other DACS Elements Not Covered in this Manual

- Processors identifying a need in a specific description for the use of a DACS element not covered in this manual should consult with the Head of Technical Services.

## Additional Information Not Supplied According to DACS

- A content standard for a processing note is not included in DACS. Compose a succinct paragraph providing an overview of the strategy that was used during processing of the collection.  
Example: This collection received a basic level of processing within a year after it was received by Archives R Us. This included rehousing in archival boxes and minimal organization. Except in extreme cases, collection materials were not refoldered. Descriptive information is drawn in large part from information supplied with the collection and from an initial survey of the contents. Folder titles appearing in the Inventory section of the finding aid are often based on

those provided by the creator or previous custodian. Titles have not been verified against the contents of the folders in all cases. When folder labels contained no, or too little, information, processing staff supplied titles based on a cursory examination of folder contents and appropriate national content standards. Additional processing may be done in the future if usage of the collection suggests that would be appropriate.