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# The Development and Professionalization of the Utah State Archives, 1897-1968

Cory L. Nimer  
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## ABSTRACT

The 20th century saw the rise and development of the archival profession. This paper examines what it means to be a profession and how the characteristics of a profession began to manifest themselves in the archival community using the Utah State Archives as a case study. The Utah State Archives reflects many of the national trends towards professionalization as it was initially part of the Utah State Historical Society and eventually became its own entity.

On December 8, 1961, the Council on Library Resources, Inc. presented a grant of \$42,000 to the Society of American Archivists (SAA) to complete a study of state archival institutions. Ernest Posner, a former president of SAA and leader in the archival profession, was appointed director of the survey. To better understand the landscape, Posner conducted a series of "circuits," or survey trips, between 1962 and 1963 to every archival repository in the United States. As part of his fourth tour, in the fall of 1962, Posner stopped in Salt Lake City to inspect the archival holdings of the Utah State Historical Society.<sup>1</sup> The institution's director, Everett L. Cooley, noted that

the Society had been host to a very interesting visitor, Dr. Ernest Posner, dean of American archivists, who is presently making a survey of state archival institutions. Dr. Posner inspected the

1. Ernest Posner, *American State Archives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 3-4.

Archives facilities. He was pleased with the operation. He expressed surprise with the program, and said he did not know how so much has been accomplished with the personnel and budget the Archives has to operate with.<sup>2</sup>

Posner published the results of the survey in 1964 as *American State Archives*, which included a summary of the history and functions of the repository.

Posner's report was generally positive, and captured a significant moment in the development of the Historical Society and its Archives Division. In the preceding years the Society had slowly evolved from a group of amateur enthusiasts to an increasingly professional operation. A few years later, the Archives would complete this transformation to emerge as an independent state agency.

This paper examines the development of the Utah State Archives, from its origins as part of the Utah State Historical Society to its eventual separation in 1968. While this story provides useful context to the study of Utah archives, history, and government, the story of the Archives also illustrates larger trends in American archival practices. These include the tension between archives and manuscript collecting, the impact of national trends toward professionalization on state and local institutions, and the competing demands of archives and history.

## Overview of American Archives

Many present-day archivists are familiar with the two traditions concept for the management and care of archival materials. First codified by Richard C. Berner in 1983, the two traditions thesis identifies an antiquarian historical manuscripts tradition and an opposing public archives tradition.<sup>3</sup> This interpretation of events has been widely accepted, and is featured prominently in James O'Toole and Richard Cox's introductory text on archives.<sup>4</sup> However, as Rebecca Hirsch has recently pointed out, this interpretation overstates the case for public archives.<sup>5</sup> During the nineteenth century, government archives were non-existent, and archival records were maintained and made available through their creating bodies.<sup>6</sup>

2. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, September 15, 1962, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
3. Luke J. Gilliland-Swetland, "The Provenance of a Profession: The Permanence of the Public Archives and Historical Manuscripts Traditions in American Archival History," *American Archivist* 54, no. 1 (1991): 161.
4. James M. O'Toole and Richard J. Cox, *Understanding Archives & Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2006), 51-59.
5. Rebecca Hirsch, "The Permanence of Provenance: The 'Two Traditions' and the American Archival Profession," *Journal of Archival Organization* 8 (2010): 55.
6. Posner, *American State Archives*, 12.

The success of recordkeeping activities in early America also varied significantly from state to state. While many of the colonies had regulations calling for the creation and preservation of records, fires and other disasters common during the colonial period created gaps in maintained records. At the same time, records custodians often failed to maintain the integrity of the records, giving original documents to historians or others in exchange for copies, or neglecting the physical preservation of the materials in their charge.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the uneven care for public records, there was an increasing interest following the American Revolution in creating a historical record and heritage. This led to the development of historical societies throughout the country, beginning with the establishment of the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1791.<sup>8</sup> Historical societies were primarily interested in collecting the papers of prominent early Americans, preserving them, and making them available through documentary editions. In some cases, the societies also maintained public records, managing them using library classification systems.<sup>9</sup>

It was not until the development of scientific approaches to the study of history in the 1870s that steps were taken leading to the establishment of public archives in the United States. With an increasing emphasis on the use of primary sources in the writing of history, historians began to organize and advocate for access to sources. In 1895, the American Historical Association established the Historical Manuscripts Commission, with the primary responsibility of locating primary sources that might be useful to historians.<sup>10</sup> By the next year, the commission had compiled *A List of Printed Guides to and Descriptions of Archives and Other Repositories of Historical Manuscript*, including information about both archival and manuscript sources.<sup>11</sup>

The early success of the Historical Manuscripts Commission led to the formation of the Public Archives Commission in 1899. The Public Archives Commission was tasked with the identification and description of public records available for historical research. The Public Archives Commission quickly became one of the most effective lobbying organizations for the passage of archival legislation.<sup>12</sup> The Commission's effectiveness was based on the surveys and reports it had created on the archival

7. Ibid., 9-13.

8. O'Toole and Cox, *Understanding Archives & Manuscripts*, 55.

9. Richard C. Berner, *Archival Theory and Practice in the United States: A Historical Analysis* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1983), 12. Berner includes a description of work done by Joseph B. Felt of the Massachusetts Historical Society to preserve state records by organizing them by topic and binding them into 241 volumes.

10. O'Toole and Cox, *Understanding Archives & Manuscripts*, 61.

11. Posner, *American State Archives*, 18.

12. Berner, *Archival Theory and Practice in the United States*, 13.

institutions of thirty states. These reports demonstrated the value of those institutions.<sup>13</sup>

The growing recognition of archives and historical manuscripts in historical research led the American Historical Society to establish a forum for those interested in the management of public records. This forum was called the Conference of Archivists and was established in 1909. The Conference of Archivists continued until 1936 when the Society of American Archivists (SAA) was established.<sup>14</sup> The SAA was established to allow the more technical and precise concerns of archivists to be addressed rather than continuing the historical focus on use and interpretation of archival records, which was the major focus of the Conference of Archivists.<sup>15</sup> The formation of the SAA was an early step towards professionalism by American archivists.

## Professionalization and American Archives

It is not easy to define what differentiates an occupation from a profession. Sociologists who study the professions have described a variety of characteristics of professions but have generated very little consensus on which of these characteristics are the fundamental criteria for defining a profession.<sup>16</sup> As Stan Lester has noted, “the notion of a ‘profession’ as distinct from a ‘non-professional’ occupation is far from clear.”<sup>17</sup> In spite of this lack of clarity about what defines a profession, it is still useful to attempt to distill a set of criteria for defining what a profession is. This is particularly true when studying occupations that are attempting to gain status as a profession.

Since its development in the early 20th century, the archival profession has steadily charted a course towards professionalization. In gauging the progress of the archival profession towards this stated goal, it is critical to have a set of criteria against which to measure its efforts. For the purposes of this paper, the following criteria has been chosen to define a profession:

- **Possession and use of a specialized knowledge base.** One of the few characteristics common across every sociological definition of a profession is

13. O'Toole and Cox, *Understanding Archives & Manuscripts*, 61-62.

14. Berner, *Archival Theory and Practice in the United States*, 15.

15. O'Toole and Cox, *Understanding Archives & Manuscripts*, 63.

16. For examples, see Patrick B. Forsyth and Thomas J. Danisiewicz, “Toward a Theory of Professionalization,” *Work and Occupations* 12 (1985): 59-76; Stan Lester, “Becoming a Profession: Conservation in the UK,” *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 23, no. 1 (2002): 87-94; Kenneth S. Lynn, ed. *The Professions in America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965); and Adam Yarmolinsky, “What Future for the Professional in American Society?” *Daedalus* 107, no. 1 (1978): 159-174.

17. Lester, “Becoming a Profession,” 88.

the possession and use of a specialized knowledge base. In fact, it has been argued that “the profession must not only possess this knowledge; it must also help to create it.”<sup>18</sup>

- **Service orientation.** Members of a profession use their specialized knowledge base “for the benefit of individuals or groups with whom he or she establishes a relationship of trust and confidence.”<sup>19</sup> In practical terms, this means that members of the profession exercise their specialized knowledge to benefit their client and not themselves.
- **Community sanction.** Professions are given grants of power by the communities that they serve. These grants of power give professions the right to select who will become members of the profession and the right to discipline members who transgress the profession's code of conduct. These grants of power are given because the community trusts the profession's commitment to its service orientation.<sup>20</sup>
- **Institutional altruism.** Another important characteristic of a profession is that it possesses a system of institutionalized rewards that encourage members of the profession to maintain a strong service orientation. These institutionalized rewards systems typically take the form of codes of ethics and mechanisms for enforcing these codes of ethics.<sup>21</sup>
- **Image building.** Forsyth and Danisiewicz have argued that the creation of a strong public image is one of the key factors in an occupation gaining the community's sanction as a profession. They state that “successful public recognition—a concept that is larger than legal recognition or licensure—is likely to result in a grant of autonomy.”<sup>22</sup> The community has to be willing to allow members of the profession to make autonomous decisions and they do this if they trust the profession—as exemplified in its public image.

18. William J. Goode, “The Librarian: From Occupation to Profession?” *The Library Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (1961): 306-320.

19. Yarmolinsky, “What Future for the Professional in American Society?” 159.

20. For a more detailed discussion of how professions are granted power see Patrick B. Forsyth and Thomas J. Danisiewicz, “Toward a Theory of Professionalization,” *Work and Occupations* 12 (1985): 59-76.

21. For more information on the impact of institutionalized rewards for maintaining a strong service orientation see Forsyth and Danisiewicz, “Toward a Theory of Professionalization,” 59-76; Goode, “The Librarian: From Occupation to Profession?,” 306-320; John Frederickson and James F. Rooney, “How the Music Occupation Failed to Become a Profession,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 21, no. 2 (1990): 189-206; and Richard J. Cox, “Professionalism and Archivists in the United States,” *American Archivist* 49 (1986): 229-247.

22. Forsyth and Danisiewicz, “Toward a Theory of Professionalization,” 64.

Examining the archival occupation in relation to these five criteria will allow us to see where it is on the continuum of becoming a profession.

## **The Utah State Historical Society**

Another important early step towards the professionalization of American archivists was the creation of state archives. Around the same time as the establishment of the Public Archives Commission, various states began to address the need for improved preservation and access. Posner identified two models for the development of state archives—the Southern states and the Midwestern archival models. The Southern states archival model was based on the establishment of state archival institutions. Alabama was the first of these states, forming its Department of Archives and History in 1901. The Midwestern archival model gave responsibility for public records within the state to the state historical society. Kansas and Nebraska were the first in the region to enact laws to this effect, doing so in 1905.<sup>23</sup>

In Utah, the State Archives developed gradually following the Midwestern model, with responsibility for state archival records originally given to the Utah State Historical Society. Over time, the Society's operations professionalized as the organization was impacted by both internal needs and external trends. Examining the development of the archives shows how the formation of the archival profession nationally was manifested in local operations.

### **Establishment and Early Goals**

The Utah State Historical Society was founded in 1897 as part of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the state of Utah. The *Deseret Evening News* explained the wider goals of the Society in an article written the day following its organization. Among the objectives of the new society, they listed “the collection of such material as may serve to illustrate the growth, development and resources of Utah and the intermountain region; the preservation of manuscripts, papers, documents and tracts of value, especially narratives of the adventures of early explorers and pioneers.”<sup>24</sup> These materials would provide primary sources to tell the history of the state of Utah.

The first president selected for the organization was Franklin D. Richards, an apostle in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Church Historian. Richards' selection, and his acceptance, of the position are clear indications that the community believed that the new historical society had an important role to play. This community sanction proved extremely important to the Historical Society. Historian Gary Topping has argued that Richards was selected in order to “indicate that the Mormon Church saw neither competition nor conflict of interest inherent in

23. Posner, *American State Archives*, 19-22.

24. *Deseret Evening News*, December 29, 1897, Gary Topping Papers (1824-2004), Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.

the new organization.”<sup>25</sup> However, in his initial presidential address it was unclear what role Richards envisioned for the Society as a collecting institution, noting only that other organizations such as the local libraries, state and local government, and the Genealogical Society of Utah had complementary collections.<sup>26</sup> Other early presidents of the organization included Orson F. Whitney (1902-1908), Joseph T. Kingsbury (1908-1909), James E. Talmage (1909-1912), and Spencer Clawson (1912-1917).<sup>27</sup> Yet despite the involvement of many important early Utah figures, the Historical Society struggled to achieve its aims—largely due to a lack of resources.<sup>28</sup>

### Legal Mandate for Archival Functions

This began to change when the Historical Society was recognized as an official state institution.<sup>29</sup> Until that time, the Society had been self-funded, supported by individual memberships and centered on the Salt Lake and Utah Valleys. Recognizing the limitations that this imposed on the organization, a legislative committee had lobbied the legislature since 1903 to provide funding and adopt the Historical Society as a state agency.<sup>30</sup> Mormon historian Andrew Jenson, who had served on the committee, was elected as president in 1917, when the legislation was finally passed. The 1917 law recognized the Society as an official state institution, allowing it the possibility of requesting budgeted funds from the state to complete its objectives. The law also provided the legal mandate for founding an archival program, stating that

The said society shall hold all its present and future collections of property for the state, and it is hereby made custodian of all records, documents, relics, and other material of historic value, which are now or hereafter may be in charge of any state, country, or other official not required by law to be kept as a part of public records, ten years after the current use of same or sooner in the discretion of the heads of such departments, and copies thereof when made and certified by the secretary of said society under oath and seal shall have the same force and effect as if made by the original custodians.<sup>31</sup>

25. Gary Topping, “One Hundred Years at the Utah State Historical Society,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 65, no. 3 (1997): 211.
26. Franklin D. Richards, “Franklin D. Richard’s Presidential Address of 1898,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (1972): 339.
27. “Presidents of the Utah State Historical Society,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (1972): 340-341.
28. For a fuller discussion of the establishment of the Utah State Historical Society, see Topping, “One Hundred Years at the Utah State Historical Society”; Glenn M. Leonard, “Utah State Historical Society, 1897-1972,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 40 (1972): 300-334.
29. Leonard, “Utah State Historical Society, 1897-1972,” 313.
30. *Ibid.*
31. Allen Sanford and Richard Thurman, *The Compiled Laws of the State of Utah, 1917* (Salt Lake City:



The law also required that the Historical Society catalog and provide public access to their collections in a reading room. The passage of the 1917 law and subsequent legislation provides clear indications of community sanction for the Historical Society and increasing esteem for public records.

During Jenson's presidency, the Historical Society began to take the initial steps to develop its historical and archival collections. By 1920, collections consisted primarily of the relics obtained from the Golden Jubilee Commission and some government publications.<sup>32</sup> When the Society was moved to its own offices in the State Capitol from the fairground offices, Jenson also donated a "nearly complete set of all the books [he] had written or published" as the foundation of a historical reference library.<sup>33</sup> The collections were further expanded beginning in 1920, when Andrew Neff was selected to write a history of Utah's involvement in the First World War. In order to do so, he began the first concerted efforts to gather historical manuscripts and records.<sup>34</sup> As he described it, at "the present time the archives of the Society possesses many valuable documents, but must secure a wealth of additions before the many sided phases of this war period will be satisfactorily covered. I emphasize this aspect of the problem, as it is the essential preparatory step to the writing of the history of Utah in the world war."<sup>35</sup> Neff was ultimately unable to complete the project, in part due to the challenge of gathering adequate documentation, though the military collections he amassed remained with the Society.<sup>36</sup>

In the years following the Neff history, funding for the Historical Society became sporadic, with legislative appropriations often tied to specific expenses rather than ongoing operations and maintenance. This problem was clear in the 1926 report by Society president Albert Philips, which noted that the historical materials on the World War (collected by Neff through a financial appropriation from the Legislature) were still sitting unprocessed in the Society's offices due to a lack of funding. He also noted that the lack of funds made the collection of historical manuscripts impossible, especially when other state and private institutions had actively funded programs.<sup>37</sup>

Century Printing Company, 1919), 219.

32. Utah State Historical Society, *Biennial Report of the State Historical Society of Utah, 1917-1918*; Utah State Historical Society, *Report of the Utah State Historical Society for the Biennium 1919-1920*.

33. Andrew Jenson, *Autobiography of Andrew Jenson* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1938).

34. Utah State Historical Society, *Report of the Utah State Historical Society for the Biennium 1919-1920*.

35. *Ibid.*, 5.

36. Topping, "One Hundred Years at the Utah State Historical Society," 222.

37. Utah State Historical Society, *Report of the Utah State Historical Society for the Biennium 1919-1920*.

## Movement Toward Professionalization

While Philips's 1926 report was fairly bleak, steps were already being taken that would ultimately lead to significant improvements for the Historical Society. These steps moved the Archives steadily towards a more professional outlook, increased community sanction for the Archives, recognized a deeper reliance on the specialized knowledge of Archives, and strengthened the image of the Archives.

In 1925, the law changed to allow the governor to appoint members to the Board of Control of the Society. The legislation also included the establishment of the positions of treasurer and librarian within the organization.<sup>38</sup> In the years following the annexation of the Historical Society by the state executive (with the exception of the 1933 biennium), the Society was regularly included in legislative appropriations. The change in the law also led to changes in the composition of the Board. Following the reorganization of the Society in 1925-1926, perhaps due to the nature of the appointments and infusion of funding, the nature of the Society's leadership began to change and it became more common for academics and historians to be appointed to the Board. Board members from the late 1920s included history professors Joel E. Ricks of the Utah Agricultural College, Levi Edgar Young of the University of Utah, and William J. Snow of Brigham Young University. Prominent amateur and local historians such as William R. Palmer of Cedar City and J. Cecil Alter of Salt Lake City were also prominent appointees, and helped plot the course of the Society into the 1940s.

With the infusion of state funding, the Historical Society allocated \$1,200 per year to provide salaries to support the work of the secretary-treasurer and librarian.<sup>39</sup> The infusion of funding from the state was indicative of the community's support, or community sanction, of the Society's activities. The Society's decision to appoint a librarian demonstrated their understanding of the specialized knowledge necessary for caring for the materials in the Society's library. Board president Philips was appointed librarian, to be "in charge of the Society's library and files; and Curator of the Society's Museum," while Alter was made secretary-treasurer.<sup>40</sup> In the years to come, Alter, a professional weatherman and amateur historian, came to be known as the "workhorse" of the Society. In addition to his work as secretary-treasurer, he also served as editor of the *Utah Historical Quarterly* and when Philips left the presidency of the organization in 1931, as librarian as well.<sup>41</sup>

38. *State of Utah, Laws of the State of Utah, 1925, Passed at the Sixteenth Regular Session of the Legislation* (Salt Lake City: State of Utah, 1925), sec. 5357X.

39. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, June 18, 1927, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

40. *Ibid.*

41. Leonard, "Utah State Historical Society, 1897-1972," 304.

Alter's development of the library and manuscript holdings suffered during this period as he focused primarily on the production of the *Utah Historical Quarterly*.<sup>42</sup> During these years, there are limited references in the Board minutes regarding collecting historical manuscripts, generally taking the form of occasional acquisitions of diaries or letters. More often, discussions centered around locating content for publication in the *Quarterly*; not the Archive.<sup>43</sup> Although incoming president Snow established committees to support core activities, including the creation of a Library and Museum Committee headed by Ricks, by 1932 the committee recommended the suspension of their manuscript collecting program in order to focus on developing content for the *Quarterly*.<sup>44</sup>

Despite the hard work of Board members, it had become clear by the mid-1930s that paid help was needed to meet the Historical Society's goals. From 1936 to 1937, Flora Bean Horne was hired on a part-time basis as secretary-treasurer-librarian in order to allow Alter to focus on the *Utah Historical Quarterly*.<sup>45</sup> After her resignation in July 1937, the Executive Committee determined to employ a full-time secretary instead, with responsibility for "the duties of Treasurer, Librarian, Historian, Secretary, Editor Stenographer-Typist, and Miscellaneous."<sup>46</sup> Marguerite L. Sinclair was selected based on her qualifications, political connections, and experience at "libraries in the east to study cataloging and filing."<sup>47</sup>

While it does not appear that Sinclair had formal library training, she immediately began organizing the Society's collections, cataloging them according to "the [Dewey] Decimal Classification, letter [alphabetization], and other filing systems" in the first month of her employment.<sup>48</sup> Perhaps due to her efforts, there were renewed efforts to develop the library after her arrival, beginning with Alter's donation of his personal library in 1938.<sup>49</sup> Other projects initiated at this time

42. Marguerite Sinclair Reusser, "In Memoriam: J. Cecil Alter," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (1964): 325.

43. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 7, 1928, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

44. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 4, 1931, and April 9, 1932, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

45. Leonard, "Utah State Historical Society, 1897-1972," 305.

46. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 27, 1937, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

47. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, May 28, 1937, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

48. *Ibid.*

49. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 2, 1938, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

included the creation of a clippings file, the transcription of previously acquired journals, and the beginning of a card catalog.<sup>50</sup>

Over the course of Sinclair's tenure, the Society became reengaged with collecting historical manuscripts. In October 1939, the Society became the sponsoring institution for the Historical Records Survey in the state at the request of Governor Henry H. Blood. Blood felt that the Society could play an important role in gathering original documents for future researchers, stating that "we are not writing history; we are preserving the sources of Utah history, and if we keep them pure, the stream of history must be pure." Following the transfer, Sinclair began supervising two typists who assisted her with the clippings file as well as other projects.<sup>51</sup> Between 1947 and 1948, Board of Trustees' President Young also worked to coordinate manuscript collecting by the Society and other cultural heritage institutions in the state, such as the Daughters and Sons of Utah Pioneers, the Humanities Council, and the Church Historian's Office.<sup>52</sup>

The move toward professionalization within the Historical Society continued following a series of departures in the late 1940s. This included the resignation of Alter as editor of the *Utah Historical Quarterly* in October 1946, who the Board decided to replace with a history professional—in recognition of the importance of a specialized body of knowledge. Among the qualifications required for the position was that the person be "someone well trained in Utah's history and atmosphere; someone with the equivalent of a doctor's degree."<sup>53</sup> However, the needed funds were not available to hire someone immediately, leaving president Young to serve as acting editor for the time being.<sup>54</sup> The situation was aggravated by Sinclair's decision to retire in September 1948 following her marriage to Herbert Reusser of Oakland, California.<sup>55</sup>

50. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 8, 1938, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
51. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 6, 1940, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service. The work done by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) staff ended in 1942, but the collection remained with the Society. It was later broken up and its component items cataloged as individual objects.
52. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 7, 1947, and September 30, 1948, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
53. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 18, 1946, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
54. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 7, 1947, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
55. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, September 30, 1948, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

Despite these staffing issues, the momentum to develop the Historical Society's historical manuscripts holdings continued to grow during this interim period. When Ricks was appointed president in 1949, he worked to expand the Society's library holdings. This included the preparation of a library inventory and the deputizing of Board members to assist in collecting books for the Society's library.<sup>56</sup> A manuscripts committee was also reestablished to assist with this work; Board member Juanita Brooks recommended that Board members abstain from collecting for other institutions.<sup>57</sup>

It was not until 1950 that the Board was able to begin the search for a "secretary-editor" to take on the responsibilities previously held by Alter and Sinclair. Still desiring a professional historian for the position, the requirements were described as such:

The applicant should be a man trained in editorial work and one who is familiar with the history of Utah and the west. He should be a man qualified to travel throughout the state establishing local historical units and gathering journals, and should be one who is trained in public relations work and could meet favorably with the Legislature. The Board will require evidence of historic research of all applicants and will wish to meet with each candidate if such is at all possible.<sup>58</sup>

The selection committee narrowed the list to two candidates: A. Russell Mortensen, a history professor at San Bernardino Valley College, and Everett L. Cooley.<sup>59</sup> Although both candidates were considered to be "eminently well qualified" for the position, Mortensen was ultimately selected.<sup>60</sup>

During the next ten years, Mortensen made many improvements to the Historical Society. The most visible of these was the acquisition of new facilities for the organization, which moved from shared rooms in the state capitol to the Kearns Mansion in 1957—a building with "unlimited space for storage of microfilm, books, etc., and... sufficient room to house donations of private collections and libraries."<sup>61</sup>

56. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, July 27, 1949, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

57. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 14, 1949, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

58. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, June 6, 1950, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

59. *Ibid.*

60. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, August 29, 1950, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

61. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, May 10, 1952, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

Mortensen also worked to expand the Society's programs, reinvigorating the Utah Historical Quarterly, and instituting a tradition of annual meetings. Yet the most important of his actions was to advocate for the expansion of the professional staff to allow the Society to better meet its objectives. Mortensen recognized the importance of having a staff that possessed the specialized body of knowledge necessary to successfully manage library and archival materials.

In the library and manuscripts section, the first full-time staff librarian was hired in 1952. The librarian, John James, was responsible primarily for current monograph acquisitions and for cataloging of Historical Society materials. The printed book collection remained relatively small, with only 5,100 printed volumes by 1958. The library remained significantly underfunded, reporting that same year that the library did not have enough funds to keep up with current publications.<sup>62</sup> Even with the materials they were able to obtain, inadequate staffing levels left much of the material un-cataloged.<sup>63</sup>

In addition to maintaining the Historical Society's printed sources on Utah history, the librarian was also responsible for managing the historical manuscripts collection. These holdings were limited, consisting of only 350 manuscript items by 1958. Yet, many of these sources were critical for the history of Utah including pioneer journals, letters, and other primary documents. The library also managed a fairly large photograph collection, with individual items cataloged using library practices. The librarian encouraged the acquisition of more primary sources, noting that the "library's importance depends, to a great extent, upon the unique materials it possesses."<sup>64</sup>

However, it was not the librarian but the Board that oversaw the acquisition of personal and family papers during this period. Following the arrangement established by Ricks, Board members approached potential donors to encourage them to place their materials with the Historical Society, a task that Board members considered a key responsibility. As Brooks wrote, "As I see it, we constitute a non-political, non-religious group dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of history, with emphasis on making available to the public material which they would not otherwise have. I wish to co-operate fully to this end."<sup>65</sup>

62. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, March 8, 1958, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

63. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 31, 1959, and September 30, 1948, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

64. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, January 11, 1958, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

65. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 4, 1958, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

Having the Board be part of the collection acquisition process also allowed for broader discussion of the consequences of accepting donations. One notable case considered during this period was the acquisition of the J. M. Bernhisel papers, which were offered to the Historical Society on the condition that a monument be erected in the memory of Bernhisel. While the Society wanted the papers, there was concern that “it might set a dangerous precedent if the Society were to pay for such papers when most families are glad to deposit such material in the Society for preservation and historical and scholarly research.”<sup>66</sup> The papers were eventually returned to the family in 1963 due to ongoing conflict over the quality of the proposed monument.<sup>67</sup>

With the appointment of Brigham Young University librarian S. Lyman Tyler to the Board of Trustees in 1962, the library program gained a great advocate.<sup>68</sup> Tyler’s appointment to Board showed that the Historical Society understood that the specialized knowledge of librarians was a useful asset. Over the next few years he would frequently call for additional funding for collections, including actively seeking out rare books and other materials.<sup>69</sup> This representation by professional librarians continued when Tyler left the Board in 1964 and Milton C. Abrams, university librarian at Utah State University, was appointed to fill the vacancy. Yet despite this leadership, there were significant cuts to the library budget between 1964 and 1966.<sup>70</sup> During these years, the library staff was forced to rely on volunteers from the Salt Lake Junior League to process their manuscript collections.<sup>71</sup> It was not until 1967 that additional funds were made available for the further development and professionalization of the library and manuscripts program.<sup>72</sup>

## **Utah State Archives**

In addition to his work with historical manuscripts, Mortensen’s greatest achievement was the founding of the Utah State Archives. While the 1917 law had granted the Utah State Historical Society the authority to collect and maintain official public records, little was done to develop a state archival program until the late 1940s.

66. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 4, 1959, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

67. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 20, 1963, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

68. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, September 15, 1962, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

69. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 20, 1963, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

70. J. Grant Iverson, “President’s Report,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (1966): 341.

71. J. Grant Iverson, “President’s Report,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (1964): 387.

From this foundation, Utah's state archival program would eventually be formalized through new legislation in 1954.

In fact, the first mention of archives in the Board minutes does not appear until 1937, when Cornelia Lund, following a series of consultations with other historical societies, broached the subject of preserving government records. According to the minutes, she "thought it best to look into the matter, and suggested that the Society live up to the laws of the State, and Society."<sup>73</sup> This theme was taken up in 1938 when Palmer brought up the possibility of developing an archival program for the state, a proposal that was encouraged by Board president Herbert S. Auerbach.<sup>74</sup> Despite this official sanction, little concrete action was taken.

Still, the Historical Society continued to review its programs and plan for the future. The professionalization of archival activities in the Society took a large step forward in 1941 when Alter recommended that Sinclair attend the meetings of the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) and the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in Chicago in order to learn how other historical societies functioned. These professional meetings led to the establishment of the first archival program undertaken by the Historical Society. As a result of her attendance, a bill was developed by the Society and then passed in the legislature designating the Society as the Department of War Archives and History.<sup>75</sup> Sinclair also attended the joint AASLH and SAA meetings again in 1947 in Denver on behalf of the Society, providing her with additional access to professional training in archives and historical societies.<sup>76</sup> This was another sign of the Society's interest in tapping into the specialized knowledge of librarians and archivists.

With the designation of the Historical Society as the war archives, Sinclair was empowered by the Board to work with the governor and other agencies in "gathering and preserving data and information related to the State's activities in World War II, and that the work of cataloging and indexing this information be made a major project of the Society, while the information desired is now available."<sup>77</sup> Sinclair worked through the governor's office and with the selective service office to obtain an

72. J. Grant Iverson, "President's Report," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (1967): 344.

73. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 3, 1937, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

74. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 2, 1938, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

75. Reusser, "In Memoriam: J. Cecil Alter," 326-7.

76. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 7, 1947, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

77. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, February 13, 1943, and September 30, 1948, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.



index of Utah soldiers and sailors serving during the war.<sup>78</sup> This close cooperation with the governor greatly increased the profile of the Society within the executive branch, leading Governor Herbert B. Maw to describe the organization as “one of the most important departments in the State government.”<sup>79</sup>

The success of the military records archives led to renewed interest in developing an archival program after the close of the war. In the August 8, 1946, meeting of the Board, President Young opened with a discussion of the type of materials that should be in the Historical Society’s archives.<sup>80</sup> Shortly thereafter, Palmer renewed his call for expanding work with archives, urging the Society to contact all county recorders asserting that according to the law “obsolete records...belong to the Historical Society.”<sup>81</sup>

The professionalization of archival activities continued in May 1947 when the Board appointed Palmer the State Archivist for Utah. This appointment combined community sanction with recognition of the specialized knowledge necessary to perform archival functions. In connection with this appointment the state attorney general issued a letter stating that the Historical Society was legally authorized to “travel throughout the state collecting records at least ten years old or those not in current use.”<sup>82</sup> Palmer was also awarded a travel stipend and expense account for stenographic services. In October, the Board approved the creation of a microfilming program.<sup>83</sup>

Palmer’s work in the counties focused on what he described as “gleaning and copying.”<sup>84</sup> A description of his work was provided by the Kane County Standard, which wrote in a September 1947 article that

William R. Palmer, of Cedar City, State Archivist has been in Kanab this week at the Kane County Court House searching through all the

78. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 7, 1944, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
79. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, February 13, 1943, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
80. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 8, 1946, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
81. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, August 27, 1946, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
82. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, June 12, 1947, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
83. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 7, 1947, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
84. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 9, 1948, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

early records of the city and county for historical data, which will be assembled under some forty headings. The information is assembled as to subject, such as the following which shows the type of information being gathered and will be made available to [the] State and to our County under these and other appropriate heads. A few are as follows: Bounties, Courts, livestock, Irrigation, Mills, timber, power, fisheries, taxation, levies, fines, streets, sidewalks, industries, fortifications, elections, herdsman, herd grounds, United Order, and many other just as interesting headings. Some of the information already gathered is very interesting and some amusing.<sup>85</sup>

While not an archival approach, Palmer decided to focus on creating subject files due to the lack of storage space for archival materials at the Historical Society's offices.<sup>86</sup>

In order to expand the scope of the archival program, Palmer was provided with a microfilming camera a few months later to help copy the records. However, as part of the filming process, he began stamping the materials as "Property of the Utah State Historical Society," which led to conflict with records custodians. Ultimately this microfilming work was futile as later archivists deaccessioned the microfilm created by Palmer due to poor image quality.<sup>87</sup> This stage in the development of the State Archives came to a close in 1948 when the attorney general put the preservation program on hold when he decided that additional legislation was needed to authorize it. Meanwhile, Palmer's appointment to the Board expired in April 1949.<sup>88</sup>

The legal questions revolving around the archives and microfilm programs were resolved in 1951, with the passage of a new law that authorized the appointment of a State Archivist, and the establishment of a microfilming program.<sup>89</sup> However, there was no funding provided to support these programs, leaving the Historical Society unable to hire an archivist. In 1953, as an interim measure, a newly reappointed Palmer developed a proposal to make the county clerks "ex-officio assistant librarians" and members of the Society, with the hopes of encouraging their

85. *Kane County Standard*, September, 1947, William Rees and Kate Vilate Isom Palmer Western History Collection, Ms 1, Southern Utah University.

86. *William Palmer: An Autobiography*, n.d., William Rees and Kate Vilate Isom Palmer Western History Collection, Ms 1, Southern Utah University.

87. Interview with Everett L. Cooley, December 10, 1996, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.

88. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 8, 1949, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service. Palmer does not appear in the minutes after this time.

89. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, March 10, 1951, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service; State of Utah, *Laws of the State of Utah, 1951, Passed at the First Special Session of the Twenty-Ninth Legislature* (Salt Lake City: Lorraine Press, 1951), 359.

assistance in the management of archival records in their care. The Board accepted the proposal unanimously.<sup>90</sup>

While these stopgap measures maintained a certain amount of momentum for the Archives, it had become clear within the Historical Society that the time was right to establish a more permanent program. In March 1953, Secretary of State Lamont Toronto urged that the Society initiate an archival program, as “this is an area where the Society holds unique power and authority and where there is no competition.” He also pushed the group to purchase the equipment to initiate a new microfilming program.<sup>91</sup>

To this end, in January 1954, Secretary of State Toronto, President Ricks, and Mortensen recommended that a letter be written to the state’s Board of Examiners requesting funds to hire a state archivist.<sup>92</sup> The necessary funding was approved by May through a deficit appropriation—another demonstration of strong community sanction for the Archives—and recruitment was begun immediately. As with the earlier hiring of Mortensen, the Board expected the archivist to “be a man of sound judgment, have public relations ability, and have a background in Utah history.”<sup>93</sup> The Historical Society continued to be interested in hiring someone with a strong background in history. This background would provide the successful applicant with the specialized knowledge necessary to manage a successful archival program. This approach closely followed the recommendations of the Society of American Archivists’ Bemis Committee that archivists should either “be candidates for the Ph.D. degree in history” or “have the equivalent of a master’s degree in history or political science.”<sup>94</sup> A number of applicants were considered before Everett L. Cooley was selected as the first professionally trained state archivist.<sup>95</sup>

Cooley came to the position with a strong academic background, which he continued to build upon throughout his term as State Archivist. As stated in the requirements provided by the Board, Cooley had a Ph.D. in history, as well as training

90. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, March 28, 1953, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

91. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, March 28, 1953, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

92. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, January 16, 1954, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

93. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, May 22, 1954, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

94. H. G. Jones, “Archival Training in American Universities, 1938-1968,” *American Archivist* 31, no. 2 (1968): 136-137.

95. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, June 5, 1954, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

in archives from his service in the Navy Reserve.<sup>96</sup> After he was hired, he gained additional training at the Institutes on Archives Administration under Dr. Posner at American University.<sup>97</sup> During his time at the Historical Society, Cooley remained involved in professional archival organizations and sought to expand his knowledge and personal network. In 1957, for example, Cooley and Mortensen went on a road trip on their way back to the SAA and AALSH convention in Columbus, Ohio. As part of the trip they visited “historical, archival, and library institutions at: Lincoln, Nebraska; Des Moines, Iowa; Iowa City, Iowa; Nauvoo and Carthage, Illinois; Madison, Wisconsin; and East Lansing, Michigan, where they visited the Michigan Historical Collections at the University of Michigan. They also visited the Ford Archives and Museum at Dearborn. On their return trip, Drs. Mortensen and Cooley visited Hannibal, Missouri, Independence, Missouri—the auditorium of the L.D.S. Reorganized Church, and the Truman Library—and then went on to Topeka, Kansas, and thence home.”<sup>98</sup>

After his appointment, Cooley immediately began to work on bringing the state records under archival control and building the image of the Archives. Some of the projects undertaken during his first years at the Historical Society included the processing of the papers of early governors, territorial records, and a review of state agency records.<sup>99</sup> Much of this time was spent educating others about the role of archives and the principles of archival work. This included preparing detailed reports to the Board of Trustees, as well as visiting with local recordkeeping officials and making public presentations.<sup>100</sup> Cooley’s reminiscences include numerous stories about the poor condition of public records in Utah, including the story of a visit to Tooele where, when he asked the newly elected clerk to see some records listed in a published register, he was told, “Well, you know, I’ve been in office now six or eight months and no one’s asked for those so I sent them out to the dump.”<sup>101</sup>

While considerable work was accomplished, Cooley felt that the Archives still lacked the necessary authority to complete its work, and pushed for more specific

96. Interview with Everett L. Cooley, December 10, 1996, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.

97. *Ibid.*

98. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 12, 1957, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

99. Interview with Everett L. Cooley, December 10, 1996, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.

100. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, March 8, 1958, and October 4, 1958, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

101. Interview with Everett L. Cooley, December 10, 1996, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.

language in the supporting legislation.<sup>102</sup> As a result, in 1957, the law was again changed to make the Utah State Archives a division of the Utah State Historical Society. The law also established the definition of a record, the qualifications for an archivist, and the procedures for examining and appraising records.<sup>103</sup>

During 1957-1958, the Archives Division had come into its own, expanding its programs and gaining public recognition for its work. In 1957, the state transferred the Graves Registration and Marking Division of the Adjutant General's Office to the Archives, expanding the size and functions of the division.<sup>104</sup> The transfer of the Historical Society from the capitol to the Kearns Mansion that same year also provided expanded storage options for the Archives, providing them with room to acquire and store a significant quantity of government records for the first time.<sup>105</sup> The year culminated in the Society successfully hosting the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in Salt Lake City in 1958, leading a local arrangements committee composed of representatives of such Utah cultural heritage institutions as the Genealogical Society of Utah, the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, the Sons of Utah Pioneers, and the Church Historian's Office.<sup>106</sup> By hosting the Society of American Archivists' annual meeting, the Historical Society and the Archives provided their staff with opportunities to continue developing their archival knowledge and skills.

In the final years of the 1950s, the Archives continued to develop their services and staff. In addition to his ongoing archival work, Cooley was made Associate Director of the Historical Society in 1959.<sup>107</sup> He was also involved with state government initiatives and assisted in planning for government continuity in the event of a nuclear attack.<sup>108</sup> Beginning in 1958, the Archives became involved in

102. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, December 26, 1956, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
103. State of Utah, *Laws of the State of Utah, 1957, Passed at the First Special Session of the Thirty-Fifth Legislature*. (Salt Lake City: Lorraine Press, 1957), Chapter 141.
104. State of Utah, *Laws of the State of Utah, 1957, Passed at the First Special Session of the Thirty-Fifth Legislature*, Chapter 140.
105. Interview with Everett L. Cooley, December 10, 1996, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.
106. USHS Board of Trustees minutes March 30, 1957, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
107. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, March 8, 1958, and October 31, 1959, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
108. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 4, 1958, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service. Nationally, the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization (OCDM) coordinated planning and training to prepare archives for the continuity of government in the case of a generalized disaster of this sort (see also Ken Munden, "Records Essential to Continuity of State and Local Government," *American Archivist* 22, no. 1 (1959): 25-37).

archival training programs in the West. Archives Assistant Margery Ward attended lectures by T.R. Schellenberg in Denver in August 1958 and a workshop on forms creation by the National Archives in 1959.<sup>109</sup> Cooley also continued to regularly attend meetings of the Society of American Archivists.<sup>110</sup>

During these years the Archives also focused on two major expansion goals. The first of these was the acquisition of additional storage space for their collections. For years it was hoped that an archives building, including a records center, could be built near the Kearns Mansion. Shortly after moving into the building, the Historical Society decided to support the remodeling of the carriage house for the temporary use of the State Library, with the expectation that they would be able to take over that space for storage once the library had been moved to its own building.<sup>111</sup> However, in order to meet their expansion goals, the Archives would instead set up a records center in 1961 in the southwest corner of the state capitol.<sup>112</sup> In 1966, the rest of the Archives' holdings were moved from the Kearns Mansion to the capitol.<sup>113</sup> While this provided much needed space for the Society, it also physically separated the Archives from the historical library, manuscripts collections, and administrative offices.

The second related goal pursued by the Archives was the establishment of a records management program for the state. The move toward records management mirrored national trends, and was generally well received as a cost-saving technique.<sup>114</sup> Cooley adopted this approach as he began doing records management work in 1957, reportedly savings \$59,397 over the course of this first year. He then began a push to hire a records manager to coordinate the program and oversee a records center, supporting his request by referencing the first and second Hoover Commissions.<sup>115</sup>

109. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 4, 1958, and July 18, 1959, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

110. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 4, 1959, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

111. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, September 23, 1957, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

112. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, July 21, 1961, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

113. Archives Quarterly Report, October-December, 1966, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

114. Kathryn A. Scanlan, "ARMA v. SAA: The History and Heart of Professional Friction," *American Archivist* 74, no. 2 (2011): 428-450.

115. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, January 11, 1958, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

This lobbying led to the hiring of Ferdinand Johnson as State Records Manager in 1960. Johnson had previously worked for the General Services Administration as a records manager for the National Security Agency, though he was working as a teacher in Salt Lake City at the time of his hiring. At the same time, Cooley submitted his resignation as State Archivist to pursue a new career teaching history at Utah State University. In order to work within the Society's budget, Mortensen determined to serve as acting archivist until a replacement could be hired.<sup>116</sup>

Then in 1961, Mortensen himself decided to resign from the Historical Society in order to help establish a press at the University of Utah. In part due to the need for the director to continue to act as the archivist, he recommended that the Board try to persuade Cooley to return to the Society to take his place. A Board member, Grant Iverson, noted that the most pressing concern for the Society was the building of archival facilities, and that Cooley would be ideal for the task.<sup>117</sup> Although an open selection process was used, Cooley was a shoe-in for the position. According to Ricks, "Everett Cooley... is eminently qualified for the position by background, training, and experience; he is both historian and archivist. He is uniquely qualified for the position."<sup>118</sup> Cooley was uniquely qualified because of his specialized knowledge as both an archivist and a historian.

With Cooley in place as director, plans moved forward for the appointment of a new archivist. In order to obtain additional funding, the Historical Society authored new legislation providing additional support for the records management program.<sup>119</sup> The passage of the 1963 Records Management Act allowed them to hire T. Harold Jacobsen as the new State Archivist. Jacobsen was not a historian, but a microfilm specialist with a long association with the Genealogical Society. He came to the Society from the Universal Microfilm Corporation, and was also credited with the establishment of the microfilming program in North Carolina and the planning for the Church's granite mountain vault.<sup>120</sup> In order to gain archives-specific training, Jacobsen was sent to the American University program before starting his work in the

116. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, May 7, 1960, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

117. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, June 21, 1961, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

118. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, June 23, 1961, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

119. State of Utah, *Laws of the State of Utah, 1963, Passed at the First Special Session of the Fourty-First Legislature*. (Salt Lake City, UT: Lorraine Press, 1963), 550-552.

120. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 20, 1963; May 22, 1963; and June 28, 1963; Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

Archives Division.<sup>121</sup> Institutes like the one Jacobsen attended had become accepted ways to gain archival training by the late 1960s.<sup>122</sup>

Under Jacobsen, the Archives continued to grow, providing expanded services for state agencies. He was particularly successful in expanding the microfilm program, an area of Archives operations specifically targeted by the Records Management Act.<sup>123</sup> Under this legislation, the Archives was required to provide centralized services for state departments, building a facility with multiple cameras, a darkroom, and developing equipment.<sup>124</sup> While the legislation did not provide funds to operate this program, the Society hoped to support it by charging agencies requesting services. The move to the state capitol increased the independence of the Archives, while their larger facilities allowed them to increase the volume of records they received and processed.<sup>125</sup>

### Impact on Regional “Archival” Enterprise

In addition to the centralized services offered by the Archives Division, the Society also played an important role encouraging the establishment of regional archival repositories throughout the state. Involvement with these regional repositories was an important image-building opportunity that increased the visibility and stature of the Archives.

When Ricks became Board president in April 1949, among his first orders of business was the determination “to organize local historical units throughout the State to be affiliated with the State Historical Society and to work closely with it.”<sup>126</sup> These local historical societies were envisioned as chapters of the Society, and were established in populated centers within the state’s major regions, including Cedar

121. “State Chooses Archivist After 3 Years,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 29, 1963.

122. Jones, “Archival Training in American Universities, 1938-1968,” 142.

123. While limited microfilming had taken place in the Archives as early as 1947, progress was significantly slower than in states such as Wyoming (see Lola M. Homsher, “Wyoming State Archives and Historical Department,” *American Archivist* 22, no. 3 (1959): 323-329). However, this may have been due in part to some reticence on the part of Cooley to engage in large-scale microfilming projects (see Interview with Everett L. Cooley, December 10, 1996, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society).

124. Interview with Everett L. Cooley, December 10, 1996, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society; USHS Board of Trustees minutes, September 15, 1962, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service; J. Grant Iverson, “President’s Report,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (1968): 358.

125. Archives Quarterly Reports, n.d., Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

126. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, April 8, 1949, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.



City, St. George, Provo, Cache, Ogden, and Salt Lake City. It was hoped that the activities of these chapters would not interfere with the work of the Sons and Daughters of Utah Pioneers, but would make their own contributions to capturing and honoring the history of the state.<sup>127</sup>

Within the next ten years, chapters would spring up across the length of the state. The Cache Valley Chapter of the Society was established in the fall of 1951, and quickly became active.<sup>128</sup> The Utah Valley Chapter was formed the following year.<sup>129</sup> Other chapters were later in coming, with the Salt Lake City and Weber chapters not being established until 1959. In Southern Utah, Brooks recommended that a chapter not be created due to the potential overlap with the activities of the Sons of Utah Pioneers there—her husband was a local leader of the organization.<sup>130</sup> Despite this, a chapter was established in Cedar City by Gillies later in 1959.<sup>131</sup>

While the chapters developed public programs and other services, they were also important catalysts that spurred the growth and development of local colleges to build historical manuscripts collections. In Logan, the Cache Valley Chapter decided in 1954 to place both its archives and the other historical manuscripts it acquired in the Hatch Memorial Room of the Utah State Agricultural College.<sup>132</sup> At Cedar City, Cooley and Mortensen helped to reorganize the local chapter in 1962, with the College of Southern Utah library and archives designated as a depository for historical records obtained by the chapter.<sup>133</sup>

The Society and the Archives also encouraged the establishment of corporate archives at the universities. During a visit to Logan in 1956, Cooley noted the accumulation of inactive records in the Utah State Agricultural College's administration building and recommended that the library establish an archival

127. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, August 18, 1951, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
128. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, May 10, 1952, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
129. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, October 23, 1953, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
130. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, May 10, 1958, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
131. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, July 18, 1959, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.
132. Cache Valley Historical Society records, 1951-1958, S. George Ellsworth Papers, MSS 228, Sub-Series 7, Utah State University.
133. Iron County Historical Society minutes, 1964, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service; Founders Day, 1953-1961, Royden C. Braithwaite Collection, AR.111, Southern Utah University.

program. As College librarian Milton Abrams described it, “[Cooley] suggests we ought to have a well defined program, otherwise the State Archivist will feel an obligation to attempt a collection of these materials at the state level.”<sup>134</sup> Ultimately the state did not claim the records, despite the fact that it was more than a decade before an archival program was established at the college. In the case of Cedar City, Cooley corresponded with Inez Cooper for years, providing guidance for her work to establish an archival program there.<sup>135</sup>

Beyond providing services and advice to assist the chapters, the Historical Society also served as a training ground for Archives personnel who then moved to other institutions. This was particularly true in the case of the University of Utah, which established its archives program in the late 1960s. Following his resignation as director of the Society in 1968, Cooley moved to the university to establish the special collections program at the Marriott Library. There, he joined former state records manager Ferdinand Johnson, who had left earlier in the year to take the position of the university's archivist.<sup>136</sup>

### Separation of Archives and History

While the Historical Society administration provided critical support for efforts to establish and build the Archives Division, there were recurring concerns during the late 1950s and early 1960s that the division's growth would eventually result in its separation from the Historical Society. Beginning in 1956, Cooley suggested that the status of the Historical Society might be improved by renaming the institution the “Department of History and Archives,” moving the Society toward the Southern states model of archival repositories established in Alabama.<sup>137</sup> Based on reports issued by the Society of American Archivists, Cooley recognized that the position of the organization as a whole would be strengthened by increasing its focus on government records, while retaining its historical functions as a secondary function. He was able to convince a number of Board members to consider the change, as well as Mortensen.<sup>138</sup>

134. Libraries, 1956-1957, Daryl Chase Papers, USU\_3.1/10-2, Utah State University.

135. Founders Day, 1953-1961, Royden C. Braithwaite Collection, AR.111, Southern Utah University.

136. Archives Quarterly Reports, n.d., Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

137. For more information on the Alabama Department of Archives and History, see Patrick L. Tomlin, *The Archival Unconscious: Thomas Owen and the Founding of the Alabama Department of Archives and History* (master's thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2008).

138. Everett Cooley letter to George Ellsworth, January 24, 1958, S. George Ellsworth papers, MSS 228, Sub-Series 1, Utah State University.

In the January 11, 1958, meeting of the Board of Trustees, Cooley planned to bring a motion to make the change. In response, Mortensen spoke of the possibility for a future split, stating that

There is a distinct possibility that some day the Board will be faced with pressures to set up the Archives as a separate institution. And he [Mortensen] emphasized the fact that today the Archives, as such, exists through the efforts of the Society, that it was the Society which prepared the legislation and sold the need for such to the legislature. He further pointed out that there are two basic archival functions—records management and the creation of an archival depository. The creation of a separate archives under the management of an individual untrained in history and unsympathetic to the latter function could very well threaten the historical and research features presently offered by the combined facilities of the Utah State Historical Society. It was his feeling that it would be for the best interests of all concerned not to have that separation occur.<sup>139</sup>

However, Board President Ricks was opposed to the idea, and refused to allow Cooley to introduce the motion.<sup>140</sup>

Ricks's determination to retain the historical society model supported his goals and efforts in other areas, but shifting trends in the archival community ultimately led to the separation of the Historical Society into two divisions, as foreseen by Mortensen. These national trends included an increased focus on records management, as illustrated by the Little Hoover Commission's Leahy report, the expanding role of the National Archives, and its merger into the General Services Administration in 1949.<sup>141</sup>

The genesis of the Utah State Archives as a separate department of the state government occurred in the 1960s on the recommendations of Utah's Little Hoover Commission.<sup>142</sup> The Little Hoover Commission was the nickname for the Commission on the Reorganization of the Executive Branch. The main goal of the Little Hoover Commission was to improve the efficiency of state government. Joseph Rosenblatt, chair of the Commission, put it this way: "We think we have a motto acceptable to all—and that is that good management means good government—and good

139. USHS Board of Trustees minutes, January 11, 1958, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

140. Everett Cooley letter to George Ellsworth, January 24, 1958, S. George Ellsworth Papers, MSS 228, Series 1, Utah State University.

141. Scanlan, "ARMA v. SAA: The History and Heart of Professional Friction," 435-6.

142. Similar reviews and reorganizations were fairly common during the period, occurring in California, Connecticut, and Oregon, as well as Utah. These organizational changes often revolved around the issue of records management (see Posner, *American State Archives*, 32).

government is good politics... It is our contention that if government is to function as it was intended to in a democracy and to fully meet its responsibilities that it must be so structured that it can be managed with efficiency, with economy, and, if you please, with discipline."<sup>143</sup>

The Utah State Historical Society was not pleased with the Little Hoover Commission's recommendation that records management and archives be removed and placed with another governmental agency. In July 1965, Dr. Abrams, a Board member, "moved that the matter be urged upon the Hoover Commission that the Historical Society retain its separate identity and that it be permitted to fulfill the responsibilities assigned it by law as do the universities of the state; also, that the Society be recognized by the officers of state government and the legislature as the official historical and archival agency of the state."<sup>144</sup> A year later, the minutes note that there was talk of moving the Archives to the Department of General Services.<sup>145</sup> In January 1967, the Society's newsletter reported, "the Commission determined that Archives and Records Management were primarily service functions to other agencies of government and should, therefore, be grouped under a new Department of Administrative Services."<sup>146</sup>

Everett Cooley, director of the Historical Society, thought it was a mistake to separate the Archives from the Historical Society. He understood that the firm running the Little Hoover Commission in Utah had done similar studies in other states and that they had recommended the separation of archives in those reports as well. He was particularly unhappy with the way that the separation originally occurred which left responsibility for the Archives with the Society and gave all of the financial resources to run the program to the Finance Department. Cooley also felt that the State Archivist, T. Harold Jacobsen, had his own agenda and had wanted to be separated from Society.<sup>147</sup>

Cooley was determined to get the Archives back to the Historical Society. Responding to the Little Hoover Commission report, he wrote about an alternative proposal that could help consolidate government. He proposed the following alternative:

The Hoover Commission could have gone one step further than they did and created a Department of Cultural Affairs—a grouping of

143. Joseph Rosenblatt speech to Leadership Conference of Utah State Public Employees Association, September 23, 1965, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.

144. Summary of Minutes, July 1, 1965, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.

145. Summary of Minutes, July 16, 1966, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.

146. Newsletters January 1967, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.

147. Interview with Everett L. Cooley, December 10, 1996, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.

agencies with similar interests—a plan proposed by the Goals for Utah Committee who considered this same subject. In this Cultural Affairs Department, with a strong advisory Board representing the general public interests, would be grouped the following existing agencies: the Utah State Historical Society (including the Archives), the State Library, The Institute of Fine Arts, and the State Law Library. Perhaps a newly created Legislative Reference Service could be added and placed in this department. This arrangement would thereby group together compatible interests and services instead of the rather incongruous grouping presently proposed by placing the Utah State Historical Society and Institute of Fine Arts along with economically-oriented agencies and services.<sup>148</sup>

He spent the next several months lobbying on behalf of this alternative without making much headway.

Despite the vigorous efforts of Cooley and others, in 1968, the state legislature ultimately and permanently severed the Archives from the Society, which had created it. The 1968 Archives report noted, “on May 13, the Archives and Records Management sections were transferred from the Historical Society to the Department of Finance. Since that time Ferdinand Johnson has submitted his resignation and will leave for a new position with the University of Utah as University Archivist. The relationship of the Historical Society to the Archives presently exists only in the fact that the director is a member of the State Records Committee.”<sup>149</sup>

In early 1969, Charles Peterson, the new director of the Historical Society, was determined to get the resources necessary to bring the Archives back to the Historical Society. He commented to Jacobsen, “I am going to go all out to keep Archives with History. I hope I am successful.”<sup>150</sup> Peterson was ultimately not successful and the Archives was removed completely from the Society. He wrote Delbert Bishop that “tomorrow the Archives Division of the Historical Society becomes the Archives Division of the Finance Department. I am deeply troubled at this development, and I am endeavoring to lay the groundwork to reclaim it at the time of the 1971 legislature. Perhaps by that time my anxiety level will have dropped, but at this point the restitution of the Archives to the Society seems a must.”<sup>151</sup>

148. Everett L. Cooley letter to Vernon L. Holman, March 4, 1966, and September 30, 1948, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

149. Archives Quarterly Report, 1968, Gary Topping Papers, Mss B 1028, Utah State Historical Society.

150. Charles Peterson to Harold Jacobsen, January 23, 1969, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

151. Charles Peterson to Delbert A. Bishop, May 12, 1969, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

## Conclusion

Peterson's dream of reuniting the Archives with the Historical Society was ultimately unrealized. The two organizations would go separate ways and develop along separate paths. The Archives would focus its efforts on documenting state government and the establishment of an active records management program. The Historical Society would expand its services to include historic preservation and a museum program. Manuscript collecting would continue at the Historical Society, but with inadequate resources and an increasingly competitive collecting environment within the state, the program has had limited success. Eventually the Society found itself competing against university libraries across the state as they sought to build on collections established by the Society's own chapters. Grant Iverson complained about having to compete with state institutions receiving state funding to collect manuscript materials in a letter to Governor Rampton in 1966. He wrote

The Society stands ready to work with any group or institution in establishing such guidelines and cooperating to the fullest extent in achieving [a] harmonious program for building Utah's historical collection to the finest in the nation. But the Society urgently needs the support of the administration and legislature to prevent it from foundering and being overwhelmed by larger, richer institutions and agencies.<sup>152</sup>

This problem would be a persistent one. While the organizations would go their separate ways, they would eventually come together in 2005 to form a joint reading room in order to better serve researchers interested in the history of the state of Utah.<sup>153</sup>

The growth and development of the Utah Department of Administrative Services' Division of Archives & Records Service shows a steady progression of professionalization. Community sanction is demonstrated by the various legislative actions taken on behalf of the Historical Society to support the creation of an archives program. Service orientation is demonstrated by the developing archival program's efforts to aid state-sponsored institutions of higher education in developing archival programs of their own. Image building is seen in the Little Hoover Commission's recognizing the importance of the State Archives to enact efficient government and its recommendation that the Archives become independent of the Historical Society. The most imperative professionalization trend is the recognition that a specialized body of knowledge to run an archival program is a necessity. This is demonstrated

152. J. Grant Iverson to Calvin L. Rampton, November 8, 1966, Division of State History Administration Files, Series 3192, Utah Department of Administrative Services Division of State Archives & Records Service.

153. Utah State Archives, "Archives Newsletter, February 2005," Utah State Archives and Records Service, <http://archives.utah.gov/news/newsletters/newsletter-february-2005.html> (accessed June 21, 2012).

beginning in the 1950s with hiring of a Ph.D., Everett Cooley, to run the archival program and with the Archives sending T. Harold Jacobsen to receive archival training before commencing his tenure as State Archivist. It is also seen in the participation of archival staff in regional and national professional meetings. These professionalization trends have continued into the 21st century and continue to mark the State Archives as an archival leader in Utah.

Of course this transition was not unique to Utah, but reflects the national shift from the conception of archives as the handmaid of history to an independent profession.<sup>154</sup> In Utah, this shift led to the institutional separation of archives and history, as well as the redefinition of what an archivist should be—evolving from someone with a Ph.D. in history to a specialist in archives and records management.

154. Francis X. Blouin Jr. and William G. Rosenberg, *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and Archives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 43; Terry Cook, "The Archive(s) Is a Foreign Country: Historians, Archivists, and the Changing Archival Landscape," *American Archivist* 74, no. 2 (2011): 600-632.