



The Newberry Library, Chicago

Diana Haskell
Curator of Modern Mss.

Located two blocks west of the glittering Rush Street entertainment district on Chicago's Near North Side, The Newberry Library is an oasis of intellectual delights for scholars. It was established in 1887 through the behest of pioneer merchant, Walter Loomis Newberry and through the years has developed outstanding holdings in the humanities - particularly the Italian Renaissance; the history of printing, typography, and calligraphy; the history of music; Portuguese and Brazilian studies; Western Americana; American Indian studies; and bibliography.

Manuscript holdings fall into several categories: Ayer manuscripts; European and Oriental manuscripts; Wing Foundation manuscripts; railroad archives; Newberry Library archives; and the Midwest modern manuscripts. The Edward E. Ayer library is concerned with the discovery of the North American continent and the history of contacts between the Indian and the white man. It is rich in letters, journals, diaries, maps, drawings, paintings, and photographs, many of which are described in a catalog compiled by Ruth Butler, published in 1937.

Most of the Oriental manuscripts have been transferred to the Oriental Institute, Chicago, with a representation retained for display purposes. The European holdings are not extensive, but do contain some important items, including examples of illumination, music manuscripts, business documents, and family papers such as the literary papers of the House of Strozzi.

The John M. Wing Foundation for the history of printing is highlighted by such items as the Ricketts library of manuscript writing-books, the Platt R. Spencer private and business papers, the Will Ransom press books and archives, and the Stone and Kimball Publishing Company papers. The railroad collection comprises the archives of the Burlington and the Illinois Central railroads and the Pullman Company archives. Cornerstone of the Newberry Library archives are the papers of William F. Poole; its first librarian.

The modern manuscripts collection was established about thirty years ago. It was decided at that time to focus the collection on the Midwest where The Newberry Library is located and to limit acquisitions to material falling within the fields in which it specializes - history, literature and music. The library does not support an aggressive collecting policy (only about 100 separate collections are now held), but rather attempts to obtain only manuscripts which will interrelate with, and illuminate, existing holdings.

Backbone of the literary manuscripts is the 110 box Sherwood Anderson collection. Smaller collections include the papers of Floyd Dell, Eunice Tietjens, Henry Fuller and Octave Thanet, and working papers of two great literary scholars and editors, Morton Dauwen Zabel and Malcolm Cowley. Popular humorist and playwright, George Ade, and his friend, John T. McCutcheon, were cub reporters together on the old Chicago Record. Their individual papers run from the 1890's through the 1940's, by which time McCutcheon had become the most popular newspaper cartoonist in the Midwest. Among the papers of other newspaper figures are those of Wilhelm Rapp and Hermann Raster of the Illinois Staats-Zeitung. Two large collections of Chicago Daily News editors, Victor Lawson and Edward Price Bell, are augmented by smaller collections of seven other Daily News men.

Significant to any study of city politics are the Carter Harrison papers. Harrison and his father each had five terms as mayor of Chicago during the hey-day of political "bossism". Another approach to channeling one's creative energies in the city may be studied in the papers of Graham Taylor, founder of

the Chicago Commons settlement house. Among men of importance to the development of music in Chicago, Theodore Thomas, founder of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, ranks high. His papers are supplemented by those of his successor, Frederick Stock. Recently acquired are the music library and papers of Rudolph Ganz, distinguished concert pianist, composer, and music educator.

The modern manuscript collections are open free to qualified researchers. The library maintains a dictionary card catalog of manuscript holdings. Emphasis in the past has been on cataloging individual items whenever possible, especially for the more significant collections. However, for the recently acquired archives of The Arts Club an inventory is being prepared - a totally new concept in finding aids for this library.

NEWS NOTES

CAR POOLS. With the current "energy crisis" raging, MAC members are urged to look through their membership directories for members in their area with the idea of forming car pools for transportation to the MAC Spring Meeting in Chicago.

BUS TO TORONTO? Holding the SAA convention in St. Louis this past year made it possible for many MAC members to attend. Attending the 1974 convention, however, will be more difficult due to the distance to Toronto and the current gas shortages. Perhaps MAC should consider chartering a bus or some other means of public transportation to make it possible for more of its members to attend the convention. A preliminary check with Greyhound showed that the cost of a 5 full day round trip from Chicago for a 38 passenger bus would be about \$28 per person (assuming a full bus). This seems quite economical, and if enough members are interested the idea could be discussed at the March meeting.

Harry Miller - State
Historical Society of
Wisconsin

and University Archives; Bill Keller, administrative assistant at the Illinois State Historical Society, will assist those interested in museums and historical societies; and the Rev. M. J. Madaj, archivist of the Archdiocese of Chicago, will respond to questions raised by those interested in church archives.

Concurrent to the session on paraprofessionals and shop talks will be a meeting from 1:30 to 5:00 PM on "Controls and Retrieval: Helping the Researcher." A panel of experts consisting of Robert Brubaker, librarian of the Chicago Historical Society, J. Joe Bauxar, archivist of Northern Illinois University, Lydia Lucas, assistant curator of manuscripts at the Minnesota Historical Society, and David Olson, State Archivist of the Michigan Historical Commission, will provide MAC members with the opportunity of exploring problems in depth. This "experiment" may be the portent of things to come in future MAC meetings if it proves successful and worthwhile.

Come Saturday morning ... March 23, MACers will move by bus at 8:45 to the Newberry Library. Beginning at 9:30 AM there will be a general introduction to the Newberry Library, followed by a session from 10:00 to 11:30 AM on "The Archivist and Ethics" featuring: Janice O'Connell, Field Service Representative at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin; Daniel Porter, director of the Ohio Historical Society; and Nancy Prewitt, West. Hist. Manu. Collections, Univ. of Missouri. Concurrently with the session, there will be a tour of the Newberry Library including the Conservation Laboratory. Persons attending the ethics session will have an opportunity to visit the Conservation Laboratory between 11:30 and Noon. Buses will transport the participants back to the Bismarck Hotel by 1:00 PM for check out.

Lest you think that all is business with MAC this Spring, please bear in mind that there will be a hospitality hour Thursday night and a cash bar following the sessions on Friday afternoon.

The officers, council members, and other MAC members are looking forward to seeing you in the Windy City, March 21-23, 1974
