

U.S. Archival Arrangement & Description:

A Bibliography

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Introduction

This is an annotated bibliography concerning archival arrangement and description in the United States of America containing various books, articles, and websites divided into three areas of concern including: Defining Arrangement & Description with background and historical information, Arrangement & Description Standards with manuals and concepts used today, and Arrangement & Description Manuals with rules of implementation and examples. For the purposes of this work only general items pertaining to archival arrangement and description were considered. Specific descriptions of items such as film or photographic archives were avoided although they may be covered briefly in the different texts below. Although reference is made to historical viewpoints and practices, the textual guides in this bibliography are made to be useful to current workers in the archival field.

Defining Arrangement & Description

Duff, W. M. & Haworth, K. M. (1997). Advancing archival description: A model for rationalising North American descriptive standards. *Archives and Manuscripts* 25(2), 194-217.

Wendy Duff holds a Ph.D. in Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh and is an assistant professor of Faculty of Information Studies at the University of Toronto. She is Director of the Digital Curation Institute, has served as a member of the International Council on Archives (ICA) Adhoc Commission on Descriptive Standards, the Encoded Archival Description Working Group, and The Canadian Council of Archives Standards Committee. Kent Haworth (d. 2003) was a York University Archivist, Toronto and one of the chief architects of the Rules for Archival Description (RAD). He was also involved with the development of the International Standard for Archival Description (ISAD(G)). In this article Duff and Haworth review how the U.S. and Canada are working on developing standardization of archival description. International standards are also discussed along with Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and Dublin Core. In 1996 a group of U.S. and Canadian archivists met in Ann Arbor, Michigan under the direction of the Bentley Library Fellowship Program for the Study of Modern Archives. During this meeting the group noted three purposes of archival description: access, understanding archival materials, and preserving the authenticity of said materials. Also included is the Bentley group's "model of an archival descriptive system" (p. 206). While prospects for a North American Rules for Archival Description (NARAD) has as yet come to about Duff and Haworth do make some points in this article about progress of the standardization of archival description. References to this article can be found in the Berkley Project, 1993-1995 and Resources of Archival Description, 2008. Although references to U.S. standards are dated this is an informative read for archivists and students alike interested in information on the history of standards in the field.

Fox, M. J. (1990). Descriptive cataloging for archival materials. In R. P. Smiraglia (Ed.) *Describing archival materials: The use of the MARC AMC 11(3-4)* 17-34. New York: Hawthorn Press

Michael Fox is the Deputy Director of the Minnesota Historical Society. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin School of Library and Information Studies, he worked for fourteen years at the Wisconsin Historical Society in various positions. Fox is a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), a Working Group member of the *Encoded Archival Description (EAD)*, and has been involved with the International Council on Archives. In this article Fox starts off by defining the Nature of Description and Archives and continues with a brief note on *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, Second Edition (AACR2)* and *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts (APPM)*. The remainder of the article is devoted to Source Information listing: Title, Notes, Physical Description, and Finding Aids. The most expansive section by Fox is that of Notes where he discusses ten separate notational areas comprising everything from Biographical/Historical to Cumulative Index/Finding Aids. The section on Notes is very informative as to what data needs to be included in the description and why. However reference notations which are supposed to correspond to the article's example did not have any corresponding notations making things slightly confusing. While references to *AACR2*, *APPM*, and a dependence on microfilm as an example of non-paper items seems outdated the concepts that Fox sets forth are relevant to ease of finding archived materials and he even states that "these conventions do not comprise a static code" (p. 33). This article is an informative introductory look at archival description for professionals and nonprofessionals alike.

Miller, F. (1997). Archival description. *The Reference Librarian* 26(56) 55-66. doi: 10.1300/J120v26n56_05

Fredric Miller (d. 1998) received both an M.S. in Library Science and a Ph.D. in History from the University of Wisconsin. He was the curator of the Urban Archives at Temple University as well as developing an archival program as an adjunct history professor. Miller was also a program manager for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and participated in various archivist groups such as Delaware Valley Archivist Group (DVAG), the Mid-Atlantic Archives Conference (MARAC) and the Society of American Archivist (SAA). This article was based in the majority on Miller's work *Arranging & Describing Archives & Manuscripts* (1990) during his tenure with the NEH. Miller goes through six points in his article including: The Nature of Archives and Manuscript Collections, Basic Definitions and Principles, The Foundation of Description: Accessioning and Arrangement, The Core Descriptive Finding Aid, An Integrated Descriptive Program, and Future Trends: Automated Access and Electronic Records. In the second section Miller states that archivists must "describe both the information within their records, and how those records were created, used, and selected for long term retention" (p. 58). In the third he notes that during the accessioning process a brief description of items should be taken. In the fourth section Miller lists seven areas that comprise elements of description: Introduction Information, History or Biography, Scope and Contents Note, Series Descriptions, Index, and Appendices. The fifth section is also devoted to description involving *Machine Readable Cataloging (MARC)* records and *Archives Personal Papers, and Manuscripts (APPM)* as it relates to *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, Second Edition (AACR2)*. This article gives a brief introduction into what is involved in archives description. Although Miller's

reference to *APPM* is outdated being replaced by *Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DAC5)* his article is insightful to those new to the archiving profession.

Schellenberg, T. R. (1951). Principles of arrangement. *National Archives staff information paper number 18*. Retrieved from <http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/archives-resources/principles-of-arrangement.html#note>

Theodore Schellenberg (d. 1970) received a PhD in History from the University of Pennsylvania in 1934 and was appointed to the staff of the National Archives the following year. After a three year break to serve as Records Officer at the Office of Price Administration he returned to the National Archives in 1948 as Program Adviser to the U.S. Archivist. He went on to serve as Assistant Archivist of the National Archives from 1956 to 1963. Schellenberg is known for writing two well known archival texts, *The Management of Archives* and *Modern Archives* and authoring "Principles of Arrangement" as a staff informational paper at the National Archives. He begins the paper with the Basic Principles of Arrangement and then discusses Arrangement in the National Archives. Schellenberg divides the paper into four areas: Record Groups, Subgroups, Series, and File Units detailing each throughout. He finishes the piece with advice to the archivist who comes up against unorganized records. In light of not being able to *respect des fonds* the archivist has the opportunity to devise a system of their own. "Principles of Arrangement" is an interesting piece that was revisited by Schellenberg's contemporary Oliver W. Holmes in "Archival Arrangement" thirteen years later. A must read for all those interested in the archival field professional and student alike.

Arrangement & Description Standards

Holmes, O. W. (1964). Archival arrangement – five different operations at five different levels. *American Archivist* 27(1), 21-41.

Oliver Holmes (d. 1981) began working for the National Archives in 1935 and at one point held the position of Executive Director of the National Historical Publications Commission. Holmes was also a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) serving as president from 1958-1959. He was also said to be active in international affairs and a promoter of SAA's international outreach efforts. In his article "Archival Arrangement," Holmes notes that he bases his article on his working knowledge of the National Archives, but feels that the principles he relates in the article can be applied in any archives regardless of size. Holmes begins the article by emphasizing the importance of original order. He then defines the levels of arrangement: Depository, Record Group, Series, Filing Unit, and Document. Holmes then continues his article with an in-depth explanation of each level of arrangement including historical elements. He finishes the article with information on proper Boxing, Shelving, and Labeling as well as making a written record of how items are arranged. Although Holmes' article may seem simplistic it sets forth a standard of arrangement that has been followed by archivists since its printing in 1964. This is a good article for anyone to read interested in the arrangement of archives and it is not technically complicated however it appears to be a reworking of Theodore R. Schellenberg's earlier paper "Principles of Arrangement" for the National Archives. This article can also be

found on the Internet at <http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/archives-resources/archival-arrangement.html>.

International Council on Archives. (2000). *ISAD(G): General international standard archival description (2nd ed.)*. Retrieved from http://www.ica.org/sites/default/files/isad_g_2e.pdf

The International Council on Archives (ICA) is a professional non-governmental organization of archival groups across the world that is dedicated to preservation, development, and use of archives. It was founded in 1948 and had its first official meeting in Paris, 1950. Member groups from the U.S. currently are: the Academy of Certified Archivists, Family Search, the National Archives and Records Administration, and the Society of American Archivists (SAA). The ICA has developed a set of standards referred to as *ISAD(G): General International Standard Archival Description Second Edition* or *ISAD(G)* which is a general guideline that can be implemented into any system and was designed to complement national archival description standards in addition to an effort to internationally standardize archive description practices in order to allow great means of access worldwide as well as offering a template for countries who have yet to develop any kind of program. The *ISAD(G)* begins with glossary of terms and is then broken into three sections: Multilevel Description, Rules, and Elements of Description. The document ends with three appendices the second of which depicts a model of the levels of arrangement and the last citing full examples of the standards set forth in the text. The Elements of Description portion of the guide is broken into seven areas: Identity Statement, Context, Content and Structure (separated from Context in this edition and including System of Arrangement), Conditions of Access and Use, Allied Materials, Notes, and Description Control (new to this edition). Each of these areas has extensive examples that describe format and detail the structure outlined. The inclusion of requirements for electronic records, simplification of the text, and the broadening of examples are said to be new to the second edition. Although the SAA has developed an archival description standard, *Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DAC5)*, there are available crosswalks in *DACS* for *ISAD(G)*. The *ISAD(G)* can be used alone as a description standard for individual institutions and is a comprehensive guide that is used and referred to both domestically, in the U.S. and internationally. This is a good source for professional archivists looking to implement an internationally recognized system.

Library of Congress. (July 10, 2009). *Encoded archival description: Version 2002 official site*. Retrieved from <http://www.loc.gov/ead/>

The Library of Congress (LOC) serves at the discretion of the Congress of the United States of America, founded in 1800 by the same entity and is the oldest federal cultural institution. The library has a massive collection of books, manuscripts, photographs, recordings, etc., making it the largest library in the world with over 144 million items according to its website. The LOC is extensively involved in a variety of cataloging methods one of which is the *Encoded Archival Description (EAD)* being part of the Network Development & MARC (Machine Readable Cataloging) Standards Office. On the *Encoded Archival Description: Version 2002 Official Site* one can find many items of interest including: General Information with links for Background Information, Design Principles, Working Group Members, and related sites; Version 2002 with links to Schema, Document Type Definition (DTD), and a Tag Library; Version 1.0 (1998) with links to a Tag Library and Application Guidelines; Tools and Helper files with a link to the

Society of American Archivists (SAA) *EAD's* Roundtable website. On the page there is also a link for conversion tables between Version 1.0 and 2002 as well as the ability to sign up for an *EAD* Listserv in order to keep current with trends and information. The Background Information link gives a comprehensive history of the development of *EAD* while the links for the *EAD* Tag Library allow users to view information via the Internet as well as a downloadable PDF file courtesy of the SAA. This *EAD* 2002 official site is very informative for the archival worker allowing access to information about current issues.

Library of Congress. (May 24, 2010). *MARC standards*. Retrieved from <http://www.loc.gov/marc/>

The Library of Congress (LOC) is the oldest federal cultural institution, founded by the U.S. Congress in 1800. The library has an amassed collection of over 144 million items making it the largest library in the world according to its website. The LOC is extensively involved in a variety of cataloging methods one of which is the *Machine Readable Cataloging (MARC)* being part of the Network Development & MARC Standards Office. The *MARC Standards* website available via the LOC is an informative hub of links. The menu on the left side of the page is dedicated to the newest version of *MARC*, *MARC 21* with links to: Formats, Code Lists, *MARC LITE* (2008 version), and Specifications. The main portion of the page is broken down into several areas: General Information with links to News, FAQ, Listserv, and a Forum; *MARC* Formats; Development; Records, Systems, and Tools; *MARC* in Extensible Markup Language (XML); *MARC* and Functional Requirements of Bibliographic Records (FRBR). At the top of the page News and Updates are noted with information on Resource Description and Access (RDA) in *MARC* linking to the latest additions to *MARC 21* with information links to understanding *MARC* Bibliographic and *MARC* Authority. While *MARC 21* is used for library cataloging strides have been made toward making the system of codes applicable to archives, which is noted in the General Considerations section (2.2). This site can become confusing because several versions of *MARC* are included throughout, noting updates, and would probably best be navigated by professional archivist catalogers who could navigate the language easier.

Society of American Archivists. (2008). *Describing archives: A content standard*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists.

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) was established in 1936 and serves as an educational forum for individual and institutional professional archivists. *Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACs)* was implemented by the SAA in 2005 as a replacement for the second edition of the *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts (APPM)*. The *DACS* was approved after being reviewed by the SAA Standards Committee, its Technical Subcommittee for Descriptive Standards, and by the archival community. This format neutral resource can be used to Identify Elements, determine Content and Structure, facilitate Conditions of Access and Use (with information on arrangement), as well as note Acquisition and Appraisal. Sections are also dedicated to Describing Creators and Forms of Names. Each section contains specific rules with detailed examples. Four appendices are included. The first and second appendices give a glossary of archival terms and a list of specific standards manuals for further research respectively. The final two appendices map out seven Crosswalks for *DACS* and full examples of *Encoded Archival Description (EAD)* and *Machine Readable Cataloging (MARC 21)* records

respectively. Although it appears that previous printings of the *DACS* did not have an index this current printing does which makes finding specific topics easier. The *DACS* is an essential handbook for all U.S. archival repositories because of its general guidelines and a move toward international standards.

Walch, V. I. (1994). *Standards for archival description: A handbook*. Chicago: The Society of American Archivists.

Victoria Walch is a free-lance archivist who is currently the Executive Director of the Council of State Archivists. Some of her past positions were project coordinator for the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Working Group on Standards for Archival Description and positions at the National Archives and Records Administration. Walch is also a long time member of the Society of American Archivists. *Standards for Archival Description: A Handbook* was compiled by Walch with contributions by Marion Matters (d. 1998) former head of Technical Services for the Minnesota Legislative Reference Library. Several areas of archival description standards are covered in this book including: Information Systems, Data Exchange, Cataloging, Finding Aids, Authority Control, Editing and Publishing, and Statistics. Each section begins with historical information as to the development of standards for the topic being covered. Walch then details 86 prominent works giving information on development, structure, related standards, and archival applications along with title and purchasing information. She also presents bibliographic information of other works at the end of each section. Walch gives an extensive listing of contact information for known archival standards developers in an appendix and notes international standardization issues with an appendix showing crosswalks between U.S. and international standards of archiving. This is an excellent guide for archivists to standardized manuals for any need that may arise however some items may be out of date. The handbook is also available on the Internet at <http://www.archivists.org/catalog/stds99/index.html> created by Stephen Miller. The Online version does not appear to have any updated information.

Arrangement & Description Manuals

Hunter, G. S. (2003). *Developing and maintaining practical archives: A how-to-do-it manual* (2nd ed., No. 122). New York: Neal-Schumann Publishers Inc.

Dr. Gregory Hunter is a Certified Archivist and Certified Records Manager. He has been a professor at the Palmer School of Library and Information Science at Long Island University since 1990. In 2004 Dr. Hunter was elected a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) and served on a committee as Principal Archivist and Records Manager in order to build an Electronic Records Archives (ERA) for the National Archives and Records Administration. Dr. Hunter is also president of Hunter Information Management Services, Inc. specializing in archives and records management. In his work, *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives*, Dr. Hunter dedicates two chapters to Arrangement and Description, including notes and bibliography. In chapter five, Arrangement, Dr. Hunter gives an overview of Five Levels of Arrangement following principles reviewed by Holmes in his 1964 article "Archival Arrangement" with a chart showing specific examples of each level. He finishes the chapter with nine steps to Arranging a Collection and Ten Arrangement Hints. In chapter six, Description, Dr. Hunter divides the chapter into main sections: Objectives of a Description

Program, Three Categories of Finding Aids (concentrating on External Finding Aids), Networked Information Systems (covering *U.S. Machine Readable Cataloging (USMARC)* and *Encoded Archival Description (EAD)*), and Five Characteristics of a Good Finding Aid (intended for the researcher, considerate of the researcher's needs, objective, clear and concise, and efficient). Dr. Hunter is very informative in his manual as to the necessary points of archival arrangement and description however there is a noticeable lack of examples for one to follow. The text is great as an introduction to archival work that could easily be supplemented with other manuals such as *Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACs)*. *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives* would also make an excellent textbook for students who wish to learn of the various aspects of archival work such as arrangement and description.

Roe, K. (2005). *Arranging & describing archives & manuscripts: Archival fundamentals series II*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists.

Kathleen Roe is currently the Director of Operations at the New York State Archives. During her time with the New York State Archives she has participated in the implementation of *Machine Readable Cataloging Format for Archival and Manuscripts Control (MARC AMC)* in public records repositories. She is also a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) and participated in the SAA Working Group on Standards for Archival Description as well as serving on various committees helping to develop standards illustrated in *Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACs)*. This manual is an updated version of the first *Arranging & Describing Archives & Manuscripts* (1990) authored by the late Fredric Miller taking into account the shift from the standards addressed in the *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts (APPM)* to the current *DACS*. Roe divides the manual into four sections followed by a chapter addressing Future Directions and Issues, an informative bibliography, and five appendices. The first chapter, Overview, is an overview of archives, the second, Core Concepts, is dedicated to defining terms and determining when archival arranging and description are necessary and the third, Context, covers the history of archival arrangement and description. In the final chapter, Practice, Roe goes through the process of arranging an archive detailing the Description of Records and Developing Access Tools. Roe adds examples of throughout each section to further aid the reader. The last four appendices also give further in-depth examples of arrangement and description via well placed insets throughout. This manual is a good example of both theory and practice for the experienced archivist and those who are looking at an introduction into the field.