

Reclaiming the Presidential Papers, Part I: Walter G. Clippinger (1909-39)

Otterbein University OHRAB Grant Final Report

Stephen D. Grinch, Project Director

(614) 823 – 1761

SGrinch@Otterbein.edu

Submitted January 30, 2014

Narrative of Project Activities:

The purpose of this project was to create a finding aid for the largest of our collections, and to solve preservation issues by replacing the decades-old boxes and folders that housed the collection. The majority of the work was done by a long-term volunteer, who we are able to hire as a temporary employee each summer from mid-May until the end of August. The work was done in two stages over the course of the past year, and has enabled us to do further work beyond the scope of the grant project.

The first stage of the project ran from April to July of 2014. Our project worker passed through the entire collection, replacing the old, grime-covered folders with new acid-free folders. A finding aid was created which revealed approximately three different styles of organization within the collection. We don't know for certain whether it was President Clippinger's own order, or if this came from later attempts to organize his papers. After much debate it was decided that we would leave the collection in this "original" order. At this point no spacing changes were made, leaving some boxes packed almost to overflowing. However, numerous misfiled items were returned to their proper place.

The second stage of the project ran from August to December of 2014. During the month of August, the project worker began the process of going through the collection again to remove the metal fasteners from the papers, encapsulate and scan damaged or fading documents, replace the few remaining old folders with new, and replace the old boxes with the new. On September 1st our project worker went from being a temporary employee back to a volunteer, meaning that his work hours went from 30 hours a week to approximately six hours a week. Work on the project was re-prioritized, and the first few weeks were spent replacing the last of the old folders. After that, the project was re-evaluated again, and the decision was made that the project worker would proceed with the second pass of the collection as before, removing all of the metallic fasteners from the documents, repairing and encapsulating any fragile or damaged documents, scanning items of interest, and creating a second finding aid for the collection listing the names of all of President Clippinger's correspondents by file. After

completing each box it would be evaluated for space. If the box was too crowded files would be shifted forwards or backwards, depending on the space available in the surrounding boxes.

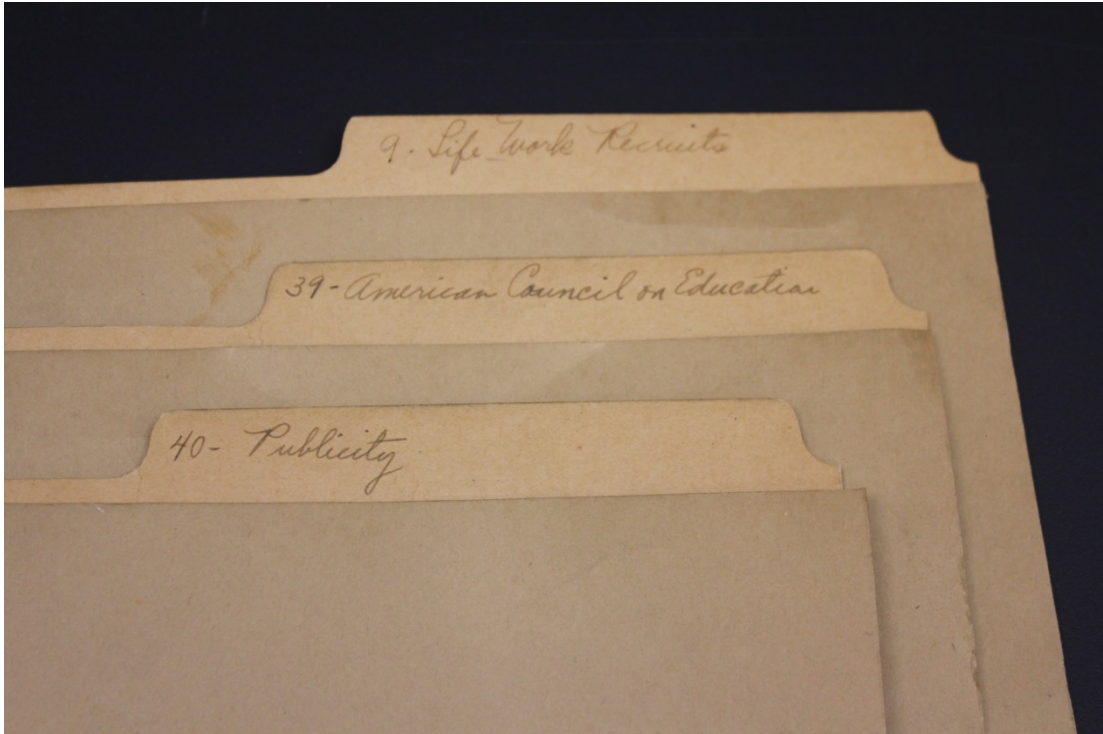
Work continued thusly through mid-November. Progress was slow enough that we decided to forgo the second finding aid for the time being and instead concentrate on the preservation work. To help with this process a new volunteer, who had previously been assisting other areas of the Otterbein Courtright Memorial Library, came on board for approximately six hours per week to assist with the processing. One month later, in mid-December, the two volunteers set preservation issues aside for a week and replaced all of the remaining original boxes with the new acid-free boxes. This completed the final phase of the work that was required by the grant agreement. Since that time the volunteers have returned to the file-by-file preservation work, and will continue to work on this project until completed.



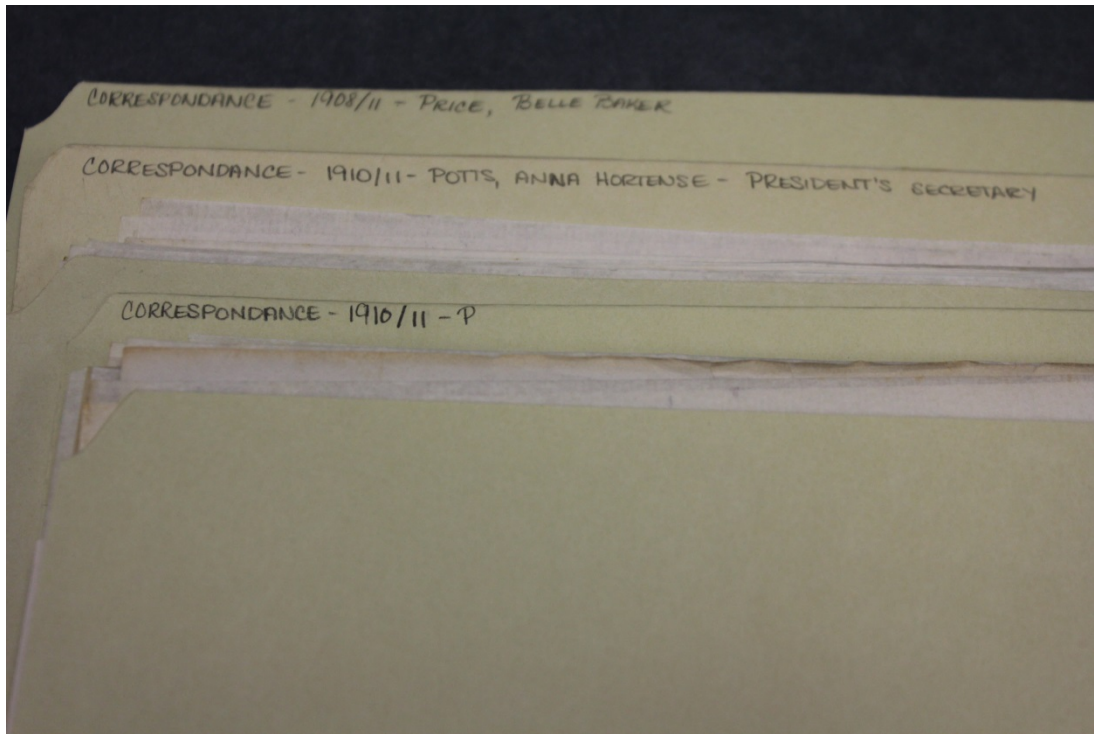
Old boxes with makeshift labels



New boxes with proper labels



Old folders with signs of wear and age



New folders

Plans for the immediate future:

Work on the Walter G. Clippinger papers will not end on December 31st. The second pass through the collection will continue until all the documents have been properly preserved, all of the files have been shifted to their final box, and the finding aid has been updated to reflect any changes. After the second pass, the finding aid and selected photographs from the archive will be added to the school's Institutional Repository, The Digital Commons at Otterbein (<http://digitalcommons.otterbein.edu/>), where they will be visible to anyone, anywhere in the world. A third pass through the collection will return to preparing the second finding aid. Due to the size of the collection this finding aid will be broken down into smaller documents by academic year. As each year is finished it will be added to our Digital Commons for the benefit of researchers worldwide. We will publicize the collection through the Digital Commons, Facebook, Otterbein University Alumni publications, and the Otterbein University Archives webpages.

Long-Range Plans:

Once the third pass through the Clippinger papers has been completed we will use the same method to process and preserve the papers of the seven presidents who followed Clippinger, 1940 to 1984 (this is not an arbitrary date; it is the end of our holdings).

Financial Data:

Clippinger Papers Project Funds			
Salaries and Wages	Total Cost	Grant Funds	Match Funds
Alan Borer, Temporary Archives Employee (20 hrs/wk x 14 weeks)	\$2,173.51		\$2,173.51
Supplies			
Blue-Gray Barrier Board Flip-Top Case (letter size) 350 @ \$4.95 each	\$1,732.50	\$1,732.50	
Blue-Gray Barrier Board Flip-Top Case (letter size) 32 @ \$5.06	161.92	\$161.92	
Blue-Gray Barrier Board Flip-Top Case (legal size) 5 @ \$6.40 each	\$32.00	\$32.00	
Acid-Free Record Storage Carton 5 @ \$7.21 each	\$36.05	\$36.05	
Reinforced File Folders (letter size) 5 @ \$28.11 per pack	\$140.55		\$140.55
Reinforced File Folders (legal size) 1 @ \$31.72 per pack	\$31.72		\$31.72
Archival Polyester Envelopes (letter size, 3 mil.) 5 @ \$22.95 per pack	\$92.05		\$92.05
Archival Polyester Envelopes (legal size, 3 mil.) 1 @ \$19.29	\$19.29		\$19.29
Equipment			
HP Scanjet 8270 Document Scanner	\$766.99		\$766.99
WD My Book 3TB 3.0 USB Hard Drive	\$127.90		\$127.90
Total		\$1,960.47	\$3,352.01
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS: \$5,312.48			