

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

Otterbein University OHRAB Grant Interim Report

Stephen D. Grinch, Project Director

(614) 823 – 1761

SGrinch@Otterbein.edu

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Summary of Project Activities to date:

- From April 7th to May 16th our project volunteer was able to devote approximately six hours a week to the Presidential papers. From May 19th to August 22nd our project volunteer was hired on a temporary basis and worked 25 hours per week on this project. He will resume volunteering for approximately six hours a week beginning again the week of September 1st, and will continue through the end of the project (officially December 31st).
- The first pass through the collection was completed in late July – a finding aid was created and most of the original non-archival folders were replaced.
- Folders that were incorrectly filed were returned to their rightful place in the collection, and folders have been shifted to accommodate overcrowded boxes. However, the decision was made by the project director and the project volunteer NOT to attempt to impose a new organizational system on the collection. The original order, though inconsistent, is easily navigable with the finding aid.
- The second pass through the collection began in early August – metal staples, pins, and clips are being removed, and a finding aide for each folder detailing the letter-by-letter contents of the collection is being generated.
- New acid-free boxes, acid-free folders, and polyester sleeves have been purchased to finish the preservation work on the collection. A computer was procured through our IT department to assist in the creation of the finding aid. A scanner is on order to allow us to digitize fragile and important documents within the collection, and an external hard drive was purchased to house the digital documents without relying on the oft-overloaded University server for space.

Our stated goals for this project were: *“...a searchable and accessible collection, where guesswork is replaced with a precise system of finding aids. All of the documents will be properly preserved, housed in files and boxes tailored to the needs of the collection. Finally, the collection will be*

prepared for a future project of complete digitization and placement in a cloud system or other open-source institutional repository.” As of August 29th we have completed our finding aid and are almost finished with the preservation work. In addition, Otterbein University will be unveiling its new Institutional Repository later this fall, which will provide an additional place to house and showcase the collection.