THE WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY FOLKLORE ARCHIVE:
IN PROCESS

Ellen J. Stekert

The holdings of the Wayne State University Folklore Archive are especially noteworthy for two reasons. First, they contain the largest and oldest known ongoing collection of urban folklore as well as the folklore of urban groups in North America. Second, they comprise the foremost collection of Michigan traditional materials, rivalled only by the Michigan State College Folklore Archives, which were incorporated into the Indiana University Folklore Archives in 1957 by Professor Richard M. Dorson. The richness of Wayne State University's Folklore Archive is matched only by the complexity of its growth and financing; it is a result of the strong guiding hand of Professor Thelma James that the collection has continued to exist and grow. In her 1955 article in Midwest Folklore, 'Report on Wayne University Archives', Professor James outlined the general classification system, summarized the holdings, and presented a brief history of the Archive since its inception in 1939 by her distinguished predecessor, Professor Emelyn Gardner.

History and Financing

Until 1965, the organization of the Wayne State University Folklore Archive remained as outlined in Professor James' article: individual collection manuscripts were placed in folders which were organized by general headings, primarily ethnic and geographic; folders containing student research studies were arranged separately and alphabetically by investigator. In 1965, Professor James and I recognized that the Archive holdings had grown to a point where substantial reorganization was necessary. In that year, therefore, with Professor James' advice and assistance, I began a project of reorganizing and expanding the Archive. The reorganization, which is progressing along lines similar to those Professor James outlined in her 1955 article, is still in process.
In 1965 three separate folklore archives were found at the University. The first, the Wayne State University Folklore Archive, was housed in the Department of English and received its support from that Department. It was under the direction of Professor James who had maintained and expanded the archive begun by Professor Gardner. Dr. Bruno Nettl (formerly of the Wayne State University Library and Music Department) had established a small but impressive Archive of Ethnomusicology in the Wayne State University Library where it was still housed. I had developed a growing tape and manuscript archive housed also in the Department of English, and supported partially by that Department and partially through grants received from the Graduate Division of the University. Thus the three archives were supported in full or part by separate branches of the University. In addition, each archive utilized a separate system of classification.

During the past two years these three archives have been brought together under the single title of 'Wayne State University Folklore Archive'. The name is simply a symbol; the three archives are presently being moved to a single location in the Wayne State University Library, and the holdings are all being reclassified under a single system. The financial support given by three University sources — the Library, the Department of English, and the Graduate Division— has increased over this period of time. Our success is due in part to the University recognizing its unique position as a major urban university with the responsibility of studying urban culture and urban problems. The University has acknowledged the importance of the study of urban traditions and, consequently, has been slowly increasing its support of the Folklore Archive.

There are presently three part-time Student Assistant Archivists reorganizing the old material and accessioning new acquisitions. Funds for two of these Assistantships are provided by the Department of English, while one is supported by the government Work Study Program. All of the students holding these positions have registered for courses in folklore and have had over a year of experience working in the Archive. Since 1964, the Graduate Division of the University has awarded me annual Research Grants-in-Aid to help pay for the purchase of new materials and for the ongoing procedures of processing and accessioning. The Graduate Division has also awarded me a Faculty Research Fellowship to work full time during the summer of 1967 on the reorganization process. At present we are negotiating with the Library and the Department of English for increased financial support and, hopefully, within a few years the Archive will have a stable, ongoing annual budget assured by the Library, the Department of English and the Graduate Division.
Holdings

There are approximately 2,000 separate accessions, including nearly 300 tapes, in the Wayne State University Folklore Archive. Most of these holdings are from Detroit and Greater Michigan. Accessions range in size from manuscripts of a few pages or a single annotated tape recording to voluminous collections such as the one which was the basis of Susie Hoogiasian-Villa's 603 page work, *100 Armenian Tales* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1966). The holdings of the Archive include: annotated manuscript and taped field collections made by supervised student and professional collectors, student studies, and commercial recordings (both 78 and LP discs). The extensive 3 x 5 card collection of cures mentioned by Professor James in her 1955 article now numbers in the tens of thousands and is being prepared by her for publication. The Archive is especially strong in its holdings of urban ethnic traditions, an emphasis initially stressed by Professor Emelyn Gardner.

In the majority of cases the material in the Archive is the result of supervised student collecting and research, although in the past few years an increasing number of accessions represent the fieldwork of professional folklorists. For example, Dr. Bruno Nettl, Dr. Richard Waterman (of the Wayne State University Anthropology Department), and I have deposited sections of our private collections in the Archive. Professional collections of other Michigan materials are presently being solicited.

Most of the student contributions to the Archive are the result of supervised study or collecting done as a partial requirement for a folklore course or for an advanced degree. Students registered for folklore courses offered by the English Department often elect to make collections. Three courses in folklore are currently offered by that Department: 'Folklore' (a survey course), 'Folksong and Ballad', and 'Studies in Folklore'. Between 250 and 350 students register for the three courses each year.

The Archive has developed a series of forms for the student to use in order to secure full background information for the collected material. Blank tapes are provided, and arrangements are made through the University Audio-Visual Department for the student to borrow a recording machine and to be trained in its use. The Archive possesses two Wollensaks and a Nagra. A series of legal contracts has been drawn up after extensive consultation with the University. These contracts offer the depositor several options concerning the use of his material.
While the Archive is in the process of relocating in the Library and establishing an ongoing budget, the major task at hand is the reclassification of the existing holdings and the accessioning of new ones. Eventually, when the reclassification is finished, the Archive will be able to concentrate more fully on its use by visiting scholars, answering mail requests, the solicitation of existing and new collections, the publication of a list of its holdings, and the establishment of a series of publications based on the collections.

The Present System of Classification

The present system by which the entire Archive is being reclassified was developed by Mrs. Judith McCulloh, former Assistant Archivist at the Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music, during her two extended visits to Wayne State University in March and July of 1966. Her visits were sponsored by the Graduate Division and the Department of English of Wayne State University. In order to facilitate the transition period and the reorganization process, Mrs. McCulloh drew up a concordance of all the Archive holdings, notating both the past location and the new number of any given folder. Thus although the old system of placement of folders was physically altered it was possible, through consulting the concordance, to locate any accession according to the old system. Eventually, when sufficient cross-indexing is completed, the concordance will no longer be necessary.

The procedure used to classify the holdings in the Wayne State University Folklore Archive is best described by Mrs. McCulloh's Manual, which is reproduced below in full. Collections are filed according to the date of accession and cross-indexes are made on 3 x 5 cards. Eventually, all manuscript material will be reproduced by microfilm process or by Xerox, all tapes will be copied, and all commercial recordings will be taped; this will obviate the necessity for an investigator to handle and, perhaps, inadvertently harm the original item.

* * * * *

Wayne State University Folklore Archive Manual

Developed by Mrs. Judith McCulloh

1966

The basic unit of the Archive is the collection, that is, a unified body of material received at one time from one source. This may consist of one or a combination of media, such as manuscripts, tape,
When a collection is received, it is immediately given 1) an accession number, 2) a title, 3) an accession folder, and 4) if necessary, location numbers.

The accession number consists of the year-month-day the collection is received, followed in parentheses by the sequence within that year. Thus 1966-3-14 (15) means that the collection was received on March 14, 1966, and was the fifteenth collection received in 1966. Each year starts over with (1). Note that the date of collection may be different from the date of accession. Thus, a tape recorded on Christmas eve of 1965, but not deposited until February 3, 1966, will have as accession number 1966-2-3 (x). The date of collection will be taken care of by the title (see below).

Accession numbers are useful for various reasons: they provide objective and immediate finding numbers for the material; they indicate when the collections were received and taken care of; they indicate how many collections came in during any given year, thus reflecting activity and growth of the Archive.

The title consists of the language(s) or culture(s) represented, in alphabetical order (with one exception, see below); the place of collection (country, state or province, major city); last name of collector; year of collection; catch-phrase to identify the material.

Material recorded in English, but clearly representing some non-English-speaking group, should be labeled according to that group. Thus the title for some Russian folktales narrated in English should begin 'Russian,...' If more than three languages or cultures are involved, begin with the word 'Mixed'. If more than three genres or subjects are included, use 'Misc.' as the catch-phrase. Thus:

**English, U. S., Utah, Fife, 1960, Mormon customs.**
**English and Yiddish, U. S., Michigan, Detroit, Smith, 1960, dialect jokes.**
**Polish, U. S., Michigan, Detroit, Stekert, 1965, folksongs.**
**Turkish, U. S., South Carolina, Somberg, 1954, Armenian folktales.**
Albanian and Greek, Canada, Ontario, Georges, 1962-63, misc.

If the accession comprises strictly secondary material, begin with the word 'Study', followed by the last name of the author, the year of composition, and the title of the paper. Thus:

Study, Jones, 1964, 'Incremental Repetition'.
Study, McCulloh, 1958, 'Proverbial Use of the Color 'Yellow'.'

Make an accession folder for every accession, even if there is nothing to put in it except the accession sheet. Eventually there will be additional documentation: music transcriptions, interview transcripts, Xerox copies of LP jacket lines notes, texts and translations of foreign-language material, and so forth. Type a paste-on tab for each folder, with the accession number and the title (which may have to be shortened to fit). Samples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961-5-27 (62)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study, McCulloh, 1958, 'Proverbial Use of the Color 'Yellow'.'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966-3-14 (15)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

File the accession folders by year, and by sequence within the year.

Assign a location number to all material not kept in the accession folder. Each type of material will have its own numbering sequence. Thus all 7" tapes will be housed together and numbered from 1 on; all 5" tapes (including smaller tapes wound onto 5" reels) will be kept together and numbered from 1 on; all notebooks (the 'notebook' category might also include items of similar size such as cardboard 'letter' boxes) will be lined up together and labeled from 1 on; discs of like size will be kept together; and so forth.
To label tapes and discs, type the location number on two pieces of adhesive tape, like this:

```
| 7" tape 1 | 7" tape 1 | 5" tape 23 | 5" tape 23 |
```

Place one label on the tape reel or the center/label area of the disc, and place the other label on the spine of the tape box or the top right or left (depending on your type of shelving) corner of the paper/cardboard disc jacket. For tapes it is also advisable to attach about four seconds of leader-and-timing tape to the end of the tape. On this write the accession number, location number, and as much of the title as will fit. This further identifies the tape (particularly if the tape is accidentally wound onto the wrong take-up reel) and protects material recorded near the end of the tape (it is likely to fray or break off under repeated use).

For each accession fill out two copies of the accession sheet (sample follows). Place one copy in the accession notebook, the other in the accession folder. Whenever new information is added, be sure to make the notation on both copies of the accession sheet.

**Accession number:** see below

**Title:** see below

**Physical description of collection:** E. g.,

one 7" tape, 1200 ft., 7 1/2 ips, two track, original.
two 5" tapes, first generation copy (of collector's originals),
full track, 3 3/4 ips.
14-page handwritten MS, plus 11 3x5 cards.
two copies (original and carbon) of a 25-page typewritten MS.
tape dub of 3-disc 78 rpm album; recorded at 7 1/2 ips, last portion of track 2 of 7" tape __; Xerox of notes on inside front cover of album.
five typewritten MSS of c. 150 pages each, apparently different editings of the same collection: original and carbon of first version; original and carbon of revision; carbon of final draft (assigned labels I, II; III, IV; V).

**Nature of collection:** This is not meant to describe subject matter; for that, see 'subject cards', below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accession Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical description of collection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of collection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collector’s name and address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depositor’s name and address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictions on use of collection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accession folder ( )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accession card ( )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location numbers assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location card ( )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title card ( )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collector/Author card ( )</td>
<td>d/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informant(s) cards</td>
<td>d/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCA cross-reference cards</td>
<td>d/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject cards</td>
<td>d/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional documentation placed in folder:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments and notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First, distinguish between student and non-student work. If it is a student project, indicate in quotes the student's title; if necessary, add a brief explanation, in brackets. Indicate the course, instructor, semester and year, and the grade. If it is not obvious by now, specify whether it is a collection, a study, a study which includes freshly collected material, and the like.

If it is not a student project, describe briefly, e.g., a concert sponsored by X organization, a lecture by visiting scholar X, a demonstration-interview in a given class, and the like. Give full dates, names, and places if this information is not covered elsewhere on the accession sheet.

**Collector's (author's) name and address:** give in full.

**Depositor's name and address:** generally the same as collector/author; if not, give in full.

Restrictions on use of collection: Indicate any request that pseudonyms be used in publication, and the like.

**Accession folder:** see above.

**Accession card:** On a 3 x 5 card type the accession number in the upper left-hand corner; type the title below; beneath the title type any location numbers. Sample:

```
1966-3-14 (15)

English, U.S., South Carolina, Cohen, 1965, fiddle tunes

7" tapes 5-7
```
File these cards according to year, and sequence within the year. It is imperative that this file be kept up to date, e.g., so that the same number is not inadvertently assigned to two different accessions.

**Former number:** Indicate any former James, Nettl, or Stekert (or other) numbers. Occasionally the history of some collection must be traced, and such clues prove invaluable.

**Location numbers assigned:** see above.

**Location card:** On a 3 x 5 card type the location numbers in the upper left-hand corner; type the title below; beneath the title type the accession number. Sample:

```
7" tapes 5-7

English, U.S., South Carolina, Cohen, 1965, fiddle tunes

1966-3-14 (15)
```

File the location cards according to category (7" tapes, 5" tapes, notebooks, etc.), and sequence within the category. This file must also be kept up to date.

**Title card:** On a 3 x 5 card type the title in the upper left-hand corner; type the accession number below; beneath that type any location numbers. Sample:
File these cards alphabetically. File the cards naming more than one language/culture after cards naming a single language/culture; ignore the word 'and'. Thus, the following sequence:

English, U.S., Michigan...
English, German, and Polish, U.S., Michigan...
English and Polish, U.S., Michigan...

Collector/author card: On a 3 x 5 card type the collector's name, last name first. Add the title, accession number, and any location numbers. File alphabetically. Sample:
Informant card: On a 4 x 6 card type the informant's name, address, age, marital status, collection title, accession number, and any location numbers. Sample:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smith, John Hamilton</th>
<th>age 56</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>983426 Sherwood Road</td>
<td>widower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit, Michigan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1966-4-11 (22). 5" tapes 7-10.

LCA cross-reference cards: These language/culture/area cards will be filed with the title cards. Make as many 3 x 5 cards as necessary to cover all languages, ethnic groups, places of collection. Right now it is not crucial to indicate units smaller than the state or province, except Detroit, and perhaps a few other major cities. Eventually cards should be made for all the Michigan material by county, and by cities in addition to Detroit. A general UP (Upper Peninsula) category would, perhaps, also be useful. In the upper left-hand corner type the unit in question; two spaces below, type 'See also: (title, accession number)'. To save file space, several entries may be typed on one card. Samples:
South Carolina


Turkish, U.S., South Carolina, Somberg, 1954, Armenian folktales. 1957-8-10 (72).

Armenian

See also: Turkish, U.S., South Carolina, Somberg, 1954, Armenian folktales. 1957-8-10 (72).

Finnish


Subject cards: These 3 x 5 cards will be filed by category. Appended is a beginning subject list; keep this list handy in some folder or notebook, and on it make a note of new subject headings as they are added. From time to time it will probably be necessary to retype this subject list, as it expands. On the 3 x 5 card, type the heading in the upper left-hand corner; type the title and the accession number below. Make as many subject cards for each collection as seem useful.

Sample:

Folktales

Turkish, U. S., South Carolina, Somberg, 1954, Armenian folktales. 1957-8-10 (72).


Additional documentation placed in folder: Indicate type, quantity, author or source, dates, and the like.

d/s refers to date/signature. All work done should be signed and dated on both copies of the accession sheet. This is the central record of what was done, when and by whom.

In each accession folder place one of the sheets indicating LCA cross-reference cards and subject cards. The archivist should write out the headings for all cards to be made. He or a clerical assistant should type all the cards thus indicated, then sign name and date. Any cards made later should be similarly listed on this sheet, with signature and date. This list indicates immediately what cards should (and do) exist; this saves time and energy by preventing duplication of cards, and facilitates matters should information on the cards need to be changed.
The 'other' category might include:

- cards for music transcriptions (as opposed just to text transcriptions);
- cards for theses, dissertations, special/major honors papers, published works based on Archive material;
- cards on individual items: e.g., by Child, Laws, motif, tale type, song titles, first lines, Bayard fiddle tune numbers, etc.;
- cards on commercial records, to be arranged by company, then by number of the record, e.g., the following sequence: Columbia ML 528; Columbia XQ 560; Columbia DG 1007; Decca 435; Decca 772; Old-Timey LP-101; Starday SLP 177; Starday SLP 179; Starday SLP 204, and so forth.

A sample sheet is provided on page 76.

The system devised for the Wayne State University Folklore Archive by Mrs. McCulloh which is based, in part, on that in use at the Indiana University Archives of Traditional Music, is working extremely well. At present, all collections have been provided with folders, Accession sheets, Accession cards, Location number cards, Title cards, and Collector/Author cards. The major aspect of the 'reclassification' of the Wayne State University Folklore Archive has been the physical relocation of the individual folders, ordering them by year of accession rather than by ethnic or genre groups. The ethnic and genre classifications are covered in the new system by cross-index cards (LCA and Subject cards), thus solving any confusion resulting when one collection includes more than one ethnic group, or material of a specific genre from a single ethnic group. Since no working cross-index previously existed for the Archive holdings, the present LCA and Subject cards will be the first such cross-index for this material, and will utilize those basic folklore tools (i.e., The Types of the Folktale, the Motif-Index, Laws Numbers) which Professor James suggested in her article 'Problems of Archives', in 1958.

The problems of financing, locating, and staffing the Wayne State University Folklore Archive are by no means unique. Almost every archive of traditional materials has had growing pains. But our present folklore holdings at Wayne State University and the poten-
LCA CROSS-REFERENCE CARDS:

cards made ____________ d/s

* * * * * * * * * * * *

MICHIGAN COUNTY / DETROIT / UP CARDS:

cards made ____________ d/s

* * * * * * * * * * * *

ADDITIONAL CARDS (INDICATE TYPE):

cards made ____________ d/s

ACCESSION NUMBER: ________

SUBJECT CARDS:
tial future investigations which can emanate from our Folklore Ar-
chive justify our struggles. Our efforts are producing results, and
Mrs. McCulloh's system of classification is revealing the unique
riches we hold in our thirty-year ongoing collection of Detroit and
Michigan materials.

NOTES

1. The distinction between the two types of folklore indicated here is
that 'urban folklore' is the lore which develops in the city; 'the
folklore of urban groups' is both that lore which develops within
the urban environment and that which the groups bring to the urban
environment.


3. The merger was announced by Richard M. Dorson in his article,
'New Holdings at the Indiana University Folklore Archives', The
Folklore and Folk Music Archivist, Vol. 1, No. 1 (March, 1958),
p. 2. The folksong holdings of the Michigan State University
collection are outlined in Joseph Hickerson's article, 'The Indiana
University Folklore Archive Song Index', The Folklore and Folk
Music Archivist, Vol. VI, No. 1 (Spring, 1963), pp. 3-6. The
superstition collection of the Michigan State University Archive
is discussed by Stuart A. Gallacher in his article,'Superstitions
in the Michigan State University Archives', Midwest Folklore, Vol.
V, No. i (Spring, 1955), pp. 60-62. and Richard M. Dorson out-
lines the general holdings of the Michigan State University collec-
tion in his article,'The Michigan State College Folklore Archives',

4. Wayne University became Wayne State University in 1956.


6. Ibid., p. 63.

7. Ibid., p. 63.

8. These studies, and the purpose of including them in the Archive
are described by Professor James in her article, op. cit., p. 64.
There are presently 688 such studies in the Archive. The practice
of accessioning these works will most likely be modified in the fu-
ture.

9. Ibid., p. 63.

10. Professor Emelyn Gardner was responsible for the collections of
Susie Hoogasian-Villa and Harriet M. Pawlowska. Susie Hoogasian-
Villa's work was published in part in 1966 as 100 Armenian Tales
(Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1966), and Harriet Paw-
lowska's work was published in part in 1961 as Merrily We Sing:
105 Polish Folksongs (Detroit: Wayne State University Press,
1961). Professor James directed the editing of both books.

12. It might be pointed out here for the sake of other Archives that there is a problem regarding contracts signed by persons under 21 years of age. It is likely that such contracts are not valid.