Guide to the University of Chicago Library
Office of the Director, M. Llewellyn Raney, Ralph A. Beals and Allen T. Hazen, Records 1894-1959

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Descriptive Summary

Identifier       ICU.SPCL.LIBRARY3


Date             1894-1959

Size             12 linear feet (24 boxes)

Repository       Special Collections Research Center
                 University of Chicago Library
                 1100 East 57th Street
                 Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract          This collection contains administrative records of the University of Chicago Library from its early years through the mid-twentieth century, but most closely documents the years 1928-1948, a span of time when the position of library director was held by M. Llewellyn Raney, Ralph A. Beals and Allen T. Hazen.

Information on Use

Access            The collection is open for research.

Citation          When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: University of Chicago. Library. Office of the Director. M. Llewellyn Raney, Ralph A. Beals and Allen T. Hazen. Records, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Historical Note   The period when Ernest D. Burton and J.C.M. Hanson each served as Director of the Library brought the construction of Harper Library, and a formal review and planning process for the library system. Despite these efforts, the University of Chicago Library remained decentralized and administratively unstable for much of the first half of the twentieth century.

The long and often conflicted process of evaluation and planning continued under M. Llewellyn Raney, who assumed the position of Director of the Library in 1928. In the early 1930s, Raney led an effort to comprehensively survey the library. In the process, faculty and administrators were solicited for their evaluations and suggestions in terms of the effectiveness of the library’s service to the departments, divisions and schools of the university. The results of the Library
Survey were published as part of a multi-part series of administrative reports that surveyed the University of Chicago as a whole.

Beginning around the same time, Associate Director A.F. Kuhlman began a project to aggressively search and acquire "fugitive materials" for library collections - resources needed by researchers in the humanities and social sciences, but difficult to acquire and manage in library collections. "Fugitive materials" were defined in intentionally broad terms: Annual reports, newspapers, government documents, archives and manuscripts, organizational records, maps, audio-visual material, and print ephemera are just a few of the types of materials that Kuhlman considered as part of the collecting scope. While Kuhlman’s project required a major dedication of staff time and resources over several years, it helped build many of the library’s collections of non-book materials, and contributed to cooperative acquisitions efforts with other institutions.

The struggle to centralize the library system and unify its operations continued through the end of Raney’s directorship. Departmental libraries, often managed independently and without operational relationships with the larger library system, persisted through their value and convenience for faculty.

Raney was succeeded by Ralph A. Beals, who served as director from 1942-1946. The position was then held by Allen T. Hazen from 1946-1948. With the directorship of Herman H. Fussler (1948-1971), the library began to manifest the lessons learned from a long period of evaluation, experimentation, administrative debate and uncertainty.

Scope Note
This collection contains administrative records of the University of Chicago Library from its early years through the mid-twentieth century, but most closely documents the years 1928-1948, a span of time when the position of library director was held by M. Llewellyn Raney, Ralph A. Beals and Allen T. Hazen.

Series I: Office of the Director, contains correspondence, reports, minutes, and collection development material. Records of the administrations of J.C.M. Hanson and Herman H. Fussler are included along with larger amounts of material from the era of Raney, Beals and Hazen. This series is organized chronologically by administrator. This series contains correspondence regarding the development of several book and manuscript collections, as well as files on private collections that the university did not acquire. Material on library committees, such as the Staff Advisory Committee (which advocated for the needs of librarians and other library staff) are also included in this series, as is a set of files related to Raney’s interest in the then-emerging technology of microphotography.
Series II: Office of the Associate Director, contains material from the office of A.F. Kuhlman. Much of the material in this collection relates to Kuhlman’s project to evaluate and expand the library's collection of “fugitive materials” - mainly published and near-print documents of governments and public institutions. Documentation of this project includes correspondence, reports, financial records, and lists of materials held or needed for the library. Much of the correspondence is routine in nature, including copies of thousands of requests to organizations for information about published material. This series also contains smaller amounts of routine administrative documents regarding facilities and personnel.

Series III: Departments and Divisions, contains administrative records of the many administrative units below the Director. This series is arranged alphabetically by administrative unit. Much of the material in this series relates to the ongoing management of library collections, including cataloging, preservation and acquisitions. The Catalog Department and Preparations Division are best documented in this series; records from departments such as Acquisitions and Serials are also included, as is a small amount of material related to the administration of departmental libraries.

Series IV: Finances, contains budgets, ledgers, statements and other financial records of the library. Material in this series spans the years 1917-1943, but most completely documents the years 1930-1933, during the administration of M. Llewellyn Raney, when both the Library Survey and Kuhlman’s fugitive materials project were underway.

Series V: Library Survey, 1930-1933, includes drafts of Raney’s report of the survey, published as part of a multi-part series that evaluated the university as a whole. It also contains correspondence, reports, and other material related to collection development and management, as well as the university community’s evaluations of the library. These evaluations, in the form of correspondence and formal statements, are organized alphabetically by department, division or school. A small number of evaluations of individual library collection are also found.

Series VI: Facilities, Equipment and Supplies, contains material related to renovation and maintenance of buildings, and the selection and acquisition of library equipment and supplies.

Series VII: Staff Information, contains bulletins, newsletters, directories used primarily for the information of internal staff at the library.

Series VIII: Publications and Guides, contains informational material for the university community and administration, as well as the general public. This series includes library documents such as annual reports, handbooks and collection guides, as well as university publications, reports and press releases that relate to library activities and services.
Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

Fussler, Herman H. Papers

University of Chicago. Library. Records

Subject Headings

- Beals, Ralph Albert, 1899-1954
- Fussler, Herman Howe, 1914-
- Hanson, J. C. M. (James Christian Meinich), 1864-1943
- Hazen, Allen T.
- Kuhlman, A.F.
- Raney, M. Llewellyn (McKendree Llewellyn), b. 1877
- University of Chicago. Library
- Academic libraries
- Academic librarians

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