The Draper Manuscripts: Frontier Lives

Come along on a trip back through time, to America in the 1700s and 1800s when the Western Frontier was the Allegheny Mountains and the Ohio River valley, when travel was by foot or horseback, and when each day was filled with a combination of danger and drudgery; come back to a time when heroes were bigger than life and could well be your "nighest" neighbor.

Learn what members of the Fox or Sauk tribes meant by Sog-o-nosh, Muc-camon, and She-caw-go-may-mang, and read the Indian Agent’s document on the “Manners & Customs of the Sauk & Fox Nations of Indians ...” that was delivered to General William Clark, Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis, on 15th January 1827.

Unravel the detailed genealogies of families that settled in the “Western Frontier” of Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, the Carolinas, Kentucky, and Tennessee; learn names like Boone, Clark, Girty, and Kenton; and also hear of the families of Sumter, Finely, Hart, and Pogue.

Come and revel in this treasure trove of material from one of the most significant collections of historical material of the American frontier. Amassed over a period of 48 years by one man, Lyman Copeland Draper (1815-1891), the material is arranged and assembled into over 500 volumes in accordance with 19th century library practice. The Regional History Collections, located on the East Campus of Western Michigan University, has the only complete set of the Draper Manuscripts in Michigan. The collection is reproduced on 123 reels of microfilm acquired from the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

Original documents dated 1740-1830 make up the majority of the papers. In addition, there are newspaper and journal articles as well as court records and other legal documents that Draper copied out by hand. This amazing set of documents provides an enthralling view of life and times during the frontier conflicts of the 1740s and 1750s through the American Revolution and the War of 1812.

The researcher gains a special feel for the authenticity of the material when he reads the words of Judge A.H. Dunlevy of Lebanon, Ohio, who, writing to Lyman Draper in 1850, harrumphs: “Unfortunately I knew too many of these Pioneers to have a very high opinion of them as a class of men. It is true they comprised [sic] men of the most uncompromising [sic] virtue, integrity and piety, but this was true only of a very few—the most of them were the very opposite, ignorant, depraved and licentious.” And, with a few words, he poked holes in Draper’s romanticized view of the “Heroes of the Frontier.”

Lyman Draper saw the history of the American frontier primarily as a series of military events, and his heroes were the soldiers, scouts, and settlers who battled Indians as well as the British and Tory sympathizers. Draper was interested in frontier women and black slaves only in relation to a particular event or person he wished to chronicle; yet the collection contains fascinating material that opens a window into their lives as well. There are references to black slaves who served as soldiers in the Revolution and Indian conflicts; other documents note African-Americans who migrated west—sometimes as slaves, sometimes as free men. Another commentary tells of a black woman who survived the two sieges of Wheeling. In fact, frontier women are directly represented by some 230 interviews and conversations recorded by Draper.

The prevalent view of the period, described as “Manifest Destiny” for the Indians, was shared by Draper; however, the material he collected presents a broader view. Thomas Forsyth, Indian Agent among the Sauk, Fox, and Kickapoo tribes; John Johnson, Indian Agent with the Shawnee, Miami, and

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Slow Fires
Commentary by Dean Lance Query

The University Libraries’ books and other paper resources are self-destructing; they are imperceptively deteriorating—cooking, burning, and consuming themselves. Yet, we are doing little to reverse this disastrous situation. That the majority of other libraries in this country, indeed, world-wide, face the same situation is small consolation.

How did we reach this critical point? Prior to 1860, paper was made primarily of rags—a good product, but one that was costly and in short supply. As printing technology became more refined and the demand for printed materials grew exponentially, alternative sources of paper had to be found. Wood was the answer, but, as we have learned to our dismay, it was not a good answer. Most of us have had to use the result when working with older newspapers and other paper documents from a few decades ago. The paper has become so brittle that it simply cannot be handled without falling apart in your hands—it has, as it were, turned to ashes. Yet, from approximately 1860 to date, the wealth of our contemporary printed resources has been printed on this highly acidic medium that is eating itself away in every library in the world. Although we have recognized that fact, and have many university presses that now print on non-acidic paper, the use of wood-based paper still prevails—especially in those books and documents obtained from foreign presses, many of which we must purchase to respond to our users and their growing need to have international resources.

The problem is not one that has just come to our attention. For most of this century, the “burning” of resources has been of concern to librarians. However, until recently, the only economically feasible method of “preserving” the contents of the self-destructing paper books and serials was to let them perish, but, in the meantime, reproduce the contents in a less-volatile format. The common methods in use are commercial reprinting on less-acidic paper, micropublishing, and mass individual microfilming by the institutions owning the originals. A few rare items have been saved by hand deacidification, but, due to the high cost, this process cannot be used in most library collections.

“Slow burning,” however, is not the only aspect of this massive problem. In addition to acidic instability, libraries simply are not built to provide an environment that will preserve paper materials. Other chemical reactions come from varying temperatures—too cold or too hot—and humidity. Both factors, temperature and humidity, enhance the inherent acidic reaction and produce further deterioration. For books, the ideal temperature appears to be a constant 50 to 60 degrees, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; this would, at least, slow the self-destruction. However, human comfort inside library walls—as well as the expectation that most books are for use outside of the library—always prevails over preservation needs; in the University Libraries, only the vault in the Special Collections area maintains such a temperature plus a relative humidity (RH) of around 50%. Moreover, this vault has been available for only the short time since Waldo was renovated—and is restricted to rare materials. Untold damage is already present in our general collections. The deterioration continues, unchecked today, with certain areas even more inappropriately protected such as our off-site storage collections in North Hall and in the irreplaceable resources of the Archives and Regional History Collections found in East Hall.

Is there a solution? The renovated Waldo Library does improve the temperature, humidity, and filtration systems essential to resource preservation. Even the book drops have been redesigned, and student stack workers are better trained to handle the books with care. We plan to acquire a microfilm cleaner that will assist in preserving our increasingly large microfilm collection, and, if funds can be found, air conditioning will be installed in North Hall. Funding, as always, is a key issue, and while grant support is being pursued, even if awarded, usually is given only for highly distinctive collections such as our Cistercian material or our German newspaper collection. Far more materials will continue to “cook” than will be treated until such time as a cost-effective mass deacidification and DEZ vapor process can be initiated. A small experimental project, costing $12 a volume, will be implemented; we will send a few cartons of books to an outside firm to see if the results are acceptable. Yet, those funds must be taken from the same pool that is used to acquire new and essential resources to support our growing curriculum and research needs.

The situation seems, to continue my analogy, unquenchable; the fires are burning faster than our fire-fighting efforts. But we have not yet lost the battle. The Michigan Library Consortium, through its Budget and Finance Committee on which I serve, is attempting to broker or negotiate more favorable rates for mass deacidification. Multi-library cooperative programs must be established; we will begin by jointly selecting valuable and at-risk collections for focused microfilming projects. We will lobby for effective, less costly means by which to deacidify, and support other research efforts that are seeking solutions to a problem that threatens the heritage of an entire world. The fires may be burning, but we cannot, will not let them consume our libraries, our civilization.
Leta Schoenhals: Nonretiring Spirit

If you wish to know about the life of a retired professional woman, then read no farther and certainly do not ask Leta Schoenhals. She doesn’t know what the phrase means, and has neither the time nor the inclination to find out!

Leta began her life as Leta Cole in Jackson, Michigan, but, when she was a small child, her family moved close to the Kalamazoo area. During that period, Paw Paw, Portage, and Richland were satellite schools of the Campus School that was part of Western State Teachers College; most folks think that this was physically found only in East Hall, but Leta knows better. The teachers in these “outside” locations were considered to be regular faculty members of the College, and were expected to perform the other non-instructional duties of a faculty member. As a result, Leta, as well as those who came to campus, was a part of the laboratory school of this institution although she officially graduated from the Paw Paw High School.

Having been exposed to the Western philosophy during her school years, and because she saw teaching as a likely career, Leta did not leave the Kalamazoo community to attend college; she enrolled as a freshman at WSTC, and selected an English and Speech major. While a senior in high school, she first met an Ann Arbor student, Neil Schoenhals, at a debate tournament, and she continued to see him during her first two years at Western. In Leta’s junior year, 1941, she married him although such actions were not especially encouraged—there were only four other women students who were married and enrolled in the College. Neil went on to a distinguished teaching career at Western, and served for 30 years—many remember him for his leadership as the Director of the Educational Resources Center—a nationally recognized, multi-media-based support center for educational programs at the University.

While Neil was engaged in his teaching during the 1940s, Leta, who had completed her undergraduate degree, interrupted her plans for a career to raise their two children. Her daughter Carol, who holds degrees from the University of Michigan and Case Western Reserve University, teaches pediatrics at the Grand Rapids Junior College. She, in turn, has two sons, Andy, who graduated from WMU in 1993 prepared for a career in construction management, and Jeff, who is currently a middle school education major at the University. Leta notes, with considerable pride, that he will receive his diploma, magna cum laude, at the April 1995 commencement.

The Schoenhals son, Marvin, universally known as “Skip” to his friends and colleagues, has also been a source of pride. He obtained his degree from the University of Michigan and then attended the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. He is CEO and president of a major bank in Delaware, and is devoted to his step-daughter, Allison, a 9th grade student. There is little doubt that Neil and Leta were successful in their parenting careers.

As her children grew older, Leta was able to return to her own professional interests, and eventually earned her master’s degree in junior high education with a counseling emphasis followed by a Specialist in Education degree, also in counseling. From there, it was a short step to a position as counselor in the Portage high schools. She needed all the skills that she had, not only to deal with her formal position, but also to assist her own family through a period of crisis. Her two grandsons had to cope with a divorce and the loss of three grandparents within a two-year period. Leta stepped in to provide stability and to help in dealing with the loss of immediate family. Prior to his death, she and Neil had explored much of the United States in their travel trailer; at this point, she traded it in for a self-contained motor home. Then, she and her grandsons spent most of their summers visiting dozens of locations in both the United States and Canada. As she recalls, “We had a ball!”

Travel may not be a career, but it comes close to being a vocation and is certainly a passionate interest. As noted, the first journeys were largely within the continental U.S and Canada, but she soon became a world-wide enthusiast with Europe and the Middle East as opening steps followed by additional trips farther afield. Among her memorable visits was one with Kalamazoo’s sister city, Numazu, visited with several other Kalamazoo as well as University friends such as Marguerite Baechtold and Eleanor McKinney, emeriti faculty from the University’s library school. She has been to Malaysia, Bangkok, Thailand, and Hong Kong—twice; spent six weeks in the South Pacific; enjoyed a week in the remote jungles of New Guinea; and braved the continent of Africa twice—once to see the antiquities in Egypt and once on an animal safari by hot air balloon across the Serengeti Plain. She reluctantly admits that South America has not yet been on her itinerary, but that oversight will soon be remedied!

Two rather special interests have grown out of her travel. Leta has honed her photography skills; she is, indeed, a superior photographer and has both the pictures and photography prizes to prove her mastery of the field. And, along the way, she also developed a somewhat unique collector’s interest in an unusual object—not art objects or jewelry or antiques, but teapots—most, of course, carried carefully home from one of her far-flung visits around the world.

Articles such as this always have space limitations, and one serious problem with describing Leta Schoenhals is attempting to encompass at least a degree of what has been important in her life. One finally

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"Only Connect ..."

One of the memorable quotations that reflects a contemporary dilemma is that of E.M. Forster who, in *Howard’s End*, stated, “only connect the prose and the passion.” Today’s almost unlimited access to information has created some special problems when humans do attempt to connect recorded data to their needs. One not-so-small step toward connectivity is now underway at Western Michigan University. We are one of six institutions in Michigan that will install PACLink software and support hardware in their libraries, which will ultimately create an easily connected statewide and national database network. Critical to this essential step has been the receipt of a $50,000 College and Technology Grant from the U.S. Department of Education that provides partial funding for the software/hardware package. Staff members Helen J. Healy and Bettina Meyer were instrumental in preparing the funding proposal that will bring the University Libraries to the requisite computer capability.

Besides linking with the University of Michigan, Wayne State University, Michigan State University, Eastern Michigan University, and Central Michigan University, a significant number of other libraries across the U.S. are moving toward coordination of access. Among them are the Indiana colleges and universities and the SUNY (State University of New York) system. Specialized services such as Data Research Associates, the SIRSI Unicorn system, and library vendors including OCLC are also involved in the development of a national telecommunications network based on a key standard, the Z39.50. It is this standard, largely unrecognized by the public, that will be implemented by the PACLink project.

So, what is Z39.50 and why must it be incorporated in our systems to enhance computer communication? The answer is not necessarily a simple one given the confusing language of modern technology. Basically, Z39.50 is a library networking standard, a communication base or mechanism, that serves as a building block for a flexible and vendor-independent environment. That environment, once in place, allows different user (vendor) systems to talk to each other without changing the search interface of the home system. Implementation of Z39.50 will permit the faculty member, student, or other user at Western Michigan University to search the online catalog at libraries located at the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, or the Kalamazoo Public Library, to cite only a few examples, directly from Finder, our own University online catalog. Every other institution will have a code name that can be selected, such as “Choose Mirlyn” and, in this example, the user would then be able to search the catalog at the University of Michigan. At the present time, this is possible only by leaving WMU’s Finder, dialing MichNet, selecting Mirlyn, and, after a few more steps, finally searching the U. of M. catalog.

A second, major advantage of the use of the Z39.50 protocol is that those libraries using the NOTIS search system, which we do, can also search similar systems such as OCLC’s FirstSearch databases. This becomes very important to anyone who has experienced the problems of moving from one vendor’s database to another. Each database has different instructions for similar actions and the typical library user quickly becomes frustrated by the multitude of details that needs to be recalled for effective searching. With the Z39.50 link, the WMU search interface—the one with which you are most familiar—can be used in external searches; there are no new commands to learn and no individualized training for each database.

Still another valuable benefit from PACLink is that users will be able to initiate interlibrary loan requests as they locate materials in other collections. While searching another catalog, users often see materials that they know they wish to review. If they then initiate an interlibrary loan request, the “system” will check the WMU libraries, inform the user that it is or is not available here, and if not, speed the loan request to the Resource Sharing office for processing. Actions that currently involve a number of separate steps, logging on and off systems, and staff intervention will be completed with a minimum of paperwork and personnel.

In addition to the software that will provide the “standard” interface, the grant funds will be used to acquire an additional ARIEL workstation. These workstations are high-powered microcomputers equipped with laser printers, optical scanners, high speed Ethernet network connections, and special software. ARIEL workstations scan and transmit over MichNet (and the Internet) high resolution reproductions of articles or documents. However, for the system to operate, ARIEL workstations must exist at each end of the transmission. When these stations are in place, bound materials as well as single sheet documents can be scanned and a high-quality copy of the material is sent to the requesting library. One such station already exists in Resource Sharing, Waldo Library, but the addition of another will double our capacity to acquire excellent copies within a shorter time frame.

To sum it all up in a few words, the PACLink project will provide easy and transparent access to numerous online catalogs and database systems using a familiar search interface; offer facilitated intra- and interlibrary loan for users on- and off-campus, provide expanded ARIEL workstation document delivery; assist in the placement of a new computer platform for all library services; and, as an added bonus, expand opportunities for staff education. If all deadlines are met, the PACLink project will be completed within a single year, but, equally important, the University Libraries will have taken a giant step closer to becoming the electronic library of the future. We will have made the connection!

H.J.H.
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other Ohio Valley tribes; and Richard Butler, Indian Commissioner, provide contemporary material on cultural thought and attitudes, tribal history, traditions, and legends.

Both the Central Reference Department in Waldo Library and the Regional History Collections in East Hall have a copy of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin's *Guide to the Draper Manuscripts* (Madison: 1983) which details the 50 series into which the 500 volume collection is divided; Appendix III of the *Guide* is devoted exclusively to the hundreds of maps found in the collection. Another aid to researchers is the calendars which list, in chronological order, material contained in eleven of the series; these are on microfiche in the Regional History Collections.

Because Lyman Copeland Draper, over a century ago, sought and collected virtually untapped manuscript and oral sources, and because he preserved whatever he collected, historians and scholars today are fortunate to have material available that is truly unique and significant. Through the legacy of the Charles R. Starring Endowment Fund, the University Archives and Regional History Collections is able to provide this amazing resource to our University community as well as to the larger community of historical researchers in Michigan. S.H.

The Check's in the Mail

Occasionally, each of us forgets something important. Right now, we want to remind you that we need your renewal for 1995—or, if you have not been a member before, your membership application. As President Leta Schoenhals noted in the Fall issue of *Gatherings*, becoming a member of the Friends of the University Libraries of Western Michigan University gives us "a common ground from which we can grow together;...you do make a difference." Please complete the form below and return it to Bettina Meyer, Waldo Library, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI 49008. We want your involvement in our efforts to strengthen and support the activities of the University Libraries.

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ends up with a list—not complete, but at least a sense of what she does: (1) Member of the Board and President of the Kalamazoo Association of Retired School Personnel; (2) Member of the Evaluation Board of the Visiting Nurse Association of Southwest Michigan; (3) Co-organizer of a program at the Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home that provides readers for the children before they go to bed; (4) Teacher of "55 Alive" for the American Association of Retired People—a program that helps senior automobile drivers cope with aging changes; she has also taught others to teach the course; (5) Chair of the Administrative Council, the governing body of the First United Methodist Church of Kalamazoo; and (6) President of the Friends of the University Libraries, Western Michigan University. Probably, one should also mention that she spends a considerable amount of time cheering on Bronco sports teams including football and basketball.

And there we are, friends: Leta Schoenhals doesn't know a thing about retirement. G.E.

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A Friendly Sale...

History notes that book sales sponsored by library friends organizations are invariably successful, and, for the third year in its brief history, the Friends of the University Libraries at WMU has sponsored an excellent fund-raising activity that has left everyone delighted with the results.

The workings behind such a well-received venture are not complex, but do demand that a series of events takes place. The first seems obvious. Books are needed for the sale, and regardless of all our information technology, the Kalamazoo community is composed of readers who choose to purchase books. At some point in their lives, however, the owners need to reduce their collections. As a result, our University Libraries receive box upon box of books, several thousand in any year, that have been culled from the personal libraries of many individuals for a variety of reasons, e.g., they need the space, they are planning to retire, the books are no longer of interest. Once in the library, the gifts are checked against existing holdings by the staff librarians who specialize in one or more of the subjects covered by the books. On many occasions, the books are already owned and, as a result, the duplicates, without charge, are given to the Friends for their annual sale. Non-duplicates are cataloged and added to the collection. In either event, the donor is sent official recognition of his or her gift to the University.

The books that have not been selected for cataloging are moved out of the building to the old North Hall on the East Campus. The building itself was originally designed as the first WMU Library, and now serves as a major storage facility for the University Libraries. Several times each year, members of the Friends' organization spend hours in the building sorting the books by discipline and pricing them. As anyone who attends a Friends' booksale knows, there are tremendous bargains. The majority of paperbacks go for a mere 25 cents (history can repeat itself); and the price then goes up in small increments depending on the perceived value of the book. A colored dot that indicates the price is placed on the volume, and it is set aside until the sale date. Of course, each later customer knows that he or she has received a unique volume for a pittance, usually a very small portion of the original cost.

The book sale of the Friends of the University Libraries takes place in November of each year. The books have been moved back to Waldo Library where a temporary “book shop” is created on the second floor. The circular space surrounding the atrium is filled with books displayed on tables so that the prospective buyers can review the entire sale collection easily. Prior to the sale dates, the upcoming event is advertised in the Western Herald, campus bulletin boards, and other local gathering points. Signs for the sale are prepared and posted so that the potential buyers can find the sale area and identify subject tables. Volunteers bring recycled paper bags for multiple purchases, the cash boxes are readied, and, when the opening hour arrives (9:00 a.m.), the rush begins; many customers have been waiting since the library opened at 7:45 a.m. The sale is off and running. Buyers and browsers are varied, but many foreign students are found among them. They purchase materials to send back to their own countries where libraries are small, and resources are limited or inaccessible.

By the end of the day, the volunteers are exhausted, the cash boxes are overflowing, and the Friends, once again, have raised hundreds of dollars to support their organization with the majority of the funds going to enhance the University Libraries' valuable collection and resources. Everyone has benefited—donor, collector, buyer, Friend, and library user.

G.E.