FINDING ARCHIVAL AND OTHER PRIMARY SOURCE MATERIALS

What’s Here at UWRF
Wisconsin Area Research Center Network
Online Resources
Homepage:
www.uwrf.edu/AreaResearchCenter
or just /archives

Click on Catalogs and Finding Aids
- Drop-down menu
- Go to the actual page
UWRF’s Catalog vs. UW-Madison’s Catalog

University Archives and Area Research Center
- Archives Resources +
  - Catalogs and Finding Aids
  - Archives Catalog (in Forward)
    [Link]
  - Library Catalog (UWRF)

- Click on Catalogs and Finding Aids
- Drop-down menu
- Go to the actual page

How to Search Catalogs and Finding Aids

- UWRF Catalog
- UWRF Finding Aids
- Archives Catalog (WHS)
- WHS Finding Aids

UWRF Catalog (Searchiq/UW)

The UWRF Catalog includes records for the books and archival materials in the UWRF University Archives, the Area Research Center (ARC), all other Area Research Centers, and the Wisconsin Historical Society’s archives collections.

After navigating to the catalog, to conduct a search of the materials just in the Area Research Center, type your search query in the box and then click the down arrow next to “Everything” and select “Historical Society Archives and RP ARC.” This will limit your search to just materials in the River Falls Area Research Center, plus any archival materials owned by the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS), located either in Madison or one of the other ARCs.

Once you see results of your search you can do further limits, for example, above the results or at the top of the left-hand column you can “Show only... Available at River Falls.” You can also Refine your Results by Resource Type (archival materials are “Other”), Topic, Creation Date, or Author. Right now our archives records say “Multiple versions found” and the first version listed is the one you want to use (includes our call number, such as Pierce Series 4).

UWRF Finding Aids

There are two types of UWRF Finding Aids:

- Area Research Center finding aids (microfilm, university manuscripts collections)
- University Archives collection inventories (university records series)

The collection inventories can be searched individually using the link...
LET'S LOOK AT UWRF'S CATALOG

- Don’t use the default “Everything”
- Instead click on the drop-down menu and use “Wisconsin Historical Society Archives and UWRF Archives”
There are 14 Area Research Centers

UWRF only has these 4 counties

- Burnett
- Polk
- St. Croix
- Pierce
There are 14 Area Research Centers

Limiting a search to “Wisconsin Historical Society Archives” gets you their material at ALL of the ARCs

UWRF only has these 4 counties

Limiting a search to “UWRF Archives” gets you WHS material at River Falls PLUS our university records, special collections, UWRF Mss., books in the ARC
SEARCHING FOR A TOPIC

- For the purposes of this demo, we are all going to pretend that we are working on the Topic “World War I County Councils of Defense”

- How would YOU search for that?
  - Simple search
    just type “world war I council of defense”—gets you 56
  - Advanced search
    type “world war I” in one, “county” in another, and “council of defense” on the third—gets you 32
  - Don’t forget about the various Limits
    - Show only Available at River Falls
      (only if you want to limit to something that physically lives here)
    - Resource Type Archives
    - Click on the Topic World War, 1914-1918
SEARCH

“POLK COUNTY” AND “COUNCIL OF DEFENSE”

- You get 2 versions of catalog record if it is archival and if it belongs to the Wisconsin Historical Society but “lives” at UWRF

- Don’t let that confuse you

- You can tell something that “lives” at UWRF by its call number –
  - Manuscript collections start with “River Falls” and Mss. or SC
  - Government records start with their county name (Burnett, Pierce, Polk, St. Croix) and the word “Series”
LIMIT TO “AVAILABLE AT RIVER FALLS”

That limits your search to only 2 items – in this case both archival records

Both available at UWRF in the University Archives & Area Research Center

2nd item says “and other locations” – a little investigation reveals that this collection has been microfilmed and a copy of the microfilm is at Madison
Two say “Archive” and 2 say “Other” – if you read the webpage you would know that Madison uses a different term than everyone else (!)

Also, the 2 that say “Archive” also say University Archives and Area Research Center AND give a call number; the other 2 don’t

WHS records, “Other” = Archive = primary source
Papers of George A. Nelson, a Milltown, Wisconsin, farmer and assemblyman, documenting his leadership of cooperatives and farmers' organizations, including the Wisconsin State Union of the American Society of Equity, the Wisconsin Co-operative Creameries Association, the Farmers' Holiday Association, and the Farmers' Educational and Cooperative Union of America. In addition, there is some personal and political correspondence, and materials relating to his political career. Business records of some Milltown cooperatives are also included.

Additions, 1889-1990, including personal correspondence with family members while George Nelson was gold mining in the Yukon (1898-1901; some letters are in Danish); courtship letters as well as later correspondence between Nelson and Christina Larsen; other miscellaneous correspondence with family, friends, and business associates; political correspondence, speeches, and campaign memorabilia concerning Nelson's political career as a Socialist; various family papers, including autograph albums, a student diary, and school papers and souvenirs; Klondike ephemera and memorabilia and financial records from this period; business records concerning the Milltown Cooperative, the People's Cooperative, and the Milltown Bank; and photographs of the Nelson and Larsen families, friends, and the Yukon.

- In 1934, Nelson ran as Socialist candidate for governor; in 1936 for vice-president
- From 1917-1919, they concern the Polk County Council of Defense of which Nelson was chairman.—HOW DO YOU DIG DEEPER TO FIND THIS?
The catalog record will tell you that:

- The collection has a register-style “finding aid”
- The Register is available online (click the blue link in Forward, the red link in UWRF catalog)
Online Finding Aids are full-text searchable
They also show up in the online catalog with their own entry
WHAT IS A FINDING AID?

- [http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi/f/findaid/findaid-idx?c=wiarchives;view=reslist;subview=standard;didno=uw-whs-wis000ca](http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi/f/findaid/findaid-idx?c=wiarchives;view=reslist;subview=standard;didno=uw-whs-wis000ca)

**Summary Information**
- **Title**  George A. Nelson Papers
- **Call Number**  Wis Mss CA; M96-118
- **Quantity**  2 cubic feet (5 archives boxes); plus 1.6 additional cubic feet (2 archives boxes)
- **Abstract**  briefly tells you what’s in the collection
- **Language**  can be important, e.g. includes some things in Danish

**Biography/History**
- **Exactly what it says it is**
- **Good place to pick up key dates**
WHAT IS A FINDING AID?

- **Arrangement of the Materials**
  - Really important in this case because there were Additions
    - materials have not been physically interfiled
    - researchers might need to consult more than one part of the collection to locate materials

- **Administrative/Restriction Information**
  - If there was a restriction on using the material, it would be listed here
  - Restriction could be something like “Not available for use until 2020”

- **Contents List**
  - Scope and Content Note – a written description of what you will find in the collection
  - Box-by-box listing of what is in the collection
  - Very important if you are borrowing a collection – only borrow the boxes you actually need
Where do you find his Polk County Council of Defense materials?

- Original Collection
- “From 1917-1919, they [letters] concern the Polk County Council of Defense of which Nelson was chairman.”
- Letters from that time period are in Boxes 1 through 3 (correspondence is filed chronologically)
  - Box 1 = 1908 – 1923 June
  - Box 2 = 1923 July – 1933
  - Box 3 = 1934 – 1954, n.d. [no date/unknown date]
**TOPIC: COOPERATIVES & FARMERS**

- **Where do you find his material about cooperatives?**
  - **Original Collection**
    - “Those [letters] from 1914-1917 are mainly about the Milltown Co-operative Laundry Company, the first such company in Wisconsin.”
    - “Beginning in 1923, letters from fellow members of farmers' groups predominate. Most concern the Society of Equity (mainly 1922-31), the Farmers' Union (mainly 1934-41), and, to a lesser extent, the Co-operative Creameries Association (1920s). All are related to the workings of these organizations rather than to the ideologies behind them.”
  - Letters from that time period are in Boxes 1 through 3 (correspondence is filed chronologically)
    - Box 1 = 1908 – 1923 June
    - Box 2 = 1923 July – 1933
    - Box 3 = 1934 – 1954, n.d. [no date/unknown date]
  - **Additions**
    - “business records concerning the Milltown Cooperative, the People’s Cooperative”
    - Box 4, Folder 7 – Milltown Cooperative and People’s Cooperative, 1929-1949
TOPIC: POLITICS AND/OR SOCIALISM

- Where do you find his material about Nelson’s politics?
  - Original Collection
    - Correspondence: “The 1921-1922 letters come from constituents urging Assemblyman Nelson’s support for or opposition to various bills.”
    - Boxes 1-3 (correspondence is filed chronologically)
      - Box 1 = 1908 – 1923 June
      - Box 2 = 1923 July – 1933
      - Box 3 = 1934 – 1954, n.d. [no date/unknown date]
  - Additions
    - “Political correspondence, speeches, and campaign memorabilia concerning Nelson’s political career as a Socialist”
    - Box 3, Folder 4 – Political correspondence, 1908-1939
    - Box 3, Folder 5 – Speeches
    - Box 3, Folder 6 – Campaign memorabilia

George A. Nelson, the Socialist candidate for governor of Wisconsin in the 1934 election, is seated with Anna Mae Davis, a Madison attorney and a local leader in the Socialist Party. Beginning in 1942 she was a perennial candidate for Attorney General on the Wisconsin Socialist ticket.
Where do you find his material about Nelson’s Gold Rush days (1896-1899)?

- Original Collection
  - Nothing mentioned in Scope and Content note for the Original Collection
  - Correspondence doesn’t start until 1908

- Additions
  - “personal correspondence with family members while George Nelson was gold mining in the Yukon (1898-1901; some letters are in Danish)”
    - Box 3, Folders 11-12, Box 2, Folders 1-3 – Correspondence for 1898-1899
  - Klondike ephemera and memorabilia and financial records from this period
    - Box 1, Folder 5 – *Official Guide to Klondike County*, 1897
    - Box 1, Folder 6 – Klondike-Chicago Transportation and Trading Company, 1898
    - Box 1, Folder 7 – Financial records, Klondike, 1898-1899
    - Box 1, Folder 8 – Klondike newspapers and ephemera

Are these primary sources?
POLK COUNTY COUNCIL OF DEFENSE

- Papers of George A. Nelson
- Polk Small Series 10 – Records of the Polk County Council of Defense
- Baker Land and Title Company
POLK COUNTY COUNCIL OF DEFENSE

Summary

Business records of an early St. Croix Valley land speculation office which evolved into a general real estate agency, and personal papers of agency owner Harry D. Baker. Originally known as the Cushing Land Agency, the company was established in 1854 to manage the land and water power investments of Caleb Cushing, a Massachusetts lawyer. Included are detailed financial records, letterbooks and a few client case files, records relating to land acquisition and sale, occasional administrative and advertising papers, and some maps which document the transition from an agency chiefly involved with timber cutover land sales for agricultural purposes to one selling developed farms and vacation lake homes.

Harry D. Baker in 1893 joined his father, agency owner Joseph Stannard Baker, in the firm’s management where he worked until 1966. Harry Baker’s papers document his civic involvements in St. Croix Falls and regional communities and relate to the First Presbyterian Church, Red Cross and county assistance following a 1922 tornado, Polk County Council of Defense during World War I, and establishment of Interstate Park at the St. Croix River Dunes, Wisconsin’s first state park. Reminiscences about the land agency, his childhood, father J.S., First Presbyterian Church, and Interstate Park are in a tape-recorded interview with Baker and a series of letters which Baker wrote to his long-deceased brother Clarence. An unpublished booklet containing recorded dialect renditions of stories told by Swedish immigrant Olag Strandberg is also part of the collection.

- Papers of George A. Nelson
- Records of the Polk County Council of Defense
- Baker Land and Title Company
POLK COUNTY COUNCIL OF DEFENSE

- 9 boxes? 28 volumes?
How do we find what we want?
POLK COUNTY COUNCIL OF DEFENSE

FINDING AID

http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi/f/findaid/findaid-idx?c=wiarchives;cc=wiarchives;view=text;rgn=main;didno=uw-whs-rf00az

Abstract:

Business records of an early St. Croix Valley land speculation office which evolved into a general real estate agency, and personal papers of agency owner Harry D. Baker. Originally known as the Cushing Land Agency, the company was established in 1854 to manage the land and water power investments of Caleb Cushing, a Massachusetts lawyer. Included are detailed financial records, letterbooks and a few client case files, records relating to land acquisition and sale, occasional administrative and advertising papers, and some maps which document the transition from an agency chiefly involved with timber cutover land sales for agricultural purposes to one selling developed farms and vacation lake homes. Harry D. Baker in 1893 joined his father, agency owner Joseph Stannard Baker, in the firm's management where he worked until 1966. Harry Baker's papers document his civic involvement in St. Croix Falls and regional communities and relate to the First Presbyterian Church, Red Cross and county assistance following a 1922 tornado. Polk County Council of Defense during World War I, and establishment of Interstate Park at the St. Croix River Dalles, Wisconsin's first state park. Reminiscences about the land agency, his childhood, father J. S., First Presbyterian Church, and Interstate Park are in a tape-recorded interview with Baker and a series of letters which Baker wrote to his long-deceased brother Clarence. An unpublished booklet containing recorded dialect renditions of stories told by Swedish immigrant Olof Strandberg is also part of the collection.
**Scope and Content Note**

The Baker Land and Title Company records are organized into the following series:

1) **Business Papers**
   1) Administrative Subject File
   2) Correspondence
   3) Financial Records
   4) Land Records

2) **Personal Papers of Harry D. Baker**

"Volume" 7 is a mistake—it should be Folder 7
WHAT DID WE FIND OUT

- Of our 3 collections:
  - One collection we had to throw out because it was the wrong war
  - One collection has only a single folder of material about our topic – *could be a gold mine*
  - One collection has correspondence scattered through unknown number of folders in Box 1 of the collection and the collection needs to be borrowed from Madison

- So . . . you need to decide if the topic is worth pursuing, and if these particular primary sources are worth pursuing
  - It’s easy and fast to borrow material from Madison or another UW campus, so don’t let that figure into your decision—takes maybe a week to get the box(es) here
AREA RESEARCH CENTER NETWORK

- Borrowing archival material works much like a book on Interlibrary Loan
- Always sign-in to get all options
Request a Collection from an Area Research Center

The Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) and the University of Wisconsin (UW) System cooperate in a network of Area Research Centers (ARCs) located at 4-year UW campus libraries (excluding UW-Madison) throughout the state and at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center. This network allows patrons to borrow archival materials housed anywhere within the network (including WHS) and use them at a regional Area Research Center of their choice or at the WHS Archives. Due to the unique and irreplaceable nature of archival materials, ARC collections only circulate through a select lending network. Please submit this form to request collections through this lending system.

NOTE: Requests usually take a week or two to transfer (unless otherwise stated). Patrons will be notified when their materials have arrived or are unavailable for transfer. Not all archival and manuscript materials can be shipped through the transfer system either because of format, size, condition, ownership, or restrictions.

For locations, hours, and other information on Area Research Centers, click here.

Fields with an * are required.

Step 1 of 2: Choose Where to View Materials

UW System locations *
Select one location: 

AREA RESEARCH CENTER NETWORK

Step 1 of 2: Choose Where to View Materials

UW System locations *
UW-River Falls (Chalmer Davee Library, University Archives and Area Research Center)

You have selected:

UW-River Falls (Chalmer Davee Library, University Archives and Area Research Center)
Questions: (715) 425-3567 or archives@uwrf.edu

Step 2 of 2: Requestor and Material Information

Requestor
Name *
john.d.public

Email *
john.public@my.uwrf.edu

Phone (daytime)
(715) 425-5555

Preferred Contact Method
○ Email
○ Phone

Requested Material
Collection Author / Creator
George A. Nelson

Title *
Papers, 1889-1990

Call Number
Wis Man A2

Container # (box, volume...)
Boxes 1-3

Date Needed
ASAP

Notes
Same collection but different call # per the addition - MIG 118, need Boxes 1-2
WHERE TO FIND OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES

- **UWRF Research Guides**
  - A general guide for History gives links to various online resources
  - A specific guide for Primary Sources: What They Are and Where to Find Them
  - UWRF Digital Collections
    (https://www.uwrf.edu/AreaResearchCenter/Digital-Collections.cfm)

- **Wisconsin resources**
  - Wisconsin Historical Society
    - Main page (http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/)
    - Ask me for help if you have problems
  - UW System Digital Collections (heavily Madison: https://uwdc.library.wisc.edu/)
  - Recollection Wisconsin (http://recolletionwisconsin.org/)

- Minnesota has similar resources, as do many states
WHERE TO FIND OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES

- Regional resources—Some examples
  - California Digital Library (http://www.cdlib.org/)
  - Minnesota Digital Library (https://mndigital.org/) displays its materials as
    - Minnesota Reflections (http://reflections.mndigital.org/)
  - **BUT**, be careful as not every state digital library is archival material, many are library materials, like this one from Ohio (https://ohdbks.overdrive.com)
    - Instead, try the state historical society, which in Ohio is part of a Collaborative Project of the Ohio History Connection and the State Library of Ohio that runs Ohio Memory (http://www.ohiomemory.org/)
    - Instead, try a university, The Ohio State University, University Libraries, Digital Content Portal (https://library.osu.edu/find/collections/the-ohio-state-university-archives/digitalcontent)
  - **BUT**, not all archives digital libraries are images of archival materials; what used to be called the Northwest Digital Archives and now is Archives West (https://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/search/), is digital finding aids to archives collections
WHERE TO FIND OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES

- Some good national resources
  - Digital Public Library of America
    - Main page (https://dp.la/)
    - Exhibitions (https://dp.la/exhibitions)
  - Library of Congress
    - Photographs (http://www.loc.gov/pictures/)
    - Digital Collections (https://www.loc.gov/collections/)
    - Chronicling America (online historic newspapers: http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/)
  - National Archives
    - Online Exhibits (https://www.archives.gov/exhibits)
  - Smithsonian Institution
    - Digital Library (http://library.si.edu/digital-library) books online, collections online, exhibitions
WHAT OTHER PRIMARY SOURCES ARE THERE

- Newspapers from the time period you are researching
  - Library of Congress
    - Chronicling America (online historic newspapers: [http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/))
  - UWRF online newspapers
    - Databases A-Z
      - African American newspapers AND periodicals
      - Newspaper Source Plus
      - NewspaperARCHIVE
      - ProQuest Historical Newspapers: New York Times (1851-) and Wall Street Journal (1889-)
    - Wisconsin Newspapers Digital Research (2005-present)
- Wisconsin newspapers
  - Our 4-county area (Burnett, Pierce, Polk, St. Croix counties, and a few Washburn County newspapers) are available on microfilm in the ARC
  - Historical newspapers from elsewhere in Wisconsin can be borrow on InterLibrary Loan and used at UWRF
  - Older copies of the Student Voice available in hardcopy in ARC
NEED HELP?

- University Archives and Area Research Center:
  - E-mail: archives@uwrf.edu (kathryn.otto@uwrf.edu)
  - Phone: 715-425-3567 (3530)
  - Visit us: 170 Chalmer Davee Library (lower level)
    - Monday-Friday 12:00–4:30
    - 2nd Saturday of every month 12:00–4:30,
      Introduction to the Archives class at 11:15
      (call to register)