



A Researcher's Guide to Reference at the Rockefeller Archive Center



Introduction

The following guide was developed for use by the staff of the Rockefeller Archive Center and has been revised for use by researchers. In most cases, the staff of the Archive Center will have identified relevant materials for researchers prior to their visit to the Archive Center. In some cases, however, researchers may want to expand their search or see what is available on other subjects. This guide to reference tools available at the Archive Center will help. It is organized in the following sections:

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Tips on Reference in the Rockefeller University Archives and RU History (p. 11)

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Researchers have ready access to and use of reference materials shelved in the Reading Room, and the 2nd floor library (across from the Reading Room), which contains the finding aids, biographies, and foundation annual reports. Materials elsewhere are accessible only to Archive Center staff.

FINDING AIDS

The basic reference tool at the Rockefeller Archive Center are the finding aids developed by the archivists during the course of processing each collection. The finding aids provide box and folder lists for the collections. Copies of these are located in the 2nd floor library and in the Reading Room. These are color-coded by collection:

- 1) Red binders list material in the Rockefeller Family Archives;
- 2) The bright blue binders list material in the Rockefeller University Archives;
- 3) The navy blue binders list material in the Rockefeller Foundation Archives;
- 4) The brown binders list material in the Rockefeller Brothers Fund Archives;
- 5) The green binders list material in the Special Collections.

The finding aids for the larger collections are organized by record groups (RG) and then by series. For most collections, the first binder for the collection provides an overview of the collection, with descriptions of the various record groups. See also the collection descriptions online at www.rockarch.org

Other reference tools at the Archive Center are useful as guides to locating material within the finding aids and thus the collections themselves. These are the tools that are the subject of the remainder of this Guide.

CARD CATALOGS AND MICROFILM INDEXES

The card indexes developed and used by various organizations to track their correspondence or microfilm versions of those card indexes, are available for a number of the organizations whose records are located at the Rockefeller Archive Center. See the list below. These card indexes include personal and institutional names, and usually include a reference number that you can follow in the finding aid to the proper box and folder. These card indexes are only moderately useful for broad subjects.

Indexes are available for the following collections (in alphabetical order):

China Medical Board - Rockefeller Foundation, Record Group 4

Includes two alphabetical series: 1914-1919 and 1920-1927

China Medical Board of New York, Inc.

General Education Board

International Education Board

International Health Board - Rockefeller Foundation, Record Group 5

Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial

Rockefeller Family Archives, Record Group 2 Office of the Messrs Rockefeller -

Microfilm. For guide to index numbers used, see the "General Documents" binder (red)

Rockefeller Foundation - Microfilm

Rockefeller University

Rockefeller University Portraits

Spelman Fund of New York

TIPS ON REFERENCE IN THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION MATERIAL

Index on Microfilm

As its files accumulated, the Rockefeller Foundation maintained a card index recording the names of institutional and individual grantees and correspondents. A microfilm copy of this index is available at the Archive Center. This index includes citations for certain parts of the foundation's archives:

RG 1 Grants

RG 2 General Correspondence

RG 3 Program and Policy (markups of 900 and above)

Note that the RF card index does *not* include references for RG 4 China Medical Board (see its particular card index), RG 5 International Health Board (see its particular card index) or RG 6 Field Offices.

Markups on RF index cards provide a range of dates and a three-digit series number and perhaps a subseries letter. For much of its history, the Rockefeller Foundation organized its records according to countries around the world (and, for a shorter time, according to states within the U.S.) Each state and country was assigned a three-digit code, and documents were marked accordingly for filing; often a letter was included after the country code to designate the appropriate RF program. Within the country series, grant files were arranged alphabetically by the name of the grant recipient, which was usually the name of an organization. For a guide to the numeric state and country codes and alphabetic program codes, see the first navy blue binder, containing series 100; a guide organized alphabetically by country is online at <http://www.rockarch.org/collections/rf/countrycodes.pdf>.

On the original index cards, different colored inks were used to distinguish between Grants and General Correspondence, but this color difference is lost in microfilm, so determining

if a markup refers to a grant file or general correspondence is a problem. The easiest approach is to assume it is a grant file (RG 1) and look in these binders for the folder title under the appropriate series. (See below for tips on determining if it is likely to be in RG 1.1 or 1.2) If you don't find it there, then the material most likely is in RG 2 General Correspondence. Also, if you are looking up a personal name and find a very specific date (that is, month, day and year) in a series other than a 900 markup, it most likely refers to a specific letter in RG 2.

Difference Between RF Record Groups 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, Etc.

The difference between RF record groups 1.1, 1.2, etc. is the date on which the material was transferred to the Archive Center and processed. Record Group 1 in the RF denotes grant files, and RG 1.1 contains material that was created earlier than material in RG 1.2, and material in 1.2 is earlier than 1.3. There is some overlap in time between 1.1 and 1.2, and 1.2 and 1.3, but generally material in RG 1.1 is from the period before 1954, and RG 1.2 contains material into the mid 1970s. It is best to check the finding aids for both 1.1 and 1.2 if the dates are in the 1940s or 1950s. Given the 20-year closure rule for RF grant material, RG 1.3 material is now open for research, and the series is being processed. Material in RG 1.3 generally begins in the mid 1970s.

Fellowship Directories (shelved with appropriate annual reports, 2nd floor library):

Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship Directory, 1917-1970. (New York: RF, 1972)

Includes IEB and LSRM fellows (not GEB fellows; see separate directory)

Includes a list of (living) fellows by country in the back

BUT does *not* include all fellows from Eastern Europe because of concern for their safety during the Cold War.

See also the earlier directory, 1917-1950, located in the RF Archives, RG 1.2,

Series 100 E, box 32, folder 239.

General Education Board Directory of Fellowship Awards, 1922-1950. (NY: GEB, 1952)

Does not include fellows from 1950s.

Includes useful rosters in the back that list fellows by GEB Program and by state

of origin. These lists also identify “Negro” fellows.

(Also *Directory of Commonwealth Fund Fellows and Harkness Fellows, 1925-1990.*)

Other RF Guides:

Rockefeller Foundation Subject Index to Grants - This box consists of alphabetical files containing photocopies of a card index that lists RF grants by subject, such as “microphotography.” While this is the most useful guide we have to RF grants by subject, it is not clear how comprehensive it is or when it was created, but it does extend into the 1960s.

RF Name ID File - A card file of RF personnel provides information on periods of RF service, sometimes birth and death dates and whether there is a file in the RF biography files.

RF Biography Files - This is an alphabetical run of files with information about select RF personnel (trustees, officers, program officers) that includes copies of resumé, obituaries, excerpts from *Who's Who* and other biographical references, and articles from newspapers and internal RF publications. These files were maintained by the RF staff and are now available for on-site research at the Archive Center. Material in the files may be photocopied for researchers. These files are in yellow folders to distinguish them from other materials.

RF Locator File – A card file in the Index Room that includes notations for RF Diaries, Oral Histories, Decorations, Maps, and Films.

Portions of the RF Archives on Microfilm

Researchers should be aware that portions of the RF archives – notably RG 1.1 series 751 (Italy), 600 (Asia), and 601 (China), and certain Officers’ Diaries in RG 12 – are to be used in microfilm formats only. Also, material in RG 2, General Correspondence, beginning with year 1958 is available only on microfilm.

TIPS ON REFERENCE IN THE ROCKEFELLER FAMILY ARCHIVES

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, SR. PAPERS

The files used most often in the John D. Rockefeller Papers (Record Group 1 of the Family Archives) are the alphabetical correspondence files that are best accessed by personal names.

The easiest way to find out if JDR Sr. (or his representatives) is likely to have corresponded with a particular person is to check the light blue, thick, spiral-bound *Index to the John D. Rockefeller Letterbooks, 1877-1918*, compiled by former RAC staff members Emily Oakhill and Claire Collier. The 394 volumes of letterbooks indexed here contain copies of outgoing correspondence by or from the offices of JDR Sr., JDR Jr. and Frederick Gates from 1877-1917. These are on microfiche for researcher use. If a name turns up in the index, the index will give you volume and page numbers that correspond to outgoing letters to that person compiled in the letterbooks. For correspondence from that person to JDR, check the alphabetical list of correspondents in the red binders for RG 1.

There are three series of incoming correspondence in the JDR Sr. Papers (RG 1 of the Family Archives). Most of this covers the years from about 1879 through 1894. One series is entitled "Office" and includes personal and charitable correspondence. Two of the series relate to business matters. One is "Business Correspondence" and mostly pertains to the Standard Oil Company and other business endeavors. The other is "Business Investment Correspondence," and includes letters offering JDR business opportunities around the world. Each of these series has been microfilmed by University Publications of America, which published useful guides to the film that contain subject indexes with reel and frame numbers. The Archive Center has a set of the microfilm for researcher use and restricts access to the original documents.

The indexes to the JDR microfilm are of some help in dealing with one of the trickier aspects of JDR reference: trying to find information about specific businesses that JDR might have invested in (other than Standard Oil) and about other kinds of organizations (since you usually need to know the names of the people with whom JDR might have corresponded at that business / organization). For organizations and persons to whom he may have given money, see the Index to his Charity Index cards, which is in print in one of the binders and also available

online.

Note that the JDR Papers are missing incoming general correspondence, 1895-1917, unless it was filed in RG 2 OMR in a project file. After 1917 see the family index cards (on microfilm), but correspondence in the Senior series in RG 2 may not be indexed there.

For genealogical inquiries about the Rockefeller family, see the Rockefeller Family Association's *Rockefeller Genealogy* (4 vols., 1910-ca. 1950) in the second floor library.

JDR SCRAPBOOKS, 1904-1937 (on microfilm)

A useful but frustrating tool are the numerous volumes of newspaper clippings about anything Rockefeller from newspapers from all over the country and sometimes from overseas. One of JDR Sr.'s daughters (Edith) hired a clipping service to compile these as a birthday present to her father. The clippings are arranged in chronological order, but there is no index, so it is important to know about when something happened to be able to find a story on a particular event.

Not just family news is recorded, however: the scrapbooks also contain articles about the early years of the various Rockefeller philanthropies, such as the GEB and the Rockefeller Institute.

NELSON A. ROCKEFELLER PAPERS

The Nelson A. Rockefeller (NAR) Papers, the largest collection of personal papers at the Archive Center, is subdivided into three records groups within the Rockefeller Family Archives:

Record Group 4, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Personal

Record Group 15, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Gubernatorial

Record Group 26, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Vice Presidential

Record Group 4 serves as a location for all non-gubernatorial or non-vice presidential materials, whether they reflect personal activities or not. For example, the Washington, DC series contains more than 200 boxes of material that documents NAR's eight presidential appointments to serve in the federal government between 1940 and 1969. Additionally, much of the documentation on NAR's wide-ranging interests is found in two series within Record Group 4: Activities (Series A) and Projects (Series L). The distinction between the two series is NAR's degree of involvement with the organization or person. His direct involvement was considered an activity; something he was interested in or supported was considered a project. Finally, an archivist can aid your research by searching for specific individual names and organizations in the NAR correspondence index cards that were maintained by his office staff from 1946-1971. This index is not available to researchers.

**TIPS ON REFERENCE IN
THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES
AND ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY HISTORY**

The RU card index is useful because it provides an old-fashioned item-level index of correspondence in some of the core collections, such as the Business Manager records, and the Flexner and Gasser papers, and the small collections of the early members of the Institute, etc. However, the time-consuming index system could not be continued, so that the usefulness of this index is very limited for the bulk of the material that has been received by the Archives since the mid 1980s.

Two useful reference resources on RU are George W. Corner's *A History of the Rockefeller Institute, 1901-1953; Origins and Growth*. (New York: The Rockefeller Institute Press, 1964) and Betsy Hanson's *Achievements: A Century of Science for the Benefit of Humankind, 1901-2001* (New York: The Rockefeller University Press, 2000). Particularly important is Appendix III in Corner, which provides a list of all officers and scientific staff at the Institute with their dates of service. The index to the book is useful, too, for its subject-related listings. It also provides information on who collaborated with whom at the laboratory bench. The *Achievements* book carries the Corner appendix to the end of the century with a comprehensive list of RU faculty. Although these sources do not provide direct entrance into the RU archives, they often provide enough information for an archivist to look up faculty collections or subject listings in other record groups.

Closure policies within the RU collections:

- 1) University corporate records are closed if less than 25 years old; and
- 2) the "-U" notations at the end of a record group number indicate that a collection is not available for research.

**TIPS ON REFERENCE IN
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
AT THE ROCKEFELLER ARCHIVE CENTER**

Special Collections, as used in the RAC terminology, refers to anything not part of the Center's core archival collections of the family, the University, the foundation, and the RBF. Finding aids for Special Collections are located in the green binders in the floor library and the Reading Room. Special Collections include both organizational records and personal papers, and for most Special Collections, the finding aid is the only reference tool available for the contents of the collection. There are exceptions, however:

China Medical Board of New York, Inc. See Card Catalog.

Commonwealth Fund. See *Directory of Commonwealth Fund Fellows and Harkness Fellows, 1925-1990*.

General Education Board. See Card Catalog, and for fellows see *General Education Board Directory of Fellowship Awards, 1922-1950*. (1952). Note: Does not include fellows from 1950s. Includes useful rosters in the back that list fellows by GEB Program and by state of origin. These lists also identify "Negro" fellows.

International Education Board. See Card Catalog, and for fellows see *Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship Directory, 1917-1970* (1972)

Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial. See Card Catalog, and for fellows see *Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship Directory, 1917-1970*. (New York: RF, 1972)

Social Science Research Council. See *Fellows of the Social Science Research Council, 1925-1951* (New York: SSRC, 1951). Biographical sketches of 1,028 fellows.

Spelman Fund of New York. See Card Catalog.

For material regarding the **Russell Sage Foundation**, see, in addition to the finding aid, the guide to a microfiche collection that includes some RAC archival documents but also many pamphlets and articles from the Russell Sage Foundation Library. The guide to this microfiche is *The Russell Sage Foundation: Social Research and Social Action in America, 1907-1947*, edited by David C. Hammack.

PUBLISHED MATERIAL AND REFERENCE WORKS AT THE ROCKEFELLER ARCHIVE CENTER

ARTICLES / BOOKS / DISSERTATIONS BY RAC RESEARCHERS

The RAC occasionally receives copies of articles, books and dissertations written by RAC researchers. These copies are available for use at the Rockefeller Archive Center.

The books and dissertations are located in the library (closed stacks). Ask an archivist to check the library catalog.

When we receive a copy of a journal or magazine article that cites our collections, it is filed by the author's name. Ask the reading Room desk monitor for assistance. If the article appears in a book, however, the book is kept in the library, and the article is not indexed separately (to locate the book ask an archivist to check the library catalog by editor's name or by book title).

REFERENCE WORKS IN PHILANTHROPY

Annual reports. The 2nd floor library has complete or nearly complete runs of annual reports for the following organizations whose records are here and a few whose records are not:

Commonwealth Fund

General Education Board

William T. Grant Foundation

Population Council

Rockefeller Brothers Fund

Rockefeller Family Fund

Rockefeller Foundation (also have bound Quarterly Bulletins, 1927-1936, and RF Trustees Bulletin, 1937-1960)

Rockefeller Sanitary Commission for the Eradication of Hookworm, 1910-1913

Also available are less complete unbound annual reports from:

Asia Society

Agricultural Development Council

Colonial Williamsburg

JDR Fund

Winrock International

For short histories of major foundations, see Keele and Kiger, eds, *Foundations* (1984), which includes essays on several foundations whose records are at the RAC: the Charles C. Culpeper Foundation (pp. 61-63), Commonwealth Fund (pp. 85-89), Jackson Hole Preserve, Inc. (pp. 187-189), John and Mary Markle Foundation (pp. 208-212), LSRM (pp. 255-259), RF (pp. 364-373), RBF (pp. 373-380), and Russell Sage Foundation (pp. 379-380).

The *Foundation Directory* (most recently 2003 ed.) is available. This give the most basic information about a foundation (name, address, founder, year established, purpose, current officers, assets, number and amount of grants in most recent year).