

RESEARCH ARCHIVES

Richard Zettler

IN ITS FIFTH YEAR of operations the Research Archives might be said, in some senses, to have officially come of age. Not only has the number of volumes in the Archives finally surpassed the ten thousand mark (a complete library in the fields of interest to the Research Archives would be 20,000 volumes), but acquisitions for the period May 15, 1977 to May 15, 1978 have decreased to 529 volumes, as a comparison of the following 1977/78 totals with those published in the Annual Report for 1976/77 will show:

Monographs	4411
Series	2595
Journals	<u>3513</u>
Total books	10,519
Pamphlets	5,970

This decrease in the number of volumes acquired continues a trend of the last few years and should not be taken to indicate that the Research Archives has cut back its purchases, but rather should be seen as a measure of the completeness of our current holdings. When the Research Archives was first established in 1973, it lacked so many items that it was necessary to make blanket purchases of everything still in print. Now, aside from the occasional acquisition of back runs of journals and out-of-print volumes, the Research Archives will be able to concentrate its purchases on newly issued monographs, series, and journal numbers. The total of 500 volumes per year fairly accurately reflects what we hope will be an average year's acquisitions from now on.

But while the Research Archives has made great progress, it still has serious gaps in its holdings. Reports on old excavations, long out of print, and old issues of journals are still a

particular problem, although we continue to search the catalogues and are in close contact with dealers in the hope of finding the occasional needed item. In this last year, for example, we were able to fill one large gap by acquiring, in reprinted edition, Arthur Pope's *Survey of Persian Art*, a sixteen volume, well-illustrated and, though 40 years old, still standard reference work for Parthian, Sassanian, and Islamic Iran and Iraq.

At the same time that we attempt to fill in gaps in the collection, the Research Archives continues to attempt to improve its usefulness to faculty, staff, students, and members by expanding acquisitions in new directions. Over the last couple of years, for example, we have begun to purchase works on South Arabian studies to match the expanding interest in that field at the Oriental Institute and the establishment of an American Research Institute in Yemen. We have also begun to acquire major dissertations in the field of ancient Near Eastern studies. Obtaining copies of these dissertations will enable our users to see and read the results of new or as yet unpublished research with as little delay as possible. The Research Archives also will begin to assemble shortly a solid papyrology section by accessioning a number of basic papyrological works currently in storage and by purchasing a major new microfiche edition of papyrology works. This section should be of use to those members of the faculty and the increasing number of new students interested in working in "late" Egyptian periods.

As usual, members of the faculty, staff, and friends of the Oriental Institute were most generous to the Research Archives in 1977/78. Foremost among these we must acknowledge the extraordinary generosity of Gustavus F. Swift, his wife Eleanor, and his family. A large portion of Gus Swift's personal library came to the Research Archives as a bequest on his death in late 1976. It was a great bonus to the Archives in many ways and those who now use his books owe him a deep debt of gratitude. We also need to express special thanks to Robert D. Biggs, editor of *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, for contributions of books and time. Several members of the faculty continued their yearly contributions of books to the Research Archives, prominent among them Klaus Baer,

McGuire Gibson, and Charles Nims. Olga Titelbaum, formerly of the editorial office, and the docent program also contributed volumes to the Research Archives. They all deserve our thanks. The day-to-day functioning of the Research Archives was ably carried on by Luanne Buchanan, Lorelei Corcoran, and Robert Ritner.

The Research Archives is open to faculty, staff, and members of the Oriental Institute and students in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, and we encourage our friends to make use of it. Hours are as follows:

Fall, Winter and Spring Quarters

Monday—Friday: 8:30–4:45

Saturday: 10:00–4:00

Sunday: 12:00–4:00

Summer Quarter

Monday—Friday: 9:00–2:00.