

May 2020

## Lost and Found in the Map Library: Ena L. Yonge and the History of Map Librarianship

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LOST AND FOUND IN THE MAP LIBRARY:  
ENA L. YONGE AND THE HISTORY OF MAP LIBRARIANSHIP

by  
Georgia Brown

A Thesis Submitted in  
Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts  
in History

at  
The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

May 2020

ABSTRACT

LOST AND FOUND IN THE MAP LIBRARY:  
ENA L. YONGE AND THE HISTORY OF MAP LIBRARIANSHIP

by

Georgia Brown

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2020  
Under the Supervision of Professor Aims McGuinness

This thesis explores the history of map librarianship and gender through an analysis of the career of Ena L. Yonge, a pioneering map librarian who worked at the American Geographical Society from 1917 to 1962. The thesis examines the decline of the ideal of the “gentleman librarian” in relation to the feminization of the library profession in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. With a focus on Yonge, the thesis examines changing relationship between the AGS, the U.S. government, and larger world events, including World War I and World War II. Yonge’s career spanned a transformation in the profession of map librarianship, as Yonge remade herself and her position from the status of clerical worker into a respected expert. Yonge’s metamorphosis was part of a larger transformation in map librarianship that Yonge herself helped to shape, as map librarianship evolved into a profession with associated organizations, standards, and scholarly publications.

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*To everyone who didn't have a clue what they were doing when they started*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I'd like to thank my advisor Dr. Aims McGuinness for his patience and inspiration throughout this thesis process and during my graduate career. His attitude and kindness are examples of how academia can be a nurturing place.

To Dr. Christine Evans, thank you for the historiography class that taught me how to think and what questions to ask. It served me well on this project and will every day after.

To Marcy Bidney, a person who I respect more with each day, thank you for taking me under your wing to learn all about this map librarianship stuff. Knowing you are my mentor has me feeling confident about the future of my career.

To the entire staff of the American Geographical Society Library - Jovanka, Stephen, Angie, Susan, and Kay - thank you for anytime you've helped me on my journey, both at work and on this thesis. You all are wonderful people who know how to make students feel like professionals.

To Connor Bowman, thank you for your continuous optimism and the balance you brought to me during our time in school together.

To Lauren Maddox, thank you for your cross-country friendship and being alongside me on our thesis journeys.

To Sebastian Black, thank you for all the supportive moments and all the laughs. Sharing a workspace with you has ruined me for all future workspaces.

To Kathryn N Reuter, thank you for all the co-working, laughs, and discussions that came from you helping me while I wrote this thesis. I will treasure this time in our friendship always.

To my family, Mom, Boone, and Todd, without you I would not be where I am today, so thank you for being there for all my important moments and giving me the confidence to be my own person.

To Alex Lancaster, thank you for making sure I was as kind as possible to myself throughout this process. Having you make cups of tea for me brought some peace to a very stressful time. Your love and support mean the world to me.

## Introduction

The leaders of the American Geographical Society (AGS) created one of the first map libraries in the United States. Throughout the history of geographic societies, organizations like the AGS have explored the world and its people. Since it was founded in 1851, the mission statement of the American Geographical and Statistical Society of New York asserted that the society was “instituted for the collection and diffusion of geographical and statistical information.”<sup>1</sup> This mission and the constitution of the society dictated that the organization would fund expeditions and be a part of producing publications, along with several other functions. Behind the Society’s explorations and publications, a library of materials supported their endeavors. One facet of the AGS was its library of maps, books, and geographical materials, which offered services to members, explorers, and even the public. In the early years of the Society, aside from donations to the library’s collections from explorers and the members, it was an often-overlooked part of the AGS. Chartered at the Society’s starting date of October 1851 and beginning officially in 1852 with twelve maps, over the subsequent decades the library of the AGS was filled with books, atlases, and maps from all over the globe. From its inception in 1852 until around 1915 when Isaiah Bowman became the first Director of the AGS, the Library and Map Department, both books and maps, were administered jointly, but since the early part of this century, they have functioned as independent, but closely cooperating, departments.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The American Geographical and Statistical Society changed its name to the American Geographical Society in 1871. Society Meetings, minutes 1851-1855, AGSNY AC 1, Box 251, Volume 1, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

<sup>2</sup> Nordis Felland, “The American Geographical Society Library,” *Professional Geographer*, Volume 7(1), (1955), 6.



Explorers and geographers who received funding from the AGS went on expeditions and did research in order to write findings that were published in AGS-sponsored journals and created maps of different types. These materials were often donated to the library of the AGS. Through these donations and other methods of acquisition, the collection grew into a trove of geographic materials. These contributions to geography and history subsequently became influential beyond the bounds of the AGS. A notable example was the contribution of AGS materials to the Inquiry and Paris Peace Conference at Versailles following World War I and the United States government's use of the library and map departments during World War II. The librarians and map curators of the AGS corresponded with patrons, helped expeditions, and handled acquisitions and exchanges. These two departments of the American Geographical Society helped to influence its members, expeditions, scholarship, and ideologies through its extensive collections and the ways patrons used them. Behind all the material and the patrons who used the materials were the employees of the AGS.

This thesis will reconstruct and analyze the interwoven histories of geography and histories of map libraries using a feminist history of library and map librarianship labor. The thesis focuses on the professional life and the mostly untold story of Ena L. Yonge, who was the Map Curator of the AGS for nearly thirty-eight years and an employee of the Map Department for forty-five years total. Using the period of Yonge's employment (1917-1962), this thesis addresses the feminization of the overall library profession and how that feminization related to map librarianship specifically, the nature of the idea of the "gentleman librarian," the changes to map librarianship that Yonge experienced, and how gender influenced Yonge's and other women's experiences at the AGS and their relationship to those around them. Yonge's

longtime colleague Nordis Felland (Librarian of the AGS) said of her career that the “timing was right,”<sup>3</sup> and truly her career remarkably reflected the history of map librarianship: she was new when map librarianship was new and when she flourished in her career, map librarianship reached new heights in library and geography circles.

The timeline of this paper is from WWI to the beginning of the 1960s, with a focus on the years of Yonge’s career. She began working at a time that was important for geography and maps. The two of these things alone set a standard/precedent for maps as objects of power. Drawing a border on a map creates a definable, defensible region, territory, or region. The members of the AGS using these maps would be for gains, and a perfect example came from Denis Wood’s book, *The Power of Maps*. Wood discusses how blank spaces on maps have been treated by geographers through the ages. He analyzes how John K. Wright, who worked for the AGS waxed poetically about the use of Terra Incognita. Wright wrote,

Terra Incognita: these words stir the imagination. Through the ages men have been drawn to unknown regions by Siren voices, echoes of which ring in our ears today when on modern maps we see spaces labeled, ‘unexplored,’ rivers shown by broken lines, islands marked ‘existence doubtful.’

This quotation highlights how Wright viewed these spaces on maps as potential and unexplored. Woods points out the imperialist impulse in Wright’s lyrical passage and cites J. B. Harley:

[Wright’s] passage is often quoted as an example of how maps stir the geographical imagination. But it also demonstrates the map’s double function in colonialism of both opening and later closing a territory...thirst for the blank spaces on the map...is also a symptom of a deeply ingrained colonial mentality that was already entrenched...in this view the world is full of empty spaces ready for the taking...

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<sup>3</sup> Nordis Felland, "Obituary: Ena L. Yonge 1895-1971," *Geographical Review* 62, no. 3 (1972): 417.

As Wright's quotation suggests, officials of the AGS were unperturbed by or simply ignored what Harley and Wood see as the inherent colonialism in their work. Only with the rise of post-colonialism have authors viewed the AGS and its collection with a more critical eye. With maps made for efforts like colonialism and the more overarching imperialism, regardless of who made them or from what time period they come, these attributes found themselves in both the Map Department and the Library of the AGS.<sup>4</sup>

For the purposes of this thesis, I regard a map library to be a collection of maps that is seen as a separate part of a larger institution. This definition recognizes that many collections have maps in them, but a map library has a separate administration to handle its unique place in libraries and to denote it as a separate entity within the institution. For example, the Library of Congress had maps in their collection since early 1800s, but the Geography and Map Division was not developed separately until the end of that century in 1897. Similarly, this definition could apply to a collection of maps connected to an academic university or public library, in addition to a historical society or geographic society. To build on the definition, Mullins stated that, "map collecting refers to the collecting of maps, charts, globes, and geographical literature in general."<sup>5</sup> Map libraries do not necessary need all these materials, but a distinctive collection must be there.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the role of maps in the United States changed significantly. During both World War I and World War II, government and military officials relied heavily on maps to strategize military, to communicate with the public, to

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<sup>4</sup> Dennis Wood and John Fels, *The Power of Maps*, (New York: The Guilford Press, 1992), 44-45.

<sup>5</sup> Lynn S. Mullins, *The Development of Map Libraries in Nineteenth Century America*, (New York: 1964), 15.

propagandize, and to redraw national and imperial boundaries both during and after the events. Maps have so many angles and reasons for production, anything from entertainment to consolidation, etc., making them a truly diverse and informative material. The twentieth century created a “perfect storm” for map librarianship. One thing that needs to be acknowledged is the innate colonialism of the AGS’s collection.<sup>6</sup> The AGS and the Library’s collection reflected the priorities and assumptions of its leaders, who were wealthy white men from the United States. In the period of the AGS’s greatest growth, in the 1800s and early 1900s, many elite intellectuals as well as political and business leaders in the West regarded the commercial and territorial expansion of European empires and settler colonial nations such as the United States as both natural and desirable. Geographers and explorers often shared these same assumptions. Geopolitics became a more concrete subject, as exemplified by Halford Mackinder and his speech to the Royal Geographical Society in England in 1904. Nationalism additionally had entered the zeitgeist of nations the decades preceding the first world war. The brewing nationalism in Europe stemming from some of the geopolitical questions there created a time where maps were relied upon to visually solve problems even if they do not solve them in actuality.<sup>7</sup>

Most of the scholarship written about the American Geographical Society was authored by employees of the society. The transfer of the location from New York City to Milwaukee, gave the library and its map collection a new opportunity to assess the history of the society

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<sup>6</sup> Karen M. Morin, *Civic Discipline: Geography in America, 1860-1890*, (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, VT Ashgate), 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Neil Smith, *American Empire: Roosevelt’s Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization*, (University of California Press, 2003), 11-12. Jerry Brotton, *A History of the World in 12 Maps*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2012), 357-358.

and its library. Little has been written about the AGS or its Library other than what employees of the AGS themselves have written. The collection of AGS employees who wrote about the library and map collections included Ena Yonge, Nordis Felland, John K. Wright, Lynn Mullins, and Roman Drazniowsky. These contributions to the library's history were documented primarily in articles and books. Most of this historiography comes from the librarians themselves, and then was supplemented by small examples of people referencing the library for one reason or another. The information written about the AGS, chronologically by narrative, began with AGS Librarian Lynn Mullins in *The Development of Map Libraries in the Nineteenth Century*, which she wrote in 1964. An example of AGS history by a non-AGS affiliated person is *Civic Discipline* by Karen Morin written in 2011, who discusses the history and development of the AGS during the nineteenth century. Her narrative mainly regards the development of the field of geography through the organization of the AGS. This thesis draws on Morin's analysis of what she calls former director Charles Daly's "Gendered Geography."<sup>8</sup> A librarian turned director of the society, John K. Wright authored *Geography in the Making* in 1952, which tells the whole history of the first hundred years of the AGS from 1851-1951. This book has nuggets of information about the Map Department and Library but does not go into depth about either of the two collections. In 1985, Library and Information Science PhD student Edmund Arnold wrote his dissertation about the collections of the AGS that picked up with the history of the library, map collection, and photograph collection of the AGS from the point of 1951-1978, which marks the end of the AGS's collections in New York City. His in-depth analysis of these twenty-seven years is a valuable account of the collections and their development. Arnold

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<sup>8</sup> Morin, *Civic Discipline*, 53-54.

mentioned Yonge often in his work, but mostly through the eyes of Wright and *Geography in the Making*.<sup>9</sup> Her own words are sometimes hard to find beneath Wright's descriptions.

The AGS has been the subject of studies by scholars in gender studies in the geography world. Douglas McManis and Janice Monk both wrote articles about gender in the workplace specifically referring to the AGS as a counterexample to other academic libraries for the typical academia-esque workplace of the twentieth century. McManis focuses more on the Publications published by the AGS and the mainly female staff, while Monk focuses on the workplace of the librarians and Map Department employees as well. Through this scholarship, a well-rounded view of the AGS forms. The employees of the AGS rarely state any of the issues of the collection, something historians and geographers had no trouble doing. Authors without a deeper connection to the society often take a more critical perspective of the AGS than its own employees.

Map libraries as official entities began emerging across the United States during the nineteenth century. The existence of the library was written into the charter of the AGS in 1852, but it began with only twelve maps.<sup>10</sup> Following this small beginning, the library of the AGS experienced tremendous growth. From 1905 to 1931, the books and pamphlet collection went from 35,000 items to 110,596 items, and the map collection went from 34,174 maps in 1915 to 82,586 maps in 1931.<sup>11</sup> As Nordis Felland, the AGS's book librarian, wrote in 1955, "The

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<sup>9</sup> Edmund R. Arnold, *The American Geographical Society Library, Map and Photograph Collection: A History, 1951-1978*, (University of Pittsburgh, 1985), 120. Arnold speculated the decline in the Library and Map Department came from a lack of funding.

<sup>10</sup> Ena Yonge, "The Map Department of the American Geographical Society," *The Professional Geographer*, Volume 7(2), (1955), 2.

<sup>11</sup> American Geographical Society Records, AGSL AC 2/4, Box 6, Folder 54, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

nature of geography makes the materials - both the regional and the general - varied in character, ranging from popular travel narratives to extremely technical studies.”<sup>12</sup> The AGS helped all manner of patrons during the time it held a library. The varied materials of both the Map Department and the Library were used by heads of government agencies during both World War I and II, and also made available to public patrons who wanted a map of a specific place, as well as to numerous scholars for the writing of lectures and publications. To build on Felland’s quote, geographic materials mattered for their very diversity. A member of the general public needing a map for their vacation or a general requesting a map of city plans across an ocean are two examples of how maps and geographic materials applied broadly to people and their goals. The lasting effect of these materials can be seen beyond just what the materials themselves are. The library of the AGS and its librarians played a crucial role in geopolitics, the subject of geography itself, and how map libraries exist today.

In discussing the foundation of the library, Mullins’s *The Development of Map Libraries in the Nineteenth Century* offers insight into the development of three major map libraries in the United States. Harvard’s map library, the library of the AGS, and the Map Division of the Library of Congress. The author examines how each of the three libraries was founded for different reasons. Contributing to scholarship and producing publications were major goals of the AGS, which helped to build its library. While the other two libraries featured in the work were known for compilational and educational goals, a reflection of the AGS mission statement to diffuse geographical knowledge can be seen in this conclusion by Mullins. A later statement by Map Curator (1917-1962) Ena Yonge described the mission of a map librarian as follows:

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<sup>12</sup> Felland, “The American Geographical Society Library,” 7.

“The aim of a good librarian is to have a map or atlas in the collection before it is called for! So eternal vigilance is the watchword.”<sup>13</sup> As this quotation indicates, Yonge combines the goals of the library as a center for scholarly studies with a compilational element. She wanted to have maps before patrons even asked for them, which was evidenced in the way the collection grew so massively under her curation. Of the acquired maps during her tenure, most were likely for the purpose of scholarship.

Not all the maps, however, were used for only scholarship. The map and book collections of the AGS were used heavily during both World Wars. First, the maps were used for World War I’s U. S. Commission of Inquiry, referred to simply as the Inquiry. The Inquiry prepared the materials and arguments sent along with the United States President’s American Commission to Negotiate Peace handling the post-war negotiations in France. Hundreds of maps from the AGS went to France for the Peace Conference at Versailles and used to reshape Eastern Europe in order to “plan the peace.”<sup>14</sup> This was not the first time that the American Geographical Society had reached an international audience, but it was likely the most significant contribution to the world’s geography. Additionally, during World War II, the various departments within the United States government had full use of the collection at the AGS. The Peace Conference using the materials of the AGS has appeared in scholarly works, mostly to reference the role of Isaiah Bowman. These scholarly works noted that the AGS and their materials were a part of the Inquiry process. Few, however, have analyzed what that means

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<sup>13</sup> Ena Yonge, “The Map Department of the American Geographical Society,” 5.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 2.



about the materials and how they add arguments to the Peace Conference's significant nationalist and colonial leanings.

Another example of a study of impactful and broadly reaching map libraries is the work of Walter Ristow. Ristow contributed over 200 articles to the field of map librarianship, some of which were collected in a book, *The Emergence of Maps in Libraries*. Ristow's book features a discussion on cataloging maps including a debate within the AGS about the best ways to approach a classification system for the society's maps. The main debate was between an area-related system or a subject based system. The AGS Map Department's first classification system, created by Thomas Letts of the AGS, was a less sophisticated version of the current model. It used a location based, then chronological organization. The chronological section of this system was so highly valued to Letts, that if no date was evident, he would assign an arbitrary one. He maintained that the organization by date was crucial.<sup>15</sup> The AGS updated their cataloging system in 1947 and 1952, and settled into an "area-subject classification, chronologically arranged."<sup>16</sup> The various arguments regarding cataloging still plague libraries generally, and the more nuanced material maps, complicate the issue further. No argument, however, was made that an area-subject classification could influence a geopolitical debate among those using the system. Having sections for places that no longer exist or creating new ones for those that were new to the world is inherently geopolitical.

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<sup>15</sup> Thomas Letts, "Maps: Their Handling, Classification, and Cataloguing," *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* 37, no. 8 (1905): 485-90.

<sup>16</sup> Roman Drazniowsky, "Cataloging and filing rules for maps and atlases in the Society's collection," (American Geographical Society: New York), 1964.

Using the American Geographical Society Library's Archival Collections, this thesis hopes to further investigate map librarianship and its history while connecting to the professional life of Ena L. Yonge. The massive archival collections available about the American Geographical Society of New York, held at UW-Milwaukee, include the AGS's library and map department acquisition and donation information, correspondence, and collection information before 1978. The internal documents of the library and its workers provide a window into the employee's daily work lives. The archives of the AGS itself show how the maps are referenced and by whom throughout the correspondence and memos of the library and map department. In addition, the archives of the AGS feature the projects that the society was working on, and insight into the larger workings of the employees. Other sources include the librarians of the AGS's published works throughout their careers. Many were featured the *Professional Geographer*, the *Geographical Review*, and similar publications.

This thesis contributes to the understanding of the gendered history of map librarianship. Some themes it relates to are the ideas of the gentlemen librarians and how geopolitical maps and geography can be understood in relation to the feminized profession. The focus of the work is Yonge's story and how she transformed herself into a respected figure in the map librarianship as part of the larger transformation of map librarianship itself into a professionalized category of librarianship. Writing this, I felt like I was unearthing an extraordinary story that people seemed to know about, but no one had ever written down. She is mentioned as a pillar and frontrunner of the profession, but rarely as a trailblazer. Ena L. Yonge's dedication to the field of map librarianship but subsequent lack of recognition within it shows that it is much easier to lose yourself in a map than to find yourself on one. Yonge's

contributions have been ignored for too long. This thesis aims to recover her importance and put her “back on the map.”

## Chapter 1 - Historiography and History of Map Librarianship

Very little has been written about the history of map libraries. Walter Ristow stands out as the clear scholar in the historiography about the subject, with multiple articles and the quintessential book in the field, *The Emergence of Maps in Libraries*. As the field evolved during the twentieth century, the literature surrounding map libraries also grew. Not until 1946 was there a rise in the topic of the history of these establishments with two different authors, Ristow and Lynn Mullins. This historiographical chapter follows the map librarianship works of Walter Ristow, prominent historian of map librarianship, Anita Kathrine Oser, author of a dissertation entitled “The Characteristics and Trends of the Literature of Map Librarianship 1853-1991,” and various works pulled from other names in the field. Ristow and Oser’s works are more broadly focused than the smaller articles that tackle subdivisions of work for map librarians. Ristow wrote over two hundred articles related to map librarianship, had a book published of some of his better-known articles, and when he died, a book of essays on map librarianship was dedicated in his honor. His passion for the field shines through in his works and his friendships with other map librarians. While mostly a quantitative study, Oser’s work has a short introduction on the history of map libraries. The content of her dissertation made it easy to locate patterns in the literature and publications over the 138 years that her study covered. The rest of this chapter addresses with relevant articles that fit issues of certain time periods.

The major turning points of the profession, as so much of United States history, align with the two world wars in the twentieth century. Ristow mentions the first hiring wave of map librarianship happens at the end of World War I. Early in the twentieth century, map librarians

had little to no library science background. At this point Ristow's term "geographer-librarian,"<sup>17</sup> a similar type of figure to the gentleman librarian, was the major purveyor of map libraries. Later in this chapter the idea of the gentleman librarian is more fully explained. During the war, maps saw a small uptick in popularity and therefore so do map libraries. This only lasts, however, during the four-year period between 1915 and 1919. In the years preceding the war and the decade following it, the interest in maps follows the zeitgeist of the United States. Since the United States had entered an isolationist phase the 1910's, a country closing itself off from the world has less need for maps than ever during a time of global communication like the war. Ristow theorized that the isolationist United States is the cause for the smaller amounts of literature in the years between 1911 and 1930, in keeping with President Wilson's plans and their lasting effects. Oser's bibliometric survey of map librarianship literature shows a total of only 28 articles written for the whole two decades, while 20 were written from 1901-1910 and 29 were written from 1931-1940.<sup>18</sup>

By the late 1800s, the general library profession was changing in the United States in many ways. The leading organization for the library profession, American Library Association (ALA) was founded in 1876, in addition to the first library education program opening in the country, the Columbia School of Library Economy in 1887. Modern libraries existed since the eighteenth century in the United States, but the formalization of the profession was new during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In the beginning, men dominated the field of

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<sup>17</sup> Walter Ristow, "Map Librarianship," *Library Journal* 92, no. 18 (October): 3610-3614.

<sup>18</sup> Anita Katharina Oser, *The Characteristics and Trends of the Literature of Map Librarianship, 1853-1991: A Descriptive Bibliometric Study*, (Florida State University, 1994), 82.

librarianship, with “approximately 80 percent of all library workers in 1870 were male.”<sup>19</sup> During this time, the profession had not garnered any notions of being only for women, however, this change happened rapidly once it started. After only thirty years, the complete opposite was true: in “1900, nearly 80% of all library workers were female.”<sup>20</sup> With the culture of workplaces changing coupled with the feminist wave of empowerment women’s employment saw better opportunities than it ever had before. These shifts, which coincided with men’s unfulfillment with their expected professions, changed how men expected themselves to be employed. Mobility played a factor in this shift. Men expected to be able to climb up ladders, while women were simply happy to receive gainful employment in a workplace outside the home. This shift in urban workplaces applied to libraries also. Even in library schools, the few men that were educated in this way expected to be hired to administration and to be paid more than their female colleagues.<sup>21</sup> Melville Dewey was a catalyst for this change as he opened the college for the library education. Passet says that of the 20 initial students, 17 were women. Conversely, Biggs says that “Dewey had fought- unsuccessfully, but uncompromisingly- for women’s entry into professional training at all-male Columbia College. Which led to him moving the school, which had the result of “hastening the feminization of a mostly male realm.”<sup>22</sup> While painted as a supporter of women, Dewey controversially thought women were more suited to library work, as he put it they had a

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<sup>19</sup> Joanne E. Passet, "Men in a Feminized Profession: The Male Librarian, 1887-1921," *Libraries & Culture* 28, no. 4 (1993): 386.

<sup>20</sup> Passet, "Men in a Feminized Profession," 386.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 399.

<sup>22</sup> Mary Biggs, "Librarians and the "Woman Question": An Inquiry into Conservatism," *The Journal of Library History* (1974-1987) 17, no. 4 (1982): 409.

predilection for it, and they could be paid far less than men were typically compensated for the same work.

The gender shift of libraries is well documented in the research of library history. Joanne Passet's narrative about men in the "feminized profession" argues that the men of the era had been disillusioned with how their lives would turn out in terms of success and wealth seems almost sympathetic and leans toward the fault being with the popular culture and society of the day. A major text for the history of the feminization of library science profession was Dee Garrison's *Apostles of Culture*, in which she explains her theory that women becoming librarians belittled the potential of libraries becoming cultural institutions. Mary Niles Maack disagrees with Garrison's assertion using the logic that the public library during the late 1800s was not branded as a center of cultural and intellectual life. Another important text is *Reclaiming the American Library Past: Writing the Women In*. A series of essays by scholars on the field of librarianship share ideas of women and professionalism and what this has meant over the years. The text leaves out special libraries and special materials in libraries. This logic does apply to map librarianship since the study of geography was already so new and map libraries were scarcely on the radar of the rest of general librarianship.

Up until the late nineteenth century, men's jobs in libraries came about through what Joanne Passet, historian of libraries, described as the, "virtue of life experience, degrees in other fields, or through a network of personal contacts."<sup>23</sup> Most male librarians had degrees in other fields which qualified them to be librarians. Their focus as librarians up until now had them focusing on their own research. This notion of the "gentleman librarian" prevailed

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<sup>23</sup> Passet, "Men in a Feminized Profession," 386.

throughout the 1800s and even into the twentieth century, despite the feminization of the profession that happened in the nineteenth century's last two decades, with examples like Leon Dominian (Curator of the AGS and predecessor to Yonge, 1915-1917), Phillip Lee Phillips (first Head of the Geography and Maps Division of the Library of Congress, 1897-1924), and Lawrence Martin (second Head of the Geography and Maps Division of the Library of Congress, 1924-1946). The wording of "gentleman librarian" came from the Janice Monk article regarding the women workers of the AGS throughout its history. She used the phrase to describe men who are a part of a library without training. No relevant experience in library science was needed by this type of person and by virtue of being men with other advanced degrees, they were awarded jobs in libraries. In furthering this definition, the gentlemen librarian terminology was specifically applied to map librarianship. The gentlemen librarian were men who had degrees or specialties in other fields and worked by virtue of that experience in map libraries. This employment among their field of study allowed these men to work on their personal research projects with the very materials they administered. The phenomenon of the gentleman librarian may have happened less often in public library spheres and more often in archives and special libraries, since the material lends itself better to a particular area of study and less on circulating a collection for the general public.<sup>24</sup> The notion of the gentleman librarian in a specialized library setting, like map librarianship, was evidenced by a person who was not trained to be a librarian but is an expert in their field, which can often be seen from the perspective of the historians of cartography. The people with expertise in this field have

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<sup>24</sup> Dee Garrison, and Christine Pawley. *Apostles of Culture: The Public Librarian and American Society, 1876-1920*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003). Dee Garrison's writings *Apostles of Culture* on the elitist administrations of many early libraries reinforces that narrative.



detailed knowledge of maps and geography, likely through different eras, and have the knowledge to teach this material while lacking the information science background to communicate the knowledge. For example, someone with a background in library science would be an advocate for access, engagement, and accessibility. A librarian without a library science background might be more prone to think of their collection as something to hide away and not share with users. In an interview with Marcy Bidney, the current Curator of the AGSL, she believed the current state of some institutions' map libraries was a result of the gentleman librarians not knowing how to advocate for their collections in the same way a library science-trained professional could. Another issue where these professionals fail was access. Many find the outdated term, treasures, applicable to the materials in special collections, while the trained professional would want many to access these collections.<sup>25</sup> A gentleman librarian would typically want to hide these treasures, while a someone trained in library sciences would want people to engage actively with their collection.

The feminization of the general library profession happened quickly across public library spheres and maybe academic, but less so in special libraries. Special libraries are archives, special collections, and other types of non-typical libraries, which included geographic and map libraries. These subsets of libraries were roughly thirty to forty years after the rest of librarianship in terms of women being active in these roles. This change does not manifest itself in map librarianship, the feminization of the library profession simply normalizes women as librarians. Women were still not considered as much for administrative roles. As the field of

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<sup>25</sup> James R. Akerman, "A View from America: Map Collecting, 'Treasure-House' Libraries, and American Civic Influences on the History of Cartography," *Imago Mundi* 66, no. Sup1 (2014): 26.

map librarianship began to develop in the late 1800s, mostly men were librarians and administrators and as the time passes, female map librarians enter the ranks. Compared to general librarianship, however, the number of women stays relatively low. For example, Ena Yonge of the AGS was Walter Ristow's mentor for much of the first years of his entrance into map librarianship, which was twenty years after Yonge began her career. His career had a trajectory of advancements, further proving map librarianship was the exceptions to the feminization of the profession. Specifically, in terms of the literature published by map librarians, the male author is overwhelmingly more present in the field. From 1853-1940, of the 93 articles about map librarianship, 68 of the articles were written by men, 4 were written by women, and then 11 came from unknown/anonymous persons. The next batch of articles, from 1941-1966, produced 249 publications. 162 of these were written by males, 61 were written by females, and 26 came from unknown/anonymous. With 73% and 65% male-written articles, respectively, for each batch of articles, map librarianship proved to be a male dominated profession.<sup>26</sup> Even if the number of female librarians was high, the view from the point of general librarianship would be that most map librarians are men, in addition to being the authority figures in the field, reinforcing the narrative of the gentleman librarian that plagued map librarianship.

The foundation of the first map libraries in the United States began around the 1850s. Maps undoubtedly existed in library collections before this, but the first dedicated department solely for maps, atlases, etc. was not a part of the library world until the middle of the nineteenth century. The AGS was the first to designate that a collection of maps be a part of

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<sup>26</sup> Oser, *Characteristics and Trends of the Literature of Map Librarianship*, 89.

their society, and they enacted this with the first twelve maps in 1852. Furthermore, map librarianship did not exist as an idea until, some argue, 1853.<sup>27</sup> Lt. E. B. Hunt, in a 1852 address on behalf of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, called for forwarding the profession by proposing that the Library of Congress provide a national collection of maps to begin to be assembled. The Library of Congress had maps in their collection from its inception in 1800, but not a separate division to house them. The visibility and potential to increase knowledge about map collections from an institution so famous as the Library of Congress would raise awareness about map collections to more people than the AGS could have reached at the time. Ristow says there were a few map collections as early as 1850, but he neglects to mention which ones. One can assume that he included the collection of the AGS in this statement because he says the early collections “were limited to rare historical items or served to provide compilation material for government mapping departments.”<sup>28</sup> The Library of Congress would not open its Geography and Maps Division until the end of the century in 1897 to be headed by Phillip Lee Phillips. When Hunt called for a map library to be built for the nation, it was two years after the American Geographical and Statistical Society founded their organization in 1851 with the promise of a collection of maps and books to be put together and maintained alongside it. The AGS charter calls for someone to oversee the collection, but the wording does not denote a full-time job to be made of the position. The AGS’s mission statement was to promote and further geographical knowledge, but access to and knowledge of this collection was limited. Since the members were wealthy men, experience in

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<sup>27</sup> Walter W. Ristow, *The Emergence of Maps in Libraries*, (Hamden, Conn.: Linnet Books, 1980), 11-31.

<sup>28</sup> Ristow, *Emergence of Maps in Libraries*, 13.

librarianship, potentially even experience in geography, would not have to be part of the requirements to oversee these geographical materials, such as books, atlases, and maps. Drawing on the notion of the gentleman librarian and the low number of maps in the collection, AGS would not have needed anyone with a special skillset to administer the collection. As Lynn Mullins wrote, there were at least three major map libraries at the turn of the century, the third being Harvard. With so few map libraries in the country, this underrepresentation created a small pool from which to draw literature and a small audience of which to read it. Ristow tells us that at this time “several American libraries had considered the problem of map storage, and a few articles had appeared in professional journals outlining the different approaches and techniques.”<sup>29</sup> With only these few potential institutions to put forth literature, United States map librarianship included very little scholarship. These few articles published before the turn of the century exemplify how map librarianship was in its formative years.

Scholarship regarding general librarianship was more firmly established in the library science journal, *Library Journal* (LJ), in which a few articles about maps were published, LJ was already on its twenty-fifth volume by the year 1900. The more general field of librarianship lent its publication a few times in the early twentieth century for special issues on the growing field of map librarianship. This shared platform helped both general librarianship and map librarianship. General librarianship was able to lend its legitimacy to the map librarianship community, while map libraries were able to help non-map librarians with organizing and cataloging maps that might be in their collections. As Ristow noted in 1946, maps are often seen as the “problem children” in regular collections because they “refuse to conform to

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 12.

established cataloguing and filing procedures,” in addition, “dominate characteristic, geographical area, does not adapt itself easily to library classifications based upon author and subject.”<sup>30</sup> Map librarians wanted other librarians to know that the addition of maps would round out a good reference section.<sup>31</sup> In the coming two decades, the historiography grows as the field does, with more contributions, more map librarians, and more librarians finding their way to the profession because of World War II and the depository programs that follow it.

None of the early historians of map librarianship provided a clear definition of what constituted a map library. As stated in the introduction, this thesis recognizes a map library as a separate division within a larger institutional body. The map library has its own staff members to deal with the uncommon materials often found in these distinctive collections. With the post-WWII depository programs, many of today’s map libraries began their collections. Many of these maps were United States Geological Survey (USGS) maps of the library’s home state, major landmarks, and potentially some of the surrounding states. Others, however, are sets of maps from the war itself, that the Army Map Service distributed.

Mullin’s book states that map librarianship in the nineteenth century stemmed from three main objectives: education, compilations, and scholarship. She defines education as “to learn the basic geographical facts about the regions of the earth and its place in the larger celestial systems.” Compilational refers to collecting new versions of maps in addition to older versions of the same map for comparisons of change in place over time. Lastly, she defines

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 32.

scholarship was collecting maps for the purpose of geography as a field of study in relation to “its findings and spatial relationships.”<sup>32</sup>

In the 1930’s, map librarians became increasingly concerned with the problem of cataloging. Cataloging is an issue that to this day plagues all areas of librarianship, and maps offer a more specific problem than other library materials. Since maps are such a specialized material that so few have cataloging training in, several pieces of scholarship written during the 1930s regarded cataloging maps, for both map librarians and general catalogers. The Boggs-Lewis system, created in 1932, was a 159-page manual for the *Classification and Cataloging of Maps and Atlases* and it attempted to standardize the field. It was created by Samuel W. Boggs, a geographer in the Department of State, and Dorothy Lewis, Map Librarian of the Department of State. Other articles had been written at this time about how to classify and catalog, for example Thomas Letts published an article about the earliest AGS classification system in 1905, but the Boggs-Lewis system undoubtedly blew all others out of the water with its comprehensiveness and attention to detail. The Boggs-Lewis was rejected by the ALA’s 1939 treatise on cataloging for not “conforming” enough to the standards.<sup>33</sup>

The issue of cataloging was complicated by the diversity of stakeholders. Maps needed to be discoverable to specialized users and librarians. At the same time, any system that was adopted had to be comprehensible to non-specialists. In the early twentieth century, many public libraries folded maps in with their existing call number systems, which likely followed a Dewey Decimal System format. Many of the articles that came out of map librarianship are

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<sup>32</sup> Mullins, *Development of Map Libraries*, 2.

<sup>33</sup> Ristow, *Emergence of Maps in Libraries*, 19.

dedicated to how to catalog and classify maps. Others were bold enough to create their own and publish about it, as the AGS would in the early 1940s with revisions in the 1950s. The merits of call number systems that are geographically based are unique to map libraries. Lloyd A Brown, noted author of *The Story of Maps*, also wrote *Care and Cataloguing of Old Maps*, which has instructions for the cataloger of a map collection. In this work, he discusses the important points to note when cataloging the maps. Instead, he focuses on the basics of maps including titles, without titles, and general problems that arise from older maps. Changes made in the 1930s helped to standardize the way map cataloging was done. The standardization lives on in that today most map libraries use the Library of Congress call number system for their maps, with a few special exceptions like the American Geographical Society Library.

The 1930s was a period in which librarianship more generally was becoming more professionalized. In 1934, Gilbert H. Doane, author of "The Librarian as Writer," in which he put out a call for librarians to bring more writing in their field so that the field of general librarianship could be taken more seriously. He chided the ALA for requesting a professor to write a book called *Making the Most of Books* instead of a librarian. Doane stated "we are what we call ourselves,"<sup>34</sup> encouraging more librarians to pick up their pens so to speak. This change took place before WWII, but the map librarian community still seemed up to this challenge that Doane was issuing throughout the profession. Independently from this call to action being issued to librarians, map librarians already wrote and published a few articles and scholarly works on the fringes of librarianship. In thinking that regular libraries were marginalized, Doane

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<sup>34</sup> Gilbert H. Doane, "The Librarian as a Writer," *Bulletin of the American Library Association* 28, no. 8 (1934): 446-74.

failed to mention that special libraries were more marginalized. “Librarians as writers” for map librarianship was still very new because the field had only seen an example of a treatise on cataloging in 1932. Another opportunity to publish came when the first professional group came together in 1941 when the Special Libraries Association (SLA) Geography and Maps Division (G&M) founded.<sup>35</sup> The Bulletin of the SLA was an example of how far outside the loop these specialized librarians were from general librarianship.

By the eve of World War II, there were thirty map libraries in the United States. In 1937, the breakdown of those thirty map libraries with at least one full time employee in the United States was divided into public libraries (33%), academic libraries (25%), Federal Agencies (20%), and state libraries and historical or geographical societies (22%).<sup>36</sup> These thirty libraries and their librarians were communicating more with others in the field and began forming professional societies. Within their small communities, cataloguing had become a major issue in the field in the last ten years, and by the 1940s, how to handle maps and wartime was also an issue in the profession. In 1947, according to the book *Aids to Geographical Research*, written by AGS Director John K. Wright and AGS Librarian Elizabeth Platt, there were twenty-four libraries that researchers listed as a part of their geographical research processes. With some overlap, there were fifteen research institutions listed from the same survey.<sup>37</sup> Both lists include the AGS as the second most referenced library or institution. This might be because the survey and book come from the Society, and therefore had bias and the takers of the survey

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<sup>35</sup> Susan Elizabeth Ward Aber and Jeremy Aber, *Map Librarianship: A Guide to Geoliteracy, Map and GIS Resources and Services*, (Cambridge, MA: Chandos Publishing), 2017. The Special Libraries Association was founded in 1909, but the Geography and Maps Division came about in 1941.

<sup>36</sup> Oser, *Characteristics and Trends of the Literature of Map Librarianship*, 6.

<sup>37</sup> John K. Wright, and Elizabeth T. Platt, *Aids to Geographical Research: Bibliographies, Periodicals, Atlases, Gazetteers and Other Reference Books*, Second Edition, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), 276-277.



potentially felt compelled to list it. The book *Aids to Geographical Research* mirrored the influence of the field of professional geography around the time of World War II. Between the years 1900 and 1948, there was a 1000% increase in students enrolled in college geography, despite some detractors to the field, this increase highlighted how many more people came to know geography as a discipline.<sup>38</sup> Map libraries and their librarian counterparts had no clue that the end of World War II brought about a massive increase to holdings, professionals, and literature.

The United States' involvement into World War II brought about a fifteen to twenty-year period of intense popularity in maps and the increase of scholarship related to map libraries was astounding. The United States government and private media made use of maps to a much greater extent than in World War I. As map librarian Bill Woods argues, the library community, parallel to the feelings of the United States as a whole, began to see the "respectability of maps as a legitimate material for collecting and reference."<sup>39</sup> Whether acquisitions or reference related, there was likely to be a published article in one of the outlets for map librarian scholarship, such as the Bulletin of the Geography and Map Division of the Special Libraries Association. The field also saw its first instruction manuals and articles on the topics of map librarianship. Ristow, as the third head of the Geography and Map Division for the Library of Congress and Yonge, as the Map Curator of the AGS Map Department, both would

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<sup>38</sup> Alexander B. Murphy, "Geography's Place in Higher Education in the United States," *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 31:1(2007), 121-141. DOI: [10.1080/03098260601033068](https://doi.org/10.1080/03098260601033068)

<sup>39</sup> Bill Woods, "Of map Librarianship – A Very Personal Report," *Special Library Association, Geography and Map Division Bulletin*, no, 76 (June): 4-6.

have seen a tremendous uptick in the amount of people, especially government officials, looking for maps.

Another outcome of World War II, the distribution programs of the Army Map Service (AMS) and the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) both began during and following the war. For the AMS distribution program as many as 20,000 maps were distributed to 190 institutions in the first five years of the program, and 50,000 by 1955.<sup>40</sup> This program would continue on and off for the next thirty years, depending on whether the United States was currently in a war or not, before ultimately ending in 1975. The FDLP started its regional and selective system in 1962. This update allowed more libraries to be able to receive materials. Based on these classifications, the regional repositories received everything offered and selective repositories chose what materials best suited their collections. The surge in maps across the country increased the readership of the literature about map librarianship for those new to the field with their newly acquired AMS maps to be cared for and organized. As Ristow states during this time following the war, “new map libraries were born, and existing ones greatly expanded.”<sup>41</sup>

Many college campuses gained new additions to their collections, but some public libraries gained maps too. Following the war, only ten public libraries in the United States had a separate collection for their maps. With all the new additions to map collections, keeping track of how to balance a collection properly through further acquisition on the part of the library remained a difficult undertaking. These new problems and questions regarding maps led to the

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<sup>40</sup> Ristow, *Emergence of Maps in Libraries*, 86-87; 33.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, 33.

discipline of map librarianship to come into its own. Not only are there more map libraries than ever in the years following WWII, but there are more librarians who needed guidance from the professionals who had become pillars in an established, but largely unpublished and unrecognized field.

To further help these newly minted map librarians with their newly acquired AMS and FDLP maps, in 1950, *Library Journal* published a special issue entitled, "Maps in the Library," in which eleven articles were published. This denoted another milestone for the field. Ristow almost refers to it as a turning point. In his article, "What About Maps?" Ristow's hope for this kind of exposure of the field to the rest of the library science world shines through in his writing. Additionally, the excitement all the authors show in getting to publish in *Library Journal* is evident in their writing. Ena L. Yonge, Curator of the Map Department of the AGS, was the editor for this issue owing to her status as a member of the Special Libraries Association (SLA) New York City Division. She edited ten articles and wrote her own contribution entitled, "These Maps are Essential," which instructs a novice map librarian about which maps, atlases, and map series are a good foundation for a collection. Her contributions as an editor and writer in this article help to prepare the next generation of map librarian professionals, who might be receiving AMS maps without having other important maps in their collections. In his next major article discussing the history of map librarianship while updating his colleagues on the articles published and books written, "The Emergence of Maps in Libraries," which he wrote in 1967, (not the same as the compilational book with the same title), Ristow actually spells out his disappointment that map librarianship as a library science-wide issue did not take off with the success that he and the community had hoped for. From 1950-1955, the profession was,

“warmed by the sweet wine of accomplishment,” and perhaps overly “optimistic”<sup>42</sup> for its continued success.

The continued success notwithstanding, this elevation of status for map librarianship in the library world created a greater need for legitimacy among the map librarianship profession after World War II. As the wave of the first map librarians began to retire, they were replaced by graduates of Library Science programs. As most of the original generation of map librarians taught themselves to administer map collections, the formalization of library science-educated people brought a new standard to be upheld. The biggest boon for the legitimacy and advancement in the field was in 1952 when the University of Illinois Library School created a class called Maps and Cartobibliographical Aids, which was taught by Bill Woods. The dedication of a course to this subject cemented the field as a part of the library science community. At the end of WWII and with the surplus of maps at libraries, it makes sense that a class would be useful to new librarians. The potential new places for maps to be housed can be visualized in the map (Appendix, Figure 1), *Map Librarians in the United States and Canada*, made by Patricia Ann Greechie Alonso in 1954, based on the Directory of Map Libraries and Collections, compiled by Marie Cleckner Goodman, who was the Chairperson of the Map Resources Committee of the Geography and Map Division of the Special Libraries Association. According to the directory and the map, there were 527 map collections in the United States and Canada (497 and 30 respectively). Twenty-five of these collections had more than 100,000 sheets, and for context, the AGS with Yonge’s expertise had amassed 240,000 sheets by 1954.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 49.

Following the end of the wartime-inspired map trend sometime during the 1960s, the need for an increase of map libraries began its slow decline. Ristow theorizes two reasons for the downfall. To start, the first wave of the original map librarians, like Yonge in 1962, began to retire or pass away. Big names in the profession, like LeGear with the Library of Congress Geography and Maps Division and Dorothy C. Lewis with the Department of State (also the co-author of the Boggs-Lewis treatise on map cataloging), retired, taking with them over 300 years of experience.<sup>43</sup> Others who passed included Lloyd Brown, author of *The Story of Maps* and map librarian at the University of Michigan and S.W. Boggs, the other author of *Classification and Cataloging of Maps and Atlases* and State Department geographer. With these professionals leaving the field, various institutional memories and professional memories no longer existed. On the brighter side, Ristow commented on the young, intelligent professionals that were eager to fill those ranks. While some still might not have received training in maps as resources, more map librarians than ever were graduates of a library science program.

Another major accomplishment was the first book solely dedicated to the entirety of map librarianship. Other books or manuals had been published about cataloging and various other topics specifically, but none about the field as a whole entity on its own. It was compiled by Yonge's successor, Roman Drazniowsky, while he was the Curator of the Map Department at the American Geographical Society in 1975. While outside of the purview of this paper, the timeline of scholarship for the discipline was such a drawn-out process, showing how long it took accomplishing something that general librarianship had for decades before. The book came after 150 years since the first map libraries and map librarianship's first few articles of

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 50.

scholarship appeared. This first book, to Ristow, further validated the profession. In Ristow's culminating speech *The Greening of Map Librarianship*, he lists all the publications that abounded in the 1970s and onwards. His dedication to the field was unsurpassed, and no one has amounted any sort of history of the profession of map librarianship since he retired. He counted among his mentors, Ena L. Yonge, who predated his entry into the map librarianship field by twenty years.

## Chapter 2 - Ena Yonge, Gender at the AGS, and the Paris Peace Conference

### Introduction

Before World War I, map librarians and women in libraries were both still very new phenomena, Ena L. Yonge was a pioneer in both regards. In an exploration of gender at the AGS and gender in map librarianship around the time of WWI, this chapter discusses how a fresh-faced Yonge began her job, handled being at the beck and call of the Inquiry, and her time leading up to World War II. Yonge had a long and full career as the Map Curator for the American Geographical Society. At the beginning of her career, however, she knew next to nothing about maps or map librarianship. When she was hired in January of 1917, Yonge was a typist and general assistant to Leon Dominian and J.R. Wallace, who were the Map Curator and assistant of the Map Department, respectively. These two were employees who began at the AGS not too long before Yonge. Dominian started in 1915 as the Map Curator and had been the Editor of the Bulletin and the Geographical Review (both AGS publications) since 1912, and Wallace started in 1914. Yonge's duties at the time included filing, sorting maps, and other general office jobs.

After six months in employment, she went on a two-week vacation in August, only to return as the sole employee of the department, saying, "the Map Department was left high and dry, with only me to look after it."<sup>44</sup> In the six months prior, Yonge learned much about geography and basic map care, so much so that after being placed under the supervision of the

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<sup>44</sup> Nordis Felland, "Ena L. Yonge," 414.

Society's Librarian,<sup>45</sup> she requested to the director of the AGS to be made the Map Curator in earnest. He granted her a one-year trial period, and she remained at the post until 1962. Yonge continued the tradition of a strong acquisitions mission, following the example of her predecessors, Letts and Dominian. Before Yonge, the map collection quadrupled from 1911 to 1912.<sup>46</sup> Her position required both having a collection that helped geographers with their research, but also the members of the AGS itself. More than half of her time as the map curator, she was the sole employee of the department. Her life and time at the AGS Map Department reflect the trends and arcs in map librarianship that developed throughout the twentieth century. Dominian left for a job with the State Department and Wallace had been arrested. She remembers both fondly. Yonge remarked that Dominian was often busy and most of her training came from Wallace, who she described as "a fussy, middle-aged Englishman, who treated me very kindly."

#### Gender at the AGS

Yonge heard about the job at the AGS through a friend, and according to her, she immediately "rushed down from Yonkers, and had an interview." Yonge earned her job at the end of this nation-wide shift of males leaving clerical work and other types of jobs similar to librarians.<sup>47</sup> Yonge was lucky in her new workplace because women were already established in the culture there, if in subordinate roles. The first woman hired by the AGS was Ilione Hurlbut in 1894 as Library Assistant. Her father, George Hurlbut, had been employed as the librarian of the

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<sup>45</sup> The American Geographical Society kept their library of books and collection of maps separate, respectively calling them the Library of the American Geographical Society and the Map Department of the American Geographical Society.

<sup>46</sup> American Geographical Society Records, AGSL AC 2/4, Box 6, Folder 53, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

<sup>47</sup> Passet, "Men in a Feminized Profession," 385.



collection since 1885. Ilione Hurlbut worked as Library Assistant until 1915. Yonge found herself on the tail end of the transition from the gentleman librarian to women being mainly placed in this role. This came about because the rise of feminism at the time, coupled with the AGS's already forward attitude about women. The AGS allowed women to be counted among its ranks from the very beginning of its inception. For the middle of the nineteenth century, this was very unusual. The first woman member of the AGS was Mrs. Francis Hallock, and she was accepted for membership in 1869, 18 years after the Society's founding. Despite this freedom, women members of the AGS, usually the wives or sisters of male Society members, only totaled 9 out of 1400 in 1893.<sup>48</sup> Some women in the AGS published their works in the AGS's publication. After 1915, however women were far more visibly involved in projects important to the Society.

After Yonge's trip to be interviewed by the AGS, her interview with Map Curator Leon Dominian landed her the job of typist at the department for a week, until she could be interviewed by Isaiah Bowman, AGS Director at the time. Dominian hired her at the pay rate of \$75 per month, with which she was pleased. Upon a second interview with Bowman, and she was soon bumped up to \$100 per month. One interesting development of the switch from Dominian to Yonge in 1917 was that the Map Department went from three full time employees to one. Despite Yonge's eventual triumph in her domain, surely the AGS and Bowman did not think that one woman with only six month's experience in this new field could successfully cover the extent of what was, at the time, a very large collection. On the eve of what would be

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<sup>48</sup> Douglas R. McManis, "Leading Ladies at the AGS, (American Geographical Society)," *The Geographical Review* 86, no, 2 (1996), 270.

their busiest period to date in helping with the Inquiry, this was a gross oversight and an interesting administrative choice. One of the possible options for this hiring freeze, which lasted twenty years, was that there potentially was not enough money in the budget. The AGS also might have thought that other people, like W.L.G. Jeorg who was the first trained geographer employed at the AGS, could help cover lapses in the coverage of the map department. Another likely scenario is that the business of the Inquiry put a pause on hiring new people and when Yonge proved competent, the AGS held off on acquiring new people.

Yonge's education reached a high school level, which was not uncommon for working woman of the early twentieth century, after attending Bernard School for Girls. Born in Bangalore, India to British parents, she was already geographical set apart from other map librarians.<sup>49</sup> In a memo to John K. Wright, Yonge told a story of how this played to her advantage: "By a strange coincidence, when he was explaining how to find a map, he asked me "If someone wanted a plan of Bangalore, where would you go to find it? I was born in Bangalore, so that was an easy one for me."<sup>50</sup> Most women entering the workforce at this type fit the mold of white, educated, and middle class, in addition to remaining single to fulfill their professional lives.<sup>51</sup> Yonge fits into the category of all four. Librarianship as a career for women during this period of the 1910s and 1920s was considered especially appropriate, "because they

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<sup>49</sup> Yonge being from a foreign country was not so rare at the AGS. Most of the people hired in the early twentieth century were not American by birth. For example, Yonge was British by way of India, Dominian was born in what is now Turkey, Wallace was English, and Bowman was Canadian. Several other employees also came from outside the United States.

<sup>50</sup> American Geographical Society Records, Memo to Wright AC 1, Box 2, Folder 14, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

<sup>51</sup> Penina Migdal Glazer and Miriam Slater, *Unequal Colleagues: The Entrance of Women into the Professions, 1890-1940*, (New Brunswick, N, J: Rutgers University Press, 1987).

drew on their natural talents nurturance, sympathy, domestic management, and self-sacrifice.”<sup>52</sup> In need of employment, Yonge was happy to hear about this job at the AGS. In her short, informal autobiography to J. K. Wright for his book *Geography in the Making*, she talked about racing down from Yonkers to apply as soon as her friend told her of the position. Her timing of being of working age during the later years of the feminization of the profession allowed her entry into this job as a typist in the Map Department.

The first of the AGS librarians were part of the AGS council, a tradition that continued on and off that was likely affected by the rise and fall in paying memberships to the AGS over the years before 1915. Starting with Bowman and Wright, the librarian (in charge of books) title was held by two of the people who would become a director. This might be a commentary on the gendered aspect of these two’s roles. They started as gentlemen librarians that turned into administrative roles or in Bowman’s case held the two positions consecutively. Bowman ran the library for the first five years of his Directorship. In a clear example of gentlemen librarianship, no one would have expected Elizabeth Platt or Nordis Felland to become the director after their time as AGS Librarian, for they were library school educated. Platt and Felland did not have an entirely different knowledge and skillset that adjacently qualified them for this work. Bowman being the librarian at the time explained why he had so much to do with Yonge’s hiring, salary, and supervision as it was during Bowman’s reign that the map department and the library collection. “Like Dellenbaugh, Randell-Maclver, Bowman, ad McBride before him, he was a non-

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<sup>52</sup> Barbara J. Harris, *Beyond Her Sphere: Women and the Professions in American History*, (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), 118; 145-146. This is rooted in the “cult of domesticity” that Harris says the United States and Americans were having trouble shaking off from their European ancestors. It supports the notion of differences between males and females on every level, not just biologically.

librarian and much of his time was directed to other endeavors, chiefly editorial.” In 1937, Elizabeth Platt was the first woman and first professional to hold the post of Librarian of the AGS. She had been with the department as an Assistant since 1920.

In *Geography in the Making*, Wright listed the pillars of the AGS, Presidents and Staff Leaders, and in doing so, mentioned all the male leaders of the AGS, including the librarians. He failed, however, to include Librarians Platt and Felland or Map Curator Yonge. To mention that all the men librarians were pillars of the AGS, but not the women librarians showed a lack of appreciate for their work and effort. This omission was noted by Edmund Arnold, in his 1985 dissertation about the library, map collection, and photograph collection of the AGS from 1952-1978.<sup>53</sup> His writing was a summation of events covering the collection from the end of Wright’s book to the move of the collections to Milwaukee. Arnold did not write his thesis from a feminist standpoint or to uncover to the hidden labors of people like Yonge. Despite this, he recognized how Yonge’s achievements were underappreciated by Wright, who neglected to give her full credit. Arnold’s work insured that these silences were noted but did not state any unfairness in Wright’s omission. The subtly of Arnold’s casual mention highlighted the changing way people thought about gender, and to his mind, he might have thought that he did enough for the women who were silenced by Wright’s writings.

Yonge was now a part of the geographic and cartographic worlds since she worked so closely with professionals in these fields. Her regard in this sphere is not well documented with only one monograph about women in cartography mentioning her in its pages, and even then, only once. Map librarianship is often tangentially referenced in texts about the history of

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 40 and 47.

cartography – but only the monographs regarding the history women in cartography, like *Map Worlds: A History of Women in Cartography* by Will C. Van Den Hoonaard and Judith Tyner’s *Women in Cartography: An Invisible Social History*. Hoonaard’s book mentions Yonge, along with several other map librarians and Tyner’s book has a page dedicated to Clara LeGear, who was another typist-turned-map librarian and how important map librarians were to the effort during World War II. The books these women are featured in are women in cartography books, therefore considering that most map librarians were men, it is an odd place to find them. This inclusion of women in books where they are a historically a small percentage of the profession uncovers another layer of the engrained feminization of the profession in scholarship. The more general history of cartography books included women, but only women cartographers, so female and male map librarians were left out of these narratives. On the other hand, when would these women/people be mentioned outside of this context? The topic of the history of cartography has a more enticing ring to it than history of map librarianship, which further confirms the idea of the gentlemen librarian. Since the feminization of the profession in the late 1800s, the gentlemen librarians might not have wanted to identify themselves as librarians but rather a scholar in the history of cartography whose responsibilities happened to cover a collection of maps and books.

At a time when map librarianship as a profession was in its infancy, Yonge truly pioneered her way to the creation of best practices in the field. Map librarian historian Walter Ristow wrote that “the first generation of American map librarians was, of necessity, self-trained.”<sup>54</sup> He qualifies the first generation as being hired before World War I, and in a

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<sup>54</sup> Ristow, “Map Librarianship,” 3610.

memorial for Yonge, Ristow qualifies her as the textbook definition of this generation. Her hiring circumstances fit the mold of the emerging profession that Ristow discussed.<sup>55</sup> Maps appeared in libraries in the late nineteenth century, as they became more common, the everyday activities of adding maps to collections, map organization, and the other administration duties in a unique collection, required a specific employee that could handle the specialized work. Former AGS Librarian Lynn Mullins, another historian of map libraries, talks about how and why these collections were formed: scholarship, complication, and education. The library of the AGS was formed for scholarly research according to Mullins, and from its early days, “the collection had made its mark on the minds of the geographers of the day, and was to go on doing so ever more emphatically as the years saw it multiply.”<sup>56</sup> This collection and its prominence led to it being chosen as the repository that would supply the Paris Peace Conference with maps after World War I.

#### United States Commission of Inquiry

Around the same time Bowman promoted Yonge to Map Curator, President Wilson began having materials gathered for what came to officially be known as the United States Commission of Inquiry. In expectation of the victory of the United States allies, President Wilson directed the Department of State to begin an “organization...of a body of experts to collect data and prepare for monographs, charts, and maps, covering all historical, territorial, economic, and legal subjects which would probably arise in the negation of a treat of peace.”<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Ristow, *Emergence of Maps in Libraries*, 325.

<sup>56</sup> Mullins, *Development of Map Libraries*, 12.

<sup>57</sup> Robert Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations: A Personal Narrative*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1921), 17.

The Inquiry undertaking was a government secret, large-scale amassing of materials of all types, geographies that described people, borders, and routes that would eventually be absorbed into the American Commission to Negotiate Peace that was taken to Paris for the Peace Conference. These materials were to be sent to Europe once World War I ended for the purpose of making peace. Books, maps, atlases and other materials about almost all the countries in the world traveled over for the purposes of redrawing borders to “create peace” in regions like Eastern Europe. Despite the amount of confidence these men had in themselves, this most certainly was not a peace-making effort but just people in a room doing their best.

In September of 1917, Congress approved emergency funding for such a gathering of materials that would study Europe and other parts of the world. According the AGS publication, *The Geographical Review*, the Subjects of Investigation are “Passing by countless details, the Inquiry, broadly, has covered the following fields: 1. Political History, 2. Diplomatic History, 3. International Law, 4. Economics, 5. Geography, and 6. Education.”<sup>58</sup> In an official memorandum regarding the Inquiry and the Commission to Negotiate Peace, the document discussed how the Inquiry was proceeding with experts and materials being amassed, in addition to the location:

...The experiment has been attended by some very interesting results. In the case of the American experts an appeal was made to the colleges and universities and private and public institutions of various kinds in the United States for the loan of men and material, and to all such requests the most hearty response was obtained. It became a kind of joint educational enterprise which elicited the enthusiasm and devotion of a large group of strong men at a time of need when everyone was seeking to be of the largest service to the national government. The work of the American experts was carried on at the building of the American Geographical Society... where there was made available the largest collection of

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<sup>58</sup> "The American Geographical Society's Contribution to the Peace Conference." *Geographical Review* 7, no. 1 (1919): 1-10. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/207609>.

carefully selected maps in the United States and the best geographical library was well.<sup>59</sup>

The mention of the AGS's Library and the inferred mention of the Map Department show what an important collection the AGS held during WWI. The large number of maps and atlases would not be found at many other institutions. The Library of Congress undoubtedly had a good collection at the time though, but in order to keep this project a secret, it was best to do this away from Washington, D.C. and out of a government affiliated space. Early on, the Inquiry had trouble finding a large enough place for their daily meetings. Before the Inquiry met at the AGS, they met at New York Public Library.

Needing a space in which to conduct the gathering of materials and research, AGS Director Isaiah Bowman offered the Inquiry part of the space in the Society's Headquarters at 156<sup>th</sup> and Broadway in New York City. Bowman became the Territorial Specialist of the Inquiry, so having the Society's maps and materials close at hand was beneficial to him. Officially, Bowman was not in charge of the Inquiry, it was technically Dr. Sydney Mezes, brother-in-law to Colonel Edward House, who led this group and its organization. The Secretary of State Robert Lansing stated in his memoir, however, that "the actual and efficient executive head was Dr. Isaiah Bowman."<sup>60</sup> Having the space and the staff at his place of work, Bowman was able to tout his new director-ship of the AGS by reaching out to friends that he cultivated earlier in the decade. His authority over the Inquiry process hinted at his leadership style and how he was not afraid to insert himself into the mix of anything as a grab to power.

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<sup>59</sup> Memorandum Regarding the Section of Territorial, Economic and Political Intelligence of the Commission to Negotiate Peace, undated: FRUS Vol. I, Pg. 183., Wesley Reisser and, John A. Agnew, *From a World of Empires to a World of Nation States: America at the Paris Peace Conference*, 2010, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

<sup>60</sup> Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations*, 17.



The war underscored the nature of maps and their changing purposes leading up to 1919. The conclusion of World War I led to great hopes among geographers and world leaders such as Woodrow Wilson that improved maps could help to avoid future global conflict. A librarian during the Inquiry and the person responsible for the materials as they traveled overseas, Andrew Keogh reflected on how impactful these materials were: "Yet these questions, and a hundred like them, are the questions that disturb the peace of the world...We cannot rid ourselves of these dangers by ignoring them. There are probably people in this audience who do not know where Tacna and Arica are, yet the question of their boundaries may at any time bring on a war in which the United States may have to share."<sup>61</sup> His statement underscored how important the early twentieth century saw maps and borders. By referencing geopolitics and nationalism, Keogh set up maps as a catalyst more clearly defined borders and therefore peace. As earlier hinted at, these maps, similar to the Paris Peace Conference, were not the magical item to change the way people look at borders as definite and unchanging for the greater good. They were, however, a hopeful, but often times more manipulative way people attempted peace.

The AGS Map Curator from 1915-1917, Leon Dominian, wrote a book, *The Frontiers of Language and Nationality in Europe*, that was published in 1917. He called the book "a study in applied geography." With the rise of nationalism permeating through Europe, geography followed suit. To have a well-defined border positioned people to better, more specifically define themselves. Dominian's book did not favor one nation, rather it showed case studies of

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<sup>61</sup> Andrew Keogh, "Our Library Resources As Shown By Some Government Needs In The War," *Bulletin of the American Library Association* 13, no, 3 (1919): 270-73.

contested areas. “Never has it been realized better than at the present time that an ill-adjusted boundary is a hatching-oven for war. A scientific boundary, on the other hand, prepares the way for permanent goodwill between peoples.”<sup>62</sup> In a similar vein to researchers like Henryk Arctowski and Eugeniusz Romer,<sup>63</sup> geographers thought numbers and science could solve some of the problems of the world. The maps and materials leading to the Inquiry had a specific purpose to fulfill. The demographics, ethnographic, nations, and other people-based distinctions were made into maps that hopefully were for the purpose of solving problems. Dominian was the Map Curator before Yonge, so he undoubtedly spent his time among both his research and the map collection. Yonge said in her early days of working at the AGS, Dominian spent most of his working time writing.<sup>64</sup> Some of this writing was because Dominian had the dual jobs of editor of the *Geographical Review* and *AGS Bulletin*. From this description of him, Dominian obviously exemplified the gentlemen librarian. By focusing on his writing, he typified the flexibility of his status and his position to be able to work on his personal effects as a part of his duties as the curator of the department. One quote from the ever honest Yonge stated that, “Mr. Dominian should to stroll around the map room in a lordly way, and if it was not in apple pie order I heard about it!”<sup>65</sup> Yonge being the replacement for Dominian with no other

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<sup>62</sup> Leon Dominian, *The Frontiers of Language and Nationality in Europe*, (New York: Publication for the American Geographical Society of New York by H, Holt and Company, 1917), vii.

<sup>63</sup> Arctowski and Romer notably took more scientific approaches to their maps and atlases made in preparation for their time at the Paris Peace Conference representing the Polish delegation.

<sup>64</sup> American Geographical Society Records, AC 1, Box 2, Folder 14, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

<sup>65</sup> American Geographical Society Records Memo to Wright from Yonge, AGSL Archives AC 1, Box 2, Folder 14, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

employees in the department began the trend from “gentlemen librarian” to hardworking young women is in evidence here.<sup>66</sup>

#### AGS Map Department and the Inquiry

The field of map librarianship was so new and unpublished that few people knew how to accomplish it as their primary job, much less help to handle a special project of the Inquiry's size. Less than 45 articles had been written about maps as library material from 1890-1920, so Yonge had very little to go on in terms of literature. Thomas Letts, the Map Curator proceeding Dominion, had already created a classification system, so any articles regarding that subject would not be useful to her. Being on her own with all the needs of the Inquiry upstairs was a stressful time for her to be learning on the job. The AGS was actively preparing for the hosting of the Inquiry, as evidenced by the Library's Acquisitions documents in 1918. Nearly all the books obtained comprised monographs about Europe, Eastern Europe, peace, and race. The noticeable difference in the acquisitions for the next year, 1919, showed when the subjects open back up to different continents and subject matter.

This means that Yonge is heavily involved, despite being so new to her job. Yonge wrote a brief history of her time as the Curator in her final Map Department Annual Report. She mentions barely knowing what she was doing as she took the helm during the Inquiry setting up shop in the AGS's headquarters. The Inquiry used the AGS's Library and Map Department daily for its purposes. A switchboard was installed where Yonge's desk in the Map Room, so she

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<sup>66</sup> For more about AGS and working women, see Janice Monk's article. Janice Monk, "Women's Worlds at the American Geographical Society," *Geographical Review* 93, no. 2 (2003): 237-57.

could help the researchers when they needed her. She said that Audubon Terrace was filled with “specialists in all fields of physical and political geography and their staffs, occupied all available spaces, even settling in corners in the Map Room.”<sup>67</sup> The duality of being necessary to this process and relied upon as an expert of the Map Department would hinge on her domain needing to be organized. She later found out that during the Inquiry, her supervisor, “Mr. Wallace was very much annoyed at the Inquiry, for they were using the maps to much, and I found out later that he hid some of the French sets in unlabeled drawers!...I had an awful time locating France 1:100,000, finally finding it safely hidden!”<sup>68</sup>

After the Inquiry was completed, these materials made their way across the Atlantic Ocean to Paris, France for the Paris Peace Conference. In the historiography about the Paris Peace Conference, the writers do not mention the libraries that offered up materials for the conference. Few sources mention the books used during the Inquiry but go into detail about the amount of research and in what fields.<sup>69</sup> Most often, the people using the materials are at the center of the stories told. While the maps and books were central to the geopolitics in 1919, the visual culture used during the meeting is an overlooked part of the story.

## Paris Peace Conference

Yonge kept very detailed lists off all the maps that traveled overseas to be a part of the Paris Peace Conference. Pages of handwritten map titles can be found in the archive from 1918

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<sup>67</sup> American Geographical Society Records, AC 2/4 Box 12, Folder 21, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

<sup>68</sup> American Geographical Society Records, AC 1/4 Box 2, Folder 14, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

<sup>69</sup> O'Connor, Thomas F, "Library Service to the American Commission to Negotiate Peace and to the Preparatory Inquiry, 1917-1919," *Libraries & Culture* 24, no, 2 (1989): 144-57.

and 1919 that were loaned to the Inquiry and eventually sent to France. Yonge's record keeping was where her involvement in the Peace Conference ended.

Another unsurprising part of the Paris Peace Conference was how few women were involved in this effort. Mary Florence Wilson (known professionally as Florence Wilson), a librarian from the United States, worked at Cornell University as a librarian before leaving to help with the organizing and care for the materials that went to France. Wilson traveled with Andrew Keogh, who was the librarian in charge of the materials. In addition to materials of the AGS, materials from other libraries and collections were used during the Inquiry and the Peace Conference. Florence Wilson began as the assistant to Keogh, but after he stepped away, she began the Librarian of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace.<sup>70</sup> Following this, she was elected to become the Librarian of the League of Nations.<sup>71</sup> Wilson's story differs from Yonge because Wilson had the education to back up the positions she earned, however, both women were tossed into jobs that they did not sign up for and hoped to make the best of it. Years after her time as the assistant librarian of the Inquiry and the first librarian of the Library of the League of Nations, she remarked, "Today, as I look back over the years which have been marked by broken dreams of peace, frustrations in international politics, and general disappointment rather than success in achieving harmony of man, I cannot help but feel the experience has been a rewarding one for me. I will always consider it my good fortune to have exercised my professional responsibility in what was truly part of a 'noble effort.'"<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 151.

<sup>71</sup> Andrew Keogh, *Our Library Resources*, 2.

<sup>72</sup> Mary Florence Wilson and Ron Blazek, "Vignettes of Library History: No. 11: The Library of the League of Nations." *The Journal of Library History* (1966-1972) 7, no. 4 (1972): 366-71. [www.jstor.org/stable/25540377](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25540377).

## AGS Map Department Post 1920

Following the Inquiry and the Paris Peace Conference, Lawrence Martin, who would later be head of the Geography and Maps Division at the Library of Congress, brought back 3000 maps for the AGS. Cataloging and accessing these maps was one of her first major jobs following the Inquiry. Another of her jobs was checking the list of materials that went to France against ones that returned. This proved quite a task.

In the sources made by Yonge, she does not mention too much more about her time as the Map Curator throughout the rest of the twenties. Undoubtedly, with six months of training that carried her into preparing and working for the Inquiry, then keeping track of the materials that return and the new ones added to the collection from the conference, Yonge was busy learning her new trade. By the end of the 1930s, the AGS Archives show Yonge branching out with her work. As with all of history, there is also a possibility that she was already doing things but did not document them or the documents did not get saved. In 1937, Yonge made the exhibit for the AGS Fellows Day, and in 1938, she made an exhibit for a meeting of the Special Librarians of New York. She kept a list for both of these exhibits, showcasing some of the materials used.<sup>73</sup> A photo of her exhibit appears in Wright's *Geography in the Making* on page 192. The implications of these exhibit lists showed an early example of outreach in libraries through these exhibits. Her involvement also showed an administrative aspect to her daily work. Yonge being involved with the exhibit portion hints at least moderately in the planning of

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<sup>73</sup> American Geographical Society Records, Map Department, Box 2, Folder 14, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

big events like Fellows Day. Lastly, Yonge being involved in professional societies (remember this is where Ristow theorizes about Yonge blossoming into her professional self) showed that after this point, she has the confidence to do so.

From here forward, her participation in scholarship increased and her footprint in the archives became more evident. This chapter showed how Yonge started off as a 21-year-old typist that quickly had to contend with the “big dogs.” She had to learn quickly, for the sake of the AGS and its capacity to assist the Inquiry. From then, she was busy finding her footing before launching herself into the next phase of her career. Yonge met all types of researchers with their work. She said in her position required having a collection that helped scholars with their research, members of the AGS itself, people from the general public, and various branches of government. She describes some reference interactions by saying sometimes educational programs would borrow the maps for backgrounds, and the older maps were useful for land disputes.

## Chapter 3 - World War II, The Rise of Map Librarianship, Yonge's Contributions to the Profession

### Introduction

World War II played a significant role in the legitimization of the map library profession. People, both governments and the public alike, came to understand the importance of maps. The government's involvement in war led to its increased appreciation for maps. Both for maps made earlier in the twentieth century and the pressing need to make new maps that were more accurate and included data relevant to government purposes. The American public found maps more useful as they sought to understand the conflict from the United States. U.S. Army Newsmaps, published by the United States War Department are one example of how much maps helped the public conceptualize much of WWII. The surge of respect and need for maps reflected a growth in map library collections and the professionals who oversaw them. Yonge made her biggest leaps as a professional in these years by joining various professional organizations, attended conferences, began writing articles (more than any other map librarian in the period), and serving as a reference professional to the government to help during the war effort. For these new additions to her plate, she was richly rewarded.

### Acquisitions

By the beginning the United States' entry into World War II, Ena L. Yonge was starting her 25th year as the Curator of the Map Department of the AGS. Despite starting her career as a typist with no library or geography knowledge, Yonge moved beyond her domain of the AGS Map Department to begin to contribute to the profession broadly. She does not venture out



until after the Special Library Association started a New York City chapter. Ristow theorizes that the legitimacy she gained by joining a professional society gave her the confidence to join other professional societies and begin committing time and scholarship to the field of map librarianship. Ristow mentions another theory that her former boss, AGS Director, Isaiah Bowman was a taskmaster in the workplace, so her time and expertise might have been stifled under his leadership. Bowman left the AGS in 1935 to become the President of Johns Hopkins University. Up until the middle of World War II, Yonge was the sole employee of the Map Department.<sup>74</sup> Her tasks included typical map librarianship duties, such as acquisitions (ordering, requesting, accessions), cataloging (classification, catalog system she sat in on the meeting to create, filing), and reference (helping patrons, helping AGS staff, answering phone inquiries, letter inquiries). Her commitment to pursuing the AMS Maps and the subsequent payoff led the AGS to hire a fulltime assistant for the map library. Her assistant, Mary Elizabeth Hartzell, was hired in 1944 to help offset some of the workload, and a second assistant was added in 1946. Additionally, the Library of the AGS went from three workers in 1943 up to five by the end of the decade. The hiring in these two departments showcase how the aftermath of WWII spiked an interest and the importance of in map libraries. Not only did knowledge of geography assert itself as a valuable skill for the government and civilians following the war, but the trust institutions put in women increased and more were hired in the map department and library during and after WWII.

Yonge was famed for her amazing acquisition skills, which stemmed from her early solo days in the Map Department: “Dr. Bowman gave me good schooling in acquisition work. He

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<sup>74</sup> She reportedly had occasional part time help, but this isn't well documented.

would be reading a book, note a map mentioned, mark it, send the book up to me with curt, 'let me see this map.' It taught me to get maps there before he needed them, and to keep an eye out for map notices."<sup>75</sup> The society spent the earlier parts of the twentieth century reaffirming its goals of research and publications. "Bowman's many contacts from the Inquiry enabled the Library and Map Departments to acquire many publications and maps otherwise unattainable."

"The aim of a good librarian is to have a map or atlas in the collection before it is called for! So eternal vigilance is the watchword."<sup>76</sup> Every memory or memorial of Yonge mentioned her steadfast dedication to acquisition. How she managed to grow the collection of the AGS Map Department from 38,000 maps to 300,000 by the end of her tenure astounded her coworkers and other map librarians. Even more impressive was her ability to do it on such a small budget. According to friend and colleague Clara E. LeGear, "Her persistent solicitation of maps and atlases, both at home and abroad, by letter, telephone, and personal visit brought it all about."<sup>77</sup> LeGear was interim head of the Library of Congress Geography and Maps Division for a time, and an employee of the Division for fifty-eight years, and the two were friends for a long time, both professionally and otherwise. AGS colleague and President John K. Wright also mentioned Yonge's talent for acquisition, "acquired a thorough mastery over her domain and an unquenchable urge to enlarge, and skill in the enlargement of, the collections under her charge."<sup>78</sup> To Yonge, this meticulous collecting would not have been a way to brag about the

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<sup>75</sup> American Geographical Society Records, AC 1, Box 2, Folder 14, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

<sup>76</sup> Yonge, "The Map Department," 5.

<sup>77</sup> Clara E. LeGear, "Ena Laura Yonge (1895-1971)," *Imago Mundi* 25 (1971): 85-86.

<sup>78</sup> John K. Wright, *Geography in the Making; the American Geographical Society, 1851-1951*, (New York: American Geographical Society, 1952), 193.

numbers found in the collection. Her reference services would have blossomed under the scrutiny of Bowman, “No doubt these demands helped her to develop a “nose for maps.”<sup>79</sup> Under Bowman, finding as many maps as possible for as inexpensive as possible would have become a de facto part of her job description. Her budget was always very limited and throughout the interwar period the AGS’s, financial difficulties kept new ideas in the heads of the employees. Several of the interoffice memos discuss ideas on ways to better run the society and increase funds.<sup>80</sup> Yonge’s reference services blossomed with all her years of solo experience, for so many years,

Since she had her hand in every step of the selection, acquisition, processing, cataloguing, and filing of the maps, she knew the collection intimately and could give prompt and expert service to the many thousands of map users in personal consultations, by letter, and by telephone.

Once Yonge had an assistant, one or the other went down to Library of Congress to acquire their duplicates.<sup>81</sup>

Another way that the Yonge managed to grow the collection was through the exchange of publications. Since the AGS published a journal, the *Geographical Review*, and had its own map making department, regarding various regions and types of geography, exchanging publications and sets of maps was a great way to get international materials. By 1955, the government of the United States began radically cutting off its distribution of maps. Despite Yonge’s zest for acquisitions, she never received much of a budget with which to work on growing the collection.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Felland, “Ena L. Yonge,” 414.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> American Geographical Society Records, AC 2/4, Box 2, Folder 28, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

<sup>82</sup> Arnold, *The American Geographical Society Collections*, 66-67.

## During the War

During World War II the AGS Map Department was at the disposal of all branches of the United States government, whether in a military or civilian capacity. Yonge tells of a “hidden treasure” that must be in the collection when she tells the story of a high army official who, after the war, told Yonge and the staff of the AGS about a map that was desperately needed and the Map Department had the only copy. He never revealed which map was the needed one. While this story seemed like something out of a novel, it exemplified how well cataloged the Map Department was and how easily it was to find all its materials.

As AGS director at the time, John K. Wright wrote, “The Second World War impelled the United States Government to turn to our institution for help, both before but more especially after Pearl Harbor. As it happened in 1917, war caught many of our governmental agencies woefully lacking in necessary geographical information.”<sup>83</sup> He made this point to exemplify how the government had turned to the AGS and its collection during WWI, and this history of government and AGS cooperation led the United States to once again depend on the AGS for materials. During the war, around forty different government agencies visited the offices of the AGS. Pages 354-355 of Wright’s book, *Geography in the Making*, talk about the different, major government entities that used certain parts of the collection. Wright lists quotes from different departments like the New York Office of the Military Intelligence Division and the Office of Strategic Services outlining the excellent collections and its exemplary organization. According

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<sup>83</sup> Wright, *Geography in the Making*, 354.

to Yonge, the AGS Library and Map Department was the preferred spot of some government agencies because the materials were so easy to find with the collection fully cataloged. Yonge also theorizes that the AGS was neutral ground and that government officials did not have to worry about rivalries among the divisions interfering with the work while in New York. During the war, the government ordered that they be the only users of the collection, along with credited users. They also gave orders to report any suspicious requests to the FBI. Yonge said she reported a person “once, when a gentleman wanted to see maps of islands on both sides of the Panama Canal.”<sup>84</sup>

Yonge makes a point of saying that the AGS collection is unbiased, which she reasoned since the collection was free of government influence. Whether or not her ascertain is correct or not, it is interesting that she takes this role of information professional so seriously. Her attitude of research help falls in line with library rhetoric at the time. She described the AGS as a research center and as a place that would serve all people. Most of this information was gleaned from Wright’s book, however, in the section that he bragged about the strengths of the map department and library, all part of the “revolutionary” collection, he neglects to mention the map department and library workers that helped facilitate this usage of the collections.

Yonge began hiring staff in 1942 to help with the extra work that was needed in the Map Department. By 1946 the Map Department had grown to five employees, the highest in Yonge’s time there. These trends in hiring mirror the United States’ post-war economic boom, since the Map Department picked up in terms of patrons and clout in being a facility where the United States government did work.

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<sup>84</sup> AGSNY AC 1, Box 163, Folder 17, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

## Librarian as Writer

Anita Katherine Oser's dissertation, "The Characteristics and Trends of the Literature of Map Librarianship, 1853-1991: A Descriptive Bibliometric Study" lays out how far the discipline came in terms of publishing and specifically how Yonge and the AGS stacked up against others in the field. Yonge came into her own as a professional, being lauded as one of the greats by fellow map librarians like Ristow, Bill Woods, Clara LeGear, and her fellow AGS employee Nordis Felland. Woods said Yonge was "one of the luminaries of the field," and was more than honored when they won the Special Library Association Geography and Map Division Honors Award together in 1959.<sup>85</sup> Woods' account of her was a fun professional who organized outings for the map librarians at various conferences while contributing significantly to the scholarship. From the years 1941-1966, Yonge published the most articles in all the map librarianship literature with a total of eight works. She was followed by Woods, who had seven, and Arch Gerlach and Ristow, two others well known in the field. Ristow, in his memorial essay about Yonge mentions how participation in the Special Libraries Map and Geography Division New York Group with Ristow in 1944 catapulted her into the next phase of her career. In addition to the eight articles mentioned above, Yonge worked on committees, read papers, and two of her biggest accomplishments were her books about national atlases and globes. Her publication, *National Atlases: A Summary*, was released around 1957 and her second major work, *A Catalogue of Early Globes, made prior to 1850 and conserved in the United States: A Preliminary Listing*, released in 1968. In 1952 at the Washington D.C. Congress of International

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<sup>85</sup> Woods, "Of Map Librarianship," 4-6.

Geographical Union, the AGS agreed to help compile the United States editions of these globes for the international project, and Yonge “soon was enthusiastically immersed in the subject.” Ristow called her catalogue of globes “her most significant contribution to the profession.”<sup>86</sup> The book can be found in 206 libraries worldwide at the time this thesis was written, a fitting reward for her nearly ten years of dedication to the topic. She was also elected into the International Coronelli Society for Global Studies.<sup>87</sup>

Inspired by the surplus of maps coming to libraries in 1950, the *Library Journal*, the premier library science journal, dedicated an issue to map libraries. Yonge was the editor for ten different articles regarding the whole gamut of map librarianship, with Yonge also contributing a piece entitled, “These Maps are Essential.” Her piece at first glance of the title sounds like a plea advocating for maps’ place in libraries, but it was a helpful piece of literature for the new map librarian on what maps are useful for a collection to procure.

Yonge’s place as the editor of this issue symbolized her organizational skills and the respect from her colleges, but also puts her at the center of the communication of this group of professionals. The *Library Journal* issue was merely a beginning point. Over the next twelve years, Yonge would attend geography conferences, history of cartography conferences, and special library conferences. Not only did she attend conferences, but she began organizing trips all around the world for her map librarian colleagues. Her contributions in the last half of her career showcase how pivotal she was not only for the administrative work she put into this job, but also the social aspects of this community. “To know her was to love her,” said LeGear.

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<sup>86</sup> Ristow, *Emergence of Maps in Libraries*, 328.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 330. This company has also been called Coronelli World Federation of Globusfreunde and Coronelli Weltbund der Globusfreunde.

## Depository Programs to the AGS

In 1954, the AGS became a depository for all types of maps made by the United States government. Yonge listed them in her 1954 article in the Association of American Geographers' journal, *The Professional Geographer*: "the Geological Survey, the Coast and Geodetic Survey, the Aeronautical Chart Service and, for topographic maps of the United States and Alaska, the Army Map Service (AMS). The Bureau of the Census, Forest Service, Bureau of Reclamation, and the Soil Conservation Service also supply maps at regular intervals."<sup>88</sup> The AGS's good relationship with the AMS led it to become the chief non-government AMS Depository, which led 40,000 captured maps<sup>89</sup> to be added to the collection. In addition, 40,000 United States and British forces maps added to the numbers of the collection via the AMS Depository Program. The relationship that Yonge and AGS developed with the United States government during the war secured its place in the line of map deposits, and certainly helped with the huge number of maps that Yonge added under her tenure as the Curator of the Map Department.

## After AGS

Her retirement in December of 1962 did not even signal the end of her contributions to the profession. She worked on an unofficial basis for five months after her retirement. In a ceremony befitting the end of her time with the AGS, she was named Curator Emeritus of the Society on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1963. Later in 1963, Yonge consulted internationally for places such as the Royal Geographical Society, National Library of Scotland, and John Bartholomew & Son, and the

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<sup>88</sup> Yonge, "The Map Department," 2.

<sup>89</sup> A captured map is a map taken from an enemy, especially during wartime.



British Museum's Map Room. She also did consultation work at the national scale as is the case with the Rucker Agee Map Collection in Birmingham, Alabama, where she helped to catalog the map collection. She detailed these trips in articles featured in journals like the *Professional Geographer* and the *Bulletin - SLA Geography and Map Division*. On March 11, 1964, the Map Room at the AGS was dedicated and named after Yonge, in addition to her being named Map Curator Emeritus. Using funds donated anonymously for this purpose, a plaque stating, "Ena L. Yonge Atlas Room" was placed outside the space.

## Conclusion

From knowing nothing about map librarianship in 1917 to exiting with the respect of her peers in the field, Ena L. Yonge truly mastered her element. She was known for being a shy, but sassy force in the Map Department and as a part of professional organizations. For more than half of her time as the map curator, she was the sole employee of the department. Her life and time at the AGS Map Department reflect the trends and arcs in map librarianship that developed throughout the twentieth century. Yonge spent the forty-five years at the AGS becoming a respected map librarian and professional.

The beginning of her story beginning with her admission that she had no clue what she was doing is something to which each of us can relate. With her six months of training in 1917, she managed to handle helping experts in their field during the Inquiry. Yonge managed to handle the severe Bowman, and his philosophy to just keep asking for maps until they give them to you later fueled her drive to continually add to the collection. The way she grew the collection left her contemporaries in the dust, and others attempted to compete with her numbers while spending as little as possible the way she did.<sup>90</sup> Following the Paris Peace Conference in the early 1920s, she gained new maps and spent her first years as the Map Curator, a title and promotion that she advocated for herself. She spent the next decade honing her craft and becoming a mentor to people like Walter Ristow, who would become the biggest name in map librarianship during the latter half of the twentieth century.

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<sup>90</sup> Woods, *Of Map Librarianship*, 4-6.

An essential part of librarianship is helping other people with their research. She ingrained herself in the lives of geographers and correspondents of the AGS and the public. She remembers them fondly within a memo to a later Director of the AGS:

Amusing incidents often occur, such as the man who had a psychic blind friend, and every time there was an accident reported, and an aeroplane disappeared, he would come in and trace the scheduled route, and take the drawing to her and she would find the spot where the accident occurred. Then there was the man who wanted to make Coney Island into a Florida beach, and studied the oceanography of the Atlantic coast to find where a barrier could be constructed to swing the Gulf Stream inland. And the man who was going to Southwest Africa to sweep up diamonds in the river estuaries, and promised to send me some. But no diamonds ever came back to the AGS. A young lad of ten visited the map room and signed the register, giving as his profession, 'going to be an explorer.'<sup>91</sup>

Very often, Yonge was mentioned in the last line of people's letters to and from the AGS, no matter which AGS staffer the person was writing too. These little notes were asking "Miss Yonge" if the AGS had a certain map or the AGS staff member replying about such an inquiry, passing along Yonge's message that says the AGS did not have that map, but they should, so she will be ordering it. Yonge was remembered by many as the ruler of the Map Department, including former employee Marie Morrison: "The Map Department, on the floor below, had it a bit easier. But its curator, Ena Yonge, was also a bit tougher, and she and her colleague, Nordis Felland, who ran the Library on the second floor, between them fought and scrounged for the preservation and enrichment of the unique and invaluable collections they had each spent a professional lifetime in developing."<sup>92</sup> Yonge's attention to detail when it came to acquisitions escaped no one's notice.

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<sup>91</sup> American Geographical Society Records, AC 1/4 Box 2, Folder 28, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.

<sup>92</sup> Marie Morrison, "Foreword: William O. Field and The American Geographical Society: The Early Years," *Physical Geography*, 16:1(1995), 9-14, DOI: 10.1080/02723646.1995.10642539

The next phase of her story came in the 1940s when she began participating in professional societies and publishing articles. She was the most published author, male or female, during the period from 1941-1966 with 8 articles. Her memberships grew over time to include SLA's Geography and Map Division, Association of American Geographers, and Society of Women Geographers. She often was an officer of these organizations either at the national level or the New York chapter. Yonge attended the relevant conferences and meetings of these organizations, and she often planned daytrips or excursions for her fellow map librarians to enjoy even internationally. One of the proudest moments of her career was undoubtedly when she received the Honors Award of the SLA Geography and Map Division in 1959. By professionalizing herself, she wrote herself into history. Her books and articles secure her in a way that the AGS did not. The sources pertaining to her are scattered throughout the archives of the AGSL without a Map Department folder or box devoted to her. She had a folder in the Library's archival collection, but she was never an employee in that department. Without her agency to share what she knew about map librarianship; her story would not have been so thorough.

Yonge managed to navigate the waters of the gentlemen librarian, geopolitics in her workplace, and the strange contrast of being a part of librarianship that was not feminized. Her predecessor Dominion and her coworkers at the AGS were examples of the gentleman librarians, and somehow, they were listed as the pillars of the AGS when Yonge, a forty-five-year installment of the Society was not. Geopolitics touched her work from the beginning with the Inquiry and again during World War II. She undoubtedly helped with reference services for all kinds of questions that the United States government had for the maps of the collection.

This narrative ends with Yonge's retirement in 1962, but even after her retirement she remained an active figure in the map librarianship world by consulting on collections internationally. She also wanted to write her own paper about the history of cartography, specifically about the work of Lt. George Wheeler and his work in the United States west of the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian. She sadly never finished this work as she passed away on December 31, 1971.

Her legacy lives on in the collection now housed in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where the library of the AGS was moved in 1978. The plaque dedicated to her in New York City now hangs at the entrance to the Rare Materials Room in the current location of the American Geographical Society Library, at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. A tribute to the maven of map librarianship, the plaque reads, "All of this is so close to my heart that I'm sure if anyone cut me open they'd find a map inside, with rivers and roads for veins."

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Appendix

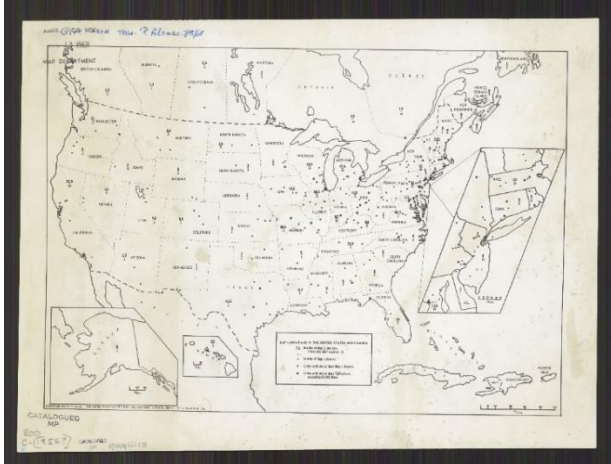


Figure 1. Alonso, Patricia Ann Greechie and Special Libraries Association. *Map Librarians in the United States and Canada*. [Washington, D.C.]: [Special Libraries Assoc.], 1954. 800 C-1954. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, American Geographical Society Library.



Figure 2. A photo of Ena L. Yonge. A known lover of hats and travel. Nordis Felland, "Obituary: Ena L. Yonge 1895-1971," *Geographical Review* 62, no. 3 (1972): 415.



Figure 3. A photo of Ena L. Yonge and David Lowenthal. AGSNY AC 1, Box 40, Folder 11. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. American Geographical Society Library. <https://collections.lib.uwm.edu/digital/collection/agsny/id/62802>