

MARS Catalog Search Tips

The online catalog, or MARS, (Manuscripts and Archives Reference System) enables you to search the collections of the Outer Banks History Center, the State Archives in Raleigh, or both by clicking in the “Select” column:

Select	Expand / Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	NC State Archives
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Outer Banks History Center

(Note: If you wish to search the State Library catalog, you may include it in your search.)

The History Center houses several different collections and MARS enables you to search by collection or by *all* collections. **The David Stick Library** is a good place to start and includes the largest collection of materials in different formats. You may search the entire collection, or one or more **formats** by clicking on the expand (+ **button**). If you are unsure where materials might reside, or if you want to search all collections, choose “Select All.”

Basic Search

- From the search type drop-down list, select the type of search that you want to perform. Below is a list of the eight types of searches and what they mean:

Free Text	Searches all fields. Treats multiple words separately unless you enclose them in quotation marks.
Global Keyword	Searches all fields. Treats multiple words as a phrase.
Title Field	Searches the Title field only.
Scope/Content	Searches the Scope/Content description only.
Author Name	Searches the Author/Creator Name only.
Subject	Searches subject headings.
Personal Name	Searches personal names (last name, first name).
Call Number	Searches the call number field.

- In the **search term text box**, enter the words for which you want to search. The more words you enter, the more specific your search results will be. You may use relevance indicators to focus your search further. All symbols except the truncation [?] are limited to the Free Text search type. If these are not sufficiently detailed, try an advanced search.

The relevance indicators are:

- Use a space between multiple words.
 - Use quotation marks [“”] to search for a specific phrase
 - Use a question mark [?] to indicate truncation. This term can be used with any type of search. For example if you did an Author Name search for “William?” your results would include any files containing “William,” “Williams,” “Williamson,” etc.
- In the **“Records per Page”** drop-down list box, select the number of records to display on each page of search results.
 - In the **“Return Results in . . . order”** drop-down list box, select the order in which you want search results sorted on the **Results Display** page.
 - Place a check in the **“Remove Duplicate Hits?”** check box if you want to have records with multiple hits displayed only once on the **Results Display** page. If you do not check this box, every instance of the word or phrase you are searching for will be displayed on the **Results Display**.
 - Select the collections you want to search by clicking their corresponding **Select checkboxes**. We suggest that you include all of the collections in MARS in your search by clicking on the **“Select All”** button; this will help insure that you find materials related to your search regardless of where they are located within our collections. However, if you wish to only search specific collections, you may click the expand and collapse buttons (the + and - characters inside the folder) beside collection titles and select the resources you want to search.
 - To start the search, click the **Search** button. The **Results Summary** page will then open.

Advanced Search

1. From the search type drop-down box, select the type of search that you want to perform on the first term(s). Below is a list of the eight types of searches and what they mean:

Free Text	Searches all fields. Treats multiple words separately unless you enclose them in quotation marks.
Global Keyword	Searches all fields. Treats multiple words as a phrase.

Title Field	Searches the Title field only.
Scope/Content	Searches the Scope/Content description only.
Author Name	Searches the Author/Creator Name only.
Subject	Searches subject headings.
Personal Name	Searches personal names (last name, first name).
Call Number	Searches the call number field.

- In the search term text box, enter the terms for which you want to search. The more words you enter, the more specific your search results will be. You may use relevance indicators to focus your search further. All symbols except the truncation [?] are limited to the Free Text search type.

The relevance indicators are:

- Use a space between multiple words.
 - Use quotation marks [“”] to search for a specific phrase
 - Use a question mark [?] to indicate truncation. This term can be used with any type of search. For example if you did an Author Name search for “William?” your results would include any files containing “William,” “Williams,” “Williamson,” etc.
- From the drop-down list beside the field, select whether you want to search for all of the terms, any of the terms, or all terms as a phrase.
 - To search multiple fields at the same time, do the following for each subsequent field.
 - If you are adding additional search statements, select which Boolean operator you want applied to the following search field from the **And/Or/Not** drop-down list box.
 - Repeat Step 1 through Step 3, above.
 - In the “**Records per Page**” drop-down list box, select the number of records to display on each page of search results.
 - In the “**Return Results in . . . order**” drop-down list box, select the order in which you want search results sorted on the **Results Display** page.
 - Place a check in the “**Remove Duplicate Hits?**” check box if you want to have duplicate hits removed on the **Results Display** page. If you do not check this box, every instance of the word or phrase you are searching for will be displayed on the **Results Display**.

8. Select the collections you want to search by clicking their corresponding **Select checkboxes**. We suggest that you include all of the collections in MARS in your search by clicking on the “**Select All**” button; this will help insure that you find materials related to your search regardless of where they are located within our collections. However, if you wish to only search specific collections, you may click the expand and collapse buttons (the + and - characters inside the folder) beside collection titles and select the resources you want to search.
9. To start the search, click the **Search** button. The **Results Summary** page will then open.

How to Browse

To browse the contents of collection records, click the expand and collapse buttons (the + and - characters inside the folder) beside the collections. To view a description of any record, click the **View Description** image (the “i” in the circle) beside the record name. When browsing, if a particular record contains a large number of virtual child records, the catalog may display them in sets, rather than all under the parent record. Child records are broken up into sub-records, which you can then browse to see each subset of records.

Viewing Records Descriptions

By clicking on the **View Description** image (the “i” in the circle) beside a record name, you are able to view the available information on that record. There are various types of information that are displayed in these records descriptions and the amount of information often depends on the level of the record. Descriptions at the collection level will frequently have less information than records at the series or sub-series level, because the collection level descriptions have to apply to all the smaller series and sub-series within that collection. Lower level descriptions can be more specific because they only have to apply to the series, folder, or item that they describe. Below is a chart that lists some of the possible types of information found in records descriptions:

Field Name	Definition
Title	Title of the collection, series, folder or other unit of materials.
Years	The date or date ranges for the creation of the materials.
Creator	Creator of the materials. This can be a person, business, organization, government agency, family, etc.

MARS id	The id number given to materials in the original MARS catalog.
Call Number	Box, folder or item number.
Location	Physical location of the materials.
Genres/Forms	Type or physical form of materials. For example: annual reports, bills (legislative records), bonds (legal records), correspondence, inventories, land grants, letters, minutes, photographs, programs, reports, speeches, etc.
Quantity	Size of the collection, series, file, etc. Could be listed in cubic feet or number of boxes or items.
Associated Agencies	The creator of the materials was at one time part of, an umbrella agency for, or associated with the agency in this field. See the agency histories for more information.
Arrangement	The arrangement of the materials. For example: alphabetically or chronologically.
Scope/Contents	A narrative description of the materials including content and context information. Some Scope/Contents notes are very long and in those cases you will see only a paragraph or two with a link to the full description.
Index Terms	Subject headings for the materials. May include subjects, personal names, corporate names, or geographic names.
Source/Donor	The person, organization, corporation or other entity that had possession of the materials before they came to the Archives.
Note field	A field for miscellaneous information not included in the other fields.