

Special Collections Section, Private Collections

Collection Development Policy

Statement of Purpose

Private Collections is part of the Special Collection Section of the State Archives of North Carolina, and its mission is to collect, preserve, and provide public access to unique personal records of enduring value that document the history, diversity, people and culture of North Carolina. To this end, Private Collections collects, preserves, organizes, describes, and provides print and digital access to manuscripts, books, photographs, and other materials.

Collection Policy

Generally

Private Collections defines personal records in the broadest sense, so that they might include correspondence, diaries, travel journals, daybooks, photographs, scrapbooks, financial records, account books and business records, research files, notes, biographical/genealogical data, and other unique items.

Personal records are typically acquired through donation by their owners as gifts. Selected manuscript items or collections are also obtained through transfer, or by purchase as circumstances and funding by Friends of the Archives or other support groups permit.

What We Collect

Private Collections collects the personal papers of North Carolinians whose activities significantly reflect the history, law, economic history, and culture of North Carolina, or the state policy of the North Carolina government. The papers should be of inherent interest and constitute important source material for the study of the period which they cover, throwing light on important changes in the state's history, and major movements, developments, controversies, events, and issues impacting the lives of all North Carolinians.

In essence, the records should have the potential to improve our understanding of North Carolina's past.

Emphasis is placed on acquiring material of substantial importance, or that constitutes source material of underexplored issues, underrepresented groups and lives, and important events and places from North Carolina history that are not well documented in existing collections.

Other considerations inter alia include:

- Are the records complete and comprehensive?
- Do the records provide evidence of change over time?

- Do the materials complement, link to, or improve the understanding of other records?
- Do the records link to events, people, and/or movements that play key roles in state or national history?
- Are the items from a time period currently underrepresented in Private Collections?
- Would there be public or research interest in the materials?
- Are resources available for processing and storage of materials?

What We Don't Collect

Private Collections does not acquire fragmentary groups of personal papers, or single items, except where the Private Collection archivists consider the item(s) are, complementary to, or fill in gaps in, an existing collection; or they are all that has survived; or they are of considerable importance, (e.g., diaries, narratives, letters or speeches describing or commenting on a particular historical event, period or personage).

With the exception of pages from family Bibles, Private Collections does not accept items for scanning, microfilming, or otherwise reproducing a record, for subsequent return to the owner.

Specifically, Private Collections does not collect:

- Printed material that is readily available in another form, i.e., newspaper clippings.
- Books or periodicals unless their content is in some way unique or has links to extant collections in the Private Collections, or the Government Records Section of the State Archives of North Carolina.
- Duplicate material that is in good, accessible condition, and readily available through other areas of the State Archives of North Carolina, such as land grants, deeds, or government records
- Duplicate published or distributed material
- Most three-dimensional artifacts such as furniture, china, textiles or building fragments
- Items the Private Collections archivists identify as outside the scope of Private Collections

Selection of Materials

The Private Collections archivists, under the supervision of the Head of Special Collections, are responsible for selecting all materials for Special Collections, including identifying and reviewing potential collections, soliciting collections, working with donors, and accepting donations.