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WELCOME TO THE GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

The Georgia Historical Society was founded in 1839 to collect, preserve, and share Georgia history. Since 1875 the staff of the Society has been fulfilling that mission from the GHS headquarters at 501 Whitaker Street in Savannah, Georgia. Whether you are visiting us on the web, or at Hodgson Hall, we welcome you.

This document is intended to provide you with an overview of the resources available at the Georgia Historical Society library. The resources listed are sorted by type under the headings of "secondary" or "primary" sources and each listing includes usage notes as well.

Photocopy request slips are located next to the computer terminal at the Reference Desk; photocopy prices vary depending on the size and status of the original material, but range from .50 to \$1.00 (members receive a 10% discount).

Good luck in your research and please don't hesitate to inquire with the staff if you have any questions at all. Thank you.

Secondary Sources

- **Vertical Files**

These can often be the best place to begin for general research needs. The files can hold newspaper clippings, pamphlets, student papers, and research notes.

Holdings: We have files for Subjects (includes buildings, events, eras, and locations), as well as Biographies and Genealogies.

How to Use: Each series of files has its own index, located above the blue binders on the shelving unit opposite from the Reference Desk. Consult the index first to determine if we have a file related to your research subject. If your subject appears, let the staff know and the files will be pulled for you.

- **Card Catalog**

The Georgia Historical Society library catalog is now available electronically from the GHS website: www.georgiahistory.com. We still have a traditional card catalog, which is housed in the white labeled drawers in the cabinet located in the alcove near the door to the restrooms. There are cards for subjects, authors, and titles. The library utilizes Library of Congress call numbers.

Holdings: The library's collection does not circulate; everything that appears in the catalog should be available. Our holdings cover a myriad of subjects pertaining to both the history of Georgia and the nation.

How to Use: Once a resource has been identified, note the author, title and call number. The shelving arrangement begins upstairs at the South East corner of the building and continues alphabetically around the upper mezzanine. If the card details that it is either Rare or a Rare Pamphlet you will need to fill out a pull slip to have it retrieved from the archives.

- **Georgia Historical Quarterly**

Holdings: Published since 1917, this scholarly journal provides article-length coverage on all varieties of Georgia, Savannah, and southern history. The entire series is located in the library alcove across from the Savannah Newspaper indexes.

How to Use: The two-volume index lists subjects alphabetically and includes names, places, eras, and events as well as author and article-title listings. After each entry, a brief abstract of the subject's context within the article is given, followed by volume, issue, and page information for the article. The published index covers issues from 1917 to 1976, and each volume beyond that includes an annual index.

- **Periodicals**

Holdings: The Georgia Historical Society library carries over 300 periodical titles dating from the mid 18th century to the present, including scholarly history journals from each of Georgia's neighboring states. Many early titles relate to agricultural endeavors, for example the *Southern Cultivator*, as well as general interest publications like *The Gentleman's Magazine*. Current titles available include *Atlanta History* and *The New England Genealogical Magazine*.

How to Use: An alphabetical index by title to all our periodicals is located above the blue binders in the shelving unit across from the Reference Desk. Location information will be provided there. If a title is listed as located in the stacks please fill out pull slip to have it pulled from the archives.

Primary Sources

- **Census**

Holdings: Federal Census, 1790-1930.

How to Use: The complete Federal Census collection is available via GHS's subscription to Ancestry.com. Please ask a staff member to log you on to this service at one of the public access computer terminals. We also hold census indices and schedules in print and microfilm. Each index includes the county abbreviation and census page number for listed individuals. After obtaining this information, consult the black binder labeled "Census on Microfilm" to get the microfilm reel number for the listing you seek. Copies are obtained at the microfilm machines for a cost of .25 cents per page. Staff can provide change and any assistance you may need with the machines or locating reels of film.

- **Vital Records**

Holdings: As part of the City of Savannah Collection (MS 5600 HE) we hold a series of ledgers that contain chronologically arranged lists of birth, marriage, and death records for approximate dates 1898-1916. Certified copies of vital records after 1919 can be obtained from either the State of Georgia Division of Public Health or the county where the event occurred. An index to state-wide deaths c. 1919-1994 is available on microfiche. Other death information is available for 1763-1803 in the *Early Deaths in Savannah* series found upstairs at call number F 294 .S2 E37. Additional death information for dates 1853-1938 can also be found upstairs at the *Register of Deaths* series at F 294 .S2 R35 as well as in the cemetery indexes at call number F 294 .S2 B65; C37; L28. Marriage records are available for 1748-1877 in *Marriages of Chatham County* vols I & II upstairs at call number F 292 .C37 M37. For dates 1964-1971, 1973-1992 please see our microfiche holdings.

Note: Vital records may be available for other counties and locations, please consult the card catalog for specific holdings. You might also want to search Ancestry.com's vital

records databases.

- **Manuscript Collections**

Holdings: The Georgia Historical Society manuscript collections contain a variety of significant documents and photographs dating from the 17th-20th centuries.

How to Use: The index to these materials is located in the main card catalog, in the drawers with the blue labels. Subjects are arranged alphabetically in the catalog. Recently cataloged collections are prefixed with either MS to indicate manuscript material or VM for visual material. The manuscript collection number(s) that are relevant to the subject heading appear on the card. Collections are described in the series of blue binders located in the shelving unit across from the Reference Desk. In those finding aids you will find detailed information regarding collection content and be able to determine whether or not the collection is of use to you. To have collections pulled from the archives please use the pull slips located on the corner of the Reference Desk.

Noteworthy Collections:

MS 1349 Walter Charlton Hartridge Collection: Comprising over 90 cubic feet of research notes and documents compiled by a noted Savannah historian, this collection covers all facets of Georgia history as well as local architecture and genealogy.

VM 1360 & 1361 PH: The two main photographic collections of the Georgia Historical Society, these collections hold approximately 20,000 images with an emphasis on late 19th and early 20th century views of Savannah and the surrounding areas.

- **Maps**

Holdings: Our collection of maps includes significant resources detailing both the development of the state of Georgia, and the nation. Maps held in the archives are indexed in a drawer labeled "Maps" at the smaller card catalog near the Reference Desk.

How to Use: Please utilize pull slips to have specific maps brought out of the archives for you. Additional secondary source maps are housed in the map case which is open for browsing.

- **Newspapers**

Holdings: Savannah newspapers are available for dates 1763 to present on microfilm however the index covers only dates 1763-1895, then 1929 to 1985.

How to Use: Consult the index for your subject or name of interest, and note the three-letter newspaper abbreviation and date listed for the reference. Then utilizing the binder labeled "Newspapers on Microfilm" determine which reel of microfilm holds the newspaper you seek. Copies are obtained at the microfilm machines for a cost of .25 cents per page. Staff can provide change, and any assistance you may need with the machines or locating reels of film.

