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Georgia Historical Society Library and Archives Division Collection Development Policy

Statement of Purpose

The mission of the Georgia Historical Society (GHS) is to collect, preserve, and share the history of Georgia and the United States. Among the most significant ways in which GHS fulfills this mission is by collecting, receiving, preserving, and providing access to primary and secondary sources that fit its mission; maintaining an archives building for the preservation of its collection; and by creating and maintaining a research facility for the use of its members and the general public.

Materials Collected

Acceptance of materials is limited to those collections that have a primary emphasis on Georgia and/or Georgians and its/their role in the history of the United States. This does not preclude the acquisition of materials dealing with the South or the nation in general, especially if those materials describe conditions or events influencing Georgia and its development. Additional areas of collecting include African American history in general; and genealogical source materials pertaining to states from which immigrants came to Georgia, specifically Virginia, Maryland, the Carolinas, and New England.

Acquisitions

GHS actively seeks primary and secondary sources which will build on current strengths as well as enhance underrepresented time periods and people. These acquisitions are made through donation, deposit, or purchase and are approved by the President and CEO and/or the Executive Vice President/COO in accordance with the purchasing and deposit policies. Acquisitions will also be based on the ability to properly care for the items.

Primary sources include, but are not limited to, the following: personal and professional papers and correspondence, business records, family letters and Bibles, records, journals and diaries, genealogical records, rare and/or first edition books, photographs, prints, postcards, maps, architectural drawings, speeches, lectures, unpublished writings, newspaper clippings that illuminate a person's life and career.

Except in special circumstances, GHS will refrain from collecting photocopies of material held by other repositories and individuals. GHS will not accept collections which are closed to public access in perpetuity. Although GHS prefers not to collect materials with access restrictions, collections that can be opened upon the donor's death or within a reasonable period of time (not to exceed 25 years) will be considered.

In the event that GHS determines previously accessioned materials are unsuitable for its collections, those materials will be deaccessioned in accordance with the board-approved Deaccession Policy.

Cooperative Collecting

GHS recognizes that other institutions collect in the same or overlapping areas and that in some cases there may be a more appropriate repository for materials offered to GHS. In the spirit of cooperation, opportunities to acquire such materials, as well as those not covered by the Collection Development Policy of GHS, will be referred to an appropriate repository. In the event that the legitimate collecting interests of GHS and another repository directly conflict, GHS will consider the best interests of the materials and the research community in pursuing an amiable resolution.