

Use of Materials from the Archives Policy

Thank you for your interest in our collections! To safeguard unique and valuable archival and manuscript material, researchers must observe the following policies:

Appointments

Patrons are required to make an appointment to conduct research; they can do so in one of three ways:

- by using the [online appointment form](#)
- by contacting Archives via the [Email Archives form](#)
- by telephone at [\(478\) 301-2968](#)

Materials Brought to the Reading Room

Users may bring only those materials needed for research into the reading room. The library reserves the right to inspect briefcases, notebooks, and other personal property before the researcher leaves the unit.

Closed Stacks

All archival materials are housed in closed stacks. Researchers must request materials through department staff and conduct their research in Special Collections. Materials will be inspected before they are re-shelved.

Handling of Materials

The researcher accepts responsibility for handling all materials carefully. No pens may be used; only pencils are allowed in the reading room.

For the Protection of Our Materials, Please:

- refrain from marking on materials or erasing existing marks.
- take notes only in pencil (no fountain pens, felt-tipped pens, or similar writing instruments are permitted)
- avoid taking notes on top of archival materials.
- refrain from folding, tearing, or cutting documents.
- refrain from making tracings or rubbings.
- avoid resting books or other objects on archival items.

- handle materials carefully, using the edges of the paper when possible.
- refrain from using paper clips, staples, tape, “Post It” notes, or rubber bands on Special Collections materials.
- notify an archives employee if you find damaged material.

Mutilation, destruction, and theft of Special Collections materials will be prosecuted.

Maintaining Original Order

To safeguard the integrity of archival documents, original order must be maintained. To that end, please:

- use one folder from a box at a time.
- maintain the existing order of material within each folder and box. If you have doubt or questions about the order, please notify the Special Collections staff.

Equipment

Portable computers, cell phones, and scanners as well as photographic, video, and audio equipment may be used with permission of the archivist. Users are responsible for the security of equipment and materials they bring to the unit.

Reproduction

Material may be photocopied in accordance with the limits of the copyright act and the unit policies. The Special Collections staff may restrict some copying to protect fragile, damaged, or oversized materials.

Restricted Materials

Certain documents may be restricted by statute or the office of origin/donor. The researcher must assume full responsibility for fulfilling the terms connected with the use of restricted material. For the protection of its holdings, Special Collections also reserves the right to restrict the use of “unprocessed” materials (those that are not yet arranged or housed in accordance with archival standards), materials of exceptional value, and fragile or damaged materials.

Publication

Permission from Special Collections must be obtained before any unpublished documents can be published. In giving permission to copy, quote from, or publish, Special Collections does not surrender its own right to publish such material or to grant permission to others to do so. The researcher assumes full responsibility for use of material and for conformity to the laws of defamation, privacy, and copyright and shall indemnify and hold harmless the university and the unit from claims arising because of use of the material so obtained. If the donor has retained literary rights, the researcher must obtain the donor’s permission before publication.

Citation

If permission to publish is granted, location of the material must be indicated in the work. In citing materials from manuscript collections located in this department, the form should be as follows:

[Identification of the item and the title of the collection], Special Collections, Mercer University
Jack Tarver Library, Macon, Georgia.

Prohibited Activities

Loud use of cell phones; smoking, eating, and drinking are not permitted in Special Collections under any circumstances.