



DAR LIBRARY MANUSCRIPTS COLLECTION: COLLECTING GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

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The Manuscripts Collection forms part of the DAR Library, and as such, supports the [Mission Statement and Collection Development Policy of the DAR Library](#):

The mission of the DAR Library shall be to support and enhance the National Society's membership application process and to further the goals of the National Society by acquiring and preserving historical materials related to genealogical research, primarily American genealogical research, and by acquiring and preserving records related to the American Revolutionary War period.

Collection Overview

The Manuscripts Collection in the DAR Library is comprised of over 3,000 collections related to genealogy, family history, and American history. A large portion of the Collection includes family Bibles with family records documenting births, deaths, and marriages, and family Bible records donated without the full Bible. The Collection includes several large aggregate collections, such as the File Case Collection, the Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection, and the Miscellaneous Bible Records Collection, which were compiled from different sources and organized to facilitate management and use. In general, collections have come to the DAR Library through generous donations from DAR Members and DAR Chapters, the public, and genealogical societies. For example, the National Genealogical Society donated over 150 linear feet of genealogical manuscript materials in 2004, with subsequent donations in 2008, 2011, and 2014, which have led to the creation of over 70 discrete collections. Collections have also been created from transfers of original supporting documentation from member applications.

Today, all donations require prior approval and signed Deeds of Gift, and collection records endeavor to document provenance whenever possible. The Manuscripts Collection continues to update its record descriptions and comply with archival best practices and standards to arrange, preserve, and describe holdings, and to better support research and access.

All collections, once cataloged, are discoverable via the DAR Library Catalog available online.

Manuscripts Collecting Guidelines

The Manuscripts Collection acquires primary and secondary source material of historical and/or genealogical significance. Material does not need to relate to the Revolutionary War, but material documenting activities and people of that period are of particular interest. Research collections of prominent genealogical researchers or organizations are also of interest, though personal family research files are generally outside of the collecting scope of the Manuscripts Collection.

All prospective donations are assessed for fit within the Manuscripts Collection, which includes assessing condition and preservation needs, format, provenance, collection dates, and research value. The Manuscripts Collection does not accept material that duplicates readily available information, duplicates collections at other archival repositories, or duplicates DAR Library holdings. Digital formats are not accepted at this time.

Acceptable donation materials include, but are not limited to:

- Historical family records (i.e., original deeds, marriage records, wills, etc.)
- Historical/genealogically significant papers, including diaries and correspondence
- Family Bibles that include family records
- Bible records separated from their original Bible
- Legible printed scans or copies of Bible records

Materials **NOT** accepted include, but are not limited to:

- Internet printouts (i.e., from FamilySearch, Ancestry, Find-a-Grave, RootsWeb, etc.)
- Contemporary family photographs or framed documents
- Photocopies of collection material from other archival repositories
- Printouts of digitized or otherwise available microfilm
- Personal family research files
- DAR membership applications or paperwork
- Vital records less than 100 years old (i.e., birth certificates, death certificates, etc.) or material with Personally Identifiable Information (PII)
- E-mailed photographs of Bible records
- CDs, floppy discs, flash drives, or hard drives

Acquisitions and Donations

All prospective donations must receive prior approval by the Manuscripts and Special Collections Librarian and be within the scope of the Manuscripts Collecting Guidelines.

After approval, a DAR Manuscripts Deed of Gift will be provided for signature and must be received prior to acceptance into the Manuscripts Collection. Signed Deeds of Gift are accepted by email or with donation shipment.

For inquiries about possible donations, email the library at manuscripts@dar.org, or call the main library at 202-879-3229.