

Collections Development Policy

Daughters of the American Revolution Library

Mission Statement and Collections Management Policy

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Together these statements comprise the DAR Library Mission Statement and Collections Management Policy.

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I. MISSION STATEMENT

- A.** The mission of the DAR Library is to support and enhance the National Society's membership application process, and to further the goals of the National Society by acquiring, preserving, and making accessible historical materials related to genealogical research, primarily American genealogical research, and by acquiring and preserving records related to the American Revolutionary War period.
- B.** As part of this mission, the DAR Library:
1. Will identify and acquire materials and collections that support these goals;
 2. Will promote the availability and use of these materials and collections through in-house research opportunities;
 3. Will explore and implement new methods for providing access to these materials and collections; and
 4. Will train individuals in the use of Library materials and collections, in genealogical research methods and practices, and in using these materials to facilitate the DAR Application process through a variety of educational materials and programming formats.

II. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY – Non-manuscript materials

A. Collection Overview

1. The collections of the DAR Library support research by a wide range of individuals, including staff genealogists, professional genealogists and historians, DAR applicants and members, members of other lineage societies, and casual genealogical researchers. The DAR Library has built a collection of published works, microform publications, and digital resources focused specifically on genealogical research and American history. While the collection does also include some sources that fall outside of the scope of American genealogical research and American history, these sources are generally limited to English language publications that include genealogical or historical information directly related to the foundation and settlement of the United States or genealogical information directly related to people groups that migrated to the United States. Due to the physical location of the DAR, genealogical and historical records related to the District of Columbia are also an important collection focus.
2. The collections of the DAR Library are non-circulating. The majority of the non-manuscript materials are housed in open stacks for easy access by researchers. Some items are housed in closed stacks due to security, physical condition, or other storage and access considerations.

B. Acquisitions and Donations

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1. Donation is the preferred method of acquisition for the DAR Library. Desired publications or resources identified by the DAR Library staff are added to the DAR Library Wish List to streamline the donation process by DAR members or other interested parties. Unsolicited donations will also be accepted from DAR members, authors, publishers, or other interested individuals or groups as long as the donated materials fit within the scope of the collection and are approved by the Library staff prior to donation. Only approved donations will be added to the collection.
2. In most cases, donors should plan to donate a full run of a serial or multi-volume set unless the donation is intended to fill identified gaps in the existing holdings.
3. Certain portions of the digital collections are acquired as part of the DAR Membership Application process or are created by the DAR Membership as part of DAR activities, such as the GRCs.
4. Microform materials might be acquired through donation or purchase or through long-term loan, but these acquisitions are generally only made when the content is not readily available in any other format or when accession of the records in another format is not feasible.
5. Other materials may be acquired through purchase, exchange, or other co-operative agreement with publishers or distributors, institutions, or organizations.
6. Library staff may either decide not to accession an item or to deaccession/remove an item from the DAR Library collection any materials for the following reasons:
 - a. The item does not fall within the scope of the DAR Library Collection Development Policy.
 - b. The item does not provide relevant content related to specific genealogical or historical records.
 - c. The item is in a condition that is not usable for researchers. This could include damaged or decaying physical materials, nitrate microform materials or decaying acetate microform materials, or electronic materials that are in an obsolete format.
 - d. The item has been specifically identified as including faulty or erroneous information.
7. Library staff may either decide not to accession an item or to deaccession/remove an item from the DAR Library collection any materials for the following reasons:
 - a. The item duplicates materials already in the collection.
 - b. The item exceeds the available storage capacity for the particular format or subject area.
 - c. The item does not represent a complete publication or a full run of a serial.
8. Deaccessioned items may be subject to transfer to other DAR Offices or Collections, donation or exchange with another repository, dispersal to state or local DAR societies or chapters, sale, or other method of distribution to members, patrons, organizations, or other interested parties. See Section IV, Deaccessioning Policy, for further information.

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C. Format of Materials Collected

1. **PUBLISHED MATERIALS:** The majority of materials in the non-manuscript collection are bound published materials. The focus is on materials that are in good physical condition to ensure a high level of usability and access for researchers. Items in less than optimal physical condition may be rebound, repaired/conserved, or removed from general access at the discretion of the Library staff. Before an item is removed from general access, staff will attempt to find a digital copy and link it to the item's catalog record. Published items which already exist in digital format with a stable URL at another institution will not be accepted into the collection unless there is a particular value to having the physical copy available.
2. **SERIALS:** Because serials are collected from a variety of historical and genealogical sources and societies ranging from national publications to local editions, the serials in the collection cover a broad spectrum of physical format and quality. When a full run of a specific serial has been acquired, the issues are bound and added to the general collection.
3. **MICROFORM:** The non-manuscript collection includes materials in both microfilm and microfiche formats. In cases where the microform is the primary copy of the item, these materials are available to researchers. For items where the microform publication is a copy of materials that are more readily available in print or digital format, the microform publications are not available to researchers unless a specific need is identified.
4. **UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS:** Unpublished materials are generally acquired by donation/gift and are generally incorporated into the Manuscript Collection or File Collection. These materials may require significant arrangement and description by the Library staff and are only available to researchers by request. Please see Section III for information regarding manuscript collection policies.
5. **UNBOUND MATERIALS AND OTHER EPHEMERA:** Maps, charts, pamphlets, photographs, and any other unbound or nonstandard materials that fit within the overall collection scope will be retained and stored in the appropriate sub-collection and/or with similar objects. Please see Section III for information regarding manuscript collection policies.
6. **DIGITAL MATERIALS:** The bulk of the digital collection consists of items that were digitized at the point of or after acquisition, but the collection does include some materials that were acquired in digital format. An ongoing effort will be made to ensure that these materials are retained in, or converted to, appropriate formats to ensure long-term retention and usability. The Library does not accept new acquisitions on CD-ROMs, floppy discs, flash drives or hard drives. Existing materials acquired on CD-ROM will be retained as long they remain operable and compatible with current system requirements. After that time, these materials will be replaced with a different format, converted to a different format, or deaccessioned based on the specific nature of the materials.

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III. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY – MANUSCRIPTS

A. Collection Overview

1. 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. Collections have come to the DAR Library's Manuscripts Collection through generous donations from DAR Members and DAR Chapters, the public, genealogical societies, and department transfers.
2. The collections of the DAR Library's Manuscripts Collection are non-circulating. Collections are housed in closed stacks in secured storage. Patrons must submit requests for collections at the Library Reference Desk. Restricted collections will not be served.

B. Acquisitions and Donations

1. Donation is the preferred method of acquisition for the DAR Library's Manuscripts Collection. Other materials may be acquired through purchase, exchange, or other cooperative agreement with other organizations. Provenance and collection history are requested with each donation.
2. All donations require prior approval by the Manuscripts and Special Collections Librarian and must be within the scope of the Manuscripts Collecting Guidelines. A 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. Only approved donations with signed Deeds of Gift will be added to the collections.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. The Manuscripts Collections are the DAR Library's archival holdings of genealogical interest. Approved donations are accessioned, assigned a collection name and number,

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and archivally processed, which includes arrangement, creating a collection record, and describing the collection via catalog record and archival finding aids, when appropriate. Record descriptions and collections are continually updated to comply with archival best practices and standards to arrange, preserve, and describe holdings, and to better support research and access.

6. Collections processing includes arrangement of the collection, appropriately housing oversized and fragile materials, and weeding the collection to remove duplicate material and material not within scope of the collecting guidelines.
7. Collections with use restrictions will be added for priority digitization, and use copies made available to researchers, for reasons that include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Collection is unprocessed, not in folders, includes an excess of material still in envelopes, includes very oversized documents or rolled and folded documents.
 - b. Collection includes very fragile documents, ledgers or bound volumes in poor condition, or family Bibles.
8. All Manuscripts Collections, once cataloged, are discoverable via the DAR Library Catalog online. This may include collections that are not yet fully processed and not physically available for research use.
9. The DAR Library's Collection Development Policy and Manuscripts Collection Collecting Guidelines inform the deaccessioning process, which is essential to properly managing the collections and resources of the Manuscripts Collection. Collection material may not be accessioned, or formal review or reappraisal of collection holdings may be initiated, or material may be deaccessioned for reasons that include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Material falls beyond the scope of the DAR Library Manuscripts Collection Collecting Guidelines.
 - b. Material duplicates information already available in the Manuscripts Collection.
 - c. Material duplicates information available at another library or archival repository.
 - d. Material is damaged or deteriorated beyond repair or usability.
 - e. Material is in a condition that is not usable for researchers. This could include damaged or decaying physical materials, nitrate photographic negatives, decaying acetate materials, or digital media formats.
 - f. Material has been specifically identified as including faulty or erroneous information.
 - g. The material exceeds the available storage capacity.
10. Deaccessioned items might be subject to transfer to other DAR Offices or Collections, donation or exchange with another repository, dispersal to state or local DAR societies or chapters, sale, or other method of distribution to members, patrons, organizations, or other interested parties. See Section IV, Deaccessioning Policy, for further information.

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11. Materials considered for deaccessioning are carefully reviewed and, as appropriate, deaccessioned in compliance with any donor agreements or legal restrictions, professional best practices, and professional standards. The Manuscripts Collection follows the principles outlined in the following professional standards and guidelines:
 - a. [Association of College and Research Libraries Code of Ethics for Special Collections Librarians](#)
 - b. [Society of American Archivists Code of Ethics for Archivists](#)
 - c. [Society of American Archivists Guidelines for Reappraisal and Deaccessioning](#)

C. Format of Materials Collected

1. UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS: The majority of the materials in the Manuscripts Collection are unpublished materials, either bound or unbound. Examples include historical family records, such as original deeds, marriage records, and wills; historically and/or genealogically significant papers, such as dairies, business record ledgers, correspondence, pastor's registers, and original military ledgers. Original family Bible record pages are also accepted for donation, though the preference is for the full original Bible with publishing dates and details. These materials may require significant arrangement and description and are only available to researchers by request.
2. OTHER EPHEMERA: Charts, vintage photographs, vintage photograph albums, scrapbooks with historically or genealogically significant information, and any other non-standard material that fit within the collecting scope will be retained and stored with donated collections.
3. PUBLISHED MATERIALS: Some published materials may enter the Manuscripts Collection as part of larger collections of unpublished materials. Common examples include newspaper clippings, published materials in scrapbooks, pamphlets and articles. Published materials with heavy annotations of genealogical significance, as with family Bibles with family record information, are also accepted. To ensure access to materials and preservation of donated items, material in poor condition with high research value will be re-housed and use copies made available for research use and will be otherwise restricted from frequent handling.

IV. DEACCESSIONING POLICY

- A. The NSDAR Library strives to maintain an active and healthy library collection through consistent collection development and management policies following established best practices. Collection management includes the identification of material for storage, when available and appropriate, and deaccessioning when necessary. Beyond the initial acquisition expenditure, there is a continuing cost to retaining and maintaining material in any format. Consideration of the physical space is also part of collection management.

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Infinite expansion of storage for tangible materials is not feasible or sustainable. As a result, the Library makes acquisition and retention decisions carefully and continuously.

B. Evaluation of Materials

1. While the library may on occasion deaccession published materials because they duplicate holdings already in the Library, no materials with significant research or financial value will be deaccessioned without careful research and consideration.
2. When publications in tangible formats are duplicated in permanent, electronic form, either owned by the library and/or available through stable, accessible platforms, the library will consider relying on the electronic version alone. It will make exceptions when it determines the needs of the discipline(s) preclude that reliance.
3. The following questions should be answered in the process of reviewing materials for deaccessioning:
 - a. Does the material fall within the scope of current collecting policies?
 - b. Is the material a duplicate or does it duplicate information already held here or elsewhere in another format?
 - c. Is there a newer, more accurate version of the publication that does not remove any important information?
 - d. Is the content available online or in an otherwise stable, reliable digital format?
 - e. Has the material deteriorated beyond real usefulness or to the point where it can no longer be safely handled?
 - f. Is the material part of an incomplete series or set? Is the library planning on acquiring the remainder of the series?
 - g. How would deaccessioning the material affect public access to information?
 - h. Are there any other restrictions aside from donation considerations preventing the removal of the material from the collection?
4. A report on proposed deaccessioning must be delivered to the Library Director for review. The Library Director will share this information with the Administrator or any other individuals deemed to have an interest as needed. Once the list of items to be deaccessioned is approved, the Library Director can authorize deaccessioning materials from the collection and their removal from the catalog.

C. Deaccession of Donated Items

1. Donated items accepted into the DAR Library collection are considered a permanent part of the collection as long as they retain their physical integrity and are relevant to the collection. Because of the long period of time during which the DAR Library has been collecting materials, there are volumes which have been accepted into the permanent collection that do not meet standards currently in effect. These objects are generally no longer relevant to the DAR Library's current collections policy, are in very poor

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condition, their physical copies or have been lost or stolen, or may duplicate other holdings. These types of donated objects may be considered for deaccessioning.

- a. The decision to deaccession must be initiated by the DAR Library's collections evaluation process rather than by the desire of any individual or organization to acquire any object in the DAR Library's collection.
 - b. Many objects in the collection have been donated either by state societies, chapters of the NSDAR, or individuals.
 - i. The donor understands when the donation is made and/or the deed of gift is signed that all legal title is transferred to the DAR Library. Thus, the object is Library property and the Library is responsible for administering the object for the benefit of the public, and deaccessioning it, if necessary. When the DAR Library intends to deaccession an object, no special preference is given to return the object to the original donor or their heirs, or to contact the donor regarding deaccessioning.
 - ii. The DAR Library follows the guidelines of the Tax Reform Act of 1984, and will notify the donor and IRS if a donated object is deaccessioned within two years of accessioning into the collection.
2. That an item was a donation will not prevent it from being deaccessioned if other criteria outlined in this policy are met.

D. Disposition of Materials

1. Materials to be deaccessioned may be transferred to other institutions, offered for public sale, or destroyed. Any disposition of materials with significant research or financial value will be governed by the following considerations:
 - a. Materials must be free of all legal impediments.
 - b. Reasonable attempts will be made to determine if other organizations or institutions have an interest in the materials.
 - c. Materials which are unsafe to handle or contain any hazardous components or that could present a risk to a collection (*e.g.* mold, pests, etc.) will be destroyed.
 - d. Any proceeds from the sale of materials will be used solely to further the preservation and development of collections in the Library.
 - e. The method of disposition will be decided by Library Director, in consultation with the staff, the Administrator and any other NSDAR staff as the Director deems necessary.
2. Deaccessioning is part of the natural collection management process which keeps collections healthy and up to date with current needs. Collection analysis with view to deaccessioning material will be undertaken on a regular basis, but no more than once per calendar year.