



Appendix 3:

Sargeant Memorial Collection for Local History and Genealogy Collection Development Policy

Historical Background

The SARGEANT MEMORIAL Collection (SMC) is named in honor of William Henry Sargeant, librarian in charge of the Norfolk Public Library from 1895 until his death in 1917. Although not a Virginian by birth, Mr. Sargeant was interested in building a collection of Norfolk and Virginia materials, believing that a complete file of city newspapers and directories "ought to be somewhere easy to access, and where better than in the library?" His efforts were rewarded in May 1927, when the Library Board Room was made fireproof in order to house the collection begun by Mr. Sargeant thirty years earlier. Since that time, the staff of the Sargeant Collection has continued to collect and maintain a historical collection of Norfolkiana, Virginia and genealogy. The collection has expanded beyond Mr. Sargeant's vision of a complete file of newspapers and city directories. The collection now houses more than 16,000 books, 3,700 microforms and 20,000 photographs. **All materials are non-circulating.**

General Selection Guidelines

The purpose of the collection is to provide resource materials targeted towards individuals conducting local history or genealogical research in the [Sargeant Memorial Collection](#). The SMC collection contains a wealth of historical and genealogical research information that focuses on the City of Norfolk, the State of Virginia and surrounding states, such as Maryland, Tennessee, Kentucky, North and South Carolina, the District of Columbia, and West Virginia. The collection also provides selective material on the Commonwealth of Virginia and histories and census information for states contiguous to Virginia. Patron requests are considered when ordering new materials. A policy of not circulating the materials in the Sargeant Memorial Collection is essential to ensure the collection and preservation of historic materials.

The Sargeant Memorial Collection consists of subject areas that focus on the geographical locations listed below.

- A. City of Norfolk, Norfolk County, Princess Anne County
 - B. Tidewater area
 - C. Virginia
 - D. North Carolina
 - E. South Carolina

- F. Maryland/The District of Columbia

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G. West Virginia State

H. Kentucky/Tennessee

Materials purchased and collected are rated according to the following categories.

1=Significant amount, 2=Selectively, 3=few, 4=None

1. County Court Records A1, B1, C2, D2, E4, F3, G3, H3

2. Family Histories A1, B3, C2, D4, E4, F4, G4, H4

3. County and City Histories A1, B2, C2, D2, E3, F3, G3, H3

4. Photographs A1, B2, C3, D4, E4, F4, G4, H4

5. Census Films A1, B1, C1, D1, E1, F1, G1, H1

6. Maps A1, B1, C1, D2, E3, F3, G3, H3

Types of Materials

The collection consists of materials that relate to the history of the Tidewater Area such as books, photographs, manuscripts, and maps. Most of the materials that are donated are accessible to the public or stored in a special location in the Library.

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- **Books** – Titles are purchased which emphasize genealogical and historical research. The collection consists of biographies that mainly focus on the state of Virginia and introductory genealogy books. Fiction and literature are no longer purchased, though a collection is maintained in storage and retrieved as requested. The Library attempts to obtain one copy of each Norfolk High School yearbook annually.
- **Electronic Resources**
- **CD-ROMs** are available to the public for research only.
- **Online databases** of genealogical web sites on the Internet are available for use in the Sargeant Memorial Collection. As public records become available in online format, SMC will select appropriate databases that meet local history and genealogical research needs.
- **Audiovisuals materials** - Audio, slide, film and video materials relating to Norfolk and Norfolk history are acquired when possible and maintained as archival, non-circulating items. At such time as a viewing/listening facility is opened at the Kirn Memorial Library, these materials will be available to individual patrons and groups for in-library

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use only. The library's oral history project will be a part of this collection when completed. Similar audiovisual materials for areas outside of Norfolk will be purchased or accepted on a case-by-case basis.

- **Microfilm** of Virginia and North Carolina court records are purchased selectively. Federal Census films are purchased for Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Maryland and the District of Columbia. Print indexes to early census records are available and Soundex indexes to the microfilm collection are purchased as space and budgets permit. Internment cards for some of Norfolk's local cemeteries are also available on microfilm.
- **Periodicals** include magazines and newsletters that focus primarily on genealogical subject areas and those published by local historical societies. Selected periodicals published by historical societies in other states are included in the collection as well.
- **Photographs** - The SMC Photograph collection is one of the valuable assets in the Collection. Patrons have access to the collection under the guided supervision of the staff. The collection consists of pictures of buildings, neighborhoods, places and events in Norfolk from the late 19th century to the present. The collection includes the works of Harry Mann, John Emmerson, James Murdaugh, Charles Borjes, H.D. Vollmer, Jim Mays and Carroll Walker. Due to the historic nature of the collection, **photographs and negatives are not permitted to leave the room.**
- **Public Records** are purchased in subject areas defined by the Sargeant Memorial Collection general selection guidelines. This includes census records from 1800 to 1920 and county and courthouse records. Manuscripts, Norfolk City Log Books, and Scrapbooks are also collected and available for public access.
- **Vertical Files** of local newspapers and newspaper clippings have been collected since the establishment of SMC. The clippings are filed by subjects and pertain to Norfolk, Virginia and some of the surrounding areas. Selected copies of post and pre-civil war newspapers are also part of the collection.

Gifts and Donations

Gifts and donations are important to supplementing the collection. The Sargeant Memorial Collection will accept gifts of county records, histories and family histories from a broad range of localities, including from out-of-state. Indeed, it relies heavily on gifts of family histories to supplement its collection, as the library cannot afford to purchase all that are available.

Donations are accepted if they can be used in an effective manner. Donations that are determined to have a more selective use in another more suitable environment are not accepted, but referred to other locations that may or may not accept the donation. Selectivity is critical to the

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maintenance of the collection in order for the collection to continue to support its core research areas.

Gifts of money, given outright or as memorials, are also accepted and can be designated for the Sargeant Memorial Collection exclusively. If the donor has a special area of interest, it will be taken into consideration when making the purchase. All gift materials are acknowledged and gift-plated.

Collection Maintenance

Many items in the SMC collection are deteriorating through age and poor original paper quality. A thorough needs assessment should be undertaken and a long-range preservation plan effected before many items are lost forever. The library will also explore external funding opportunities for this purpose. Areas to consider include:

- Binding materials that are irreplaceable
- Microfilming materials that are too fragile for public use
- Low-acid mylar tape and paper for encapsulation of maps and other paper documents
- Hollinger boxes for storage of scrapbooks, manuscripts, books, and records
- Buffered boxes, envelopes and interleaves for storage of negatives
- Storage of rare and unique materials in a locked case to limit access
- Scanning or digitizing paper items such as newspaper clippings, photographs, telephone and city directories, and fragile books no longer in print
- Purchase of reprints, when available
- Climate control for the room and the storage area

Deselection and Retention of Materials

In a permanent collection such as this, materials are deselected only when a replacement copy is available. Storage space, therefore, is a critical factor in retention policy. The Library will explore external funding opportunities for a ventilated, climate-controlled storage area that would assist in easing the crowding of the collection in the room, while still making materials readily available to researchers who request them.