

FROM THE VAULTS

Newsletter of the Georgia Archives



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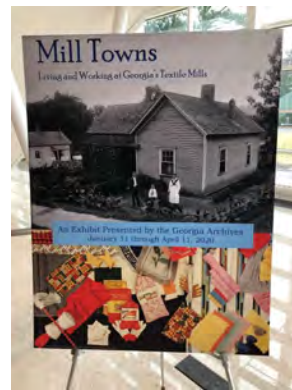
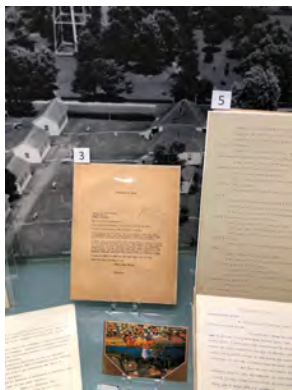
Volume 5, No. 1

April 2020

Exhibits at the Georgia Archives

Visitors to the Georgia Archives are invited to view our exhibits, which are changed every few months with a new theme. Exhibits include items that are usually stored in our vaults. Visitors have enjoyed our latest exhibit, *Mill Towns: Living and Working at Georgia's Textile Mills*, which has been on display since January. The next exhibit is going to highlight nineteenth and twentieth century business records. Information will be posted on our website at www.georgiaarchives.org and also on our Facebook page when the exhibit is open to the public.

The Georgia Archives offers free quarterly tours on the second Saturday of the month. The tour follows the theme of the exhibit. Our last tour on Saturday, March 14th, was *Stories of Southern Textile Mills and Mill Villages*. Below are photographs from the March exhibit and the March tour. Information on the tours will be posted on our website and Facebook page.



News From Friends of Georgia Archives and History (FOGAH)

2020 is off to an unprecedented start, but we at FOGAH look forward to another busy and successful year at the Georgia Archives. We hope that you will join us for some of those activities as a member of FOGAH. When you join, you are providing much needed funds for education programs, public lectures, internships, exhibits, and digitization projects including:

- Sponsoring diverse Lunch and Learn programs at the Georgia Archives.
- Financing the Dunaway Scholarship that allows recipients to attend the Georgia Archives Institute, a two-week program that offers instruction in the concepts and practice of archival administration and links theory with real world applications in the form of a three-day internship in local repositories such as Coca-Cola, Delta Flight Museum, and National Archives.
- Funding two summer interns in the conservation lab of the Georgia Archives, which gives prospective graduate students of conservation training programs the opportunity to gain skills and experience in the preservation and treatment of paper-based archival materials.

In addition, during the summer our new ornament will be announced and will go on sale sometime in the early fall. As always, all the proceeds from our popular ornament sales also assist programs at the Georgia Archives. All donations made to Friends of the Georgia Archives and History are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. You may send a check to the address below or donate online at www.fogah.org.

Thank you for your support of FOGAH!

Karin Dalton, President



Friends of Georgia Archives and History Membership Enrollment

Please enroll at the indicated level:

- Individual/\$20
- Family or Organization/\$35
- Ancestry/\$100
- Heritage/\$500
- Legacy/\$1,000
-

FOGAH is a not-for-profit organization that supports and assists the Georgia Archives in fulfilling its mission. Membership is open to individuals and corporations.

Name _____ Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email: _____

Return your check to P.O. Box 711, Morrow, Georgia 30261-0711
For more information on membership or on volunteer opportunities visit www.fogah.org.

Thank you for your donations!

From the State Archivist

Christopher M. Davidson, J.D.

During these difficult times, the Georgia Archives encourages you to use our online resources, located at www.georgiaarchives.org. For those unfamiliar with the resources on our site, we have a new item under “Announcement” on the front page. Click “Online Resources for Research” and you will be taken to a page highlighting some of our collections as well as some collections not on our site.



Georgia Archives Hosts SARC

October 27th through October 29th the Georgia Archives hosted the Southeastern Archives and Records Conference (SARC) for directors and staff from state archives in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. SARC provides archivists an annual opportunity to visit another state archives, discuss issues that all of us face, and share our experiences and solutions.

SARC directors and staff were divided into the following discussion groups facilitated by Georgia Archives’ staff: Directors, Access/Public Services, Collections Management, Records Management, Electronic Records/Digital Collections, Education/Outreach and Conservation/Preservation.

All meals and snacks were hosted at the Georgia Archives. Individuals and community organizations donated door prizes. As well as attending discussion groups, attendees enjoyed a visit to the Delta Flight Museum in Hapeville and a tour of the Archives.

At the end of the conference, everyone left with goody bags which included, among other things, beautiful hand-sewn books made by Conservation staff.



Photographs: (Top left) Tour of the Georgia Archives with State Archivist and Assistant Vice Chancellor, Christopher M. Davidson; (top right) Tour of the Conservation lab with Conservator Sigourney Smuts; (bottom left) SARC attendees at the barbecue dinner; (bottom right), question and answer time with state archives’ directors

Conservation

Behind the Scenes of Preparing an Exhibition: The Georgia Land Lotteries

By Former Conservation Intern Anna Piwowar

The Georgia Land Lotteries was an earlier exhibit open through December 21, 2019 at the Georgia Archives. There were many fascinating objects from the collection on display. The topic, accompanying texts, and final list of items were finalized long before the objects went into their respective cases. As the Conservation intern, I had the chance to see how the rest of the process unfolds, including preparing and mounting the objects and designing their layout and display.

Each object had its own history of usage and unique purpose in the story being told, which influenced how the objects were treated. For instance, I worked on one of the books in the display cases. The leather on the quarter binding was suffering from red rot, a common issue with historic leather. Red rot causes the leather to disintegrate into a red dust that can build up in other parts of the book and spread unnecessary dust onto other objects. Under supervision, I was able to consolidate the leather using a conservation-approved consolidant that, though it darkens the color slightly, would at least ensure that the top-most layer of leather would not flake off. However, the red rot persists underneath, and there is no way to stop it once it has started. If the book were going to go on display with the cover visible, there might have needed to be more work done, but the ultimate goal was to make sure that the book was stable enough to be displayed open.

The next step was to decide how to arrange the book so it displayed the information needed, which in this case meant using conservation-approved materials to strap the pages down. Another important concern was giving the book enough support so as to not put too much strain on the spine, a commonly damaged part of any book. This meant creating a cradle that takes into consideration the size and angles of an individual book and intuiting where it is the best fit.

Finally, once the materials were stable and supported, it was time to arrange them in the display cases. Each of the three cases is climate controlled and emits safe lighting levels for collection materials. I was given free-reign to arrange the third case. The first consideration is how important the arrangement of the items is in terms of what the case is trying to convey. For example, if a case is showing chronological development, then it is necessary to keep things in chronological order. Most people look at things the same way they read them: left to right. There are many other tricks of curating that help visually guide a viewer, which take into consideration the distance from the viewer, the angle, the height, etc. However, as this was my first time in creating a display, I had to stick with my intuition to figure out how such things actually work. In the end, it was very satisfying to see the end result and felt that it made sense as a story. This experience gave me the chance to see what the other side of conservation is, which is of course preserving history so it can be shared with the world.

Conservation

The Georgia Land Lotteries Exhibit

The exhibit featured records that document Georgia's push to obtain land from the Creek and Cherokee nations, the process of land distribution under the lottery system, and individual cases surrounding the granting of this land. Among the materials on display were:

An 1825 letter from John Ross, Principal Chief of the Cherokee, to President John Adams.

Land lottery tickets from the Cherokee Gold Lottery in 1832, the only known examples of lottery tickets.

A district plat map for Wayne County from 1805, showing part of the Okefenokee Swamp.

A statement against Allen Summerall, a free person of color, whose land won in the 1832 lottery was taken from him and divided between the person who reported him and the State of Georgia. The informant, Oran Moses, reported him to the Superior Court in Murray County.

Articles of Impeachment for Land Lottery Commissioner Shadrach Bogan, who devised a scheme so that valuable lots would have been won by his friends.



Photographs: (L) Former Conservation Intern Anna Piwowar next to the exhibit case she arranged. (R) Conservator Sigourney Smuts showing a December community tour the exhibit.

Collections Management Section

This spring, the Georgia Archives hosted Heleen Blommers, a historian and Fulbright recipient from Vrije University in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Below, Ms. Blommers provides some background on her project and the records she utilized at the Georgia Archives.

As a PhD candidate, I am now almost two years into the project *Deconstructing the War on Poverty: The rise of a policy failure narrative*. My project concerns the question why and how the idea that Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty failed came into being between 1964 and the mid-1980s.

An important part of this project is analyzing how the War on Poverty was implemented and responded to "on the ground." One of its largest and most controversial programs was the Community Action Program (CAP), under which both local authorities and non-profit organizations could apply for federal funding for their local anti-poverty initiatives.

For this "on the ground analysis" I chose Georgia as one of my case studies because it is a Deep Southern state, with its own stance on federal dollars flowing in. In the Georgia Archives I tried to find out how the War on Poverty was implemented on a state level, how the state government interacted with the federal and local governments, and if and how they influenced the way the federal anti-poverty dollars were spent in the state.

In the Archives I found many materials pertaining to how the War on Poverty was fought in Georgia, but a highlight includes sources that document the involvement of the state in founding a "Floriculture Co-op" in Laurens County. Poor farm families participating in this co-op were trained to plant and cultivate floral products in their own built greenhouses. Moreover, I am uncovering how Area Planning and Development Commissions (APDCs, commissions closely aligned to local governments) worked with, competed with, and fostered grassroots initiatives that were funded by the federal government. Although my research on the APDCs is still in its early stages, it seems that this relationship between the APDCs and the grassroots initiatives can be found quite persistently throughout the state and is very specific to the way in which the War on Poverty was implemented in Georgia.

Collections Management Section (Continued)

The Georgia Archives Collections Management Section has had a busy end of 2019 and beginning of 2020. Staff members attended and presented at several professional conferences.

In February, three members of the section presented papers at academic conferences. Hendry Miller and Caroline Crowell highlighted Georgia Archives holdings at the Georgia Association of Historians annual meeting in Augusta. Miller's presentation discussed the uses of Georgia survey and land lottery records. Crowell focused on new and little-known collections at the Georgia Archives. Both of these presentations were well-attended and spread the word about the unique and diverse Georgia Archives holdings and how they can be used by historians, family researchers, and those with a general interest in Georgia's past. Student Assistant Kersten Toebben, an Honors Student at Clayton State University, presented her senior thesis at the Georgia Collegiate Honors Council conference. Toebben's project on African-Americans during the Civil War era earned second prize in the humanities section.

Collections Management Section staff continued work on bringing in new government records, private manuscript records, and making existing records more accessible by creating folder indexes. In addition, student assistant Kersten Toebben and work study student Afi Avogah updated the housing of several existing collections by replacing harmful acidic folders with ones of modern archival quality.

We are also working on a survey of our online finding aids. If you are interested in any government records series or privately donated manuscript collections held at the Georgia Archives, you can contact us by submitting a question to our Ask an Archivist form, calling us at 678-364-3710, or visiting us in person when we resume normal operations.

Search Room Resources

GALILEO access at the Georgia Archives

The Georgia Archives has added access to GALILEO on our on-site search page. GALILEO is a library portal to scholarly sources and many subscription only resources. You can use these for free on-site at the Georgia Archives. One of the databases you can now access is EBSCO Academic Search Complete, which includes full text access to:

- *Georgia Historical Quarterly* (2002-Present)
- *Journal of African American History* (2002-Present)
- *Virginia Magazine of History & Biography* (1997-Present)
- *Journal of Southern History* (2003-Present)
- *Georgia Law Review* (2010-Present)
- *History Today* (1975-Present)

While we have many of these journals in published form in the Georgia Archives Reference library, you can use the online access to download PDFs of articles and to do subject searches across many volumes.

Articles in these journals can help give context to your own research. The articles' citations can also lead you to more sources on a topic, including original records held at the Georgia Archives.



New Virtual Vault Collection

Wilkes County Estate Records

To access the Wilkes County Estate Records go to the Georgia Archives website www.georgiaarchives.org. Under “Featured Content” to the right on the homepage, click “Virtual Vault.” The Virtual Vault features 52 collections. When you click on page 6 at the bottom of the page you will be directed to the page with the link to the Wilkes County Estate Records.

Wilkes County Estate Records includes documents submitted to the Inferior Court sitting for Ordinary (probate) purposes for recording as the official records of estates probated in Wilkes County, Georgia. The Inferior Court, established in 1789, was the court of record for all estate and guardianship transactions. Probate functions were transferred to the Court of Ordinary in 1851. Records may include:

- wills
- letters of administration
- administrator's bonds
- guardian's bonds
- inventories & appraisements
- letters of guardianship
- annual returns
- vouchers
- sales of property
- divisions of property
- final returns.

Many estates prior to Emancipation (1865) include inventories, annual returns, sales, and final returns or distributions listing enslaved people.

It is estimated that well over 50% of deceased persons died intestate (without a will). However, if the deceased left property, the estate still had to be probated.

Case files are arranged in alphabetical order by the name of the decedent. The papers in this collection may not include the entire case file or all the papers filed for the settling of an estate. Please consult the Wilkes County ordinary record and minute books for the official records of the court. These are available on microfilm at the Georgia Archives and through FamilySearch.org.

Funding for this collection was provided by the R.J. Taylor, Jr., Foundation.

The Georgia Archives Virtual Exhibits

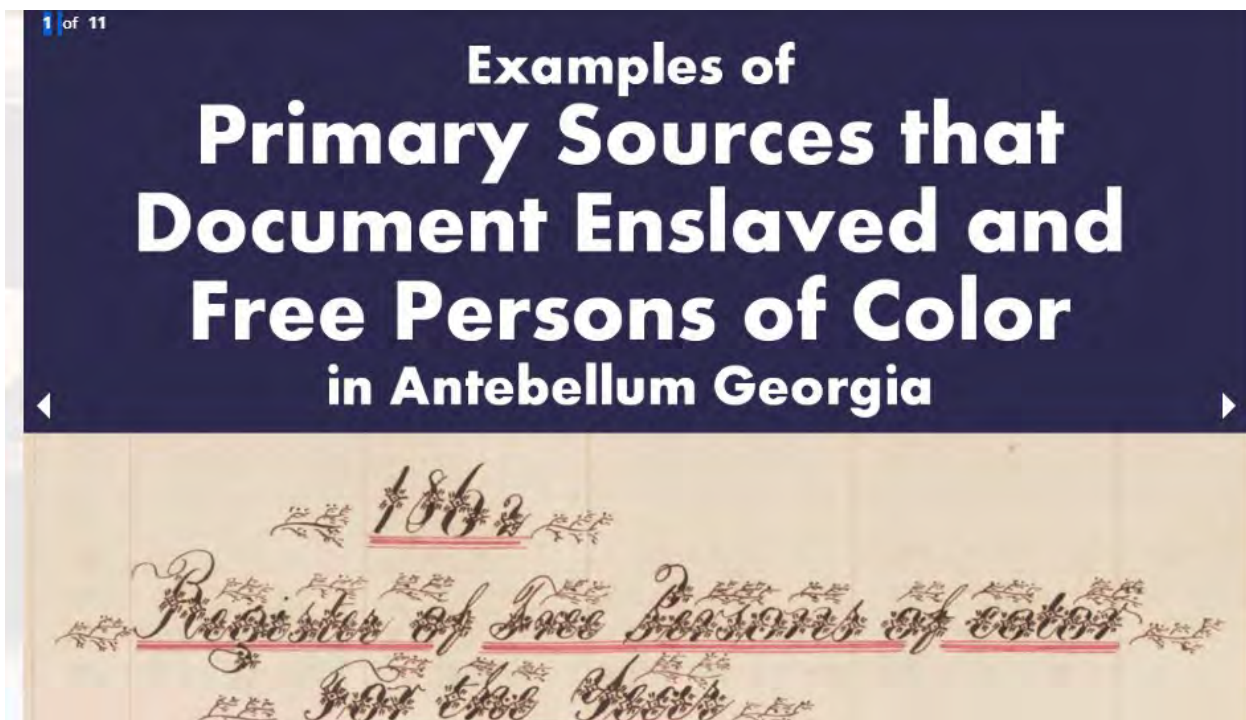
The Georgia Archives has several virtual exhibits available on the Archives' website. The exhibits, which cover a variety of topics, illustrated with records from the holdings of the Georgia Archives, are located at: [https:// www.georgiaarchives.org/online exhibits](https://www.georgiaarchives.org/online-exhibits). Our current online exhibits are *Primary Sources that Document Enslaved and Free Persons of Color*; *World War I in Their Words: Letters Written by Georgia Soldiers and Their Families*; *Reading and Interpreting Handwriting*; *Georgia Archives Timeline*; and *Georgia Archives Centennial Event*.

Look for future new exhibits to be added to our online collections.

Primary Sources that Document Enslaved and Free Persons of Color

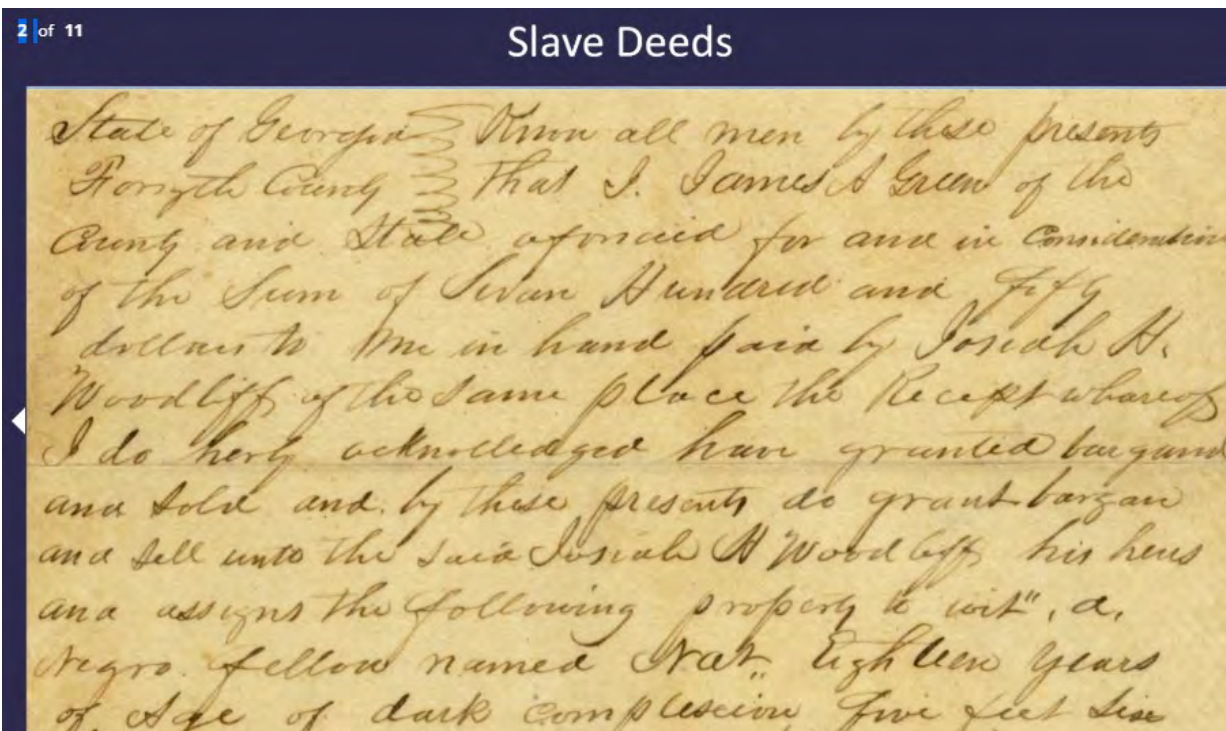
This online exhibit presents several useful primary sources: slave deeds, trial records, free persons of color registration records, laws, estate records of slave owners, and manumission in estate records. Below and on page 11 are some of the slides that you can view in the exhibit.

For additional information on African American research, we have *Historical and Genealogical Resources* available under our "Research" tab on our website: www.georgiaarchives.org.



The Georgia Archives Virtual Exhibits (continued)

Primary Sources that Document Enslaved and Free Persons of Color



[Deed of sale between James A. Green and Josiah H Woodliff for the sale of Nat, a slave for life, recorded in Forsyth County, 1849. File II Counties and Subjects, RG 4-2-46.](#)

State of Georgia
Forsyth County



Know all men by these presents
That I James A Green of the

County and State aforesaid for and in consideration

of the Sum of Seven Hundred and fifty

dollars to me in hand paid by Josiah H.

Woodliff of the same place the Receipt [receipt] whereof

I do herby acknolleged [acknowledged] have granted bargained

and sold and by these presents do grant bargain

and sell unto the said Josiah H Woodliff his heirs

and assigns the following property to wit, a

Negro fellow named Nat, Eighteen years

of Age of dark complexion five feet six

The above image and transcription is a partial part of a complete deed. To view the full copy go to the slide show in the virtual exhibit, which contains a link to the document in File II.

State Records Center

State Records Committee Update

The State Records Committee met October 30, 2019 and approved new or revised retention schedules for the following state government agencies: Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission, Jekyll Island Authority, Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission, and the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority. The deadline for agencies to submit proposed new or revised schedules for the October 2020 meeting is August 1. State agencies should submit their proposals to Karl Simpson, karl.simpson@usg.edu.

Records and Emergency Preparedness Planning

May Day, May 1, is a day during which archives, libraries, and similar institutions focus on disaster preparedness and planning. Records are often not included in disaster plans, yet they are invaluable for a successful response and recovery from a disaster. Government agencies, private businesses, and the public need to plan ahead for disasters and include records in their plans. Records necessary for emergency response and recovery fall into the five categories listed below with examples of each.

- Records needed to respond to the disaster, including fire escape routes, blue prints, and maps.
- Records needed to resume or continue operations, such as insurance records and delegations of authority.
- Records that protect the people's rights, safety, health, and property, including deeds; medical records, including veterinary records for pets; and birth, marriage, and military service records.
- Records that require massive resources to recreate, including databases, GIS maps, and personal research.
- Records that document the history of agencies, companies, communities, and families, including meeting minutes, historical documents, and genealogy records.

Government agencies, private businesses, and households need to identify these records before a disaster threatens, and to implement measures to ensure that the information contained in them is protected. The first steps in protecting essential records are to identify the records that fall into these categories, determine where they are located, and note any potential threats to them. For example, records being in an unstable environment, including attics, basements, or sheds; being located near water pipes, windows, or doors that could leak; being stored on outdated software or hardware making them inaccessible or unreadable; and having outdated information that could slow emergency response and recovery, to name a few.

After the records and the threats to them have been identified and located, the next step is to protect the information. Move the records away from threats or mitigate the threats as best as possible. Store records at least six inches off the ground in water-proof containers. Keep the records in a locked room that only designated staff can access. Make multiple copies, paper and electronic of the records, and store a copy offsite in a secure facility. These are just a few ways to protect records prior to a disaster.

Visit www.mnhs.org/preserve/records/disaster.php and <https://www.loc.gov/preservation/emergprep/emerpubs.html> for more suggestions and ideas.