

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

MANUSCRIPTS

The manuscript section of the Special Collections & Archives collects, arranges, and describes historical materials originating outside of the university. Manuscript collections may be either personal or corporate. A manuscript collection may be comprised of the letters and journals of an individual or the correspondence, administrative files, and financial records of a business or family organization.

Manuscripts are organized differently than books in a library. Instead of being arranged by subject they are grouped by the creator of the papers or records. For example, the manuscript section holds the Ruth Barrus Papers and the Great Feeder Canal Company Records. Collections vary greatly in size and composition.

Each collection has a finding aid, called a register. The register contains an introduction, a biographical sketch or agency history, a scope and content note and an inventory of the collection.

Manuscript collections can be viewed in the reading room. After the researcher has determined that the Special Collections & Archives holds a collection that they are interested in, the researcher can request those materials from the collection. An employee will retrieve the materials and bring them to the researcher in the reading room.

ARCHIVES

Special Collections & Archives appraises, collects, organizes, describes, makes available and preserves records of historic value created by Ricks College and its successor, BYU-Idaho. This includes both published and unpublished materials concerning the university, as well as papers of faculty and the permanent records of the colleges and departments that make up the university.

The archives play an important role at BYU-Idaho. The archives' first priority is to serve the colleges and departments of the university. Some of the materials in the archives are restricted because of the right to privacy and administrative reasons, and are not available to students or the general public. Therefore, it is a good idea to telephone prior to visiting the archives in order to check if the material you want to see is available. The archives contain the institutional memory of the university. In a very real sense it is helping to "preserve the spirit of Ricks" as the transition to BYU-Idaho goes forward

DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

The BYU-Idaho Special Collections & Archives is participating in a Church Educational System project to digitize collections of interest to the LDS Community throughout the world. These digitized collections serve as valuable primary sources of historical information about the unique culture and heritage of the Latter-Day Saint people. These collections consist of diaries of early church members, memoirs, and numerous examples of religious artwork. These collections may be searched from the website listed below:

<http://www.lib.byu.edu/online.html>

For further information about these topics, or any questions about the BYU-Idaho Special Collections & Archives, please contact John Powell by phone at 496-2377, or by e-mail:

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