



south carolina STATE LIBRARY

Collections Handling Guidelines for Patrons & Visitors

For rare, fragile, oversized, and special items of the SCSL Collections.

Some collections items require an appointment for viewing. Please contact the library at (803) 734-8666 or reference@statelibrary.sc.gov for assistance in making an appointment.

Workspace

- The table should be clear before working with a collections item. This includes making sure that all bags are stowed safely away from the workspace.
- No food or drink is allowed on the table with the collections item.
- Use only pencil when consulting original objects. Any item that could put a permanent mark or stain on a material should be kept away from your workspace.
- If using either laptops or paper to record notes, please be aware of how you place it in relation to the documents on the table. Please ensure that nothing is ever placed on top of a collections item.
- When photographing, please be mindful of how you hold your camera. Shoot from the side, rather than hovering the camera over the item in case the camera is dropped.
- Flash photography is not permitted when photographing collections items. Objects, photographs, etc. can retain damage, over time by use of flash.
- In some cases an item may be digitized and available online. If a collections item is not available online, scans can be provided for items in condition for scanning. It is at the discretion of the library professional if the item is fit for scanning, and what percentage of the item can be scanned.

Handling

- Ensure that your hands are clean and dry when handling any collections items. Wear the gloves provided (if they have been provided) when handling photographs.
- Be gentle and move slowly around original materials. Do not bend photographs or documents, or attempt to make items lie flat with pressure.
- Be mindful of your hair, jewelry, and clothing if you lean in close to an object.