University Libraries—Special Collections

CONTACT INFORMATION—Mullins Library, Level One, Room 130 / 575-8444 (Anne Prichard, Reading Room Supervisor) / 575-7251 (Andrea Cantrell, Head of Research Services) / 575-5576 (Tom Dillard, Department Head)

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION—Special Collections houses the Libraries’ collections of original manuscript collections (e.g., letters, diaries, memoirs, scrapbooks, organizational archives, unpublished reports) as well as materials on Arkansas, rare books, historical maps, old photographs and postcards, broadsides, and other unique materials. Most of these materials are listed in InfoLinks or described online at http://libinfo.uark.edu/specialcollections/manuscripts/. Special Collections location codes begin with ARK COLL, MC, and SPEC COLL.

REFERENCE SERVICE PROVIDED—Almost all transactions in Special Collections are reference transactions per ARL definition: ready reference through advanced assistance with the Department’s collections. The latter may include consultations with researchers to identify pertinent collections and develop research strategies for a term paper, thesis, dissertation, article, or book.

OTHER SERVICE PROVIDED—Department personnel can make photocopies of materials for patrons, but only if doing so will not damage the original. Free lockers are available for researchers.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS—Special Collections is open to anyone—including the general public—subject to departmental regulations. The Department provides limited assistance by mail, but is not staffed to conduct research for patrons. Some policies and procedures in the Department are unique in the Libraries. For example, all materials are non-circulating and stored in closed stacks. Therefore, patrons cannot browse the shelves and must use materials in the Reading Room. Patrons must store all enclosed containers—including purses and backpacks—in lockers. Personnel closely supervise the use of materials to preserve them. The department head must approve access to unprocessed manuscript collections. These policies and procedures are available online at http://libinfo.uark.edu/specialcollections/about/regulations.asp.

REFERRALS—Special Collections receives referrals from within the Libraries and campus, as well as from other individuals, businesses, and institutions. Personnel refer questions internally as appropriate. Researchers with questions that cannot be answered with resources in Special Collections may be referred within the University Libraries or elsewhere. Questions pertaining to the following should be referred first to the Reference Department: (1) Sanborn maps (available online and on microfilm—the originals in Special Collections are restricted); (2) newspapers; (3) basic information about Arkansas; and (4) manuscript collections for which the originals are at another repository and the Libraries have the microfilm.

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