

Collection Scope

This policy was approved by the Board of Councilors of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania on 8 June 2009. For more information, see also [How to Donate Your Materials](#) [1] and [Archives Department Collecting Guidelines](#) [2].

The collections of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania include those of the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies and the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania and document, from the perspective of the Philadelphia region, the diverse members, migrations, and experiences of the American family, the roots of the United States, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's history. The Society focuses its collecting as follows:

Printed Holdings. These treat primarily:

- Pennsylvania and adjacent areas from the period of initial European encounters to the present
- The migrations of people to Pennsylvania and from Pennsylvania to points east of the Mississippi
- The selective study of ethnic communities across the United States, including their national organizational life and periodical production
- The nation's founding

Manuscripts. These treat primarily:

- The formation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the United States
- The area centered on Eastern Pennsylvania (metropolitan Philadelphia in particular), southern New Jersey, and northern Delaware
- National ethnic organizations, especially those headquartered in the Mid-Atlantic region
- Other organizations and activities that reach across significant parts of the Mid-Atlantic region
- Pennsylvanians beyond the Commonwealth, among them merchants, soldiers, and tourists, as well as diplomats, artists, and explorers

Graphics. These illustrate primarily the Philadelphia area, its architecture, landscapes, events, and people.

The Society respects the collection scopes of other institutions while recognizing that there are instances when its collecting interests overlap with those of other repositories. The Society has a cooperative agreement with the Library Company of Philadelphia (LCP), adopted in 1965, by which LCP administers the Society's pre-1820 imprints while the Society administers LCP's manuscript collections. Both institutions retain ownership of their respective collections.

The Society does not collect government-owned documents or other property. It does not add to its art and artifact collection, in the limited custody and control of the Atwater Kent Museum since January 2002 (and with full ownership since the summer of 2009).

Links

[1] <https://hsp.org/node/2242>

[2] <https://hsp.org/node/2244>