


# Annotation

ANNUAL REPORT *of the*  
NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS  
*and* RECORDS COMMISSION





*Cover portrait:* Private William Cobbs, 24th Infantry, Company F. Taken by the Aultman Studio in 1894. History Colorado is arranging and describing four large photograph collections documenting Colorado and the American West.

*Back cover:* Columbia University's copy of Alexander Hamilton's farewell letter to his wife Elizabeth. Written a few days before his duel with Burr; the letter's poignant closing lines: "Adieu best of wives and best of Women. Embrace all my darling Children for me."



NATIONAL  
ARCHIVES

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NATIONAL HISTORICAL  
PUBLICATIONS  
& RECORDS COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2015-16



Journal  
of the Proceedings  
of the general Federal Convention  
Held at Philadelphia.

From the 14<sup>th</sup> of May to the 17<sup>th</sup> of September 1787.

Together with the other documents and Papers  
relating thereto, deposited in the Department of State.

Published conformably to a Resolution of the Congress  
of the United States of 27<sup>th</sup> <sup>March.</sup> ~~April~~ 1818.

# *Message from the* ARCHIVIST *of the* UNITED STATES

One of the real joys of working at the National Archives is the daily surprise of uncovering treasure from the trove of historical records. Whether it is a record that had gone missing—like the patent for a flying machine by the Wright Brothers—or family ties gleaned from Census records, or documents tracing the history of women’s rights, the discovery elicits palpable satisfaction and delight. We have found our way back to the past. We have retrieved another piece of the American story.

As Archivist of the United States, I also serve as chairman of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), and in that position, I see how that same thrill of discovery is replicated in thousands of archives across the United States. Making such treasures public, in print and online, is the very first step in sharing that joy and satisfaction of discovery.

But what happens next is even more important.

Access to the records allows them to be used, interpreted, and repurposed. Let me cite one prominent example: in June 2016, Lin-Manuel Miranda and his company received multiple Tony awards for their production of the musical “Hamilton,” which millions adore. The musical resulted from Miranda’s chance reading of Ron Chernow’s biography of Alexander Hamilton, which in turn had been made possible by the collection and publication of the *Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, supported by grants through the NHPRC and available via Founders Online ([founders.archives.gov](http://founders.archives.gov)). One can draw a straight line from the modest investments made by the Federal agency to a whole new way of understanding the contributions Alexander Hamilton made to the United States of America.



Director Thomas Kail, composer and performer Lin-Manuel Miranda, and historian Ron Chernow at the 2016 Records of Achievement Award Ceremony, sponsored by the National Archives Foundation. Chernow wrote the biography *Hamilton*, using the Papers of Alexander Hamilton, which had been supported by the NHPRC. Miranda and Kail used the biography to create the award-winning musical “Hamilton.”

There are many such cases of people discovering historical records to make something new: The genealogist who finds a century-old connection that changes family perceptions. The songwriter who is inspired by re-formatted tape recordings to write new songs. The researcher who digs through letters and diaries to give us a much clearer sense of what everyday life was like for slaves or suffragists. The stuff of history—both at the National Archives and in the nation’s archives—is being made more readily and widely available, particularly when harnessed to the publishing distribution of the Internet. Access to primary sources will only grow bigger and deeper in the years to come.

The NHPRC exists to increase public access to historical records. In November 2014, the Commission began working on a new Strategic Plan to see how best to make progress on that mission. We consulted with our colleagues and constituencies. We debated long and hard over the next steps in the evolution of the Commission, and we came back to honoring first principles while acknowledging a rapidly changing environment. Our ambitions are straightforward: Make access happen. Open the archives to the people. Publish the records so that they can be more easily discovered and widely used.

I am pleased to issue this Annual Report, covering in this case the past two fiscal years. It not only provides an overview of our expenditures but also includes our new Strategic Plan. Within its modest means, the Commission has big ambitions. Our four goals for the next few years are:

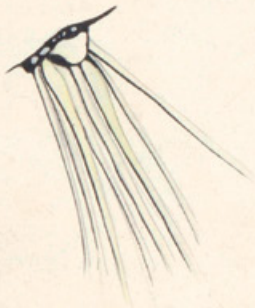
- **Connect the National Archives with the work of the nation's archives.**
- **Expand access to the nation's historical records.**
- **Engage the American people in preserving and discovering the American record.**
- **Enhance the capacity of small and diverse organizations with historical records collections.**

Great nations deserve great archives. The National Archives has made a long-term commitment to get all of our records online. We now have 95% of our holdings—more than 13 billion pages of records with millions added every year—completely described at the series level in our online catalog. This is both a monumental achievement and a first step toward access for all. And it is a challenge for archives across the nation to set our ambitions high, so that everyone can experience that singular joy of finding it at the archives.



David S. Ferriero  
ARCHIVIST OF THE UNITED STATES





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# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S *Report*

**F**or the past two years, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission has been creating a new Strategic Plan built around one core goal: greater public access to America's historical records.

Attached as an appendix to this report, the Strategic Plan is based on past achievement as its members and staff look to the future. Through collaboration with other Federal agencies and private funders, the Commission will:

- enhance the leadership role of the National Archives
- support our partners in the states
- fund preservation and access, historical documentary editions, and professional development and training; and
- expand programs that enhance public participation in preserving and using historical records collections.

At the heart of these efforts is a fundamental principle: the American people have the right to access their historical records. Indeed, our new mission statement reflects commitment to that ideal:

*The National Historical Publications and Records Commission provides opportunities for the American people to discover and use records that increase understanding of our democracy, history, and culture.*

A deep sea dragonfish, *Aristostomias* sp. nov., illustrated by Helen Damrosch Tee-Van during the Department of Tropical Research expeditions to Bermuda, 1929. Courtesy Wildlife Conservation Society Archives in New York City.

# *The NEED for ACCESS*

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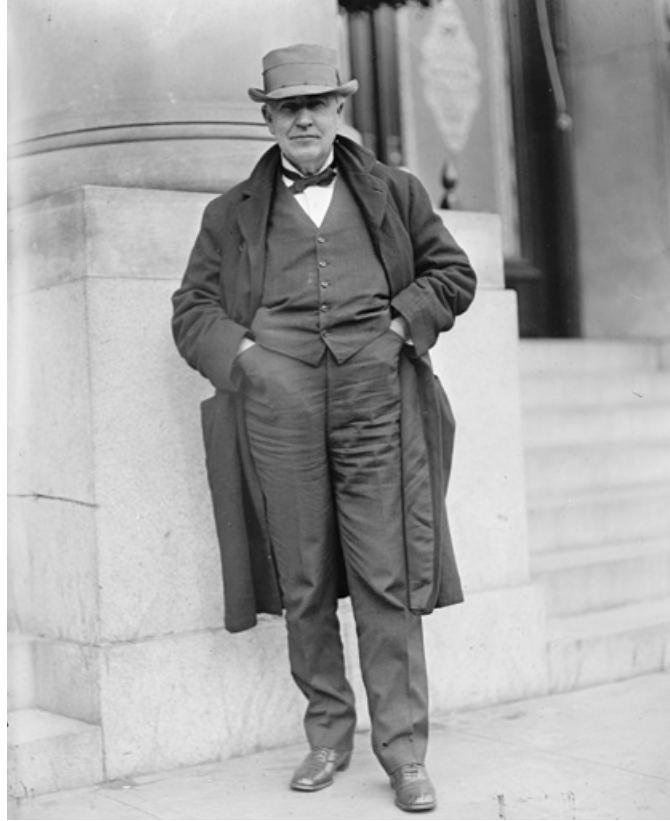
## WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO DEVOTE FEDERAL resources to increase access to the nation's historical records?

Democracy requires an informed and knowledgeable citizenry, fluent in the language of its principles. The National Archives was created to protect the fundamental right of the American people to see, examine, and learn from the records that document the actions of their government. Access to those records is a safeguard to all of our rights and provides for better public understanding of our history, culture, and democracy.

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission was created in the same 1934 legislation that created the National Archives. It was originally conceived as a venue for publishing records held by the Federal Government, state, and local governments, and in public and private archives and repositories. These records provide an accounting of who we are, where we have been, and where we are going. Together they are the American record, the foundation for telling the American story.

Historical records link us directly to the past. James Madison's handwritten notes about ancient forms of government reveal his thinking when framing the Constitution. Abraham Lincoln's correspondence with ordinary citizens shows how he struggled to save the Union while advancing the emancipation of slaves. Images from the Edison studios document not only an emerging technology but open a window into American life in the early 20th century. Audiotapes of the first Monterey Jazz Festival record the blues of Billie Holiday. Sermons by Martin Luther King, Jr are early steps in the march toward civil rights.

Evidence of the extraordinary lives of ordinary Americans is also found in the American record: passenger lists from immigrant ships, naturalization and citizenship records, marriage certificates, birth certificates, draft and enlistment records, military service records, pension records, and more. Because our broad, national narrative is more often than not captured in individual stories and locales far from power centers, the documents outside the federal sphere add immensely to a deeper and truer understanding of the past.



*Left:* Billie Holiday at the Downbeat Club, 1947. Holiday performed at the inaugural Monterey Jazz Festival in 1958. The Archive of Recorded Sound at Stanford University preserved audio recordings with an NHPRC grant.  
*Right:* Thomas A. Edison, 1911. Harris & Ewing Collection, Library of Congress. The NHPRC has long funded a project at Rutgers University to publish Edison's massive collection of papers.

Scholars pore through letters and diaries of the past to write biographies and creative writers use them to pen new fiction, drama, and other artistic works. Genealogists search for clues to their family histories in local historical societies. Veterans and their families hunt for their military service records. Lawyers and entrepreneurs dig into archives—including data mining of large bodies of records—to protect rights or seek out evidence and support new ideas. These documents and images are our direct connection to the past.

Over time, historical records gain value as they are used. The more people use, understand, and share the Constitution, the greater value it has for spreading democratic ideas. The more genealogists use the nation's archives to discover their family and community histories and share their own stories, the more treasure is added to the trove. The deeper we dig, the more we discover.

The pages that follow provide context and background for the thinking behind our new Strategic Plan while highlighting the Commission's history and the achievements over the past two fiscal years.

# *The Role of the* NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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THE NOTION OF PRESERVING AMERICA'S VITAL RECORDS is as old as the nation itself. In a 1791 letter to the editor for the first collection of the nation's historical records, Thomas Jefferson wrote, "Let us save what remains; not by vaults and locks which fence them from the public eye and use . . . but by such multiplication of copies, as shall place them beyond the reach of accident."

Jefferson and other Founders of the nation readily understood that the value of historical records lies not only in the ideas embodied within them but in the public's ability to access and use those records. The link between the publication of records and the national interest had its origins in efforts by the U.S. Government in the late 18th century to publish the historical records of the Continental Congress, the Constitutional Convention of 1787, and the early journals of Congress and to spend \$130,000 to purchase the manuscripts of its earliest statesmen. Despite these efforts, much was lost.

In the early days of the Republic, individual executive branch agencies of the Federal Government maintained their own archives, often with disastrous results. Fire destroyed records of the early War Department, the Treasury Department, the Patent Office, and the 1890 Census records. The Supreme Court kept its own accounts, and Congress stored the records of its business in the halls and attic of the new Capitol building. Recordkeeping within executive branch agencies was haphazard, and in 1884, the newly formed American Historical Association called for a national standardized system of archival organization and soon argued for the creation of a National Archives to better manage Federal records.

In March, 1789, the Senate introduced this House bill, an Act to Establish an Executive Department to be Denominated the Department of War. Most of the War Department's records were destroyed by fire, but a project supported by the NHPRC is uniting copies of lost documents at the Papers of the War Department at George Mason University.



AN ACT to establish an EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT to  
be denominated the DEPARTMENT of WAR.

*Senate and H. of Rep. of the U.S. of America in Congress assembled*

*L1*  
*L3 dele*  
**B**E IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
That there shall be an Executive Department, to be denomi-  
nated, "The Department of War," and that there shall be a prin-  
cipal officer therein, to be called the Secretary for the Department  
of War, and who shall perform and execute such duties as shall,  
from time to time, be enjoined on, or intrusted to him, by the Pre-  
sident of the United States, agreeably to the Constitution, relative  
to military commissions, or to the land and naval forces, ships, or  
warlike stores of the United States, or to such other matters re-  
specting military or naval affairs, as the President of the United  
States shall assign to the said department, or relative to the grant-  
ing of lands to persons entitled thereto, by reason of military ser-  
vices rendered to the United States, or relative to Indian affairs:  
And furthermore, That the said principal officer shall conduct the  
business of the said department, in such manner as the President of  
the United States shall, from time to time, order or instruct.

*L2*  
*L16-18 dele*  
AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That there shall be in the said  
department, an inferior officer, to be appointed by the said prin-  
cipal officer, to be employed therein as he shall deem proper, and  
to be called the Chief Clerk in the Department of War, and who,  
whenever the said principal officer shall be removed from office by  
the President of the United States, or in any other case of vacancy,  
shall during such vacancy, have the charge and custody of all re-  
cords, books and papers, appertaining to the said department.—  
~~PROVIDED NEVERTHELESS, that no appointment of such Chief  
Clerk shall be valid, until the same shall have been approved by  
the President of the United States.~~

AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the said principal officer,  
and every other person to be appointed or employed in the said  
department, shall before he enters on the execution of his office  
or employment, take an oath or affirmation, well and faithfully to  
execute the trust committed to him.

AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Secretary for the De-  
partment of War, to be appointed in consequence of this act, shall  
forthwith after his appointment be entitled to have the custody  
and charge of all records, books and papers in the Office of Se-  
cretary for the Department of War, heretofore established by the  
United States in Congress assembled.

1789, June 27.

Read the third time and passed the House of Representatives.

[NEW-YORK, PRINTED BY THOMAS GREENLEAF.]

After decades of lobbying by the historical community, the U.S. National Archives was finally established in 1934. Based on the models of other national repositories, its core mission is to preserve and make public the records of the Federal Government. The value of these historical records can be demonstrated by the actions of Americans every day. Visitors line up around the block at the National Archives to see the Charters of Freedom—the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights. Scholars and students examine the records at Presidential libraries to learn more about the nation’s leaders and their administrations. Academics, reporters, lawyers, and legislators rely on ready access to the records available at 28 of our locations around the country and online.

As the steward of Federal Government records, the National Archives has provided leadership in the archives and records management field for more than 75 years. As the nation’s largest archives, it impacts archival work and practices at state and local governments; historical records repositories and archives at colleges, universities, and other nonprofit organizations; and archives within institutions of all sorts.

Working with the Society of American Archivists and others, the National Archives has helped create protocols for records management and historical document preservation as well as develop strategies to encourage public access. And from its very beginnings, these two goals—preservation and access—have been at the heart of its mission. As far back as 1939, the *American Archivist* summed up the central challenge: “Just as librarians promote the use of books, and as teachers defend before the public the value of education, so archivists have as part of their duty to give stimulus and guidance to the use of archives, and to their use not by the few but *by the many*.”



# *The Role of the* NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS *and* RECORDS COMMISSION

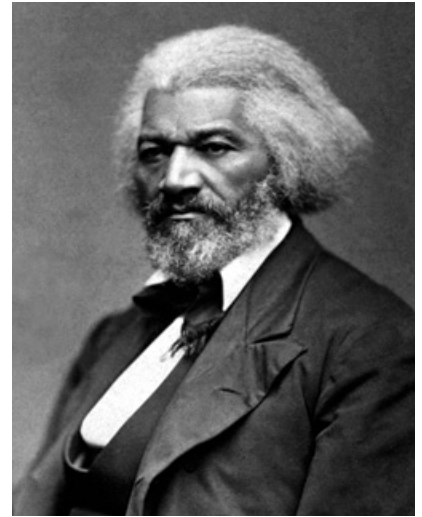
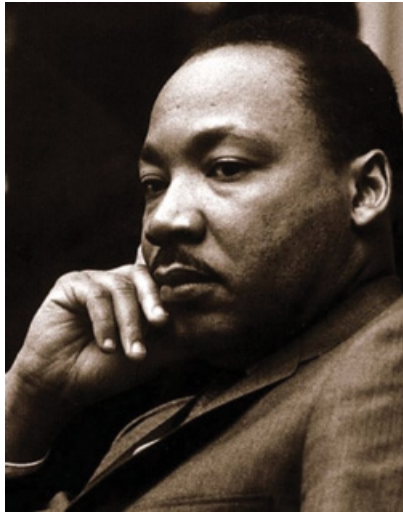
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CREATED IN THE SAME 1934 ACT OF CONGRESS AS THE National Archives, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission was established to provide access to historical works and collections that include those materials that are not in the possession of the Federal Government, but that are nonetheless vital to citizens' understanding of their culture, history, and democracy.

The Commission first proceeded by supporting the publication of collections of documents. In the mid-20th century, a primary means to accomplish this were through historical documentary editing projects, which collected, annotated, and printed bound editions of the papers of nationally significant historical figures or social movements. Characterized by a rigorous process from conception to publication, modern documentary editions are managed over time by dedicated teams of editors and scholars.

Acting Librarian of Congress Verner Clapp, President Harry S. Truman, and former Secretary of State George C. Marshall at the Library of Congress, on the publication of Volume One of *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, with Harold W. Dodds, president of Princeton University. Courtesy Harry S. Truman Library and Museum.





Left: Eleanor Roosevelt addresses the Knesset in Israel, 1952. The NHPRC supports the *Eleanor Roosevelt Papers* project at George Washington University. Courtesy Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library. Center: The NHPRC supports a project to publish the *Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.* Here King listens at a White House meeting. Courtesy Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum. Right: Frederick Douglass, c. 1879, National Archives. *The Frederick Douglass Papers* project is at Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis.

The first volume of the *Papers of Thomas Jefferson* was completed in 1950 and presented to President Harry Truman at the White House. Impressed with the quality and importance of the documentary edition, Truman proposed a comprehensive program for the publication of the public and private writings of persons who have contributed greatly to the development of the United States. The Commission began a survey of scholarly opinion about such a broad publications program.

The Federal Records Act, passed later that same year, advised the Commission to “cooperate with and encourage appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies and nongovernmental institutions, societies, and individuals in collecting and preserving and . . . in editing and publishing the papers of outstanding citizens of the United States and such other documents as may be important for an understanding and appreciation of the history of the United States.”

Over the next decade, the Commission assisted a number of new documentary editions in their search for copies of the papers of outstanding Americans. This assistance and encouragement of new projects was vitally important, and after milestone legislation was passed authorizing a grant program in 1964, the Commission was able to provide tangible support.





Madison Street Park Bathing Beach, June 24, 1936. This is one of thousands of documents preserved by the Seattle Municipal Archives, which was created through NHPRC support.

Appropriated funds, though quite modest, spurred progress. For the past 50 years, the Commission's modest grants program has supported editorial projects—over time numbering 300 different documentary editions—to provide access to important national collections. Commission support has leveraged institutional and private-sector funding for these projects, many of which are complete, and some of which are available online.

These editions provide access to the writings of a wide range of important Americans, including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Andrew Jackson, Frederick Douglass, Ulysses S. Grant, Susan B. Anthony, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr., and for projects covering major events such as the ratification of the U.S. Constitution and the history of emancipation. The editions have provided the best and

most complete collections of primary source materials of American history. They are invaluable in undergraduate courses and have introduced many people to the words and deeds of these significant individuals. The work in these editions spurred hundreds of historians to write books and articles and develop plays and television programs that further our understanding of the American experience.

In 1974, Congress expanded the scope of the Commission to include projects pertaining to the collection and preservation of historical records in the United States, including those of state and local governments. For the past 40 years, the Commission has supported thousands of archival projects that enable scholars and students, family and local historians, journalists, documentary filmmakers, and many others to use original source materials. Approximately half of the NHPRC's funds have preserved and made accessible literally millions of cubic feet of historical documents. Grants have helped to:

- Extend the reach of state archives and records management repositories. Through state historical records advisory boards, the NHPRC has funded statewide planning, including disaster preparedness and response, workshops and regrant programs for local projects within the state for preservation and access.
- Establish or modernize public records programs in local governments, from rural Troup County, Georgia, and Lauderdale County, Mississippi, to metropolitan centers in Seattle, Boston, San Diego, and San Antonio.
- Enhance public access to historical documents. The NHPRC has awarded in excess of \$50 million for processing collections of personal papers, photographic collections of all types, architectural plans and drawings, ship designs, film and video footage, and sound recordings. Since 2006, the NHPRC has also funded digitization projects to make entire collections available online.
- Fund research and development in electronic records management and professional development and leadership programs for archivists and historical documentary editors. The NHPRC has been instrumental in developing Encoded Archival Description, "More Product, Less Process," the Institute for the Editing of Historical Documents, and the Archives Leadership Institute.

## *The* CONTINUUM *of* ACCESS

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THROUGH THE INVESTMENTS THE NHPRC HAS MADE, the National Archives has been instrumental in opening up the nation's archives to researchers and scholars, teachers and writers, students and citizens. Over the course of a generation, our partners in libraries, archives, and museums have responded to the potential of the Web with tremendous creativity and enthusiasm. We believe that enhanced and targeted Federal investments can play a catalytic role in exploiting those opportunities further and in addressing the challenges ahead.

But the gains to be realized from the digital revolution require substantial planning and meaningful investment from all sectors. As stewards of historical records collections re-think their roles and how best to serve the public, they have taken on some of the costs associated with digitization as well as the preservation of traditional analog materials. However, allocation of financial resources has not kept pace with the preservation needs of analog or digital historical records, the need for encouraging records of diversity and inclusion, the public demand for free access to all records, and a sustainable means of distribution.

Future archives leaders are gathered at Berea College in Kentucky for the Archives Leadership Institute.

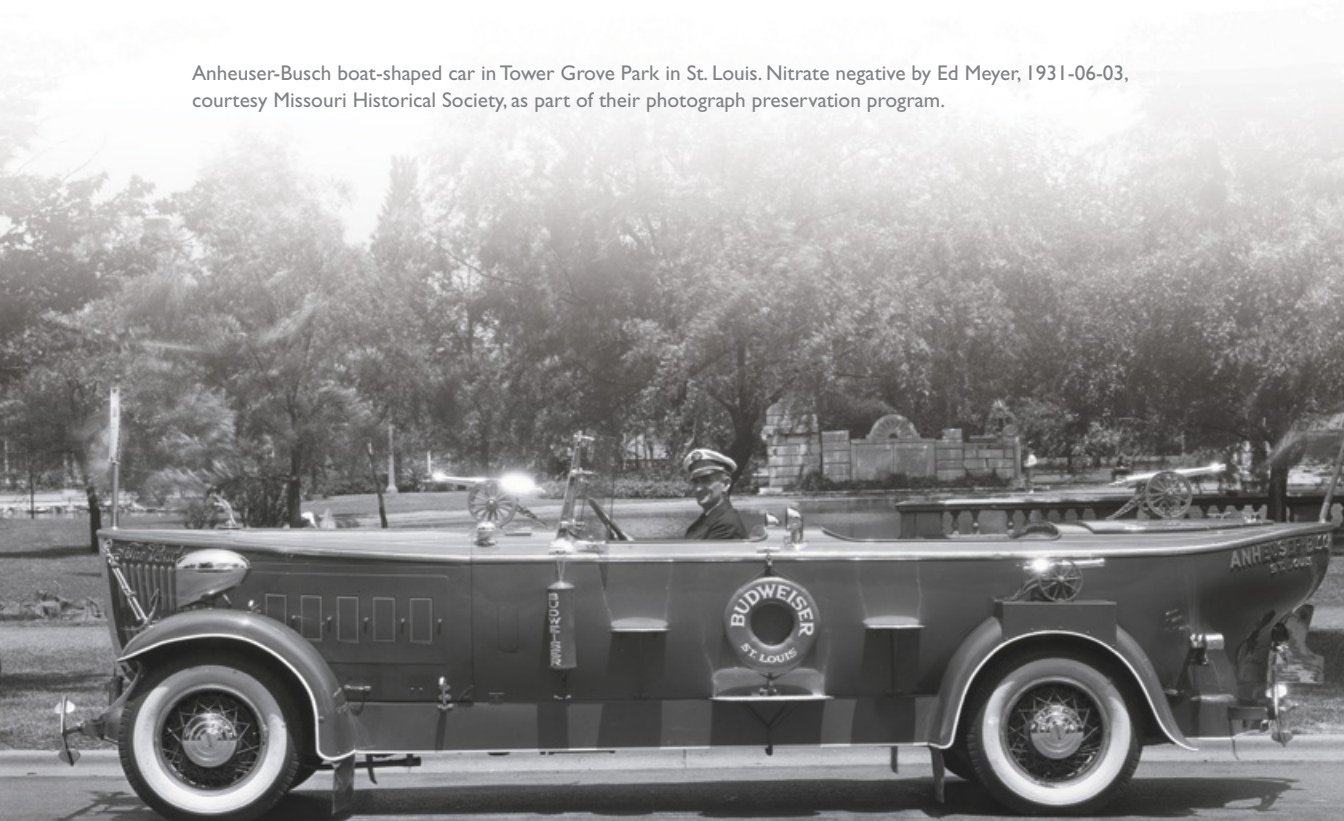


The Federal Government can be a catalyst to create the conditions in which all Americans can more readily access the greatest range and depth of our documentary heritage. The challenge for the NHPRC, the National Archives—and all archives—is to find the best ways to provide *access for the many*.

Archives, repositories, and documentary editions provide access on a continuum—from the processing of collections to publishing online annotated editions or data sets of historical records. At one end of the spectrum is the baseline of basic preservation and, where needed, conservation of the physical documents. At the other end of the spectrum are open source online databases of records available for use by all. With its new Strategic Plan, the NHPRC has developed its grants programs to focus on that continuum of access in five key areas that center on primary sources:

- Processing
- Digitizing
- Publishing
- Engaging the public
- Expanding the network

Anheuser-Busch boat-shaped car in Tower Grove Park in St. Louis. Nitrate negative by Ed Meyer, 1931-06-03, courtesy Missouri Historical Society, as part of their photograph preservation program.





# PROCESSING

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THE VERY FIRST STEP IN PROVIDING ACCESS TO historical records is gaining some measure of control over them. Many institutions have their own records management protocols and evaluative criteria in place as the primary ways of deciding which materials are necessary to keep on a temporary or permanent basis. Other organizations—such as state archives—function as the repository for multiple agencies and departments. Cultural heritage institutions—museums, libraries, archives, colleges and universities—acquire historical records through donations or accessions.

Archival processing—the arrangement and description of the records—is the first stage in making them accessible. Included in this stage are basic preservation practices, and in the past few years, archives and manuscript repositories have made efforts to reduce backlogs and provide access to materials as quickly as possible. Many were encouraged to adopt new methods for this by the 2005 *American Archivist* article “More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing” by Mark A. Greene and Dennis Meissner, based on research funded by the NHPRC.

Once the materials have been arranged and described, a finding aid can be written that allows users to search through broad categories to best determine where they might find the records they seek among vast quantities of original materials. Finding aids might be published and catalogued, but the intrepid researcher would have to manually search through directories to locate the likely finding aids and then search through the finding aids in order to request the appropriate box or folder for the documents.

Over most of the past five decades, the NHPRC primarily funded this stage of access to archives: getting the material under control and creating finding aids for discovery and use. With the birth of the Internet, archivists clued into the new medium’s potential to radically change the finding aid.



The new opportunity to publish finding aids online led to reconsiderations of how to best create them. Encoded Archival Description (EAD), which grew out of standards set for machine-readable archives, was first released in the fall of 1998. Since then, and with help from the NHPRC, revisions to EAD and metadata standards have led to more sophisticated means for making it easier to search, maintain, and exchange information. More and more archives have realized that processing now leads to online publishing of fully searchable finding aids.

The changing dynamics of processing are reflected in the grants NHPRC has made over the past two years. Very few projects are stopping with processing alone, realizing that making at least some digitized versions of records available online is relevant and necessary. In Fiscal Year 2015, we funded projects documenting Jewish American history through New York's Jewish Theological Seminary, the Tanglewood Music Festival of Contemporary Music through the Boston Symphony Orchestra, writers on the radio through Minnesota Public Radio, and the Atlas Rocket Program records at the San Diego Air and Space Museum.

In Fiscal Year 2016, we funded projects on the 1950s Red Scare records at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, the history of gambling at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, photograph collections from 1930s St. Louis through the Missouri Historical Society, the history of railroads at Cornell University's Kheel Center, and the history of the Wildlife Conservation Society.

These and the other diverse processing projects we have funded over the past two years share one thing in common. In virtually every case, the institutions were planning to publish both online finding aids and selected representative images, documents, and recordings. While it may not be financially possible to publish everything online at this time, they recognize that the public expects some measure of instant access to historical records collections.

Leonard Bernstein conducting a Tanglewood Music Center orchestra rehearsal, c. 1955.  
Courtesy Boston Symphony Orchestra Archives.

# DIGITIZING

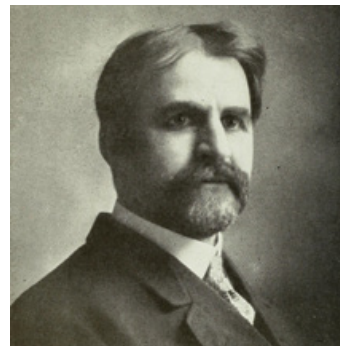
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IN 2006, THE NHPRC BEGAN TO FUND DIGITIZATION projects, in part to examine and test cost-effective methods to digitize archives, but also in full recognition that by digitizing entire records collections we can make them more readily discoverable and usable. Tied in with processing, digitizing is an important next step in opening up collections to the public.

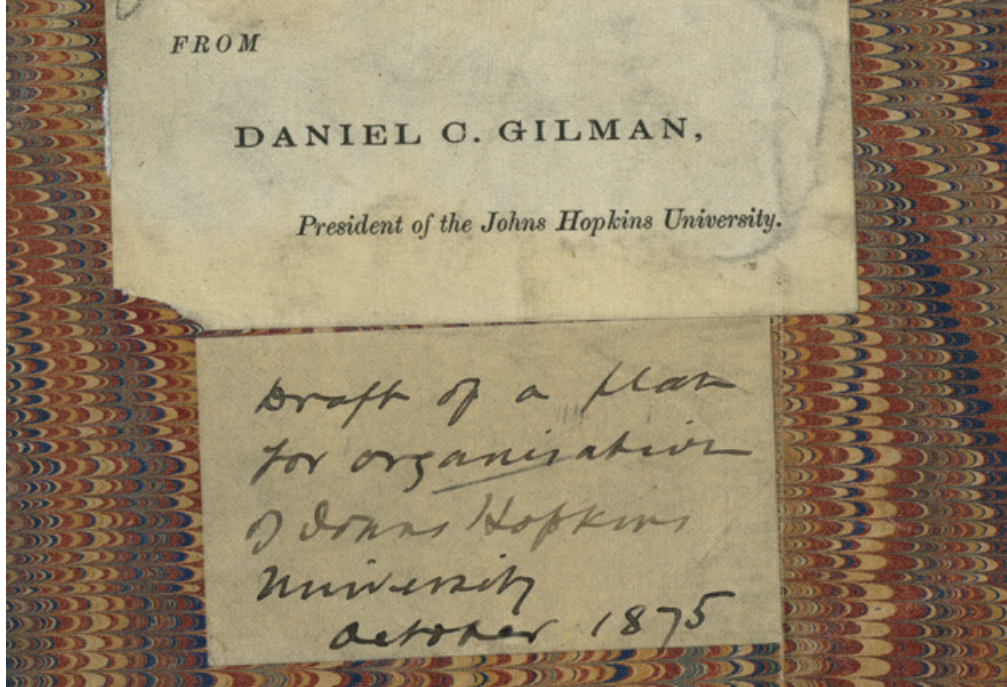
Creating digital surrogates of original material—including papers, photographs, film, video, and audio—helps ensure that multiple copies exist. By posting digitized historical records collections on the Internet, archives and repositories are, in effect, “publishing” these primary sources online. While digital copies are surrogates for analog originals, they can provide a means for researchers to see or hear the content of primary sources.

This revolutionary step makes records accessible to an exponentially larger audience. In this way, archives are replicating the precedent set by some early historical documentary projects. During the 1950s and 1960s, numerous projects microfilmed processed historical records collections in order to expand access. Microfilm allowed, as well, for the creation of new collections drawn from multiple repositories and provided researchers a one-stop way of viewing the entire arranged collection. Microfilm still requires users to travel to a

*Left:* Frame from a videotape interview with Coretta Scott King, part of the preservation of the “Eyes on the Prize” television documentary at Washington University in St. Louis. *Right:* The University of Southern California is preserving the correspondence of writer Hamlin Garland (1860–1940), a leading figure in American literary history.







The title page of Daniel Gilman's 1875 plan for the organization of Johns Hopkins University. Gilman was the first president of Hopkins as well as the founding president of the Carnegie Institution.

specific repository or order a copy to view the materials. The Internet remedies that task by publishing and distributing through a shared platform accessible to users worldwide.

Over the past decade, we have been supporting dozens of projects that digitize and publish materials. In FY 2015, the NHPRC funded digitization projects including a history of the Uprising of 1934 at the Southern Labor Archives at Georgia State University; civil rights collections from the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture at the College of Charleston; and digitizing the interviews created for the award-winning civil rights “Eyes on the Prize” television documentary, held at Washington University in St. Louis.

Five additional projects were funded during FY 2016: documentation of the 1970 shootings at Kent State University; some 114,300 pages from Pan Am World Airways held by the University of Miami; the papers of James R. Mead, one of the founders of Wichita, Kansas, at Wichita State University; the records of Daniel C. Gilman, president of both Johns Hopkins University and the Carnegie Institution of Washington, held by Hopkins; and at the University of Southern California, the correspondence of Hamlin Garland, a founding voice of American literary realism. These projects join a roster of dozens of digitized collections supported by the NHPRC over the past decade that have created new ways of accessing historical records collections, all in service to the founding ideas behind the Commission to open archives to the public.

# PUBLISHING

FOR THE PAST FIVE DECADES, PUBLISHING HISTORICAL records collections has been the primary way of expanding public access to the American Story. The NHPRC has funded more than 300 documentary editions in print, microfilm and online. Publications projects share practices with archival projects, beginning with gaining intellectual control over the range of materials. In the case of publishing projects, those collections typically are built around a significant historical figure—from the Papers of Benjamin Franklin to the Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr., for example—or a socio-historical movement, such as Freedom and Emancipation.

Founders Bookmarks. *Opposite:* Dolley Madison from a lithograph of an original painting by Gilbert Stuart. Courtesy White House Historical Association.







Documentary editions begin with the compilation of copies of as many related primary sources as possible by searching repositories across the country and around the world, often for several years. Editors transcribe handwritten documents and printed materials, checking exact copies against originals to ensure authenticity and accuracy. Documents are then arranged, typically serially, and annotation begins. Scholars versed in the history of the era provide context, cross-referencing and citing other relevant materials, and providing notes to explain incidents and individuals that may be unfamiliar to many readers. Individual volumes are then prepared, indexed, proofread, and sent to the press.

Over the past dozen years, many print editions have been working to take advantage of the power of the Internet to increase public access. Founders Online ([founders.archives.gov](http://founders.archives.gov)), a cooperative project between the National Archives (through the NHPRC) and the University of Virginia, has published an online database of some 175,000 documents sent to and from six founders: Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison. In its first three years, Founders Online has received more than 2.3 million visitors, and it is frequently cited in source notes and bibliographies for articles, theses, and monographs.

In addition to these projects, others are creating hybrid versions of documentary editions, publishing in both print and online, for example, the Andrew Jackson Papers, Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, the Papers of Jane Addams, the Papers of Thomas A. Edison, the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, the Papers of John Jay, the Presidential Recordings Project, and others. Digital-only editions include the Dolley Madison Digital Edition, the Civil War Governors of Kentucky Digital Documentary Edition, the Walt Whitman Archive, the Yale Indian Papers project, and the Pinckney Statesmen of South Carolina digital edition.

Many documentary editions, both print and online, rely upon processed collections at multiple archives and repositories, and clearly there is a symbiotic relationship that should be expanded in the decades to come. If we take the principles of documentary editing—providing context, annotation, and links to other sources—and apply them to digitized collections held by single archives or multiple repositories, we can create exciting, new ways of providing deep access and historical understanding through historical records collections. Working together, archivists and historians are building new ways of publishing digital editions, and the Commission is uniquely positioned to assist in these efforts.



Benáumakééh } Devil } East Haven Indian  
Hobbomauck } Language }

James Meeh-yééh Sachem of the East Haven Indians. <sup>did about 1745 of Cheshire</sup> His Son

James Mennaugach did at Darby 1758

300 Indian Men in Arms assembled in East Haven at a grand Council. Eliz. Mohege's



East Haven first began to be settled by English in 1681 & 1682. M. Hemmeway began to preach there 1704; formed into a parish 1707 with about & not above 25 Families. Ordained

An Oval or Ellipse 17 1/2 by 12 feet

Sachem's Wigwams, it is said used to be double, with two Fire places & Smoke holes atop.

Ezra Stiles sketched this Niantic wigwam during his 1761 visit to the tribe in Connecticut. It is representative of East Coast Algonquian Native American architecture. Courtesy Yale Indian Papers Project.

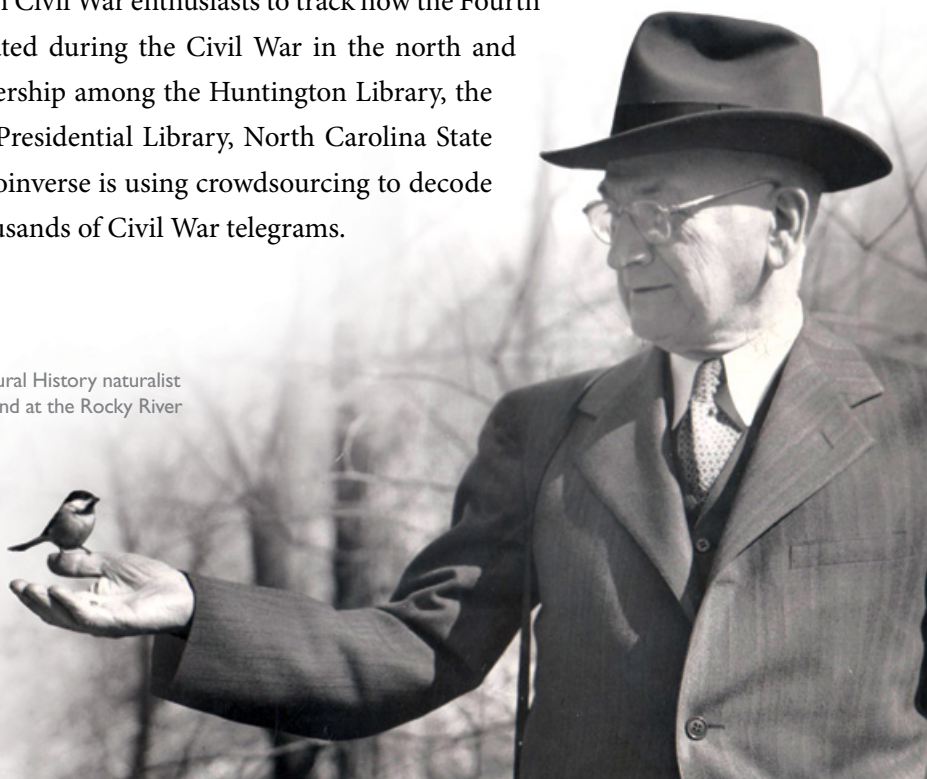
## ENGAGING *the* PUBLIC

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A DIRECT CONSEQUENCE OF THE DECISION BY ARCHIVES and documentary editions to publish materials online is that public expectations have changed. Users go to the Internet first to search for finding aids and, increasingly, entire collections and specific items. Genealogical sites, such as Ancestry, Family Search, and Fold3, have led to greater direct public participation in building and enriching materials. The National Archives itself enlists the public in tagging and transcribing efforts from the 1940 U.S. Census to subtitling videos, from its Citizen Archivists activities to the History Hub platform.

Over the past few years, the NHPRC has set aside funds to fund a handful of pilot projects that harness the power of citizens to engage directly with making more historical records accessible. In FY 2015, we funded a project at Keene State College, New Hampshire, to bring together high school students and volunteers at the Historical Society of Cheshire County to put local 18th and 19th century documents online for students and the public to read, interpret, and transcribe. At Virginia Tech, a new website is relying on Civil War enthusiasts to track how the Fourth of July was celebrated during the Civil War in the north and the south. A partnership among the Huntington Library, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, North Carolina State University, and Zooniverse is using crowdsourcing to decode and transcribe thousands of Civil War telegrams.

Cleveland Museum of Natural History naturalist Arthur B. Williams and friend at the Rocky River Reservation in 1942.







Thomas J. Eckert, seated on the left, with six telegraph assistants near Petersburg, Virginia, 1864. Courtesy Huntington Library.

In FY 2016, the NHPRC funded a project that is bringing together volunteers from a retirement center with students from the University of Rochester to do the prep work for a digital edition of the Papers of the Seward Family, including William Seward, Lincoln's Secretary of State. St. John's University in Queens, New York, is partnering with New York City's Department of Education and the Queens Memory Project to train teachers to help 10th graders connect their family histories with broader trends in the world. The Cleveland Museum of Natural History is collaborating with two Ohio universities to introduce middle and high school students to forest and wildlife records from the 1930s and apply them to changing ecosystems of today. The University of South Carolina is partnering with the South Carolina Department of Education and teachers to create Document Based Questions for U.S. history collections.

It is no surprise that one of the most dynamic means of public engagement with historical records is via the classroom. Archives across the country are capitalizing on the rich resources offered online as a way of getting primary sources into the hands of students. Founders Online is a great example of that idea in action. The National Humanities Center offers interactive lessons built upon these primary sources at "American in Class" <http://americainclass.org/citizen-leadership-in-the-young-republic>. University of Virginia historian Peter Onuf used Founders for his first widely-attended MOOC (massive, open online course) entitled "The Age of Jefferson." These programs and efforts at archives and educational institutions around the country are tapping into the power of the people to make access happen. Access for the many will require the continued efforts of the many to achieve this goal.

## EXPANDING *the* NETWORK

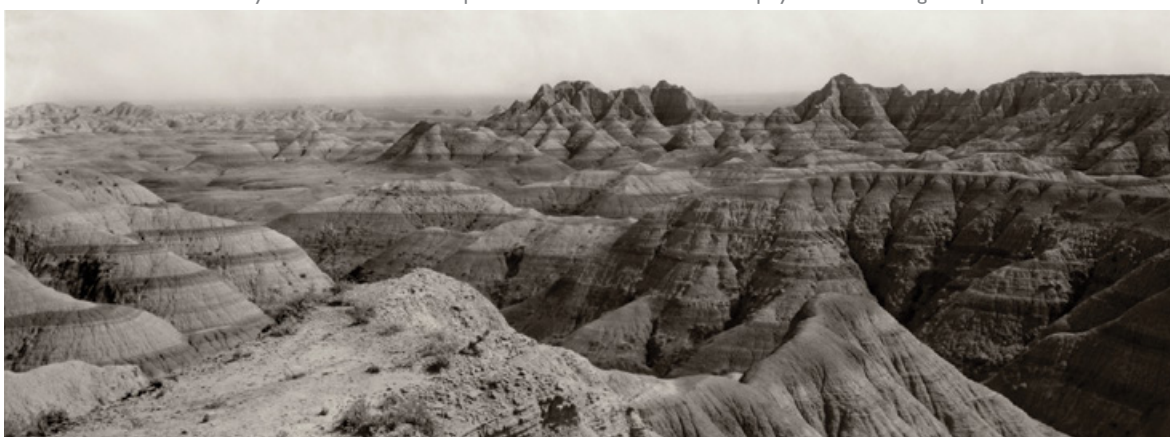
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IN ORDER TO PROVIDE ACCESS FOR THE MANY, THE National Archives needs great partners at the state and local levels. For the past 40 years, the NHPRC has partnered with state historical records advisory boards to work with state and local governments and small organizations within individual states to provide public access to archives.

Over the past two fiscal years, the NHPRC has concentrated on two programs to expand and strengthen the network of state archives. State Government Electronic Records grants went to seven archives to accession, describe, preserve, and provide access to records of enduring value. Projects in Alabama, Colorado, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, and Wisconsin have created strategies to develop and demonstrate new and sustainable electronic records preservation and management.

Our State Board Programming Grants went to 36 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands in Fiscal Years 2015-16. Through this program, state boards were able to undertake a variety of activities, including regrant programs, which provide modest funds to small and mid-size institutions; community workshops on best practices, including citizen engagement efforts; traveling archivists, with students and journeymen assisting smaller archival organizations; online citizen resources; annual Archives Month and National History Day events; and archives emergency preparedness. These grassroots efforts in the states help build and strengthen an infrastructure for archives and the people they serve.

This panorama of South Dakota's badlands is by Louis Palenske. Through an NHPRC regrant from the Kansas Historical Records Advisory Board, the Wabaunsee County Historical Society was able to preserve Palenske's photos, which are now part of [Kansasmemory.org](http://Kansasmemory.org). *Opposite:* October is Archives Month, and in Connecticut they showcased the story of the woman who inspired the "Arsenic and Old Lace" play and film through this poster.



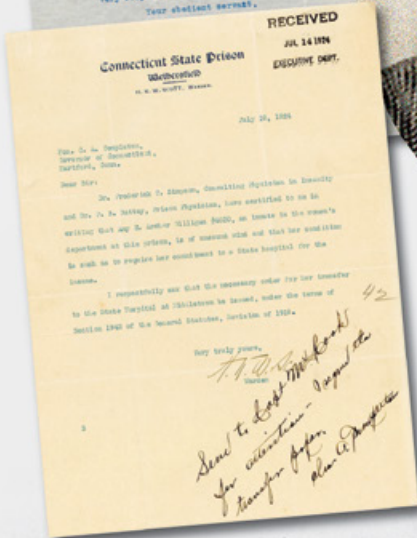


# MOTIVE FOR MAYHEM! FIND IT IN THE ARCHIVES.

Letter from Warden Charles McClaughry regarding stay of execution for Amy Archer Gilligan, 1918. Record Group 005, Governor Marcus Holcomb, State Archives, Connecticut State Library.



Purported mug shot of Amy Archer Gilligan. Unknown source.



Letter from Warden H.K.W. Scott requesting transfer of Amy Archer Gilligan to the State Hospital at Middletown, 1924. Record Group 005, Governor Charles A. Templeton, State Archives, Connecticut State Library.



Case #2933 State v Amy E Archer Gilligan Superior Court, Sept. Term, 1916. Record Group 003 State Archives, Connecticut State Library.

Women's Ward, Wethersfield Prison, Wethersfield. Accession # 1963.33.34.22, Connecticut Historical Society.

Amy Archer Gilligan operated a home for the elderly in Windsor from 1907 until her arrest in 1916 for murder. During that time period, 60 residents died at the home as well as both of her husbands. She was convicted and sentenced to death by hanging which was overturned on a technicality. She later pled guilty to a reduced charge and was sentenced to life in prison. In 1924, prison officials declared her insane and sent her to the State Hospital for the Insane where she remained until her death in 1962. Amy Archer Gilligan's story was the inspiration for the 1939 Broadway play and 1944 movie, *Arsenic and Old Lace*.



Archer Home for Old Folks, Windsor. Windsor Historical Society, Windsor, Connecticut.



Prior to awarding grants, staff at the Commission helped projects collect and transcribe documents. Here in 1954 is Marion Tining working on Thomas Lloyd's shorthand notes of the First Congress. That document would later appear in the *Documentary History of the First Federal Congress*, a project at George Washington University.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING

## *and the ROAD AHEAD*

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THE VERY NAME OF THE NATIONAL HISTORICAL Publications and Records Commission suggests a distinction between two funding streams—one for publications and one for records. But hindsight shows that that has always been a false equivalency and is increasingly blurred. Archives, special collections at universities and museums, digital humanities centers, and libraries are all realizing the need to open up the records and put them online. Users—in our case the American people, the taxpayers—are more interested in being able to discover and use historical documents than ever before. With our experience over the past 50 years, the Commission now encourages greater levels of cooperation and collaboration among archivists, editors, historians, and publishers to get more online and to ensure that these rich resources can be understood and appreciated.

Our Strategic Plan focuses on providing as many opportunities as possible to reach users on that continuum of access, stated earlier in this report. In our Publications Program, we are engaged in a two-year process that looks at ways to create sustainable digital editions. Our Public Engagement program is looking for model projects to pilot and test new ways of bringing more volunteers and other people into crowdsourced projects. We are working with our partners at the state historical records advisory boards to come up with new and better ways of expanding the nation's network of archives, and one specific area of investigation is to see how born-digital emails and other messages can be better managed and shared.

Our new Access to Historical Records program has two funding categories: one for Major Initiatives, designed to provide opportunities for collaboration and innovation, and one for Archival Projects, which reduces the cost-share burden to broaden our



From a Commission meeting in 1951: Standing from left to right: Solon J. Buck, Library of Congress; G. Bernard Noble, Department of State; George M. Eelsey, Administrative Assistant to the President of the United States; Rudolph A. Winnacker, Office of the Secretary of Defense; Julian P. Boyd, Librarian of Princeton University and Editor of *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*; Richard H. Shryock, Director of the Institute of the History of Medicine, Johns Hopkins University. Seated from left to right are: Philip M. Hamer, Executive Director for the Commission; Howard W. Smith, Member of the United States House of Representatives from Virginia; Felix Frankfurter, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; Guy Stanton Ford, American Historical Association; Wayne C. Grover, Archivist of the United States and Chairman of the Commission. Absent and not pictured is Clyde R. Hoey, United States Senator from North Carolina.

applicant pool and reach more diverse audiences and institutions. Through it all, we are committed to develop and lead targeted national initiatives that convene archivists, editors, historians, publishers, librarians, and others to discuss critical issues, best practices, innovative tools, and methodologies in the publishing and stewardship of historical records collections. Initiatives will serve as collaborative efforts of the National Archives, other Federal funders, and the private sector.

The NHPRC was created to serve as a means for the National Archives to make access happen to historical records collections. While the central mission of the National Archives revolves around Federal records, the founders of the agency readily understood the need for a Commission, in the words of J. Franklin Jameson, with the “power to edit and publish not only materials in possession of the government, but also those which are in private existence.” As we chart the road ahead, we stand committed to opening the archives and to publishing historical records collections that tell the American story.

Kathleen Williams  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



# *Financial Summary of* **NHPRC AWARDS**

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THIS ANNUAL REPORT COVERS FY 2015 AND FY 2016.

## **FY 2015**

**I**n Fiscal Year 2015 through the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the National Archives awarded 68 grants and one cooperative agreement totaling \$5.3 million for archives and publishing projects in 35 states, the territory of U.S. Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia.

<i>Archives Leadership Institute</i>	\$243,954
<i>Access to Historical Records</i>	\$778,010
<i>Digital Dissemination of Archival Collections</i>	\$353,143
<i>Literacy &amp; Engagement</i>	\$293,854
<i>Founders Online Cooperative Agreement</i>	\$167,529
<i>Publishing Historical Records</i>	\$2,308,514
<i>State Boards</i>	\$526,683
<i>State Government Electronic Records</i>	\$598,356
<b>TOTAL RECOMMENDED AWARDS</b>	<b>\$ 5,270,043</b>

## FY 2016

In Fiscal Year 2016 through the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the National Archives awarded 62 grants and one cooperative agreement totaling \$5.2 million for archives and publishing projects in 33 states and the District of Columbia.

<i>Access to Historical Records</i>	\$829,320
<i>Digital Dissemination of Archival Collections</i>	\$375,089
<i>Institute for Historical Editing</i>	\$264,987
<i>Literacy &amp; Engagement</i>	\$401,230
<i>Founders Online Cooperative Agreement</i>	\$170,000
<i>Publishing Historical Records</i>	\$1,996,188
<i>State Boards</i>	\$621,761
<i>State Government Electronic Records</i>	\$518,025
<b>TOTAL RECOMMENDED AWARDS</b>	<b>\$5,176,660</b>

# THE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS & RECORDS COMMISSION

## STRATEGIC PLAN

*(adopted May, 2016)*

The National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) supports activities that provide access to historical records that tell the American story. The NHPRC supports publishing, preservation and access projects, research and development of best practices and new methodologies. These undertakings assist the National Archives in carrying out its mission and goals.

As the nation's archives, records repositories, and documentary editing projects are engaged in dynamic ways of redefining practices and adopting new directions for preservation and access, the NHPRC has adopted this new Strategic Plan.

Through collaboration with the National Archives, other Federal agencies, and private funders, the Commission seeks to enhance its national leadership role; continue its support of our partners in the states; fund preservation and access, historical documentary editions, and professional development and training; and expand programs that enhance public participation in preserving and using historical records collections.

## **MISSION**

THE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS AND Records Commission provides opportunities for the American people to discover and use records that increase understanding of our democracy, history, and culture.

## **VISION**

THROUGH LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES, GRANTS, AND fostering the creation of new tools and methods, the National Historical Publications and Records Commission connects the work of the National Archives to the work of the nation's archives. The Commission acts as a bridge for innovation and creativity in advancing best archival practices, publishing historical records, and connecting citizens to their records.



## GOAL ONE: *Connect the National Archives with the work of the nation's archives.*

STRATEGY: THE COMMISSION WILL PROVIDE NATIONAL leadership in addressing core challenges, developing and promoting best practices, and building partnerships among the nation's vast network of archives and documentary editing projects.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Build national and state partnerships around key needs
- Support professional development opportunities for archivists and documentary editors
- Fund research, development, and dissemination of best practices, tools, and methodologies

### TACTICS:

1. Develop and lead targeted national initiatives that convene archivists, editors, historians, publishers, librarians, and others to discuss critical issues, best practices, innovative tools, and methodologies in the publishing and stewardship of historical records collections. Initiatives will serve as collaborative efforts of the National Archives, other Federal funders, and the private sector. *Initial undertakings* will focus on:
  - a. new publishing methods, including digital documentary editions
  - b. digital records preservation and access, with an initial focus on email
  - c. partnerships between the states and the National Archives, including the role and capacity of state historical records advisory boards and state archives
  - d. public engagement with archives' collections, processes, and outcomes
2. Organize and sponsor regular opportunities for project staff of NHPRC grants and staff of the National Archives to share best practices and new methods to advance the field
3. Publish and disseminate findings on best practices, tools, and methodologies drawn from funded projects, authored by staff and others

## GOAL TWO: *Expand access to the nation's historical records.*

STRATEGY: THE COMMISSION WILL SUPPORT INNOVATIVE and collaborative projects in preserving, arranging, describing, and publishing collections of primary sources.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Broaden preservation of, and increased online access to, historical records collections
- Initiate collaborative projects leading to the long-term sustainability of digital resources
- Promote open access to collections to encourage re-use and analysis
- Support the development and use of standards for online publishing of historical records collections

### TACTICS:

1. Combine the current Access, Digitization, and Electronic Records programs into a single Access program with a two-tiered annual cycle:
  - a. *Major Initiatives*: for innovative and collaborative approaches to address significant challenges. Grants would be limited to several large awards and require a 50 percent cost share. The initial application would be a three-page proposal, with an invitation to make a full application to a select set of applicants
  - b. *Archives Projects*: modest-sized grant awards to carry out preservation and access activities. Implement a reduced cost share (25%) to widen the applicant pool
2. Complete current documentary editions (print and online) and identify new projects to make historical records collections more widely accessible
3. Develop and sponsor national convenings (see also Goal One) to address challenges associated with primary sources, including long-term sustainability of digital resources, digital publishing standards, and open access to humanities-based work, among others
4. Support, where appropriate, the use of Creative Commons licenses, the building of APIs (application program interfaces), and other Open Access principles that promote use and re-use of collections and associated data

## GOAL THREE: *Engage the American people in preserving and discovering the American record.*

STRATEGY: THE COMMISSION WILL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES that put the American people in touch with primary sources in their communities and online.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage innovative methods for the public to share their knowledge about and interest in historical records
- Support efforts to train people of all ages in using primary source materials
- Partner with state boards on local and statewide projects that enhance public participation and engagement in the work of archives

### TACTICS:

1. Promote education and training efforts led by archivists, editors, and records managers for the creation and use of innovative curricula that advance public engagement with historic records
2. Identify needs for open source tools to help the public find fulfilling and useful ways to benefit from the increasing amount of digital resources in American history and culture
3. Offer regular forums for archival and documentary editing projects to share best practices in public engagement

## GOAL FOUR: *Enhance the capacity of small and diverse organizations with historical records collections.*

STRATEGY: THE COMMISSION WILL PROMOTE THE institutional advancement of organizations in underserved communities with historical records collections and assist locally-based repositories with training and tools to improve their stewardship abilities.

### OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage a wider pool of applicants
- Fund the creation of methods and tools designed for smaller repositories and underserved communities
- Partner with state boards, state archives, and other entities to advance the capacity of local institutions in their states

### TACTICS:

1. Develop and lead a national initiative (see Goal One) to examine the collaborative role of state boards and state archives in identifying and meeting the needs of local archives and repositories
2. Partner with state boards, state archives, or other leading institutions to target institutional advancement for local archives and repositories
3. Streamline the application and review processes—reduce reviews to one panel comprised of peers and state board members; offer brief preliminary applications for some grant programs
4. Support and offer workshops through a variety of sponsors—regional professional organizations, State Boards, and others—to educate locally-based applicants about project design and the application process
5. Regularly survey applicants and potential applicants about NHPRC processes and programs



# THE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS & RECORDS COMMISSION

*(members FY 2016)*

Archivist of the United States, *Chair*  
DAVID S. FERRIERO

Representing the U.S. Supreme Court  
JUDGE JEREMY D. FOGEL

U.S. Senate  
SENATOR DANIEL SULLIVAN, *Alaska*

U.S. House of Representatives  
REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BARR, *Sixth District, Kentucky*

Presidential Appointee  
KAREN J. JEFFERSON, *Records Manager,*  
*Robert W. Woodruff Library, Atlanta*

Presidential Appointee  
NAOMI NELSON, *Associate University Librarian, Duke University*

Library of Congress  
NICOLE SAYLOR, *Head, American Folklife Center Archive*

U.S. Department of Defense  
ERIN MAHAN, *Chief Historian*

U.S. Department of State  
STEPHEN RANDOLPH, *Historian*

Association for Documentary Editing  
RAY SMOCK, *Director, Robert C. Byrd Center for  
Congressional History and Education, Shepherd University*

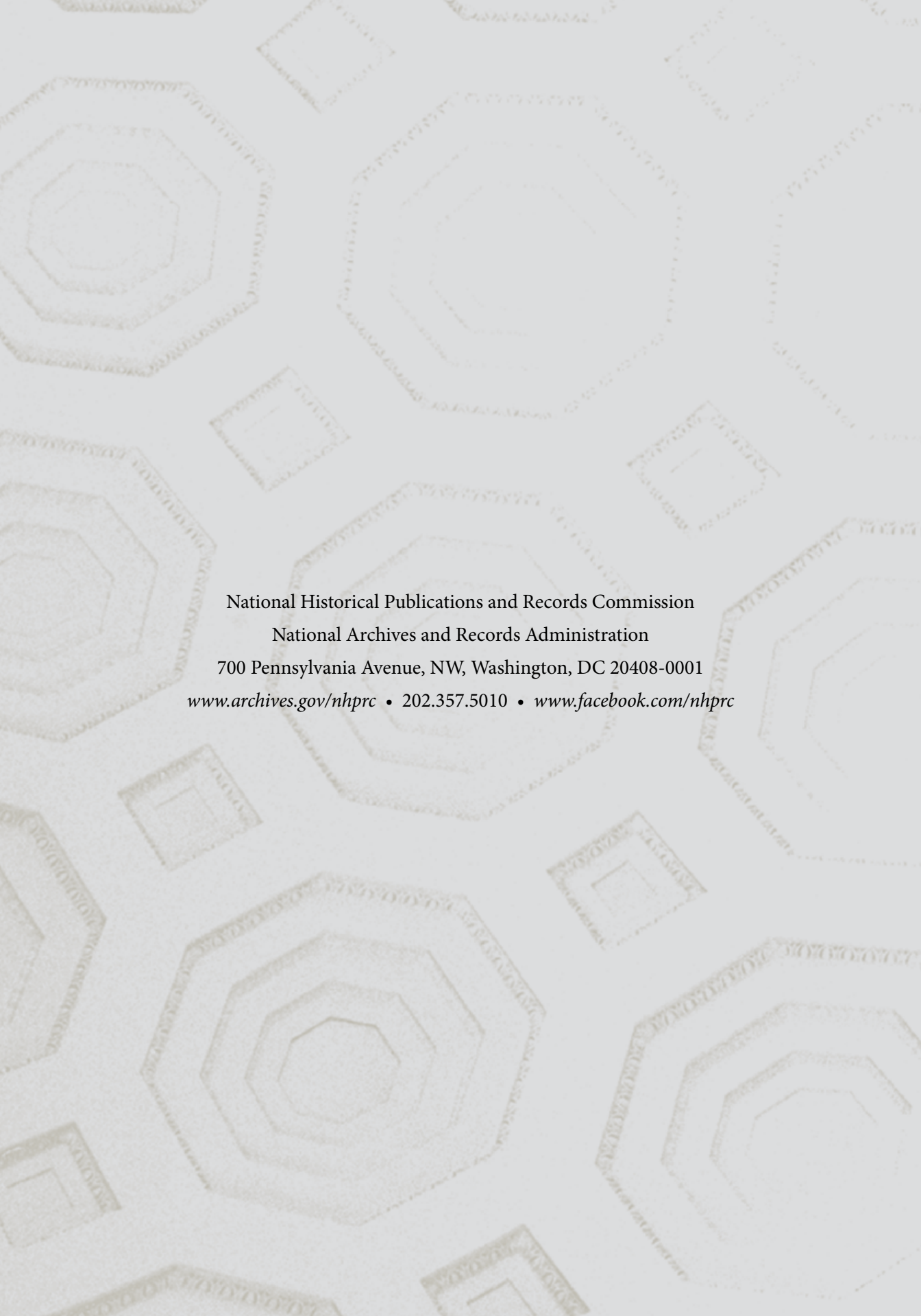
American Association for State and Local History  
W. ERIC EMERSON, *Director,  
South Carolina Department of Archives and History*

American Historical Association  
WILLIAM G. THOMAS, III, *Chairman,  
Department of History, University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators  
KAYE LANNING MINCHEW, *Director,  
Troup County (Georgia) Archives*

Organization of American Historians  
GEORGE MILES, *Curator, Western Americana Collection at the  
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University*

Society of American Archivists  
PETER GOTTLIEB, *former State Archivist in Wisconsin  
and Past President of the Society of American Archivists*



National Historical Publications and Records Commission

National Archives and Records Administration

700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20408-0001

[www.archives.gov/nhprc](http://www.archives.gov/nhprc) • 202.357.5010 • [www.facebook.com/nhprc](http://www.facebook.com/nhprc)

This letter, My very dear Eliza will  
not be delivered to you, unless I shall first have  
terminated my earthly career; to begin, as I trust, by  
hope from redeeming grace and divine love, a happy  
immortality.

If it had been possible for me to have  
avoided the interview, my love for you and my precious  
children would have been alone a decisive motive -  
but it was not possible without sacrifices which would  
have rendered me unworthy of your esteem. I need  
not tell you of the pang I felt from the idea of  
quitting you, and exposing you to the anguish which  
I know you would feel. Nor could I dwell on the  
topic lest it should unman me.

The consolations of religion, my beloved,  
can alone support you; and these you have a right  
to enjoy. Fly to the bosom of your God and be comforted.

With my last idea I shall cherish the sweet hope  
of meeting you in a better world.

Adieu best of wives, and best of  
women, Embrace all my darling children for  
me.

July 4. 1814

Your  
A. H.

Mrs Hamilton



NATIONAL  
ARCHIVES

NATIONAL HISTORICAL  
PUBLICATIONS  
& RECORDS COMMISSION