

INTRODUCTION



The Special Collections Research Center is home to the Joseph Mark Lauinger Memorial Library's rare books and manuscripts as well as the Georgetown University Archives and the Georgetown University Art Collection. Georgetown's rich collections range over the historical aspects of almost every humanistic discipline and of many scientific fields of study, with materials covering the whole course of recorded history. A few of the collections' areas of special strength include Jesuit history, intelligence and espionage, early American Catholicism, English recusant history, music manuscripts, English and American literature, with emphasis on English Catholic literary figures, American printmakers, Native American linguistics, diplomacy and international affairs, with concentrations on the Middle East and on Panama and the Canal, and of course Georgetown history. And much else besides. Our collections are not only available for consultation and study by Georgetown faculty and graduate students and visiting scholars, but are also actively sought out for classroom use and for research projects by Georgetown undergraduates.

This descriptive catalog is an introduction to our extensive and constantly expanding holdings, most of which are documented in much greater detail in the library's online catalog and in the detailed finding aids available on the library's Web site. This catalog itself bears witness to the rapid growth of the collections as well as to our efforts to gain intellectual control over them: this fourth edition is more than double the size of the first edition, issued in 1985.

In the introduction to that first edition, then-University Librarian Joseph Jeffs commented on the library's enormous gratitude to our many donors:

The decision to part with a collection which has been built up over a lifetime or which has been in a family for generations is not an easy one to make. Credit must be given to the hundreds of alumni and other friends who, understanding the importance of primary resource materials to the world of scholarship, made selfless decisions to share their own precious collections. Georgetown's students and faculty and scholars everywhere owe a lasting debt of gratitude to each of them. The publication of this catalog gives us an opportunity to acknowledge publicly our appreciation of this outstanding generosity.

There is little to add to this statement of the library's indebtedness to the continued generosity of alumni and friends, except to note the effectiveness of the several gifts of endowed funds that have come since that time in allowing the library to build strength upon strength, and to reaffirm the value of these collections to the international scholarly community and to the many Georgetown students who have been enabled to learn the art of archival research by experiencing it firsthand. The farsightedness of our donors in their gifts of books, manuscripts, personal papers, and artwork, and in their gifts of funds to support cataloging, conservation, and acquisitions, grows increasingly apparent.

This fourth edition of *Special Collections at Georgetown* owes its existence to the generosity of Elizabeth Fuller, whose ample gift of funds has made its publication possible.

John A. Buchtel
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