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News - Digital Library of Georgia

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Digital Library of Georgia

Valdosta State University Archives Map and Plat Collections Now Available Online

Three map and plat collections featuring historical maps, plats, deeds, records, and correspondence pertaining to South Georgia land holdings dating from 1767 to 1899 are now available in the Digital Library of Georgia (DLG). These resources belong to Valdosta State University Archives. They have been made available online thanks in part to the DLG's Competitive Digitization grant program, a funding opportunity intended to broaden DLG partner participation for statewide historic digitization projects.

The three digital collections include:

- Deeds and Plats, Georgia, available at dlg.usg.edu/collection/valdosta_ms18, consisting of residential and commercial deeds, plats, maps, and other documents from counties and towns, mostly in southeast Georgia, dating from 1767 to 1899.
- Deeds, Camden County, Georgia, available at dlg.usg.edu/collection/valdosta_ms21, which includes deeds, plats, land grants, and legal documents dating from 1833 to 1899 regarding land in Camden County, Georgia, and northern Florida.
- John Adam Treutlen, June 1767, available at dlg.usg.edu/collection/valdosta_ms165, a land grant dated June 1767 assigned by King George III of England conveying 400 acres of land in the parish of Saint Matthew, Georgia to

John Adam Treutlen, Georgia's first elected governor.

Digitization, description, and online access to these collections provide historical value to Georgia genealogists, and researchers of South Georgia and its development.

John G. Crowley, associate professor in the Department of History at Valdosta State University noted:

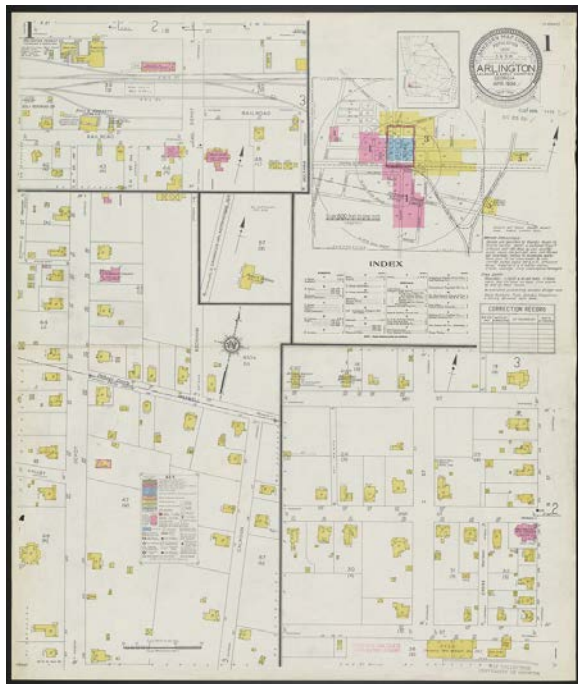
Materials such as these are invaluable to genealogists and historians. They reveal patterns of land use, settlement, industrial development, and those involved in such enterprises. For the genealogist, land records are a source of general background information on individuals and families, establish patterns of movement and employment, and often reveal family relationships otherwise unknown or unproven. Southern historians, local historians, and genealogists both amateur and professional will profit enormously from improved access to this material.

Chris Meyers, professor of history at Valdosta State University stated that "the collections to be digitized represent what a genealogist would consider a prized find. Deed records fill significant gaps in genealogical research and making these records available to all, through digitization, represents a significant service to all genealogists."

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Select Georgia Towns and Cities Dating From 1923–1941 Now Available for Free Online

The Digital Library of Georgia has just made Sanborn fire insurance maps produced between

1923–1941 for 39 Georgia towns and cities in 35 counties freely available online. The maps, which are now in the public domain, can be retrieved at dlg.usg.edu/collection/dlg_sanb and complement the DLG’s existing collection of the University of Georgia Map and Government Information Library’s 539 Sanborn maps dating from 1884–1922 that have been available since 2005. The DLG has also upgraded its image viewer, which will allow better access and improved navigation to the new and older Sanborn images from this collection.



Sanborn maps were designed to assist fire insurance agents in determining fire hazards for properties by outlining the construction of buildings and their elements, as well as the location of water facilities, house and block numbers, and the names of streets. They have proven useful in researching urban growth and decline, urban planning design, and the historic use of buildings in a city.

Cari Goetcheus, associate professor in the College of Environment and Design at the University of Georgia noted:

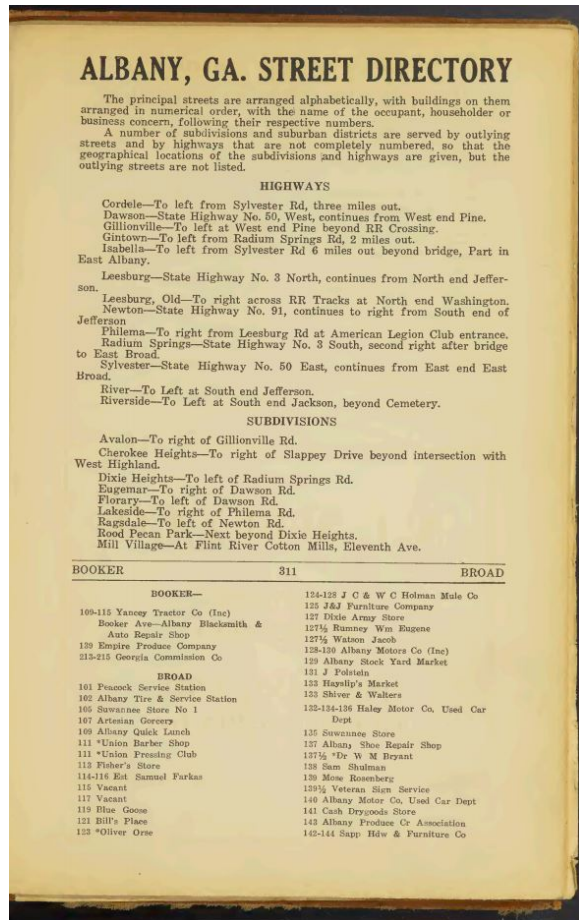
Sanborn maps are a wonderful snapshot of place in time from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s. Originally created by insurance companies to understand building materials in cities so they could decide what and how to insure the built environment, these maps offer much more than that by providing insight into Georgia’s diverse cultural, political, social, economic, and geographic history. For example, my students and I have most recently been using Athens Sanborn maps to document land-use change in an area known as Hot Corner, the historically black business district of Athens from the late 1800s to the 1970s.

Valerie Glenn, librarian and head of the University of Georgia’s Map and Government Information Library noted:

Because the maps contain such rich details, they provide a clear picture of a town as it existed—culturally, socially, economically, geographically. Users can see how many banks, or theatres, or piano stores existed; the “colored” schools and churches; and the distance between the river and the cigar factory. Over time this makes it easier for users to, for example, identify changes to historically African American neighborhoods in a given town or see the development, expansion, and/or decline of a central business district.

Digitization of City Directories for Albany, Georgia, Dating From 1922–1950.

New online records are now available for people researching their families in Albany, Georgia. The Digital Library of Georgia has just added a collection of city directories housed at the Dougherty County Public Library, dating from 1922–1950. The collection, Albany, Georgia City Directories, is available at dlg.usg.edu/collection/zgn_albcd and contains 11 directories covering Albany during



business, civic, social, religious, charitable, and literary institutions."

Christina Shepherd, head of reference for the Dougherty County Public Library described the relevance of Albany's city directories to the researchers in her library:

Several patrons have asked to use the directories to see who lived in their house, to trace an ancestor's life, verifying use of land, or to see who ran what businesses. A specific example is in 1940 there was a tornado that came through and destroyed a lot of downtown Albany. While these directories do not show that event, they show the city stayed strong after that event. The directories have the addresses where businesses were before the tornado in 1939 to where they had to relocate in 1941. Just think, those directories were the same books that our relatives, our city leaders, and others used to find an address or phone number!

intermittent years from 1922 to 1950, and one 1937 directory from Americus.

J. Douglas Porter, a writer based in Albany, Georgia noted:

City directories existed before telephone directories and often listed the names, addresses, occupations, and ethnicities of people in American towns and cities. Because they contain so much detailed information, they are vital resources for researchers, genealogists, and the general public. According to the Library of Congress, city directories "are among the most important sources of information about urban areas and their inhabitants. They provide personal and professional information about a city's residents as well as information about its

Much of the material I have been looking at has been digitized and is searchable. This has not only been a useful time-saver, but it has also proven to be more reliable than my visual scans of many pages of materials. The city directories have a high level of historic value and potential for reuse by multiple audiences well into the future. In fact, they will become even more valuable as time passes and the paper copies crumble.