

Dorothy Fear Grimm, "A History of the Library Company of Philadelphia 1731-1835" (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1955).

Sean D. Moore, *Slavery and the Making of Early American Libraries: British Literature, Political Thought, and the Transatlantic Book Trade 1731-1814* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Scope and Contents

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The records of the Library Company of Philadelphia provide detailed information about the founding and operations of the Library Company, as well as the operations of several other subscription libraries that merged into the Library Company in the 18th century.

The processed portion of the collection details the Library Company's founding in 1731 as a private subscription library, its operations and evolution over the next 150 years, and the work of the men and women who became its members, directors, and staff.

The records include a wide breadth of materials, including directors' meeting minutes, administrative files, correspondence, financial records, collection and cataloging records, exhibition documents, and the activities of various directors and staff.

The collection also includes staff-compiled photocopies of records in other repositories. Those are arranged at the end of each series, with photocopies of earlier records arranged before photocopies of later records.

The collection also provides information on several other libraries that eventually merged into the Library Company, including the Loganian Library, the Union Library Company, the Association Library Company, and the Amicable Library, as well as some of the men and women who became members, directors, and eventually staff of those institutions. The Library Company also acquired the collections and shareholders of the Pennsylvania Library of Foreign Literature and Science in 1841, but that acquisition did not include the records of that institution.

*Please note that only the first 150 years of the Library Company's records – 1731 to 1881 – are fully described in this finding aid.* Later materials have been processed and described here only when those records were interfiled with earlier records and/or were deemed essential for processing earlier records. Please reach out to Library Company reference staff with questions about unprocessed institutional records dating from 1882 to the present.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)