

**Records of the Commissioners of the
Charleston Orphan House, 1790–1959**
The Charleston Archive, Charleston County Public Library
Prepared by Nicholas Butler, Ph.D., January 2011

Collation: Approximately 80 linear feet.

Chronological Scope

The present collection represents the activity of the Charleston Orphan House from its inception in 1790 to its removal from the city in 1951, the bulk of the records represent the years 1800 through 1930. When the Charleston Orphan House officially closed in September 1951, the institution was continued at a new location under the name Oak Grove. Every effort has been made to separate the respective records of these two institutions, but some of the records bridging the transitional period of the 1950s are contained in bound volumes that cannot be separated. The present collection therefore contains some a small amount of records dating from as late as 1959, however, which technically represent Oak Grove. The remainder of the records of the Oak Grove facility are still in the possession of the City of Charleston, and will be made available to the public at some point in the future.

Collection Description

The collection consists of the administrative records of the Charleston Orphan House, from its founding in 1790 to its removal from urban Charleston to suburban North Charleston in the early 1950s. These materials not only document the long-term management of a large municipal institution, but also provide significant insight into the care and nurturing of thousands of individual children.

This large body of materials is arranged in thirteen distinct series, including anniversary records, applications to admit and to remove children from the institution, commissioners' correspondence, financial records, indenture books, library records, minutes, miscellaneous materials, physicians' records, printed materials, registers, staff records, and superintendent's weekly reports. Much of the collection is available on microfilm, as noted below.

Anniversary Records, 1804–1861

This series consists of one volume, labeled "Anniversary Records," which is actually a scrapbook of printed and manuscript materials. It includes printed programs for the institution's anniversary celebrations of 1804, 1838, 1841, 1843–53, and 1855–56, and transcriptions of the proceedings of the anniversary celebrations of 1855–61. The entire volume is available on microfilm.

Applications, 1796–1929

This series consists of approximately twenty-four linear feet of materials divided into four categories: accepted and rejected applications to admit children into the Orphan House, and accepted and rejected applications to remove children from the institution. All of this material is available on microfilm.

From the beginning of the institution, parents or guardians (or their agents) seeking to place children in the Orphan House were obliged to apply to the Commissioners of the Orphan House for approval. Application materials, including correspondence and printed forms, survive for hundreds of children, but the present collection does not represent a complete record of every child admitted into or turned away from the institution. Nevertheless, the extant materials often contain useful information about the family circumstances that precipitated the application to place the children in the Orphan House.

Similarly, persons seeking to remove a child from the Orphan House were obliged to apply for the commissioners' consent. Among the extant applications for this purpose are many letters from parents and other family members wishing to regain custody of their children or relatives. In addition to such requests from family relations, the present collection also includes correspondence from unrelated individuals seeking apprentices or child laborers. Around the age of fourteen, most of the "inmates" of the Charleston Orphan House were "bound out" to serve an apprenticeship or "indenture" with a business or family outside the Orphan House. In order to obtain a child for such purposes, individuals communicated their requirements to the Commissioners of the Orphan House, who would then select an appropriate child. In both of these scenarios, the children in question were "indentured" back to their family or to an unrelated individual for a specified period of time (usually until they reached the age of majority). A typescript name index to the approved and rejected applications to admit and to remove children, spanning from 1796 to the 1929, is available with the present collection.

In conformity with the City of Charleston's privacy policy, the applications to admit or remove children from the Orphan House from 1930 and beyond are still held by the City Records Management Division and are closed to the general public. Former Orphan House residents and their direct descendants can access these records by contacting the City of Charleston directly.

Correspondence, 1792–1951

This series includes five linear feet of correspondence, committee reports, and related loose materials addressed to the Commissioners of the Orphan House. These materials are arranged chronologically, but a small amount of undated correspondence, committee reports, resolutions, and miscellaneous items are also included. With the exception of a few physicians' annual reports, 1825–53, the contents of this series have not been microfilmed. The content of much, if not all, of this material, however, is referenced in the minutes of the commissioners' regular meetings, which have been indexed and microfilmed.

Financial Records, 1790–1959

This series includes five linear feet of materials including audit reports (1932–51), bank deposit books (1868–1959), cash books (1812–1933), cash journals (1919–59), petty cash ledgers (1928–51), records of donations, legacies, and escheats (1790–ca. 1900), general ledgers (1855–1921), insurance policies (1872–99), stock certificates (1818–56), monthly statements (1871–1951), private accounts (1792–1918), and receipts and bills (1803–1941). The records of donations to the Orphan House are available on microfilm, but the rest of the financial records have not yet been filmed.

Indenture Books, 1790–1949

This series consists of forty-one volumes, each folio of which contains a separate printed “indenture” for each child admitted into the Orphan House. These “indentures” (a generic term signifying a legal contract) represent the legal “binding” of the child as an “apprentice for education” into the custody and guardianship of the Commissioners of the Orphan House. All of this material is available on microfilm.

The first ten volumes (A–K) include indentures for both girls and boys in chronological order of his or her admittance to the institution. The rest of the volumes (L–OO) are divided between indentures of girls (thirteen volumes) and indentures of boys (seventeen volumes). In addition, a single nineteenth-century volume contains blank indentures. It is worth noting that the mid-nineteenth-century indentures were not always recorded in a strictly chronological manner.

The children’s names contained in the indentures books, 1790–1900, are available in a published index.¹ The names of the children present in the post-1900 indenture books have not yet been indexed.

Library Records, 1855–1889

This series includes thirteen volumes of bound ledgers, the bulk of which form a chronological record of children’s names and the books they borrowed from the Orphan House library. A single 1855 volume contains a catalog of the book titles in the Orphan House’s library (and the names of their respective donors) arranged alphabetically by subject (astronomy, biography, geology, etc.). This series is not yet available on microfilm.

¹ Susan L. King, *History and Records of the Charleston Orphan House, 1790–1860* (Easley, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1994); Susan L. King, *History and Records of the Charleston Orphan House, Volume 2: 1860–1899* (Columbia, S.C.: SCMAR, 1994). Note that the loose materials contained in the artificial collection of “Inmate Files” mentioned in King’s indices have been returned to their proper place among the correspondence of the Orphan House commissioners. Note, also, that King’s indices inadvertently omit a small number of the names in the indenture books. For example, some names in Indenture Books V and Y, containing girls admitted between 1860 and 1874, are not included in King’s index of that same material. In other cases, King did not include all of the available data about the children, such as the name of the person to whom the child was indentured. Researchers using King’s indices are therefore advised to consult the microfilmed records as well.

Minutes, 1790–1953

This series contains three subdivisions: rough copies of the minutes of the meetings of the Commissioners of the Orphan House, 1796–1896 (incomplete); fair copies of the minutes of the commissioners' meetings, 1790–1953 (twenty seven volumes); and minutes of the Committee on Binding Out (Indentures), 1859–1863. All of this material, except the rough minutes, is available on microfilm. Indices of the minutes of the commissioners' meetings are available for most years from 1790 to 1953. Please refer to the collection outline below for details.

In addition to the minutes of the commissioners' meetings, a single volume containing the minutes of the Committee on Binding Out (Indentures), November 1859–January 1863, also survives. Prior to November 1859, when this standing committee was created, the general board of commissioners considered all applications for indentures. This volume of minutes contains only a few pages of unique information related to the binding out of children during the months of November and December 1859. The remainder of the volume includes indenture-related text extracted and copied from the general minutes of the Board of Commissioners.

Miscellaneous Materials, 1778–1951

This small series consists of several different types of large format, flat materials. Included are two photographic portraits (George W. Williams and Andrew Buist Murray), two lithographic portraits (Agnes K. Irving and an unidentified male), three plats (ca. 1800; a late nineteenth copy of a 1799 plat; 1951), an 1809 balance sheet, and a 1778 property conveyance. This material is not available on microfilm.

Physicians' Records, 1862–1950

This series consists of four volumes of weekly reports made by the appointed visiting physician, summarizing the general health of the Orphan House. The volumes cover the periods March 1862–December 1897 (reports by W. H. Huger), September 1921–February 1923 (reports by T. Grange Simons and A. J. Buist), and February 1933–March 1950 (reports by A. J. Buist et al.). Note that summaries of these reports also appear in the minutes of the commissioners' meetings, most of which have been indexed. These bound physicians' records are not yet available on microfilm.

Printed Materials

This series includes multiple copies of three published titles: *By-Laws of the Orphan House of Charleston, South Carolina* (Charleston, S.C.: Evans and Cogswell, 1861); *Charleston Orphan House, Centennial Celebration* (Charleston, S.C.: Walker, Evans and Cogswell, 1891); and *Annual Report of the Commissioners of the Charleston Orphan House* (Charleston, S.C.: Walker, Evans & Cogswell, 1871–1930). The first two of the abovementioned titles are available on microfilm.

Registers

This series consists of nine volumes containing three different types of data, all of which is available on microfilm.

The earliest volume, spanning the years 1791–1834, contains a chronological register of the names of the Orphan House officers, servants (slaves), and inmates, including each child's date of admittance, date of indenture or discharge, and parents' names.

Six of the volumes in this series constitute a register of all children admitted into and bound out of the institution between 1821 and 1949, including their dates of admission and the name of the person to whom they were indentured. The names of all the children in the above-mentioned registers, up to 1900, have been indexed in a separate publication.² One of these volumes, containing a chronological register of children admitted to the Orphan House between 1869 and 1895, was not included in the aforementioned index, but the names contained therein are duplicated in the indexed registers. It is worth noting, however, that this un-indexed register, 1869–95, includes some information not present in the other registers: the child's age, place of nativity, and religion.

The third and final part of this series consists of two volumes containing the signatures of visitors to the Orphan House, 1854–1911 and 1857–1909.

Staff Records

This series consists of five linear feet of materials in two subdivisions: loose applications and correspondence, 1797–1922, and monthly receipt books for staff salaries, 1884–1923. This material is not available on microfilm.

The loose applications and correspondence, 1797–1922, comprise 3.25 linear feet of materials arranged alphabetically by surname. Included are letters of application from both successful and unsuccessful candidates for employment at the Orphan House, letters of recommendation, letters of resignation, and disciplinary notices from the commissioners. Some related materials, such as committee reports and staff petitions, are located among the commissioners' correspondence and minutes.

The monthly receipt books for staff salaries, 1884–1923, include eight volumes of records in which members of the Orphan House staff acknowledged receipt of their monthly wages.

Superintendent's Weekly Reports, 1809–1951

This series consists of twelve volumes containing weekly reports made by the superintending or principal officer of the Orphan House staff, 1809–48 and 1897–1951, and presented to the board of commissioners at their regular meetings. The first two volumes, covering 1809–16 and 1823–30, are available on microfilm.

² Ibid.

The extant reports of July 1809 through July 1848 were prepared by the steward of the institution, and contain weekly tallies of the total numbers of staff, children, and servants, as well as brief descriptions of the rations, “occurrences and remarks,” and brief physician’s reports. After the office of steward was eliminated in January 1869, the principal teacher of the Orphan House became its superintendent. The volumes containing reports from June 1897 through August 1951 were prepared by the principal, and include tallies of staff and children, names of children admitted and discharged, and miscellaneous remarks.

Provenance

The City of Charleston Records Management Division transferred the materials contained in this collection to the Charleston County Public Library in 2002 in order to facilitate public access to them.

Historical Note

The Charleston Orphan House was established by an ordinance of City Council ratified on 18 October 1790, “for the purpose of supporting and educating poor orphan children, and those of poor, distressed and disabled parents who are unable to support and maintain them.”³ The institution, the first municipal orphanage in the United States, was governed by a board of twelve commissioners or trustees who were annually elected by City Council. The day-to-day operations of the Orphan House, however, were administered by a paid staff of women and men. The institution was funded by a public endowment consisting of annual appropriations from City Council, returns on investments, and charitable donations and bequests. Founded during an era in which most African-Americans in South Carolina were held as chattel slaves, the Orphan House admitted only white children of European descent.

Although the institution was officially created in 1790, the Charleston Orphan House was housed in temporary quarters during its first four years. Its first home was a large, pre-existing structure located at the corner of French Alley and Ellery Street.⁴ Here President George Washington breakfasted with the commissioners on 7 May 1791, viewed the children, and perused the institution’s records. The cornerstone of the first permanent Orphan House, located on the north side of Boundary (now Calhoun) Street, was laid on 12 November 1792, and it formally opened on 18 October 1794. The institution’s campus occupied most of the block bounded by Calhoun, King, Vanderhorst, and St. Philip Streets. A chapel, designed by Gabriel Manigault (d. 1809), was constructed in 1801–2 on the south side of Vanderhorst Street, between King and St. Philip Streets. The Orphan House remained at this site, with numerous additions and improvements, for nearly one hundred and fifty years.

³ The full text of the ordinance can be found in George B. Eckhard, ed., *A Digest of the Ordinances of the City Council of Charleston, from the Year 1783 to Oct. 1844* (Charleston, S.C.: Walker and Burke, 1844), 188–89.

⁴ French Alley is now the northernmost block of Church Street, between North Market Street and Pinckney Street. Ellery Street is now extinct, but it once ran westward from East Bay Street to Meeting Street, and was located approximately 82 feet to the north of the original northern line of Market Street. After the fire of 27 April 1838 burned all the buildings on the north side of Market Street (what is now called North Market Street), that street was extended northward, thus rendering Ellery Street redundant. Ellery Street was formally closed in 1840, and the area occupied by the first Orphan House is now used as a parking lot.

Between 1849 and 1859 the number of inmates in the Orphan House tripled. In order to accommodate the growing need for space, the commissioners of the institution oversaw a significant expansion and refurbishment of the physical plant and its administration in the mid-1850s. In August 1853 the children and staff moved into temporary quarters in the city's recently purchased Alms House on Columbus Street. After two years and three months of construction, they returned to the refurbished campus in mid-October 1855. Following their return to the Orphan House, the commissioners instituted a number of physical and administrative changes that were codified into a new set of institutional by-laws in 1861.⁵

On 24 August 1863, a few days after the Union army commenced bombarding the city of Charleston, the Commissioners of the Orphan House ordered the immediate evacuation of the children and staff by train to a temporary facility in Orangeburg, South Carolina. On 22 September 1863 the Commissioners noted that all the furniture of the house had been removed to Orangeburg except the furniture in the Board Room and in the Library (and its books). In order to prevent theft and possible looting, they ordered the Board Room furniture to be stored in the library and the door to be locked. On 22 September 1863 the Commissioners also received a request from General Beauregard and his staff, forwarded to the Orphan House by the mayor, asking to use the Orphan House as a military hospital. The Commissioners readily agreed, noting, however, that the door to the library was to remain locked. Confederate sick and wounded were not the only occupants of the near-empty house, however. In the latter months of 1863, the majority of Charleston's remaining citizens abandoned their homes and stores in the southern part of the city in search of a safe haven beyond the range of the U.S. artillery fire. After several shells struck City Hall, located at the northeast corner of Meeting and Broad Streets, the offices of the mayor, city council, city sheriff, and other municipal employees were removed to the Orphan House by December of 1863.⁶

Shortly after the occupation of Charleston by U.S. forces in February 1865, the Orphan House became a barracks for African American soldiers. The Commissioners of the Charleston Orphan House regained possession of the building in October of that year, however, immediately after U.S. officials gave permission for the mayor and city council to reorganize municipal government.⁷ After an absence of approximately twenty-six months, the children returned to their Calhoun Street home in early November 1865 and soon settled into a familiar routine.

During the second quarter of the twentieth century, the purpose and identity of the Charleston Orphan House began to move in a new direction. The advent of new social services sponsored by federal and state agencies eroded the traditional role of the municipal orphanage, and the commissioners increasingly viewed the aging facilities of the Charleston Orphan House as an impediment to its mission. In 1947 the board asked the Child Welfare League of America to conduct a survey of the institution and to make recommendations. The League's report, delivered on 26 February 1948, identified the old physical plant on Calhoun Street as an obsolete and

⁵ Charleston Orphan House, *By-Laws of the Orphan House of Charleston, South Carolina* (Charleston, S.C.: Evans and Cogswell, 1861). This publication also includes a list of the 148 commissioners of the Orphan House from 1790 to 1861.

⁶ See the "Directory of Public Offices" in *Charleston Courier*, 19 December 1863.

⁷ There are no extant minutes of the Commissioners of the Orphan House between 15 December 1864 and 6 October 1865. The post-war use of the Orphan House as a barracks is mentioned in Justus Clement French and Edward Cary, *The Trip of the Steamer Oceanus to Fort Sumter and Charleston, S.C.* (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Union Steam Printing House, 1865), 120.

financially burdensome impediment to the continued success of the institution. After considering this observation, the commissioners unanimously agreed to pursue a “cottage system” of housing at a new, more spacious facility located outside the city.

After a year of negotiations, the commissioners purchased a tract of land in North Charleston in 1949 and began contracting to build a new facility. On 23 October 1950, the City Council of Charleston entered into agreement with Sears, Roebuck and Company for the sale of the old Orphan House property on the completion of the new plant. The new facility, called Oak Grove, was officially dedicated on 12 August 1951, and the children moved into the new building later that month. A civic ceremony marked the formal closing of the old Orphan House on 6 September 1951. The sale of the Calhoun Street property to Sears, Roebuck and Company was finalized on 13 September 1951, and the old buildings were demolished between early February and late April 1952. Despite the objections of the city, the commissioners, and the community in general, the Sears company razed the Orphan House Chapel on Vanderhorst Street in late June and early July 1953.

The City of Charleston formally removed itself from the administration of the Oak Grove facility in 1978. Oak Grove was then reorganized as a private, not-for-profit institution called Carolina Youth Development Center, which continues to operate at the present time.

Researchers investigating the history of the Charleston Orphan House or searching for ancestors who once lived under its roof should be aware of a confusing fact regarding the nomenclature of the institution. Although the official name of the institution was the “Charleston Orphan House” or simply the “Orphan House,” numerous writers have incorrectly referred to it as the “Orphan Asylum.” In many cases, such references were clearly meant to indicate the Orphan House on Calhoun Street, but the existence of a separate “City Orphan Asylum” invites confusion. Founded in 1829 under the auspices of the Catholic Diocese of Charleston, this second orphanage was supported by private funds until 1885 when it began receiving an annual appropriation from the municipal government of the City of Charleston. The relationship between the city and the Catholic orphanage was strengthened in 1901 by the ratification of an ordinance to reorganize the institution and rename it the “City Orphan Asylum.” This cooperative venture operated at the northeast corner of Queen and Logan Streets until January 1965.⁸ In short, researchers should thus exercise appropriate caution when interpreting historical references to Charleston’s “Orphan Asylum.”

Selected bibliography

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⁸ Richard C. Madden, *Catholics in South Carolina: A Record* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1985), 167–68, 361.

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- Wates, Wylma Anne. "Charleston Orphans, 1790–1795," *South Carolina Historical Magazine* 78 (October 1977): 321–37.

Records of the Commissioners of the Charleston Orphan House, 1790–1959

Collection Outline

- I. Anniversary Records, 1804–1861 (Box 1)
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Records of the Commissioners of the Charleston Orphan House, 1790–1959

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	6 January 1848–8 June 1854 (1 volume; index included)	Box 119
	14 December 1854–25 November 1858 (1 volume; index included)	Box 120
	9 December 1858–24 June 1864 (1 volume; index included)	Box 121

Series #	Description	Box #
	12 October 1864–24 September 1868 (1 volume; index included)	Box 122
	1 October 1868–31 October 1872 (1 volume; index included)	Box 123
	7 November 1872–27 December 1877 (1 volume; index included)	Box 124
	3 January 1878–28 December 1882 (1 volume; indexed separately)	Box 125
	4 January 1883–27 September 1888 (1 volume; indexed separately)	Box 126
	4 October 1888–26 April 1894 (1 volume; not indexed)	Box 127
	3 May 1894–25 April 1901 (1 volume; not indexed)	Box 128
	2 May 1901–29 July 1909 (1 volume; not indexed)	Box 129
	5 August 1909–27 September 1917 (1 volume; indexed separately)	Box 130
	4 October 1917–24 June 1926 (1 volume; indexed separately)	Box 131
	1 July 1926–5 September 1935 (1 volume; not indexed)	Box 132
	12 September 1935–16 December 1948 (1 volume; not indexed)	Box 133
	6 January 1949–10 December 1953 (1 volume; indexed)	Box 134
	C. Indices of the Minutes of the Commissioners	
	18 October 1790–22 October 1818 (5 separate fascicles)	Box 135
	3 January 1878–27 September 1888 (2 separate fascicles)	
	3 January 1878–27 September 1888 (1 volume)	
	5 August 1909–24 June 1926 (1 volume)	
	D. Minutes of the Committee on Binding Out (In dentures)	
	November 1859–January 1863 (1 volume; not indexed)	Box 136
VIII.	Miscellaneous Records	
	A. Lithographic print of unidentified male, late nineteenth century (fragile), 51 cm x 38 cm.	Box 137
	B. Lithographic print of Agnes K. Irving, late nineteenth century (fragile), 51 cm x 37 cm (cut to an oval shape).	
	C. Photographic print of Andrew Buist Murray (d. 1928), ca. 1910, 51 cm x 38 cm.	
	D. Photographic print of George Walton Williams (d. 1903), ca. 1890, 25 cm x 20 cm.	
	E. Undated early-nineteenth-century pen and ink diagram of the interior of the Orphan House with notations indicating the uses of the various rooms, 38 cm x 30.5 cm (fragile).	
	F. Undated, late nineteenth-century pen and ink reproduction of Joseph Purcell's 1799 plat of the Orphan House and adjacent property, 51 cm x 38 cm.	
	G. Oversize balance sheet, "The Commissioners of the Orphan House, for the Church, in Account with Daniel Stevens," listing the expenditures paid by the treasurer of the "Orphan's Church Fund" between October 1806 and October 1809.	
	H. "Plat of the Charleston Orphan House Property," January 1951, 95 cm x 59 cm.	
	I. John Coram to Thomas Coram and Joel Holmes, lease and release of 400 acres in Ninety Six District, South Carolina, 10–11 July 1778. One folio, 42 cm x 33 cm; two folios, 60 cm x 48 cm. These documents probably came into the possession of the Orphan House as part of the bequest of Thomas Coram (d. 1811).	

Series #	Description	Box #
IX.	Physicians' Records, 1862–1950	
	March 1862–December 1897 (Dr. W. H. Huger) September 1921–February 1923 (T. Grange Simons and A. J. Buist) February 1933–June 1942 (A. J. Buist) June 1942–March 1950 (A. J. Buist et al.)	Box 138
X.	Printed Material	
	A. <i>By-Laws of the Orphan House of Charleston, South Carolina</i> (Charleston, S.C.: Evans and Cogswell, 1861): 5 copies; 3 additional copies of 1921 reprint C. <i>Charleston Orphan House, Centennial Celebration</i> (Charleston, S.C.: Walker, Evans and Cogswell, 1891): two copies	139
	B. <i>Annual Report of the Commissioners of the Charleston Orphan House</i> (Charleston, S.C.: Walker, Evans & Cogswell): 1871, 1872, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930	Box 140
XI.	Registers	
	Registry, 1791–1834 (1 volume, arranged chronologically)	Box 141
	Register of children bound out, 1821–1856 (1 volume, arranged alphabetically) Register of children bound out, 1821–1863 (1 volume, arranged chronologically)	Box 142
	Register of boys, 1856–1949 (1 volume; arranged alphabetically) Register of girls, 1856–1949 (1 volume; arranged alphabetically)	Box 143
	Register of children bound out, 1869–1895 (1 volume, arranged chronologically) Register of children not bound out, 1869–1895 (1 volume, arranged chronologically) Register of Visitors, 1854–1911 (2 volumes, 1857–1909; 1854–1911)	Box 144
XII.	Staff Records	
	A. Loose applications and correspondence	
	Anonymous–Channer	Box 145
	Chanson–Evans	Box 146
	Fash–Henry	Box 147
	Herbert–Lockwood	Box 148
	Logan–Mitchell	Box 149
	Moisson–Rivers	Box 150
	Roberts–Syfan	Box 151
	Taylor–Young	Box 152
	B. Staff Salary Receipts	
	October 1884–September 1906 (4 volumes)	Box 153
	October 1906–December 1923 (4 volumes)	Box 154

Series #	Description	Box #
XIII.	Superintendent's Weekly Reports, 1809–1951	
	20 July 1809–30 May 1816 (fragile) available on microfilm 12 June 1823–5 August 1830 (fragile) available on microfilm 12 August 1830–12 September 1839 (fragile)	Box 155
	3 October 1839–20 July 1848 (fragile)	Box 156
	June 1897–December 1901 January 1902–August 1906	Box 157
	August 1906–March 1911 March 1911–September 1915	Box 158
	October 1915–November 1924 November 1924–November 1933	Box 159
	November 1933–January 1943 January 1943–August 1951	Box 160

Records of the Commissioners of the Charleston Orphan House, 1790–1959

Microfilm Inventory

A large portion of the records in this collection has been microfilmed. The materials available in this form comprise 54 reels of microfilm, including some duplicates, which can be divided into four categories:

Reels 1–9: Minutes of the Commissioners of the Orphan House, 1790–1964

Reels 10–11: Registers of children, etc., 1791–1949

Reels 12–21: Indenture books, 1790–1949

Reels 22–29: Indenture books, 1790–1949 (duplicate film)

Reels 30–54: Applications to admit and remove children, 1796–1929

Reel 1 (35 mm, filmed in 1980): Minutes, 1790–1795; 1795–1800; 1800–1807; 1807–1810; 1814–1818; 1810–1814; 1818–1821; 1821–1826; 1826–1828 (ends on page 57 of this volume).

Reel 2 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Minutes, 1790–1795; 1796–1800 (rough minutes); 1795–1800 (fair minutes); 1800–1807; 1807–1810; 1810–1814; 1814–1818; 1818–1821; 1821–1826.

Reel 3 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Minutes. 1826–1834; 1834–1841 (These volumes also appear on Reel 21)

Reel 4 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Minutes. 1841–1847; 1848–1854; 1854–1859.

Reel 5 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Minutes. 1858–1864; 1864–1868; 1868–1872.

Reel 6 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Minutes. 1872–1877; 1878–1882; 1883–1888; 1888–1894; 1894–1901.

Reel 7 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Minutes. 1901–1909; 1909–1917.

Reel 8 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Minutes. 1917–1926; 1926–1935; 1935–1948.

Reel 9 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Minutes. 1949–1953; 1954–1958; 1959–1964.

Reel 10 (35 mm, filmed in 1980):

Register of Staff, Slaves, and Children. 1791–1831

Register of Children, 1821–1856

Register of Children, 1869–1895

Register of Girls Bound Out, 1856–1949

Register of Boys Bound Out, 1856–1949

Register of Visitors, 1854–1911

Register of Visitors, 1857–1909

Anniversary Records, 1804–1861

Copies of Wills (donations to Orphan House), 1804–1810
Donation Book, 1790–1821
Donation Book, 1790–1855
Floor plans, blue prints, Jones and Lee drawings
Centennial Proceedings (1890)
Bylaws, 1861 (published pamphlet)
Report of Stewards and Physicians (Weekly Reports), 1809–1816
Report of Stewards and Physicians (Weekly Reports), 1823–1830
Physicians' Annual Reports, 1825–1853

Reel 11 (16 mm, filmed in 1990):

Committee on Indentures, 1859–1863
Register of Children, 1869–1895
Register of Children, 1821–1863
Register of Staff, Slaves and Children, 1791–1831
Register of Children Not Bound Out, 1869–1895
Register of Children, 1821–1856
Register of Girls Bound Out, 1856–1949
Register of Boys Bound Out, 1856–1949

Reel 12 (35 mm, filmed in 1980): Indentures. Boys and Girls in same volumes.

Book A, 1790–1792
Book B, 1792–1794
Book C, 1795–1800
Book D, 1800–1803
Book E, 1803–1808
Book F, 1808–1812
Book G, 1812–1816
Book H, 1816–1818
Book I, 1818–1825

Reel 13 (35 mm, filmed in 1980): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.

Book K, Boys, 1821–1827
Book L, Girls, 1821–1831
Book M, Boys, 1827–1841
Book N, Boys, 1831–1839
Book O, Girls, 1831–1849
Book P, Boys, 1841–1849
Book Q, Boys, 1849–1854 (pp. 1–85)

Reel 14 (35 mm, filmed in 1980): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.

Book Q, Boys, 1849–1854 (continued from page 85)
Book R, Girls, 1849–1856
Book S, Boys, 1854–1857
Book T, Boys, 1857–1860
Book U, Girls, 1856–1860 (pp. 1–107)

- Reel 15** (35 mm, filmed in 1980): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.
Book U, Girls, 1856–1860 (continued from page 107)
Book U, Boys, 1866–1868
Book V, Girls, 1860–1867
Book W, Boys, 1860–1866 (pp. 1–191)
- Reel 16** (35 mm, filmed in 1980): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.
Book W, Boys, 1860–1866 (continued from page 191)
Book Y, Girls, 1867–1874
Book Z, Boys, 1868–1875
Book AA, Girls, 1874–1884
Book BB, Boys, 1875–1881 (pp. 1–75)
- Reel 17** (35 mm, filmed in 1980): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.
Book BB, Boys, 1875–1881 (continued from page 77)
Much of this is illegible; see version on reel 26 instead.
Book CC, Boys, 1881–1889
Book DD, Girls, 1884–1894
Book EE, Boys, 1888–1894 (pp. 1–129)
- Reel 18** (35 mm, filmed in 1980): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.
Book EE, Boys, 1888–1894 (continued from page 130)
Book FF, Girls, 1892–1900
Book GG, Boys, 1894–1903
Book HH, Girls, 1900–1915 (pp. 1–134)
- Reel 19** (35 mm, filmed in 1980): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.
Book HH, Girls, 1900–1915 (complete volume)
Book II, Boys, 1904–1915
Book JJ, Girls (pp. 1–142)
- Reel 20** (35 mm, filmed in 1980): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.
Book JJ, Girls (continued from page 143)
Book KK, Boys, 1915–1924
Book LL, Boys, 1924–1939
Book MM, Girls, 1925–1944 (pp. 1–97)
- Reel 21** (35 mm, filmed in 1980): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.
Book MM, Girls, 1925–1944 (continued from page 98)
Book NN, Boys, 1939–1949
Book OO, Girls, 1944–1949
Orphan House Minutes, 1826–1834
Orphan House Minutes, 1834–1841

The following reels duplicate the above indentures:

Reel 22 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Indentures. Boys and Girls in same volumes

Book A, 1790–1792
Book B, 1792–1795
Book C, 1795–1800
Book D, 1800–1803
Book E, 1803–1808
Book F, 1808–1812
Book G, 1812–1816
Book H, 1816–1818

Reel 23 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Indentures.

Book I, Boys and Girls, 1818–1820; 1825
Book K, Boys, 1821–1827
Book L, Girls, 1821–1831
Book M, Boys, 1827–1831; 1838–1841
Book N, Boys, 1831–1839
Book O, Girls, 1831–1849
Book P, Boys, 1841–1849

Reel 24 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.

Book R, Girls, 1849–1852
Book Q, Boys, 1849–1854
Book S, Boys, 1854–1857
Book T, Boys, 1857–1860 (1862)
Book U, Boys, 1866–1868

Reel 25 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.

Book U, Girls, 1856–1860
Book V, Girls, 1860–1867
Book W, Boys, 1860–1866
Book Y, Girls, 1867–1874
Book Z, Boys, 1868–1875

Reel 26 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.

Book AA, Girls, 1874–1884
Book BB, Boys, 1875–1881
Book CC, Boys, 1881–1888
Book DD, Girls, 1884–1892
Book EE, Boys, 1888–1894

Reel 27 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.

Book FF, Girls, 1892–1900
Book GG, Boys, 1894–1903
Book HH, Girls, 1901–1915

Book II, Boys, 1904–1915

Reel 28 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Indentures. Separate volumes for Boys and Girls.

Book JJ, Girls, 1915–1925

Book KK, Boys, 1915–1924

Book LL, Boys, 1924–1939

Book MM, Girls, 1925–1944

Book NN, Boys, 1939–1949

Reel 29 (16 mm, filmed in 1990): Indentures.

Book OO, Girls, 1944–1949

APPLICATIONS TO ADMIT AND REMOVE CHILDREN (reels 30–54)

COH RA 1: Rejected Applications to Admit, 19th and 20th Century: Ackis–Fox

COH RA 2: Rejected Applications to Admit, 19th and 20th Century: Galaway–Murray, James and Susan (1868)

COH RA 3: Rejected Applications to Admit, 19th and 20th Century: Murray, Louis–Zoller

COH AA 1: Applications to Admit, 19th Century: Abrams–Boyce

COH AA 2: Applications to Admit, 19th Century: Boyd–Christopher

COH AA 3: Applications to Admit, 19th Century: Churchill–Doughty, John Edward (1876)

COH AA 4: Applications to Admit, 19th Century: Doughty, John Edward (1880)–Gerk

COH AA 5: Applications to Admit, 19th Century: Gibbons–Hutchinson, John William

COH AA 6: Applications to Admit, 19th Century: Hutchinson, Mary–Leman, Edward, Gertrude, Lillas, and Rosa

COH AA 7: Applications to Admit, 19th Century: Leman, Morris and Jeanette–Mills

COH AA 8: Applications to Admit, 19th Century: Miner–Platt, L.

COH AA 9: Applications to Admit, 19th Century: Platt, W.–Skillen

COH AA 10: Applications to Admit, 19th Century: Skipper–Ward, R.

COH AA 11: Applications to Admit, 19th Century: Ward, T.–Zylks

COH IR 1: Applications for Indentures, Rejected, 18th and 19th Century: Anonymous–Clark, J.

COH IR 2: Applications for Indentures, Rejected, 18th and 19th Century: Clark, L.–Nunes

COH IR 3: Applications for Indentures, Rejected, 18th and 19th Century: O’Brien–Yates

COH IA 1: Applications for Indentures, Accepted, 18th and 19th Century: Abrahams–
Broughton

COH IA 2: Applications for Indentures, Accepted, 18th and 19th Century: Brown–Davis, L. E.
M.

COH IA 3: Applications for Indentures, Accepted, 18th and 19th Century: Davis, L.–Gilbert, A.

COH IA 4: Applications for Indentures, Accepted, 18th and 19th Century: Gilbert, J.–Johnson,
J.

COH IA 5: Applications for Indentures, Accepted, 18th and 19th Century: Johnson, W.–
McGuire, J.

COH IA 6: Applications for Indentures, Accepted, 18th and 19th Century: McGuire, L.–Prince,
Harriet

COH IA 7: Applications for Indentures, Accepted, 18th and 19th Century: Prince, H. E.–Tarrant

COH IA 8: Applications for Indentures, Accepted, 18th and 19th Century: Tarry–Zylks