

ABOUT US

Organized in 1852, the Presbyterian Historical Society is the oldest denominational archives in the United States and serves as the national archives for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its predecessor denominations.

OUR MISSION

The Presbyterian Historical Society leverages its collections and archival work to galvanize the transformative power of history in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and wider community.

SUPPORT OUR WORK

Individual contributions provide support for the programs and services that are core to our mission. They also help us to improve the historic building that houses PHS's state-of-the-art archives and research facility.

www.pcusa.org/phs/give



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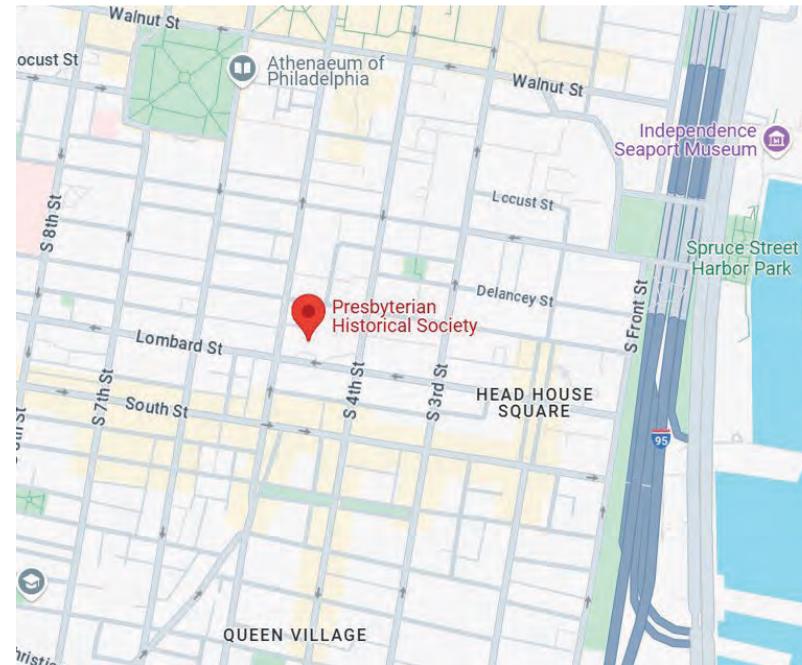
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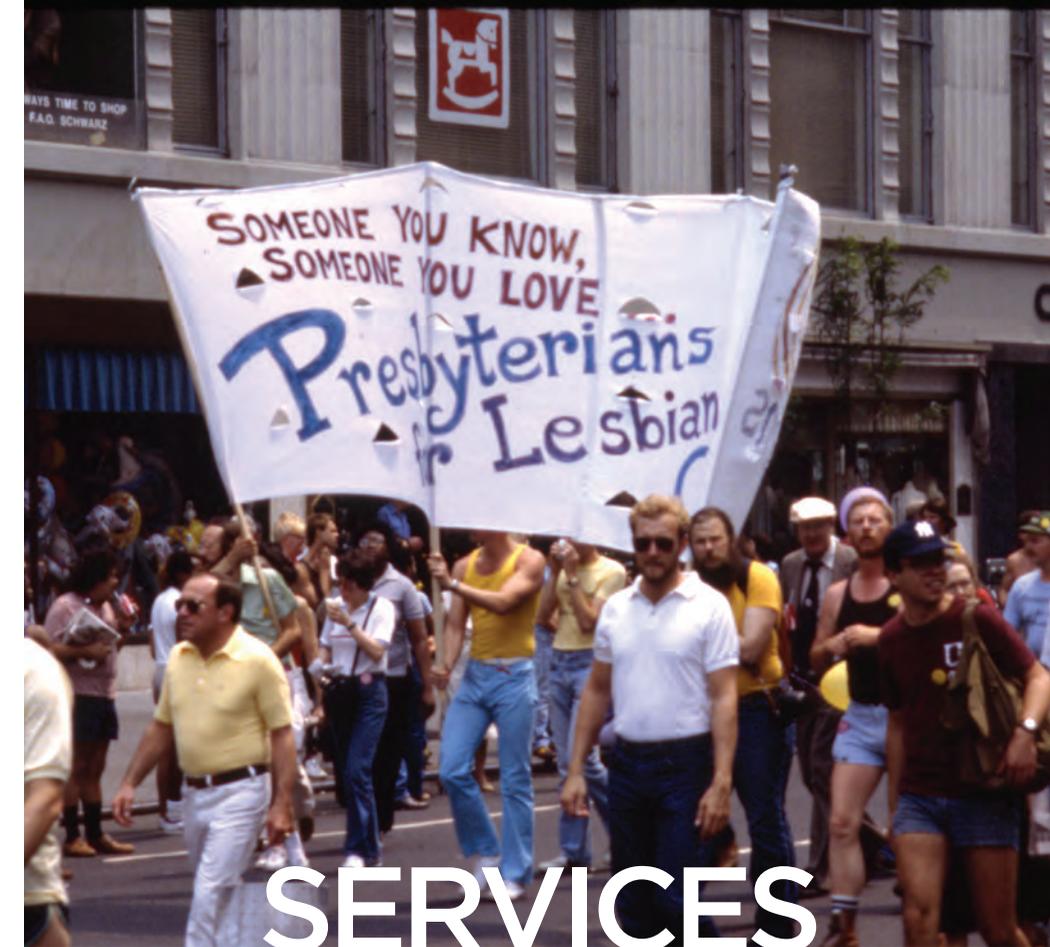


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PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Collect. Preserve. Share. Transform.



SERVICES

The Presbyterian Historical Society provides a broad range of services for Presbyterians, scholars, and the general public.

We understand that not everyone can book a trip to Philadelphia to research in our reading room. And, sometimes you need assistance navigating our extensive collections. To make Presbyterian history more accessible, PHS offers a number of services for congregations preserving their records and for individuals seeking information from records in our holdings.

Learn more: www.pcusa.org/phs/services



COLLECTIONS

PHS collects records of historic value from congregations and mid councils, national agencies within the PC(USA), and from individuals and families who served the church.

PHS is home to over 40,000 cubic feet of records and 250,000 published titles that reflect Presbyterian, Reformed, and ecumenical history. Our paper and digital collections document the work of the denomination; preserve the voices of ministers and church leaders through sermons and oral histories; and capture the work of Presbyterian mission through sound and video recordings.

Learn more: www.pcusa.org/phs/collections



HISTORY ONLINE

PHS online resources provide historical background on the Presbyterian and Reformed traditions in America and can be accessed anywhere in the world.

Explore digital exhibits and timelines, download free church bulletin inserts for your congregation, follow our blogs, and engage with important topics in Presbyterian history.

Learn more: www.pcusa.org/phs/history-online

PRESBYTERIAN HERITAGE

Spring 2025/ Vol. 37, No. 1

RG293: Revisited, Repaired, EXPANDED.

STAFF MEMBERS ON PHS'S REPARATIVE DESCRIPTION COMMITTEE HAVE RECENTLY

finished repairing and enhancing the collection guide, catalog record, and other descriptions of the Beatty Family Papers (RG 293), a collection that includes materials pertaining to Native Americans/Indigenous peoples.

* *John Beatty's 1808-1810 almanac/diary*

Includes some documentation of those John had enslaved. For example, there is a handwritten note in the March 1808 section regarding the birth of an enslaved child named Charles and the death of an enslaved woman named Dinah (the enslaved child's mother). Most other annotations and notes in the almanac/diary pertain to weather, agricultural work, routine finances, and death dates of John's acquaintances.

* *Rev. Charles Beatty's original 1766 journal*

Documents his missionary trip to western Pennsylvania and the Ohio Country. During his trip, Beatty was accompanied by Rev. George Duffield and Joseph Peepy, a Lenape guide and translator.

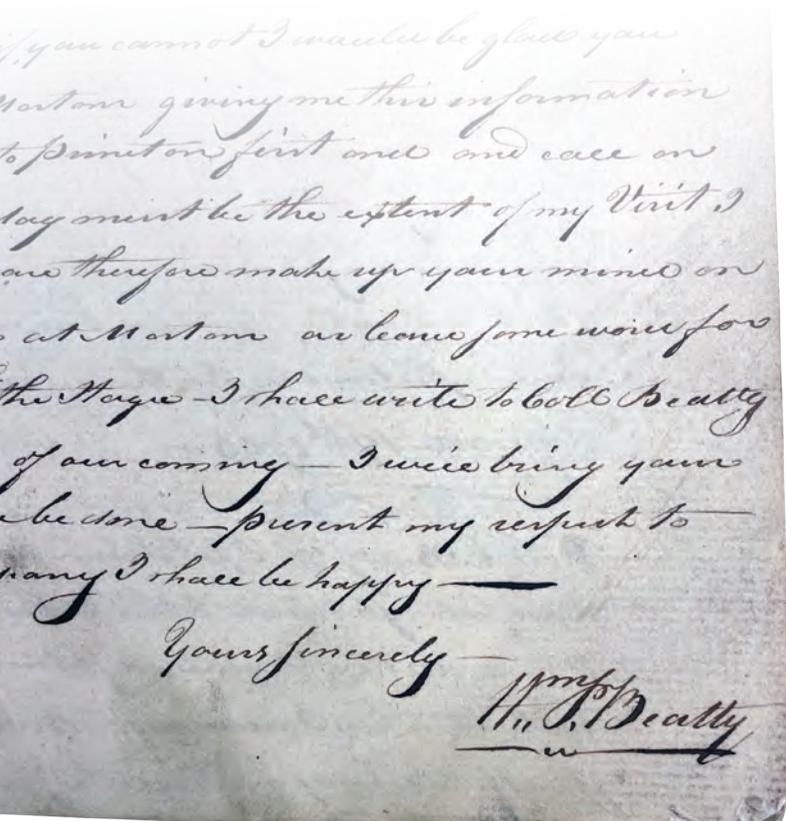
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pcusa.org/phs

REVISITED, REPAIRED, EXPANDED: THE BEATTY FAMILY PAPERS

In general, the Committee's work aims to revisit, reconsider, and ultimately adjust the way collection materials have been described at PHS, especially when past descriptions leave out or distort important details about people and groups represented in archival materials. Reparative description does NOT involve altering the original records in any way. Rather, the work focuses on revising collection guides, catalog records, etc. to better and more equitably describe what is in a collection, thus expanding its research use.

RG 293 includes correspondence, journals, legal records, and other materials documenting the lives of three generations of the Beatty family. Charles Clinton Beatty, a Presbyterian minister born in Ireland, kept a journal of his 1766 missionary trip to western Pennsylvania and the Ohio Country. In PHS's collection guide from 1992, staff described the journal as documenting Beatty's trip to "the Native American Mission field" without further detail. This left PHS's Reparative Description Committee with several questions:



If you cannot I would be glad you
at Marton giving me this information
to print on first one and call on
day must be the extent of my visit I
and therefore make up your mind on
at Marton or leave some word for
the Stage - I shall write to both Beatty
of our coming - I will bring your
be done - present my respects to
many I shall be happy -
Yours sincerely
Wm Pitt Beatty

Which Indigenous peoples/tribes did Beatty encounter? Where exactly did he go? What did his mission work with Indigenous people(s) look like?

The Committee's work started with reading through the 1766 journal and noting Charles Beatty's interactions with Indigenous peoples and places. The journal reveals that Beatty ministered to the Lenape (Delaware) people, met with Lenape leaders, and traveled through Lenape towns, chiefly in the Tuscarawas Valley of eastern Ohio. To enhance the description of the journal, Committee members revamped the biographical information in the collection guide to add more detail regarding Beatty's mission trip. They also created an index for the journal, listing the Indigenous names and places mentioned in the original journal entries. Now, people researching the Lenape are much more likely to discover the Beatty Family Papers at PHS.

Revisiting old collection guides always reveals other problems in older descriptions. Committee members saw that the old guide mostly contained biographical information about Charles and his son John Beatty, with no description of William Pitt Beatty and his son George Beatty, two other family members whose materials make up part of the collection. Staff also saw that the original collection overview was scanty and did not accurately describe all the materials in the collection.

Enhancing these descriptions required Committee members to consult both external resources and the collection materials themselves. In doing this research, staff came across additional, unexpected information regarding the Beatty family not mentioned in the old guide. Recent research conducted by the

The William Pitt Beatty series, 1795-1799, consists of a single letter and a letter book. The letter book contains handwritten copies of William's outgoing correspondence. The bulk of the letters are addressed to his brothers and sisters, and concern his business affairs.

WHAT IS REPARATIVE DESCRIPTION?

Washington Post had identified John Beatty as a slaveholder, and PHS staff confirmed that through annotations in John Beatty's almanac diary referencing some of the people he enslaved. Genealogy materials in the collection mention that George Beatty participated in the U.S. Army's forced removal of the Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) people in Wisconsin, and staff added description to the collection guide pointing researchers to a letter written by George from Fort Winnebago, describing his and others' involvement in the forced removal.

As has been the case with other reparative description projects at PHS, the scope of repair tends to unexpectedly widen when revisiting collections that were under-described or processed decades ago. For the Beatty Family Papers, what started as a project focusing on the description of a single journal led to additional research to improve other deficiencies in the guide. This research shed light on important materials within the collection that document the lives of people often marginalized or left out of older archival descriptions.

Explore the revised Beatty Family Papers collection guide at: pcusa.org/phs/beatty

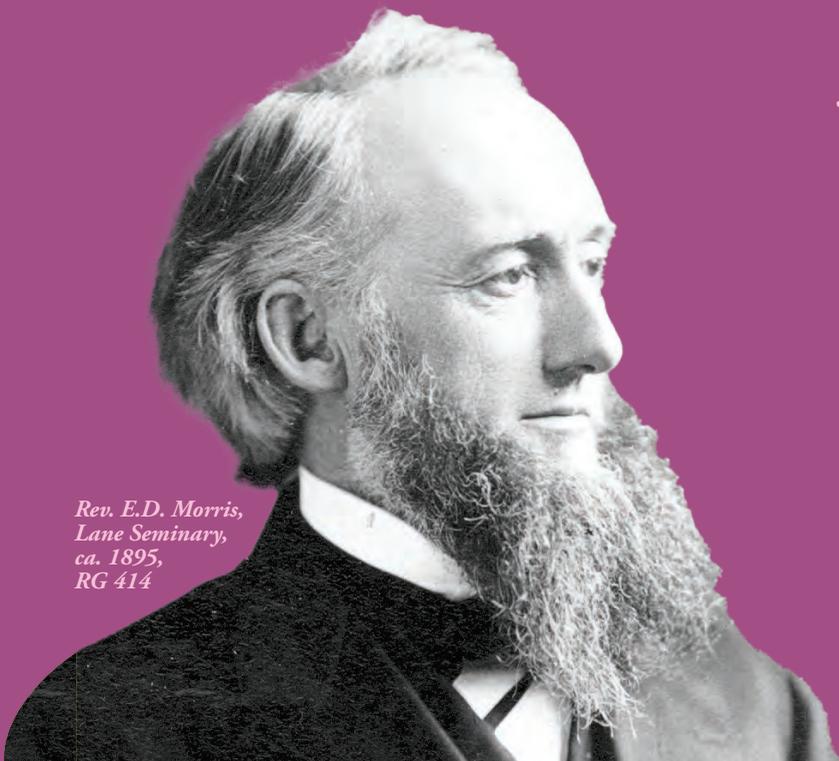
The practice of critically examining and ultimately adjusting the way we as an institution describe or characterize marginalized groups, paying particular attention to instances where our description inflicts harm, spreads false narratives, or minimizes past and ongoing injustices.



JOURNAL PREVIEW

The Spring/Summer 2025 issue of *The Journal of Presbyterian History* features two articles that consider schisms within Presbyterianism. Isaac Tuttle explores why both Old School and New School Presbyterians in the United States supported the same side in the Disruption of 1843 that split the Church of Scotland. John Wiers focuses on seminary professor and theologian Edward D. Morris as representative of a moderate, middle ground between Fundamentalists and Modernists in the late 19th and early 20th century church.

To receive *The Journal*, visit pcusa.org/phs/jph



Rev. E.D. Morris,
Lane Seminary,
ca. 1895,
RG 414

PHS RECEIVES GRANT TO FURTHER EXHIBIT DEVELOPMENT

An immersive historical experience is coming soon to PHS's home in Philadelphia and other venues across the PC(USA).

Thanks to generous funding from Lilly Endowment Inc., the Presbyterian Historical Society will greatly expand its exhibit program over the next five years. The \$2.4 million grant, awarded through Lilly Endowment's Religion and Cultural Institutions Initiative to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation, will go toward PHS traveling, web, and onsite exhibits.

"The new exhibits will enable Presbyterians and others to learn about historical figures, ideas, and movements in compelling ways," said PHS Executive Director Nancy Taylor. "An immersive experience will also greet visitors and researchers at the Presbyterian Historical Society building in Philadelphia where we will have the capacity to incorporate interactive elements in our onsite exhibits for the first time."

A planning grant from Lilly Endowment in 2024 helped PHS create a prototype traveling exhibit titled "Faith & Justice in the 1960s: Religious News Service Covers Civil Rights." With the new funding, PHS will develop and circulate innovative traveling exhibits nationwide. Like the prototype, the new traveling exhibits will

feature stories and images from PHS's Religious News Service collection, a key resource for understanding how religion and the media shaped the world in the mid-20th century.

During the final three years of the grant, PHS will continue to support the RNS traveling exhibits while developing two additional exhibits: one focused on the impact of ecumenical and interfaith groups on U.S. politics, policy, and culture in the 20th century; and the other drawing out the complex story of Presbyterian mission work to Native Americans, examining the legacy of Presbyterian Indian schools for all involved.

Interested in hosting a traveling exhibit?
Email refdesk@history.pcusa.org

Prepping the prototype for the unveiling in New York.



CAMPAIGN UPDATE FINISH LINE IN SIGHT!

In the spring of 2023, the Presbyterian Historical Society launched its first fundraising campaign, **Preserving the Past, Empowering the Future** with a goal to raise \$500,000 over a three-year period. It has been a busy two years, and we are thrilled with the response from friends and supporters of PHS.

We have raised over \$425,000!

Your generosity has enabled us to install the ADA-compliant access ramp and commence the search for a new Outreach Specialist. Over the next year, we hope to move forward with other campaign deliverables—including more accessible electrical outlets and more comfortable furniture in the reading room.

We're almost at the finish line, but still need your help. To aid in this final push, a generous donor has pledged to match all gifts up to \$20,000.

So, if you haven't made a gift already, please consider one of any size. And, if you have already made a gift, consider another. Thank you for your support!

Donate online at: pcusa.org/historical-society/give

SERVING THE PC(USA)

625 INQUIRIES FROM PC(USA) CHURCHES, MID COUNCILS, AND NATIONAL AGENCIES

COMPLETED **31** PC(USA) SCANNING PROJECTS FOR **36,900** PAGES DIGITIZED

TOTAL FOR THE YEAR:
72,907 PAGES

RECORDS DEPOSITED FROM **64** ACTIVE PC(USA) CONGREGATIONS FOR **94** CUBIC FEET

PRESBYTERIES DEPOSITED THE MOST RECORDS FOR **298.81** CUBIC FEET

TOTAL FOR THE YEAR:
342 GROUPS, **504.79** FEET



ASSISTING RESEARCHERS

DETAILED RESPONSES DELIVERED TO **2,368** RESEARCHERS IN PERSON, OVER THE PHONE, AND BY EMAIL

17% INCREASE
FROM LAST YEAR

RESEARCHERS VISITED FROM **34** STATES AND **10** COUNTRIES

SCHOLARLY WORKS CREATED FROM RESEARCH AT PHS: **320**

An Expression of Gratitude

Each year we acknowledge and honor the many individuals and organizations that have supported us throughout the previous year. It is impossible to express our gratitude for the countless ways so many have given to PHS in 2024. Please accept our profound thanks for your many gifts that have helped us collect, preserve, and share the story of the American Presbyterian experience.

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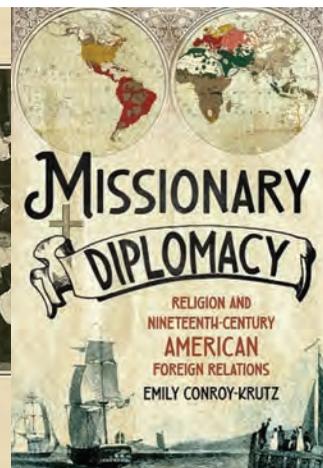
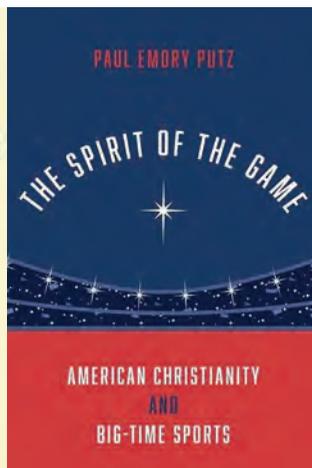
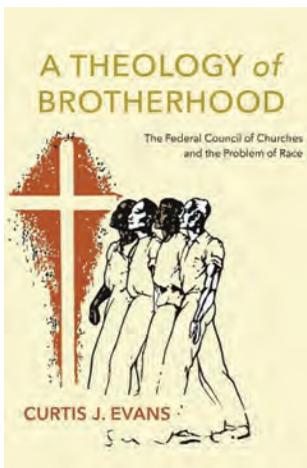
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*in honor of Nancy Taylor for all her
hard work*

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We also wish to thank the following organizations and individuals for depositing or donating church records and other archival materials to PHS in 2024.

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Our digital collection, Indigenous Peoples of North America history, had many new additions in 2024.

See more at digital.history.pcusa.org

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In July, the Reparative Description Committee—tasked with implementing a reparative and inclusive approach to bibliographic, archival, and digital content description at PHS—completed reparative description work on the Tucson Indian Training School Records (RG 103), a federally supported Presbyterian boarding school that operated from 1888 to 1960 in Tucson, Arizona.



PRESBYTERIAN HERITAGE

Presbyterian Historical Society
425 Lombard Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147-1516
pcusa.org/phs | 215.627.1852

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit No.
477777

*Presbyterian Heritage is published twice a year by the
Presbyterian Historical Society, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

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Minutes*	Permanent	
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Annual reports*	Permanent	
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Annual budgets*	Permanent	
Annual audits*	Permanent	
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* Records designated with an asterisk may be transferred electronically if they are born-digital (i.e. created in a digital format, rather than digitized from paper records). These records must be transferred in one of the following approved formats: PDF or PDF/A; CSV; TXT; or a Microsoft Office or Open Office format.

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Loan agreements	Satisfaction + 20 years	
Property appraisals, records of sale	Sale + 20 years	
Personnel records/employee records	Employment + 7 years	
Contracts	Active + 6 years	
Accounts payable	7 years	
Accounts payable invoices	7 years	
Accounts receivable records	7 years	
Bank statements	7 years	
Canceled checks	7 years	
Cash receipt records	7 years	
Donations (regular, weekly)	7 years	
Expense reports	7 years	
FICA / W2 records	7 years	
Payroll records	7 years	
Petty cash records	7 years	
Receipts of purchases	7 years	
Bank deposit slips	3 years	
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Periodic financial statements	2 years	
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