

This month we'll be highlighting finding aids for manuscript collections from both Reese Library's Special Collections & Institutional Archives, and Greenblatt Library's Historical Collections & Archives. Finding aids are tools that help researchers determine whether a manuscript collection will be helpful for their research, and generally include a summary of collection materials, some background information about the people or organizations represented in the collection, and a list of collection materials.

From the Special Collections & Institutional Archives:

This month, I wanted to highlight a finding aid that is currently in progress, rather than one that has already been published. If you've never worked behind the scenes in an archive, library, or museum, it can be easy to forget that the tools you regularly use as a researcher, things like finding aids for archival materials, or catalog records for books and journal articles, don't spring fully formed into the world. There are people behind each of those online records, and the act of *creating* finding aids, especially well-developed ones, is a very labor intensive process.

Before we can publish a finding aid, we first have to process the collection. This includes everything from taking the boxes of unorganized materials from some attic or basement somewhere, to publishing the finding aid that will guide researchers through the collection. This summer I've been working on processing the William Fleming paper, so that I could publish a new finding aid, and thus make an incredibly valuable collection accessible to the public.

Fleming is a big name here in Augusta, GA, so I knew the collection was likely to have a pretty high research value. Plus, I had actually used one of Fleming's publications, *Slavery and the Race Problem in the South*, for a history class focused on local history during Reconstruction through early Jim Crow. The story of how this collection got to us is both interesting, and somewhat emblematic of the state of many of the collections in our back log here. The collection was donated by a local demolition contractor in 1989, when he was working on a building in Augusta. At some point, the collection was placed in acid free boxes, and someone created an inventory of one of the 12 banker's boxes. And that's as far as it got. Twenty nine years later, here I am, processing it (finally).

Digging into the collection, two things became clear to me very quickly: This collection is a who's who of Augusta, GA from 1880-1930. All the big families are represented throughout. William Henry Fleming was a local Augustan, and served as the superintendent of the public schools here from 1874-1880. He later practiced law in Augusta from 1880-1930, and served in the Georgia House of Representatives from 1888-1896.

As the collection is nearing completion, I will soon be writing and publishing the finding aid for it, which will provide researchers not only with background information on William Fleming, but will also outline each folder of materials included in the collection,

making this large and unwieldy collection accessible for the first time since 1989. Be on the lookout for the finding aid, coming this fall!

-Kara Flynn, Special Collections Librarian

From Historical Collections and Archives (HCA):

The Joseph Eve Allen Papers is a small collection of items that belonged to a man with strong historical ties to the Medical College of Georgia and to Augusta. Joseph Eve Allen was born in 1857 to a prominent Augusta family. He was named after his maternal grandfather, Joseph A. Eve, one of MCG's founding faculty members. Joseph Eve Allen graduated from the Academy of Richmond County in 1874 and from MCG in 1877.

One of the items in this collection is Dr. Allen's diary which states on the first page: "Joseph Eve Allen, Student of Medicine, Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, Nov. 2nd, 1874." The diary evolved into a journal in which Allen recorded notes of the lectures he attended at MCG. This collection includes his chemistry lecture notebook and three physician's journals from Allen's private practice of medicine.

Dr. Allen's career as a faculty member at MCG began in 1880. He was elected by the faculty to serve as dean in 1906. His election as dean was a popular choice with the students. The Augusta Chronicle recorded that when the announcement was made, the students "took the new dean upon their shoulders and carried him in the college..." (Augusta Chronicle, page 7, February 25, 1906).

Here is a [link](#) to the Joseph Eve Allen Papers. Contact me at rsharrock@augusta.edu if you would like to view this collection in person.

- Renée A. Sharrock, Curator

About the Heritage Unit: The University Libraries has a department devoted to the preservation and archival keeping of the campus' unique histories. The Historical Collections & Archives (HCA) is located on the 2nd floor of the Greenblatt Library on the Health Sciences campus. Special Collections & Institutional Archives is located on the 3rd floor of the Reese Library on the Summerville campus.