Caroliniana Columns - Fall 2000

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What do a B-movie “scream queen,” a Yankee general with horns and cloven hooves, a politician holding two stringers of panfish, and a turn-of-the-century bicyclist have in common?

Quite a bit more than one might imagine. All of these characters lurk in the South Caroliniana Library’s photograph collection; all of their unique images are undergoing conservation and preservation treatment; and all will soon be accessible to researchers through print and electronic databases.

In 1999 the National Endowment for the Humanities awarded the Library a substantial grant to support the preservation of and access to the photograph collection. Currently at work on the grant are project archivist Joe Long and student assistants Jean Bischoff, Jayne Griffin, and Lin Zhang. The group is working to ensure preservation of the Library’s images (more than 20,000 prints and 5,000 negatives) by rehousing them in archivally sound storage materials. Additionally, they are working to improve access to the collection by loading electronic bibliographic records to the University’s on-line catalog (U-SCAN) and the OCLC national database.
Dr. William Freehling and Library Director Allen Stokes at the reception.

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and other photographic illustrations as well as recent additions to the map collection which depict the development of South Carolina’s transportation system from 1900 to the 1950s.

Following the reception, the meeting adjourned to the Russell House for the luncheon and business session presided over by President Harry Lightsey. President Lightsey recognized retiring Executive Council members Vice-President Frank K. Babbit, Jr., and Councilors Caroline Hendricks and William Chandler and presented them with tokens of appreciation for their service. Elected to the newly vacated Council positions were Dr. Selden Smith, Vice-President, and Stewart Lindsay and Dr. Rose Marie Cooper, Councilors.

Dr. William W. Freehling, the Otis A. Singletary Chair in the Humanities at the University of Kentucky, delivered the luncheon address. It was bit of a homecoming as Dr. Freehling was a researcher at the South Caroliniana Library while a graduate student in the early 1960s. Introduced by Dr. Belinda Gergel of the Department of History and Political Science at Columbia College, Dr. Frechling addressed “South Carolina’s Pivotal Decision for Disunion: Popular Mandate or Manipulated Verdict?” As a young researcher working through collections in the Library, Dr. Frechling developed an appreciation for historical complexities and what one can and cannot learn from them. Thus, the Civil War should not be viewed as a war of “The North” versus “The South,” for as many as 450,000 anti-Confederate Southerners, white and black, fought in the Union army.

The records document and reveal the complexity of this historical event; however, as Dr. Freehling notes, “the surviving historical materials run dry before one can be arrogantly certain that even a complex guess has it right” as to whether anti-Confederate Southerners did change the outcome of the war.

Complexities also emerge from studying South Carolina’s decision to secede in 1860. It was not, contends Dr. Freehling, a “unanimous, simple South Carolina” that withdrew from the Union and led other states to do the same in
In a separate report distributed at the annual meeting, Secretary-Treasurer Allen Stokes addressed the business of the Society in 1999. He reported that the Society's current membership is 2,101 and that sixty-four new members joined in 1999.

The Executive Council met in April and set an annual goal of one hundred new members. Towards this goal, current members are encouraged to submit nominations. Every issue of Caroliniana Columns contains a nomination card; in response to the card enclosed with the Spring 2000 issue, the Society received around fifteen nominations. So far this year, the Society has received twenty-seven new members, one of whom is a Life Member. Current members can help expand membership by thinking of friends and associates who may be interested in the South Caroliniana Library's mission of collecting and preserving the documentary record of South Carolina's history, literature, and culture.

The Council has also determined that the Society will hold at least two functions annually for the membership. The annual meeting in May will remain a Saturday event with a morning reception followed by the luncheon and program. Additionally, the Society will hold an evening event in the fall.

The Secretary-Treasurer reported that the Society received $24,350 in dues and other contributions and $65,914 in interest and dividend income during 1999. The fund's market value stood at $1,864,963, an increase of $79,233 since 1998. The Secretary-Treasurer spent $77,104 of accumulated dues and investment income to purchase printed, visual, and manuscript materials for the Library. The Society continued its financial support of the nationally recognized editorial projects - The Papers of Henry Laurens and The Papers of John C. Calhoun - with a contribution of $1,500 to each project. The Society also made a contribution of $10,000 to the conservation laboratory in the University Libraries' remote storage facility. This gift was applied towards the purchase of custom-made worktables for the laboratory.

During 1999 the Library received funding for a twenty-four-month project to reorganize, rehouse, and begin online cataloging of our collection of approximately 20,000 images in...
Images from the Library's photograph collection (from left to right): That is no less a statesman than James F. Byrnes, himself, standing on a street in Conway, South Carolina, posing with two full strings of fish borrowed from some passing children for the photo-op. The collection's "scream queen," Lois Collier of Santee, South Carolina, appeared in Weird Woman (1944), Flying Disc Man from Mars (1951), Missile Monsters (1958), and a host of other low budget films of the forties and fifties. Finally, the lady bicyclist, one Miss Waing, won a race associated with Charleston's "Blockade Week" festival in 1900.

Photographs continued from page 1

...ing photographs into the broad categories of "People," "Places," or "Things." Once established, this system stayed in place well past the WPA era. Photographs and other visual images that came to the Library as separate, intact collections were often distributed among these categories, which both unnecessarily dispersed the photographs and made it difficult to differentiate the original collections.

The arbitrary decisions required to place the images in their categories also made them more difficult to find in some cases. For instance, a photograph of workers harvesting cotton might be filed under "People" by the surname of one of the workers or of the field's owner, "Blacks" or "Catawba Indians" depending on the workers' ethnicity, or under "Places" by the county in which the harvest took place. Finally, the photo might be filed under "Things: Agriculture: Cotton" or "Things: Agriculture: Farm Scenes." Cross-indexing was, unfortunately, nonexistent.

Currently, Long and his assistants are working to restore a sense of original order to the collections and to describe photographs in greater detail. As the grant progresses, both the preservation of the collection and ease of access to it will continue to improve. Ultimately, the creation of on-line catalog records will allow access to the images from a wide variety of subject search terms. A database already provides improved indexing to the WPA photos. While the grant continues, the collection remains accessible as the old catalog cards can still be employed by staff members to locate images.

Joe Long
IN MEMORIAM - MAY BELSER DOUGLASS (1915-2000)

On August 19 the South Caroliniana Library lost an esteemed friend, a valuable associate, and a long-time supporter.

May Belser-Douglass, widow of Wilford Franklin Douglass, was the first of eight children born to the late Irvine F. Belser and Mary Heyward Belser. A Summa Cum Laude graduate of the University of South Carolina, class of 1936, she taught English at Dreher High School in its opening year and was a retired employee of the State-Record Newspaper. Her memberships included the Columbia Junior League, the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, and the Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, where she belonged to the Daughters of the Holy Cross.

For more than a decade, from around 1982 to 1993, she served as a volunteer assistant to field archivist Thomas L. Johnson at the Library. In particular, she played an essential role in the development of the Library's vertical file collection. Through the years, as a member of the University South Caroliniana Society, she also made significant gifts to the Library's other holdings, particularly those in the Books Division.

May Douglass' tenure was marked by diligent attention to her work and her kindly disposition and friendly presence. She is remembered with respect and affection by Library personnel and patrons.

-Dr. Thomas Johnson

ENDOWMENT AND FELLOWSHIP NEWS

The Library is pleased to report on the establishment of several new endowment and scholarship programs as well as the continued success of several established programs.

At the annual meeting, the Society recognized and thanked the donors of two endowments that have been established to assist the South Caroliniana Library's conservation and acquisition efforts and to enable scholars to conduct research on government, politics, and society in South Carolina since 1900.

The Orin F. Crow Acquisition and Preservation Endowment was established by Dr. Crow's daughter and son-in-law, Mary and Dick Anderson. The Ellison Durant Smith Research Award was established by Mr. John McLeod of Greenville through the estate of his father, Harold McCallum McLeod, and honors his father's cousin, United States Senator Ellison Smith.

The Library is also pleased to announce that the William Jennings Bryan Dorn Young Scholar Prize will honor the best paper by an undergraduate student who conducts research in the Library's Modern Political Collections Division.

This past summer the Library hosted two visiting scholars under the auspices of previously established fellowships. For the second consecutive summer, Dr. James B. Meriwether was the William Gilmore Simms Visiting Professor. He continued his research on a bibliography of William Gilmore Simms' separate publications including books, pamphlets, and contributions in periodicals.

Mr. James O. Spady spent the summer months at the Library as the Lewis P. Jones Summer Research Fellow. A graduate student in the American Studies program at the College of William and Mary, Mr. Spady researched educational practices and institutions in the lower South from the 1730s through the 1820s and analyzed their relationship to the cultural politics of the American Revolution.
WHERE PINE TREES FOREVER GREW

Nineteenth century travelers viewing a new locale for the first time often penned vivid descriptive accounts of and commentary on institutions, climate, food, customs, language, and architecture. The South Caroliniana Library is the repository for hundreds of personal narratives of travelers who included South Carolina in their itineraries. Travel accounts are found among correspondence as South Carolinians visited other areas of the country (especially New England and the Middle Atlantic states), Europe, the Middle East, and Africa by ship, stage, rail, and wagon. The letter transcribed and excerpted below is a recent acquisition. The author, C. Scott, came to Adams Run, South Carolina, to work as a tutor. In this four-page letter to his uncle, Charles Buchanan of New York, Scott offers today's readers a detailed portrait of a nineteenth century village.

Adams Run, S. Carolina Jan. 18 1845

My Dear Uncle,

I promised you a letter after my arrival in the South and as I can now write with some degree of certainty, I deem it my duty to perform my promise. You will perceive by the date of my letter that I am in Adams Run, South Carolina, which is a small pine-land village, situated about 25 miles to the South of the city of Charleston. These villages are scattered throughout the low-land country and are the summer resorts of the neighboring planters. It is very dangerous to reside there during the warm months on the rice and cotton plantations, in consequence of a poisonous mildew which rotted the cotton and destroying many of our only lands which obtain throughout the entire Eastern part of the State and which disappointed by the whites produces fear of the most malignant and fatal kind.

Consequently, in the month of May, nearly all the planters leave their gardens and take their residences for a few months in more healthy localities. Most of them seek some favorable pine-land, which is warm and dry, sandy and north and which is sufficiently well watered, plantations, to enable them to cool either once or twice a week, to see how all is going with the work and negroes. These trees are cleared away, affording just sufficient room for a house from ten to twenty of pitch, constituting a village—a pine-land village. These houses are usually two-storied and together with the palmetto and adobe are in contrast very pretty with the tall lines of the pine trees which surround them. I have told that Adams Run is a very good specimen of the sort. It contains twenty dwellings beside negro houses, all of them elevated from 6 to 10 feet above the ground and supported by wooden props, and some of them are two stories high and look very nicely indeed on the outside. But they are simply enclosed and partitioned into rooms and have no ceilings within, either of lime & plaster or of boards. Most of the chimneys too are on the outside and built of clay, for bricks are very expensive and little fire is necessary. So you perceive that the houses are in reality only calculated for summer residences. Still we have some 5 or 6 families living here among whom are the 2 families by whom I am now employed. Consequently it has a very dull and uninteresting appearance, looking only like a deserted village in the midst of a forest. It is all interesting and answers very well to the following poetic description:

Where to the north—pine trees in prospect rise
Where to the South—pine trees extend the skies,
Where to the East—pine trees obstruct the view,
Where to the West—pine trees forever grew.

Such a place is my present place of residence, as it now appears but in the summer it becomes more pleasant and lovely as the planters come in on the 1st of May and remain until after heat.

I landed in the Hamburg City on the 14th of Dec. which, if you remember, was my 17th birthday. Remained there just two weeks, then came to this place to teach in the family of Mrs. King, a widow lady, where I had been offered $300 and board, with the privilege of receiving whatever other children should get. But on coming here I made a somewhat different arrangement. I agreed to board with... Mr. Walter, a brother of Mrs. King, and teach his children as an equivalent, while on the other hand I receive $350 or $50 more than first agreed upon. My school consists of 4 from Mrs. King—3 from Mr. Walters and one other boy whose father pays me $12 per yr. Through the summer will have several more, probably at the same price so that I will likely receive at least $600
for my years work, while my expenses will be quite light. But there is a possibility that I may not remain here all summer. Though quite healthy for the season, I entertain some fear as to the effect of the climate upon my bilious constitution. In June will take the advice of some physician on the subject and follow his directions.

Biliousness are very prevalent.

Though I take my meals at Mr. Bullitt's, I live by myself and keep bachelor hall. A cousin of Mrs. King has kindly offered me the use of her house which is standing empty at present and have gave the family ... in the best style which the place affords. The house is one of the best in the village, double with a hall through the middle, two stories in height with brick chimneys (one of two that have been) and all neatly whitewashed. I have the range of the whole house and feel like a prince, when I ascend an evening before a cheerful fire, surounded by Mrs. King, elegant library, furniture, pictures, and paintings and though solitary and alone, I feel cheerful and happy.

By the way (speaking of fire) I have surely known what cold weather is in this mild climate. To be sure a fire feels pleasant but it has not been necessary. Have seen ice only once since my arrival in South Carolina. The weather has been very much like our April or May. But they call it a very mild winter and besides although not cold yet the temperature often changes several degrees in the course of a few hours and thus seems to chill the system so that our feelings are sometimes very unpleasant. I am told that it is not uncommon for the thermometer to change 20 or 25 degrees in a single day and back again perhaps during the night.

Have several times wished myself at the North enjoying a good sleigh ride over the snowy track with my friends and companions in Orange County.

Thus have I given you some particulars of my present situation. Have not been in the county long enough to hazard any opinion concerning the manners and customs of the people — or to tell you how I shall like my present location. Thus far my intercourse with them has been very pleasant and I trust that it will continue so. At least no efforts of mine shall be spared to render myself useful respected and beloved. The Southern people are noted for their generosity and hospitality and although somewhat reserved at first they soon welcome the stranger and make him feel as if a stranger no longer.

Already have I received several invitations to visit planters in the neighborhood and as I am free every Saturday, I think that I will soon become acquainted and be able to tell more of the Southern character ...

I have eat sweet potatoes and haminin every day in all their perfection and am much more fond of both than I supposed I should be. Have not seen a piece of bread in a week and will not perhaps in a month more ...

May I not expect a letter from you, dear Uncle? Direct to Adams Run, Parish of St. Pauls, S.C. for we have a Post Office here. Perhaps I will soon become lonely and then how pleasant will be communications from my friends. I am now started on the course of active life. I know not what may be my destiny — but whether success or misfortune attend my effort, I feel comforted with the assurance that your well wishes and prayers are with me.

Farewell,

C. Scott

(Editor's note: Spelling, punctuation, and grammar inconsistencies are those of the original writer and have not been changed.)

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LOOKING BACK OVER 200 YEARS: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1801-2001

The USC Archives is producing a bicentennial exhibit in cooperation with McKissick Museum and the Bicentennial Commission. For the full story behind the following teasers, please tour the exhibit at McKissick Museum when it opens in January 2001.

Did You Know That . . .

...the only documented fatal duel between South Carolina College students occurred in 1833 - over first serving rights to a plate of fish at the campus dining hall?

...members of the literary societies could be fined for eating, smoking, sitting "in an indecent posture" and spitting on the carpet during meetings?

...the brick wall constructed around the campus in 1835 was a largely unsuccessful effort to deter students from leaving the campus and engaging in ungentlemanly pursuits—such as stealing turkeys and visiting grog shops?

...renowned professor Francis Lieber attempted to have a student expelled from South Carolina College for stupidity?

...in 1852 over half the student body quit school in protest of the rancid and worm-infested food served in the campus dining hall?

...the University of South Carolina was the only state-supported southern university to integrate during Reconstruction?

...Greek fraternities were banned from South Carolina colleges from 1897 to 1927?

...students and faculty members, weary of trudging through muddy paths on rainy days, laid the first brick sidewalks on the Horseshoe in 1931?

...a near-riot ensued at the 1961 Carolina-Clemson football game thanks to a prank by USC's Sigma Nu fraternity?

...the earliest impetus for the restoration of the Horseshoe occurred in 1972, when a shower stall in a men's residence hall fell through a rotting floor?

...Cocky, USC's award-winning mascot, was booed and jeered when he made his debut at the 1980 Homecoming game?

- Elizabeth West
The weather had warmed up. The oaks were in the rich fullness of early leaf, wisteria hung in purple and thickly perfumed clusters all over Conway. Behind us, in the yard at Snow Hill, such azaleas as had survived a murderous February freeze were coming into blossom. We slipped down the Lake, under the bridge, past the Presbyterian Church, and entered the Waccamaw.

From Horry and the Waccamaw, page 134.

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1860 and 1861. Those who orchestrated South Carolina’s decision knew well that they might not achieve the necessary two-thirds majority vote, for the nullifiers had failed in 1830 and the disunionists in 1850-1852. Armed with the knowledge that no other state would take the first step and that if South Carolina did, others would follow, the secessionists in South Carolina silenced such critics as James Henry Hammond and used the local militia to suppress those who urged caution. Thus, Dr. Freehling concludes that “South Carolina blazed out of the Union seemingly unanimously, with none of the oft-times paralyzing debate.”

-Dr. Allen Stokes

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In early 2001, South Caroliniana Society members may look forward to the publication of Partners with the Sun: South Carolina Photographers, 1840-1940 by Harvey S. Teal. Teal's narrative recounts the history of the men and women who captured a century of South Carolina images, from photography's introduction in the state through 1940. Beginning with William H. Eller, a South Carolina College professor who was the first in the state to experiment with the new technology, Teal records carefully researched biographical information on nearly six hundred professional photographers who worked throughout South Carolina. He showcases their work with more than three hundred examples of daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes, cartes de visite, cabinets, stereographs, panoramas, and other types of photographs. While the images provide a one-hundred-year pictorial panorama of South Carolina, the biographical entries rescue from obscurity the men and women who made a business of recording the state's landscapes, streetscapes, architecture, people, social life, and economic endeavors.

Dividing the century into historical periods, Teal groups the photographers by the towns in which they operated studios. Additionally, he profiles amateur photographers who participated in significant projects, such as those who produced the more than three thousand photographs taken of the Penn School on St. Helena Island in Beaufort County. In response to the increasing interest in female photographers, African American photographers, photography as a business, and the production of picture postcards, stereographs, and panoramas, Teal devotes a chapter to each of these topics. He highlights local and national events of the century and chronicles advances in photographic technology, to place the photographers in their historical contexts.

Published by the University of South Carolina Press. Partners with the Sun will be available in January 2001.
WILL THESE GENTLEMEN REMAIN UNKNOWN SOLDIERS?

This damaged albumen print, ca. 1890, shows five men in uniform, one with the chevrons of a non-commissioned officer on his sleeves (far left). The enlisted men carry flat canteens on a diagonal strap. On their belts are wicked-looking bush or "bolo" knives appropriate to the apparent subtropical or tropical background. The knives must be quite heavy by the way they tilt all of the belts to the side (except the dapper-looking sergeant's; perhaps that is why he is in charge). Each soldier has a Maltese cross or some similar insignia on his cap - in the sergeant's case with a wreath around it. The enlisted men also have what appears to be a carrying strap of some kind, and one has decided that formation for a photograph is not a good enough reason to tuck his pipe out of sight (far right).

Interestingly, a uniform jacket identical to those in the group picture is worn in a photo at right taken in March, 1898, in Charleston of Private Eugene Schell (Battery 'G,' 1st Artillery). Schell might even be the second man from the right in the group photo.

Are these Spanish-American War era soldiers members of a specialized state volunteer unit or of a regular unit of an army (American or otherwise)? What is the significance of the Maltese Cross here?

Any information regarding the identity of the military unit will be rewarded with special mention in Caroliniana Columns. Please contact Joe Long at 803-777-0580 or longwj@gwm.sc.edu with any ideas.
Internationally renowned artist Philip Mullen, who retired in June after teaching at USC’s Art Department since 1969, made this printed drawing of the South Caroliniana’s Library’s reading room in the early 1990s. He created it to explore the manifold variations that result from applying paint to a printed work. The Library houses a basic archival research collection on Mullen’s career. He will be featured in an article written by assistant director Thomas L. Johnson in the forthcoming issue of the USC library publication *Ex Libris.*