

College Archives

The Randolph-Macon College Archives include materials dating from the founding of the college to the present, including books, documents and papers, publications, newspapers, microfilm and microfiche, drawings, photographs, scrapbooks, blueprints, films, oral histories, and objects and artifacts.

In addition to official college records, presidents' papers, publications from the College's long tradition of literary and debating societies, and other documents, the collection includes:

- early subscription books documenting monetary pledges towards the founding of the school, solicited from congregations in Virginia and North Carolina
- the first diploma awarded by the school in 1835 to John C. Blackwell
- a chair owned by a student killed at Gettysburg, as well as letters sent home by other students during the Civil War
- student diaries, scrapbooks, and historical sketches, including the Leroy Edwards diaries of 1857-1858
- a film of the college's centennial celebration in 1930, including an early football game
- R-MC branded commemorative memorabilia, including a cigar band dating from the 1920s, hatpins and stickpins, pocket watches, watch fobs, medallions, freshman beanies, pillow covers, pen-nants, bookends, and many other items
- correspondence and papers of Dr. Robert Emory Blackwell documenting his time in the leadership of the Virginia Commission on Interracial Cooperation



Original College building at Boydton, VA, prior to the College's move to Ashland after the Civil War



McGraw-Page Library
Randolph-Macon College
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<http://library.rmc.edu>

Choose "Special Collections"

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Flavia Reed Owen Special Collections and Archives

McGraw-Page Library





Special Collections at Randolph–Macon College

The Special Collections unit of the McGraw–Page Library at Randolph-Macon College houses several significant historical and literary collections in addition to preserving the historic archives of the college.

The oldest item in the collection is an illuminated manuscript, attributed to Spanish monks in the 14th century, while many of the newest materials are digital files. Materials range from rare and valuable books, such as an 1853 edition of Byron’s *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* with fore-edge painting, to local history collections such as the archives of the Woman’s Club of Ashland.

The Methodist Collection

Special Collections houses the historic archive of the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church. This collection includes books, papers, documents, publications, diaries, photographs, maps, paintings, church silver, filmstrips and projectors, and numerous other types of objects and artifacts.

The collection documents the history and growth of the Church in Virginia starting in the colonial period through the present.



Items range from 3-inch long shoes collected by missionaries to document Chinese foot-binding practices to Magic Lantern slide projectors and filmstrips used in Sunday School lessons during the first half of the twentieth century.

The Davis Collection

The Library has the personal book and journal collection of Richard Beale Davis, an R-MC alumnus who won the National Book Award for 1978 for his seminal work, *Intellectual Life in the Colonial South, 1585-1763*. His 4,000 volume collection of publications focuses on the intellectual life of the colonial South .

The Herald–Progress Collection

McGraw-Page Library acquired the archive of the local newspaper, the *Herald-Progress*, which consists of over 40,000 items. The collection includes primarily photographs, but also contains many documents, articles, histories, and memoirs documenting the history of Hanover County, Virginia, and the Town of Ashland from colonial times to the present.



The Porter Hardy Papers

A graduate of Randolph-Macon College, Porter Hardy, Jr., served the state of Virginia as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 22 years, from 1947-1969.

The Oral History Collections

Several oral history projects are archived at the library, including recordings of students, alumni, faculty, and staff focused on life at R-MC and the history of the college, and the Ashland oral history project, “One Ashland-Many Voices,” a collaborative project with the Town of Ashland.

The Collections of J. Rives Childs

The Casanova Collection

J. Rives Childs, an R-MC alumnus and retired diplomat, collected extensively during his years in the Foreign Service in Europe and the Middle East.



The J. Rives Childs Collection of Casanoviana is one of the world’s most extensive collections of rare editions of Casanova’s *Memoires*.

The collection consists of over 2000 items including numerous rare volumes in many languages.. In addition to the *Memoires* and writings

of Casanova, the collection contains numerous bibliographies, biographies, sales catalogs, correspondence, playbills, and illustrations.

The Henry Miller Collection

Mr. Childs’ extensive correspondence with the author Henry Miller as well as a large collection of Miller’s works compose the core of this collection, which also includes other writers and artists who came within Miller’s orbit.

The Childs Collection

During World War I, Mr. Childs was part of the team charged with breaking German codes, and his personal collection of books, papers, and other materials on code-breaking and ciphers was bequeathed to R-MC.