



Legacy Finding Aid for Manuscript and Photograph Collections

801 K Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

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Finding aids are narrative guides to archival collections created by the repository to describe the contents of the material. They often provide much more detailed information than can be found in individual catalog records. Contents of finding aids often include short biographies or histories, processing notes, information about the size, scope, and material types included in the collection, guidance on how to navigate the collection, and an index to box and folder contents.

What are Legacy Finding Aids?

The following document is a legacy finding aid – a guide which has not been updated recently. Information may be outdated, such as the Historical Society’s contact information or exact box numbers for contents’ location within the collection. Legacy finding aids are a product of their times; language and terms may not reflect the Historical Society’s commitment to culturally sensitive and anti-racist language. This guide is provided in “as is” condition for immediate use by the public. This file will be replaced with an updated version when available.

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The Historical Society of Washington, D.C., is a community-supported educational and research organization that collects, interprets, and shares the history of our nation’s capital. Founded in 1894, it serves a diverse audience through its collections, public programs, exhibits, and publications.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, D.C.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS FINDING AID

Title: MS 66 W. Riley Deeble Papers, 1888-1905

Processor: Michelle Krowl

Date: June 2002

William Riley Deeble (April 21, 1860-April 4, 1907) was a prominent member of the real estate and insurance community in Washington, D.C., and considered an expert in realty assessments. A native of Georgetown, Riley Deeble was the son of **James William Deeble (1819-1887)** and Nicea Patterson Fuller Deeble (d. ca. 1861). He attended public and private schools in Washington, D.C., and graduated with a law degree from Columbian College (now George Washington University) in 1882. He headed Deeble, Davis & Company, and its successor Deeble & Company. He also served as president of the Georgetown Gas Light Company, director of the American Security and Trust Company, vice president of the Potomac Fire Insurance Company, vice president of the National Safe Deposit, Savings, and Trust, and was a popular member of the Washington Stock Exchange.

On February 8, 1888, Deeble married the former Cora B. Beggs, daughter of James H. Beggs of Wilmington, Delaware. The Deebles eventually had four children: Elizabeth, Dorothy, William Riley, Jr., and Margaret. Their primary residence was at 2020 P Street, NW. Deeble belonged to Columbia Historical Society, St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, and was a founder of the exclusive Dumbarton Club in Georgetown. W. Riley Deeble died unexpectedly at the age of 47, after a week-long bout of typhoid. He is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery in Georgetown.

W. Riley Deeble descended from Edward Deeble (October 8, 1791-April 16, 1869), whose family emigrated from England to Alexandria, Virginia in 1795. Edward Deeble served in the Navy during the War of 1812, and later became a printer, publisher and bookbinder in Washington, D.C. He and his wife, Margaret McCliesh, were the parents of six children, including James William Deeble, the father of W. Riley Deeble.

Scope and Content: The W. Riley Deeble Papers, 1888-1905 contain correspondence sent to W. Riley Deeble regarding events surrounding the Admiral Dewey Reception (1899) and the inaugural of President Theodore Roosevelt (1905), and Deeble's participation in many of those events. The collection primarily includes form letters sent to Deeble by reception and inaugural members, but also contains a few documents original to Deeble. The collection also contains genealogical information on the Deeble family collected by Elizabeth Deeble and an account ledger, 1888-1890, identified as a "Record kept by J.W. Deeble."

Donor: Elizabeth Deeble, 1983.066

Size: 2 folders (one oversize)

Restrictions: none

Related Materials:

Presidential ephemera donated by W. Riley Deeble, Ephemera Collection, Historical Society of Washington, D.C. (HSW). See "Roosevelt, Theodore" for ephemera issued to Mr. and Mrs. Deeble, and "Taft, William Howard" for materials belonging to Mrs. Deeble.

Silhouette of Edward Deeble, HSW Portrait Collection.

MS 525 Charles Carroll Glover Papers, 1681-1991, HSW. Glover was one of Deeble's correspondents, and a personal friend.

Container List

Folder 1: Correspondence, 1899, 1905. Primarily contains form letters regarding events surrounding the reception of Admiral Dewey (1899) and the inaugural of President Theodore Roosevelt (1905) sent to W. Riley Deeble by members of the official Reception and Inaugural Committees, respectively. A few documents were written specifically to Deeble. Folder also contains genealogical materials on the Deeble family, prepared by Elizabeth Deeble in 1961.

Folder 2 (oversize): Account book, 1888-1890, showing alphabetized names and monthly accounts for an unidentified business. Identified on first page as "Record kept by J.W. Deeble;" however, J.W. Deeble, insurance agent, died in 1887. W. Riley Deeble may have kept these records.