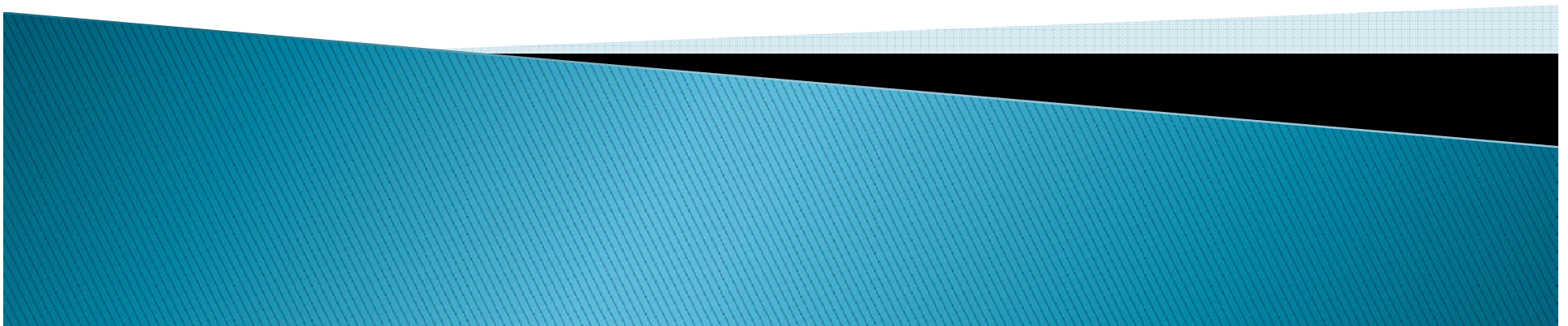


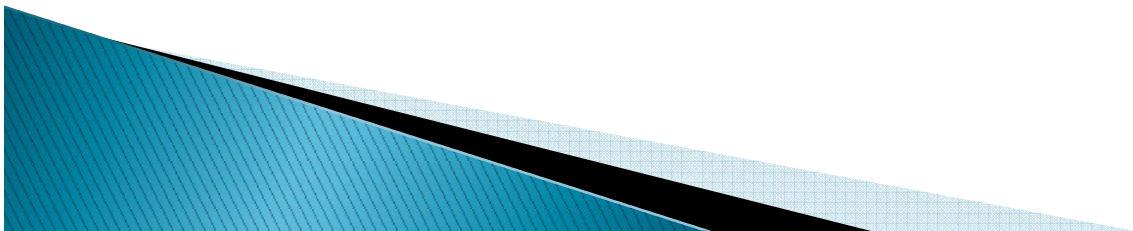
# National Treasure or White Elephant? A Stewardship Case Study

Sabrina Riley, MILS  
ASDAL 2011  
Pacific Union College

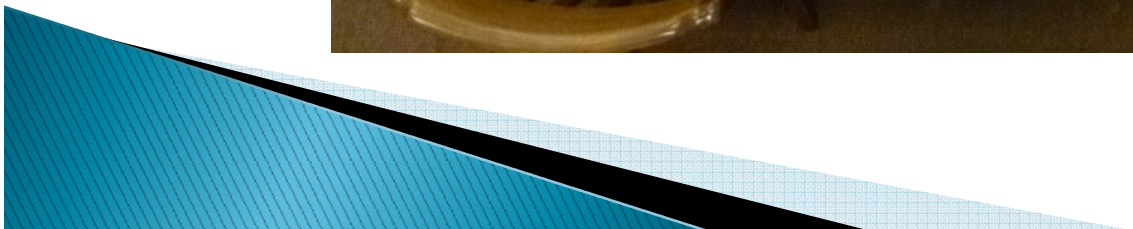


# Definitions of Stewardship

- ▶ Merriam–Webster: The careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care
- ▶ Biblical concepts: Stewardship is temporary custody for which one answers to God
- ▶ Professional concepts: ALA Core Values emphasize that what we do is for the good of our communities (institutions)



# My Grand Adventure

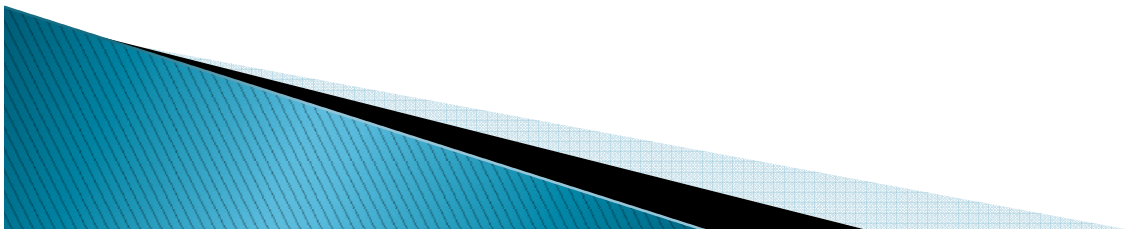


# Photographs

- ▶ Matthew Brady – discovered 1952







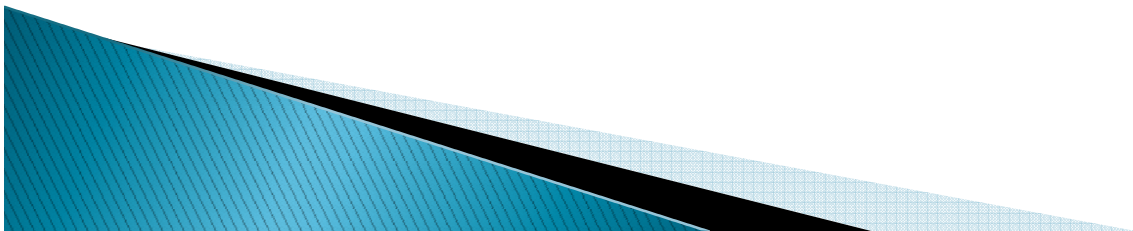
# Photographs

- ▶ Alexander Gardner – discovered 2006



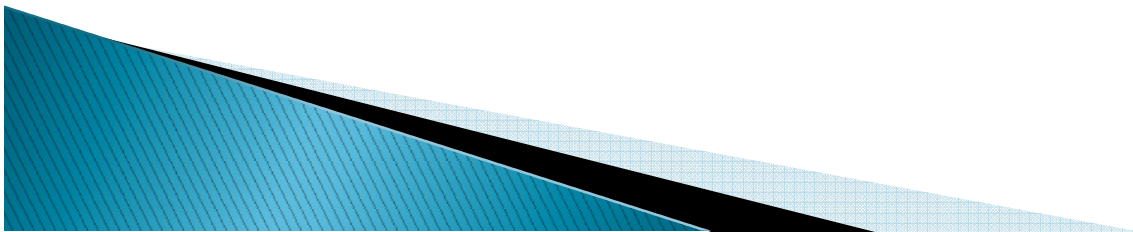
# Research

- ▶ Publications
  - U.S. Flags not standardized
- ▶ Historians
  - Impossible. Don't waste your time.
- ▶ Conservationist
  - Don't waste money on material analysis
- ▶ Easy for them to say.



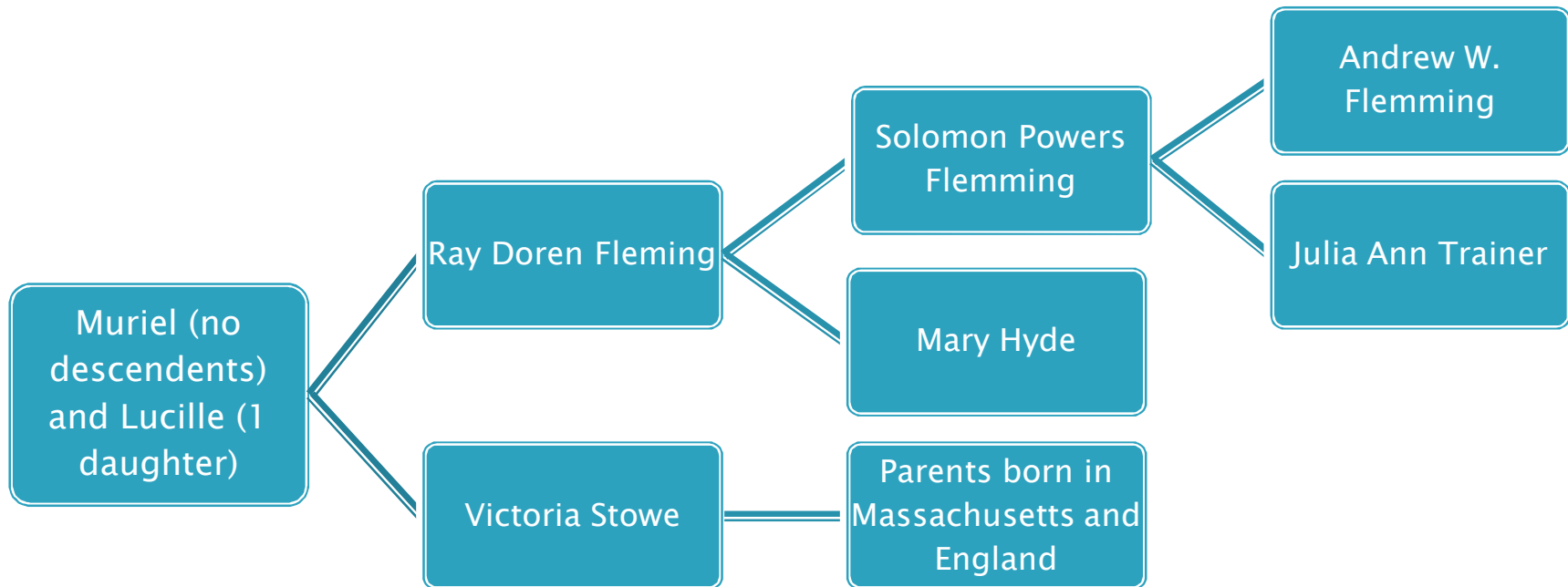
# Serendipity

- ▶ Assumption: Genealogical records may not prove the story true or false, but they may establish probability.
- ▶ Big problem: Didn't know the donor's name.



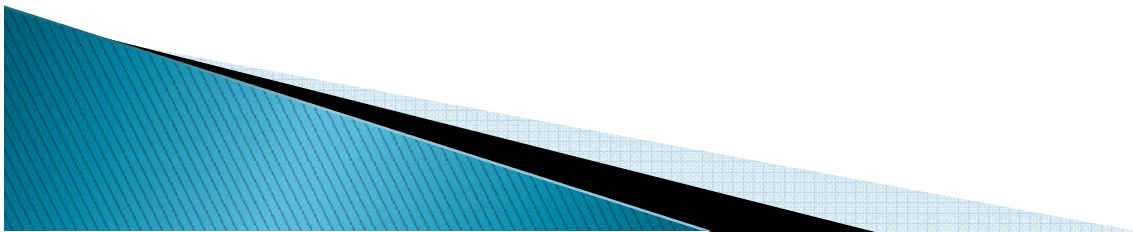


# Into the Genealogy



# Meeting the Family (Online)

- ▶ GenWeb Project volunteer
- ▶ Hyde Cousin
- ▶ Niece



# The Family's Story

*Victoria Fleming is my second cousin & married my  
brother, Dan Fleming. Muriel is her daughter.*

## Denver Woman Owns Flag Lincoln Saw at Gettysburg

A flag owned by Muriel Fleming, 2328 S. Ogden St., was one of the flags strung across the platform from which Lincoln made his Gettysburg Address.

Her great-grandfather, Alexander S. Fleming, captain of the Gettysburg, Pa., home guards during the Civil War, served as master of ceremonies at the dedication of the national cemetery when Lincoln made the speech, said Miss Fleming this week.

After the ceremonies—Nov. 19, 1863—the flag was presented to Fleming. It was passed down through the Fleming family and Miss Fleming has had it since 1939.

The flag, which has 34 stars and is more than slightly frayed, hung briefly in a museum at Des Moines, Iowa.

At every fifth-grader in the country knows, one Edward Everett spoke for two hours, Lincoln for several minutes.

Miss Fleming has no idea of the words her great-grandfather used to introduce Lincoln or Everett.

### HEARD OF CEREMONY

Miss Fleming's mother, Mrs. Victoria Fleming, 83, who lives with her, said she often heard her father tell stories about the dedication at Gettysburg. Her father was 12 years old at the time and was present at the ceremonies. Also present was the boy's sister, Dora, who was 18. She had helped take care of the wounded during the Battle of Gettysburg in July of 1863.

Mrs. Fleming's father told her the audience was "quiet and respectful" during Lincoln's speech but had no idea of the significance of the words they had just heard.

Miss Fleming is an assistant professor of medical and surgical nursing at the Union College nursing program at Porter Hospital.

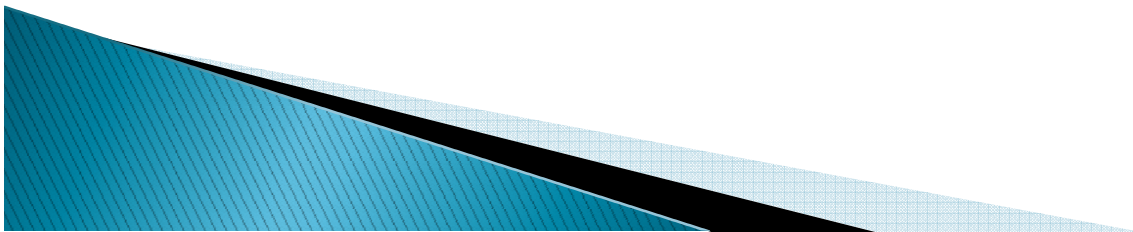


Denver Post Photo by George Crozier

**FLAG WAS ON PLATFORM DURING GETTYSBURG ADDRESS**  
Holding it are Mrs. Victoria Fleming, left, and her daughter, Muriel Fleming, right, the present owner.

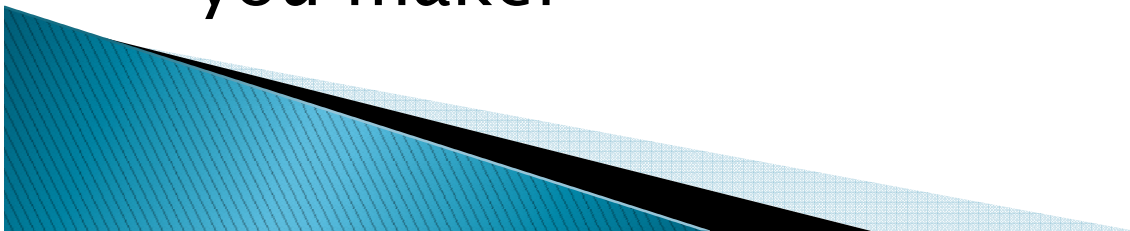
# Internal Evidence

- ▶ Parade flag
  - Single piece of fabric
  - Color printed on it
  - Small cord or rope on left
- ▶ Not designed to be flown long term



# What would you do?

- ▶ How much time is too much time and effort?
- ▶ When should an item be returned to the donor or donor's heirs?
- ▶ When should an item be discarded?
- ▶ What should be the institution's responsibility to fund research and care of the object?
- ▶ Do you view yourself as an owner or a steward of the items in your collection?
- ▶ How does your viewpoint impact the choices you make?





# The Rest of the Story

