

## PRESERVING THE PAST: RESTORING THE WORDS OF ANNA CALHOUN CLEMSON



Anna Maria Calhoun Clemson (1817-1875) is as important to the history of Clemson University as the man for whom it is named. Fully supporting the idea of scientific education in the South, she willed Fort Hill and the land surrounding it to her husband so that it could become the “high seminary of learning” it is today.

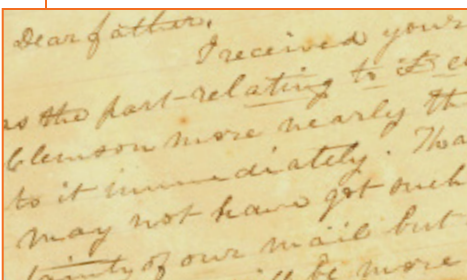
The Special Collections Library houses letters from Anna to various family members, including her father John C. Calhoun. These letters shed important light on the founding of Clemson University as well as the early history of the United States.

Calhoun, who served in both houses of the U.S. Congress, as vice president under John Q. Adams and Andrew Jackson, and secretary of state under John Tyler, maintained a lengthy correspondence with his daughter, considered to be the brightest of his children. In addition to writing about family matters and everyday life, his letters also addressed politics, foreign relations and his opinions on a variety of issues of the day. Anna thoughtfully replied about these subjects and reported about events in Europe during the turbulent years when she and her husband, Thomas Green Clemson, lived there.

The significance of Anna’s personal letters has been recognized as a major source for research about Calhoun, United States history and politics, Clemson and the founding of Clemson University.

### Restoring the Legacy of Letters

Some of Anna’s letters – particularly those to her father – are in desperate need of repair. These mid-nineteenth century letters have suffered due to improper storage and extensive rodent damage before being placed in the Special Collections Library. The result is a treasure trove of Clemson history that has become disfigured with holes and stains. These letters are in need of extensive restoration accomplished by a specialized conservator. Without this costly action, the survival of these letters is in jeopardy.





## The Need for Restoration is Critical

Eight letters from Anna and one written to her by her mother have been identified as having the most historical significance. These letters have been selected as an ideal starting point for the conservation of Anna's correspondence. The restoration cost per letter ranges from \$800 to \$2,000, depending on the letter's condition, number of pages and size of the paper.

## Your Gift Preserves a Legacy

A concerted effort to preserve these irreplaceable papers documenting the University's history is underway. Your gift to the preservation of Anna's letters is a gift to conserve artifacts important to both American and Clemson University history. Her correspondence provides a first-hand account of the events, politics and family life of the day. Their continued existence will help future generations gain insight into the role Anna and her husband had in establishing Clemson University.

