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### **Donation to State Archives Will Enhance Preservation of Civil War Governors' Records**

AUSTIN, TX – The records of seven Civil War and Reconstruction-era Texas governors will be better preserved and made more accessible to researchers, thanks to a generous donation to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. These records capture the leadership of the state's chief executive during a very tumultuous period in both American and Texas history.

The donation of \$8,600 by Glen Sample Ely, Ph.D., was for the enhanced preservation of these gubernatorial records, which are housed in the State Library and Archives. At a recent meeting, the commission gratefully accepted Dr. Ely's donation. Dr. Ely is a Texas author, historian and documentary filmmaker from Fort Worth.

“The preservation need of the state's archives is urgent,” said Dr. Ely. “I wanted to jumpstart it now by adopting this significant collection of records.”

The donated funds will enable the State Archives to purchase new archival supplies, including folders and boxes, and to hire a part-time student archivist to review the records and update the existing collection guides, which outline the subjects and contents of each set of records. The project is expected to take about six months.

“We're very grateful to Dr. Ely,” said Edward Seidenberg, TSLAC's Interim Director and Librarian. “His gift will help us improve public access to important state records. These records are already heavily accessed by the public; they include petitions, lists, and incoming and outgoing letters. This gift also gives us an opportunity to lengthen the life of these documents and to pilot our project to establish an adopt-a-collection program for the State Archives.”

In addition to Civil War and Reconstruction-era materials, the State Archives is home to materials related to the Texas Revolution, the Republic of Texas, and the Texas Rangers – materials that could also benefit from enhanced preservation donations like Dr. Ely's.

To acknowledge Dr. Ely's gift, each updated collection guide will include an honorarium line prescribed by Dr. Ely in honor of John Anderson, a current and long-time staff member of the State Archives whom Dr. Ely has worked with over the years while researching the archives for his scholarly writings and television documentaries on Texas history. For more on Dr. Ely and his work, visit

[www.texashistory.com](http://www.texashistory.com)

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*Preserving yesterday,  
informing today,  
inspiring tomorrow.*

The seven governors were in office from November 1861 to December 1876. As a whole their records provide compelling evidence of the state executive's efforts to guide Texas through a crucible in American history, sometimes defiantly. In April 1865, for instance, Governor Pendleton Murrah (1863-1865) wrote a public letter to Texas Confederates urging them to fight on despite the fact that Robert E. Lee had already surrendered to the Union forces led by Ulysses S. Grant.

Another example is a March 1867 telegram from Union General Phil Sheridan, the new military commander of Texas, to Governor James Throckmorton (1866-1867). The commander makes it clear that he expects the governor's cooperation in the reconstruction effort. Throckmorton ultimately failed to meet that expectation, and the commander removed the governor from office in July 1867.

Capsule portraits and biographies of the seven governors, beginning with Francis Lubbock, are available on TSLAC's website: <http://bit.ly/tsa-lubbock>

### **PHOTOS ATTACHED**

Caption 1: Glen Sample Ely (center) presents his \$8,600 donation to Michael C. Waters (left), TSLAC Chairman, and John Anderson (right), TSLAC Preservation Officer, during the commission's June 3rd meeting at the Lorenzo de Zavala State Archives and Library Building in Austin.

Caption 2: Page 1 of Murrah to "My Countrymen," April 27, 1865, Records of Pendleton Murrah, Texas Office of the Governor, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission: [www.tsl.state.tx.us/governors/war/murrah-resist-01.html](http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/governors/war/murrah-resist-01.html)

Caption 3: Telegram from General Phil Sheridan to Throckmorton, March 29, 1867, Records of James Webb Throckmorton, Texas Office of the Governor, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission: [www.tsl.state.tx.us/governors/war/throck-sheridan.html](http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/governors/war/throck-sheridan.html)

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### **ABOUT THE TEXAS STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COMMISSION**

*Formed in 1909, TSLAC is committed to giving Texans access to information and programs they can use to improve their lives and communities. We provide historical and genealogical search assistance, federal and state government documents, electronic research and library services to all Texans, including those who are unable to read standard print material because of physical or reading disabilities. For more information, visit [www.tsl.state.tx.us](http://www.tsl.state.tx.us)*