Guide to the Thomas C. Fleming Papers

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Guide to the Thomas C. Fleming Papers

Collection number: MS 131

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Descriptive Summary

Title: Thomas C. Fleming papers
Dates: circa 1929-2004
Bulk Dates: 1978-2004
Collection number: MS 131
Collection Size: 1.25 linear feet(2 boxes + 1 oversized box)
Repository: African American Museum & Library at Oakland (Oakland, Calif.)
Oakland, CA 94612
Abstract: The Thomas C. Fleming papers include photographs, certificates, programs, manuscripts, and newspaper clippings documenting his life and career as a journalist.
Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English
Access
No access restrictions. Collection is open to the public.
Access Restrictions
Materials are for use in-library only, non-circulating.
Publication Rights
Permission to publish from the Thomas C. Fleming Papers must be obtained from the African American Museum & Library at Oakland.
Preferred Citation
Thomas C. Fleming papers, MS 131, African American Museum & Library at Oakland, Oakland Public Library. Oakland, California.
Processing Information
Processed by Sean Heyliger, 02/06/2014.
Biography / Administrative History
Journalist Thomas C. Fleming (1907-2006) was born on November 29, 1907 in Jacksonville, Florida. He was raised by his grandmother in Jacksonville until 1916, when he moved to New York City to live with his father, a Pullman porter, before moving to Chico, California to live with his mother in 1919. After graduating from Chico High School in 1926, he worked as a cook and bellhop for the Southern Pacific Railroad. During the 1930s, he began working for the San Francisco black newspaper, The Spokesman, while taking journalism classes at Chico State College.
Fleming was hired as the founding editor of the African American newspaper The Reporter in 1944, which quickly merged with Carlton B. Goodlett’s newspaper The Sun, to become The Sun-Reporter. He worked as managing editor and lead reporter for the Sun-Reporter for over 33 years until his retirement in 1997 at the age of 89. In retirement, he worked on his memoir which was collected in his 1997 publication Reflections on black history.
Scope and Content of Collection
The Thomas C. Fleming papers include photographs, certificates, programs, manuscripts, and newspaper clippings documenting his life and career as a journalist. The papers are organized into three series: biographical material, writings, and artifacts. Biographical material consists of two portraits of Fleming, a certificate and plaque, and three programs from events honoring Fleming. His writings include a 150 page unpublished manuscript about his life growing up in California and career as a journalist, three copies of his self-published monograph, Reflections on black history, and assorted newspaper clipping written by or about Fleming. Artifacts include Fleming’s hat and two smoking pipes.

**Arrangement**

Series I. Biographical Series II. Writings Series III. Artifacts

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Fleming, Thomas C., 1907-2006.

African Americans--California.

African American journalists--Biography.

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**Biographical**

Physical Description: 3 folders + 1 oversized box

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes two photographs, certificates, and programs.

Arrangement

Arranged by format.

**Photographs**

Box 1:1

Portrait of Thomas C. Fleming circa 1920s

Box 1:1

Thomas C. Fleming sitting at his desk 1987

**Programs**

Box 1:2

"86th birthday celebration for Thomas Fleming" 1993

Box 1:2

Thomas C. Fleming retirement celebration 1997

Box 1:2

Northern California Center for African American Museum & Life and the African American Museum and Library at Oakland honors Thomas C. Fleming nation’s oldest black journalist 1999

**Certificates**

Box 1:3

Congratulations Uncle Tom from: the Jeffrey family undated

Box OM13

The Sun Reporter plaque 1978

**Writings**

Physical Description: 4 folders

Series Scope and Content Summary

Includes an untitled autobiography, three copies of Fleming's Reflections on black history, a draft of his newspaper column, "Weekly report," and assorted newspaper clippings by and about Thomas C. Fleming.

Arrangement

Arranged by format.

Box 1:4

Untitled autobiography [150 pp.] undated

Box 1:5

Reflections on black history [3 copies] 1997

Box 1:6

"Weekly report" undated

Box 1:7

Newspaper clippings 1983-2004
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box ART2</th>
<th>Hat undated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box ART2</td>
<td>Smoking pipes [2] undated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Artifacts**

- **Physical Description:** 1 box
- **Series Scope and Content Summary**
  - Includes Fleming's hat and two smoking pipes.
- **Arrangement**
  - Arranged by format.