The Repository
The Texas State Archives and Library Commission (TSLAC) traces its roots to the beginning of the Republic, when Mirabeau Lamar signed a law establishing a “national library.” It is tasked with the goal of preserving both the past and present history of the state of Texas. The TSLAC maintains the records of the state government and numerous other state agencies. It also possesses a substantial number of manuscript collections related to Texas history.

The Collection
Provenance
Donated by Nellie Feris, granddaughter of patriarch George Feris, in 1953. Previously boxed and foldered by state archivists but content of the collection was not known.

The Repository
The Texas State Archives and Library Commission (TSLAC) traces its roots to the beginning of the Republic, when Mirabeau Lamar signed a law establishing a “national library.” It is tasked with the goal of preserving both the past and present history of the state of Texas. The TSLAC maintains the records of the state government and numerous other state agencies. It also possesses a substantial number of manuscript collections related to Texas history.

The Collection
Provenance
Donated by Nellie Feris, granddaughter of patriarch George Feris, in 1953. Previously boxed and foldered by state archivists but content of the collection was not known.

Types of Materials
Mainly correspondence, but also contains business and legal documents, diaries, scrapbooks, memorabilia and newspaper clippings.

Significance of the Collection
Much of the material dates from the Civil War era, providing invaluable insight into an important and tumultuous time in history. George Feris and his two sons, Achille and Yandell, served in the Confederate Army. George received a commission from the new Confederate government to start a field hospital for wounded soldiers, while Achille served in the 8th Calvary, also known as Terry’s Texas Rangers. The correspondence between the Feris family members traces the experiences of Texans both at home and serving on the front lines.

Our Tasks
Appraisal Report and Processing Plan
Research the biographical history of the family, and describe the content of the collection. Make recommendations with regards to arrangement, preservation and research value based on what we had learned in our Introduction to Archival Enterprise I class.

Finding Aid
A DACS-compliant Finding Aid according to TSLAC guidelines, for use by archivists and researchers in the TSLAC. Included a biographical history and scope and content for each series, and a folder-level listing of the collection.

XML-Encoded EAD Finding Aid
Encode the finding aid in XML according to Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and TSLAC guidelines so that the finding aid could be put up on the web through Texas Archival Resources Online (TARO).

Challenges
• Some material was old and brittle with faded writing
• Some of the material was irreversibly laminated
• We had no way of knowing the original order of the material
• Content of material, other than presence of Civil War material, was not known
• Some folders had erroneous labels
• Some items were misfolded: for example, clearly identified correspondence was placed in “Unidentified”
• It took time to get used to reading mid-19th century handwriting
• Little information about the family was available outside the content of the collection
• The template software (XMetal) that the TSLAC usually uses for XML encoding was not available, so we encoded it manually using another XML editor, EditiX

The Feris Family Tree

The Repository
The Texas State Archives and Library Commission (TSLAC) traces its roots to the beginning of the Republic, when Mirabeau Lamar signed a law establishing a “national library.” It is tasked with the goal of preserving both the past and present history of the state of Texas. The TSLAC maintains the records of the state government and numerous other state agencies. It also possesses a substantial number of manuscript collections related to Texas history.

The Collection
Provenance
Donated by Nellie Feris, granddaughter of patriarch George Feris, in 1953. Previously boxed and foldered by state archivists but content of the collection was not known.

Types of Materials
Mainly correspondence, but also contains business and legal documents, diaries, scrapbooks, memorabilia and newspaper clippings.

Significance of the Collection
Much of the material dates from the Civil War era, providing invaluable insight into an important and tumultuous time in history. George Feris and his two sons, Achille and Yandell, served in the Confederate Army. George received a commission from the new Confederate government to start a field hospital for wounded soldiers, while Achille served in the 8th Calvary, also known as Terry’s Texas Rangers. The correspondence between the Feris family members traces the experiences of Texans both at home and serving on the front lines.

Our Tasks
Appraisal Report and Processing Plan
Research the biographical history of the family, and describe the content of the collection. Make recommendations with regards to arrangement, preservation and research value based on what we had learned in our Introduction to Archival Enterprise I class.

Finding Aid
A DACS-compliant Finding Aid according to TSLAC guidelines, for use by archivists and researchers in the TSLAC. Included a biographical history and scope and content for each series, and a folder-level listing of the collection.

XML-Encoded EAD Finding Aid
Encode the finding aid in XML according to Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and TSLAC guidelines so that the finding aid could be put up on the web through Texas Archival Resources Online (TARO).

Challenges
• Some material was old and brittle with faded writing
• Some of the material was irreversibly laminated
• We had no way of knowing the original order of the material
• Content of material, other than presence of Civil War material, was not known
• Some folders had erroneous labels
• Some items were misfolded: for example, clearly identified correspondence was placed in “Unidentified”
• It took time to get used to reading mid-19th century handwriting
• Little information about the family was available outside the content of the collection
• The template software (XMetal) that the TSLAC usually uses for XML encoding was not available, so we encoded it manually using another XML editor, EditiX

The Feris Family Tree

The Repository
The Texas State Archives and Library Commission (TSLAC) traces its roots to the beginning of the Republic, when Mirabeau Lamar signed a law establishing a “national library.” It is tasked with the goal of preserving both the past and present history of the state of Texas. The TSLAC maintains the records of the state government and numerous other state agencies. It also possesses a substantial number of manuscript collections related to Texas history.

The Collection
Provenance
Donated by Nellie Feris, granddaughter of patriarch George Feris, in 1953. Previously boxed and foldered by state archivists but content of the collection was not known.

Types of Materials
Mainly correspondence, but also contains business and legal documents, diaries, scrapbooks, memorabilia and newspaper clippings.

Significance of the Collection
Much of the material dates from the Civil War era, providing invaluable insight into an important and tumultuous time in history. George Feris and his two sons, Achille and Yandell, served in the Confederate Army. George received a commission from the new Confederate government to start a field hospital for wounded soldiers, while Achille served in the 8th Calvary, also known as Terry’s Texas Rangers. The correspondence between the Feris family members traces the experiences of Texans both at home and serving on the front lines.

Our Tasks
Appraisal Report and Processing Plan
Research the biographical history of the family, and describe the content of the collection. Make recommendations with regards to arrangement, preservation and research value based on what we had learned in our Introduction to Archival Enterprise I class.

Finding Aid
A DACS-compliant Finding Aid according to TSLAC guidelines, for use by archivists and researchers in the TSLAC. Included a biographical history and scope and content for each series, and a folder-level listing of the collection.

XML-Encoded EAD Finding Aid
Encode the finding aid in XML according to Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and TSLAC guidelines so that the finding aid could be put up on the web through Texas Archival Resources Online (TARO).

Challenges
• Some material was old and brittle with faded writing
• Some of the material was irreversibly laminated
• We had no way of knowing the original order of the material
• Content of material, other than presence of Civil War material, was not known
• Some folders had erroneous labels
• Some items were misfolded: for example, clearly identified correspondence was placed in “Unidentified”
• It took time to get used to reading mid-19th century handwriting
• Little information about the family was available outside the content of the collection
• The template software (XMetal) that the TSLAC usually uses for XML encoding was not available, so we encoded it manually using another XML editor, EditiX

The Feris Family Tree