

Gibson House Museum

Finding aid for

Mary Ethel Gibson Allen and Dr. Freeman Henry Allen Papers

Date Range

1873 - 1930s

Bulk Dates

1925-1930

Creator

Gibson House Museum

Extent

4 linear feet

Abstract

The Mary Ethel Gibson and Dr. Freeman Henry Allen Papers include correspondence, photographs, scrapbooks, journals, and calendars belonging to the couple.

Language

The material is in English

Acquisition information

The Correspondence subseries contains letters donated by Roz Allen, Mary Ethel Gibson Allen, to the Gibson House in 2013. The Mary Ethel Gibson subseries and the Dr. Freeman Henry Allen subseries contain items donated by Roz Allen in 2016.

Access restrictions

This series is open to research

Copyright

Copyright remains with the Gibson House Museum

Biographical sketches/information

Mary Ethel Gibson Allen was born in 1873 to Charles Hammond Gibson and Rosamond Warren Gibson. She grew up at 137 Beacon Street and lived at home until the age of thirty-eight. After a long courtship, Mary Ethel married Dr. Freeman Henry Allen in 1911. The couple remained in the Back Bay neighborhood and had one child, Henry Freeman Allen in 1917. She passed away in 1938.

Dr. Freeman Henry Allen was born in 1870 to Reverend Henry F. Allen and Georgiana May Stowe, the daughter of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* author Harriet Beecher Stowe. He was a graduate of Harvard Medical School and became a pioneer in the field in anesthetics. Dr. Allen struggled with depression and substance abuse, spending the last years of his life in and out of mental health institutions. He died by suicide in 1930.

Henry Freeman Allen was born in 1917, the only child of Mary Ethel Gibson Allen and Dr. Freeman Henry Allen.

Scope and Content

The Mary Ethel Gibson and Dr. Freeman Henry Allen Papers contains correspondence, photographs, scrapbooks, journals, and calendars belonging to the couple. The strength of the collection is found in the correspondence. These series shed light on Boston social life, marriage, medicine, and mental health in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Correspondence subseries ranges from 1890-1931 and contains 481 letters. The majority of the letters were written by Dr. Freeman Henry Allen to his wife, Mary Ethel Gibson Allen. The bulk of these letters were written by Freeman Allen from 1925 to 1931 during multiple stays at psychiatric hospitals.

The Mary Ethel Gibson Papers subseries ranges from 1873 through the 1930s. It contains photographs, postcards, scrapbooks, and manuscripts such as personal journals and poetry.

The Dr. Freeman Henry Allen Papers subseries ranges from 1892 to 1930. It contains photographs, medical essays, and personal calendars and diaries.

Materials Removed From the Collection

The following items were removed from the Correspondence series and donated to the Stowe Center in 2014:

1 letter from Calvin E. Stowe to Reverend Henry Freeman Allen, dated December 15, 1885
10 letters from Harriet Beecher Stowe to Georgiana May Stowe and Reverend Henry F. Allen, dating from 1862 to 1891.

The following letter was moved to the Miscellaneous Papers series of the Gibson Family Papers Collection:

1 letter from Dr. Freeman Allen to son, Henry Allen, dated October 18 and sent from White Plains, NY

Correspondence Contents Listing

Box 1, Folder 1

- Letters written by Georgiana May Stowe to her husband, Reverend Henry Freeman Allen, ca. 1864 - 1890
 - 6 June, 1864
 - 29 April, 1874
 - Undated Letters
 - Envelope addressed to Reverend Henry Freeman Allen

- 7 June
- Date illegible
- Undated
- Unknown Author to Georgiana May Stowe, undated
- Letters written by Harriet Beecher Stowe to her daughter, Georgiana May Stowe and her son-in-law, Reverend Henry Freeman Allen, ca. 1862 - 1896
 - To Reverend Henry F. Allen, 15 December 1885
 - To Reverend Henry Freeman Allen, 12 June 1884
 - To Reverend Henry Freeman Allen, 19 January 1884
 - 13 November 1862
 - 10 December
 - Undated
 - To Georgiana May Stowe, 14 July 1885
 - To Reverend Henry Freeman Allen, 22 January 1883

Box 1, Folder 2

- Letters written between Stowe and Allen relatives, ca. 1875 - 1914
 - Calvin E. Stowe to Reverend Henry Freeman Allen, 29 March 1875
 - Grandmother to Reverend Henry F. Allen, 15 December 1891
 - Charles Edward Stowe to Mary Ethel Allen, 2 September 1914

Box 1, Folder 3

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen before their marriage, during his time in Cuba after the Spanish American War, 1900 - 1901
 - 2 May 1900
 - 1 July 1900
 - 29 August 1900
 - September 1900
 - 22 September 1900 & 20 February 1901
 - 27 October 1900
 - 23 November 1900
 - 2 December 1900
 - 29 January 1901

Box 1, Folder 4

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen before their marriage, during his time traveling Europe, 1903 - 1906
 - 12 June 1903
 - 26 October 1903
 - 31 July 1906
 - 16 August 1906
 - 20 October 1906

Box 1, Folder 5

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson before their marriage, during his time studying medicine in Switzerland, 1908
 - 25 May 1908
 - 9 June 1908, postmarked 19 June 1908
 - 16 June 1908, postmarked 29 June 1908
 - 4 July 1908
 - 5 July 1908, postmarked 15 July 1908
 - 15 July 1908, postmarked 27 July 1908
 - 27 July 1908, postmarked 5 August 1908
 - 4 August 1908, postmarked 16 August 1908
 - 10 August 1908, postmarked 19 August 1908
 - 15 August 1908, postmarked 26 August 1908
 - 23 August 1908, postmarked 2 September 1908
 - 26 August 1908, postmarked 5 September 1908
 - 22 September 1908
 - 27 September 1908

Box 1, Folder 6

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson before their marriage, during his time studying medicine in Switzerland, 1908 - 1909
 - 11 October 1908
 - 25 October 1908, postmarked 26 October 1908
 - 6 November 1908, postmarked 9 November 1908
 - 15 November 1908, postmarked 16 November 1908
 - 25 November 1908
 - 24 December
 - 6 January 1909, postmarked 7 January 1909
 - 18 January
 - 11 February 1909
 - 11 March 1909, postmarked 23 March 1909

Box 1, Folder 7

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson during their engagement, ca. May - July 1911
 - 27 May 1911
 - 29 May 1911
 - 31 May 1911
 - 1 June 1911
 - 2 June 1911
 - 4 June 1911
 - 5 June 1911
 - 6 June 1911

- 7 June 1911
- 8 June 1911
- 9 June 1911
- 13 June 1911
- 20 June 1911
- 21 June 1911
- 7 July 1911
- Unknown, June 3 letter to Freeman Allen
- Undated letter from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson

Box 1, Folder 8

- Miscellaneous correspondence from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson, before their marriage, 1892 - 1910
 - 13 August 1892
 - 10 October 1892
 - 12 July 1898
 - 30 October 1898
 - 26 February 1899
 - 10 April 1900
 - 28 March 1904
 - 8 May 1904
 - 15 May 1904
 - 28 April 1907
 - 10 July 1907
 - 29 February 1908
 - 2 March 1908
 - 20 October 1910

Box 1, Folder 9

- Miscellaneous correspondence from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson, before and after their marriage, 1910 - 1913
 - 13 November 1910
 - 7 December 1910
 - 29 April 1911
 - May 1911
 - 29 February 1912
 - Freeman Allen to Tigey, 5 June 1912
 - 31 December 1912
 - 20 May 1913
 - 21 May 1913
 - 4 August 1913

Box 1, Folder 10

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson while traveling abroad in Europe, 1894
 - 2 January 1894
 - 19 January 1894
 - 29 January 1894
 - 12 June 1894
 - 30 June 1894
 - 2 August 1894
 - 22 August 1894
 - 2 October 1894
 - 18 October 1894
 - 17 November 1894

Box 1, Folder 11

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson while traveling abroad in Europe and Egypt, 1894 - 1895
 - 28 December 1894
 - 21 January 1895
 - 6 February 1895
 - 17 February 1895
 - 25 April 1895
 - 28 July 1898

Box 2, Folder 12

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson during her time in California, 1896
 - 15 February 1896
 - 18 March 1896
 - 22 March 1896
 - 22 March 1896
 - 29 March 1896
 - 12 April 1896
 - 19 April 1896
 - 26 April 1896
 - 10 May 1896
 - 18 May 1896
 - 24 May 1896
 - 21 June 1896
 - 3 July 1896
 - 12 July 1896
 - 2 August 1896

Box 2, Folder 13

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson during her time in California, 1896 - 1897
 - 6 August 1896
 - 16 August 1896
 - 20 August 1896
 - 4 September 1896
 - 12 September 1896
 - 30 September 1896
 - 18 October 1896
 - 8 November 1896
 - 27 November 1896
 - 13 December 1896
 - 21 January 1897
 - 31 January 1897
 - Undated

Box 2, Folder 14

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson during his travels in Europe, April - July 1909
 - 31 March 1909
 - 20 April 1909
 - 7 May 1909
 - 4 June 1909
 - 1 July 1909
 - 20 July 1909
 - 21 July 1909
 - 10 September 1909
 - September 1909
 - Undated

Box 2, Folder 15

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay at Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, NY, April - August 1925
 - 25 April 1925
 - 27 April 1925
 - 5 August 1925
 - 6 August 1925
 - 7 August 1925
 - 7 August 1925
 - 7 August 1925
 - 10 August 1925
 - 11 August 1925

- 11 August 1925
- 11 August 1925
- 12 August 1925
- 13 August 1925
- 14 August 1925
- 18 August 1925
- 20 August 1925
- 22 August 1925

Box 2, Folder 16

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay at Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, NY, August - September 1925
 - 23 August 1925
 - 25 August 1925
 - 26 August 1925
 - 27 August 1925
 - 28 August 1925
 - 29 August 1925
 - 31 August 1925
 - 1 September 1925
 - 2 September 1925
 - 5 September 1925
 - 6 September 1925
 - 8 September 1925
 - 10 September 1925
 - 10 September 1925
 - 11 September 1925
 - 14 September 1925
 - 14 September 1925
 - 15 September 1925
 - 17 September 1925

Box 2, Folder 17

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay at Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, NY, September - October 1925
 - 18 September 1925
 - 30 September 1925
 - 2 October 1925
 - 3 October 1925
 - 3 October 1925
 - 4 October 1925
 - 5 October 1925

- 6 October 1925
- 7 October 1925
- 8 October 1925
- 10 October 1925
- 11 October 1925
- 12 October 1925
- 13 October 1925
- 13 October 1925
- 14 October 1925
- 15 October 1925
- 16 October 1925
- 18 October 1925

Box 2, Folder 18

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay at Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, NY, October - November 1925
 - 19 October 1925
 - 20 October 1925
 - 21 October 1925
 - 22 October 1925
 - 25 October 1925
 - 25 October 1925
 - 26 October 1925
 - 26 October 1925
 - 27 October 1925
 - 28 October 1925
 - 29 October 1925
 - 30 October 1925
 - 1 November 1925
 - 2 November 1925
 - 3 November 1925
 - 4 November 1925
 - 5 November 1925
 - 6 November 1925
 - 8 November 1925
 - 9 November 1925
 - 10 November 1925
 - 11 November 1925
 - 12 November 1925
 - 13 November 1925

Box 2, Folder 19

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay at Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, NY, November - December 1925
 - November 1925
 - 15 November 1925
 - 16 November 1925
 - 17 November 1925
 - 18 November 1925
 - 19 November 1925
 - 20 November 1925
 - 22 November 1925
 - 23 November 1925
 - 24 November 1925
 - 4 December 1925
 - 5 December 1925
 - 8 December 1925
 - 9 December 1925
 - 10 December 1925
 - 11 December 1925
 - 13 December 1925
 - 14 December 1925
 - 16 December 1925
 - 17 December 1925
 - 18 December 1925

Box 2, Folder 20

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay at Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, NY, December 1925
 - 20 December 1925
 - 20 December 1925
 - 21 December 1925
 - 23 December 1925
 - 24 December 1925
 - 25 December 1925
 - 27 December 1925
 - 27 December 1925
 - 28 December 1925
 - 30 December 1925

Box 3, Folder 21

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay at Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, NY, January - February 1926
 - 1 January 1926

- 3 January 1926
- 5 January 1926
- 6 January 1926
- 7 January 1926
- 8 January 1926
- 9 January 1926
- 10 January 1926
- 11 January 1926
- 12 January 1926
- 14 January 1926
- 15 January 1926
- 15 January 1926
- 18 January 1926
- 27 January 1926
- 28 January 1926
- 30 January 1926
- 30 January 1926
- 1 February 1926

Box 3, Folder 22

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay at Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, NY, February 1926
 - 3 February 1926
 - 5 February 1926
 - 6 February 1926
 - 8 February 1926
 - 9 February 1926
 - 10 February 1926
 - 11 February 1926
 - 12 February 1926
 - 14 February 1926
 - 15 February 1926
 - 15 February 1926
 - 16 February 1926
 - 17 February 1926
 - 18 February 1926
 - 20 February 1926
 - 22 February 1926

Box 3, Folder 23

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay at Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, NY, February - April 1926

- 24 February 1926
- 27 February 1926
- 28 February 1926
- 3 March 1926
- 5 March 1926
- 7 March 1926
- 9 March 1926
- 11 March 1926
- 14 March 1926
- 16 March 1926
- 18 March 1926
- 21 March 1926
- 4 April 1926
- 7 April 1926
- 8 April 1926
- 9 April 1926
- 10 April 1926
- 14 April 1926
- 15 April 1926

Box 3, Folder 24

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay at Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, NY, April - May 1926
 - 17 April 1926
 - 19 April 1926
 - 19 April 1926
 - 20 April 1926
 - 20 April 1926
 - 20 April 1926
 - 21 April 1926
 - 22 April 1926
 - 24 April 1926
 - 26 April 1926
 - 28 April 1926
 - 29 April 1926
 - 3 May 1926

Box 3, Folder 25

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay at Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, NY, May 1926
 - 3 May 1926
 - 5 May 1926

- 6 May 1926
- 7 May 1926
- 8 May 1926
- 9 May 1926
- 9 May 1926
- 11 May 1926
- 12 May 1926

Box 3, Folder 26

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay in Providence, RI, August 1929 - February 1930
 - 10 August 1929
 - 12 August 1929
 - 12 August 1929
 - 13 August 1929
 - 15 August 1929
 - 15 August 1929
 - 17 August 1929
 - 18 August 1929
 - 21 August 1929
 - 22 August 1929
 - 26 August 1929
 - 27 August 1929
 - 28 August 1929
 - 29 August 1929
 - 30 August 1929
 - 28 January 1930
 - 31 January 1930
 - 3 February 1930
 - 3 February 1930
 - 5 February 1930

Box 3, Folder 27

- Letters from Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen during his stay in Providence, RI, February - May 1930
 - 7 February 1930
 - 10 February 1930
 - 12 February 1930
 - 14 February 1930
 - 20 February 1930
 - 26 February 1930
 - 14 April 1930

- 15 April 1930
- 18 April 1930
- 18 April 1930
- 22 April 1930
- 23 April 1930
- 24 April 1930
- 26 April 1930
- 28 April 1930
- 28 April 1930
- 29 April 1930
- 2 May 1930
- 2 May 1930
- Undated
- Undated

Box 3, Folder 28

- Letters from Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gibson, Sr. to their daughter, Mary Ethel Gibson Allen, during her honeymoon in Europe, July - August 1911
 - Rosamond Warren Gibson "Pie" to Dr. and Mrs. Freeman Allen, 21 July 1911
 - Charles Gibson Sr., to Mary Ethel Allen, July 22 1911
 - "Pie" to Mary Ethel Allen, 23 July 1911
 - Unknown to Mary Ethel Allen, 26 July 1911
 - Charles Gibson Sr., to Mary Ethel Allen, 27 July 1911
 - "Pie" to Dr. Freeman Allen, 27 July 1911
 - "Pie" to Mary Ethel Allen, 2 August 1911
 - "Pie" to Mary Ethel Allen, 6 August 1911
 - Charles Gibson Sr., to Mary Ethel Allen, 11 August 1911
 - "Pie" to Mary Ethel Allen, 14 August 1911
 - "Pie" to Dr. Freeman Allen, 20 August 1911
 - "Pie" to Mary Ethel Allen, 25 August 1911
 - Charles Gibson Sr., to Mary Ethel Allen, 27 August 1911
 - "Pie" to Mary Ethel Allen, 31 August 1911
 - "Pie" to Mary Ethel Allen, 24 September 1911

Box 3, Folder 29

- Letters of Freeman Allen to his mother-in-law and father-in-law during his honeymoon, 1911
 - Freeman Allen to Charles H. Gibson, 29 July 1911
 - Freeman Allen to "Pie", undated
 - Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen, undated
 - Postcard to his mother-in-law and father-in-law

Box 4, Folder 30

- Letters from Freeman Allen's physicians to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen, 1926
 - 1926 February 19
 - 1926 April 7
 - 1926 April 16
 - 1926 April 20
 - 1926 April 29
 - 1926 May 4
 - 1926 May 10

Box 4, Folder 31

- Letters from Freeman Allen's physicians to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen, 1930 - 1931
 - 1930 February 18
 - 1930 February 24
 - 1930 March 10
 - 1930 April 14
 - 1930 April 15
 - 1930 April 18
 - 1930 April 22
 - 1930 April 29
 - 1930 May 1
 - 1930 May 2
 - 1930 May 12
 - 1930 May 16
 - 1930 May 26
 - 1930 May 29
 - 1930 June 6
 - 1930 10 July
 - 1930 July 15
 - 1930 September 22
 - 1931 February 2
 - Envelope with "Return to Mrs. F. Allen 200 Beacon St."

Box 4, folder entitled "Bay State"

- Contents of envelope addressed to Bay State Branch, Old Colony Trust Co. (each item in separate protective sheet), 1924 - 1925
 - 1924 December 31 and 1925 January 1, Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Allen; one envelope addressed to Dr. Henry A. Shaw, postmarked 1925 January 5, Providence, RI
 - 1924 January 19 and 28, two written pledges by Freeman Allen; one unaddressed envelope from Mrs. Freeman Allen's stationary
 - 1924 August 24, Medical Director of Bloomingdale Hospital to Mary Ethel Allen, letter and envelope

- 1925 August 15, Medical Director of Bloomingdale Hospital to Mary Ethel Allen, two letters and envelope
- Undated letter by Freeman Allen

Box 4, folder entitled "misc."

- 1911 May 4, Hugh Williams to Mary Ethel Gibson
- 1917 December 13, Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen; Halifax, Nova Scotia to Boston, MA
- 1917 December 16 Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen; Halifax, Nova Scotia to Boston, MA
- 1917 December 19 Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen; Halifax, Nova Scotia to Boston, MA
- 1918 March 15, Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen; Boston, MA to Philadelphia, PA
- 1918 March 19, Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen; Boston, MA to New York City, NY
- 1918 April 1; Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen; Thomasville, GA to Boston, MA
- 1918 September 12, Affidavit of Treasurer of Massachusetts General Hospital
- 1918 December 11, Mary Ethel Gibson Allen to Freeman Allen; delivered to Boston, MA
- 1920 December 4, William Finaly Morgan to Freeman Allen
- 1921 May 13, Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen; Boston, MA to Doylestown, PA
- 1921 May 17; Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen; Boston, MA to Doylestown, PA
- 1923 September 26, Mary Ethel Gibson Allen to Freeman Allen; Manchester, MA to Medfield, MA
- 1924 December 31 envelope containing three letters: 1924 December 31, Charles B. Towns to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen; undated, Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen; undated, Freeman Allen to Mary Ethel Gibson Allen
- 1925 July, Freeman Allen pledge
- 12 June 1928, empty envelope containing Freeman's will
- 1929 July 15 letter from Henry Freeman Allen, to his parents, Dr. Freeman Allen and Mary Ethel Allen
- 1929 July 22 letter from Henry Freeman Allen, to his parents, Dr. Freeman Allen and Mary Ethel Allen
- 1929 July 29 letter from Henry Freeman Allen to his parents, Dr. Freeman Allen and Mary Ethel
- 1929 August 5 letter from Henry Freeman Allen, to his parents, Dr. Freeman Allen and Mary Ethel Allen

- Business card
- Bloomingdale Circular Information booklet

Box 4, folder containing ribbons and rubber bands that held the original bundles together