In late 2011, the UWM Libraries received a grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation through the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) to organize and process the Archives of the American Geographical Society. These archives date from the Society’s founding in 1851 and include approximately 350 cubic feet of material, with documents relating to well-known figures in American exploration and the larger field of geography from the mid-nineteenth century through most of the twentieth. Highlights include log books of early Arctic expeditions, the papers of Robert E. Peary (who served as President of the Society), the American flag carried by Capt. Charles Francis Hall on his second Polar Expedition, and correspondence with such individuals as David Livingstone, Franklin D. Roosevelt (a Councilor) and William H. Seward to name only a few.

Susan Peschel, Co-PI; Sr. Academic Librarian, UWM Libraries
Robert Jaeger, CLIR Project Archivist

Before & After: Lincoln Ellsworth lantern slides

Flag from C.F. Hall’s 2nd Polar Expedition, 1869

Inuit sketch by Robert Flaherty, circa 1913

I.I. Hayes Expedition artifacts and logbook, 1860

Early correspondence