ARCHIVAL TREASURES

Celebrating Frederick Douglass

PRECIOUS PAPERS: Among the most storied items in the special collections of University Libraries are two passes for the Underground Railroad written by former slave and abolitionist icon Frederick Douglass, whose 200th birthday is being celebrated this year. One, with the salutation "My Dear Sir," is addressed to Douglass's friend Samuel Drummond Porter, who frequently concealed escapees from slavery in a barn owned by his sisters. Douglass's close friend Amy Post ("My Dear Mrs. Post"), a member of a prominent family of Rochester suffrage and abolition activists, is addressed in the other. For nearly three decades, Douglass lived and worked in Rochester, where he published antislavery newspapers and advocated for abolition. While Douglass didn't know the exact date of his birth, historians have identified the year as 1818. Douglass chose February 14 as the day. PHOTOGRAPH BY J. ADAM FENSTER

