

CARTER, THOMAS MICHELLE, 1841-1922.

Thomas Michelle Carter papers,1842-1922

Emory University
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Carter, Thomas Michelle, 1841-1922.
Title: Thomas Michelle Carter papers,1842-1922
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 452
Extent: .25 linear ft. (1 box) ; 1 microfilm reel (MF)
Abstract: Papers of Confederate soldier Thomas Michelle Carter of Columbus and Atlanta, Georgia, who served in Company G of the 2nd Georgia Infantry Regiment.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

Additional Physical Form

Also available on microfilm.

Source

Gift, 1976.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Thomas Michelle Carter papers, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

Processed by MRD, February 1, 1965.

Collection Description

Biographical Note

Thomas Michelle Carter (1841-1922) was born in Columbus, Georgia and died in Atlanta, Georgia. He was the son of Robert and Evelyn Page Nelson Carter and the grandson of John and Anna Matilda Gray Carter and Major Thomas Monduit and Sarah Walker Page Nelson, the latter of Pagebrook, Virginia. Thomas Michelle Carter joined the Confederate Army in Columbus, Georgia as a private in Company G, 2nd Georgia Infantry Regiment. This company on April 16, 1861 was ordered to report to General A. R. Lawton at Savannah and remained on the Georgia coast until July 24, having been mustered into the service of the Confederate States on May 9. Carter arrived with his company at Richmond, Va., on July 29, and remained in Virginia until he was transferred to Nelson's Independent Company Georgia Cavalry (on June 20, 1862) commanded by Colonel Thomas Page Nelson, who was his mother's brother. Carter apparently went home to help in getting horses for the new cavalry unit and then went with his uncle's company into Kentucky where they served under Gen. Kirby Smith. They came down into Tennessee in the fall of 1862 and in the Spring of 1863 went into Mississippi with the intention of joining Gen. Kirby Smith but were unable to cross the Mississippi River. They remained in Mississippi under General Stephen D. Lee until July 1864 when they returned to Georgia "To report to the old Company again" at Atlanta. Carter's company remained in the Atlanta area until October or November when they went into North Alabama and Tennessee and took part in the Battle of Franklin, which he describes in his last wartime letter.

His brother Robert (and probably his brother William) and his Uncle William Nelson, who was wounded at Manassas in 1861, were also in the Confederate service. Apparently a Negro servant named Henry was with the boys throughout the war and is the "Harry" who brought Colonel Nelson's horse back to Columbus after the Colonel's death. Thomas, who invariably signs his name T. M. Carter, was a willing soldier, always ready for action. He was a devoted son and brother and wrote frequently to members of his family. He suffered with malaria while he was in Mississippi. He was inclined to take optimistic view of Confederate prospects even after the fall of Atlanta. His brother Robert served for a brief period as Clerk of the Military Court for Lee's Cavalry Division.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of 121 letters of which 72 were written during the Civil War. Of these, 65 were written by Thomas Michelle Carter: 53 to his mother; four to his father; two to his brother, Robert E.; two to his brother, Will; one to his Aunt Rosa; one to his cousin, Evelyn; one to "Captain," probably his uncle, Thomas Nelson, dated February 11, 1864; and one to Major K. Falconer asking for a furlough to attend to the business of his uncle's widow, dated September 15, 1864. Of the remaining Civil War letters, three were by William N. Nelson, three by Robert E. Carter; and one by John Segrām to Nelson, probably Captain (later Colonel) Thomas Nelson. The one pre-war letter, dated January 25, 1842 was written by Benjamin Harrison (Berkeley, Charles City County, Va.) to Major Thomas M. Nelson (Columbus, Georgia). Benjamin was the eldest son of Benjamin Harrison, (and Susanna Randolph) who was the eldest son of Benjamin Harrison (and Elizabeth Bassett), signer of the Declaration of Independence and elder brother of William Henry Harrison, ninth President of the United States. Benjamin Harrison, writer of this letter, was born 1789 and his first wife was Lucy, daughter of Judge William Nelson. His second

wife was Mary W. Page, daughter of John Page of Pagebrook. The writer was a contemporary and probably a brother-in-law of Major Nelson (through both of his wives). Lucy was probably Thomas Nelson's sister and Mary, his second wife, was the sister of Thomas Nelson's wife, Sarah Walker Page. Of the 48 letters written after the Civil War, all 48 were by T. M. Carter, 36 of them to his mother and the others to various members of his family and are concerned with family matters.

The collection also includes the following six miscellaneous items; "Extracts from a letter from one of the Nelson Rangers." 1 p.; fragments of three letters, one of which bears the signature of Charles U. Fisher; Special Order, No. 18, Hdqtrs Army of Tenn., Greensboro, North Carolina, April 27, 1865, 2 p.; Special Field Order No. 65, Headquarters, Military Division of the Mississippi, in the Field, Raleigh, N. C., April 27, 1865, 2 p.

Arrangement Note

Arranged in chronological order.

Finding Aid Note

There is a calendar of the Civil War letters in the collection case file.

Container List

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	Correspondence, 1842
1	2	Correspondence, 1861-1865
1	3	Correspondence, 1871-1894
