

Nelson Family Papers

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1783-1872, n.d.



Title Statement

Nelson Family Papers Nelson Family Papers, 1783-1872, n.d. Ms.1989.021

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Publication Statement

Publisher: Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Special Collections and University Archives, University Libraries (0434)
560 Drillfield Drive
Newman Library, Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
Business Number: 540-231-6308
specref@vt.edu
URL: <http://spec.lib.vt.edu>



2014 (CC0 1.0)

Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2025-03-20 08:45:51 -0400.

Language Usage: English

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Revision Description

2020-08-28 Finding aid notes updated to new department standards. juliags

2025-03-19 Ella Winterling added Existence of Location and Copies.

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.1989.021

Unit Date

1783-1872, n.d.

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

This collection contains papers (primarily correspondence and Civil War documents) from the Nelson family of Clarke County, Virginia, 1783-1872, n.d.

Creator

Nelson family

Creator

Nelson, George Washington, Jr., 1840-1903

Creator

Nelson, Adelaide, 1816-1875

Creator

Nelson, Hugh Mortimer, Sr., 1811-1862

Extent

0.9 Cubic Feet 3 boxes

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research.

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Source of Acquisition

The collection was acquired by Special Collections in 1989.

Processing Information

Initial processing, arrangement, and description of the the Nelson Family Papers was completed in October 2013. Additional work was completed in January 2015. Final arrangement and description was completed in October 2024.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Nelson Family Papers, Ms1989-021, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

The Nelson family has a long and rich history in the state of Virginia beginning with Thomas Nelson (1677–1745) who came to Yorktown in the early years of the 18th century and is often identified as Scotch Tom. Among his sons was William Nelson (1711–72), colonial governor of Virginia (1771–71), sometimes known as "President Nelson," as he held the title, President and Commander in Chief of the Colony and Dominion of Virginia; and Thomas Nelson (1716–82), known as Secretary Nelson, who served as secretary of the Virginia Colony. One of William's son's, Thomas Nelson (1738–89) represented Virginia in the Continental Congress, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and was Governor of Virginia in 1781. Governor Thomas Nelson and his wife, Lucy Grymes had eleven children, all of whom were born at Yorktown. Among Governor Thomas Nelson and Lucy Grymes's children were Thomas Nelson Jr. (b. 1764), Philip Nelson (b. 1766), and Francis Nelson (b. 1767).

Thomas Nelson Jr. married Frances Page in 1795 and had four children, including Rev. George Washington Nelson (b. 1805), who married Jane Crease in 1834. They had three children, including George Washington Nelson, Jr. (b. 1840), also known as "Wash." He attended University of Virginia from 1858 to 1860, but, in May 1861, enlisted in the Confederate Army. Within a year, he was a Captain commanding the Hanover Light Artillery, soon to be promoted to Major. In October 1862, outside New Market in Millwood, Clarke County, Va., he was captured by Union forces and spent the rest of the war as a prisoner. Confined first at Atheneum Prison, West Virginia, he was transferred to Camp Chase, Ohio; Johnson's Island, Ohio; Pt. Lookout then Hammond General Hospital, Maryland; and then to Ft. Delaware, Delaware in June 1864. On 20 August 1864, he was moved to Morris Island outside Charleston, South Carolina, where he become one of what is known as the Immortal 600, a group of confederate prisoners placed by the Union in the line of Confederate fire, in retaliation for a similar action by the Confederate Army. "Wash" was moved again to Ft. Pulaski, Georgia, where he was finally released in June 1865. His correspondence with cousin Mollie Scollay, written while he

was a prisoner of war, is a prominent part of this collection. He and Mollie were married in October 1865. George Washington Nelson, Jr. was ordained as a Episcopal priest in 1875 and had been rector of St. James Episcopal Church in Warrenton, Va. for over twenty years at the time of his death on 30 May 1903. Mollie died on 12 June 1923.

Philip Nelson married Sarah Ann Burwell in 1789 and moved to Clarke Co. Va. together with Sarah's brother, Robert Carter Burwell in 1790. Robert Carter Burwell was the builder of the home "Rosney" and, about twenty years later, the nearby mansion at Long Branch Plantation, both of Clarke County. Burwell died while serving in the military during the War of 1812, after which Philip and Sarah Nelson, who had lived at Rosney, inherited Long Branch.

Francis Nelson of Mont Air, Hanover Co. Va. married Lucy Page about 1792 and had fourteen children. Among them were Sally Page Nelson (b. 1801), Hugh Mortimer Nelson (b. 1811), and Fannie Burwell Nelson (b. 1810).

Sally Page Nelson married Dr. Samuel Scollay of Smithfield, Jefferson County, Va. (later West Virginia) in 1841. Among their children was Mary Scollay (b. 1844), also known as Mollie. It is Mollie's correspondence with George Washington ("Wash") Nelson, Jr., her future husband, while he was a prisoner of war that forms a large part of this collection. "Wash" and Mollie were cousins, as their fathers, Thomas Nelson, Jr. and Francis Nelson, were brothers. They were both grandchildren of Governor Thomas Nelson.

Hugh Mortimer Nelson (Sr.) married Adelaide Holker (b. 1816) of Boston in 1836. They settled in Baltimore for a short time, where Hugh began his career as a lawyer. In 1842, Hugh moved back to Virginia with his wife and three-year old daughter Nannie and purchased a struggling Long Branch from his uncle Philip Nelson. The correspondence between Adelaide and daughter Nannie while the latter was attending a New York school in 1857 comprises another significant portion of this collection. Son Hugh Nelson, Jr. was born in 1847. Another daughter, Lucy, was born in 1842, but died as an infant. Hugh Mortimer Nelson, Sr. represented Clarke County at the Virginia (Secession) Convention of 1861, where he initially maintained his support for the Union. Following the events at Ft. Sumter and Virginia's decision to secede, he raised a cavalry company from Clarke County and served under J.E.B. Stuart's command for a time before attaining the rank of Major under General Richard S. Ewell. Wounded at the Battle of Gaines Mill/Seven Days Battles on 26 June 1862, he died in Albemarle County on 6 August 1862. Adelaide was left in charge of Long Branch. She died in 1875 of pneumonia after a long struggle to keep the property in the family.

Fanny Burwell Nelson, one of Hugh Mortimer Nelson, Sr's sisters, never married and moved from Mont Air, Hanover County to Smithfield, Jefferson County, Va. (later West Virginia) around 1846. She moved from Smithfield to Long Branch in 1878 when it belonged to Hugh Mortimer Nelson, Jr. and his wife, Sally Page Nelson (b. 1866), daughter of George Washington ("Wash") Nelson, Jr. and Mary (Mollie) Scollay Nelson. Fanny Burwell Nelson died at Long Branch in 1896.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of papers, primarily correspondence, from the Nelson family of Clarke County, Virginia. The Civil War letters between prisoner of war George Washington "Wash" Nelson and his future wife, Mollie Scollay of Shepardstown, Jefferson County, Virginia (now West Virginia) make up the largest part of the collection, followed by the correspondence between Hugh and Adelaide Nelson of Long Branch Plantation and their daughter Nannie. Other Civil War papers include muster rolls, one of them signed by J.E.B. Stuart, of Captain Hugh Mortimer Nelson Sr.'s companies in the First and the Sixth Virginia Cavalry

Keywords

Women -- History
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
Clarke County (Va.)
Local/Regional History and Appalachian South
Civil War

Rights Statement for Archival Description

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Arrangement

The collection is arranged in two series, Correspondence and Documents. Items within the first series are

arranged, first, by primary correspondent, and then by date, when possible. Items within the second series are arranged by date.

Box 1 Folders 24 and 25 were removed in June 2014 and refoldered as Oversize Folder 1.

Description of Subordinate Components

Series I: Correspondence

Unit Date February 18, 1783 - January 29, 1872, n.d.

Letters to/from Mollie and Wash

Unit Date July 6, 1863 - January 29, 1872, n.d.

"Home," letter to Wash from Cousin Molly S. Award of Gettysburg and loss of 10,000 Men

Unit Date July 6, 1863

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Two letters in one envelope, one to Mollie from Wash in Westwood, and one to Mollie from Wash in Fort Delaware

Unit Date October 25, 1863, March 31, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash in Winchester, telling Mollie of his capture

Unit Date October 28, 1863

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W. at Johnson's Island, Ohio) from M.N.S.

Unit Date December 20, 1863

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W. at Johnson's Island, Ohio), from Mollie

Unit Date December 30, 1863

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Letter to Cap. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W. Johnson's Island, Ohio)

Unit Date January 16, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

To Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W. at Johnson's Island, Ohio) from Mollie

Unit Date January 30, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash in Johnson's Island, Ohio

Unit Date February 9, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash in Johnson's Island, Ohio

Unit Date February 25, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

To Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W. at Johnson's Island, Ohio), from Mollie

Unit Date February 26, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 10 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W. at Johnson's Island, Ohio) from M

Unit Date March 2, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W. at Point Lookout, MD) from sister

Unit Date March 13, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 13 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash in Johnson's Island

Unit Date March 14, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 14 (folder)

Two letters in one envelope to Mollie from Wash in Johnson's Island

Unit Date March 8, 1864, March 27, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 12 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson, Hd.Qtrs, Gen. Pendleton's Corps, from Mollie

Unit Date April 5, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 16 (folder)

Two letters in one envelope, one to Mollie from Wash, Point Lookout; and one to Mollie from Wash, Hammund General Hospital, Point Lookout

Unit Date May 23, 1864, June 14, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 17 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash in Harrimand General Hospital, Point Lookout

Unit Date May 30, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 18 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W.) Point Lookout, MD

Unit Date June 3, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 19 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W.) Point Lookout, MD, from M

Unit Date June 6, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 20 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash, Point Lookout

Unit Date June 7, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 21 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash, Point Lookout

Unit Date June 12, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 22 (folder)

Letter Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W.) Point Lookout, MD

Unit Date June 17, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 23 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W.) Point Lookout, MD

Unit Date June 22, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 24 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash, Point Lookout, MD

Unit Date June 22, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 25 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W.), Point Lookout, MD, From M

Unit Date June 26, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 26 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash in Fort Delaware, (Envelope Contains a small note- [To Mollie from Dune-requests a book] and Another letter to "My Dear Friend," from Haley Curtis-no date)

Unit Date June 28, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 27 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash Nelson, Ft. Pulaski

Unit Date October 31, 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 29 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Capt. Wash Nelson (P.O.W. at Johnson's Island) the envelope has "Div:38 Fort Delaware, Delaware"

Unit Date 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 15 (folder)

Letter to Miss Mollie N. Scollay, Shepherdstown, VA, from Wash

Unit Date 1864

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 28 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W.) Ft. Delaware, DE, from Mollie

Unit Date March 21, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 32 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G. W. Nelson (P.O.W.), Ft. Delaware, DE, from Mollie

Unit Date March 24, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 33 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash in Ft. Delaware

Unit Date April 2, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 35 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W.), Ft. Delaware, DE, from Mollie

Unit Date April 4, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 34 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash in Ft. Delaware

Unit Date April 6, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 36 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W.) Ft. Delaware, DE, (Pressed Flowers inside Envelope)

Unit Date April 9, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 37 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash Nelson in Ft. Delaware

Unit Date April 12, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 38 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W.) Div. 34- Ft. Delaware, DE

Unit Date April 15, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 39 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash in Ft. Delaware

Unit Date April 15, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 40 (folder)

Two letters to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W.), from Mollie

Unit Date April 28, 1865, April 23, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 41 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash, Ft. Delaware

Unit Date May 3, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 42 (folder)

Letter to Mollie From Wash, Ft. Delaware

Unit Date May 4, 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 43 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash in Ft. Delaware

Unit Date May 10, 1865

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash, in Ft. Delaware

Unit Date May 14, 1865

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W) Ft. Delaware, DE. from Mollie

Unit Date May 21, 1865

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Letter to Wash from Mollie

Unit Date May 27, 1865

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash, Ft. Delaware

Unit Date May 27, 1865

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson (P.O.W.) Division 38, Ft. Delaware, DE

Unit Date June 3, 1865

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Letter to G.W. Nelson in Beaver Dam Depot, Hanover County, VA, from Mollie

Unit Date July 12, 1865

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Letter to Mollie in Middleway, Jefferson County, VA, from Wash in Mont Air

Unit Date September 4, 1865

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 10 (folder)

Letter to Capt. G.W. Nelson in Gettysburg, PA, from Mollie

Unit Date September 25, 1865

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash Nelson, Fort Delaware

Unit Date 1865

box-folder 2 (box)

Container 31 (folder)

Letters to Mrs. G.W. Nelson (Mollie), from her mother, S.P. Scollay

Unit Date December 8, 1871, February 19, 1872

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Mother, S.P. Scollay, in Middleway W. VA at Smithfield

Unit Date January 29, 1872

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 12 (folder)

Letter to Mollie from Wash (married), Aunt Adelaide

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 29 (folder)

Letters from Adelaide to Nannie

Unit Date April 6, 1857 - June 14, 1857, n.d.

Letter from Adelaide to Nannie

Unit Date March 31, 1857

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Letter from Adelaide to Nannie

Unit Date April 6, 1857

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Letter from Adelaide Nelson to Nannie

Unit Date April 13, 1857

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Letter from Adelaide, in Long Branch, to Nannie

Unit Date April 25, 1857

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Letter from Mother Adelaide, in Long Branch, Nannie

Unit Date April 28, 1857

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 9 (folder)

Letter from Adelaide to Nannie

Unit Date May 9, 1857

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 11 (folder)

Letter from Adelaide to Nannie

Unit Date May 16, 1857

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 13 (folder)

Letter from Mother, in Long Branch, to Nannie

Unit Date May 20, 1857

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 14 (folder)

Letter from Adelaide to Nannie

Unit Date June 14, 1857

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 16 (folder)

Letter from Adelaide in Long Branch to Nannie

Unit Date 1857

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

April 10 (no year), Letter to Nannie from Adelaide in Long Beach

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 18 (folder)

April 30 (no year), Letter to Nannie from Adelaide

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 19 (folder)

No Date, Letter from Adelaid in Long Beach, to Nannie, Envelope included, 2 small pieces of paper, one is a note

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 20 (folder)

June 5 (no year), Letter from Adelaide to Nannie

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 27 (folder)

March 23 (year unknown), Letter from Delaide in Long Branch to "My Precious Little Child"

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 14 (folder)

June 6 (no year), Letter from Mother to Nannie, letter included a pressed flower and a note from Little Hugh

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 28 (folder)

Letter "Thursday Morning" from Adelaide, to Nannie (includes note from Hugh Nelson)

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 34 (folder)

Envelopes and Covers Not Attached to Letters

Unit Date n.d.

Wrapper, envelope- war letters, no letters contained, envelope addressed to Col. A.R. Boteler, 1861-1862

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 27 (folder)

March 30 and April 8 (no year), Two Envelopes to Nannie

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 16 (folder)

April 6 (no year), Envelope to Nannie

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 17 (folder)

May 8 (no year), Envelope to Nannie

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 22 (folder)

May 22 (no year), Envelope to Nannie

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 23 (folder)

May 22 (no year), Envelope to Nannie

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 24 (folder)

Envelope Cover, Hugh M. Nelson, Near Millwood

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 31 (folder)

Envelope (empty), "Copy of Commission Gen. Thomas Nelson by General Washington"

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 30 (folder)

Letter from Walker Daniel, at Col. Floyd's, to a French Merchant (Monsieur Major B. Tardiveau); No. 33 Louisville

Unit Date February 18, 1783

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 13 (folder)

"Saturday, March" from mother to daughter, (March)

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 35 (folder)

Series II: Documents

Unit Date June 17, 1828 - March 4, 1862, n.d.

Prescription for Nelson Esq. from a Pharmacy in Paris

Unit Date June 17, 1828

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

University of Virginia announcement (Re: Final exercises, best debater, Charles Stringfellow, sent by Bennett Taylor)

Unit Date July 1, 1858

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 18 (folder)

Muster Roll, Pay Roll, Capt. Hugh M. Nelson, Co. D, First Virginia Cavalry, JEB Stuart Command

Unit Date 1861

oversize 1 (folder)

Muster Roll, Capt. Hugh M. Nelson, Co. D Sixth Cavalry, Col. Charles W. Field

Unit Date 1861

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 22 (folder)

Muster Roll Company D, 6th Regiment

Unit Date November 1, 1861

oversize 1 (folder)

Muster Roll, Company D, Sixth Regiment

Unit Date November 1, 1861

oversize 1 (folder)

Statement of enlistment order, Capt. Hugh M. Nelson, Clarke Cavalry Co. D, 6th regiment (?), Virginia Cavalry

Unit Date March 4, 1862

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 30 (folder)

Hugh M. Nelson Accounts

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 32 (folder)

Remnants of European Tour

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 3 (box)

Container 33 (folder)

Capt. Joseph Hardesty, 1st Regiment Cavalry Muster Roll, Signed: JEB Stuart (Harper's Ferry, Shephardstown enrollments, Berryville, people mustered by Stuart)

oversize 1 (folder)