

A Guide to the Charles A. Derby Papers, 1844-1867 MS.0030

Charles A. Derby papers
1839-1891

Title Statement

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

MS.0030

Unit ID

/repositories/3/resources/600

Unit Date

1839-1891

Language

English

Creator

Derby, Charles A., 1828-1862

Extent

0.25 cubic feet Approximately 80 items in 1 box

Physical Location

Manuscripts stacks and Oversized Case 1

Repository

Virginia Military Institute Archives

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

There are no restrictions

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Preferred Citation

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Biographical / Historical

Charles A. Derby was born in Dinwiddie County, Virginia on September 12, 1828 to Perry L. Derby and Martha Jones. His early years were spent on his father's plantation and as a student at Winfield Academy in Dinwiddie County. He entered VMI on August 8, 1845 and graduated on July 4, 1848, standing 5th in a class of 24.

Following his graduation from VMI, Derby began a teaching career that continued through the late 1850s. His various positions included: Private tutor for a family in Northumberland County, Virginia Head of the Fairfax (Virginia) Academy Head of an academy in Sumterville, Alabama Professor of mathematics at military schools in Kentucky and Georgia Principal of a private academy in Eutaw, Alabama In 1856-1857, Derby began the study of theology and was ordained in the Episcopal ministry. He was named deacon at St. Stephens's Church in Eutaw, while also continuing his private school there. He subsequently gave up teaching as his primary interest and served at a church in Camden, Alabama, and then at St. Peter's Church, Lowndes County, Alabama.

Derby married twice during the 1850s. His first wife, Clara J. Hunt of Marietta, Georgia, died within a year of their marriage. On December 28, 1859, he married Charlotte Basset of Cahaba, Alabama and the couple had two daughters, Martha (October 1860-?) and Harriet (April 1862-February 1927).

A year after the outbreak of the Civil War, Derby joined the Confederate Army. He was elected Lieutenant Colonel of the 44th Alabama Infantry Regiment on May 16, 1862 and entered service at Selma, Alabama circa June 5, 1862. He was killed in action at the Battle of Antietam (Maryland) on September 17, 1862 and his body was not recovered.

Scope and Contents

The bulk of the Charles A. Derby papers consists of Derby family correspondence. Approximately twenty-eight letters were written by Charles A. Derby (dated 1844-1862) and cover the period from late boyhood up to his death in battle in 1862. Included are letters (dated 1846-1847) written while he was a cadet at VMI, as well as correspondence dating from his careers as a teacher and Episcopal clergyman. Two items were written during his brief service in the Confederate Army.

The papers also include fourteen letters written by other members of the Derby family, primarily Mary Derby Stancell ("Mollie") and her husband, Samuel. Other items in the papers are clippings, wedding announcements, poetry, and other family documents.

Keywords

Confederate States of America. Army—Alabama Infantry Regiment, 44th

Virginia Military Institute—Cadet life—1840-1849

Military education—Georgia—History

Education—Georgia—History

Military education—Alabama—History

Education—Alabama—History

Presbyterian Church in the U.S.—Presbytery of Lexington

Episcopal Church—Alabama—History

United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Personal narratives—Confederate

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Correspondence

Derby Family

Stancell Family

Derby, Charles A., 1828-1862

Description of Subordinate Components

Charles A. Derby papers

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5161

Unit Date 1844-1862

Language English

Creator Derby, Charles A., 1828-1862

Extent 4 Folder3 folders of correspondence and 1 folder of writings

Extent 2 Files2 files of oversized drawings

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5162

Unit Date 1844-1849

Language English

Extent 9 itemsFolder 1

Letter to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1606

Unit Date 1844 May 13

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Petersburg, Virginia. Letter discusses Charles A. Derby's health, finances, and family matters.

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Correspondence

Letter from W. Maghee to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1607

Unit Date 1845 June 27

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written by Charles A. Derby's teacher to his father. Letter regards Derby's chances for an appointment at VMI and obtaining letters of recommendation.

Keywords

Correspondence

Derby, Charles A., 1828-1862

Letter to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/3188

Unit Date 1846 April 4

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from VMI, Lexington, Virginia. Letter discusses good health, academics, and candidates for Virginia legislature.

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Virginia Military Institute—Cadet life—1840-1849

Virginia Military Institute—Academics—History—19th century

Correspondence

Transcription

VM Institute April 4th 1846

Dear Father, Yours of the 15th ult. was duly received. The fifteen dollars which were enclosed I handed to Col Smith as you desired. This will certainly be sufficient to cover all my expenses between now and July. In regard to my health, I think you need not be at all uneasy for it never was better than it has been since I have been here. At this time I know of no case of sickness in Lexington. For the last three weeks, the weather has been very pleasant and if it continues to be so, the corps will in a few days put on white pantaloons. Enclosed you will find a list of the standing of the third class at our January examination. I copied it from a semi-annual report. I did intend to send you a report; but there are I believe only two at the Institute. Col. Smith had this year, only a few published for the legislature. You may perhaps obtain one from Dr. Thompson. I am getting on remarkably well with all my studies except Drawing and this I must confess. I think will prevent me from retaining my present standing. When I first commenced it I had but little talent for it, and thought I have made a considerable improvement in it. My marks have hitherto been so low, that I fear I will not be able to make up for them. I shall endeavor to do my best at it. In French and Mathematics I still stand among the first. You have perhaps, before this received a circular from Col. Smith. I have I believe one demerit, but if I get no more than five between now and July, they will all be taken off. You will recollect that I had a few previous to our examination, but as they did not exceed five, they were taken off. I see in The Petersburg Republican that Dr. Thompson and Capt Sydnor are the candidates for the Legislature in Dinwiddie. I would be glad if you would inform me whether there is any chance for a Whig to be elected and also whether Mr. Lyme has any opposition. I do not believe that the candidates in Rockbridge have been nominated, but she will certainly elect two Whigs. Gov. McDorrel's influence is not so great as to prevent her from doing this although he was almost unanimously elected to Congress a short time since. I received a letter from cousin Robt last week in which he stated that his family were all well. He says that he expects after this year to teach school as there is not much to be made by shoemaking in Marysville. He thinks he can get at least thirty scholars. Give my love to mother etc. In haste your devoted son [signed] Chas. A. Derby

Letter to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1608

Unit Date 1846 May 9

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from VMI, Lexington, Virginia. Letter regards the difficult extraction of a tooth and a disturbance in VMI barracks in which cadets threw "missiles."

Keywords

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Virginia Military Institute—Cadet life—1840-1849

Transcription

VM Institute May 9th 1846

Dear Father Yours of the 26th ult was duly received. Your advice in regard to perseverance I shall follow as well as I can, though, I think it will be of little avail to me, since I have to contend with many who had taken lessons in drawing before they entered the Institute. I went this morning to the surgeon's office, for the purpose of having one of my teeth extracted. Dr. Estill pulled six times as it and succeeded in getting it all out except a part of the root. He immediately sent for a dentist who pulled at it twice, but could not get it out. He advised me to wait about a fortnight, in which time he thought the room would rise above the gum, and enable him to get a hold on it. It was I believe the largest tooth in my head. You will recollect that you wished me to have it extracted when Mr. Murrill was at your house about four years ago. It did not ache, but I knew that it was an injury to my other teeth. Last night a little disturbance was caused by some of the Cadets. About eleven o'clock they commenced throwing missiles in barracks, when the Officer of the Day came to our room, and told one of my roommates, who was Corporal of the Guard at the time, to post the first relief, if the noise did not cease; but it was quelled in a short time. I would write more but I feel so badly, that I must postpone it until some other time. In haste your affectionate son, [signed] Chas. A. Derby

Letter to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1609

Unit Date 1846 October 24

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from VMI, Lexington, Virginia. Letter regards the arrival of new faculty member William Gilham, disciplinary action against cadets, and health.

Keywords

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Virginia Military Institute—Cadet life—1840-1849

Gilham, William, 1818-1872

Transcription

Dear Father Your letter of the 15th inst was duly received. In compliance with your request I asked Jackson if he paid extra carriage for the box of books which he brought me. He said that it was so small no pay was required of him. Listed Mary wrote me word a short time since that six pairs of socks were sent to me. I received only five pairs. These as well as my shoes and collars fit very well. Several members of the Board held a meeting in the Capitol in Richmond some time during the last week at which time they considered the application of Jackson and decided that he should not be again admitted into the Institute. I think that as others whose conduct was much worse than his, have since the Institute has been in operation, been admitted after being dismissed it would have been but justice if they had extended to him the same kindness. Major Gilham has arrived at the Institute and has entered upon the discharge of his duties. My health is at this time unusually good. Excuse me for my short letter. I am now more busily engaged than I ever was. My love to all. Your affectionate son,
[signed] Chas A Derby

Letter to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1610

Unit Date 1847 January 19

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from VMI, Lexington, Virginia. Letter regards results of mid-year examinations, a cadet Christmas celebration, and a severe snowstorm.

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Social life and customs

Virginia Military Institute—Academics—History—19th century

Virginia Military Institute—Cadet life—1840-1849

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Correspondence

Transcription

Va Military Institute Jany 19th 1847

Dear Father, As you are perhaps anxious to learn the result of our last examination I take the present opportunity to write to you. The examination commenced on Monday the 4th last and continued until Saturday evening. I still stand second in my class and am also as I expect you have before this seen in my circular a file higher in mathematics, than I was at the examination in July. I will also state that the maximum in Mathematics in the second class is 300 from which you will perceive that considerably more importance is attached to that part of the mathematical course which is studied by the second class than to that which is studied by the third class. I could have easily stood higher in Latin than I did by studying it as much as some members of my class did, but I preferred devoting my time mostly to the principal study. In fact I believe it better to have a tolerable standing in each department, than to stand very high in some, and very low in others; and it is upon this principle that I have acted ever since I have been at this place. The young man who stands first in Latin, having already a good knowledge of Mathematics devoted most of his time to that study with which he was least acquainted; on the other hand I depended upon the little knowledge of Latin which I had already acquired and studied Mathematics. I saw in some of the papers last week, that Mr. Bryan was first Lieutenant of the second company, which had been raised in Petersburg. Please inform me in your next, whether there were any Other members of that company with whom you were acquainted. You perhaps wish to know what kind of a Christmas we had. At the Institute Christmas is kept only one day, and that day is never forgotten inasmuch as it is the only one on which we are blessed with turkeys and minced pies. With the exception of the eatings my enjoyments were no greater than usual. Since I wrote to you last, there has been another severe snowstorm in Rockbridge. The weather last week was extremely cold, but it has moderated considerably. Write me word whether you have hired any servants and if you have who they are. Also whether my sisters have made much progress in the study of music. I would indeed be very much pleased to learn that they have. Give my love to them and to mother. I remain as ever - your devoted son, [signed] Chas A. Derby

P.S. My old school mate Samuel Garland stands second in the third class. Please inform me whether Samuel Hardy succeeded in obtaining the situation at Winfield Academy. We were not examined in French and consequently no standing was determined upon it. [signed] CAD

Letter to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1611

Unit Date 1847 February 26

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from VMI, Lexington, Virginia. Letter regards future teaching positions and graduation class speakers. Letter also discusses a controversy in the Lexington Presbyterian Church as the pastor, Dr. Skinner, is "on trial" before the presbytery.

Keywords

Presbyterian Church in the U.S.—Presbytery of Lexington

Commencement ceremonies

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Virginia Military Institute—Cadet life—1840-1849

Correspondence

Transcription

Virginia Military Institute Feb 26th 1847

Dear Father, I received in due time your of the Inst in which was enclosed the half of a twenty dollar note. Of course all your advice I believe to be salutary. The most of it I have endeavored to follow from my infancy. Whatever may have been my misfortunes, I profess to be old enough to be able to preserve a moderate share of spirits. I have endeavored to banish all childish folly. For the present I will forebear writing in that metaphysical strain which has characterized the letters which I have written for the last three months. Please tell sister Mary that I received her letter; also tell sister Martha Ann that I received hers and that I inadvertently omitted to mention it in my last letter. Col. Smith has placed my name on the list of applicants as teachers. It is probably that ?????? Mr. Pendleton or myself will obtain a situation in Charles City County near the residence of Mr. Hill Carter. The salary which is offered is five hundred dollars. This it is true is a small salary; but it is much better than six hundred dollars in a town. However it is possible that I may have a chance of getting a situation better than this. Col. Smith did not mention anything in regard to the gentleman in Charles City who wishes to obtain a teacher nor do I even know as yet, his name. I shall endeavor to gather as much information on this point as possible. One serious objection which I have to living in that country is that it thought by some to be rent-wealthy. Considerable excitement has been produced in Lexington for the last month by the Skinner case of which you have probably heard. Dr. Skinner the recent pastor of the Presbyterian Church at this place, is now undergoing a trial before the Lexington Presbytery. Of all the ingenious men I ever saw I think that he is the most ingenious. It is said that he was expelled from Scotland on account of some disturbance in the church which he raised in that country. But for the disturbance which has occurred here he would in all probability been the next president of Washington College, as Dr. Ruffner will resign in the course of a few months. It is certainly astonishing to hear the debates which occur in the Presbytery. In that religious body there is sometimes created almost as much confusion as there is usually created by those sinners in Congress. This affair has several times called off Maj. Preston from his collegiate duties. I have been teaching Latin in the Institute for the last three or four weeks. The first class have elected the Speakers who are to represent them at the time of graduation as well as a speaker to represent them upon the reception of their diplomas from The Society of Cadets. Mr. B. G. Baldwin will deliver the Salutatory addresses. Messrs J. B. Jones, and Finney, orations, Mr. Council, the Valedictory addresses and the address to the Society will be delivered by myself. The Day of the Twenty Second was exceedingly inclement and on that account but for persons attended the addresses which were delivered in behalf of the Three Societies. The Washington Society was represented by Mr. Barton, the Graham Society by Mr. Crockett, and the Society of Cadets by Mr. Finney. Give my love to all. Your affectionate son, [signed] Chas A. Derby

Letter to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1612

Unit Date 1847 December 27

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from VMI, Lexington, Virginia. Letter discusses perseverance and value of hard work, problems with chemistry and sciences, and cadet Christmas celebrations.

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Academics—History—19th century

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Social life and customs

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Virginia Military Institute—Cadet life—1840-1849

Transcription

Virginia Military Institute Dec 27th 1847

Dear Father I received yesterday morning the letter in which you had enclosed the other half of the twenty dollar note which I am to place in the hands of the treasurer. I was considerably surprised on learning the circumstances which attended the death of Capt Ferguson. Your advice in regard to perseverance I have all along endeavored to follow. If I fail at the next examination it will not be my fault but the fault of nature. One cannot expect to have a talent for every department. One cannot be responsible for the deficiencies of nature; yet it is his duty to improve that with which the Lord has blessed him, however little it may be. It is an admitted fact that application can never create a talent; yet it cannot be denied that by application talents are directed into their proper channels. It is for this reason that a person should while young ascertain that for which he is best fitted in order that he may not in after life be trifling with that for which he has no turn. There are many in my class who are smarter than myself; yet by application I have succeeded in accomplishing more than they have. Indolence is often an attendant of talents; for gifted men frequently trust too much to their talents. It is not always the most talented men who are first at the Bar; it is not always the most talented who have the greatest political fame; it is not always the most talented who are first in the scientific world. The greatest men of whom the world has every boasted have generally been those who with moderate abilities, by their industry made up for their deficiencies, and won the confidence and esteem of all. The lawyer who has the greatest natural ability will if he is careless get but little practice. He may be able to deliver a startling speech; he may be the originator of striking ideas; yet none can place their confidence in him. It is on this account that I never despair. Whenever I do not succeed, I try again. It seems to me that h this year I am peculiarly unfortunate. Of Chemistry I do not profess to know much; yet I do not believe that in this department I have received justice. The opinion which you hand me express in regard to our professor of Natural Sciences has undergone but little change. I have not done well, comparatively speaking in Engineering; yet I by no means find fault with our professor in that department. I believe him to be a perfect gentlemen. The principle reason why I have not done well on these two studies is that a knowledge of them depends upon the memory; and you yourself know that my memory is very poor. Those studies which depend exclusively upon the reasoning faculties I find but little difficulty in mastering. Since I wrote to you last there has been another snow storm in this county. During this Christmas there have been several private entertainments given by Cadets who have lately received boxes of eatables from their homes. This evening I have been enjoying a fine supper of oysters which are the first that I have eaten for more than two years. I continue to enjoy my usual share of health. Give my love to all. Your son as ever. [signed] Chas A Derby

Letter to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1613

Unit Date 1849 January 16

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Northumberland County, Virginia. Charles A. Derby is a private instructor in the home of Mr. Harding, a wealthy landowner. The letter regards a family Christmas celebration, the contrast between the people of Dinwiddie and Northumberland, and personal matters.

Keywords

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5163

Unit Date 1852-1859

Language English

Extent 11 itemsFolder 2

Letter to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5164

Unit Date 1852 August 23

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Sumterville, Alabama. Letter regards new boarding accommodations, a trip to Tuscaloosa, Alabama, finances, becoming a Mason, and Cyrus Harding's appointment at VMI.

Keywords

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Mexican War, 1846-1848

Collier, Henry W., Governor, 1801-1855

Scott, Winfield, 1786-1866

Harding, Cyrus, 1834-1893

Resolution from Board of Trustees, Georgia Military Institute

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5165

Unit Date 1854 December 22

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Georgia Military Institute, Georgia. Regards acceptance of Charles A. Derby's resignation.

Keywords

Georgia Military Institute (Marietta, Ga.)

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Derby, Charles A., 1828-1862

Charles A. Derby extracts

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5166

Unit Date 1855 July-August

Language English

Scope and Contents

Certified extracts from correspondence between Charles A. Derby and Willis Crenshaw regarding business arrangements for the Eutaw Academy, Alabama.

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Correspondence

Education—Alabama—History

Eutaw Institute announcement

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5167

Unit Date 1855 September 24

Language English

Scope and Contents

An announcement for the opening of the Eutaw Institute, Alabama.

Keywords

Education—Alabama—History

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5168

Unit Date 1855 October 17

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Eutaw, Alabama. Letter regards the death of his wife, Clara J. Hunt ("Jeanie"). Letter also describes a betrayal by Board of Trustees of Eutaw Institute and how Charles A. Derby had to open a private school on his own.

Keywords

Education—Alabama—History

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Correspondence

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5169

Unit Date 1856 July 17

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Eutaw, Alabama. Letter discusses the success of Charles A. Derby's new school, life in Eutaw, and finances.

Keywords

Correspondence

Education—Alabama—History

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5170

Unit Date 1857 May 27

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Eutaw, Alabama. Letter regards ordainment in the Protestant Episcopal Church, responsibility of St. Stephen's Church in Eutaw, deaconship, and the busy school year.

Keywords

Education—Alabama—History

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Correspondence

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5171

Unit Date 1857 August 22

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Dinwiddie, Virginia. Letter regards travel to Philadelphia and Boston, preaching at Christ Church in Norfolk, and family news.

Keywords

Correspondence

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5172

Unit Date 1858 January 20

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Eutaw, Alabama. Letter regards growth of St. Stephen's congregation, life in Eutaw, and Charles A. Derby's school.

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Education—Alabama—History

Correspondence

Letter to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5173

Unit Date 1859 December 27

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Camden, Alabama. Letter regards marriage to Charlotte Basset and general news.

Keywords

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5174

Unit Date 1860-1862

Language English

Extent 9 itemsFolder 3

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5175

Unit Date 1860 January 10

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Camden, Alabama. Letter regards marriage to Charlotte Basset of Cahaba, Alabama.

Keywords

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5176

Unit Date 1860 February 28

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Camden, Alabama. Letter regards the success of Charles A. Derby's new church, his teaching career, and family matters.

Keywords

Correspondence

Episcopal Church—Alabama—History

Education—Alabama—History

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5177

Unit Date 1860 April 17

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Camden, Alabama. Letter regards a recent visit to Cahaba, Alabama.

Keywords

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5178

Unit Date 1860 December 19

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from St. Peter's Church, Lowndes County, Alabama. Letter regards family matters, including housekeeping and Charles A. Derby's eight-week old child.

Keywords

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5179

Unit Date 1861 April 2

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from St. Peter's Church, Lowndes County, Alabama. Letter regards the murder of their cousin Edward Cousins.

Keywords

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5180

Unit Date 1861 May 14

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from St. Peter's Church, Lowndes County, Alabama. Letter regards Derby family members joining the Confederate Army and Charles A. Derby's frustrations about not being able to join.

Keywords

Episcopal Church—Alabama—History

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5181

Unit Date 1862 April 15

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from St. Peter's Church, Lowndes County, Alabama. Letter regards Charles A. Derby's election as Captain of the Militia of Benton.

Keywords

United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Personal narratives—Confederate

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Correspondence

Transcription

St. Peter's Ch. Lowndes, Ala. April 15th, 1862

Dear Sister: I have but little news worth communicating, such is the monotony and want of variety in our region. We are all well except my wife, who has been complaining for some time. Our congregations are very small of course, as all congregations in the Confederacy are compared with what they were before the war. We have had a great quantity of rain this Spring. The washing, driving rains of March beat down the earth so hard that many of my neighbors ploughed up their corn and planted a grain. Our planters are not turning their attention this year to cotton, which is cultivated in little patches only for family use. Our neighbors are very kind to us, and I am pleased with them more and more. A call was recently made upon Lowndes composed of two regiments, for 250 men to serve 90 days. One regiment had furnished 135 men, and the other was about to furnish the remaining 115

when the Governor countermanded the call. In four hours I would have been Captain of a company ready to set out for Mobile. I had made all my arrangements to go, when the countermand was received. I hope that Captain Stancell has recovered before this and returned to his post. Henry must have been near the scene of naval conflict in the James. He must have heard the guns, if he did not witness the engagement. I am going on with my little school of three boys, teaching whenever it suits my convenience to teach. But few Confederate soldiers are left in Ala to protect her. She is consequently dependent upon her militia for her defence. Contrary to my expectation and very much to my surprise, I was recently elected "Captain of the Militia of Benton Beat." Although the militia was not to my taste, yet I did not feel at liberty to decline the office which I was so pressingly urged to accept. Accordingly I am regularly engaged with drilling my men. In these troublous time, we must labor in even uninviting fields for the public good. For a whole year or more I have been trying to learn where Mr. King is, but nobody writes me a word about him. Please give me the desired information in your next. My best regards to Capt. Stancell. Yours Affectionately, Chas. A. Derby

Mrs. Mary E. Stancell Margarettsville, N.C.

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5182

Unit Date 1862 May 27

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Benton, Alabama. Letter regards Charles A. Derby's election as Lieutenant Colonel of the 44th Alabama Infantry.

Keywords

Confederate States of America. Army—Alabama Infantry Regiment, 44th

United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Personal narratives—Confederate

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Correspondence

Transcription

Benton, Ala. May 27th, 1862

Dear Sister: I find myself very busy preparing for the war and have but two days to make the preparation. On the 16th inst. I was elected Lieut. Colonel of Kent's Regiment. I was on duty las week. I expected to be a home at least a week, but learn that we are ordered to Corinth immediately. Our regiment is at Selma. We have another daughter. She was born on the 26th ult. and is a very fine looking child. I have hardly a moment to write more. Be so kind as to give the above information to the rest of the family. I must today make some provision for my family. I will write more when disengaged. I hear that Capt. Stancell is wounded. How is he? Write me soon. My love to all. Yours affectionately, Chas. A. Derby

Mrs. Mary E. Stancell Margarettesville, N. C.

Letter to Mary Derby Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5183

Unit Date 1862 July 15

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from "camp near Falling Creek, Chesterfield," Virginia. Letter regards family matters and a discussion of wartime devastation.

Keywords

Confederate States of America. Army—Alabama Infantry Regiment, 44th

United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Personal narratives—Confederate

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Correspondence

Transcription

Camp near Falling Creek, Chesterfield. July 15th, 1862

Dear Sister: We are now about seven miles from Richmond on the turnpike leading from that place to Petersburg. I preceded the Col. By nearly two weeks. He is now with me and relieves me of a heavy responsibility. We reached Richmond at the very commencement of the series of battles. We then drew our arms. We have been in no engagement. We are gradually becoming well drilled. I have seen Mr.

Graves twice since my arrival. More than a week ago I met him accidentally. Yesterday I sought him and found him. His camp is about three hundred yards from ours. Until last week my health had been excellent. I became slightly indisposed. On recovering from this indisposition I had a rising on my thumb; and now I have a dreadful cold. I met Pa and Henry in Richmond nearly two weeks ago. Henry had a furlough and was on his way home. The war seems to be dormant precisely at this time. How long it will be before it rouses from its lethargy I have no idea. My intimate friends and neighbors have suffered dreadfully. Many of them have been killed and many are dangerously wounded. It makes my heart sick to think of it. I am glad that Capt. Stancell is nearly well. The poor fellow's face must have been horribly mutila-[mutilated] [based on end of sentence above, a page appears to be missing] Our Regiment have now a little breathing time. I have been thinking much of my poor wife and children. I have not heard from them since I left them. It is probable that we will remain here for some time. We now have our tents and this itself is an indication of permanency. In Richmond I met two of the immortal Pierces, who were particularly obsequious and polite. I cared nothing for their sycophancy. If I could hear from my family, I would be satisfied. My love to your family. With my afflicted hand and other ailments I find it difficult to write. Address Lieut. Col. Chas. A. Derby 44th Reg. Ala. 3d Brigade Huger's Division Richmond, VA

Writings

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5186

Unit Date 1852-1854

Language English

Extent 2 itemsFolder 4

Translation of the Aeneid, Book 1

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5187

Unit Date 1852 March 20

Language English

Scope and Contents

A translation by Charles A. Derby of Aeneid, Book 1 by Virgil.

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Poetry

Acrostic poem

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5188

Unit Date 1854 September 30

Language English

Scope and Contents

An acrostic poem written by Charles A. Derby titled "A Humble Acrostic."

Keywords

Poetry

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Geometry exercises

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5184

Unit Date 1847 March

Language English

Creator Smith, Francis H. (Francis Henney), 1812-1890

Physical Location Oversized Case 1

Scope and Contents

Twelve pages of geometry exercise drawings for Francis H. Smith's course.

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Cadet drawings

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Cadet uniform drawings

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5185

Language English

Physical Location Oversized Case 1

Scope and Contents

One page of cadet uniform drawings.

Keywords

Virginia Military Institute—Cadet drawings

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Derby family papers

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1585

Unit Date 1839-1891

Language English

Creator Derby Family

Creator Stancell Family

Extent 10 Folder

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5189

Unit Date 1851-1855

Language English

Extent 10 itemsFolder 5

Letter from W. M. Bates to Mary

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5192

Unit Date 1851 June 12

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Randolph-Macon College, Virginia. Letter is written on an invitation to a commencement party.

Letter from Samuel Stancell to Mary Stancell (Derby)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1593

Unit Date 1852 January 9

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Northampton County, North Carolina. Letter regards problems on his [family's?] plantation, illness among slaves, contract for railroad sills (Raleigh and Gaston Railroad), and family matters.

Keywords

Slavery

Correspondence

Letter from Samuel Stancell to Mary Stancell (Derby)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1594

Unit Date 1852 January 10

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Northampton County, North Carolina. Letter regards family news and their marriage date.

Keywords

Correspondence

Letter from Samuel Stancell to Mary Stancell (Derby)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1595

Unit Date 1852 February 25

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Northampton County, North Carolina. Letter regards Mary Stancell's (Derby) health and plans for their March 31st wedding.

Keywords

Correspondence

Letter from Samuel Stancell to Mary Stancell (Derby)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1596

Unit Date 1852 November 6

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Lawrenceville, Arkansas. Letter regards Samuel Stancell's business trip.

Keywords

Correspondence

Letter from Samuel Stancell to Mary Stancell (Derby)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1597

Unit Date 1852 November 11

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Marlbrook, Hemstead County, Arkansas. Letter regards general news about Samuel Stancell's business trip.

Keywords

Correspondence

Letter from Samuel Stancell to Mary Stancell (Derby)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1598

Unit Date 1853 April 7

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Margarettsville, North Carolina. In the letter, Samuel Stancell asks his wife Mary "Mollie" Derby to come home soon from her visit with her family.

Keywords

Correspondence

Letter from Samuel Stancell to Mary Stancell (Derby)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1599

Unit Date 1853 April 12

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Jackson, North Carolina. Letter regards business and Mary Stancell's (Derby) health.

Keywords

Correspondence

Letter from Mary Stancell (Derby) to Samuel Stancell

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1600

Unit Date 1854 July 21

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Danville (Davidson County), Virginia. Letter regards family news.

written from Darvills (Dinwiddie County), Virginia. Letter regards family news.

Keywords

Correspondence

Letter from Janie Hunt Derby to Mary Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1601

Unit Date 1855 February 6

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Marietta, Georgia. Letter regards general news about life in Marietta.

Keywords

Correspondence

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5190

Unit Date 1863-1889

Language English

Extent 5 itemsFolder 6

Letter from William F. Perry to Charlotte Derby (Basset)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1602

Unit Date 1863 January 1

Language English

Biographical / Historical

William F. Perry was the commander of Charles A. Derby's regiment.

Scope and Contents

Included is the original letter, a contemporary copy, and a transcription. Written from "camp near Fredericksburg," Virginia. The letter offers condolences for Charles A. Derby's death.

Keywords

Correspondence

Derby, Charles A., 1828-1862

Letter from Francis H. Smith to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1603

Unit Date 1863 June 20

Language English

Creator Smith, Francis H. (Francis Henney), 1812-1890

Scope and Contents

Francis H. Smith was Superintendent of VMI from 1839-1889. This letter is in reply to Perry L. Derby's notification that Charles A. Derby has died in battle.

Keywords

Correspondence

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Derby, Charles A., 1828-1862

Letter from Charlotte Derby (Basset) to Mary Stancell (Derby)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1604

Unit Date 1864 March 13

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Cahaba, Alabama. Letter regards general news and family news.

Keywords

Correspondence

Letter from Anna to Mary Stancell (Derby)

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/1605

Unit Date 1867 December 1

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Southampton County, Virginia. Letter regards Anna's [surname unknown] personal news.

Keywords

Correspondence

Note with enclosed newspaper clippings and booklet

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5208

Unit Date 1878-1889

Language English

Scope and Contents

Blank envelope includes one note dated April 13, 1889 from Marianna Ewell, three newspaper clippings regarding family deaths, and "A Child's Faith" poem booklet.

Keywords

Correspondence

Newspapers

Devotional poetry

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5191

Unit Date undated

Language English

Extent 7 itemsFolder 7

Letter to "Sir Knights"

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5193

Language English

Scope and Contents

An unsigned letter that describes the concept of chivalry.

Keywords

Correspondence

Letter from V. B. to Miss Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5194

Language English

Scope and Contents

Devotional poem written to "my mother."

Keywords

Correspondence

Devotional poetry

Place cards

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5195

Language English

Extent 2 items

Scope and Contents

Two place cards. One card is for Miss Willie J. Mitchell and the other card is for Mr. and Mrs. Henry N. Harrison.

Keywords

Place cards

Envelope addressed to Charles A. Derby from Anna and Lizzie Graves

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5196

Language English

Keywords

Correspondence

Envelope addressed to Perry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5197

Language English

Keywords

Correspondence

Letter to Mrs. Henry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5198

Unit Date January 17

Language English

Scope and Contents

Written from Berkley, Virginia. Letter regards family and personal matters.

Keywords

Correspondence

Poem by Mary E. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5199

Language English

Scope and Contents

Poem titled "Shall we meet again, Mary?."

Keywords

Correspondence

Poetry

Invitations

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5200

Unit Date 1880-1889

Language English

Extent 8 itemsFolder 8

Keywords

Invitation cards

Wedding invitation

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5201

Unit Date 1884 June 12

Language English

Scope and Contents

Wedding invitation for Marion Macintosh and the Right Reverend G. W. Peterkin.

Keywords

Correspondence

Wedding invitation

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5202

Unit Date 1886 August 4

Language English

Scope and Contents

Wedding invitation for Nannie L. Whitehurst and Samuel E. Long.

Keywords

Correspondence

Wedding invitation

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5203

Unit Date 1880 October 7

Language English

Scope and Contents

Wedding invitation for May Hundley and Louis Bowly.

Keywords

Correspondence

Wedding invitation

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5204

Unit Date 1883 October 18

Language English

Scope and Contents

Wedding invitation for Kate Gordon and Reverend J. E. Poindexter.

Keywords

Correspondence

Invitation and place card

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5205

Unit Date 1880 February 18

Language English

Scope and Contents

Invitation for an event at the home of V. A. Thornton and name card for Willetta F. Thornton.

Keywords

Correspondence

Place cards

Wedding invitation for the marriage of Henry L. Derby and Jane

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5206

Unit Date 1882 September 20

Language English

Scope and Contents

Wedding invitation for Fannie Towles and Daniel M. Harman.

Keywords

Correspondence

Wedding invitation to Henry L. Derby

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5207

Unit Date 1882 August 23

Language English

Scope and Contents

Wedding invitation for Dr. J. E. Brown and Marion A. Sullivan.

Keywords

Correspondence

Charlotte Derby (Bassett) papers

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5209

Unit Date undated

Language English

Extent 2 itemsFolder 9

Composition

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5210

Language English

Scope and Contents

Composition titled "The Powers of Custom."

Keywords

Composition (Language arts)

Pressed flower and plant album

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5211

Language English

Scope and Contents

Pressed flower and plant album featuring the English and Latin names of each specimen.

Keywords

Wild flowers

Henry L. Derby notebook

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5213

Unit Date 1868-1870

Language English

Extent 1 itemsFolder 10

Notebook

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5214

Unit Date 1868-1870

Language English

Scope and Contents

Henry L. Derby's notebook he kept while at the Theological Seminary in Fairfax County, Virginia. The notebook contains course lists and schedules, finances, and other writings. A loose piece of sheet music for "Prince of Peace" and a map of "Paul's Third Journey" are tucked into the back of the notebook.

Keywords

Notebooks

Maps

Sheet music

Newspaper clippings

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5215

Language English

Extent 8 itemsFolder 11

Scope and Contents

Eight newspaper clippings. Four clippings are related to Charles A. Derby's career at Western Military Institute, Kentucky. One clipping is related to Derby's career at Eutaw Male Academy, Alabama. Two clippings are related to the death of his wife Clara J. Derby (Hunt). One clipping is Derby's obituary.

Keywords

Clippings

Virginia Military Institute—Class of 1848

Military education—Alabama—History

Derby, Charles A., 1828-1862

Derby Family

Printed materials and textile cloth

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5216

Language English

Extent 6 itemsFolder 12

"Original Poems for Infant Minds" book

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5219

Unit Date 1839

Language English

Scope and Contents

Book chiefly written by Jane Taylor (1783-1824) and Ann Taylor (1782-1866). Signature of Charlotte Derby (Bassett) written in pencil on the inside front cover.

Keywords

Books

Poetry

"French & Son's Handbook and Directory for Worthing" fragment

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5217

Unit Date 1859

Language English

Scope and Contents

Fragment (up to page 53) of the "French & Son's Handbook and Directory for Worthing."

Keywords

Directories

England—Sussex

"Long's Worthing Directory"

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5218

Unit Date 1891

Language English

Keywords

Directories

England—Sussex

"Old, Old Story" book

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5220

Language English

Biographical / Historical

Published by the American Tract Society, New York.

Keywords

Books

"The Star of Bethlehem" book

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5221

Language English

Biographical / Historical

Published by the American Tract Society, New York.

Keywords

Books

"Nicholas Hamner Cobbs, D. D., In Memoriam" book

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5222

Unit Date 1861

Language English

Scope and Contents

Funeral address and obituary notices for Nichoas Hamner Cobbs, D. D., who was the first bishop of the Protestant Episcopal church in the diocese of Alabama.

Keywords

Books

Episcopal Church—Alabama—History

Red textile cloth with pouch

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5223

Language English

Extent Red textile cloth is 14 inches long by 8 inches wide and features one pocket.

Keywords

Textile fabrics

William L. Hughlett items

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5224

Unit Date 1884

Language English

Extent 2 itemsFolder 13

Place card

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5225

Language English

Scope and Contents

Place card with the name Wm. Hughlett.

Keywords

Place cards

Medical College of Virginia Address to the Graduates program

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5226

Unit Date 1884 March 31

Language English

Keywords

Commencement ceremonies

Programs (Publications)

"Nearer Home" poem transcription

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5227

Language English

Extent 1 itemsFolder 14

Keywords

Poetry

Poem transcription

Unit ID /repositories/3/archival_objects/5228

Language English

Scope and Contents

A transcription of the poem "Nearer Home." The transcriber is unknown.

Keywords

Poetry

