

A Guide to the Turner Ashby Letters, 1852-1863 SC 0107

Turner Ashby Letters
1852-1863



Title Statement

A Guide to the Turner Ashby Letters, 1852-1863 SC 0107

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SC 0107

Unit ID

/repositories/4/resources/262

Unit Date

1852-1863

Language

English

Abstract

The Turner Ashby Letters consist of 28 letters, a petition, and two portrait photographs of Turner Ashby.

Creator

Ashby family

source

Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society

Extent

0.16 cubic feet 3 folders

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

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Acquisition Information

Placed on deposit by the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society in September 1992.

Processing Information

In order to streamline the process of applying collection numbers, Special Collections staff completed a large-scale renumbering campaign in the spring of 2017. **This collection was previously cataloged as SC 2087.**

Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], Turner Ashby Letters, SC 0107, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg Va.

Bio/Historical Note

Turner Ashby was a Confederate cavalry commander during the Civil War. He was born in Fauquier County Virginia, where he became an accomplished horseman. Sometimes called the "Black Knight of the Confederacy" Ashby was responsible for guarding the Potomac River from Harpers Ferry to Maryland. This was in part to help Maryland men with Confederate leanings join the Confederacy. Ashby was to serve with Stonewall Jackson. During the Valley Campaign, Ashby was shot in the Battle of Good's Farm. He had been appointed Brigadier General at this time, but it was never confirmed by the Confederate Senate.

Scope and Content

This collection consists of 28 letters (a few with envelopes), a petition, and two portrait photographs of Turner Ashby. The letters comprise correspondence between relatives of Turner Ashby including his mother, Dorothea F. Ashby; his sisters, Mary and Dora (both later married to Moncures); cousins; and friends of the family. Two letters are penned by Turner Ashby. These two letters plus one from "D.A.M." have been transcribed; transcriptions are available in the folder.

Keywords

Slaves -- Shenandoah River Valley (Va. and W. Va.) -- History -- 19th century

Plantation life -- Shenandoah River Valley (Va. and W. Va.) -- History -- 19th century

Generals -- Southern States -- Biography

Bull Run, 1st Battle of, Va., 1861

Shenandoah Valley Campaign, 1861

Shenandoah Valley Campaign, 1862

Harrisonburg (Va.), Battle of, 1862

Confederate States of America -- History, Military

United States -- Armed Forces -- Biography
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
Shenandoah River Valley (Va. and W. Va.) -- History
Shenandoah River Valley (Va. and W. Va.) -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
Shenandoah River Valley (Va. and W. Va.) -- Social life and customs -- 19th century
Shenandoah River Valley (Va. and W. Va.) -- Genealogy
Virginia -- History, Local -- 19th century -- Sources
Virginia -- History, Local -- Civil War, 1861-1865
Virginia -- History -- 19th century -- Social life and customs
Rockingham County (Va.) -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
Letters (correspondence)
Photographs
Confederate States of America. Army. Virginia Cavalry Regiment, 7th
Ashby, Turner, 1828-1862
Ashby, Turner, 1828-1862 -- Correspondence
Ashby, Richard, 1831-1861
Ashby, Richard, 1831-1861 -- Correspondence
Ashby family -- Correspondence
Moncure family -- Correspondence
Confederate States of America. Army -- Biography
Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society

Other Formats Available

Transcriptions of a selection of letters are included in the collection.

Bibliography

Bushong, Millard K. General Turner Ashby and Stonewall's Campaign. Verona, VA: McClure Printing Co. Inc., 1980. Cunningham, Frank. Knight of the Confederacy: General Turner Ashby. San Antonio, TX: Naylor Co., 1960.

Description of Subordinate Components

Dated Letters

Unit ID Folder 1

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1066

Unit Date 1852-1863

Mixed Materials [1000886559] 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

"D.F.A" to "My dear Child"

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1069

Unit Date August 1852

Scope and Content

Explains what Turner Ashby is doing as he stays at Mrs.Grayson's house. There is mention of a gathering at the Spring and the expected arrival of Mary. [D.F.A. is probably Dorothea F. Ashby, Turner's mother.]

"M Allen" to "My dear Madam"

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1070

Unit Date Aug. 9, 1853

Scope and Content

Reply to a letter to Bettie who was ill; plans of different friends; some speakers from Baltimore.

"Dora" to "My darling Mother"

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1071

Unit Date Oct. 27, 1853

Scope and Content

A recount of opera, Crystal Palace, & Lt. Nicholas' house suggest trip to New York City. [Dora is the sister of Turner Ashby.]

From unsigned to "My dearest Mol-"

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1072

Unit Date July 28, 1854

Scope and Content

Written at Argyle; concerns home affairs at Clarke including a drought in the corn, sickness, babies, and servants.

"Turner Ashby" to "Dear Dora"

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1073

Unit Date Jan. 14, 1861

Scope and Content

written at Raven's Craig. Hopes to get off for a couple of weeks; gives Dora authority to sign his name concerning the sale of a servant, Louisa; engagement of Milly Stribling [a friend of the family].
TRANSCRIPTION available in folder.

"Richard Ashby" to "Dear Mama"

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1074

Unit Date March 12, [1861]

Scope and Content

written from Richmond. Expresses sadness because won't be coming to Stafford although happy in Richmond. Special remembrances to the servants. [Richard is brother of Turner.]

"We the undersigned Ladies of Shepherdstown, Jefferson County, Va" to "Lt. Col. Ashby"

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1075

Unit Date [After June 16, 1861]

Scope and Content

written at a camp near Duffins Depot. Petition for protection from the enemy by having one or two companies stationed there.

Wednesday morning "Dora" to "My Dear Beck" at Markham

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1076

Unit Date [Before July 3, 1861]

Scope and Content

Report of weddings, response to kind letter and trip. Describes bachelor dinners given to TA before his return to Washington.

"Mary C. Braxton" to "Mr. Ashby" [Turner]

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1077

Unit Date July 15, 1861

Scope and Content

written from Elmwood. Condolences for the death of the recipient's brother [probably Richard, on July 3, 1861] during battle; faith of her sister, Harriety, who is taking the death of her idol very hard. [Mary C. Braxton is a friend of the family.]

"Dora Ashby" to "Dearest Mary"

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1078

Unit Date [Before July 22, 1861]

Scope and Content

[on back: Mrs. Mary Moncure] written from Ravenswood to Chelsea. Bad weather has kept her from going back to school [to teach]; a party where Annie is flirting like a belle; hi to Mammy and all the servants. In an additional note, D. F. Ashby accepts invitation to move to Chelsea. [Mary is also Turner's sister.]

"Dora Moncure" to "My dearest brother" [Turner]

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1079

Unit Date July 22, [1861]

Scope and Content

Written at Ravenswood. Expresses thanks for the sparing of brother's life at Manassas. Death of brother, Dick, [Richard] who was engaged. Mr. [Powhatan] Moncure is too sick to be drafted.

"Dora" to "My Dear Mother" at Chelsea [on back: Mrs. D. F. Ashby]

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1080

Unit Date [July 1861]

Scope and Content

Suggests moving and in Dora's state of health cannot take care of the servants. Mentions an overseer; news of Manassas.

"Fanny Ashby" to "My Dear Mary" [on back: Mrs. Mary Moncure]

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1081

Unit Date [July 1861]

Scope and Content

Concerns about family members; sadness at Mary not coming to Ravenswood. [Cousin of Turner] waiting to hear news of Manassas.

"Harriette Caputon"[?] to [on envelope dated Sept. 5 from Union Va: Mrs. Dora A. Moncure], from Elwood.

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1082

Unit Date Sept. 4, [1861]

Scope and Content

Grief at loss of Dora's brother [probably Richard], her "life's happiness". Concern for D.F.A.'s illness.

"Turner Ashby" to "Dear Dora" written at Camp Lookout.

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1083

Unit Date Sept. 6, 1861

Scope and Content

Tells of camp duties, skirmishes with the enemy and casualties Ends with "give love to Mary."
TRANSCRIPTION available in folder.

"Harriette Caputon"[?] to [D.F.Ashby] from Elmwood.

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1084

Unit Date Oct. 4, [1861]

Scope and Content

Grieves over loss of [Richard]; encouragement that remaining children can be her comfort.

Friday Evening "Harriete Caputon" to [on envelope: Mrs. Dora A. Moncure] written from Elmwood.

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1085

Unit Date [Oct. 5 1861]

Scope and Content

Response to Dora's letter. Encouraging thoughts for families; grief over [Richard's] death.

"Dora" to "my sweet sister."

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1086

Unit Date Oct. 21, [1861]

Scope and Content

Describes home life & having enough to get by. Mentions Fanny as a sister. Good relations with neighbors and friends.

"Dora Moncure" to "My Dear Sister" [on back: Mrs. George W. Moncure Chelsea]

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1087

Unit Date [Dec. 25, 1861]

Scope and Content

Family matters. Gift exchange on Christmas and bad road conditions. Prescription from Dr. Rase for mother.

Tuesday "Dora Moncure" to "My Dearest Sister" written from Ravenswood.

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1088

Unit Date [Before June 6, 1862]

Scope and Content

Tells of letters from Robbie and news of Turner and George dispelling rumors of Turner's death. A visit from a Presbyterian Chaplain and other family matters.

Monday "Susan Shacklett" to "My dear Dora" written from Richmond

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1089

Unit Date [After June 6, 1862]

Scope and Content

Inquiry about the family since the Yankees had raided them; Turner as one of the greatly loved Generals; the place where he fell near Harrisonburg.

"Bettie A.[?] Green" [cousin] to "My dear Dora" written from Mountain View

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1090

Unit Date March 2, [1863?]

Scope and Content

Dining at Markham [previously Rose Bank, home of the Ashbys]. Acquaintances and health of herself and mother. [Green was D.F.A.'s maiden name.]

Undated Letters

Unit ID Folder 2

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1067

Unit Date Undated

Mixed Materials [1000886559] 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Monday Eve "Dora" to "My Own Dear Sister" [on back: Mrs. George Moncure]

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1091

Unit Date Undated

Scope and Content

Story of soldier's death at sister's home. Concern for sister's health and Robbie.

Friday Eve [Dec.] "Dora" to "My Dear Sister" written from Chestnut Hill

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1092

Unit Date Undated

Scope and Content

Moving back to Ravenswood. Christmas dinner, exhausted after childbirth, impatience with Milly, a black woman.

Tuesday night "D.A.M." [Dora A. Moncure] to "My own Dear Sister" [Mary]

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1093

Unit Date Undated

Scope and Content

Describes cough and sickness. Neighbors helping, talk of servants leaving but can't get along without one. George is in Mountain View. TRANSCRIPTION available in folder.

Tuesday "Dora Moncure" to "My Dearest Sister" [Mary] witten from Ravenswood

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1094

Unit Date Undated

Scope and Content

Newborn baby of Mary; asks her to consider having Miss Eliza Harry come up to take care of the family and nurse the child. Describes food sent.

Saturday, the 10th "Dora" to "My Dear Mother"

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1095

Unit Date Undated

Scope and Content

Log of the trip back from Chelsea. Explains house chores and visitors.

[Undated] "Vic"[?] to "Dear Cousin Mary" [on back: Mrs. George V. Moncure Chelsea]

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1096

Unit Date Undated

Scope and Content

Staying with Aunt Ashby; mentions family members; an invitation to come to their house after children's sickness; Dora's baby boy.

[Undated] "PM" [possibly Powhatan Moncure, Dora's husband] to "My Dearest Bet"

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1097

Unit Date Undated

Scope and Content

An invitation to D.F. Ashby to come with Dora and convalesce in quietude.

Photographs

Unit ID Folder 3

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/1068

Unit Date Undated

Mixed Materials [1000886559] 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Scope and Content

Two photos of portraits of Turner Ashby--one with "C.W. Alexander" in lower right corner.