

Guide to the McGowin Papers

Descriptive Summary:

Creator: Unknown

Title: McGowin Papers

Dates: 1861-1864 (bulk 1862-1863)

Quantity: .25 linear feet

Abstract: 44 letters sent from McGowin sons back to family during their service in the Civil War.

Accession: 90-09-548 ; 548-2011

Biographical Note:

The McGowin family associated with the papers appears to have resided in Conecuh County, Alabama. The family may also have had ties to Escambia County, Alabama. It is possible the family lived in Conecuh County, and that their county residence changed when Escambia was formed in 1868 from parts of Conecuh.

This branch of the McGowin family concerns the children of Samuel (1805-1892) and Martha Mason McGowin (1810-1892). The two had thirteen children: Mary Ann McGowin Foshee (1832-1874), Peter McGowin (1833-1863), Alexander (Alex or Alec) McGowin (1836-1914), Samuel McGowin (1836-1862), James McGowin (1838-1897), Joseph McGowin (1839-1862), Anthony Lewis McGowin (1840-1864), Thomas McGowin (1842-1890), John Charnie McGowin (1843-1862), Sarah Jane McGowin Hart (1845-1906), Martha Elizabeth McGowin Blacksher (1847-1898), Ann Eliza McGowin Blow (1848-1903), and Matilda Katherine McGowin Foshee (1851-1908).

All of the McGowin sons except Thomas would serve in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. A biographical note found with the photocopies lists Thomas as being physically unfit for service. Of the seven sons that did serve, all but Peter served in Company D of the 16th Alabama Regiment, which saw action in Tennessee and Georgia, particularly at Shiloh,

Murfreesboro, and Atlanta. Accounts conflict as to what unit Peter McGowin served in, with a news article from the Andalusia Star in 2010 stating that he served in Company B, 9th Alabama Infantry Regiment, while a Sons of Confederate Veterans website lists his unit as the 17th Alabama, Co. I. The McGowins suffered tremendous tragedy due to the war, with five of the seven sons who served dying either in battle or as a result of disease. Only Alexander and James survived the war.

Scope and Contents:

The papers consist of forty-four letters written by one or more than one of the brothers from the warfront, though one of the letters is written by John W. Moore, who appears to be a family friend. A.L. and Alexander's correspondence tend to make up the bulk of the papers. The letters are dated from 1861 through 1864, with much of it coming in 1862 and 1863. They are mainly focused on the health and well being of the writer(s), but also include some details of life in camp. There are also references in some of the letters to battle, with the Battle of Murfreesboro spoken of most prominently. In addition, there are passing mentions of Gen. Braxton Bragg, Gen. William Rosecrans, Gen. Simon Buckner, and Gen. Patrick Cleburne.

Arrangement:

The transcriptions and the photocopies of the correspondence are arranged by year.

Access Restrictions:

This material is open to research.

Preferred Citation:

McGowin Papers, The Doy Leale McCall Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL.

Content List:

Box 1

1. 1861
2. 1862
3. 1863
4. 1864

List of Letters:

Listed as sender, receiver (date, location of sender)

1. Joseph and Samuel mentioned, but unclear as to sender or receiver (8/12/61; Montgomery)
2. Joseph to sisters (9/10/61; Knoxville)
3. Anthony to family (9/23/61; Knoxville)
4. Joseph to family (10/9/61; Knoxville)
5. Anthony to a brother (10/29/61)
6. John W. Moore (friend of the family?) to "Friend Sam" (2/10/62; Columbia, TN)
7. Joseph to no one in particular (2/15/62; Columbia)
8. Joseph to Martha McGowin (6/9/62; Tupelo)
9. Alexander to Thomas (6/10/62; Tupelo)
10. Anthony to family (7/15/62; Okolona, MS)
11. Alexander to parents (7/16/62; Tupelo)
12. Alexander to family (7/22/62; Tupelo)
13. Alexander to family (8/6/62; Chickamauga, TN)
14. Alexander and Joseph to family (8/19/62; Chattanooga)
15. Anthony to Sarah Jane McGowin (11/18/62; Winchester, TN)
16. Joseph to mother (11/29/62; Shelbyville, TN)
17. Anthony to mother (no date or place; possibly 11/29/62, Shelbyville)
18. Alexander to parents (12/10/62; no place)
19. Anthony to Sarah Jane (12/21/62; Triune, TN)
20. Alexander and Anthony to family (1/7/63; Winchester, TN)
21. Alexander to parents (1/11/63; Tullahoma, TN)
22. Alexander and Anthony to brothers (1/13/63; Tullahoma)
23. Anthony and Alexander to family (1/30/63; Tullahoma)
24. Alexander to father (2/5/63; Tullahoma)
25. Anthony to family (2/5/63; Tullahoma)
26. J.C. McGowin (a cousin) to Joseph (2/13/63; Tullahoma)
27. Alexander to family (2/22/63; Tullahoma)
28. Anthony to Sarah Jane (4/8/63; Tullahoma)
29. Alexander to family (4/26/63; Wartrace, TN)
30. Alexander to Sarah Jane (5/3/63; Wartrace)
31. Peter to Nancy McGowin (his wife) (6/14/63; Fort Gindrat – unsure where this was)
32. Alexander to Thomas (7/13/63; Tyner's Station, TN)
33. Anthony to Sarah Jane (7/23/63; Tyner's Station, TN)

34. Anthony to Sarah Jane (8/12/63; Harrison, TN)
35. Peter to Nancy (9/16/63; Mobile)
36. Alexander to family (9/27/63; Chattanooga)
37. Anthony to Sarah Jane (10/3/63; Chattanooga)
38. Anthony to Sarah Jane (11/3/63; Chattanooga)
39. Peter to Anthony and Alexander (12/10/63; Mobile)
40. Anthony to Alexander (12/27/63; Tunnel Hill, GA)
41. Alexander to family (1/8/64; Tunnel Hill)
42. Anthony to Thomas (1/17/64; Tunnel Hill) 43) Alexander to family (2/8/64; Tunnel Hill)
44. Alexander to Sarah Jane (2/25/64; Dalton, GA)