

EUGENE S. MITCHELL

1841-1871

**Mercer Student
Civil War Soldier**

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Biographical Note

Eugene Severn Mitchell was born on July 28, 1841, in Hillsborough, Jasper County, Georgia, and died on December 10th, 1871, in Atlanta. He was the son of Levin Mitchell and Ann Marie Corbin, both of Worcester County, Maryland. They married in Worcester County May 30, 1826, and by the 1850 Census, when Eugene Mitchell was 8, the family was in Macon, Bibb County, Georgia. In fact, the Georgia Property Tax rolls of 1836 show Levin Mitchell to be in the Howard District of Bibb County; that is five years before the birth of Eugene. In the 1860 Census Eugene is 18 years old and has graduated from Mercer University; the census shows his siblings to be Benjamin, 28, Robert, 21, Laura, 28, and Willie, 15.

Eugene Mitchell enlisted as a private in the Confederate Army, and attained the rank in Company F of Full Jr 2nd Lieutenant September 25, 1862. He served with the Georgia 45th Infantry Regiment out of Jones County, beginning March 4, 1862, where he was promoted to Full 2nd Lieutenant on August 15, 1864. Mitchell spent his years in service writing to his friend and future bride, Chloe Emma Lewis, born May 18, 1845.

Mitchell's regiment engaged in Virginia for the most part, with brief times in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. This Georgia unit fought in some of the more significant battles of the Civil War, such as Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Richmond, Malvern Hill, and the 2nd Appomattox Courthouse. Mitchell was captured and incarcerated in the Union Prison at Fort Delaware between March and June of 1865. At least by late December of 1865 Eugene Mitchell had found work in his hometown of Macon, Georgia. Two years later, on October 17, 1867, he married his long-time sweetheart, Chloe Emma Lewis. The 1870 Census found the Mitchell family in Montgomery Ward G, Montgomery, Alabama, with Mitchell working as a coal dealer. Eugene and Chloe had two children, Anne, born September 12, 1868, in Griffin, Georgia, and Laura, born February 1, 1870, in Alabama. A third child, Eugene S. Mitchell, was born in Atlanta, Georgia, October, 1871, only three months prior to his father's death on December 10, 1871, of extreme lung congestion. Mitchell's will was probated in February of 1872; he was buried at Oak Hill Cemetery alongside Laura, or Lollie as she was called, who died August, 1872. Annie Mitchell never married, and the 1890 Census lists her in her mother Chloe's household at age 31. Ancestry.com records show that Anne requested a passport at age 27 and received it on October 15, 1895, and was a passenger aboard the Vaderlund out of New York in 1905. The 1940 Federal Census found Anne living alone at age 71; she died in 1953. Anne, too, was buried in Oak Hill Cemetery.

Eugene S. Mitchell the younger married Nina Cynthia Hardy on April 30, 1896, and they had two children together, Eugenia and Emma Lewis.

Chloe was remarried in 1884 to John D. Turner, a two-time widower with several children. Turner was a few years older than Chloe and died in 1909. The couple had a son together, Curtis L. Turner. In 1933, she requested a war widow's pension based on Eugene Mitchell's war record and did the same in 1937 using John Turner's war record. Turner had practiced medicine during the Civil War after having apprenticed with his physician father. He ran a cotton compress in Atlanta later in life. Chloe passed away at the ripe old age of 94 years in 1940 and is buried with the Mitchells in Oak Hill Cemetery in Griffin, Georgia, alongside first husband Eugene and their two daughters

Scope and Content Note

The Eugene S. Mitchell Papers consist of 26 folders of correspondence, mostly from Mitchell to Chloe Emma Lewis, his future wife. The bulk of the letters were written between 1863 and 1865 from Mitchell's service in the Virginia battlefields of the Civil War. Only three letters in the collection were written by people other than Mitchell as follows: One was written by Chloe Emma Lewis to Eugene Mitchell; a second letter was written to Mitchell by a S. N.(?) Robbins; a third was written by Mitchell's Aunt Julia. Each letter is in its own folder due to fragility and size.

Letters from Mitchell record his feelings about the war itself, specific battles, and hardships of camp life and life on the march. He refers to well-known Confederates, as Stonewall Jackson, Jeb Stuart, and Robert E. Lee, sometimes in critical terms. Writing from Camp Gregg, Virginia, March 27 of 1863, Mitchell regales Chloe with a tale about the Confederate and Union armies on each side of the Rappahannock and a Union band playing, its performance ending with "Dixie"

to the yells of the Confederates, followed by “Yankee Doodle,” and then “Home Sweet Home.” In a letter from August 6, 1863, Mitchell speaks of hearing that southern women have lost faith in the war and worries this is the case with Chloe, whom he attempts to encourage.

Mitchell writes of campaigns in which his regiment has fought and others in which he has not fought and how he perceives the war is proceeding. He describes the battle at Chancellorsville and the death of Stonewall Jackson in May of 1863 and a year later waxes somewhat poetic in regard to nature and its negative rather than positive effect on the soldier. He writes at the end of August, 1864, of reasons for his inability to pen a letter to Chloe and describes the various types of weaponry fired from the Union lines and forts they have built. In a later letter Mitchell speaks of his desire for a furlough and of his deep feelings for the soldiers in his regiment; he writes that he doesn’t get ill seriously enough to warrant leave but that “a slight wound would be desirable.”

Some of Mitchell’s letters simply speak of his feelings for Chloe, but in December of 1864 he begins a discourse on Sherman and his sojourn in Georgia, a topic that appears in other correspondence. In his letter of December 21, 1864, Mitchell writes of the rumor of Jefferson Davis’ death and tells Chloe that he is very ill, cautioning her not to mention that fact to his mother or Aunt J(ulia). The letter of July 8, 1865, finds Mitchell imprisoned in Fort Delaware, and on August 22, 1865, affirms his love for Chloe from Newtown, Maryland. This letter concludes Mitchell’s war correspondence. Following ones are from towns in Georgia as he approaches his marriage to Chloe in October of 1867.

In addition to the Correspondence, the Mitchell collection contains a pamphlet of a printed speech addressed to the Phi Delta Society of Mercer University in 1857 by R. E. Rester. The papers also include a diploma from Mercer University, the marriage license for Chloe Lewis and Eugene Mitchell, and a tintype of Mitchell in a brown union case disconnected at the hinge. The photograph is in its own box and the diploma is loose. All are contained in an archival oversized box to accommodate the varying sizes of the items in the collection.

Subjects

Education, Higher – United States – History
Georgia—History—Correspondence.
Georgia—History-Mercer University—Penfield.
Georgia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865—Personal.
Manuscript Collection: Eugene S. Mitchell Papers
Virginia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865—Campaigns.
Virginia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865—Destruction and Pillage.
United States—History-Civil War, 1861-1865—Correspondence.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Military life.

Restrictions

Restrictions on access

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Separated Material

None

Administrative Information

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Eugene S. Mitchell Papers. Archives and Digital Initiatives, Mercer University Jack Tarver Library, Macon, GA.

Source

The collection was donated by David Brown, Greensboro, North Carolina, on June 6, 2011.

Processing

Processed by Gabrielle Hale and Sybil McNeil, 2015-2016.

Finding Aid Note

Finding aid available in repository.

Series Description

- SERIES 1.1** Civil War Correspondence
- SERIES 1.2** General Correspondence
- SERIES 2** Education/Essays and Speeches
- SERIES 3** Education/Mercer University
- SERIES 4** Miscellaneous Items

SERIES 1.1 Civil War Correspondence

- 1/1 October 7, 1862 to Miss Lewis/with transcription
- 1/2 January 19, 1863 to Miss C/with transcription
- 1/3 March 27, 1863 to Miss C/with transcription
- 1/4 May, 10, 1863 to My Dearest
- 1/5 May 14, 1863 to Miss Chloe/with transcription

- 1/6 June 12, 1863 to Miss Chloe
- 1/7 July 28, 1863 to Miss C/with transcription
- 1/8 August 8, 1863 to Miss C/with transcription
- 1/9 October 22, 1863 to Miss C
- 1/10 January 22, 1864 to Miss C/with transcription
- 1/11 January 25, 1864 to Miss Cho/with transcription
- 1/12 May 3d, 1864 to Miss Cho/with transcription
- 1/13 July 17, 1864 from S. N. Robbins(?) to Chloe Lewis
- 1/14 August 26, 1864 to Miss Co/with transcription
- 1/15 September 21, 1864 to Miss Co/with transcription
- 1/16 November 29, 1864 to Miss C/with transcription
- 1/17 December 14, 1864 to Miss C/with transcription
- 1/18 December 18, 1864 to Miss C/with transcription
- 1/19 July 8, 1865 to Miss C/with transcription
- 1/20 August 22, (1865) to Miss C/with transcription

SERIES 1.2 General Correspondence

- 1/21 August 15, 1853 to Brother/with transcription
- 1/22 December 27, 1865 to Miss Co/with transcription
- 1/23 February 19, 1866 to [Chloe Lewis (no greeting)]/with transcription
- 1/24 March 5, 1866 from Aunt Julia
- 1/25 June 17, 1866? From Chloe Lewis/with transcription
- 1/26 June 20, 1866 to Miss C/with transcription
- 1/27 Sept 16, 1866 from Chloe Lewis/with transcription
- 1/28 October 20, 1866 from Chloe Lewis/with transcription
- 1/29 December 11, 1866? From Aunt Julia/with transcription
- 1/30 January 29, 1867 from Chloe Lewis/with transcription
- 1/31 February 19, 1867? From Aunt Julia/with transcription
- 1/32 March 22, 1867 from Chloe Lewis/with transcription
- 1/33 August 30, 1867? From Chloe Lewis/with transcription
- 1/34 March 30, 1868 to Chloe Lewis Mitchell/with transcription
- 1/35 April 19, 1868 to Chloe Lewis Mitchell/with transcription
- 1/36 April 29, 1868 to Chloe Lewis Mitchell/with transcription
- 1/37 August 2, 1868 to Chloe Lewis Mitchell/with transcription
- 1/38 August 17, 1868 to Chloe Lewis Mitchell/with transcription
- 1/39 October 14, 1868 to Chloe Lewis Mitchell/with transcription
- 1/40 August 15, 1869 to Chloe Lewis Mitchell/with transcription
- 1/41 September 12, 1869 to Chloe Lewis Mitchell/with transcription
- 1/42 September 20, 1869? To Chloe Lewis Mitchell/with transcription
- 1/43 July 2, 1871 to Chloe Lewis Mitchell w/transcription
- 1/44 Undated from Aunt Julia/with transcription

SERIES 2 Education/Essays and Speeches

- 1/45 October 31, 1856 – “Washington”

- 1/46 December 5, 1856 – “Youth”, “Contentment”/with transcriptions
- 1/47 Jan/Feb, 1857 – “The Pleasures of Traveling” (2), “Manufactures”, “Death”
- 1/48 February 20, 1857 – “The Earth”, “Egypt”/with transcriptions
- 1/49 March 13, 1857 – “The Mahometan Religion”/with transcription
- 1/50 March 27, 1857 – “Civilization”/with transcription
- 1/51 April 2, 1857 – “The United States of America”
- 1/52 Undated – “Education of the Masses”
- 1/53 Undated- “On Love”
- 1/54 Undated – “Knowledge of Past History”
- 1/55 Undated, “Party Politics”, “The Fate of the South and the Confederacy”, “Views on Slavery”
- 1/56 Undated – “Party Spirit”
- 1/57 Undated – “Macaulay’s History of England”
- 1/58 Undated, Unnamed
- 1/59 Undated – “The People Make the Demagogue”
- 1/60 Undated – “Death”
- 1/61 Undated – “The Ga. Legislature”
- 1/62 November 28, 18?? – “Disease”
- 1/63 Undated – “Fellow Athenaeans”, partial speech

SERIES 3 Education/Mercer University

- 1/64 (May 22), 1857 Printed Address to Phi Delta Society/Mercer University
- 1/65 1860 Diploma Mercer University

SERIES 4 Miscellaneous Items

- 1/66 June 17, 1865 – Oath of Allegiance to the United States
- 1/67 October 17, 1867 Marriage License
- 1/68 1871 poem by Eugene Mitchell’s mother
- 1/69 Undated Tintype of Eugene Mitchell
- 1/70 Undated Anne Mitchell’s note about her father’s military dates and regiment
- 1/71 Undated envelope and two calling cards
- 1/72 Undated empty envelope for photographs addressed to Chloe Mitchell Turner, in Atlanta, Georgia

SERIES 5 Photocopies and Ephemera

- 1/73 Photocopies from David Brown, collection donor