

# Florence Carson Graves Letters

Collection Number: M003

Inclusive Dates: 1866, 1881, 1883-1886

Bulk Dates: 1883-1886

Volume: 12 letters

## Biographical/Historical Sketch

James Carson, a lawyer and planter of Natchez, Mississippi, owned Spring Hill near Natchez and Wood Cottage in DeSha County Arkansas, across the Mississippi River from Bolivar County. He married Eliza Mary McCormick of Augusta, Kentucky. She died in 1882. James and Eliza McCormick had at least seven children: Mary (b. 9/20/1843), Florence, Lyde, Thomas, Lilly, Charlie, and Nettie.

Florence, the recipient of James Carson's letters, married Nathaniel Graves and lived and raised cotton in Phillips County, Arkansas. They had at least two children, Lexy and Nathaniel.

## Scope and Content

Eleven personal letters (1881, 1883-1886) from James Carson to his daughter Florence and one letter (1866) from Harriet Warfield Bell of Deerfield, Arkansas, the sister-in-law of Florence's sister Mary, to Florence. The letters relate the sicknesses of family members and Natchez friends, many of whom suffer from "the chills and fever," family news and visits, Natchez marriages, births, deaths, and social and church activities, including charity concerts and the visit of Frances E. Willard, president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. James Carson also inquires about the taxes on Wood Cottage. Of note are his comments on the health and state of mind of his friend Joseph Dunbar Shields of Natchez. Carson also increasingly notes his own failing health.