

The Filson Historical Society

**Carson family
Papers, 1833-1854**

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for these papers, see the
Curator of Special Collections.

Size of Collection:

.66 cu. ft.

Locator Number:

Mss./A/C321

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Biographical Note

Catharine Waller was the daughter of William Smith Waller and Catharine (Breckinridge) Waller. William S. Waller served for over 40 years as a cashier at the Bank of Kentucky, first at Frankfort and then at Lexington. William and Catharine Waller had seven children: Henry (1810-1893), Anna Maria (1812-1814), Catharine (1815-1888), James Breckinridge (1817-1887), William (1819-1880), Edward (1821-1867), and Susannah Preston (1824-1902).

James Green Carson was born ca. 1815. His father, Colonel Joseph Carson, commanded the Mississippi cavalry in the Creek War. He died soon after the birth of his son, and James Green Carson was his only heir. James G. Carson married Catharine Waller on July 28, 1835. After their wedding the couple lived at Carson's plantation, Cane Brake, near Natchez, Mississippi. Sometime during the 1840s, the family moved to "Airlie" in East Carroll Parish, Louisiana. James and Catharine Carson had five children: Joseph (b. 1843), William Waller (b. 1845), James Green (b. 1847), Edward Lees (b. 1848), and Katherine Breckinridge (b. 1853). More biographical and family genealogy information can be found with the transcripts of the letters.

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Scope and Content Note

This collection consists mainly of letters written by Catharine and James G. Carson of Mississippi and later Louisiana to Catharine's parents Catharine and William Smith Waller of Kentucky. Other family members including Catharine Carson's brother William Waller and her sister Susannah Preston Lee also contribute letters. Many of the letters center around James Carson's plantations in Mississippi and Louisiana, and several mention a plantation owned by Catharine's brother William. Items discussed include the purchase of slaves, the Carsons' perceptions of their slaves, and the amounts and types of crops grown. Catharine Carson's letters to her father also chronicle her trip to her husband's plantation in Cane Brake, Mississippi immediately following her marriage to James Carson in 1835, and her travels throughout the Eastern Coast of the United States the following year with her mother. In 1838, James and Catharine traveled to Baltimore, Pittsburg, and Philadelphia and the letters show James' reaction to the abolitionists in the Philadelphia. Collection also includes transcripts of the letters and some genealogy information on the Waller and Carson families.

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List of folders

- Folder 1: Correspondence, 1833-1836
- Folder 2: Correspondence, 1837-1839
- Folder 3: Correspondence, 1848-1849
- Folder 4: Correspondence, 1850-1851
- Folder 5: Correspondence, 1852
- Folder 6: Correspondence, 1853-1854

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Subject Headings

Abolitionists - Pennsylvania - Philadelphia
Agriculture - Southern States
Carson family
Cotton gins and ginning
Education - Louisiana
Louisiana - Social life and customs
Medical care
Mississippi - Social life and customs
New England - Description and travel
New York (N.Y.) - Description and travel
Ocean travel
Plantation life
Slavery - United States
Slaves - Health and hygiene
Textile fabrics - Kentucky
Waller family