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MS-014: Thomas Cheshire Papers

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MS-014: Thomas Cheshire Papers

Description

The Thomas Cheshire Papers mainly consist of his handwritten document describing his capture, prison experience, and escape from Andersonville. The manuscript is supplemented by correspondence written by Cheshire's family members, army officials, and one letter from Cheshire himself. Also included in the collection is Elizabeth Scott's (granddaughter of Thomas Cheshire) published historical fiction, *More Fox Than Lion*, based on Cheshire's early life and manuscript. Correspondence from the donor of the collection, as well as a newspaper article on Cheshire's escape found in the *Providence Journal*, is included.

Cheshire's account illustrates the conditions experienced by prisoners of war, specifically in the Andersonville prison. The collection also highlights dangers faced when attempting escape. Although this manuscript contains useful insight regarding prison life, it also hints at Union sympathies in the South.

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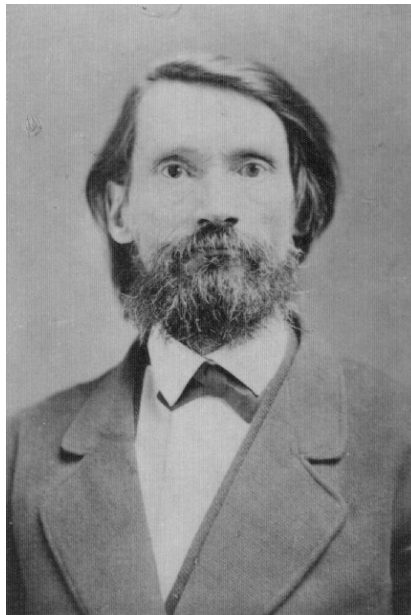
Keywords

Civil War, Union scout, Andersonville Prison, Prisoner of War, POW, prison camp

Disciplines

Cultural History | History | Military History | United States History

**Guide to the
Thomas Cheshire Papers**



**Gettysburg College, Musselman Library
Special Collections & College Archives**

**Processed by Meggan Emler
July 2004**

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Provenance: Gift of Jennifer Kemp

Biography:

Wales native Thomas Cheshire, later a saw mill operator from Kentucky, became a scout for the Union army in June 1863. He was captured near Tellico Plains, Tennessee that September, and was taken to Atlanta, Richmond, and eventually to Andersonville prison. After several months in horrendous conditions, Cheshire and four other prisoners escaped the prison and made their way to the coast of Florida where they met up with a Federal blockade. The vessel took them to New York where they arrived just before Thanksgiving. After reporting to General Burnside in Providence, Cheshire returned to his wife, Elizabeth. According to his granddaughter, Cheshire and his wife had eleven children together. Thomas Cheshire died in 1900 in Cleveland, Ohio and is buried in Lakeview Cemetery.

Scope and Content Notes:

The Thomas Cheshire Papers mainly consist of his handwritten document describing his capture, prison experience, and escape from Andersonville. The manuscript is supplemented by correspondence written by Cheshire's family members, army officials, and one letter from Cheshire himself. Also included in the collection is Elizabeth Scott's (granddaughter of Thomas Cheshire) published historical fiction, *More Fox Than Lion*, based on Cheshire's early life and manuscript. Correspondence from the donor of the collection, as well as a newspaper article on Cheshire's escape found in the *Providence Journal*, is included.

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Box-Folder

Box 1

1-1: Inventory

1-2: Biographical/Provenance Information

"Adventures Of A Union Prisoner Lately Escaped From Andersonville, GA." *Providence Journal* XXXV: 281. Dec. 6, 1984. MS-3pp.

Gettysburg College News Release: "Family donates original Civil War manuscript to Gettysburg College" d. 6/6/00 MS-2pp.

Letter to Karen Drickamer, Head of Special Collections from Jennifer Kemp, d. April 2, 2001 regarding the items in the collection. MS-1p.

Notecard of Pennsylvania Hall to Karen [Drickamer] from Jenny Kemp, n/d. MS-1p.

1-3: Scott, Elizabeth. *More Fox Than Lion*. New York: Vantage Press, Inc. 1972.

1-4: Photograph & Tintype

Tintype of Thomas Cheshire, n.d.

Photograph of Thomas Cheshire, n.d.

Pass d. December 10, 1864 discharging Thomas Cheshire "from the service of the United States to Cincinnati Ohio," signed by C. A. Dana, Asst. Sec. of War. Copy on photograph paper.

1-5: Correspondence

Letter from Head-Quarters Department of ... Ohio, d. Cincinnati, Ohio, [July] 2 1863, stating that Thomas Cheshire has "free pass within & through the lines." ALS-1p. (copy)

Letter from Thomas Cheshire to his wife d. Richmond Va. Oct. 25, 1863, informing her that he has been taken prisoner, and New-York State Soldiers' Depot card d. Nov 24.

ALS-1p. (copy)

Letter to Mrs. Eliz. Cheshire from R. H. I. Goddard d. Providence October 12/64, informing her that steps would be taken to "remunerate you for the services performed by your husband to the U.S. Government." ALS-2pp. (copy)

Letter to Sister from Isaac Cheshire d. Wash., Oct. 31/64, advising her to keep the letter from Head-Quarters as a voucher, and explains his efforts to get Gen'l Butler to exchange for Thomas. ALS-1p. (copy)

Letter to Thomas Cheshire from A. E. Burnside d. Providence R.I. November 28, 1863, acknowledging Cheshire's escape from prison and requesting him to come to Providence to settle his accounts. ALS-1p. (copy)

1-6: Thomas Cheshire manuscript, AMs-pp.1-10.

1-7: Thomas Cheshire manuscript, AMs-pp.9-16.

1-8: Thomas Cheshire manuscript, AMs-pp.17-24.

1-9: Thomas Cheshire manuscript, AMs-pp.25-32.

1-10: Thomas Cheshire manuscript, AMs-pp.33-41.

1-11: Thomas Cheshire manuscript, AMs-pp.1-10 (copy).

1-12: Thomas Cheshire manuscript, AMs-pp.9-41 (copy).