

Historians Take a Look at Civil War Era Family Documents

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Historians with the Library of Virginia are collecting stories from the Civil War, told through family documents. It's part of the preparation for Virginia's commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War.

Archivists were at City Space in Charlottesville for about nine hours on Saturday sorting through documents and doing quite a bit of scanning. They found plenty of people eager to share their family's history as it relates to the civil war.

Debbie Donley brought in some Civil War era family letters have been sitting in her Scottsville home for a quarter century.

"I've just always felt like they should be shown somewhere, and so now I have this opportunity to bring them in and I was just thrilled," said Donley.

On Saturday, Library of Virginia Historian Laura Drake Davis was happy to take a look at them.

"They do get to keep the originals, and we just scan here and hand the originals back to them when we're done," she explained.

The uncovering of family documents is all a part of the CW 150 Legacy Project in partnership with the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission.

"We're hoping to be able to shed light on some either long neglected topics or shed new light on some topics and be able to provide further evidence for life during the Civil War, both the battle front and the home front," said Davis.

Scans of these generations old documents will eventually be stored on the library's website. For Donley and others donating their family histories, it's a chance to reconnect with their family's past, while sharing that history with future generations.

The historians are traveling across the commonwealth searching for all kinds of letters, diaries and pictures from that era.

[Click here](#) for information on where they'll be next.