1858: Copy of letter from John Carter.
Our ancestors came to Virginia about two hundred years ago and settled just at Jamestown, to whose honor to Lancaster County. The first of our family was my grandfather's great-great-grandfather Thomas Carter, son of a London merchant. My great-grandfather said he had a brother John living in Texas, but further I cannot say. And some say we came to old King Carter of Cothermar, but I could never find anything. Our old ancestor Tom Carter was a little 20 years old when he came to Va. and was a man of substance as a planter and tobacco trader. He was married twice. His first wife was an English woman, and they had 3 children, who all died young. She died he married a...
I was interested in my people, and attentive with stories of the old men. My father's sister, Aunt Fanny Cale, died at my house in 1832 at the age of 92, and knew many of the people from the earliest days. Many of the families have decayed, and sold all their land. Big families, poor plantations, poor constitution. But in some cases, there was no hanging or want to fight that I know of. The Callies have generally been planters, or merchants, with a status as a professional man. If you were here, I could tell you stories of the lives of our people, but they're too much for old hands to put in paper. So I'll send with this what I'm able to write.

In doubt you hope from business affairs.

This country is fine for the white man, and the King should give a chance to the people. The country needs interest in you. My hand is tired too. We are all well as usual, managing to get enough to eat, by
a John Colvin Coe.
Lexington, Ky.

Oct. 3, 1838.

Dear Neph.

Your last letter & parcel containing your likeness by the new art named some years ago and greatly appreciated as being denied a sight of you in the flesh. I am indeed glad to see your representative, think not an old man’s flattery. Doc. Tom, when he says he’s not disappointed. You have gained the York if you please. My brother when I saw him last near fifty yrs ago. It is a face that shows a mark of intelligence & character and don’t mistaken in my estimation you gave your letter. A man’s looks be a study good, wise to what he is. You must send me Betty’s likeness too. Our distress to hear of the loss of your little son. It is hard to understand the ways of Providence, but should accept his acts in a proper spirit to know he works for the
But it is hard to see why it is not to take a promising young life to lead a
trifle old man like me who
has accomplished this great work than a century who
is past.
Everything that has lived in the past.
We are never too old to appreciate others
interest in us, and so may try your
letters to your aged interest much than
meant much to me. Your questions
of time to time about your family
has shown a most natural interest in
a new man in a subject I pedigree
of the old feelings like true folks are
reliving their past while waiting the past
centuries who pay attention to who
faint family preceded them in the world
the rest.
For some months past
I've been putting letters to you as best
I can a narrative of my perfect form what
I recollect & some notes I made from
the old records at the court house a few
yrs ago. Your questions have made me
think of myself in my young days.