

Francis, Henry L. and Maurice K. Letters

Henry L. and Maurice K. Francis Letters

1896-1899



Title Statement

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Author: John M. Jackson

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specref@vt.edu

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Profile Description

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Revision Description

2020-08-27 Finding aid notes updated to new department standards. juliags

2021-04-26 LM Rozema added missing notes for an unprocessed collection, added FA title, added FA date from EAD, and added component with instances previously attached to collection level.

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.1989.005

Unit Date

1896-1899

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

Letters of brothers Henry Lewis Francis, Sr. (1876-1945), corporal in Company F, 2nd Virginia Regiment during the Spanish-American War, and Maurice K. Francis (1874-1905), an iron molder, written to their mother, Eliza A. Francis of Floyd County, Virginia.

Creator

Francis, Henry

Creator

Francis, Maurice K.

Extent

0.1 Cubic Feet 1 folder

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open to research.

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Source of Acquisition

The Henry L. and Maurice K. Francis Letters were purchased by Special Collections and University Archives in 1989.

Processing Information

The processing and description of the Henry L. and Maurice K. Francis Letters commenced and was completed in January 2022.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Henry L. and Maurice K. Francis Correspondence, Ms1989-005, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

Henry Lewis Francis, Sr., son of William H. and Eliza Attaway Shelor, was born in Floyd County, Virginia, on September 24, 1876. In 1897, while working for the *Roanoke Times*, he married Harriet R. Massie. The marriage would apparently later end in divorce. At the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, Francis volunteered for military service and served as a corporal in Company F, 2nd Virginia Regiment. He continued to serve in the Roanoke Blues (a volunteer militia company) and in the Roanoke National Guard company, after the war. On December 12, 1906, Francis--still working for the *Roanoke Times*--married Agnes Mayo (1885-1988) in Roanoke. The 1910 census shows Francis living in Roanoke with wife Agnes and a nine-month-old son while working as a merchant for a confectionary. (The Francis family would have at least two more children.) By 1912, Francis was working as salesman for the Virginia Real Estate Exchange, Roanoke. He continued to work in real estate sales for the rest of his life. Henry L. Francis died in Roanoke on June 25, 1945.

Maurice Kemper Francis, older brother of Henry L. Francis, was born in Floyd County, Virginia on January 8, 1874. By late 1896, Francis was living and working in Chattanooga, Tennessee. In 1899, he was working for P. Kennedy's Foundry in Baltimore, but the 1900 census found him again in Chattanooga, boarding in the home of Victoria Vioux while working as an iron molder. By 1905, Francis had returned to Virginia and was working for the Roanoke Machine Works as a molder while living with his mother and brothers in the city. On July 29, 1905, he was murdered in Floyd County and was buried in Fair View Cemetery, Roanoke.

Scope and Content

This collection contains letters written by brothers Henry K. Francis--a corporal in Company F, 2nd Virginia Volunteer Infantry during the Spanish-American War--and his brother Maurice K. Francis, an iron molder, written to their mother, Eliza A. Francis, in Floyd County, Virginia. Most of Henry Francis's letters are written

from Camp Cuba Libre (Jacksonville, Florida) and relate to personal matters, chiefly the trouble he is having with estranged wife Harriet (usually referred to in the letters as "H"). He touches only briefly on military affairs. His final letter discusses his imminent return home.

Maurice Francis's letters, commencing from Chattanooga, Tennessee in 1896, also relate to personal matters: his living quarters, family relations, job prospects, and his personal finances and health. In his letter of May 1, 1898, he expresses concern over his brother Henry having volunteered for military service.

The collection also contains a photographic portrait of an unidentified man--presumably Henry L. Francis--in uniform, with a "VA" insignia on collar.

Keywords

Floyd County (Va.)

Local/Regional History and Appalachian South

Spanish-American War, 1898

Rights Statement for Archival Description

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General

This collection had long held the title "Henry Francis Correspondence," but a closer look at the contents during processing suggested that "Henry L. and Maurice K. Francis Letters" would be a more accurate title.

Description of Subordinate Components

Letters

Unit Date 1896-1899

folder 1

Photograph

Unit Date n.d.

folder 1