

Secrist, Robert B., Letters

Robert B. Secrist Letters

1862-1864



Title Statement

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.1991.010

Unit Date

1862-1864

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

Letters from Robert B. Secrist, serving in the 7th Pennsylvania Cavalry during the American Civil War, most addressed to his sister Maria, together with wartime letters from other acquaintances.

Creator

Secrist, Robert B.

Extent

0.1 Cubic Feet 1 folder

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

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Source of Acquisition

The Robert B. Secrist Letters were purchased by Special Collections and University Libraries in 1991.

Processing Information

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Preferred Citation

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Biographical Note

Robert Brown Secrist, son of Michael and Sarah Brown Secrist, was born in Pennsylvania on December 31, 1840. The 1850 federal census lists him as the youngest of four Secrist living in the Fayette County, Pennsylvania, home of his parents. Robert B. Secrist mustered in with Company K, 7th Pennsylvania Cavalry on October 12, 1861. Records indicate that he transferred to the 2nd U. S. Cavalry on February 10, 1863, but the contents of the letters in this collection suggest that he was serving in the 1st U. S. Cavalry by March, 1863. Records seem to indicate that Secrist enlisted in the 4th U. S. Cavalry on February 12, 1864, through the end of the war, and into 1867. Following his military service, Brown returned to Fayette County. On April 24, 1873, he married Emma S. Kemp (1852-1923). By 1880, the Secrist family had four children; they continued to live in Fayette County, where Robert Secrist worked as a carpenter. Robert B. Secrist died in Fayette County on December 11, 1915, and was buried in Hill Grove Cemetery, Connellsville (Fayette County).

Scope and Content

This collection contains six letters from Robert B. Secrist, a soldier in Company K, 7th Pennsylvania Cavalry and Company F, 1st U. S. Cavalry during the American Civil War. Most of the letters are addressed to Secrist's sister, Maria G. Secrist. In his first letter, written from Camp Worth (18 miles from Franklin, Tennessee) on April 12, 1862, Secrist relays news of the Battle of Shiloh and writes of scouting, standing guard, and taking prisoners. In a letter to his father, written from Camp Worth on June 25, 1862, Secrist recounts the recent movements of his company, concluding with a detailed account of the celebration surrounding the hoisting of the Union flag over "McMimisville" [McMinnville, Tennessee?]. On March 13, 1863, Secrist writes from Washington, D. C., informing his sister of his recent transfer to the 1st Virginia Cavalry. He describes his experiences in camp and notes that he has been making extra money by "playing tailor." Secrist writes briefly to his mother from Potomac Creek Station on May 3, 1863, describing his supper and asking that she send him some paper for writing. Writing briefly from a camp near Warrenton, Virginia, on July 27, 1863, Secrist mentions recent skirmishes with Confederates and notes mutual acquaintances that he has recently seen. An undated fragment of a letter from Secrist to his mother and sister includes his account of firing on and taking a prisoner. Also addressed to Maria Secrist are letters from Charles G. Leland, relaying news of the death of Lieutenant Fisher; [G.?] H. Brown, of the Commissary Department in Nashville; and Eugene Stocking, at Camp Stoneman. The collection also includes a letter written to R. B. Secrist by L. A. Wilson of the 1st U. S. Cavalry.

Keywords

Civil War

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

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Description of Subordinate Components

Letters

Unit Date 1862-1864

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