

Tinsley, Fanny W., Memoirs

Fanny W. Tinsley Memoirs

1912



Title Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.1991.013

Unit Date

1912

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

Typescript memoir by Fanny W. Tinsley regarding her American Civil War experiences during the Union occupation of her Hanover County, Virginia neighborhood and the ensuing Battle of Mechanicsville.

Creator

Tinsley, Fanny W.

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 Fanny W. Tinsley Memoirs were purchased by Special Collections and University Archives in 1991.

Processing Information

The processing and description of the Fanny W. Tinsley Memoirs commenced and was completed in October, 2022.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Fanny W. Tinsley Memoirs, Ms1991-013, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

Fanny W. Tinsley was likely Frances William Gaines Tinsley, the daughter of Dr. William F. and Janes Elizabeth Spindle Gaines. She was born in King William County, Virginia, on November 11, 1836, and in the 1850 federal census, she is listed among the children living in the Hanover, Virginia, home of her parents. On May 2, 1860, she married Seaton G. Tinsley (1836-1901) in Hanover County. The 1870 federal census shows the Tinsleys living and farming in Hanover County with three Tinsley children; by 1880, the family had added three more children, moved to Richmond, and Seaton Tinsley had taken a position as a tax collector. Fanny W. Tinsley died in Henrico County, Virginia, on January 27, 1921, and was buried in the city's Hollywood Cemetery.

Scope and Content

This collection consists of a typescript memoir bearing the title "Mrs. S. G. Tinsley's War Experiences[,] From Original Manuscript: Being a Civilian's Account of the Battle of Mechanicsburg [i.e., Mechanicsville]." A note on the first page explains that the typescript was copied from the original manuscript, then owned by H. E. Matheny of Akron, Ohio. The 14-page, bound manuscript, dated January 6, 1912, provides Fanny W. Tinsley's eyewitness account of the Battle of Mechanicsville, June 26, 1862. Tinsley's story begins in May, 1862, as she explains why her family decided to remain in their home after the Confederate evacuation, and she describes the family's treatment by Union soldiers during the ensuing six-week occupation. She recalls the army's activities, including the use of a reconnaissance balloon (the "Intrepid") and the interactions between Union soldiers, her family, and enslaved workers. Later, Tinsley describes the family's flight from their home and between the lines of the two armies as Union forces fell back, and the family's eventual passage through the Confederate lines to the home of a neighbor. Following the battle, Tinsley concludes, the family moved to Richmond, where they remained for the remainder of the war, and the family's home at Mechanicsville was destroyed.

Keywords

Civil War

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

Women -- History

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Description of Subordinate Components

Memoirs

Unit Date 1912

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