

Gallaher, William B., Papers

William B. Gallaher Papers

1861



Title Statement

Gallaher, William B., Papers William B. Gallaher Papers, 1861 Ms.1991.062

Author: John M. Jackson

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specref@vt.edu
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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.1991.062

Unit Date

1861

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

Two letters written by William B. Gallaher, serving in in Company E, 1st Virginia Cavalry, during the American Civil War (including a letter written on the eve of the First Battle of Bull Run), accompanied by a document certifying Gallaher's promotion from private to first lieutenant.

Creator

Gallaher, William 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 William B. Gallaher Papers were purchased by Special Collections and University Archives in 1991.

Processing Information

The processing and description of the William B. Gallaher Papers 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], William B. Gallaher Papers, Ms1991-062, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

William Bowen Gallaher, son of Hugh and Elizabeth Catherine Bowen Gallaher, was born in Shepherdstown, (West) Virginia on February 10, 1840. He attended Georgetown College and Waynesboro Academy before graduating from Virginia Military Institute in 1860. On April 19, 1861, Gallaher enlisted in Company E, 1st Virginia Cavalry at Waynesboro, Virginia. He was promoted to lieutenant on July 4, and was placed on detached duty to serve on the staff of General Joseph E. Johnston. Gallaher tendered his resignation on August 11, reportedly due to ill health, and returned home to assume charge of a tannery producing leather for the Confederacy. Gallaher married Amelia Frances Briscoe (1845-1911) in Jefferson County, West Virginia, on August 8, 1864. Following the war, the Gallahers moved to "Springdale," an estate near Waynesboro, Virginia, where their six children were born, and later moved into Waynesboro. William B. Gallaher died February 19, 1911, and was buried in Riverview Cemetery, Waynesboro.

Scope and Content

This collection contains papers of William B. Gallaher, who served in Company E, 1st Virginia Cavalry during the American Civil War. Included are two letters written by Gallaher to his parents. Writing to his father while on picket duty near Harpers Ferry, (West) Virginia, on May 27, 1861, Gallaher notes that a local resident has generously provisioned them with food and milk. ("We are enjoying ourselves very much," he writes.) Gallaher writes at length about his personal business affairs, then relays word of the killing of Elmer E. Ellsworth at Alexandria, and other war news, before mentioning some recent purchases of firearms, including a Sharps rifle and a Colt revolving rifle. In the second letter, addressed to his mother from Manassas Junction, Virginia, on July 20, 1861 (the eve of the First Battle of Bull Run), Gallaher writes of the uncertainty of his future movements, the ready availability of food, the scarcity of water, and briefly describes a recent battle, probably the Battle of Blackburn's Ford. The collection also includes a document, dated August 6, 1861, certifying Gallaher's promotion from private to lieutenant.

Keywords

Civil War

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

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Description of Subordinate Components

Papers

Unit Date 1861

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