

Wickham, Williams C., Order

Williams C. Wickham Order
1861



Title Statement

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.2018.020

Unit Date

1861

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

This collection contains an order written to Williams C. Wickham, June 24, 1861 by George W. Lay, who was the acting Assistant Adjutant General for Brigadier General Milledge Bonham.

Creator

Wickham, Williams Carter, 1820-1888

Extent

0.1 Cubic Feet 1 folder

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

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Source of Acquisition

The Williams C. Wickham Order was purchased by Special Collections in February 2017.

Processing Information

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Preferred Citation

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Biographical Note

Williams Carter Wickham, attorney, farmer, politician, Confederate brigadier general and president of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company (the C&O), was born September 21, 1820. The son of William Fanning and Anne Butler Carter Wickham, Williams Wickham was born in Richmond, Virginia but reared on his father's plantation, Hickory Hill, in Hanover County. He graduated from the University of Virginia and was admitted to the Virginia bar in 1842 but seems to have devoted much of his time to managing Hickory Hill. He married Lucy Penn Taylor, and the couple had four children. Wickham was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1849 and also served as the presiding justice on the Hanover County court. In 1858, he became captain of a unit of Virginia militia cavalry, and in 1859 was elected as a Whig to the state senate.

Wickham voted against the ordinance of secession in the 1861 Virginia convention, but once secession had been effected, he and his company, the Hanover Dragoons, joined the Confederate Army during the American Civil War. After First Manassas, Wickham was commissioned colonel of the Fourth Virginia Cavalry. At the Battle of Williamsburg, Wickham was wounded and captured but soon paroled and healed. Wounded again after the Battle of Antietam, Wickham had rejoined his regiment by late 1862 and participated in the battles of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. He was promoted to brigadier general on September 9, 1863. Wickham resigned his commission on October 4, 1864, and assumed the Confederate Congress seat to which he had been elected in the spring of 1863.

Just weeks after the cessation of hostilities, Wickham joined the Republican Party, providing his reasons in an open letter which estranged many of his colleagues. The former general was elected president of the Virginia Central Railroad Company in November 1865, and when that line merged with the Covington & Ohio Railroad in 1868 to become the C&O, Wickham was retained as the new company's president. He served as vice-president of the company from 1869 to 1878, when the company went into foreclosure, with Wickham as receiver. Under reorganization of the company, Wickham served as second vice-president. During this time, he maintained an active political life, being elected chairman of the Hanover County board of supervisors in 1871 and a state senator in 1883. He held all of these positions at the time of his death on July 23, 1888.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains an order written to Williams C. Wickham, June 24, 1861 by George W. Lay, who was the acting Assistant Adjutant General for Brigadier General Milledge Bonham. The text of the order is as follows:

Head Qrs Adv. Forces A.P. Fairfax C H June 24, 1861 Captain Wickham comg Cavalry will immediately furnish twenty or twenty five of his best mounted men with an officer to go under guidance of Col. Lipscomb, Actg Aid to the Comg Genl, for special detached service to continue probably a few hours only. By order: G W Lay AAAG Capt Ball will furnish three men at once, report at my office. W.C. Wickham Cap Comg Cavy

Related Archival Materials

See the following related materials, which are also at Virginia Tech Special Collections and University Archives:

Williams Carter Wickham Letterbook, Ms2008-011

Williams C. Wickham Letters, Ms2025-090

Keywords

Civil War

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

Confederate States of America. Army. Virginia Cavalry Regiment, 4th

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Description of Subordinate Components

Order

Unit Date 1861

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