

A Guide to the Diary of Miss Mary E. Lack, 1861-1862

Diary of Miss Mary E. Lack 1861-1862
1861-1862

A Collection in the Thomas Balch Library SC 0049
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Author: Emily Hershman

History

Processed by: Emily Hershman

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Collection: SC 0049

Author: Emily Hershman

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Descriptive Summary

Collection number

SC 0049

Language

English

Abstract

The diary of Miss Mary E. Lack is a detailed personal account of the first year of Civil War in Loudoun County. The transcripts are in overall good condition and may be photocopied.

Creator

Mary E. Lack

Repository

Thomas Balch Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection open for research .

Use Restrictions

No physical characteristics affect use of this material.

Acquisition Information

William C. Whitmire, Jr., Leesburg, VA

Processing Information

Processed by Emily Hershman, 29 Jul 2009

Preferred Citation

Diary of Miss Mary E. Lack (SC 0049), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA..

Accruals

1995.0049

Alternative Form Available

None

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

None

Bibliography

Ancestry, www.ancestry.com

Confederate Soldier Service Records, Footnote database, www.footnote.com

Diary of Miss Mary E. Lack (SC 0049), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA

The Washington Post

Other Finding Aid

None

Technical Requirements

None

Biographical Information

Mary E. Lack (1846-1864) was born in Loudoun County, VA, the daughter of William (ca. 1810-1893) and Mary Lack (unk.-1881). Her father worked as a gardener in Leesburg. They were active members of St. James Episcopal Church, and it was there that Lack met her fiancé, Thomas H. Magee (1837-unk.), a private in the 18th Mississippi Regiment. In her diary, she describes her exchanges with him and other soldiers, particularly those of the 18th and 21st Mississippi Regiments, during and following their occupation of Leesburg in 1861. Lack died on 27 Jul 1864, less than two years after her last journal entry, and is buried next to her parents in the Old Episcopal Church Cemetery in Leesburg, VA.

Thomas H. Magee enlisted in the Confederate Army in 1861. He was wounded in the Battle of Cold Harbor 30 May 1864, and furloughed for 30 days. Official records indicate he deserted from the Confederate Army in February 1865; it is uncertain what became of him after the war.

Scope and Content

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The diary of Miss Mary E. Lack is a detailed personal account of the first year of Civil War in Loudoun County. The transcripts are in overall good condition and may be photocopied.

The journal commences on 24 Nov 1861, and notes major troop movements in the area and interactions with various soldiers from the 18 Mississippi Regiment, including Thomas Magee, John C. Brent (1841-1910), and Edwin G. Banks (1843-1916). Lack recalls the bloody aftermath of the Battle of Ball's Bluff, writing that "the wounded were brought by [her] house, and to hear their groans was awful... a great many of the Yankees were drowned." She describes mounting casualties from illness and skirmishes, declaring "there are more than 100 graves in the cemetery now, the graves of those who have died of disease and wounds received on the battle field... I often wonder when it all will end." As well as conveying the tragic consequences of war, Lack's diary also documents ordinary issues and occurrences, such as the slaughtering of livestock and the price of domestic goods. The journal concludes with an entry on 11 Nov 1862, evincing the hope that her fiancé would be able to join them for Christmas dinner.

The diary transcripts are the only items in this collection.

Contents List

Folder 1: Diary of Miss Mary E. Lack 1861-1862

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