

Mckennie, Marcellus letter

Marcellus Mckennie letter

1859-05-30

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Descriptive Summary

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Unit Date

1859-05-30

Mixed Materials

BW 27 (box)

Container

1 (folder)

Language

English

Creator

McKennie, M. (Marcellus), 1824-1890

Extent

0.03 Cubic Feet 1 letter sized folder

Repository

Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is minimally processed and open for research.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

This collection was purchased from David M. Lesser by the Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia on February 1, 2021.

Preferred Citation

MSS 16496, Marcellus McKennie letter, Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia.

Biographical / Historical

Dr. Marcellus McKennie (1824-1890) graduated from the University of Virginia in 1841 with a degree in Natural Philosophy. He attended the Virginia Military Institute and graduated in 1844. He studied medicine at the University of Virginia and completed his medical degree at Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia in 1846. He practiced medicine in Charlottesville, Va. following graduation. Early sources show he was more often working at the bookstore his father established at the University of Virginia. The 1860 Federal Census lists him as a merchant. Military records show that he was a colonel with the 88th Virginia Militia as of March 4, 1861. He opened McKennie and Company on July 1, 1861, a sword manufacturing business. It produced fewer than 200 swords before closing the following April. In June, 1862, he became Confederate Acting Assistant Surgeon assigned to Chimborazo Hospital in Richmond. He later was appointed Assistant Surgeon in August 1863. He transferred to Charlottesville General Hospital. In 1871, he co-authored "A Treatise on the Manufacture of Alcoholic Liquors". Records show that he was practicing medicine at the University of Virginia prior to his death. In the obituary for his daughter, Albert G. Drane, on October 13, 1940, it is mentioned that Dr. McKennie was also an intimate of General Robert E. Lee. (www.civilwarartillery.com; Charlottesville During the Civil War" website of Encyclopedia of Virginia)

General Terisha Washington Dillard (1817-1863) was the son of James Spotswood Dillard (1792-1866) of Virginia. He received his law degree in 1838 from the University of Virginia and set up practice in Amherst County. He served the Confederacy as Colonel of Companies F & S, 90th Regiment Virginia Militia. He met a horrible fate in May 1863 when he was brutally murdered by nine enslaved persons that he kept at his farm in Amherst, Va. Dillard allegedly provoked one of the enslaved women by chastising her for "stealing". The other enslaved persons protected her from him with axes and clubs. He was bludgeoned to death, his body mangled and mutilated. Some reports say that Dillard and his wife were quite cruel. After the attack, his

body was buried along with other evidence of the murder. Some later confessed and five or six enslaved persons were hanged. ("Murder of a Citizen of Amherst County" Savannah Republican, Georgia, 22 May, 1863, page 2, reprinting report of Lynchburg Republican: "Horrible Murder in Amherst, VA."; Winchester Daily Bulletin, 15 May 1863, page 2; May 13, 1863: "The Brutal Murder of Gen. Dillard", taken from the Daily Virginian, Lynchburg, Va. accessed at website of newsadvance.com; "More terrible things discovered by accident", dated January 18, 2017, accessed at website of appetite4history on November 9, 2020).

Content Description

This is an autographed letter signed from M. McKennie at the University of Virginia to "Gen. T.W. Dillard" on 30 May 1859. This is likely Dr. Marcellus McKennie (1824-1890) to General Terisha Washington Dillard (1817-1863). In the letter, McKennie urges Dillard to not assemble his regiments at Charlottesville next year. McKennie fears that the young men will be greatly excited by the great number of places selling alcohol with and without licenses in Charlottesville, and that they will consequently "care very little for the restraints of law."