

A Guide to the Morrill Civil War Collection

Morrill Civil War Collection 1862-1907

1862-1907

A Collection in the Special Collections Department 11031
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Descriptive Summary

Collection Number

11031

Language

English

Collector

Charles F. Morrill

Extent

144 items

Repository

University of Virginia. Library. Special Collections Dept.

Alderman Library
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903
USA

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection is open to research.

Use Restrictions

See the [University of Virginia Library's use policy](#).

Acquisition Information

The Morrill Civil War Collection was placed on deposit in the Library by Mr. Charles F. Morrill of Charlottesville, Virginia, on February 27, 1992.

Funding Note

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Preferred Citation

Morrill Civil War Collection, Accession 11031, Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library

Scope and Content

This collection consists of 144 items, 1862-1866, 1902 & 1907, pertaining to Corporal Wilbur F. Hawxhurst[b. 1845], Company E, 65th Ohio Veteran Volunteer Infantry and Charles Plummer Morrill, 24th Maine Infantry, describing their experiences during and after the Civil War in Georgia, Louisiana, New York, Tennessee and Texas. Also present are military discharge papers for Hawxhurst and Morrill's brother George Morrill[b. 1847], a member of the 4th Maine Light Artillery, a photograph of Hawxhurst (see his letter of January 31, 1866) and three ambrotypes: Charles Morrill(taken in Memphis, Tennessee, 1863), an unidentified woman and an unidentified man. A calotype print of an unidentified young Atlantawoman is attached to Hawxhurst's letter of May 31, 1865. The letters of Hawxhurst and Morrill are described below as two separate groups.

Wilbur F. Hawxhurst's letters (1862-1866, 1902 & 1907, 109 items) were written in Ohio(Vermilion, Elyria, Youngstown, July 1862-January 1864), Tennessee(Chattanooga, Nashville, Columbus Hill, Cleveland, February-August, October-December 1864, January-June 1865), Georgia(Atlanta, Vining Station[Vinings], Catoosa Springs, August-October 1864), New Orleans(July 1865) and Texas(Placedo Creek, Victoria County and Camp Irwin, July 1865-February 1866).

His letters are chiefly to his brother-in-law and sister Reverend John W. and Mary Thompson("Bro & Sister") of Richfield, Summit County, and Pittsfield, Lorain County, Ohio(see letters of April 16, 1865 and January 31, 1866); there are nine empty letter envelopes addressed to Reverend Thompson from Hawxhurst. Sometimes Hawxhurst wrote more than one letter on the same day; several letters on "Office Union Line Express," United States Christian Commission, U.S. Sanitary Commission, U.S. Military Telegraph, "Head-Quarters District of the Etowah," "Head Quarters 2d Division 4th Army Corps," "Head Quarters, Central District of Texas" and Soldier's Home, Nashville, stationery are present. Topics of discussion include family and local news, complaints about lack of letters, derogatory commentary on African-Americans; the Atlanta Campaign(Hawxhurst was more of a witness than participant), his activities as a hospital nurse, patient and detached duty as a company (chief) clerk at Chattanooga and Nashville, Tennessee, Vining Station[Vinings] and Atlanta, Georgia, New Orleans, and occupation duties in Victoria County, Texas. Select letters from July to August 1865 were numbered by Hawxhurst (1 to 13; some are missing); two Hawxhurst letters (post June 8 and July 1864) on U.S. Christian Commission stationery are missing pages.

Prominent military officers and civilians mentioned by Hawxhurst include: Ulysses S. Grant[1822-1885], Charles G. Harker[1835-1864], John Bell Hood[1831-1879], Andrew Johnson[1808-1875], Abraham Lincoln[1809-1865], George B. McClellan[1825-1885], Oliver Perry Morton[1823-1877], George H. Pendleton[1825-1889], William T. Sherman[1820-1890], Edmund Kirby Smith[1824-1893], David Stone Stanley[1828-1902], George H. Thomas[1816-1870], Horatio Wright[1820-1899] and Felix Kirk

Zollicoffer[1812-1862].

Hawxhurst discusses various Ohio infantry regiments (the 31st, 38th, 64th, 65th) and various military personnel: Captain Wilbur F. Hinman, 65th Ohio; Colonel Frederick W. Lister, 31st Ohio; Ira Pool, Company A, 38th Ohio; Captain Joseph F. Sonnestine, Company E, 65th Ohio; Captain Joseph H. Wilsey, 65th Ohio. Places or events discussed or described include contemporary events and issues, military camp life, Lincoln's assassination, and the battles of Resaca (May 19, 1864), Nashville (December 19, 1864).

A "Hawxhurst Miscellaneous" folder contains nine empty letter envelopes from William F. Hawxhurst to his brother-in-law Reverend J. W. Thompson, 1864-1865, and an October 30, 1902 letter from Mary Thompson (Hawxhurst's sister), Copopa(?), Ohio, to her nephew M. M. Hawxhurst of Ann Arbor, Michigan, scolding him and his father (William) for not writing since their last visit and promising to send M. M. a wartime photograph of his father (see letter January 31, 1866). Also present is a February 16, 1907 certificate of Hawxhurst's army discharge with an April 29, 1880 copy of the record. It attests he was discharged by Captain Joseph F. Sonnestine, Company E, 65th Ohio, on March 3, 1866 in Victoria, Texas.

October 16, 1862: on patriotic stationery; asks about George Morrill(?); lists discharged and drafted men and those who obtained substitutes; is employed as a telegraph operator. January 25, 1863: complains Abraham Lincoln is not respected in Vermilion; his employer wants him to study bookkeeping and penmanship; July 15, 1863: still a civilian and discusses wages for a job offer; has just heard of Port Hudson's (Louisiana) surrender [July 8, 1863]; November 19, 1863: describes Youngstown and compares it with Richfield (his sister's residence) December 18, 1863: has "15 regular correspondents"; earns \$25.00 a month; discusses religion.

February 11, 1864: writes from Chattanooga, Tennessee; is now a soldier employed as a clerk at the headquarters of the District of Etowah; food consists of potatoes "three times a day," beef and pork; April 18, 1864: writes from Nashville; identifies his unit as Company E, 65th Ohio Veteran Volunteer Infantry; encloses a piece of stick from the grave of Confederate General Felix Kirk Zollicoffer; May 4, 1864: hard marching [beginning of Atlanta Campaign]; mentions presence of flocks of "negroes and white trash"; describes the weather and countryside of Cleveland, Tennessee; his brigade heading for Dalton and Atlanta, Georgia; May 5, 1864: mentions General Charles G. Harker's orders to the brigade in pursuit of the rebels to Dalton; description of a hard luck rebel family; May 5, 1864: in camp at Catoosa Springs, Georgia; Gen. Harker expresses confidence in victory; his company has only 18 men; briefly mentions his equipment, including a revolver; May 19, 1864: writes from a general field hospital where he has volunteered [as a nurse] and ordered to accompany wounded to Chattanooga; mentions the battle of Resaca [May 13-16, 1864]; May 19, 1864: detailed account of his brigade at the battle of Resaca; mentions his hospital duties, "They said I was too good a nurse to go back to the field"; May 27, 1864: weather complaints; anxious to return to his regiment; a Chattanoogawoman had been told Yankees had "horns" on their heads; promises to send Luella (his niece; see December 26, 1864) "a nigger to play with"; May 28, 1864: describes a patient and "fine fellow" Ira Pool [Edgerton, Fulton County, Ohio], Co A, 38th Ohio Veteran Volunteer Infantry, wounded at the battle of Missionary Ridge [November 25, 1863]; description of the hospital's menu provided by the U.S. Sanitary Commission; May 30, 1864: predicts Union victory and capture of Richmond by General Ulysses S. Grant.

[Post June 8, 1864]: U.S. Christian Commission stationery--everyone is for Lincoln and Andrew Johnson; Ira Pool's father lives in Edgerton [pages are missing from this letter]; July 1, 1864: tells his sister "I have no earthly friend who I care for except you at home, I have no correspondents except you I have not received a letter from any one in Ohio since I left"; July 11, 1864: his political and spiritual efforts to convert three rebel patients; expects arrival of 1,000 wounded rebels from General William T. Sherman; July 13, 1864: delay of his mail due to movements of his brigade, admits he cries when he does not receive mail; fears his diarrhea will become chronic; promotion of Lieutenant Wilbur F. Hinman to captain; tells Luella "I guess the best plan is to leave the Niggers here" [see Hawxhurst letter May 27, 1864]; also comments "I do not feel like coming home till the war is over"; Ira Pool's rank is second sergeant [see Hawxhurst letter May 28, 1864]; [July 1864]: on U.S. Christian Commission stationery--misses onions; requests a comb [pages missing from this letter]; August 4, 1864: writes from breastworks at Atlanta and describes them; says Wilbur Hinman is the most thoughtful officer in the company; August 10, 1864: weighs 95 pounds; a doctor describes him as no more than a baby; August 11, 1864: Tom Powell offers to trade 89 acres of land in Royalton, Ohio, for the Hawxhurst house and lot in Berea; urges his brother to inspect the property first; August 28, 1864: has been sent to the general field hospital at Vining Station [Vinings], Georgia, because of his poor health; August 31, 1864: on stationery of U.S. Military Telegraph Hawxhurst reports Democratic nomination of General George B. McClellan and George H. Pendleton of Ohio for president and vice-president; says "Abe" (Lincoln) rejoices in their nomination because soldiers will support him; August 31, 1864: capture of Atlanta; tells brother not to worry about the draft.

September 12, 1864: describes Atlanta, General Sherman and General George H. Thomas; October 29, 1864: inquires about the soldier's vote for Lincoln in Summit County, Ohio; complains the war has "hanged on like grim death to a dead Nigger"; December 13, 1864: pursuit of Confederate General John Bell Hood's army; December 19, 1864: Confederate defeat at the battle of Nashville [December 15-16, 1864]; December 26, 1864: asks his niece Luella about her Christmas; December 28, 1864: plans to buy land in Crawford County, Iowa, after the war.

January 22, 1865: is homesick and asks for news; February 1, 1865: detailed as a clerk at the Inspector General's office, headquarters, District of the Etowah; February 23, 1865: 100-gun salute at noon in honor of George Washington's birthday (February 22); March 1, 1865: characterizes Vermilion, Ohio, as a "God forsaken hole"; March 1, 1865: has received a letter from his lowagirl and boasts she "is a beauty" unlike those in Ohio; he misses being away from "all kinds of womanhood or girlhood" and is glad to receive a friendly letter from the fair girls up north"; March 7, 1865: Colonel Lester [Frederick W. Lister] of the 31st Ohio Volunteer Infantry is the new inspector general; March 24, 1865: he and his comrades hand over their rations to a woman (a Chattanooga boardinghouse keeper) for proper cooking; April 3, 1865: mentions the capture of Richmond, Virginia; earns \$100 a month plus rations in the quartermaster department; April 16, 1865: mourns Lincoln's assassination and hopes Andrew Johnson will remember his senatorial pledge to hang traitors; encloses a poem calling for vengeance against traitors; soldiers in mourning.

May 4, 1865: wants a wife after his return then will go into business; has learned to ride on horseback; May 10, 1865: printed General Orders No. 3, Major General George H. Thomas, [Army and] Department of the Cumberland, Nashville, praising the 4th Army Corps's review of previous day; in a handwritten postscript Hawxhurst tells family he is well; May 18, 1865: "had some Photos taken please find Three inclosed for yourself" [not present]; May 31, 1865: General Grant has telegraphed Indiana Governor Oliver Perry Morton that troops are to be mustered out in Washington for final discharge and pay; mentions surrender of Confederate General Edmund Kirby Smith; wants to settle in Iowa; in a faded pencilled postscript he encloses an attached calotype print of "a woman from Atlantadont know her got it in the Gallery" [this letter is filed in an oversize folder]; June 9, 1865: the Army of the Cumberland's 3rd Division stacked its arms and refused to go to Texas; June 17, 1865: "on board steamer Emma Floyd bound for Texas"; has been detailed as a clerk at division headquarters [2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, 4th Army Corps] and appointed to the rank of corporal; received pay of \$314.60 while at Nashville; June 22, 1865: "on board steamer Indiana near New Orleans"; compares Mississippi and Ohio rivers; saw alligators; increase in desertions now that the war is over; discusses Joe Wilsey of Berea [Captain Joseph H. Wilsey, 65th Ohio], an abusive brigade adjutant-general who "I will remember him as long as I live just wait till he and I are both citizens"; Wilsey assaulted and nearly thrown overboard by angry soldiers.

July 2, 1865: in New Orleans; unable to write home because "there is no Sabbath in the Army and especially in Military Office"; mosquitoes are not a problem, plenty of food, drinking river water; rumors the regiment is to sent to San Antonio, Texas; July 18, 1865: Letter No. 2--mentions Captain Wilbur F. Hinman; July 27, 1865: Letter No. 3--is in western Texas but does not know where; July 30, 1865: Letter No. 4--describes area of Placido [Placedo] Creek, Victoria County, Texas; complains eastern troops are being mustered out faster than western troops; August 3, 1865: Letter No. 6--account of daily activities; blames General David Stone Stanley for the 4th Corps' transfer to Texas; August 13, 1865: Letter No. 7--defends card playing as "innocent relaxation"; October 7, 1865: provides a brief physical description of himself; October 10, 1865: quotes General Stanley's request to General Horatio Wright, commander of the Department of Texas, Galveston, that the 64th and 65th Ohio Infantry regiments be mustered out; October 17, 1865: troops are at work restoring railroad [San Antonio and Mexican Gulf Railroad] between Lavaca [Port Lavaca] and Victoria; complains it will be "turned over to the civil authorities and Rebels will get the benefits of Union Soldiers Labor"; November 23, 1865: Head Quarters, Central District of Texas, Office Commissary of Musters; has decided to remain "until all troops are mustered out they need my services in this Office" December 3, 1865: 65th Ohio is on its way home except for Hawxhurst; December 7, 1865: busy mustering out troops; few Union families but many "Bitter Rebels" in Texas.

January 10, 1866: expects to be mustered out in February; hopes to establish a bookstore in Victoriabecause "the South's the place for a young man to get a start"; recounts a dream during which he met and married an acquaintance named Maria Garget(?); January 31, 1866: decided to remain in the army until March; asked an Eau Claire, Wisconsin, friend to address letters to Hawxhurst care of "Rev. J. W. Thompson, Pittsfield, Lorain County, Ohio"; would like to flirt with the sister of his lowayoung lady (whom he has not heard from in some time); encloses photograph [carte-de-visite] taken at C. Marmu Photograph Gallery, 69 Royal Street, New Orleans ("it looks cross but it wont bit if you dont tease") showing a somber Hawxhurst in civilian dress [most likely taken while stationed in New Orleans, July 1865]; February 16, 1866: expresses appreciation to his sister and brother-in-law for making him "a better boy"; will be home in 15 to 20 days; wants to marry a girl named Ella; worries veterans unable to find work [last Hawxhurst letter].

Charles Plummer Morrill's letters (1862-1865, 35 items) were written in Maine(Camp E. D. Keyesand Augusta, September-October 1862), New York(Camp Maineand East New York, October 1862-January 1863, December 1863), Fort Monroe, Virginia(January 1863), Louisiana(New Orleansand Port Hudson, February and May 1863), and Washington, D.C.(April 14, 1865). Morrill's letters are chiefly to his parents (his father was register of deeds in Franklin County, Maine; see letter of December 25, 1862) and occasionally his brother George. Morrill was employed in his regiment's hospital department and his letters discuss camp news, visits to various site and miscellaneous subjects. There is a gap in his letters from February 25 to May 29, 1863 and May 31 to December 3, 1863. Also present is an incomplete six-page draft pencil manuscript (pages 3-8) of reminiscences and Lincoln's assassination and three ambrotypes including one of Charles Morrill(1863), an unidentified woman and an unidentified man.

Two letters were not written by Morrill. A March 28, 1864 letter from "Cousin Cyrus" [Cyrus Birney?--see Morrill's November 17, 1862 and February 24, 1863 letters] a member of Company D, 1st District of Columbia Cavalry, Camp Baker, Washington, probably to Morrill, inquires about his medical studies, discusses the dangerous aftermath of a mounted reconnaissance, mentions regimental chaplain Samuel H. Merrill of Portland, Maine, visits to the Capitol, Senate and House of Representatives and characterizes describes Washington as "a marshy hole." An undated November 8 from "Nell" to "Mother Morrill" [daughter-in-law to her mother-in-law?] discusses family matters, appreciates a toy "nigger baby" sent to "May" from "Grandma" and other presents to family for which Charles P. Morrill also expresses his thanks in a postscript. A June 17, 1865 certificate of George H. Morrill's army discharge, Augusta, Maine, signed by Captain Charles W. White, 4th Maine Light Artillery, and a captain of the 13th United States Infantry, are also present.

Prominent military officers and civilians mentioned by Morrill include: Nathaniel P. Banks[1816-1894], Henry Ward Beecher[1813-1887], Ambrose P. Burnside[1824-1881] and Franklin S. Nickerson[1826-1917]. Other military personnel mentioned by name include Frederic R. Esterbrook, Roscoe L. Harlow, Ansel J. Libby, John C. Manson, and John A. Moreton(surgeons), Chaplain Frederick A. Hodsdon, Arthur Deering, Samuel S. Brown and Hiram C. Vaughan(captains), Lieutenant John H. True, Lieutenant Colonel Charles T. Bean(24th Maine), Dr. Silas C. Thomas(21st Maine) and Captain Charles W. White(4th Maine Light Artillery). Mainemilitary units mentioned are the 4th Maine Light Artillery, 21st Maine Infantry, 24th Maine (24th Maine Volunteer Militia) and 28th Maine Infantry.

September 27, 1862: Morrill as a member of Company E, 24th Maine(24th Maine Volunteer Militia); appointed a wardmaster and assigned to Surgeon John C. Manson; refers to Captain Hiram C. Vaughan of the 24th; October 4, 1862: requests clothes; brief mention of his duties; October 18, 1862: measles outbreak in the 21st and 28th Maine Infantry regiments; October 28, 1862: witnessed the departure of the 21st; promises to "take care of myself and try and do my duty"; October 30, 1862: transport of regiment to Boston, Norwich, Connecticut, and New York City.

November 2, 1862: describes sightseeing in New York City; may hear Henry Ward Beecher preach next Sunday; November 9, 1862: measles continues to spread within 21st and 24th Maine Infantry; brief mention of hospital staff; regiment quartered on Long Islandsoutheast of the city of Brooklyn; attended a New York theater with Lieutenant John H. True of Company E; describes a Democratic voting hall; November 17, 1862: brief comments on a Beecher sermon; accidental mortal wounding of a sergeant by [Captain Vaughan]; mentions seeing Cyrus Birney; November 30, 1862: describes his daily work routine; December 7, 1862: lameness of Captain Hiram Vaughan may lead to his discharge [part of this letter is missing]; December 14, 1862: visited the 28th Maine's hospital; plans to hear Beecher preach; December 20, 1862: account of a Beecher sermon; Morrill describes his devotionals; three new doctors assigned to the regiment (Roscoe L. Harlow, Ansel J. Libby and John A. Moreton); Dr. Silas C. Thomas appointed the 21st Maine's assistant surgeon and Morrill appointed hospital steward; several officers under arrest for signing a petition calling for Colonel George M. Atwood's resignation, including captains Arthur Deering, Samuel S. Brown and Vaughan; December 25, 1862: describes and encloses drawing of the barracks housing the 21st, 24th and 28th Maine regiments; refers to his father as register of deeds for Franklin County, Maine; questions the honesty and integrity of public and military officials; doubts General Ambrose P. Burnside will ever be successful; Surgeon Libby, Colonel Atwood, and Lt. Col. Charles T. Bean are ill; December 28, 1862: Surgeon Libby died of typhoid.

January 4, 1863: he and Surgeon Harlow undertook a walking tour of New York City where they purchased coal; complains about regiment's lack of Sabbath observances; January 11, 1863: regiment has received orders to travel on ship Lizzie Southard; offers his brother advice about parents and girls; January 14, 1863: on board Lizzie Southard, sailing for New Orleans, 700 men aboard; January 19, 1863: "On Board transport Lizzie Southard Off Fort Monroe, " encloses drawing of ship's position; January 25, 1863: "Ship Lizzie Southard Off Fortress Monroe, Hampton Roads, " describes he and Dr. Frederic R. Esterbrook's visit to the Hampton Hospital; complains Chaplain Frederick A. Hodsdon resigned as the Southard was about to leave New York; on Friday [January 23] a man hanged for shooting a Negro; visited Fort Monroe; steamship Vanderbilt is coaling in preparation to seek out the CSS Alabama; describes presence of two monitors as "funny looking rafts"; February 13, 1863: has arrived at the Mississippi River and New Orleans; describes voyage, does not like sea travel; regiment assigned to General Franklin S. Nickerson's Third Brigade, part of General Nathaniel P. Banks's Red River Campaign; February 24, 1863: description and drawing of his regiment's camp; death of Assistant Surgeon Esterbrook due to typhoid; mentions Cyrus (Birney?); saw Gen. Banks and New Orleans sights including statues of Henry Clay and General Andrew Jackson; citizens are unhappy rebels and "war has laid its devastating hand with very visible effect on this city."

May 30, 1863: writes from Port Hudson with brief mention of the first Union assault against it (May 27); December 31, 1863: writes from Camp Maine, East New York, that he has received an appointment (but does not say exactly what type); plans to study medicine as a student of Surgeon Harlow's. April 14, 1865: writes to his brother from Washington, D.C., which is celebrating victories over the rebels; saw General Grant; asks how long brother's battery [4th Maine Light Artillery] will remain at City Point, Virginia; adds postscript regarding Lincoln's assassination [final Charles P Morrill letter].

Folder Listing

Wilbur F. Hawxhurst Letters

Unit Date 1862-1864

Extent 49 items

Wilbur F. Hawxhurst Letters

Unit Date 1865 Jan-Jul

Extent 31 items

Wilbur F. Hawxhurst Letters

Unit Date 1865 Aug-1866 Feb

Extent 15 items

Hawxhurst Miscellaneous

Unit Date 1864-1865, 1902 & 1907

Extent 13 items

Wilbur F. Hawxhurst Letters

Unit Date 1862-1865, n.d.

Extent 32 items

Wilbur F. Hawxhurst, Chattanooga, Tennessee, to "Dear Bro & Sister" with attached calotype print of an unidentified young Atlanta woman

Unit Date 1865 May 31

Container Oversize Folder (Box)

Ambrotype, Charles Plummer Morrill "Taken at Memphis, Tenn/1863" (tinted)

Unit Date 1863

Container Mini-Tray 99 (Box)

Ambrotype, an unidentified bearded man

Unit Date n.d.

Container Mini-Tray 99 (Box)

Ambrotype, unidentified woman (reddish tint)

Unit Date n.d.

Container Mini-Tray 99 (Box)