

Fabricius A. Cather, Soldier, Civil War Diaries, 1860-ca. 1960 A&M 3633

Fabricius A. Cather, Soldier, Civil War Diaries
1860-ca. 1960



Title Statement

Fabricius A. Cather, Soldier, Civil War Diaries, 1860-ca. 1960 A&M 3633

Author: Staff of the West Virginia & Regional History Center

Publication Statement

Publisher: West Virginia and Regional History Center

1549 University Ave.
P.O. Box 6069
Morgantown, WV 26506-6069
Business Number: 304-293-3536
wvrhcref@westvirginia.libanswers.com
URL: <https://wvrhc.lib.wvu.edu>



Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-06-18 13:22:03 -0400.

Language Usage: Description is written in: English, Latin script.

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

A&M 3633

Unit ID

[Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

[Previous Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

[Previous Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

[Previous Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

[Previous Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

[Previous Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/2027

Unit Date

1860-ca. 1960

Unit Date

1860-1865

Language

English .

Abstract

Civil War diaries authored by First Lieutenant (later Major) Fabricius A. Cather from Flemington, Taylor County, West Virginia, records his experiences in the military and political conflicts of the Civil War. The six diaries, and a transcribed copy of the original 1864 and 1865 diaries, contain entries for the years 1860 to 1865 regarding western Virginia's grassroots efforts to secede from the Confederacy and establish a new state, and of the first battles and skirmishes such as Rich Mountain and Corricks Ford. He describes campaigns involving his regiment, the First West Virginia Cavalry, including the 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign under Sigel, Hunter, Sheridan, and Custer against Breckenridge, Early, and Mosby's Rangers; the last battles of Petersburg as Grant broke the Rebel lines; and the continuous fighting during Lee's retreat. Although most diary entries are one or two sentences in length, some entries in 1864 and 1865 are longer, perhaps due to his full involvement in combat. The collection also contains 18 items stored in pockets inside the covers of the diaries, including headquarters passes, business cards, and a complimentary pass for Lt. Cather to attend the June, 1861 "NorthWestern Virginia Convention" in Wheeling. An Addendum includes two scans of photos of Cather, two scans of Civil War military service papers, photocopies of an 1873 Kansas Land Grant, and genealogy material documenting the Cather family.

Extent

0.3 Linear Feet 3 1/2 in. (1 flat storage box); (1 rolled genealogy chart)

Physical Location

West Virginia and Regional History Center / West Virginia University / 1549 University Avenue / P.O. Box 6069 / Morgantown, WV 26506-6069 / Phone: 304-293-3536 / URL: West Virginia & Regional History Center

Repository

West Virginia and Regional History Center

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

No special access restriction applies.

Conditions Governing Use

Permission to publish or reproduce is required from the copyright holder. For more information, please see the Permissions and Copyright page on the West Virginia and Regional History Center website.

Preferred Citation

[Description and date of item], [Box/folder number], Fabricius A. Cather, Soldier, Civil War Diaries, A&M 3633, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia.

Biographical / Historical

Fabricius Augustus Cather was born on May 12, 1840 in Harrison County, Virginia, but he called Flemington, West Virginia home. His occupation was farming and raising cattle, before and after the war. Cather's style of writing and his vocabulary indicates he probably had received an education beyond the basic public school curriculum of the times. He followed his family into the political fray of the early 1860s against secession with a determination to save the Union, and to separate from Virginia to create the state of West Virginia. Thomas Cather, F.A.'s father, was elected a state senator in 1861, representing the counties of Taylor, Monongalia, and Preston in the Restored Government of Virginia.

Political activity spilled into military action when F.A. Cather volunteered for the Grafton Guards Militia in the spring of 1861 to protect his home from the "arms of secessionists." He served with the rank of First Lieutenant of Company B as his unit was sworn into the US Army in May, 1861. After his involvement in early battles and skirmishes in western Virginia, Cather's health failed and he was forced to resign from the US Army for two years. He still remained active in local politics and the militia, dealing with Rebel cavalry and guerrilla raids. Cather reenlisted in the US Army in February 1864 and was assigned to the First West Virginia Cavalry, Company K, returning to the rank of First Lieutenant. He was soon in charge of the company and later promoted to captain. Cather and his command were engaged in the last major eastern campaigns of

the war, including the Shenandoah Valley, the breaking of the siege lines at Petersburg, and the pursuit of Lee's Army to Appomattox.

F.A. Cather received an honorable discharge as a Major in July, 1865. He married Helen V. Mallonee in August 1865 and had four children. Fabricius Augustus Cather died of illness in October, 1876.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains seven volumes, six of which are the original diaries authored by Fabricius A. Cather, documenting the years 1860-1865; the seventh is a manuscript copy of the original 1864 and 1865 diaries (which are in the collection) that were transcribed by Thomas H. Cather, his son, in 1904. There is a minor discrepancy between the original diary and the transcript involving the entries of March 8, 9, and 10, 1865. Although the original contains entries for each of these days, the transcript does not. All references to Helen V. Mallonee, his future wife, are in code or "cipher" in the original diaries of 1864 and 1865, perhaps due to the Confederate sympathies of her family. These coded passages are deciphered in the transcript. They were married in August, 1865.

Statistics regarding casualties, and captured arms, livestock, and military property are recorded for most of the battles. Narratives of events regarding the surrender at Appomattox and the Grand Army of the Republic passing in review in Washington D.C. close the series. Other subjects and events prominent in the diaries are: elections, secession, treason, illness and disease, family, friends, the Cather's farm, travel, church and social events, scouting, guerrillas, retaliation, and the stealing, burning, and destruction of property; locations include: Grafton, Bridgeport, Wheeling, Corricks Ford, Cheat Mountain, Martinsburg, Winchester, Cedar Creek, Front Royal, New Market, Lexington, Lynchburg, Charlottesville, Richmond, Five Forks and Saylor's Creek, among others.

Although most diary entries are one or two sentences in length, some entries in 1864 and 1865 are longer, perhaps due to Cather's full involvement in combat.

Keywords

Taylor County (W. Va.)
Civil War -- Appomattox
Civil War battles.
Civil War -- War diaries
Civil War -- Military discharge
Civil War -- Home Guards
Civil War -- Mosby's Rangers
Civil War - Shenandoah Valley Campaign, 1864 (August-November)
Civil War - Union soldiers - West Virginia.
Civil War - Valley Expedition.
Civil War - West Virginia 1st Cavalry.
Civil War battles - Cedar Creek.
Civil War battles - Corrick's Ford.
Civil War battles - Jones' Raid.
Civil War battles - Rich Mountain.
Civil War battles - Sailors Creek.
West Virginia - Wheeling Conventions of 1861-1863.
Cather, Fabricius A.

Description of Subordinate Components

Volume 1

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/232235

Unit Date 1860

Scope and Contents

Index to Volume 1:

1860/1/1-18; Listing of names and addresses

1860/2/18; Cure for warts - "The bark of a willow tree burnt to ashes and mixed with strong vinegar and applied warts"

1860/4/6; F.A.C. attended the wake of Mrs. Elizabeth Hustead, "consort of James Hustead"

1860/4/7; F.A.C. attended "the burying of Mrs. Hustead"

1860/4/23-26; F.A.C. traveled to Smithfield, Pennsylvania to move his brother and his family

1860/4/28; F.A.C. went to Bridgeport with his father and friends for the Regimental Muster

1860/7/30; Cather worked on court ordered plats with his cousin Lydia

1860/8/1-2; Continued to work on plats and visit friends

1860/8/3; Went to Pruntytown and "brought out the brass instruments for the Flemington Band"

1860/8/7; Left for Annapolis, Maryland

1860/8/8; Cather reached Annapolis at 11:00 AM and took passage on the Great Eastern Steamship, "a magnificent ship" which carried 10,000 people to Baltimore

1860/8/9; Toured Baltimore including the Washington Monument and left for home

1860/8/10; Arrived in Grafton, and walked to Pruntytown where court was still in session

1860/8/11; F.A.C. went with his father to buy cattle and was not with the Band "as usual"

1860/8/12; Church and dinner with friends

1860/8/15-18; Harvested and stacked hay

1860/8/20; F.A.C. left home for the "Great West" by train

1860/8/22; Arrived in Sullivan and then Mattoon, Illinois and stayed with friends

1860/8/23; Attended a [Stephen] Douglas Mass Meeting regarding the pending presidential election, F.A.C. witnessed a fireworks display, confusion and some fights

1860/8/24-29; F.A.C. continued to visit friends and argue politics in Sullivan

1860/8/30; Saw many "Va. Friends" in Sullivan, "pulled a tooth for Leon's wife", "took dinner" with friends. Cather writes ". . . in town politics very high"

1860/9/2; Argued politics from 7 to 9 PM

1860/9/3; Started for Chicago and arrived by 8 PM; viewed Lake Michigan by moonlight

1860/9/4-12; Crossed the Mississippi River into Burlington, Iowa, continued to New Virginia, Iowa and J.B. Read's home (F.A.C.'s sister and brother-in-law, Emily and John Read)

1860/9/24; Attended a "taffy - pull -- considerable fun"

1860/10/4-5; Left New Virginia journeyed to Bloomfield (Illinois?) and attended a Douglas Camp meeting where there was "plenty of whiskey afloat"

1860/10/6-21; Walked 31 miles to Memphis, continued to Greensburg and visited several friends

1860/10/22-26; Traveled with J.W. Roe to LaGrange by buggy and witnessed several campaign speeches by representatives for the presidential candidates Bell, Breckinridge and Douglas

1860/10/27-28; Sick with chicken pox

1860/10/30-31; Left La Grange on board the steamship, "Hannibal City", stopped at St. Louis

1860/11/1-5; Continued to enjoy an excursion down the Mississippi River to Cairo, and turned up the Ohio River to Paducah, New Albany and Louisville

1860/11/6; Arrived in Cincinnati; Cather reports the presidential election results, "Abraham Lincoln Elected President and Hannibal Hamlin Vice Pres."

1860/11/7-12; Enjoyed Cincinnati, left for Parkersburg and visited friends before starting for home, arrived in Flemington on the 12th

1860/11/26; Cather reported the "Union men attempts to hold a Mass Meeting, but are broken up by the Disunionists -- " lead by M.H. Johnson and G.H. Hansbrough

1860/12/3; F.A.C. went to Pruntytown for a "Union Mass Meeting". He reported "Quite an excitement on Ellery M. Hall being called on to speak -- " The Disunionists countered with Moses J. Robinet of Grafton

1860/12/22; F.A.C. attended a "Disunion Meeting" in Pruntytown, where he heard several speeches in favor of disunion including those delivered by G.W. Hansbrough, M.H. Johnson, E.J. Armstrong, and W. J. Kemble

Volume 2

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/232236

Unit Date 1861

Scope and Contents

Index to Volume 2:

1861/1/4; F.A.C. noted the day was a National Day of Prayer and Fasting as proclaimed by President Buchanan

1861/1/18; Attended a political meeting in Flemington regarding the choice of a union man as delegate for the State Convention. Cather emphasized, "if he could be elected"; John Burdette was chosen

1861/2/4; Unionist John Burdette elected to represent Taylor County at the State Convention, defeating "Secessionist" Hansbrough

1861/4/17; F.A.C. recorded the passing of the Ordinance of Secession by the Virginia Convention

1861/4/22; Cather witnessed John Carlyle's speech pertaining to his motion to the split of Virginia, creating a new state

1861/4/29-30; In Morgantown F.A.C. joined Colonel Jonathan Heck for tea and stayed until after dinner the next day

1861/5/6; Went to Fairmont with father to hear several speakers including Francis Pierpont, E. Hall, J. Burdette and Moses Tichnell

1861/5/8; Attended a union meeting in Flemington, where "a company of union volunteers give in their names . . ."

1861/5/9; F.A.C. sent as messenger to Flemington and Fairview to warn citizens of the "secession troops"; this created "quite an excitement"

1861/5/10; Went to Grafton, where "people are also determined to fight secessionists"

1861/5/13; A portion of the Volunteer Company held rifle and revolver practice

1861/5/14; F.A.C. went to Flemington to receive the daily intelligence, giving an account of the West Virginia Convention

1861/5/18; After he attended company muster at Flemington, F.A.C. heard the "arms for secessionists" were moving from Bridgeport to Pruntytown, he made an effort to have them stopped; he was "up all night"

1861/5/19; F.A.C. stayed out in the woods all day with 20 others and watched for "secession arms"

1861/5/20; Cather joined the Volunteer Company at Grafton for three months with the rank of First Lieutenant

1861/5/22; In Grafton, Cather watched as the "secession troops marched through", being received with hissing and groans by the citizens

1861/5/23; Statewide election regarding the Virginia Ordinance of Secession, Cather went to Grafton to view the body of Sergeant T. B. [Thornbury Bailey] Brown, killed by the secessionists the night of the 22nd

1861/5/25; F.A.C.'s company was mustered into the United State Army at Wheeling

1861/5/27; Cather commanded forces guarding the Wheeling Railroad Depot during Captain Latham's absence

1861/6/3-4; F.A.C. noted the Battle of Philippi, the wounding of Colonel Kelly and listed the casualty, captured livestock and equipment figures

1861/6/22; Cather's unit moved to Mannington

1861/6/27; F.A.C. reported to Generals McClellan and Morris to give information regarding the roads and the layout of the region

1861/6/29; Elections for new reformed state government of Virginia, F.A.C.'s father, Thomas Cather was elected state senator for Taylor, Monongalia and Preston Counties

1861/7/5; F.A.C. reported a friendly fire incident seriously wounding a soldier

1861/7/6; Army marched to Philippi

1861/7/7; Cather's brigade was General Morris' Rear Body Guard in all night march; fighting began at 9 AM with "heavy skirmishing with the Rebels"

1861/7/8; All night fighting and in the evening the Union forces gave the Rebels a "tremendous raking" with grape shot

1861/7/9; Artillery battle continued

1861/7/10; Fighting slowed, but Cather reported "a great deal of reconnoitering" and commented on the his splendid view of the enemy's camp

1861/7/12; Spies reported the Rebels had pulled out and the Union forces pursued them

1861/7/13; Continued to chase the Rebels across Cheat Mountain under terrible conditions; Federals overtake and defeat the Rebels at Corricks Ford; Cather listed the number of captured arms, equipment and casualties, including Confederate General Robert Garnett, killed in action

1861/7/14; F.A.C. assigned to bury a member of General Garnett's bodyguard, killed with his general; Cather wrote he carried out his orders ". . . as decently as possible", this included a touching inscription over the boy's grave

1861/7/15; Army crossed the Cheat River for 8th time in two days, returned to camp at Ellicott's

1861/7/16; Army spent the day collecting captured "property" of the rebels

1861/7/20; F.A.C. traveled to Beverly and "took" supper at General McClellan's quarters

1861/8/5; Cather's outfit moved to Camp Bealington [Belington], assigned as scouts for the area

1861/8/6-12; Cather gathered information regarding secesh activity, scouted the area, and made arrests

1861/8/13; F.A.C. became very ill with symptoms of Typhoid Fever

1861/8/26; F.A.C. attended his home church witnessed "an exciting debate. . . " regarding the introduction of politics into religious matters."

1861/8/27; F.A.C. called to testify in US [United States] Court against "certain characters" charged with treason

1861/9/13; Cather took a squad and destroyed all the liquor they could find

1861/9/15-19; Noted the passing of several units of infantry and artillery as they moved toward Cheat Mountain

1861/10/1- 25; Cather's unit continued assignment of policing and scouting the area

1861/10/26; F.A.C. heard reports to expect renewed fighting at Cheat Mountain with General Lee leading the Rebels

1861/11/26-12/5; F.A.C. nursed a sick friend and soldier, John D. Powell and became ill; Powell moved to E.R. Douglas' house, December 5th

1861/12/6-24; In camp at Bealington [Belington] and visited friends

1861/12/24-31; Visited his family, both parents and F.A.C. were ill

Volume 3

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/232237

Unit Date 1862

Scope and Contents

There are 6 items stored in the pockets of Volume 3:

1. 1862 pocket calendar
2. General Order Number 11, February 10, 1862, regarding the examination of officers
3. Business card for Augustus Pollack, Foreign and Domestic Goods, Wheeling
4. Business card for John T. Lakin, Merchant and Taylor, Wheeling
5. Business Card for Cutaiar & Batchelder, Cigars, Cincinnati, Ohio
6. Army pass from Headquarters, Clarksburg, January 31, 1862

Index to Volume 3:

1863/1/2; President Lincoln signed the bill admitting West Virginia in to the Union

1863/1/3; F.A.C. read the Emancipation Proclamation

1863/1/13; Wrote Governor Pierpont regarding the stealing of horses by rebel guerillas

1863/2/8-14; Took cattle to Baltimore on train to sell, made stops enroute in Cumberland and Martinsburg

1863/2/15; Visited Washington DC, sat in the gallery during a both Senate and House session

1863/2/25; Cather heard that John Righter's guerillas (Confederate) were in the area

1863/3/5; While in Wheeling, F.A.C. "attending to business" with Governor Pierpont and A.G. Henry Samuels

1863/3/26; Voted on the ratification of the Willey Amendment to the Constitution of West Virginia

1863/4/15-16; F.A.C. acted as guide with the 6th Virginia Regiment to "hunt the Rebel horse thieves"

1863/4/25; Heard of the defeat of Colonel Latham by the Rebels at Beverly

1863/4/27; F.A.C. helped to put "out the 119th Regiment" and sent out scouts for Colonel Mulligan

1863/4/30; "Our troops" driven out of Bridgeport by the Rebels

1863/5/1; With the militia, started for the "rebel camp ground at David Coplin's"

1863/5/2; F.A.C. "played the secesh" to obtain information

1863/5/3; Rebels at Bealington [Belington]

1863/5/5-8; Cather busy with duties as the Acting Assistant Adjutant General of the Virginia Militia,

1863/5/9; Rebels headed south and the militia disbanded

1863/5/28; West Virginia's first state election for county and state offices

1863/5/30; Election results, regarding state and county offices, "the rebel copperheads" won some county offices and the Union party won state offices

1863/6/7; Friends from Gilmer County, refuged to the Cather home, forced out by Rebel guerillas

1863/6/15; The governor called out the militia and President Lincoln sent 100,000 troops to deal with rebel invasion

1863/6/20; Arthur Boreman inaugurated governor of West Virginia

1863/7/9; F.A.C. heard "good news from the Army of the Potomac, Meade pursues Lee"

1863/8/27; Cather reports 150 mules taken by the rebels

1863/10/1; F.A.C. placed ad for "correspondence with young lady . . ."

1863/10/2-8; Sick

1863/10/9; Showed Mr. Mallonee some timber

1863/10/11; F.A.C. addressed a note to "H.V.M." (Helen V. Mallonee)

1863/10/21; Seized some "treasonable circulars"

1863/10/22; State elections for United States Congress and State legislature

1863/11/15; Attended funeral of Sergeant Francis Marion Brohan, killed at Williamsport

1863/11/26; Cather reported the defeat of Confederate General Bragg in Tennessee

Volume 4

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/232239

Unit Date 1863

Scope and Contents

There are 5 items stored in the pockets of Volume 4:

1. Business card for Parker House, Board \$1.00 per day, Laporte, Indiana
2. Paper, side one, List of Quartermaster Stores issued to Lieutenant Cather at Beverly, Virginia, September 23, 1861; side two, Bill of goods for Miss M.J. Cather of Flemington, Taylor County
3. Paper with accounts listed regarding cattle sales
4. Minutes of a church meeting, F.A. Cather, Secretary, May 31, 1862
5. Small piece of paper with directions to "Madison"

Index to Volume 4:

1863/1/2; President Lincoln signed the bill admitting West Virginia in to the Union

1863/1/3; F.A.C. read the Emancipation Proclamation

1863/1/13; Wrote Governor Pierpont regarding the stealing of horses by rebel guerillas

1863/2/8-14; Took cattle to Baltimore on train to sell, made stops enroute in Cumberland and Martinsburg

1863/2/15; Visited Washington DC, sat in the gallery during a both Senate and House session

1863/2/25; Cather heard that John Righter's guerillas (Confederate) were in the area

1863/3/5; While in Wheeling, F.A.C. "attending to business" with Governor Pierpont and A.G. Henry Samuels

1863/3/26; Voted on the ratification of the Willey Amendment to the Constitution of West Virginia

1863/4/15-16; F.A.C. acted as guide with the 6th Virginia Regiment to "hunt the Rebel horse thieves"

1863/4/25; Heard of the defeat of Colonel Latham by the Rebels at Beverly

1863/4/27; F.A.C. helped to put "out the 119th Regiment" and sent out scouts for Colonel Mulligan

1863/4/30; "Our troops" driven out of Bridgeport by the Rebels

1863/5/1; With the militia, started for the "rebel camp ground at David Coplin's"

1863/5/2; F.A.C. "played the secesh" to obtain information

1863/5/3; Rebels at Bealington [Belington]

1863/5/5-8; Cather busy with duties as the Acting Assistant Adjutant General of the Virginia Militia,

1863/5/9; Rebels headed south and the militia disbanded

1863/5/28; West Virginia's first state election for county and state offices

1863/5/30; Election results, regarding state and county offices, "the rebel copperheads" won some county offices and the Union party won state offices

1863/6/7; Friends from Gilmer County, refuted to the Cather home, forced out by Rebel guerillas

1863/6/15; The governor called out the militia and President Lincoln sent 100,000 troops to deal with rebel invasion

1863/6/20; Arthur Boreman inaugurated governor of West Virginia

1863/7/9; F.A.C. heard "good news from the Army of the Potomac, Meade pursues Lee"

1863/8/27; Cather reports 150 mules taken by the rebels

1863/10/1; F.A.C. placed ad for "correspondence with young lady . . ."

1863/10/2-8; Sick

1863/10/9; Showed Mr. Mallonee some timber

1863/10/11; F.A.C. addressed a note to "H.V.M." (Helen V. Mallonee)

1863/10/21; Seized some "treasonable circulars"

1863/10/22; State elections for United States Congress and State legislature

1863/11/15; Attended funeral of Sergeant Francis Marion Brohan, killed at Williamsport

1863/11/26; Cather reported the defeat of Confederate General Bragg in Tennessee

Volume 5

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/232240

Unit Date 1864

Scope and Contents

There are 5 items stored in the pockets of Volume 5:

1. Yellow ribbon with print, "AOP [Army of the Potomac] Cavalry Corps"
2. Return to duty pass for Union Private John Steward of Company K, 1st Regiment of Virginia Cavalry, October 18, 1864
3. Pass to allow Lieutenant F.A. Cather through the lines, Beverly, Virginia, November 10, 1861
4. Pass for Lieutenant F.A. Cather, Headquarters, Clarksburg, signed by "N. Goff", October 6, 1861
5. Complimentary pass to the "NorthWestern Virginia Convention", June 6, 1861; on the back is written "Lieut. Cather"

Index to Volume 5:

1864/1/1-3; F.A.C.'s father very ill, doctor prescribed "McMunn's Elixir of Opium"

1864/1/4; F.A.C. visited Helen V. Mallonee; his father's condition improved

1864/1/9-28; His father relapsed, the doctors attended and medication prescribed are no help, later Mr. Cather improved with a new medicine from Dr. Fahmey of in Boonsboro, Maryland

1864/1/21; Attended a "school meeting" with his brother; a pledge was signed by the "subscribers" to "build and put into operation, an institution of learning"

1864/1/30; F.A.C. and his brother, Flavius attended a meeting of "subscribers of West Virginia College"

1864/2/12; F.A.C. reenlisted in the United States Army at Wheeling

1864/3/10; General Sigel arrived in Wheeling and was "out welcomed by General Tom Thumb"

1864/3/13; Cather's unit left for Martinsburg

1864/3/15-20; Arrived in Martinsburg and drilled

1864/3/26; F.A.C. remembers the day as Helen V. Mallonee's 20th birthday

1864/3/27; Cather appointed Judge Advocate for Court Martial duty

1864/5/7; Detailed to take charge of mail line between Martinsburg and Sigel's headquarters

1864/5/8; Met a New York Herald reporter

1864/5/9-10; Army moved from Winchester to Cedar Creek, headquarters established at Cooley's mansion, where F.A.C. discovers several documents with Founding Fathers' signatures

1864/5/11; Rebel Cavalry scouting, some were captured

1864/5/15; After leaving Woodstock, Union forces engaged Rebel Army of General Breckinridge at New Market, F.A.C.'s horse shot out from under him in this Rebel victory, Cather recorded casualties and army property losses

1864/5/16; Army retreated to Cedar Creek

1864/5/17; F.A.C. reported General Sigel unwell

1864/5/22; General David Hunter replaced Fran Sigel as commander of the Department of West Virginia, troops expressed sorrow over Sigel's departure

1864/5/24; Hunter ordered three houses in Newton burned in retaliation for the murder of four Union teamsters

1864/5/26; While marching south, Hunter ordered a "splendid house near Strasburg" to be burned

1864/5/29; Camped at Rude's Hill, F.A.C. visited the wounded left, "in Rebel hands" at New Market

1864/6/2; After skirmishing with Imboden, Hunter headquartered at Harrisonburg with "loyal citizens", Cather commented the area had "quite a number of loyal citizens"

1864/6/4; Destroyed two woolen factories

1864/6/5; Fought and defeated Imboden and Jones. General Grumble Jones killed, Cather listed the number of casualties and claimed the federal artillery fired 3500 rounds

1864/6/6; Entered Staunton, a target of the campaign with "pomp and circumstance" included bands playing, Rebel prisoners jailed in a prison built by the Confederates for Union prisoners, F.A.C. roomed at the American Hotel with Lieutenant John Megis

1864/6/8; Cather on Provost Duty; examined the "Wesleyan Female Col. Institute. . . Rather an unpleasant task"

1864/6/9-10; Seized, burned and destroyed considerable "C.S. property", including flour mills

1864/6/11; Army moved to Lexington, the town was shelled before entered, F.A.C. visited VMI [Virginia Military Institute]

1864/6/12; F.A.C. recorded houses searched, property seized, VMI [Virginia Military Institute] magazine along with a few professors' houses and Governor Letcher's house were burned; the army camped on the Washington College Green, Cather commented Washington College "was the place of Dr. George Junkin's persecution and from where he was driven in 1861"

1864/6/14-15; Marched to Buchanan in Botetourt County, "intensely rebel"; the command left Buchanan, and crossed the Blue Ridge, camped near Liberty

1864/6/16; After destroying railroads, marched south, heavy fighting erupted outside of Lynchburg, Union troops forced to retreat

1864/6/17-23; Army fell back to Buford's Gap, engaged in continuous fight with Mc Clausland, including at Catawba Mountain, continued to retreat over the mountains to Sweet Sulfur Springs; Cather described the very poor condition of the Hunter's army at the end of the retreat

1864/6/25; Army camped at Meadow Buff, "have nothing to eat"

1864/6/26-27; Army moved to and Hawks Nest, crossed Gauley River and camp at Widow Huddleson's; army resupplied

1864/6/30; General Hunter, staff and Cather at Charleston

1864/7/1; Colonel Capehart, "in person" requested F.A.C.'s return to his regiment, granted and F.A.C. given command of Company K.

1864/7/3; F.A.C. visited home and Helen Mallonee

1864/7/19; Army moved to Martinsburg, Rebels burning private property

1864/7/21; Army moved through Winchester, F.A.C. sent on scout to Cedar Creek

1864/7/22; Battle broke out south of Winchester, Federals badly beaten, Cather declared, "they whipped us"

1864/7/24; Worked at General Custer's headquarters in AM; in PM, heavy fight, Federal Cavalry "whipped"; Cather witnessed, " the worst skedaddle I have ever seen . . . Army perfectly demoralized . . . Averill (Federal cavalry commander Colonel William Averell) drunk"

1864/7/25; Federals made a stand at Martinsburg, repulsed Rebel attack

1864/7/28-31; (See Cather's note under the 28th entry, regarding entries 28th through 31st) Army moved from Hagerstown, Md to Greencastle, Pa; Cather sent "to make contact with the enemy", returned to find the division under Averill [Averell] gone; he was cut off by the Rebels and forced to hide in South Mountain

1864/8/ ; Cather's division patrolled southwestern Pennsylvania, including Chambersburg and western Maryland areas, some skirmishing with Jubal Early's forces

1864/8/14-17; Detached as Judge Advocate for Court Martial duty

1864/8/18; Sent to scout Major Gilmer at Martinsburg

1864/8/19-21; Encamped at Fairplains, F.A.C. heard "very heavy cannonading . . . Suppose between Sheridan and Early"(General Phil Sheridan now in command of the Federal Forces replacing Hunter)

1864/8/22; Cather reported on the Battle of Berryville

1864/8/26; F.A.C.'s company and three others of the 1st West Virginia battled with F.H. Lee's cavalry at Williamsport, denied the rebels entry to the town

1864/9/2; In cavalry charge south of Martinsburg, Cather reported large number of Confederate property and prisoners captured

1864/9/3; Rebels attacked and repulsed at Bunker Hill, Cather's horse killed by artillery shell

1864/9/4-8; F.A.C.'s company involved with Rebel cavalry in several fights, he recorded "Averill [Averell] drunk" several times

1864/9/19; Cather gave report of the "complete victory for the US troops" at the Battle of Winchester, including his company's part.

1864/9/20; After defeat, Early fortified his command at Fisher's Hill

1864/9/22-23; Battle of Fisher's Hill, a Federal victory, Sheridan orders were to pursue the enemy "with all possible speed" up the Valley

1864/9/24; Sheridan removed Averell from command of Cather's division, Colonel Powell took over division

1864/9/27; Cavalry fight near Port Republic, Custer took command of the division

1864/9/29; F.A.C. received orders to remove and collect "all forage and subsistence everywhere in the pathway of the division"; also ordered to burn barns

1864/9/30; Custer given another command, Colonel Powell back in charge

1864/10/1; F.A.C. recorded, "Burn and destroy everything as we go except dwelling houses", Mosby captured and hung four federal soldiers

1864/10/3; Entry reads, "nothing of importance. . . except the shooting of one or two N.Y. Vedettas"

1864/10/5; Raid to Sperryville, forces moved toward Culpepper

1864/10/6; On the Rapidan River, raid and destroyed railroad bridge; return to command in the Valley, Cather described this as " very hazardous "

1864/10/7-10; Column at Front Royal

1864/10/11; On guard near Cedar Creek

1864/10/12; Cather heard fighting near Cedar Creek from his post,

1864/10/14-18; F.A.C. at Front Royal in command of his squadron, Company I and K, on picket duty

1864/10/19; Described the Union victory at Cedar Creek and counts of captured property

1864/10/20; F.A.C. went to Winchester needed medical treatment for his hand

1864/10/22-26; Returned to duty, US troops engaged the Rebels in their "well entrenched" positions near Milford, Federals pulled back to Front Royal

1864/10/27-28; Cather's squadron had drawn picket duty, while there was "excitement in vicinity of the camp" caused by reports of Mosby's command in the area, "making scouting interesting"; Cather comments, "Much dissatisfaction among men and officers opposed to General Powell's retaliatory orders to hang prisoners"

1864/10/28-11/3; F.A.C. fought illness again

1864/11/4; Detached to go to Millford, ran into Rebel pickets

1864/11/7-16; F.A.C. in hospital

1864/11/17; Left hospital, assigned AAAG (Acting Assistant Adjutant General) of 2nd Brigade

1864/11/22; Engaged Early's army at Rude's Hill

1864/11/24; Thanksgiving Day and New York City supplied the dinners

1864/11/28-30; First Cavalry Division under command of General Devon, Colonel Capehart commanding 2nd Brigade, F.A.C. as Acting Assistant Adjutant General

1864/12/17; Cather reported the 14th Cavalry attacked by Mosby, suffered heavy losses

1864/12/19; Received 15 day leave, went home

1864/12/20-26; Visited family, friends and Helen Mallonee

Volume 6

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/232241

Unit Date 1865

Scope and Contents

There are 2 items stored in the pockets of Volume 6:

1. Name card, hand written, side one, "F.A. Cather"; side two, "Hattie E. Massey, Bellingham, Mass"
2. Special Order Number 4, January 10, 1862, Wheeling, Assigning Lieutenant F.A. Cather for Volunteer Recruiting Service in Clarksburg, Virginia

Index to Volume 6:

1865/1/6; Returns to duty at Winchester as Acting Assistant Adjutant General, 2nd Cavalry Division, 2nd Cavalry West Virginia

1865/2/26; Commented on the capture of several Carolina forts and cities

1865/2/27; F.A.C.'s brigade moved out to Rue's Run, 1st and 3rd Division's under Custer, Cather's Brigade, 3rd Brigade, 3rd Cavalry Division

1865/3/1-2; Union Cavalry charged near Mt Crawford and battle at Waynesboro, heavy Rebel losses described

1865/3/3; Reached Charlottesville, burned railroad depots along the way; F.A.C and Captain Burleigh with six men flanked a Rebel scouting party

1865/3/4-6; Continued destruction of railroads, bridges and depots in the Piedmont; also captured the 23th Virginia Cavalry Battle flag

1865/3/8-9; Returned to division, destroyed the James River Canal

1865/3/12; Almost captured General Early at Thomson's Cross Roads

1865/3/13; F.A.C. and company ordered to burn tobacco factory and warehouses near Fredrick Hall, estimated worth, \$200,000

1865/3/14-16; Destruction continued as army marched east

1865/3/18-27; Sheridan's command marched through several historic areas and plantations in the Tidewater of Virginia; Cather commented on the sights, including the battle torn land and the "Immense earthworks all over this country"

1865/3/29-30; Marched around Grant's left, advanced through heavy rain and mud to Dinwiddie Court House

1865/3/31; Battle ensued at Dinwiddie Court House against 3rd Rebel Cavalry, Johnson and Pickett's Infantry, heavy losses

1865/4/1; Battle of Five Forks, major Federal victory, F.A.C. listed casualties and captured arms and

equipment

1865/4/2; Cather gave detailed account of the battle where 3rd West Virginia Cavalry charged and drove Rebel Cavalry near Ford's Station, "overtook the Rebels at Namozine Creek"; Lieutenant General A.P. Hill killed, depot destroyed with huge amount of Rebel supplies

1865/4/3; Cather reported with details, "Rebel's evacuated their positions last night" (at Petersburg), Federal Cavalry pursued and battle erupted near Winticomack Creek, F.A.C. described it as a "terrible fight"

1865/4/6; Battle at Saylor's Creek, 3rd Federal Cavalry charged the enemy's work; several Confederate officers captured including Generals Custis Lee, Richard Ewell and Joseph Kershaw

1865/4/7; Federal army marched towards Prince Edward Court House, three Federal corps "directly in Lee's rear", Cather described movements of Lee and Grant's armies

1865/4/8; Federal Cavalry met General Longstreet at Appomattox Station, "an engagement of the most desperate character . . . ensued"; that night, F.A.C. described his corps' position as "immediately in front of Lee's Army"

1865/4/9; Longstreet sent a flag of truce through the lines, asked Custer for a suspension of hostilities until Generals Grant and Lee agree to terms; Cather observed during the suspension, " the armies mingle and talk. . . . as friends"; Lee surrendered

1865/4/10; F.A.C. rode through Rebel army, saw many old acquaintances

1865/4/11; Federal army marched, "gay and happy", passed through Prince Edward Court House where white flags were, " floating from every house. . . "

1865/4/13-17; F.A.C. assigned as Acting Assistant Adjutant General to Lieutenant Colonel Charles Capehart and the 3rd Brigade, 3rd Division; General Custer now in command of Division

1865/4/18-19; Marched to Petersburg, F.A.C. "viewed" the destruction of the bombardment

1865/4/29; Cather reported the news of Johnson's surrender to Sherman

1865/5/5; Spent pleasant evening at General Custer's Headquarters

1865/5/8; F.A.C. promoted to Captain of the 1st West Virginia Veterans Cavalry

1865/5/9; Cather recorded his observations of Richmond including the number of "Negros" and "of the 1000's seen, not one in a 1000 were of pure African blood, all had more or less white blood in them"

1865/5/15; After Federal army marched over the Manassas Battlefield, enroute to Washington, F.A.C. recorded a poignant observation, " The scenes of today will be ever prominent in the history of the rebellion, as the scenes of the early part of the war where McDowell, McClellan and Pope commanded"

1865/5/16-20; Encamped outside Washington DC

1865/5/23; In Washington DC, the Review of the Grand Army of the Republic by President Johnson and Lieutenant General Grant, among other national and international officials; Captain Cather's Cavalry Division was first in the line of march to pass in review, Cather described the scene as "...the grandest thing of the kind ever known"

1865/5/24; Cather witnessed Sherman's Army passing in review down Pennsylvania Ave.

1865/5/25; F.A.C. promoted to AAG (Assistant Adjutant General) of the 3rd Cavalry Division under General Capehart

1865/5/29; Encamped outside of Alexandria

1865/6/4; Last diary entry; "Quite a riot in camp. . . The bummers clean out the Corps' purveyor & Brigade purveyor... "

Manuscript Copy of Volumes 5 and 6, Transcribed by Thomas H. Cather

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/232242

Unit Date 1904

Addendum of 2011/10/28

Unit ID [Archival Resource Key](#)

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/232244

Unit Date 1864-1960

Extent 0.08 Linear Feet1 in. (7 folders; 1 rolled chart)

Scope and Contents

Addendum includes:

Two copies of images of Fabricius A. Cather, both scanned from original photographs: 1.) portrait of Cather in dress uniform as a Union Officer during the war, ca. 1864; 2.) portrait of Cather in civilian clothes, ca. 1868. These can be found on West Virginia History OnView.

Two copies of Cather's military service papers: 1.) commission as a major in U. S. Army and 2.) discharge from the army.

Photocopies of Cather's 1873 Kansas Land Grant, and information regarding Cather family burial plots in Kansas.

Information documenting Cather family history and genealogical charts.