

John Castelli Rathbone, Colonel, Civil War Letter and Parole Pledge, 1862 A&M 3781

John Castelli Rathbone, Colonel, Civil War Letter and Parole Pledge

1862



Title Statement

John Castelli Rathbone, Colonel, Civil War Letter and Parole Pledge, 1862 A&M 3781

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>



2011/05/25

Profile Description

Creation: This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2026-06-18 13:23:27 -0400.

Language Usage: English

Descriptive Rules: Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

A&M 3781

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

/repositories/2/resources/2231

Unit Date

1862

Language

English

Abstract

Single leaf with two documents on front and back (recto and verso) respectively. On one side is an apparently unsent letter authored by Colonel John Castelli Rathbone, 11th West Virginia Volunteer Infantry, from Spencer (West) Virginia to the commanding officer at Ravenswood, (West) Virginia, dated 2 September 1862. Rathbone urgently requests reinforcements against an expected attack by Confederate cavalry. The verso is a "true copy" of the parole pledge signed by Rathbone and other members of his unit after their surrender to Confederate General Albert G. Jenkins, dated 2 September 1862. Rathbone's unit was captured during Jenkins' Raid on western Virginia. See historical note for further information concerning Colonel Rathbone.

Creator

Rathbone, John Castelli

Extent

0.01 Linear Feet Summary: 2 pages (1 folder)

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], John Castelli Rathbone, Colonel, Civil War Letter and Parole Pledge, A&M 3781, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, West Virginia.

Biographical / Historical

John Castelli Rathbone, or "Cass Rathbone" as he was better known, joined the 11th West Virginia Volunteer Infantry 29 October 1861. He was promoted to the rank of colonel 15 February 1862. His troops, lacking sufficient arms and other supplies, were attacked by Confederate General Albert G. Jenkins and his troops at Spencer, (West) Virginia on 2 September 1862. Rathbone was compelled to surrender to Jenkins and he and his troops were taken prisoner. Rathbone was paroled later that year.

Rathbone was dismissed from the service 7 January 1863 for cowardly conduct. Rathbone's dismissal is remarkable, as it was done without a court martial or even an explication of the charges against him. His dismissal was eventually revoked by President Andrew Johnson on 18 May 1866. However, Rathbone's reputation never recovered.

Before joining the Union army Rathbone had been the founder and operator of the oil fields at Burning Springs, (West) Virginia. He argued persistently for the importance of the oil fields, but was largely ignored by his superiors. Burning Springs was destroyed on 9 May 1863 by Confederate Brigadier General William E. Jones.

Keywords

Roane County (W. Va.)

Civil War -- Jenkins, Albert G. Brigade

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Prisoners and prisons

Civil War - raids and raiders.

Civil War - Union soldiers - West Virginia.

Civil War - West Virginia 11th Infantry.

Civil War - West Virginia.

Civil War - WV 11th. Inf.

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865
Jenkins, Albert Gallatin, 1830-1864
Rathbone, John Castelli