

# Blain, Daniel Papers

Daniel Blain Papers

1864-1870



## Title Statement

Blain, Daniel Papers Daniel Blain Papers, 1864-1870 Ms.1990.002

**Author:** John M. Jackson

## Publication Statement

**Publisher:** Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Special Collections and University Archives, University Libraries (0434)  
560 Drillfield Drive  
Newman Library, Virginia Tech  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061  
Business Number: 540-231-6308  
specref@vt.edu  
URL: <http://spec.lib.vt.edu>



2022 (CC0 1.0)

## Profile Description

**Creation:** This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on 2023-08-07 13:38:53 -0400.

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

**Descriptive Rules:** Describing Archives: A Content Standard

## Revision Description

<b>2020-09-08</b>	Finding aid notes updated to new department standards. juliags
<b>2021-03-08</b>	LM Rozema added missing notes for an unprocessed collection, added FA title and filing titles, added FA date from EAD, and added component with instances previously attached to collection level.

## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

Ms.1990.002

### Unit Date

1864-1870

### Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

### Abstract

Four wartime letters and a post-war diary of Daniel Blain, a Confederate soldier in the 1st Rockbridge Artillery during the American Civil War and later a Presbyterian minister in Rockbridge County, Virginia.

### Creator

Blain, Daniel

**Extent**

0.1 Cubic Feet 1 folder

**Repository**

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

## Administrative Information

**Conditions Governing Access**

The collection is open for research.

**Conditions Governing Reproduction and Use**

The copyright status of this collection is unknown. Copyright restrictions may apply. Contact Special Collections and University Archives for assistance in determining the use of these materials.

Reproduction or digitization of materials for personal or research use can be requested using our reproduction/digitization form: <http://bit.ly/scuareproduction>. Reproduction or digitization of materials for publication or exhibit use can be requested using our publication/exhibition form: <http://bit.ly/scuapublication>. Please contact Special Collections and University Archives ([specref@vt.edu](mailto:specref@vt.edu) or 540-231-6308) if you need assistance with forms or to submit a completed form.

**Source of Acquisition**

The Daniel Blain Papers were purchased by Special Collections and University Archives in four separate accessions in 1990.

**Processing Information**

The processing and description of the Daniel Blain Papers commenced and was completed in August 2022.

**Preferred Citation**

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Daniel Blain Papers, Ms1990-002, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

## Biographical Note

Daniel Blain, son of Rev. Samuel W. and Susan Isham Harrison Blain, was born in Cumberland County, Virginia on November 20, 1838. After graduating with a bachelor's degree from Washington College (now Washington and Lee University) in 1858, Blain taught at Potomac Academy in Romney, (West) Virginia and attended Union Theological Seminary. Early in the Civil War, he joined the Confederate Army, enlisting in the 1st Rockbridge Artillery at Harpers Ferry on May 27, 1861. Wounded at the Battle of Bull Run, Blain was detailed for duty in the ordnance office at Williamsburg and on the staffs of generals Magruder and Pendleton from September 1, 1861 to December 23, 1863; then served in the Ordnance Department of the 1st Virginia Artillery until December 31, 1864; and surrendered at Appomattox as ordnance sergeant and clerk of the Rockbridge Artillery. Returning to Union Seminary following the war, Blain graduated in 1866. The following year, he married Mary Louisa Mercer (1839-1916); the couple would have six children. Beginning in 1866, Blain served for four years as minister at Collierstown (Rockbridge County), then 18 years at Christiansburg, followed by short stints as minister of Williamsburg and York River Presbyterian Church and principal of Kenmore High School (Amherst, Virginia). In 1890, Blain became principal of Cove Academy and minister of the Cove and Riverside churches (Albermarle County), and he continued to serve in these positions until 1905. Daniel Blain died at Covesville on October 4, 1906, and was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery, Lexington.

## Scope and Content

This collection contains four wartime letters written by Daniel Blain, a Confederate soldier in the 1st Rockbridge Artillery during the American Civil War, and a post-war diary maintained by Blain while serving as a Presbyterian minister in Virginia.

The letters, all addressed to "My Precious Loulie" (presumably Mary Louise Mercer, Blain's future wife), were written from July to September, 1864, from camps near Petersburg, Virginia. In the first letter, dated July 5, 1864, Blain writes exclusively and at length of having attended the deathbed of "Mr. Hoge" (probably Rev. William James Hoge, who died that same day and is buried in Richmond). On August 8, Blain writes on religious matters, shares his low opinion of--and gossip about--a minister named Dr. Miller, and generally discusses war news and army rations. In a cross-hatched letter dated August 29, Blain focuses largely on personal matters but briefly mentions the shelling of Petersburg. Blain's letter of September 18 also relates largely to personal matters, responding melodramatically to Loulie's relationship with a local widower and the prospects of Loulie going to work. Blain briefly describes conditions in Richmond.

Blain's diary contains daily entries in which he briefly records his activities, particularly preparing and delivering sermons and reading. He also documents his local travels, visits with acquaintances, attendance at temperance meetings, garden work and household and leisure activities, and the day's weather conditions. Elsewhere, Blain mentions his introduction of an acquaintance to Robert E. Lee in Lexington, the stillborn birth of his son, and the impeachment trial of Andrew Johnson. Although the diary is dated 1868, it contains entries for January 1869 and January 1870 as well. Following the diary are a few pages documenting Blain's personal cash accounts for early 1868.

## Keywords

Local/Regional History and Appalachian South  
Rockbridge County (Va.)  
Petersburg (Va.) -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865  
United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865  
Civil War

## Rights Statement for Archival Description

The guide to the Daniel Blain Papers by Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, is licensed under a CC0 (<https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/public-domain/cc0/>).

## Description of Subordinate Components

### Papers

**Unit Date** 1864-1870

**folder** 1