

Aylett, William Roane, Letters

William Roane Aylett Letters

1852-1887, n.d.



Title Statement

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.1992.033

Unit Date

1852-1887, n.d.

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

The collection contains seven letters written to William Roane Aylett between 1852 and 1887, as well as five undated letters and four envelopes. The collection includes letters from family and friends, as well as business correspondence.

Creator

Aylett, William Roane, 1833-1900

Extent

0.1 Cubic Feet 1 folder

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open to research.

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Source of Acquisition

The William Roane Aylett Letters were purchased by Special Collections in 1992.

Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the William Roane Aylett Letters commenced and was completed in 1992. Additional description was completed in May 2009.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], William Roane Aylett Letters, Ms1992-033, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

William Roane Aylett was born in May 1833 to Colonel Philip and Judith Page (Waller) Aylett on the family plantation, Montville, in King William County, Virginia. His paternal great-grandfathers were influential Revolutionary War figures Patrick Henry and William Aylett. Aylett was the second of three sons and one of seven children. His early education consisted of private tutors and attending the Rumford Academy. He went to college at the University of Virginia, from which he graduated with degrees in French language and literature and in moral philosophy in 1854. He was admitted to the bar in 1854 and began practicing law privately. His reputation had spread throughout a number of Virginia counties by 1860.

In 1860, Aylett married Alice R. Brockenborough (1838-1985). Between 1861 and 1880, they had twelve children, seven of whom lived past infancy: Sarah (Sallie) (b. 1861), Martha (Pattie) Waller (b. 1862), twins, names unknown (1866?-1869?), Philip (b. 1867), Alice Page (b. 1868), Patrick Henry (1870?-1871?), William Roane (b. 1871), Elizabeth (Bessie) (1873-1948), Patrick Henry (1876-1943), Eugenia (1878?-1879?), and Moore Brockenborough (1880?-1881?).

In December of 1861, he helped organize the Confederate 53rd Regiment, Virginia Infantry, and was elected as captain. He was quickly promoted through the ranks, eventually becoming a colonel in 1863. He continued service with the regiment after being wounded at Gettysburg. He attempted to resign in 1864, disappointed at not being promoted to General, despite shining recommendations, but was denied. At Saylor's Creek, he was captured on April 6, 1865 and was later paroled from Johnson's Island, Ohio, on July 15, 1865. He returned to his home and to the practice of law, rebuilding his business and the ruined family plantation. From 1870-1886, he was a Commonwealth's Attorney. Aylett died in at Montville, King William County, Virginia, in August 1900.

For additional information:

Kneebone, John T., and Sara B. Bearss. *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*. Richmond: Library of Virginia, 1998.

Tyler, Lyon Gardiner. *Encyclopedia of Virginia Biography, Under the Editorial Supervision of Lyon Gardiner Tyler*. New York: Lewis Historical Pub. Co, 1915.

Scope and Content

The collection contains seven letters written to William Roane Aylett between 1852-1887, as well as five undated letters and four envelopes. The collection includes letters from family and friends, as well as business correspondence. Although the letters span the American Civil War-era, there is no war-time correspondence in this collection. Most of the letters are from the 1850s.

Family correspondents include Aylett's mother, his brother, Patrick, his sister, Rosalie, and his cousin, Margaret, mostly containing news about other family members. There are two letters from his friend, James

(Jack) Alexander, mostly explaining why he has not written to Aylett lately, and one from R. Hawy(?), explaining his inability to attend an upcoming party. Business correspondence includes a request for Aylett's counsel by George Taylor; a request for a copy of arguments Aylett made relating to the Thomas Cluverius murder case (1885) by Dr. John Finchcomb(?); and an anonymous note (that apparently accompanied a picture) by someone unhappy with Aylett's law practice.

Related Archival Materials

For other Virginia institutions with Aylett Family Collections, see:

Philipp Aylett Records, 1813-1871. Accession 29438, Business records collection, The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

MSS 15978, William R. Aylett letter, Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Papers of the Aylett Family, Accession #110, Special Collections Dept., University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va.

Virginia Museum of History & Culture's Research Library, Richmond, Virginia.

Keywords

Correspondence
Virginia

Rights Statement for Archival Description

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Arrangement

The collection is arranged chronologically.

Description of Subordinate Components

Letters and envelopes

Unit Date 1852-1887, n.d.

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