

# Moss, William Stephen, Collection

William Stephen Moss Collection

1863-1864



## Title Statement

Moss, William Stephen, Collection William Stephen Moss Collection, 1863-1864 Ms.2008.019

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

Ms.2008.019

### Unit Date

1863-1864

### Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

### Abstract

The collecon consists of papers centering on William Stephen Moss, a Confederate prisoner of war during the American Civil War. Includes an identification card, letters from Moss to his mother, a biography written by his son, and a photograph of Moss.

### Creator

Moss, William S., 1839-1924

### Extent

0.2 Cubic Feet 1 box

### Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

# Administrative Information

## Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

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## Source of Acquisition

The William Stephen Moss Collection was purchased by Special Collections in 2004.

## Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the William Stephen Moss Collection commenced in March 2008 and was completed in April 2008.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], William Stephen Moss Collection, Ms2008-019, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

# Biographical Note

Born 12 October 1839 in Buckingham County, Virginia, William Stephen Moss became a member of the Confederate Army during the American Civil War. Moss served in the 4th Virginia Cavalry, Company B from Chesterfield, Virginia. Captured at Germana Ford on 19 September 1863 when scouting the Union Army, Moss was brought to Washington as a prisoner of war. Moss was quickly transferred to "Point Lookout" in Maryland. On 16 August 1864, Moss was again transferred to Elmira Prison in New York—a prison with a reputation for its unhealthy conditions and high rates of scurvy. On one occasion, as related in the biography of Moss written by his son, Moss attempted to escape by tunneling out of prison with common utensils; but, guards thwarted the plot. After the war, Moss opened a general store with his brother (James Knox Polk Moss) and married Cora A. Leadbetter. William Stephen Moss died in 1924.

Biographical information was obtained largely from the biography of Moss found within the collection.

# Scope and Content

The William Stephen Moss Collection includes information on the conditions of Northern prisons during the American Civil War and Moss's personal life. Letters from Washington, D.C.; Point Lookout, Maryland; and Elmira, New York stem from Moss's capture at the Germana Ford in 1863. One letter predates Moss's capture. Specifically, in these letters Moss discusses his desire for a prisoner exchange, the disinterest of authorities in prisoners, endemic sickness, and the tradability of tobacco for stamps. Many original POW covers (envelopes) are included and are marked with signed approval and original postage. Also in the collection is a biography written by Moss's son, William D. Moss, and a hand-tinted photograph of an elderly Moss with a hunting dog lounging near a tree.

# Keywords

Civil War

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865

# Rights Statement for Archival Description

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

# Arrangement

The collection is arranged by material type. Letters are arranged chronologically.

## Description of Subordinate Components

### **William Stephen Moss's identification card**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**box** 1

### **Letter from Culpepper, Virginia**

**Unit Date** 24 March 1863

**box** 1

### **Letter from Washington, D.C.**

**Unit Date** 22 September 1863

**box** 1

### **Letter from Point Lookout, Maryland**

**Unit Date** 1 October 1863

**box** 1

### **Letter from Point Lookout, Maryland**

**Unit Date** 21 April 1864

**box** 1

### **Letter from Elmira, New York**

**Unit Date** 5 September 1864

**box** 1

### **Letter from Elmira, New York**

**Unit Date** 26 October 1864

**box** 1

### **Letter from Elmira, New York**

**Unit Date** 2 November 1864

**box** 1

### **"Biography of Wm Stephen Moss: Christian, Citizen, Soldier, Business Leader and Father" by William D. Moss**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**box** 1

### **Hand tinted photograph of William S. Moss and hunting dog**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**box** 1