

A Guide to the Elliott Guthrie Fishburne Papers, circa 1880s SC 0247

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circa 1880s



Title Statement

A Guide to the Elliott Guthrie Fishburne Papers, circa 1880s SC 0247

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SC 0247

Unit Date

circa 1880s

Language

English .

Abstract

The Elliott Guthrie Fishburne Papers consist of one letter (1886) from Fishburne to H.B. McClellan, and one undated memoir (ca. 1880s) describing the 1st Virginia Cavalry at the battle of Gettysburg on July 3, 1863.

Extent

0.08 cubic feet 2 folders

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection open to research. Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection. Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the James Madison University Special Collections Library to use this collection.

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

James Madison University Special Collections acquired these papers from an eBay auction in August 2017.

Preferred Citation

[identification of item], [box #, folder #], Elliott Guthrie Fishburne Papers, circa 1880s, SC 0247, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

Bio/Historical Note

Elliott Guthrie Fishburne (also known as "Fish" or "Ellie") was born September 3, 1842 in Waynesboro, Virginia to Daniel and Margaret L. Guthrie Fishburne. He was married to Ella Letitia Vanlear Fishburne and they had three children. During the American Civil War he fought for the Confederacy in Company E of the 1st Virginia Cavalry, which fought in the battle of Gettysburg on July 3, 1863. According to published biographical information on Fishburne, he served as 3rd Sergeant for his regiment. After the war, Fishburne opened his own general merchandise store, "Fishburne's Cheap Cash and Trade Store" in Millboro Springs, Virginia. Shortly thereafter, he moved the business to its established location on Main Street in downtown Waynesboro, where it operated primarily as a drugstore until it was demolished in 1979. Fishburne died in Waynesboro on February 25, 1906. James Abbott Fishburne (1856-1923), Fishburne's brother, founded the Fishburne Military School in Waynesboro in 1879.

Scope and Content

The collection consists of two handwritten documents by E.G. Fishburne: one memoir and one letter. The letter, dated April 1, 1886, is six pages and addressed to "Maj. H.B. McClellan," a fellow Confederate veteran who served as officer and adjutant general for Company G, 3rd Virginia Cavalry. As requested, Fishburne relates his recollection of the regiment's experience during the battle of Gettysburg. In addition, he offers both praise and corrections for McClellan's "book." Fishburne writes, "You ask if I have discovered any mistakes? So I will name or one or two as corrections . . . I like your book very much - read it with much interest. Have sold 20 copies only - I suppose they have sold many more in Staunton." Although Fishburne does not give the book title, he is presumably referring to McClellan's *The Life and Campaigns of Major-General J.E.B. Stuart*, published in 1885.

The undated memoir is two pages and contains the title "The 1st VA Cavalry at Gettysburg. July 3, 1863" written at the top of the document. Given the memoir's similarities to the letter in terms of stationery, penmanship, and condition, the memoir was likely written in the 1880s. As the title suggests, the document contains Fishburne's first-hand account of actions taken by Company E of the 1st Virginia Cavalry during the battle of Gettysburg on July 3, 1863. Highlights include:

"Very soon we were countermarched to take up another position when, just about the time the regiment got straightened out, the enemy was reported as charging, and overpowering our sharpshooters."

"Just at this very critical point, while the enemy were overriding our dismounted men, the 1st VA having been countermarched, was standing in column of fours with its rear to the line of battle; the command was given us. By fours, right about wheel! Forward! Charge! and away we went!"

"I rode with General [J. E. B.] Stuart a short distance while falling back, and got several shots at the pursuing enemy on our right & rear, but they were soon checked."

Keywords

Soldiers -- Virginia -- Correspondence

Gettysburg, Battle of, Gettysburg, Pa., 1863

Virginia -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865 -- Correspondence

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

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

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

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

Letters (correspondence)

Memoirs

Confederate States of America. Army. Virginia Cavalry Regiment, 1st. Company E -- History

Other Formats Available

Partial document transcriptions from the seller are available upon request.

Bibliography

McClellan, H.B. *The Life and Campaigns of Major-General J.E.B. Stuart, commander of the cavalry of the army of northern Virginia*. Richmond: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1885. Wert, Jeffry D. *Cavalryman of the Lost Cause: A Biography of J.E.B. Stuart*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008. Williams, Richard G. Jr. *The Battle of Waynesboro*. Charleston: The History Press, 2014.

Arrangement

The two documents are arranged chronologically in two separate legal folders.

Description of Subordinate Components

E. G. Fishburne to H. B. McClellan

Unit Date 1886 April 1

Mixed Materials [1000886347] 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Memoir of 1st VA Cavalry at Gettysburg. July 3, 1863

Unit Date circa 1880s

Mixed Materials [1000886347] 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)