

A Guide to the Mollie Brady Collection, 1847-1893

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A Collection in the Thomas Balch Library M 084

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Descriptive Summary

Collection number

M 084

Language

English

Abstract

The collection consists primarily of the correspondence of Mollie Brady, much of which dates to the Civil War. Mollie received letters from her fiance and cousins who enlisted in Pennsylvania regiments and served much of the war in Virginia. The letters describe camp life, skirmishes, marches, and news of shared acquaintances. Transcriptions of the Civil War letters, made by a descendent of Susan Brady Kiel, are also included. Many of the envelopes used to mail the letters survived. An attempt to keep envelopes with the letters they contained has been made, though it was not always possible to determine which letters and envelopes belonged together. In those cases the envelopes have been filed separately. The collection also includes letters from family members before and after the Civil War and ephemera.

Creator

I. Ruth Cheronis, Lovettsville, VA

Repository

Thomas Balch Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection open for research.

Use Restrictions

No physical characteristics affect use of this material.

Acquisition Information

I. Ruth Cheronis, Lovettsville, VA

Processing Information

Elizabeth E. Preston, 8 March 2013

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Alternative Form Available

None.

Adjunct Descriptive Data

Related Material

Leesburg Civil War Collection, 1861-1865 (M 075), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA

Civil War Letter, Leesburg, VA (SC 0090), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

Bibliography

AncestryLibrary.com. US Census Records, Military Records (accessed 27 February 2013).

Cheronis, Ruth I. Interview with Elizabeth Preston, 25 October 2012.

FindAGrave.com (accessed 27 February 2013).

Skelly Book of Remembrance

Biographical Information

Mary "Mollie" Brady was born 18 May 1842 in Wilmore, Pennsylvania, and was the daughter of Dr. Charles H. Brady (1805-1879) and Margaret Skelly (1807-1896). She was called "Mollie" throughout her life. She spent her life in Cambria County, in the south central portion of Pennsylvania, in the townships of Summerhill and Wilmore. Mollie never married, though she was engaged to Martin Pringle, Jr. (1840-20 May 1864), who died from injuries sustained at the Battle of the Wilderness in Virginia. Mollie had several siblings, including Susan (1836-1866) and William (1839-1917). Susan married Morris Kiel (1832-1919) and had two children. Susan died in 1866 when her daughters were very young, and Mollie and her mother took on much of the work of rearing them. William worked for the West Penn Rail Road. Mollie lived with her parents until they died.

Mollie's mother Margaret came from a large family. Her father was Michael Skelly, Sr. (d. 1831), a Revolutionary War soldier and son of an Irish immigrant. Michael had seven children, at least five of whom survived to adulthood. Peggy maintained close relationships with her siblings, especially her brother Hugh Skelly (1796-c. 1855) and Michael Skelly, Jr. (1786-1817). Hugh and Michael also lived in Cambria County, and the children of the three siblings spent a great deal of time together growing up.

Many of Mollie's male cousins joined Pennsylvania regiments at the start of the Civil War and she maintained a lively correspondence with them while they were away at war. Michael A. Skelly (1843-1907), Michael Skelly, Jr.'s son, was a frequent correspondent, as were the sons of Hugh Skelly, James (b. 1833), John (b. 1835), Joseph (1836-1911), and David (b. 1839). Mollie also exchanged letters with her fiance, Martin Pringle, Jr., and her sister's husband Morris Kiel. Most of the letters were written from camps in Virginia.

Mollie lived in Wilmore until her death on 30 May 1898.

Scope and Content

The collection consists primarily of the correspondence of Mollie Brady, much of which dates to the Civil War. Mollie received letters from her fiance and cousins who enlisted in Pennsylvania regiments and served much of the war in Virginia. The letters describe camp life, skirmishes, marches, and news of shared acquaintances. Transcriptions of the Civil War letters, made by a descendent of Susan Brady Kiel, are also included. Many of the envelopes used to mail the letters survived. An attempt to keep envelopes with the letters they contained has been made, though it was not always possible to determine which letters and envelopes belonged together. In those cases the envelopes have been filed separately.

The collection also includes letters from family members before and after the Civil War. Ephemera consists of a facsimile of a Continental Line pay voucher from the American Revolution and published lyrics to "When This Cruel War is Over." There are two photographs included. The first is of Robert A. Burk, probably a cousin, who was "killed in action at New Market VA 15 May 1864." The other is of Morris Kiel, Susan Brady Kiel's husband. Both men are in uniform. Also included is some material from members of the Dimond family, who were related to the Skellys by marriage. There are school bonds for the Summerhill Township School District signed by Joseph A. Dimond (1794-1860) and Jesse H. Dimond (b. 1804), as well as teaching certificates for Jesse H. Dimond.

Arrangement

Chronological

Contents List

Box 1

Folder 1: Correspondence, n.d., 1847, 1851, 1858

Folder 2: Correspondence, n.d., 1861-April 1862

Folder 3: Correspondence, June 1862-November 1862

Folder 4: Correspondence, 1863

Folder 5: Correspondence, February 1864-June 1865

Folder 6: Correspondence, September 1865-1893

Folder 7: Envelopes

Folder 8: Ephemera

Folder 9: Photographs

Folder 10: Summerhill Township School District Bonds, 1854 and 1871

Folder 11: Teachers' Provisional Certificates (Jesse H. Dimond), 1863, 1866

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