

# George R. Head Collection 1814-1901, n.d.

George R. Head Collection

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A Collection in Thomas Balch Library M 0214, VC 0083, ART 0012, OMB 029

Thomas Balch Library

2017

1814-1901, n.d.

## History

**Processed by:** Laura Christiansen

## Title Statement

George R. Head Collection 1814-1901, n.d.

**Subtitle:**

**Collection:** M 0105, OMB 0024, VC 0072, ART 0008

**Author:** Laura Christiansen

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** Machine-readable finding aid created by Laura Christiansen, 8 November 2017

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## Descriptive Summary

### Collection number

M 0105, OMB 0024, VC 0072, ART 0008

### Language

English

### Abstract

The George R. Head collection consists of materials created or collected by Captain George R. Head (1822-1894) of Leesburg, Virginia. The collection includes family correspondence and papers, military correspondence and records, publications, currency and ephemera. The collection also contains artifacts including a canteen, haversack, holster, belt and buckles used by Head during the American Civil War. A 2005 inventory of documents, typed transcriptions of selected letters and documents in the collection, and research related to George R. Head's confederate military service accompanies the collection.

### Collector

Robert and Carol Johnson, Roseville, MN

### Physical Characteristics

4.5 cubic feet .

### Repository

Thomas Balch Library

## Administrative Information

## Access Restrictions

Collection open for research.

## Use Restrictions

Physical characteristics and conditions affect use of this material. Photocopying not permitted. Some materials may require special handling.

## Acquisition Information

Robert and Carol Johnson, Roseville, MN

## Processing Information

Laura Christiansen, 25 July 2016

## Preferred Citation

George R. Head Collection, 1814 - 1901 (M 0105), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

## Accruals

2014.0140, 2014.0166

## Adjunct Descriptive Data

## Related Material

Civil War Research Collection, 1859-1865 (SC 0095); Loudoun County Military Records (M 015); Preservation Society of Loudoun County Cemetery Committee Records, 1990 (M 006); Leesburg Civil War Collection, 1861-1865, (M 075); Town of Leesburg, Virginia Records, 1813- present; Clinton Hatcher Camp, Sons of Confederate Veterans Collection (M 025).

## Bibliography

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Virginia Ordnance Department, Records, 1861-1865. Accession 38943, State Records Collection, The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

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## Historical Information

George R. Head (1822-1894) was a prominent political, business, and military leader of Leesburg, Virginia. The son of George Head (1783-1870) and Mary Gover Head (1785-1823), he was one of six children from this marriage. After Head's mother's death in 1823, his father married Hannah J. Gover (1799-after 1870). Both Head and his father served in the 57th Regiment of the VA Militia. In 1848, Head married Sarah Virginia Gover (1823-before 1878), and the couple had six children, four who survived to adulthood: Ann 'Nannie' Head (1849- after 1880), William Head (1852 - 1892), Rosellar Head Johnson (1853 - 1885), and Susan Virginia Head (1855 - 1912). He was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Active in public life, Head served as a Justice of the Peace and as a member of the Leesburg Town Council beginning in 1858. He also

established himself in business as a whitesmith or tinsmith, producing a number of goods including guns. In March 1861, he placed an advertisement in *The Mirror* announcing that he had just received "a fine lot of Colt's Revolvers which will be sold at reduced prices."

Upon the occurrence of John Brown's raid of the government armory and arsenal at Harpers Ferry on 16 October 1861, Charles B. Tebbs, among many others in Loudoun County, participated in raising a volunteer company 'The Loudoun Guard' for the protection of the border. This company, ostensibly attached to the 57th Regiment (Loudoun County), Virginia Militia, was accepted into state service at Leesburg on 22 April 1861, under the command of Captain Tebbs. Head served as First Lieutenant. On 24 April 1861, the Loudoun Guard was ordered to proceed to Alexandria, Virginia, where it was officially mustered into service on 23 May 1861, by Major George W. Brent (1821-1872) as part of the newly organized 17th Regiment Virginia Infantry. The next day the Loudoun Guard was sent to Manassas Junction and nearby Camp Pickens, where Captain Tebbs remained in command of the Loudoun Guard until June when he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and reassigned to the 8th Virginia Regiment. On June 29, 1861, Head was appointed Captain of Company C of the 17th Virginia Infantry Regiment, one of ten companies in the newly formed unit.

As Captain, Head oversaw daily duty rosters, correspondence, and requisition records for Company C dating between 1861 and April 1862. He also managed payroll, funds, and supplies for the company. He was noted for his actions on 18 July 1861 at Blackburn's Ford just before the First Battle of Manassas. In his report of the action Colonel Montgomery D. Course noted "gallant conduct" of Head and four other officers "who were actively and fearlessly employed during the engagement" where "the fire was hottest." After this engagement the 17th Virginia was stationed at Camp Harrison near Fairfax Courthouse. The Regiment was reorganized at Yorktown, Virginia in April 1862 during the Siege of Yorktown. On 23 April 1862, Head narrowly avoided being struck by an exploding shell while on duty at Dam Number 4. There is no record of Head incurring an injury during this incident. On 28 April 1862, Head was re-elected Captain of Company C, but resigned his commission shortly after his election.

In September of 1862 he was recommended for an appointment to the Ordinance Department. Created by the General Assembly of Virginia on 25 January 1861, the Virginia Ordinance Department was leased to the Confederate Government and took charge of maintaining the Richmond Armory and manufacturing arms for the war effort. Head served the Ordinance Department in Lynchburg and at the Virginia Armory in Richmond until the end of the War. In January 1864 Head was sent to Lynchburg to investigate issues with the manufacture of "Williams Guns", a breech loading rapid fire canon first deployed by the Confederacy at the Battle of Seven Pines on 31 May 1862. Head confirmed the guns were defective.

Following the end of the Civil War, Head returned to Leesburg and established a business manufacturing stoves. He continued to be active in politics, serving as a Magistrate for the 8th District in 1868, as Mayor of Leesburg from 1869-1884 and as a Town Councilman for more than 40 years. Head was an active Democrat, and was Chairman of the Loudoun County Democratic Committee from 1892-1894. He was regularly nominated as a candidate for the House of Delegates, winning elections in 1879 and 1890. In 1885 and 1886 he was appointed to serve as Leesburg's Postmaster by President Grover Cleveland (1837-1908). Head was active in the Clinton Hatcher Camp of Confederate Veterans and in fraternal organizations. He was a Mason and was elected as a Grandmaster of the Oddfellows in 1869. His death was recorded in the 1 February 1894 edition of *The Mirror* with an obituary entitled "A Valuable Citizen Passes Away." Head is buried in Union Cemetery.

## Scope and Content

The George R. Head collection consists of materials created or collected by Captain George R. Head (1822-1894) of Leesburg, Virginia. The collection includes family correspondence and papers, military correspondence and records, publications, currency and ephemera. The collection also contains artifacts including a canteen, haversack, holster, belt and buckles used by Head during the American Civil War. A 2005 inventory of documents, typed transcriptions of selected letters and documents in the collection, and research related to George R. Head's confederate military service accompanies the collection.

Family correspondence and papers are arranged chronologically and date from 1847-1897. Correspondence includes letters to and from family members and from Head's fellow Odd Fellows and Masonic Lodge members. Of note are letters sent by Head to his wife Sarah Gover Head during June and July of 1862. Other Loudoun county correspondents include George Head's brother Reverend Nelson Head (1811 -1902), George W. Janney (1821-1873), and Edward Nichols (1847-1923). Family papers contain a handwritten funeral announcement for Lydia Head (fl. 1775 -1832), paternal grandmother of George R. Head and epitaphs drafted for his wife Sarah Virginia Gover and for her father, Samuel Gover, Jr. (1795-1875).

The bulk of the collection relates to Head's military service, first with the 57th Regiment, Virginia Militia, at the outset of the Civil War as 1st Lieutenant in the Loudoun Guard and later as Captain of Company C, of the Virginia 17th Infantry Regiment. Included are daily rosters, correspondence, and requisition records for the Company C dating between 1861 and April 1862 when Head resigned his commission. In September of 1862 he was recommended for an appointment to the Ordinance Department. Correspondence and records from

Head's Ordinance Department service are included in the collection. Letters relating to the Head's investigation of inherent problems with Williams Guns are of particular note. Other Civil War era materials include pamphlets, currency, and other ephemera such as postal covers. Artifacts in the collection also relate to Head's military service. Included are a canteen, haversack, holster, belt, belt buckles, and five buttons used or worn by Head during the American Civil War. The canteen is particularly unique. The design is similar to other tin drum canteens issued by the Confederacy in 1861; however, Head's canteen features a hand-drawn image of the seal of Virginia including the motto Sic Semper Tyrannis and the figures of Virtus and Tyrannus. Two small leather coin purses are also in the collection.

## Contents List

### M 0105

#### Box 1

**Folder 1: Transcriptions of selected letters and documents**

**Folder 2: Research, George R. Head Military Records**

**Folder 3: Correspondence,**  
**Unit Date** 1847-1857

**Folder 4: Correspondence,**  
**Unit Date** 1862-1864

**Folder 5: Correspondence,**  
**Unit Date** 1868-1897, n.d.

**Folder 6: Funeral announcement Lydia Head,**  
**Unit Date** 26 April 1832

**Folder 7: Draft epitaphs, Samuel and Sarah Gover,**  
**Unit Date** after 1878

**Folder 8: Pocket notebook [enclosures removed],**  
**Unit Date** 1868-1869

**Folder 9: Enclosures removed from pocket notebook,**  
**Unit Date** 1868-1869

**Folder 10: Receipts,**  
**Unit Date** 1824-1874

**Folder 11: Insurance Papers,**  
**Unit Date** 1861-1873

**Folder 12: Handwritten Music and Lyrics,**  
**Unit Date** 1846, 1865

**Folder 13: "Military Volunteer Company" roster,**  
**Unit Date** n.d.

**Folder 14: Morning Report, 57th Regiment, Virginia Militia,**  
**Unit Date** 3 October 1814

**Folder 15: Correspondence, 57th Regiment, Virginia Militia,**  
Unit Date 1859

**Folder 16: Correspondence, Loudoun Guard,**  
Unit Date April-May, 1861, n.d.

**Folder 17: Clipping "The Right of the Virginia Volunteers to Vote at the Approaching Elections,"**  
Unit Date 1861

**Folder 18: Correspondence, 17th Virginia, Co. C,**  
Unit Date 1861

**Folder 19: Payroll and Commissary Records, 17th Virginia, Co. C,**  
Unit Date 1861-1862

**Folder 20: Monthly Reports, 17th Virginia Company C [See OMB 0024],**  
Unit Date 1861; September, November, December and 1862, January

**Folder 21: Muster Roll, 17th Virginia Company C, [See OMB 0024]**  
Unit Date 1861, June-September

**Folder 22: Muster Roll, 17th Virginia Company C, [See OMB 0024]**  
Unit Date 1861, August-March

**Folder 23: Muster Roll, 17th Virginia Company C, [See OMB 0024]**  
Unit Date 1861, November-December

**Folder 24: Muster Roll, 17th Virginia Company C, [See OMB 0024]**  
Unit Date 1862, February-April

**Folder 25: Muster Roll, 17th Virginia Company C, [See OMB 0024]**  
Unit Date n.d.

**Folder 26: Request for Payment for Service, 17th Virginia Company C, [See OMB 0024]**  
Unit Date 1 January to 1 April 1862

**Folder 27: Return, 17th Virginia Company C, [See OMB 0024]**  
Unit Date September 1861

**Folder 28: General Orders , issued to 1st Corps Army of the Potomac, 8 October 1861**  
Unit Date September 1861

**Folder 29: General Orders, #1, #2, and #16, issued to 17th Virginia Company C,**  
Unit Date 1862

**Folder 30: Acts of the General Assembly of Virginia for raising and enrolling troops to meet the Requisition on Virginia,**  
Unit Date February 1862

**Folder 31: Form 13, Provision Return [4 blank copies]**

**Folder 32: Notation of nearly being struck by a shell**

**Unit Date** 23 April 1862

**Folder 33: Correspondence, Ordinance Department, Virginia Armory**

**Unit Date** 1863-1864

**Folder 34: Monthly Operations Reports, Ordinance Department, Virginia Armory [See OMB 0024]**

**Unit Date** 1864; February-April, June, August-December and 1865; January-March

**Folder 35: Pass from Provost Marshall, Ordinance Department, Virginia Armory,**

**Unit Date** 7 April 1865

**Folder 36: Miscellaneous Notes, Ordinance Department, Virginia Armory,**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**Folder 37: On Field Fortifications, Fortresses, Attack and Defence of Houses and Villages Louis von Buckholtz [Pamphlet],**

**Unit Date** 1860

**Folder 38: On Infantry Camp Duty, Field Fortification and Coast Defence Louis von Buckholt and Selmar Siebert,[Pamphlet],**

**Unit Date** 1860

**Folder 39: Rules and Articles for the Government of the Army of Virginia [Pamphlet, 2 copies],**

**Unit Date** 1861

**Folder 40: Report of the Board of visitors of the Virginia Military Institute [Pamphlet],**

**Unit Date** 1864

**Folder 41: Hamlet, Henry L. Hinton, publisher.**

**Unit Date** 1866

**Folder 42: The Land We love. 1866. Charlotte, N.C.: Jas. P. Irwin & D.H. Hill. V.6, n. 2,**

**Unit Date** December 1868.

**Folder 43: Address to the Friends of the Piedmont & Potomac Railroad, Aldie, VA,**

**Unit Date** 8 December 1871

**Folder 44: Warrock's edition of Richardson's Virginia and North Carolina Almanack for the Year of Our Lord 1873,**

**Unit Date** 1873

**Folder 45: Mignon: Opera in Three Acts. Thomas, Ambroise, Jules Barbier, Michel Carre', and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Baltimore: Sun Printing Establishment,**

**Unit Date** December 1874

**Folder 46: "To the Women of the South" Ladies Memorial Association,**

**Unit Date** August 1875

**Folder 47: Offenbach, Jacques, Henri Chivot, and Alfred Duru. La Fille du Tambour-major: Opera Comique in Three Acts and Four Tableux. New York: Metropolitan Printing and Engraving Establishment,**

**Unit Date** 1880

**Folder 48: Strauss's Farewell Tour [Pamphlet],**

**Unit Date** 1890

**Box 2**

**Folder 1: Inaugural Souvenir, [Pamphlet]**

**Unit Date** 1901

**Folder 2: Ellsworth and his Zouaves, Temperance Union. [Pamphlet]**

**Unit Date** 1861

**Folder 3: Missionary Hymns! Micajah S. Meador,[Pamphlet]**

**Unit Date** 1869

**Folder 4: The Almost Christian His Character Described, and the Sin and Danger of His Condition. Henry A Boardman, New York: American Tract Society, [Pamphlet]**

**Unit Date** 1825

**Folder 5: The Hotel Brunswick, Boston, [Pamphlet]**

**Unit Date** c. 1872

**Folder 6: Clipping, Boston Weekly Magazine, n.d. [Partial page]**

**Folder 7: Currency, Virginia Treasury Notes, \$1 [60]**

**Unit Date** 21 July 1862

**Folder 8: Currency, Virginia Treasury Notes, \$5 [24]**

**Unit Date** 13 March 1862

**Folder 9: Currency, Virginia Treasury Notes, \$10 [21] ,**

**Unit Date** 15 October 1862

**Folder 10: Currency, Virginia Treasury Notes, \$20[56]**

**Unit Date** July-August 1862

**Folder 11: Currency, Confederate States of America Bank Notes, \$5, Richmond [10]**

**Unit Date** 17 February 1864

**Folder 12: Currency, Confederate States of America Bank Notes, \$10, Richmond [20]**

**Unit Date** 17 February 1864

**Folder 13: Currency, Confederate States of America Bank Notes, \$20, Richmond [7]**

**Unit Date** 17 February 1864

**Folder 14: Currency, Confederate States of America Bank Notes, \$50, Richmond [1]**

**Unit Date** 17 February 1864

**Folder 15: Currency, Confederate States of America Bank Notes, \$100, Richmond [3]**

**Unit Date** 17 February 1864

**Folder 16: Virginia Treasury Stock and Bond Certificates [See OMB 0024]**

**Unit Date** 1866-1870

**Folder 17: Envelopes, Loudoun Guard [4]**

**Unit Date** 1861

**Folder 18: Envelope, Ordinance Department of Virginia**

**Folder 19: Envelopes, Union Illustrated Covers [7]**

**Unit Date** 1861-1862

**Folder 20: Ephemera, Business and Trade Cards**

**Unit Date** 1869, 1881, n.d.

**Folder 21: Ephemera, General A.P. Hill and General Beauregard, Lithographs by E. Grehen, published by C. Lunden, Richmond [2]**

## **OMB 0024**

### **Box 1**

**Folder 1: Monthly Reports, 17th Virginia Company C,**

**Unit Date** 1861: September, November, December and 1862, January

**Folder 2: Muster Roll, 17th Virginia Company C**

**Unit Date** 1861, June-September

**Folder 3: Muster Roll, 17th Virginia Company C**

**Unit Date** 1861, August-March

**Folder 4: Muster Roll, 17th Virginia Company C**

**Unit Date** 1861, November-December

**Folder 5: Muster Roll, 17th Virginia Company C**

**Unit Date** 1862, February-April

**Folder 6: Muster Roll, 17th Virginia Company C**

**Unit Date** n.d.

**Folder 7: Request for Payment for Service, 17th Virginia Company C**

**Unit Date** , 1 January to 1 April 1862

**Folder 8: Return, 17th Virginia Company C**

**Unit Date** September 1861

**Folder 9: Virginia State Armory Monthly Operations Reports,**

**Unit Date** 1864; February-April, June, August-December and 1865; January-March

**Folder 10: Virginia Treasury Stock and Bond Certificates,**

**Unit Date** 1866-1870

**Folder 11: Broadside, "To the Public" Charles J. Faulkner,**

**Unit Date** 13 April 1866

**Folder 12: Broadside, "A Tribute of Respect!" Funeral of Robert E. Lee [2]**  
**Unit Date** , 15 October 1870

**Folder 13: Broadside, Richmond Theatre**  
**Unit Date** 13 April [no year]

**Folder 14: Broadside, "Grand & Interesting Panorama!" C.E. Pierce, Proprietor**  
**Unit Date** n.d.

**Folder 15: Newspaper, Baltimore Christian Advocate, V. 2, n. 10, pp 1-12**  
**Unit Date** 11 March 1871

**Folder 16: Newspaper, The Memphis Sunday Appeal, V. 31, N. 155, pp 1-4**  
**Unit Date** 21 May 1871

**Folder 17: Newspaper, The Journal of Industry, V. I, n. 2 [6]**  
**Unit Date** February 1873

**Folder 18: Newspaper, Alexandria Gazette, V. LXXXI n. 300, p 1-4**  
**Unit Date** 27 August 1880

## **Box 2**

**Folder 1: Newspaper, The Democratic Mirror, V. VII n. 10, p. 1-2**  
**Unit Date** 13 November 1861

**Folder 2: Newspaper, The Daily Richmond Enquirer, V. XXXIV, n. 253 p. 1-4.**  
**Unit Date** 25 November 1861

**Folder 3: Newspaper, Pomeroy's Democrat, V. 3, n. 17 p. 1-8**  
**Unit Date** 26 April 1871

**Folder 4: Newspaper, The Capital, Washington DC, V. II, n. 8, p. 1-2**  
**Unit Date** 28 April 1872

**Folder 4: Newspaper, The Evening Star, Washington DC, Part 2, pp 9-12.**  
**Unit Date** 18 January 1894,

## **ART 0008**

### **Box 1**

**Item 1: Canvas Haversack with leather shoulder straps, unique full over- flap secured leather strap and metal buckle closure**

### **Box 2**

**Item 1: Waist Belt of Leather with Round Cast Brass Virginia Militia Belt Buckle**

**Item 2: Civil War Regulation Revolver Holster of right hip butt forward design, with belt loop and a solid latch tab.**

### **Box 3**

**Item 1: Pattern of 1839 US Cartridge Box with two enclosed tin magazines**

Item 1: Pattern of 1855 US Cartridge Box with two crossed cut magazines missing an oval "US" plate that was part of the original issue information.

Item 2: Tin Drum Canteen with both faces flat, a short tine spout and three 1" strap loops. One face of canteen features Sic Semper Tyrannis emblem in enamel.

Item 3: Coin purse

Item 4: Coin purse

Item 5: 5 Three-piece 22 mm Virginia Militia Coat Buttons

Item 6: 2 Three-piece 15 mm Virginia Militia Cuff Buttons.

Item 7: Belt buckle plate inscribed "George R Head"

## **VC 0072**

### **Box 1**

Item 1: vc\_0072\_0001 Carte de Visite of George Head, inscribed "Yours Truly, Geo R Head"

Unit Date c. 1872