

A Guide to "Recollections of a Leslie's Special Artist" 1861

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1861

A Collection in The Special Collections Department 11219, 11219-a

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Descriptive Summary

Collection number

11219, 11219-a

Language

English

Physical Characteristics

There are five items.

Repository

Special Collections, University of Virginia Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

See the [University of Virginia Library's use policy](#).

Acquisition Information

Gift of Sue Rainey, Charlottesville, Va., 18 February 1997.

Preferred Citation

Francis H. Schell, Recollections of a Leslie's Special Artist in the Civil War, 1861, Accession #11219, Special Collections Dept., University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va.

Scope and Content Information

This collection consists of five items:

1. 20 page mss
2. 2 page partial transcription
3. 21 page typed trancription
4. 19 page edited transcription
5. 2 copies *Imprint: Journal of the American Historical Print Collectors Society*

This collection centers around the incomplete memoirs of Francis H. (Frank) Schell (1834-1909), a special war artist for *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, one of two illustrated national weekly newspapers published during the Civil War. These memoirs, edited by Sue Rainey, were published as Francis H. Schell, "Recollections of a Leslie's Special Artist in the Civil War: No. 1 Baltimore in 1861 Generals Butler and Banks and the Baffled Insurrectionists," *Imprint: Journal of the American Historical Print Collectors Society* vol. 23, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 18-26. A copy of this article is included with the collection.

Schell describes the response in New York City to the Confederate bombardment of Fort Sumter, his hiring by Frank Leslie (1834-1900), his journey to Baltimore via Annapolis, the mood of the city and its Confederate sentiment, its occupation by Massachusetts militia under the command of General Benjamin F. Butler and the seizure of arms and ammunition secreted by secessionists, a parade by firemen enlisting in a Union regiment, the arrest of police marshal George P. Kane and the board of police commissioners, the subsequent furor over presidential denial of habeas corpus, the arrival of additional Union troops, and comments by and about Butler.

Schell arrived in the city a month after the Baltimore Riots (April 19, 1861) which had occurred because of the arrival by rail of the 6th Massachusetts Militia en route to defend Washington, D.C. As the troops marched across town to a connecting train, an anti-Unionist mob attacked them; the 6th responded with gunfire which lead to the deaths of four soldiers and twelve civilians as the troops boarded their train. A month later (May 13, 1861), General Butler returned to Baltimore with the 6th Massachusetts and the city remained under military occupation for the remainder of the war. Schell's memoir records the aura of tenseness in the city and feelings of patriotism between Unionists and outrage among Confederate sympathizers. Schell claimed the timely arrival of Butler's 8th Massachusetts militia regiment had thwarted the capture or burning of the USS *Constitution* (Old Ironsides) by secessionists. He also praised the Sunday worship services and singing by the 19th Pennsylvania Infantry.

Schell recounts conversations with, describes the activities of or makes reference to several prominent persons: Edmund Ruffin (1794-1865), a Virginia secessionist and agriculturalist; William H. Seward (1801-1872), Secretary of State; Colonel (later brigadier general) Calvin Edward Pratt (1828-1896), commander of the 20th ("the Ulster County Regiment") and 31st New York militias; regiments; Brigadier General John E. Wool (1784- 1869); Brigadier General Benjamin F. Butler (1818-1893), commander of the Department of Annapolis (including Baltimore); General Winfield Scott (1786-1866); Simon Cameron (1799-1889), Secretary

of War; Brigadier General George Cadwalader (1806-1879), Butler's successor as commander of the Department of Annapolis; Major General Nathaniel P. Banks (1816- 1894), commander of a division in and later head of the Department of Annapolis (he succeeded Cadwalader); George P. Kane, the marshal of Baltimore police whom Butler later arrested on charges of treason and conspiracy with secessionists; Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger B. Taney (1777-1864), and President Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865).

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