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MS-074: Thomas B. McGaffick, Co. F, 101st Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry

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MS-074: Thomas B. McGaffick, Co. F, 101st Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry

Description

The letters of Thomas B. McGaffick, a corporal in Company F of the 101st Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry range in date from January 19th, 1861 to February 11, 1863. The collection contains twenty two pieces of correspondence, including two fragments of letters along with a number of official documents relating to McGaffick's discharge from the army. The letters are all addressed to members of Thomas's family, including his sisters Belle and Mary, his brother Benjamin and his parents. The letters address a variety of subjects ranging from the rigors of army life to McGaffick's constant battle with his own health. Thomas rarely received enough correspondence to keep him satisfied and was constantly after family members to write more. He described his thoughts on General McClellan, his desire to return home and the various women to whom he wrote during the conflict. Also of interest is McGaffick's view towards the African Americans he encountered while in the south. "If I thought I was fighting to free the niggers I would go home and let and let Lincoln fight it out himself."

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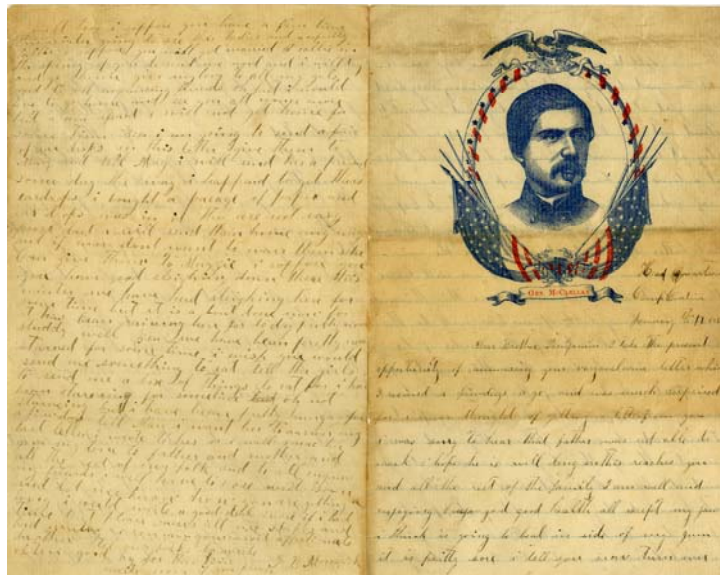
Keywords

Civil War, 101st Pennsylvania, Peninsula Campaign, Siege of Yorktown, Battle of Williamsburg, Battle of Seven Pines, Battle of Malvern Hill, Army Life

Disciplines

History | Military History | Social History | United States History

**Guide to
Thomas B. McGaffick, Co. F,
101st Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry**



**Gettysburg College, Musselman Library
Special Collections & College Archives**

**Processed by Christopher Gwinn
June 2006**

MS - 074: Thomas B. McGaffick, Co. F, 101st Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry

*Processed by: Christopher Gwinn
June 2006*

Provenance: Purchased from Charles Apfelbaum, 2005

Biography:

Thomas B. McGaffick was born and raised in Industry, PA in the county of Beaver to Jesse and Elizabeth McGaffick. Previous to service in the union army he was employed as a farmer. He enlisted in Company F of the 101st Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry on November 9, 1861 and was soon elevated to the rank of corporal. With the 101st Pennsylvania McGaffick participated in the 1862 Peninsula Campaign which included the Siege of Yorktown as well as the Battles of Williamsburg, Seven Pines and Malvern Hill, all of which the 101st was engaged in.

After service on the Peninsula the 101st along with McGaffick was transferred to North Carolina. While stationed at New Berne the unit participated in a number of engagements including the battles of Kingston and Goldsboro. McGaffick had long been suffering from ill health and as a result often found himself in the U.S. General Hospital at Annapolis. Three letters bear the Annapolis address, the first on May 27th, 1862 and the last on August 6th of that year. This puts into question just how much of the Peninsula Campaign McGaffick was witness to. He will serve the remainder of his time in the army in the New Berne North Carolina area, receiving a discharge for sickness on February 5th, 1863. McGaffick died a short time later, on July 5th, 1863, most likely as a result of the sickness contracted while a soldier in the Union army.

Scope and Content:

The letters of Thomas B. McGaffick, a corporal in Company F of the 101st Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry range in date from January 19th, 1861 to February 11, 1863. The collection contains twenty two pieces of correspondence, including two fragments of letters along with a number of official documents relating to McGaffick's discharge from the army. The letters are all addressed to members of Thomas's family, including his sisters Belle and Mary, his brother Benjamin and his parents. The letters address a variety of subjects ranging from the rigors of army life to McGaffick's constant battle with his own health. Thomas rarely received enough correspondence to keep him satisfied and was constantly after family members to write more. He described his thoughts on General McClellan, his desire to return home and the various women to whom he wrote during the conflict. Also of interest is McGaffick's view towards the African Americans he encountered while in the south. "If I thought I was fighting to free the niggers I would go home and let and let Lincoln fight it out himself."

Box 1:

1 – 1 Correspondence: January 19, 1861 – May 29, 1862

January 19, 1861 Benjamin	Head Quarters, Camp Curtain: Dear Brother
January 11, 1862 Sister Mary	Headquarters, Camp Curtain, Harrisburg: Dear
May 27, 1862	U.S. General Hospital, Annapolis, MD: Dear Sister Mary
May 29, 1862	U.S. General Hospital, Annapolis, MD: Dear Father

1 – 2 Correspondence: August 6, 1862 – October 23, 1862

August 6, 1862 Father, Mother,	U.S. General Hospital, Annapolis, MD: Dear Sisters & Brother
September 25, 1862	Camp Near Suffolk, VA: Dear Sister Mary
October 23, 1862	Camp Near Suffolk, VA: Dear Brother

1 – 3 Correspondence: November 9, 1862 – January 19, 1863

November 9, 1862	Camp Near Suffolk, VA: Dear Mary
November 29, 1862	Camp Near Suffolk, VA: Dear Sister
December 22, 1862	Camp Near Suffolk, VA: Dear Sister Mary
January 19, 1863	Newbern, NC: Dear Sister Bell

1 – 4 Correspondence: Undated or Fragmentary

February 11, [?]	At Home: Dear Sister
No Date	Dear Sister
No Date	Well Sister Mary
No Date	Well Father
No Date	Well Mary

1 – 5 Correspondence: Undated or Fragmentary

No Date	Fragment of Letter
No Date	Fragment of Letter
No Date	Poetry Fragment

1 – 6 Official Documents Pertaining to the Discharge of Thomas McGaffick

June 11, 1862 Furlough	U.S. General Hospital, Annapolis, MD: Notification of
February 5, 1863 McGaffick	New Berne, NC: Discharge Papers for Thomas

February 7, 1863
Thomas McGaffick

New Berne , NC: Oath of Identity Papers for

1 – 7 Photocopies of Biographical and Unit Information