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## MS-129: Burlew Letters

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## MS-129: Burlew Letters

### **Description**

This collection consists of letter written between Aaron E. Burlew, John W. Burlew, and Carrie Burlew, all siblings from Atkinsons Mills, Pennsylvania, during the Civil War.

### **Keywords**

Civil War, Civil War Correspondence, 12th Pennsylvania Cavalry, Atkinsons Mills, Prisoner of War, Union Army, Battle of Carter's Woods, 49th Pennsylvania, Battle of Spotsylvania Court House

### **Disciplines**

History | Military History | Social History | United States History

**Guide to the  
Burlew Letters**



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

**Processed by Rachel Hammer  
June 2012**

## **MS – 129: Burlew Letters**

(1 box, .27 cubic feet)

Inclusive Dates: 1861-1864

*Processed by: Rachel Hammer*

*June 2012*

### **Provenance**

Purchased from Charles Apfelbaum, 2007

### **Biography**

Aaron E. Burlew (June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1841-April 13<sup>th</sup>, 1906) mustered into Company F of the 12<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Cavalry (113<sup>th</sup> Volunteers) as a 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 1862. He was from Atkinsons Mills, Mifflin County, Pennsylvania and the brother of John W. Burlew and Carrie Burlew. In a July 1863 letter to their sister Carrie, John mentioned Aaron being taken prisoner, but in a letter in August of that same year, he said he was told that Aaron returned home. This was most likely during the Battle of Carter's Woods (June 15, 1863). The 113<sup>th</sup> Volunteers did not see many major battles. He mustered out on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1865 with the rest of his company. Aaron married a little over a year later on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 1866 to Emily J. Lemanan in Illinois where they settled down. They had four children; Lillie, Louisa, Meriam, and Alviretta. He died in 1906 and is buried in Nebraska.

John W. Burlew (1843-1864) mustered into Company K of the 49<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry for three years service as a private on August 18<sup>th</sup>, 1861. In January 1864, the regiment condensed from 10 companies to 4. He was reenlisted into Company B on January 2, 1864. He was from Atkinsons Mills, Mifflin County, Pennsylvania and the brother of Aaron E. Burlew and Carrie Burlew. On May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1864, during the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House, he was wounded and captured when his right leg was shot off at the hip. Company B's rolls do not have any information on him after the 10<sup>th</sup>, he died 2 days later. Samuel Ewing had his body buried in the field. Ewing also brought his watch home. His name might also be listed as John W. Berlew.

Carrie Burlew was from Atkinsons Mills, Mifflin County, Pennsylvania and the sister of Aaron E. Burlew and John W. Burlew.

### **Scope and Content Notes**

This collection consists of 1 box of letters. 24 are written by Aaron to Carrie, 1 is written by Aaron to John, 1 is written by Carrie to John, and 20 are written by John to Carrie. Aaron wrote March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1862 to December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1864. Carrie wrote May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1864. John wrote September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1861 to April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1864.

In his letters to Carrie and John, Aaron talked about home, their parents, sending money, his need for stamps, his thoughts on the girls back home and marriage, getting pictures taken and

sent home, getting a lock of hair to Carrie, and a few stories from camp life. Aaron wrote primarily from Virginia (also in what would become West Virginia) and Maryland including Manassas Junction, Winchester, and Bolivar Heights.

John wrote about home, his strong faith even in war, his need for stamps, getting his pictures taken and sent home, and, more so in his later letters, about the war. He mentioned battles and skirmishes he'd heard about, including Manassas. He talked about how he was in a few battles. There was Yorktown, one on November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1863 near the Rapidan River and a skirmish near Hagerstown after the Battle of Gettysburg (Funkstown, MD). John wrote primarily from Virginia, including Camp Griffin, White Oak Church, and Brandy Station.

In her letter to John, Carrie mainly talked about people they knew from home and if she had heard about the fate of others they knew in the war.

This collection also consists of other items. There are 2 undated letters by John, one appears to be a poem and the other is parodying the Civil War song, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." There is a note to John from an unknown person about Lewistown. Other items include a picture of all of America's Presidents up until that time, 2 American Tract Society (a non-profit Christian Literature organization) pamphlets, and a 1934 letter.

## **1-1 Finding Aid**

### **1 - 2 Correspondence: September 17<sup>th</sup>-December 25<sup>th</sup>, 1861**

September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1861 Camp Curtain, PA: John to Carrie  
October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1861 Camp Prospect (Prospect Hill), VA: John to Carrie  
November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1861 Camp Griffin, VA: John to Carrie  
December 25<sup>th</sup>, 1861 Camp Griffin, VA: John to Carrie

### **1 - 3 Correspondence: January 11<sup>th</sup>- November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1862**

January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Camp Griffin, VA: John to Carrie  
February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Camp Griffin, VA: John to Carrie  
February 12<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Camp Griffin, VA: John to Carrie  
February 16<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Camp Griffin, VA: John to Carrie  
February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Camp Griffin, VA: John to Carrie  
March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Philadelphia Camp McReynolds: Aaron to Carrie  
March 14<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Camp Mun\_\_er or in the field: John to Carrie  
April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Philadelphia Camp McReynolds: Aaron to Carrie  
April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Philadelphia Camp McReynolds: Aaron to Carrie  
May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Washington DC: Aaron to Carrie  
June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Manassas Junction, VA: Aaron to Carrie  
June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Manassas Junction, VA: Aaron to Carrie  
June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Camp No.20 within 5 miles of Richmond, VA: John to Carrie  
August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Manassas Junction, VA: Aaron to Carrie  
November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1862 Bath Morgan County, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie  
Not dated [1862] Manassas Junction, VA: Aaron to Carrie

### **1 – 4 Correspondence: January 7<sup>th</sup>-December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1863**

January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1863      Kearneysville, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie  
January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1863      Kearneysville, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie  
February 17<sup>th</sup>, 1863      Sharpsburg, MD: Aaron to Carrie  
March 29<sup>th</sup>, 1863      Camp (White Oak Church, VA): John to Carrie  
April 16<sup>th</sup>, 1863      Winchester, VA: Aaron to Carrie  
April 20<sup>th</sup>, 1863      Winchester, VA: Aaron to Carrie (envelope)  
May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1863      Camp (Near Banks' Ford, VA): John to Carrie  
June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1863      Winchester, VA: Aaron to Carrie  
July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1863      Camp (Purcellville, VA): John to Carrie  
August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1863      Camp near Warrenton, VA: John to Carrie  
October 31<sup>st</sup>, 1863      Camp (Warrenton, VA): John to Carrie  
November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1863      Martinsburg, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie  
December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1863      Camp (Brandy Station, VA): John to Carrie

### **1 - 5 Correspondence: March 25<sup>th</sup>-December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1864**

March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1864      Camp (Brandy Station, VA): John to Carrie  
April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1864      Camp (Brandy Station, VA): John to Carrie  
May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1864      Home (Atkinson Mills, PA): Carrie to John  
May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1864      Camp Davis, MD: Aaron to Carrie  
May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1864      Camp Davis, MD: Aaron to John  
May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1864      Cherry Run, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie  
June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1864      Cherry Run, WV: Aaron to Carrie  
September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1864      Bolivar Heights, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie  
October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1864      Bolivar Heights, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie  
November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1864      Bolivar Heights, WV: Aaron to Carrie  
December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1864      Near Charles Town, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie  
December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1864      Charles Town, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie  
Not dated [1864]      Harper's Ferry, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie

### **1-6 Misc.**

Undated letter written by John

“The volunteer tune the highwayman adieu to peace and all its charms our country calls to arms...”

“When Johnny Comes Marching Home” parody. Handwritten by John

“June when Johnny comes marching home  
In forty ninth we are raising recruits  
Hurra Hurra...”

Letter to Mrs. Mel B. Sayers from Harold L. Brooks; January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1934

Clipping for a “Pain Exterminator.” Note to John about Lewistown, PA handwritten along bottom

“The Presidents of Our Great Republic” picture

American Tract Society Pamphlets

“A Brand Plucked Out of Fore”

“The Christian Traveler”