

**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

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Provenance

Purchased from Charles Apfelbaum, 2007

Biography

Aaron E. Burlew (June 25th, 1841-April 13th, 1906) mustered into Company F of the 12th Pennsylvania Cavalry (113th Volunteers) as a 1st Sergeant on March 11th, 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 113th Volunteers did not see many major battles. He mustered out on July 20th, 1865 with the rest of his company. Aaron married a little over a year later on November 13th, 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 49th Pennsylvania Infantry for three years service as a private on August 18th, 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 10th, 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 10th, 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 10th, 1862 to December 22nd, 1864. Carrie wrote May 3rd, 1864. John wrote September 17th, 1861 to April 24th, 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 27th, 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 17th-December 25th, 1861

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

1 - 3 Correspondence: January 11th- November 20th, 1862

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

1 – 4 Correspondence: January 7th-December 8th, 1863

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

1 - 5 Correspondence: March 25th-December 22nd, 1864

March 25th, 1864 Camp (Brandy Station, VA): John to Carrie
April 24th, 1864 Camp (Brandy Station, VA): John to Carrie
May 2nd, 1864 Home (Atkinson Mills, PA): Carrie to John
May 3rd, 1864 Camp Davis, MD: Aaron to Carrie
May 3rd, 1864 Camp Davis, MD: Aaron to John
May 22nd, 1864 Cherry Run, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie
June 21st, 1864 Cherry Run, WV: Aaron to Carrie
September 20th, 1864 Bolivar Heights, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie
October 22nd, 1864 Bolivar Heights, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie
November 18th, 1864 Bolivar Heights, WV: Aaron to Carrie
December 20th, 1864 Near Charles Town, VA (now WV): Aaron to Carrie
December 22nd, 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 25th, 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”