

## Burgess Collection Letters

Guide to the Alvah W. Burgess Archival Collection (b.1844-d.1871), Private., Company D, 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Wisconsin Infantry Volunteers (served 1862-1865)

### DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

#### Repository

Civil War Museum, Resource Center Kenosha, Wisconsin

#### Language of Material

Material in English

#### Abstract

This collection consists of 17 documents that were all applications for invalid pensions as well as sworn notarized affidavits from those who knew him, his record or served with him to validate his character and eligibility for continuance of his pension from his war wounds.

### ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

#### Use Restrictions

No photocopying please

#### Preferred Citation

(Identification of item), Pvt. Alvah W. Burgess Collection (Company D, 5<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Volunteers Infantry Regiment), Letters Collection, The Civil War Museum, Kenosha, Wisconsin

#### Provenance

#### Processing Information

Processed by Frederick J. (Rick) Holtz, 2011

#### Biographical note:

From State of Wisconsin Muster Roll: Alvah W. Burgess lived in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin enlisting in Company D of 5<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry on August 13, 1862. On July 13, 1864, Pvt. Burgess was transferred to Company C, an independent battalion and served out his term being honorably discharged on June 20, 1865. Mr. Burgess was wounded 4 times on 3 different battlefields.

### COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The documents are a collection of affidavits that validate his length and location of service, where he was wounded, the kinds of wounds he received as well as sworn testimonies from his doctors, chaplains, commanding officers and those who served with him in Companies C and D of the 5<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Volunteers Regiment. The sole purpose(s) of these written records was to help Mr. Burgess continue to receive his pension and greatly needed medical treatment for his wounds.

COLLECTION LIST:

- Doc. #1 of 17: From Pension File Records of Affidavits dated February 2, 1867, Dodge County Court, Wisconsin by Chaplain Hiram Reed, Fr. Lorenzo Livermore and City Judge Leonard Mertz
- Noteworthy: Records Pvt. Burgess enlistment into Company D on August 15, 1862, at Beaver Dam, Wisconsin  
Honorably discharged on June 20, 1865  
Wounded at Rappahannock Station, Va. (Sept. 7, 1863), Spotsylvania Court House (May 10, 1864), again at Spotsylvania Ct. House (May 12, 1864) and finally on June 22, 1864 (location not listed).
- Doc. #2 of 17: From the National Archives Soldier's File, Certificate #81511, Alvah Burgess, Pvt., Co. D, 5<sup>th</sup> Wis. Regiment
- Doc. #3 of 17: From examining surgeon's certificate dated Oct. 20, 1866 by A. M.
- Noteworthy: Doctor's "findings" of Burgess's physical ailments due to 3 battlefield injuries.
- Doc. #4 of 17: Sworn testimony and affidavit dated Feb. 2, 1867, Beaver Dam Wisconsin, and signed by Alvah W. Burgess, Lorenzo D. Livermore, Daniel E. Tilden and County Judge Leonard Mertz
- Noteworthy: Lists Burgess's enlistment and his discharge dates  
Gives a history of his wounds and where he received them from Sept. 1863-June 22, 1864.  
Explains and illustrates his physical ailments and incapacities from his war wounds.
- Doc. #5 of 17: No. #122366, a brief record proving that Pvt. Burgess was discharged on June 20, 1865. Received and signed by Commissioner Joseph H. Barrett.
- Doc. #6 of 17: A note from Commissioner Joseph H. Barrett of the Interior Pension Office dated March 5, 1867 acknowledging that Pvt. Alvah Burgess was wounded 3 times at 3 different locations (Rappahannock, Spotsylvania, and Petersburg, Va.).
- Doc. #7 of 17: Receipt of Application for Pension #122366 dated March 6, 1867, from the Adjutant General's Office and signed by Samuel Breck, Assistant Adjutant General.
- Noteworthy: Shows proof of Pvt. Burgess presence on a muster roll, his transfer, and present duty assignment as well as muster roll out dates from 1863-May/June, 1865.

- Doc. #8 of 17: Order by Dept. of Interior, Pension Office dated March 20, 1867, asking Alvah Burgess for the name of the hospital where he was confined, the date of his admission and the treatment(s) he received. Signed by Commissioner Joseph H. Barrett
- Doc. #9 of 17: Affidavit dated April 3, 1867, Dodge County, Wisconsin, by character witness Hiram A. Reid to County Judge Leonard Hirtz.
- Noteworthy: Mr. Reid confirmed that Mr. Burgess was a member of Company D, 5<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry Regiment of Volunteers and that he was wounded on May 12, 1864, at Spotsylvania Court House, Va. and also wounded on June 22, 1864, at the Battle of Petersburg, Va.
- Doc. #10 of 17: from Surgeon General J.J. Woodward, Surgeon General's Office, Pension Division dated April 27, 1867. This record indicated that Pvt. Burgess was admitted on June 22, 1864, and treated for his leg wound.
- Doc. #11 of 17: Record No.#81.511 dated May 17, 1867, showed Pvt. Alvah Burgess "rate of pay" was "\$4/month beginning on Feb. 16, 1867, and signed by Herman Seligson, Clerk.
- Doc. #12 of 17: A "Claim for Invalid Pension" dated June 20, 1865, and filed by S.C. Hotchkiss for Pvt. Alvah Burgess.
- Noteworthy: A surgeon (unidentified) supports the fact that Pvt. Burgess was treated in a field hospital on June 22, 1864, for a wound on his left arm near his elbow.  
A chaplain (unidentified) certified that Burgess received a a leg wound at Spotsylvania on May 12, 1864, and was also wounded at Petersburg on June 22, 1864.  
On Oct. 20, 1866, a Dr. Denton recorded that a leg ball still lodged in his leg was still painful.  
On May 11, 1867, it was recorded that Pvt. Burgess had been receiving a \$4/month pension since Feb., 1862
- Doc. #13 of 17: An "Application for Invalid Pension" dated Jan. 15, 1869, Beaver Dam in Dodge County, Wisconsin
- Noteworthy: Pvt. Burgess requested a time extension along with a pension increase due to his battlefield injuries received to his left arm (deemed useless) and leg. Sworn testimonies who knew Pvt. Burgess were signed by Andrew Smith and E.A. Crane.
- Doc. #14 of 17: Affidavit dated March 23, 1869, was signed by Surgeon J. F. McClure in Beaver Dam, Dodge County Wisconsin authenticating the validity of Pvt. Burgess claims of arm and leg wounds suffered around May 12, 1864,

near Spotsylvania Court House, Virginia.

Doc. # 15 of 17: "Claim for Invalid Pension" based on "The Increase and Arrears Act" of July 27, 1868, and signed by S. C. Hotchkiss, examining clerk.

Noteworthy: Testified and Recorded by Dr. McClure on March 23, 1869, that Pvt. Burgess's left leg ankle joint injury caused considerable pain while he experienced considerable numbness in his left arm.  
Entitled to a \$4/mo/ pension from June 20, 1865, through Feb. 15, 1867.  
Admitted April 1, 1869, to an increased pension of \$6/mo.

Doc. #16 of 17: No.#:81511 dated April 6, 1869, An "Arrears and Increase Document" showing the dates that Alvah Burgess used his \$4 pension as well as his \$6 pension increase. It was signed by W. F. Gardiner, Dodge County Clerk Beaver Dam, Wisconsin and forwarded to C.W. Russell of Dodge County, Wisconsin.

Doc. #17:17 No.#815121 (undated and under the Act of July 27, 1868)  
An application made by Alvah P. Burgess for an increase of his pension during his service from 3/3/1865 to present day. Signed by Dodge County Judge, B. Scott Sloan.