

John H. Walters Letters

Guide to the John H. Walters Archival Collection (Private, Company C, 4th Indiana Cavalry)

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository

Civil War Museum, Resource Center Kenosha, Wisconsin

Language of Material

Material in English

Abstract

This collection contains copies of original letters written by John H. Walters describing his experiences with the 4th Indiana Cavalry from October 3, 1862 to June 17, 1865. Twenty-two letters (including one Special Order out of an original group of 25 originals held in other repositories) form the collection held by the Kenosha Civil War Museum.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Use Restrictions

Preferred Citation

(identification of item), The John H. Walters Archival Collection (Private, Co. C, 4th Indiana Cavalry) Letters Collection, The Civil War Museum. Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Provenance

The John H. Walters Archival Collection by John H. Walters was copied, as written, from the originals.

Processing Information

Processed by Richard J. Zimmermann, 2023

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

John H. Walters was born in Champaign County, Ohio, on March 11, 1841 and moved to Warsaw, Indiana. On August 4, 1862 he was mustered into Co. C, 4th Indiana Cavalry as a private and mustered out as a private on June 29, 1865. He died on September 10, 1917 and was buried in Warsaw, Indiana.

Doc. #1. Letter of Oct. 3, 1862. From Camp Snowhill, KY. Chasing John H. Morgan's guerillas south of Cincinnati, all day. Twenty-two were captured near Carrington, KY.

Doc. #2. Letter of Oct. 14, 1862. Camp near Williamstown, KY. Captured 35 more prisoners and 9 horses since leaving Cincinnati and his unit is now on the road to Lexington, KY. Buell's army is around 60,000 men now advancing in three columns toward Lexington, KY.

1

Doc. #3. Letter of Oct. 30, 1862. From Lexington, KY. Talks about an exchange of letters home and discusses the draft.

Doc. #4. Letter of Oct. 30, 1862. From Lexington, KY, to his "little sisters." Misses his home and hopes to return for Christmas.

Doc. #5. Letter of Nov. 8, 1862. From Camp Nicholasville, KY. Writing to his brother. Left Lexington on Nov. 1, assigned as body guards for Gen. Smith. Hopes to come home on furlough but remains part of Gen. Smith's "bodyguard." Hopes to get paid soon.

Doc. #6. Letter of Nov. 23, 1862. From Louisville, KY. To his brother. Appears unhappy with young men still at home and is willing to fight with them.

Doc. #7. Letter of December 14, 1862. From Memphis, TN. Still "bodyguards" for Gen. Smith. Sherman is near with 50,000 soldiers in 40 regiments. Asks about what folks at home think about how long the war might last.

Doc. #8. Letter of December 16, 1862. From Memphis, TN. Still "Bodyguards" and going with Gen. Smith to Vicksburg. He is about 100 miles north of Vicksburg.

Doc. #9. Letter of December 18, 1862. From Memphis, TN. He has received clothes sent from home. Hopes to return home soon but is uncertain about when that might happen. Discusses available food in camp.

Doc. #10. Letter of February 9, 1863. From a camp near Vicksburg. Mentions Arkansas Post battle and an engagement near Vicksburg itself. Predicts that Vicksburg will fall. He can see the town from his camp. Hears that Burnside is doing well also.

Doc. #11. Letter of February 10, 1863. From Texas. Collecting sea shells and sending them home. Should he re-enlist? Comments on the draft.

Doc. #12. Letter of May 29, 1863. From camp on the east side of Vicksburg. He left Millikin's Bend about April 1 with General Grant. Describes actions at Millikin's Bend, Grand Gulf, Big Sandy and Champion Hill. Discusses siege of Vicksburg, the town is surrounded on all sides. Predicts that Vicksburg will soon fall. Grant's initial proposal for the Confederate surrender. Captain Leslie promoted to major of the regiment.

Doc. #12. Letter of September 28, 1863. From Carlton, Louisiana, six miles from New Orleans. Went 90 miles up river to Galveston, LA. Food in Louisiana and Texas. Hopes to get paid in a week and will send a picture of himself home.

Doc. #13. Letter of December 11, 1863. From Biry Pine Bay, LA. HQ Div. 13th Army Corps. Officers have gone home to recruit soldiers, and he doesn't think that they will go into the field as a result.

Doc. #14. Letter of December 16, 1863. From Louisiana. He will go to Texas to prevent smuggling of arms into the South. Talks about food and getting his picture taken to send home.

Doc. #15. Letter of April 20, 1864. From Grandisire, Louisiana. Gen. Banks expedition. Rebels captured 60 wagons with supplies. Gen. Franklin was in command of cavalry. Rebs call Gen. Banks their "Commissary Sgt." Falling back to Alexandria. Will join Army of the Gulf in New Orleans. Nathaniel Banks is a terrible general and sent his men into battle piecemeal only to lose. Would have sent revolvers home but was prevented from doing so. Asks his mother to make some clothes for him.

Doc. #16. Letter of April 30, 1864. From Alexandria, LA. Gen. Banks falls back at first sight of rebels. Falls back 90 miles to Alexandria. Gen. Franklin wounded. Sent Mansfield's wounded to New Orleans. Banks lost 110 wagons in battle at Red River and 18 pieces of artillery with 18 wagons of ammunition, 3,000 men killed, wounded or lost. Gen. John McClelland has arrived and things will be different now. He attacks General Banks and the Red River Campaign defeat.

Doc. #17. Special Orders Transcription of June 16, 1864. From LaFourche District, Louisiana. Receives permission from General Cameron to proceed to Greenville.

Doc. #18. Letter of July 30, 1864. From Chattanooga, Tennessee. Foraging for food in the countryside and preparing to obtain horses and saddles for the campaign.

Doc. #19. Letter of Oct. 26, 1864. From Calhoun, Georgia. Describes foraging in the area and fighting bushwackers. Mail to Co. C, 4th Indiana Cav. 1st Div. 2nd Brig.

Doc. #20. Letter of January 7, 1865. From Nashville, TN. Left Louisville Dec. 4. Went as far as Franklin, KY where we attacked rebels under Gen. Lyons. Ran after them 27 days and captured much artillery, supplies and 100 men. Chased them as far as Bowling Green where another brigade took up the chase. Fighting Confederates near Bowling Green. Discusses the draft, getting stamps, and sending money home.

Doc. #21. Letter of March 19, 1865. Comments on Sherman's campaign and problems with high water.

Doc. #22. Letter of June 17, 1865. From Nashville, TN. Soldiers in Sherman's army are going home. Lieut. Hemphill making mustering-out rolls for discharge. Might be home by July 4th.

Discusses plans for coming home and turning in horses, saddles and the rest of his equipment.

Doc. #23. Fragment. Largely unreadable copy. Speculates on the war's end and discusses the size of Sherman's army. Not transcribed.