BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

According to the Pennsylvania Civil War muster rolls, James Alexander Streams was born in 1838 or 1839. His father’s name was Samuel Streams, and his mother’s name is unknown. Streams also had several siblings, which, according to his correspondence, included Hannah Streams, Mary Adaline Streams, Sarah Streams, and Ellen Wynkoop.

Streams enrolled in the Sixty-First Regiment of the Pennsylvania Volunteers on August 21, 1861. He belonged to Company A, which recruited in Indiana County, Pennsylvania. Streams was then mustered in at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on August 22, 1861. When he joined the Union Army, Streams listed his occupation as “farmer.” He was either mustered in as or later promoted to the rank of corporal. During his three-year military career, Streams was wounded at Spotsylvania and served as volunteer color guard.

Streams were discharged at the end of his term of service on September 7, 1864. He died in 1920 and is buried in the Washington Cemetery in Rayne Township, Indiana County, Pennsylvania.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The James Alexander Streams collection is comprised mostly of letters received by Streams from family members, friends, and fellow Union soldiers. These materials are organized into two series: Correspondence and Miscellaneous. The collection was donated in 1973 by the daughter-in-law of Streams, Mrs. J. Blair Streams.

The Correspondence series includes 41 letters. The bulk of these letters were received by Streams between 1862 and 1864. Letters from family and friends in Indiana County, Pennsylvania contain details about life on the home front during the Civil War. They also
provide information about the marriages and deaths of relatives and neighbors. The letters from fellow soldiers include accounts of their battle experiences, as well as personal reflections and tales of the men’s attempts to maintain social lives while at war. One correspondent, Peter Watson Dilts, was captured during the Battle of Gettysburg and wrote a letter to Streams from Camp Parole in Annapolis, Maryland. Two of the men who write to Streams also served in Company A of the 61st Pennsylvania. Lemuel Brady writes several before he is killed in hand to hand combat at the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House. Thomas Lemmon also is a frequent name until he is mortally wounded at Spotsylvania. Another letter, written in 1908, contains Robert A. Sayers’s memories of the war almost half a century later. The Correspondence Series also contains four letters that are not addressed to Streams. Three of these letters were sent to Mrs. M. J. Streams and W. M. Streams, whose relationships to Streams are unknown. A fourth letter has no salutation. These letters contain information about the daily lives of the authors, including accounts of life in Kansas, the location from which correspondents M. J. Shields, Isabell Stewart, and J. M. Shields wrote. All of the letters are arranged alphabetically by recipient and then chronologically.

The Miscellaneous Series contains one drawing of a farm. The back of the drawing contains the signature of W. M. Streams, Georgeville, PA. The name Mildred is also written on the back along the margin. This document is undated.

COLLECTION INVENTORY

BOX 1 - MC 2004.3

CORRESPONDENCE
Streams, James Alexander
Folder 01) Letter received from Mary A. Fleming – Feb. 6, 1862
Folder 02) Letter received from Sarah Streams – Jan. 18, 1863
Folder 03) Letter received from Thomas A. Lemmon – Aug. 2, 1863
Letter received from Lemuel Brady – Aug. 2, 1863
Folder 04) Letter received from Lemuel Brady – Sep. 28, 1863
Folder 05) Letter received from Lemuel Brady – Oct. 23, 1863
Letter received from L. Brady – Oct. 24, 1863
Folder 06) Letter received from Thomas A. Lemmon – Nov. 18, 1863
Letter received from Jennie McElhoes – Nov. 29, 1863
Folder 07) Letter received from Thomas A. Lemmon – Dec. 7, 1863
Letter received from Lemuel Brady – Dec. 8, 1863
Letter received from Peter Watson Dilts – Dec. 15, 1863
Letter received from Isaac V. Brady – Dec. 22, 1863
Folder 08) Letter received from John R. Stump – Jan. 6, 1864
Letter received from Samuel Streams & Mary Adaline Streams – Jan. 11, 1864
Letter received from Isaac V. Brady – Jan. 12, 1864
Letter received from J. T. Worden – Jan. 14, 1864
Letter received from J. R. Stumpf – Jan. 18, 1864
Letter received from Milton Streams – Jan. 31, 1864
CORRESPONDENCE (cont.)

Streams, James Alexander (cont.)
Folder 09) Letter received from Lemuel Brady – Feb. 1, 1864
Letter received from Peter Watson Dilts – Feb. 7, 1864
Letter received from Jane – Feb. 21, 1864
Letter received from John R. Stumpf – Feb. 25, 1864
Folder 10) Letter received from Jennie McElhoes – Mar. 20, 1864
Letter received from Samuel Streams – Mar. 20, 1864
Letter received from Mary Streams. – Mar. 22, 1864
Folder 11) Letter received from Lucy [illegible] & Mary Altman –
           Apr. 1, 1864
Folder 12) Letter received from Samuel Streams – May 3, 1864
Letter received from Peter Watson Dilts – May 4, 1864
Folder 13) Letter received from Jennie McElhoes – July 3, 1864
Letter received from Ellen Wynkoop – July 8, 1864
Folder 14) Letter received from Samuel Streams & Mary A. Streams –
           Aug. 9[?], 1864
Letter received from J. Milton Shields –
           Aug. 19, 1864[?]
Folder 15) Letter received from Beckie Fulmer – Sep. 8, 1864
Folder 16) Letter received from Sarah Streams & Hannah Streams –
           Sep. 4, 1865
Folder 17) Letter received from M. Shields – Jun. 11, 1871
           [Also includes note addressed to Mrs. M. J. Streams from Milton Shields
Folder 18) Letter received from Robert A. Sayers – Jan. 2, 1908
Streams, Mrs. M. J.
Folder 19) Letter received from M. J. Shields – Nov. 22, 1871
Folder 20) Letter received from J. M. Shields – Jun. 2, 1875[?]
Streams, W. M.
Folder 21) Letter received from Millie Streams – Sep. 5, 1890
Unknown
Folder 22) Letter received from Isabell Stewart – Jun. 6, 1872

MISCELLANEOUS
Streams, W. M.
Folder 23) Drawing of a farm – undated
This collection register was prepared by Malinda Triller, September 2004.