

Archives and Special Collections

Dickinson College

Carlisle, PA

COLLECTION REGISTER

Name: **Cuddy, John Taylor (1844-1864)** **MC 2001.9**

Materials: Papers (1861-1864)

Volume: 0.25 linear feet (1 Document Box, 1 Photograph Folder, 1 Artifact)

Donation: Gift of Blake Lee Spahr, 1993

Usage: These materials have been donated without restrictions on usage.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

John Taylor Cuddy was born the second son of John H. and Agnes Cuddy of Carlisle on October 17, 1844. Little is known about his early childhood, but it is possible that the family ran a distillery. When redheaded, dark-eyed John Taylor enlisted in Company A of the 7th Reserves, 36th Pennsylvania Regiment on June 5, 1861, he listed his occupation as “distiller.” He lied about his age in order to join the army, as he was only 16. Nevertheless, Cuddy embarked upon the life of a soldier and wrote many descriptive letters home to his family and friends, painting a vivid portrait of the Union Army during the Civil War. Cuddy was educated enough to be able to read and write, however, much of his spelling was done phonetically. The family must have had a decent income during the war, for Cuddy frequently requested and received money and supplies from home.

By his last letter in the collection, dated April 11, 1864, he eagerly awaited his discharge in a month. Unfortunately for Cuddy, that day would never come; he was captured at the Battle of Wilderness on May 5, 1864 along with several members of his company. Although family history maintains that he died at Andersonville Prison, contemporary records seem to indicate that John Taylor Cuddy starved to death at a prison camp in Florence, South Carolina, on September 29, 1864 at the age of 20.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The John Taylor Cuddy Papers are comprised mostly of letters from John Taylor Cuddy to his family and friends in Carlisle while serving in the Union Army, 1861-1864. These materials are organized into four series: Correspondence, Miscellaneous, Photographs, and

Artifacts. The collection was donated to the College in 1993 by Dr. Blake Lee Spahr, Class of 1947 and a descendent of the Cuddy family.

The Correspondence series is comprised of 79 letters from John Taylor Cuddy from various locations throughout the north and south to family members and friends. In these letters, Cuddy describes not only his actions and experiences in the war, but also his feelings on the war. His earlier letters of 1861 and 1862 display an earnest desire to defeat the rebels and teach them a lesson, but by 1863, the letters reveal a sense of melancholy, exhaustion, and a longing for an end to the fighting and the chance to go home. Some of these letters have been composed on army stationery bearing a variety of patriotic letterheads, of which a few are in color. The section also contains three letters not written by Cuddy but relative to his service: a letter to his father, John H. Cuddy, authorizing a furlough for his son, a letter from a friend of the family to Cuddy's mother, Agnes, and a letter from Agnes to her son dated May 1, 1864 that was either returned or never sent. The letters have been organized alphabetically by author and then chronologically. The correspondence in this collection has been transcribed by Dr. Spahr, and these transcriptions are housed together in a folder after the letters; authorship and dates overlap on the transcriptions and therefore they cannot be housed with the original letter.

The Miscellaneous series contains two scraps of paper found with the miniature tintype of John Taylor Cuddy, which is designated as an artifact within the collection. One of the documents pertains to the tintype, while the other contains information on Cuddy's death at the prison in Florence in 1864.

The Photograph series contains one tintype image of John Taylor Cuddy in uniform, complete with cap and drum, c1862. The image is designated as PC 2001.9 and is housed in the Dickinson College photograph archives.

The Artifact series contains one miniature tintype image of John Taylor Cuddy in uniform, c1862. This image is slightly different from the larger image contained in the Photograph series. The smaller image, housed in a carved wooden frame, is designated as AC 2001.9 and is housed in the Dickinson College artifact collection.

COLLECTION INVENTORY

BOX 1 – MC 2001.9

CORRESPONDENCE

Cuddy, Agnes

Folder 01) Letter to John Taylor Cuddy – May 1, 1864

Cuddy, John Taylor

Folder 02)	Letters sent – undated	(3)
Folder 03)	Letters sent – June-Dec. 1861	(12)
Folder 04)	Letters sent – Jan.-Feb. 1862	(10)
Folder 05)	Letters sent – Mar.-June 1862	(10)
Folder 06)	Letters sent – July-Oct. 1862	(7)
Folder 07)	Letters sent – Jan.-Mar. 1863	(10)
Folder 08)	Letters sent – Apr.-June 1863	(11)
Folder 09)	Letters sent – July-Nov. 1863	(9)
Folder 10)	Letters sent – Jan.-Apr. 1864	(7)

BOX 1 – MC 2001.9 (cont.)

CORRESPONDENCE (cont.)

Mullin, A. C.

Folder 11) Letter to John H. Cuddy – June 10, 1863

Thompson, Susanna

Folder 12) Letter to Agnes Cuddy – July 16, 1863

Transcriptions

Folder 13) Typed transcriptions of letters

MISCELLANEOUS

Folder 14) Scraps of paper found with miniature tintype – undated

PHOTOGRAPHS – PC 2001.9

Folder 01) Color tintype of John Taylor Cuddy in uniform – c1862

ARTIFACTS – AC 2001.9

Item 01) Color tintype of John Taylor Cuddy in uniform – c1862

This collection register was prepared by Michele M. Tourney, February 2001.