Abstract: The Robert B. McKee papers consist of correspondence, military orders, medical supply inventories, casualty reports, and other material related to service as a surgeon in the 1st Delaware Calvary regiment during the Civil War.
Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 416
Creator: McKee, Robert B.
Title: Robert B. McKee papers
Inclusive Dates: 1861-1901
Bulk Dates: 1861-1865
Extent: .1 linear feet (66 items)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 416, Robert B. McKee papers, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.
Shelving Summary: Box 1: Shelved in SPEC MSS manuscript boxes (1 inch); Removals in SPEC MSS oversize boxes (32 inches)
Location: Special Collections, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/
Source: Gift of Charles Howells, 1956.
Materials Available in Alternative Format: Access to the digitized version of the Robert B. McKee papers is available at the University of Delaware Institutional Repository or by following the links in the finding aid below.
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Biographical Note

Robert B. McKee received his medical training at Pennsylvania Medical College in 1859. Leaving his hometown of Middletown, Delaware, in 1861, McKee volunteered to serve as a surgeon in the Civil War. He worked as a hospital steward and an assistant surgeon for most of the war in Company B of the 1st Delaware Volunteer Cavalry in various areas of Virginia and Maryland. Napoleon B. Knight, with whom McKee seems to have shared a close friendship (see the letters of March 1865), organized the 1st Delaware Volunteer Cavalry on August 13, 1862. Following his release from active duty in the summer of 1865, McKee returned temporarily to Middletown before moving to Delaware City, Delaware. McKee was married to Anna M. McKee, who received a widow’s pension in 1901 for the service her husband rendered his country during the Civil War.

Sources:


*Index to compiled service records of volunteer Union soldiers who served in organizations from the state of Delaware*. (Washington: National Archives and Records Service, 1964, microform).

Historical and biographical information obtained from the collection.
Scope and Content Note

The Robert B. McKee papers consist of correspondence, military orders, medical supply inventories, casualty reports, and other material related to his service as a surgeon in the 1st Delaware Calvary regiment during the Civil War.

The papers, dated from 1861 to 1865, plus one item dated in 1901, comprise sixty-six items, including correspondence, military orders, medical supply inventories, casualty reports, military passes, circulars, newspapers, and personal essays.

The first sixty-five items, arranged chronologically, are related to McKee’s experience in the Civil War, spent primarily as an assistant surgeon with the 1st Delaware Volunteer Cavalry. The final document is a widow’s pension certificate which his wife, Anna M. McKee, received July 15, 1901.

With the recommendations of several associates from his hometown of Middletown, Delaware, including the doctor who trained him, McKee enlisted in the U.S. Army with the hope of serving his country by providing his medical skills as a surgeon. Many of the documents reveal the bureaucratic side of waging a war: supply inventories, lists of sick and wounded, requisition orders, medical transfers, and responses to requests for reports. McKee served at Drummondtown, Virginia, as well as at Baltimore, Monrovia, and Relay House, all in Maryland.

About half of the documents reveal the logistical requirements of providing medical attention for army personnel. The other half of the documents relate to McKee’s struggle to receive his final pay after some supplies under his care were either lost or damaged. Internal evidence suggests that the surgeon who served previously to McKee may have caused this problem that plagued McKee for some time after his release from service. The widow benefits McKee’s wife eventually received indicate that the problem was resolved.

Two other documents of particular interest are a newspaper, The Regimental Flag, published by the 2nd Regiment of Delaware Volunteers and an unsigned, undated essay believed to have been authored by McKee.
Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

McKee, Robert B.
McKee, Anna M.
Burton, William, 1789-1866.
Eckler, James N.
Simpson, S. J.
Barnes, Joseph K., 1817-1883.
Laurence, Samuel B.
Speel, F.

Corporate Names

United States. Army. Delaware Calvary Regiment, 1st (1861-1865)

Topical Terms

Soldiers--Medical care--United States--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Soldiers--Health--United States--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Soldiers--Correspondence--United States--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Surgeons--Correspondence--United States--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Geographic Names

Delaware--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Maryland--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
Virginia--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Form/Genre Terms

Certificates.
Circular letters.
Reports.
Correspondence.
Dispatches.
Essays.
Invoices.
Medical records.
Military passes.
Newspapers.

**Occupation**

Soldiers.
Surgeons.
Physicians.

**Personal Contributors**

Hamilton, William N.
Heald, Thomas.
Massey, George V.
Jones, Theodore.
Shields, J. Hayes.
Clark, D. C.
Lobdell, William W.
Bliss, Zenas E.
Woodward, Joseph Janvier, 1833-1884.
Cummings, A.
Knight, N. B.
Rice, N. P.
Cox, C. C.

Johnson, Henry.

Billings, John.

Perry, Alexander J. (Alexander James), 1828-1913.

Card, Benj. C. (Benjamin Cozzens), 1825-1914.

Frank, E. B.
Arrangement

Arranged in chronological order.
**Detailed Description of the Collection**

William N. Hamilton autograph letter signed to Governor W. Burton, 1861 July 27 [Box 1 F1]

1 item (3 p.)

Letter of recommendation to appoint Robert McKee as assistant surgeon for the 2nd Delaware regiment, with added notes of concurrence by W. N. Barr and two other residents of Odessa, Delaware.

[PDF](#)

Thomas Heald autograph letter signed to McKee, 1861 September 20 [Box 1 F1]

1 item (1 p.)

Letter from the War Department advising McKee to report for examination by the Medical Board.

[PDF](#)

Issue of *The Regimental Flag*, 1862 March 13 [Box 1 F2]

1 item (4 p.)

Newspaper published by the 2nd Regiment of the Delaware Volunteers. Removed to oversize box (32 inch).

[PDF](#)

George V. Massey autograph letter signed to McKee, 1863 March 1 [Box 1 F3]

1 item (1 p.)

Letter for General Lockwood ordering McKee to report to the post hospital at Drummondtown, Virginia.

[PDF](#)

Army of the Potomac report of the sick and wounded, 1864 [Box 1 F4]

1 item (2 p.)

A partially completed autograph document in spreadsheet form which listed the numbers of sick and wounded soldiers with notes on allotments of vegetables and meat made.

[PDF](#)
Army of the Potomac report of the sick and wounded, 1864 [Box 1 F4]
1 item (2 p.)

Autograph document in spreadsheet form intended to list numbers of sick and wounded soldiers with notes on issues of vegetables and meat made with no information added.

PDF

Theodore Jones autograph letter signed to Surgeon J. Hayes Shields, 1864 June 3 [Box 1 F4]
1 item (1 p.)

Jones requested a certificate of disability so that he could receive his bounty and pension.

PDF

D. C. Clark autograph letter to James N. Eckler, 1864 June 17 [Box 1 F4]
1 item (2 p.)

Clark requested to be sent to Washington, D. C. for medical treatment. J. Hayes Shields certified the request. Additional notes, found on the reverse side, include the signatures of N. B. Knight, William H. Penrose, and S. A. Holman.

PDF

William W. Lobdell autograph letter to James N. Eckler, 1864 June 17 [Box 1 F4]
1 item (2 p.)

Lobdell requested to be sent to Washington, D. C. for medical treatment. J. Hayes Shields certified the request. Additional notes are found on the reverse side and include the signatures of N. B. Knight, William H. Penrose, and S. A. Holman.

PDF

Surgeon J. Hayes Shields autograph letter to S. J. Simpson, 1864 July 18 [Box 1 F4]
1 item (1 p.)

Shields reported that both he and McKee were on duty at this post.

PDF

Printed General Order No. 5 Head-Quarters 3rd Separate Brigade , 1864 July 26 [Box 1 F4]
1 item (1 p.)

Brigadier General Lockwood assigned Surgeon C. F. H. Campbell to 3rd Separate Brigade as Medical Director.
Printed report of the sick and wounded, 1864 August [Box 1 F5]
1 item (4 p.)

Printed form with autograph information added and forwarded by J. Hayes Shields of the 1st Delaware Calvary from Monrovia, Maryland. Removed to oversize (32 inch).

Medical purveyor Zenas E. Bliss autograph letter to J. Hayes Shields, 1864 August 11 [Box 1 F6]
1 item (1 p.)
Bliss enclosed invoices for Shield's signature.

Special Requisition made by J. Hayes Shields for ambulance and mules, 1864 August 21 [Box 1 F6]
1 item (2 p.)
Request is approved by Brigadier General E. B. Tyler and Major General Wallace.

Special Requisition made by J. Hayes Shields for ambulance and mules, 1864 August 21 [Box 1 F6]
1 item (2 p.)
This a second copy of the previous item which is approved by Brigadier General E. B. Tyler and Major General Wallace. There is an additional note explaining the deletion of the ambulance from the request.

Packer's List of Medical Stores sent to Surgeon J. Hayes Shields, 1864 September 2 [Box 1 F6]
1 item (1 p.)
List of medical supplies sent to Shields at Monrovia, Maryland.

Surgeon J. Hayes Shields autograph letter to Surgeon C. C. Cox, 1864 September 7 [Box 1 F6]
1 item (2 p.)
Shield reports that he has received the receipt for medical supplies.

Invoice of medicines, hospital stores, & c., received by J. Hayes Shield, 1864 September 25 [Box 1 F6]
1 item (2 p.)
List of materials received at Monrovia, Maryland, for the 1st Delaware Calvary.

PDF

Requisition for Medical and Hospital Supplies, 1864 October 1 [Box 1 F6]

1 item (7 p.)

Requisition for supplies for a three month period at Monrovia, Maryland post.

PDF

Form letter from J. J. Woodward to 1st Delaware Calvary Surgeon in Charge, 1864 December 8 [Box 1 F6]

1 item (2 p.)

Request for the May 1864 report of sick and wounded. The verso bears an autograph note from J. Hayes Shield noting that the report was lost.

PDF

Packer’s List of Medical Stores, 1864 December 13 [Box 1 F6]

1 item (1 p.)

Form with autograph list of medicines and supplies delivered to McKee at Monrovia, Maryland.

PDF

Captain A. Cumming form letter to Robert McKee, 1864 December 17 [Box 1 F6]

1 item (1 p.)

Cumming enclosed bill of lading and invoice for recent supplies.

PDF

Surgeon C. C. Cox form letter to Robert McKee, 1864 December 19 [Box 1 F6]

2 item (3 p.)

Cox enclosed invoice and receipts for medical and hospital stores which were delivered to Cumming. Includes one invoice of medicines and hospital stores.

PDF

Robert McKee autograph letter to headquarters, 1864 December 26 [Box 1 F6]

1 item (2 p.)

McKee explained a missing report of the sick and wounded.

PDF
Surgeon J. Hayes Shields autograph letter to McKee, 1864 December 28 [Box 1 F6]

1 item (1 p.)

Shields sent invoices and receipts for supplies to be signed and returned by McKee.

Circular letter ordering inventories, 1864 December 29 [Box 1 F6]

1 item (1 p.)

The verso bears an autograph letter from McKee, dated December 31, 1864, transmitting the receipts for medical stores.

Robert McKee autograph letter to Brigadier General J. K. Barnes, 1864 December 30 [Box 1 F6]

1 item (2 p.)

McKee transmitted receipts for supplies.

Invoice of medicines and hospital stores, [1864] [Box 1 F7]

1 item (1 p.)

List of medical supplies sent to J. Hayes Shields at Monrovia, Maryland.

Autograph list of medical supplies, [1864] [Box 1 F7]

1 item (2 p.)

List of medical supplies with prices.

Autograph draft of a letter from Robert McKee, [1864] [Box 1 F7]

1 item (1 p.)

McKee explains the missing report on the sick and wounded.

Medical Director Simpson form letter to McKee, 1865 January 23 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (1 p.)

Simpson requests report of sick and wounded.
Robert McKee autograph letter to Simpson, 1865 January 24 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (2 p.)

McKee previously transmitted the needed report but is sending a second report for the same period.

Autograph extract of special order No. 137, 1865 March 21 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (1 p.)

An extract of an order restoring Lt. Colonel N. B. Knight to his command in the 1st Delaware Calvary.

N. B. Knight autograph letter to Doctor [McKee], 1865 March 23 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (1 p.)

Knight enclosed the order restoring him to command and requested his belongings be sent to him.

N. B. Knight autograph letter to Doctor [Mckee], 1865 March 27 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (2 p.)

Knight acknowledged an earlier letter. On the verso is a portion of another letter to an unidentified person and concerns the loss of his command.

Surgeon N. P. Rice autograph document , 1865 April 4 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (2 p.)

Orders for Robert McKee to report for assignment. On the verso are orders, written April 5, 1865, for McKee to remain where he is currently serving signed by Captain C. Churchman.

N. P. Rice autograph letter to Robert McKee , [1865] [Box 1 F7]

1 item (1 p.)

Requested McKee recommend an enlisted man to serve as a hospital steward.

Special orders no. 62, 1865 May 2 [Box 1 F7]
McKee ordered to report to Surgeon N. P. Rice for temporary duty at headquarters, Relay House, Maryland, by order of Brigadier General E. B. Tyler.

Robert McKee autograph letter to Lt. Colonel Samuel B. Laurence, 1865 May 15 [Box 1 F7]

McKee requests permission to visit Baltimore on personal business.

Autograph (true copy) extract from special order no. 119, 1865 May 18 [Box 1 F7]

Five hour leave of absence granted to McKee.

Special orders no. 73, 1865 May 28 [Box 1 F7]

McKee ordered to return to duty at Monrovia, Maryland.

N. P. Rice autograph letter to Colonel G. Simpson, 1865 June 30 [Box 1 F7]

Rice requested instructions on behalf of McKee regarding medical stores for which he is responsible. On the verso is a note declining to give a decision and returning the letter.

Henry Johnson autograph letter to Robert McKee, 1865 July 7 [Box 1 F7]

Johnson requested invoices from McKee.

Robert McKee autograph letter to Henry Johnson, 1865 July 10 [Box 1 F7]
McKee explained that on July 1, 1865, he shipped the boxes of supplies and invoices to Surgeon Sutherland in Washington, D.C.

PDF

Robert McKee autograph letter to F. Speel, 1865 July 14 [Box 1 F7]
1 item (1 p.)
McKee requested information regarding the shipment of goods stored by Speel.

PDF

Robert McKee autograph letter to unidentified, 1865 July 25 [Box 1 F7]
1 item (1 p.)
Draft of a letter listing items which were not included on a receipt.

PDF

Henry Johnson autograph letter to Robert McKee, 1865 July 29 [Box 1 F7]
1 item (2 p.)
Johnson returned McKee's receipt and explained why certain items are not included in the receipt.

PDF

Form letter from John Billings to Robert McKee, 1865 October 4 [Box 1 F7]
1 item (1 p.)
Billings requested McKee return the invoices and an affidavit regarding disputed items transported on July 15, 1865, to settle the issue.

PDF

Autograph affidavit sworn by Robert McKee, 1865 October 17 [Box 1 F7]
1 item (1 p.)
Affidavit from McKee regarding the missing medical stores.

PDF

Autograph copy of military regulations for public property, [1865] [Box 1 F7]
1 item (2 p.)
List of regulations in McKee's handwriting.
Robert McKee autograph letter to Paymaster General, 1865 October 19 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (1 p.)

McKee requested a certificate indicating there are no stoppages against him so that he might receive his final pay.

PDF

Robert McKee autograph letter to 2nd Auditor, 1865 November 1 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (2 p.)

McKee requested a certificate indicating he is not indebted to the U.S. government in order to receive his final pay.

PDF

Robert McKee autograph letter to Quartermaster General, U.S.A., 1865 November 20 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (1 p.)

Draft of a letter stating that the affidavit had been sent.

PDF

Copy of General order no. 71, 1865 November 29 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (1 p.)

Autograph copy of an order issued by Acting Quarter Master General Charles Thomas regarding an additional certificate necessary with affidavits.

PDF

Autograph copy of Colonel Alexander J. Perry form letter to Robert McKee, 1865 December 8 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (1 p.)

Official copy of a letter which notified McKee that his affidavit was received and forwarded to the Office of the Second Auditor of the Treasury for final action.

PDF

Robert McKee autograph letter to Second Auditor of the Treasury, 1865 December 12 [Box 1 F7]

1 item (1 p.)

McKee informed them that he had received the proper certificates and awaited their certificate in order to receive his final pay.

PDF
Another copy of McKee's previous letter to the Second Auditor, with a note on the verso.

Form letter from Benjamin Card to Robert McKee, 1865 December 16 [Box 1 F7]

McKee informed that the Quartermaster General’s office did not issue certificates of non-indebtedness.

Auditor E. B. Frank autograph letter to Robert McKee, 1865 December 20 [Box 1 F7]

McKee informed that the Second Auditor’s Office will examine his case.

Alexander J. Perry autograph letter to Robert McKee, 1865 December 27 [Box 1 F7]

Perry acknowledged receipt of affidavit.

Circular of Treasury Department - Second Auditor's Office, [1865] [Box 1 F7]

Two copies of this circular regarding application for certificates of non-indebtedness.

Autograph essay by Robert McKee, [1860s] [Box 1 F7]

Essay is in McKee's handwriting.

Pension certificate for Anna M. McKee, 1901 July 15 [Box 1 F7]

Pension certificate for Robert McKee's wife.