

Collection #
M 0042,
OM 0011

ELIJAH H. C. CAVINS PAPERS, 1829–1904

[Collection Information](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Series Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by

Paul Brockman
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Manuscripts and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	3 manuscript boxes, 2 oversize folders, 3 photograph albums, oversize photographs
COLLECTION DATES:	1829–1904
PROVENANCE:	Mr. & Mrs. Walter Brassert, 265 E. South St., Bloomfield, Indiana, May 1978
RESTRICTIONS:	None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: David Enoch Beem papers (M 0015)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1978.0508

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Elijah H. C. Cavins (1832–1910) lived most of his life near Bloomfield in Greene County, Indiana, where he was a prominent lawyer and politician. When the Civil War broke out, Cavins abandoned his law practice to organize a company for the 14th Indiana Volunteer Regiment, the regiment with which he was to serve for all but a few months of his three-year enlistment. He fought at the battles of Winchester, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, and numerous smaller engagements, and eventually rose to the rank of colonel. When his enlistment expired in June 1864, Governor Morton appointed him to the position Adjutant General for the Southern Division of the state.

After the war, Cavins returned to his law practice in Bloomfield, but he retained his interest in the Civil War. He was active in the affairs of the Grand Army of the Republic, served on the Indiana Battlefield Commissions for Antietam and Gettysburg and compiled records of the 14th Indiana, and wrote articles and speeches on military and political affairs.

Sources:

Original collection guide.

A Guide to Manuscript Collections of the Indiana Historical Society and the Indiana State Library, pp.29–30.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The main portion of the collection contains Cavins' correspondence, the largest part of which are the 151 letters written by Col. Cavins to his wife and other family members during the Civil War, 1861–64. In these letters Cavins discussed the regiment's activities, the soldiers' camp life, morale, the abilities of commanding officers, the effects of the war on Virginia, and the reactions to dissent at home. Also included is Cavins' diary for 1864 and official reports of the 14th Indiana and its actions at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. There are transcripts and an index to Cavins' Civil War letters.

Papers relating to Cavins' interest in veterans and historical materials relating to the 14th Indiana and the Civil War include accounts written by other members of his regiment on their battlefield action. Other items include Cavins' appointment to the Gettysburg Memorial Commission and relating correspondence, 1885–95, and the Constitution, Minutes & By-Laws of the Veteran Company of the Indiana Legion, 1863–65. Also included are general papers and

documents of the Cavins, 1829–1904.

Photographs in the collection include group portraits of the 14th Indiana Regiment at reunions. Albums contain portraits of Civil War generals and soldiers, and family photographs.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Civil War Letters and Documents, 1861–65

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Letters to Family, 1861	Box 1, Folder 1
Letters to Family, Jan.–May 1862	Box 1, Folder 2
Letters to Family, June–Dec. 1862	Box 1, Folder 3
Letters to Family, Jan.–May 1863	Box 1, Folder 4
Letters to Family, June–Sept. 1863	Box 1, Folder 5
Letters to Family, Oct. 1863–Nov. 1864	Box 1, Folder 6
Letters Written by Cavins' Family & Friends, 1861–65	Box 1, Folder 7
Diary, 1864; Military Correspondence, Letters, Orders & Reports, 1862–64	Box 1, Folder 8
Letter Book	Box 1, Folder 10
Muster rolls and Morning Reports, 1861–64	OM 0011, Folder 2
Poem by Cook with 14 th Indiana, n.d.; copy of Letter from Confederate Diplomat to Russian Grand Admiral, April 1862	Box 2, Folder 4

Series 2: Veterans Organizations & Regimental Histories, 1863–1900

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Partial Histories of Companies B, d & E sent to Cavins, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 12
Writings on Military Matters, Drafts of Articles & Speech, 1864, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 13
Appointment to Gettysburg Memorial Commission & Correspondence, 1885–95	Box 2, Folder 1
Notes on Military Matters, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 2
Draft of Speech for GAR Reunion, 1900	Box 2, Folder 3

Indiana Legion, Veterans Company, Constitution, Minutes & By-Laws, 1863–65	Box 2, Folder 10
Scrapbook of Newspaper Clippings Regarding the Civil War, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 11
Three Photograph Albums of Civil War Generals	Visual Collections: Albums

Series 3: Family Papers & Documents

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Correspondence, 1886–1910	Box 1, Folder 9
Notebook on Law; Draft of Speech for 1880 Election	Box 2, Folder 3
Deeds & Appointments	Box 2, Folder 5
Wills, Cemetery Papers, Family Histories	Box 2, Folder 6
Family Financial Papers, 1865–1904	Box 2, Folder 7
General Materials, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 8
Newspaper Clippings	Box 2, Folder 9
History of Cumberland Presbyterian Church, n.d.	Box 2, Folder 12
Documents and Appointments, 1829–50	OM 0011, Folder 1
Cavins Family Photographs	Visual Collections: Manuscript Photographs; OVA & OVB

Series 4: Transcripts of Correspondence

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Transcripts, Correspondence, Index	Box 3, Folder 1
Transcripts, Correspondence, June–Dec. 1861	Box 3, Folder 2
Transcripts, Correspondence, Jan.–May 1862	Box 3, Folder 3
Transcripts, Correspondence, June–Dec. 1862	Box 3, Folder 4
Transcripts, Correspondence, Jan. 1863–May 1863	Box 3, Folder 5
Transcripts, Correspondence, June–Sept. 1863	Box 3, Folder 6
Transcripts, Correspondence, 1863–64	Box 3, Folder 7

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0042).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.