

Collection #
M 0833

HUGH GASTON CIVIL WAR LETTERS, 1862–1875, 2004

[Collection Information](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 manuscript box, 1 artifact
COLLECTION DATES:	September 1862–1875, 2004
PROVENANCE:	Donald W. Janes, Breckenridge, Colorado, 3 November 2004
RESTRICTIONS:	None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2005.0036

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Hugh Gaston was born 10 February 1830 to James and Margaret Gaston, three miles south of Newark, Indiana. He was one of eleven children in the family. He married Catharine Steel and they had nine children. He was a farmer and a resident of Solsberry, in Greene County, Indiana.

In August 1862 Hugh enlisted in the 97th Indiana Infantry Volunteers as a Corporal. He was mustered into Company A on 20 August in Terre Haute. They left the state in late September for Memphis, where they were assigned to the 17th Army Corps. They moved towards Vicksburg but returned to Moscow, Tennessee after the Holly Springs disaster in December 1862. In April 1863 they joined Gen. Sherman's army in the rear of Vicksburg, watching the movements of Gen. Johnston's army.

After Vicksburg fell the 97th Indiana took part in the siege of Jackson, then moved to Memphis in September. On 13 September they were ordered to join Sherman's army near Chattanooga to support Rosecrans' army in stopping an invasion of Tennessee. They were engaged in the battle of Chattanooga, and then accompanied the army to the relief of Gen. Burnside who was besieged by Gen. Longstreet in eastern Tennessee, and returned to Scottsboro, Ala. where they passed the winter.

In May 1864, as a part of the 15th Army Corps, they moved into the Atlanta campaign. From 14 May through 2 July the 97th Indiana was involved in five skirmishes: Resaca, Dallas, New Hope Church, Big Shanty, and Kennesaw Mountain. On 22 July they participated in the battle of Atlanta. The 15th corps formed the extreme right on 28 July against which a fierce assault was made and repulsed, the 97th being noticeably engaged. On 29 August the 97th Indiana moved with its corps on the flanking march around Atlanta, and was engaged in the battle of Jonesboro. On 1 September it reached Lovejoy Station, and after the evacuation of Atlanta returned to East Point and encamped there.

On 12 November the regiment started with the right wing of Sherman's Army on its march to the sea. On the 22nd it participated in a fight at Griswoldville, Georgia, was engaged again on 8 December at Little Ogeechee River, and entered Savannah on the 21st. The regiment rested a short time in Savannah, and then moved with Sherman's army throughout the Carolinas. They moved on to Richmond, and finally to Washington, D.C., where they were mustered out 9 June 1865.

Gaston went back to farming after the war, and died 8 November 1913 in Newark at his daughter Lillie's home.

Sources:

Materials in collection.

American Civil War Research Database. Duxbury, MA: Historical Data Systems, Inc., 2005 [cited 23 February 2005]. Available from World Wide Web: (<http://civilwardata.com/>)

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The majority of the collection consists of forty letters written by Hugh Gaston to his wife Catharine Steel while he was a soldier fighting in the Civil War. There are also a few letters written by William Steel, Catharine's brother, to their parents Joseph A. and Mary Steel, a letter written by James Henderson Gaston to his brother Hugh, and letters from J.H. Smith to Jane Steel, Catharine's sister. The letters tell of camp life, what Gaston's regiment is doing, and sick and wounded soldiers. The letters have been arranged in chronological order from the earliest to the latest written.

There are a few items from after the war: a contract and mortgage regarding a tract of land in Greene County, Indiana; a piece of cloth that the letters were wrapped in; and the genealogy of the Gaston family and provenance of the letters.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
HG to Catharine and children, re: taking care of the house while he's gone, ca. Sept. 1862	Box 1, Folder 1
HG to Catharine and children, partial letter, ca. autumn 1862	Box 1, Folder 2
J.H. Smith to Jane Steel, at a camp near Louisville, Ky., 21 Sept. 1862	Box 1, Folder 3
HG to Catharine, in Louisville, Ky., 22 Oct. 1862	Box 1, Folder 4
HG to Catharine, in Memphis, Tenn., 24 Nov. 1862	Box 1, Folder 5
William Steel to Joseph A. Steel, in LaGrange, Tenn., 22 Feb. 1863	Box 1, Folder 6
William Steel to Joseph A. and Mary Steel, partial letter, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 7
HG to Catharine and children, in Moscow, Tenn., 19 Apr. 1863	Box 1, Folder 8
HG to Catharine, re: Generals and what they are doing, in Moscow, Tenn., 15 May 1863	Box 1, Folder 9
HG to Catharine, camp near LaGrange, Tenn., 27 May 1863	Box 1, Folder 10
HG to Catharine, re: what's happening at Vicksburg, in LaGrange, Tenn., 31 May 1863	Box 1, Folder 11
HG to Catharine, re: Vicksburg, in Chickasaw Bluffs, Miss., 12 June 1863	Box 1, Folder 12

HG to Catharine, re: battle fought near Vicksburg, in Mississippi, 28 July 1863	Box 1, Folder 13
HG to Catharine and Jane Steel, re: sick and wounded soldiers, in Mississippi, 9 Aug. 1863	Box 1, Folder 14
HG to Catharine and children, Camp Sherman , Miss., 15 Aug. 1863	Box 1, Folder 15
J.H. Smith to Jane Steel, in Mississippi, 24 Aug. 1863	Box 1, Folder 16
HG to Catharine, Camp Sherman , Miss., 2 Sept. 1863	Box 1, Folder 17
HG to Catharine, in Mississippi, 21 Oct. 1863	Box 1, Folder 18
HG to Catharine, in Winchester, Tenn., 11 Nov. 1863	Box 1, Folder 19
HG to Catharine, re: description of Battle of Chattanooga, in Bridge Port, Ala., 20 Dec. 1863	Box 1, Folder 20
HG to Catharine, in Scottsboro, Ala., 15 Jan. 1864	Box 1, Folder 21
HG to Catharine, re: cooking in camp and clothes, in Scottsboro, Ala., 23 Jan. 1864	Box 1, Folder 22
J.H. Gaston to HG, in Scottsboro, Ala., 20 Apr. 1864(?)	Box 1, Folder 23
HG to Catharine, in Nashville, Tenn., 15 May 1864	Box 1, Folder 24
HG to Catharine and parents, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 25
HG to Catharine, in Big Shanty Station, Ga., 11 June 1864	Box 1, Folder 26
HG to Catharine and children, re: Siege of Atlanta, in Big Shanty Station, Ga., 23 June 1864	Box 1, Folder 27
HG to Catharine, in Scottsboro, Ala., 29 June 1864	Box 1, Folder 28
HG to Catharine, re: working in a hospital and hearing canons in Atlanta, in Marietta, Ga., 27 July 1864	Box 1, Folder 29
HG to Catharine, re: working in a hospital and prisoners of war, in Marietta, Ga., 7 Aug. 1864	Box 1, Folder 30
HG to Catharine, in Atlanta, Ga. , 16 Oct. 1864	Box 1, Folder 31
HG to Catharine, re: sending money home, 9 Nov. 1864	Box 1, Folder 32
HG to Catharine, re: when the war will end,	Box 1, Folder 33

in Beaufort, S.C., 17 Jan. 1865

HG to Catharine, re: activities and path of the regiment, in Fayetteville, N.C., 14 Mar. 1865	Box 1, Folder 34
HG to Catharine, in Goldsboro, N.C., 29 Mar. 1865	Box 1, Folder 35
HG to Catharine, partial letter re: Jane's death and possible up-coming campaign, in Goldsboro, N.C., 6 Apr. 1865	Box 1, Folder 36
HG to Catharine, re: orders to march in the morning, in Goldsboro, N.C., 9 April 1865	Box 1, Folder 37
HG to Catharine and all the girls, re: end of the war and mustering out, in Alexandria, Va., 22 May 1865	Box 1, Folder 38
HG to Catharine, re: going home, in Indianapolis, Ind., 15 June 1865	Box 1, Folder 39
HG to Catharine, re: going home once he's paid, in Indiana, 16 June 1865	Box 1, Folder 40
Contract and mortgage between Stephen D. McIntire and William Steel for tract of land in Green County, 1875	Box 1, Folder 41
Gaston genealogy and succession of provenance of letters, Oct. 2004	Box 1, Folder 42
Cloth which letters were wrapped in, n.d.	Artifacts: R2262

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://opac.indianahistory.org/>
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 0833).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.