JOHN L. MARTYN
PAPERS, 1862–1883

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Processed by
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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 document case

COLLECTION DATES: 1862–1883

PROVENANCE: Robert O. Parmley, P.E., S. Ladysmith, WI 54848, 22 October 2003

RESTRICTIONS: None
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

At some point between January and July of 1843, John L. Martyn was born in Washington County, Indiana. He remained in Washington County until the he enlisted in the Union Army in 1861 as a private in the Thirty-Eighth Indiana Infantry. Martyn served through his three years of enlistment and reenlisted in 1864 in the now-veteran infantry regiment. After the war, he was eventually mustered out of the Army in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1865.

While on active duty, the Thirty-Eighth Indiana Infantry fought throughout Kentucky and Tennessee before joining Gen. Sherman on his March to the Sea. They also fought in the Carolinas before being shipped back home at the conclusion of the war. During his time in the war, Martyn rose in the ranks from corporal, to sergeant major, and finally became captain of his regiment.

He married Sarah (McBride?) in 1868 and they moved to Iowa City, Iowa, where they remained until his death sometime in the 1880s. While in Iowa, Martyn received a teaching license and was given the informal title of “Doc.” He was served several times with affidavits to help the government determine who should or should not receive pension checks. His exact date of death is unknown, but Martyn seems to have passed away in 1883.

Sources:


SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE
This collection contains the letters and documents of John Martyn from the Civil War through the early 1880s. The collection includes 12 letters; 11 newspaper clippings; and approximately 80 pension papers, general orders, or other service records or documents. There are two series within this collection. The first series is made up of letters and documents, while the second series contains newspaper articles.

The first series includes certificates for Martyn’s promotions to corporal, sergeant major, and eventually captain in the Union army. The documents verifying his discharge from the army in both 1863 and 1865 are also included. The other documents vary greatly, but are all documents from the Civil War period itself or within a few months of its conclusion. They include general orders given while Martyn was an officer, invoice statements concerning the arrival and return of clothing and equipment to Martyn’s regiment, and a roll that provides the names of soldiers mustered in and out of the Union army. There are also forty documents bound together that include general orders, receipts, and other handwritten documents from the conclusion of the war. There is an advertisement for General B.F. Scribner’s *How Soldiers Were Made*. The last item of this section is a blank certificate for soldiers who became disabled during service in the army.

The series also contains brochures from lawyers specializing in pension claims, letters claiming pension fees that are due to lawyers, a letter from a claims solicitor, and letter from the Department of the Interior, which worked with pension funds at this time. There are also affidavits from pension lawyers asking for a statement or opinion in cases concerning soldiers from the Civil War who were beneath Martyn in the chain of command.

The final section of the series contains miscellaneous letters and documents that John Martyn either signed or received after the Civil War. Within this section there are letters, a check stub, a teaching license, and a telegraph from the late 1860s. This section also has a property tax form and letters from the assistant surgeon general and the House of Representatives from the later portion of the 1870s. Finally this miscellaneous grouping of documents contains a debt statement, unsigned letters, a poem looking back on the Union success, and a postcard from the Johnson County Medical Society.

The second series contains newspaper articles that Martyn collected in relation to the Civil War, and men who fought in the war. The majority of these newspapers were printed in New Albany, Indiana, and either gave figures of casualties of a battle or for the war as a whole. There are also articles that contain obituaries of prominent leaders, and that document local matters like the celebration of a regiment returning home.

**SERIES CONTENTS**

**Series 1: Documents and Letters**

**CONTENTS**

Certificates for Military Promotions
Military Discharges: 1863, 1865
Muster In Soldiers Roll, 26 Mar 1865
Inventory and Inspection Report, 6 Apr 1865
Clothing Return Label, May 1865
Monthly Returns of Equipment, May and June 1865
Invoice of Stores, 8 June 1865
General Orders Pamphlet, 15 June 1865

**CONTAINER**

Box 1, Folder 1
Box 1, Folder 2
Box 1, Folder 3
Box 1, Folder 4
Box 1, Folder 5
Box 1, Folder 6
Box 1, Folder 7
Box 1, Folder 8
Series 2: Newspaper Articles

CONTENTS(CONTAINER)
Killed, Wounded and Missing Soldiers, 1862–65 Box 1, Folder 38
Obituaries of James Steedman, Daniel Griffin, and Frank Cheatham Box 1, Folder 39
Articles Concerning 38th Indiana Infantry and the Civil War Box 1, Folder 40

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 0809).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.