

Collection #
M 1459
OM 0733

**JOHN NILSON
COLLECTION, 1851–1892**

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Processed by

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July 2019

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 half sized manuscript box; 1 oversize manuscript folder; 2 tintypes

COLLECTION DATES: 1851–1892

PROVENANCE: Kevin P. Getchell, Mooresville, North Carolina, June, 2019

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2019.0192

NOTES: Partial transcriptions to some letters.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

John Nilson (1832–1921) was born in Monongahela County, Pennsylvania, but moved with his family to Guernsey County, Ohio, in 1835 where he learned to be a harness maker. In 1854, Nilson moved to Jeffersonville, Indiana, and subsequently to Jackson County, Indiana, where he established a saddle and harness making business.

In September 1858, Nilson married Charity Hunsucker, (1840–1930), and they produced four children. In August 1861, Nilson enlisted as a corporal in Company G of the 25th Indiana Regiment. He was subsequently promoted to lieutenant in August 1864, and to captain in January 1865.

After the war, Nilson returned to Jackson County and resumed his saddle and harness business. In 1868, Nilson and his family moved to Jasper County, Missouri, where he acquired over 200 acres of land and took up farming.

Sources:

Ancestry, Library Edition, accessed 27 June 2019

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection mainly contains a mixture of letters and military related materials pertaining to John Nilson. Many of the letters were written to him by his siblings including Mary (1838–1852) in Columbus, Ohio; James in Keokuk, Iowa, and Jane in Guernsey County, Ohio (b. 1842); and Alexander N. (“AN”) serving with the 67th Indiana Regiment in Bayou, Louisiana and elsewhere. There also are several additional letters from friends and his mother. Subjects include firing on Fort Sumter, John’s participation in the Battle of Shiloh, Alexander’s declining to become an officer in a USCT regiment, the birth of his child and sickness of his wife, and the death of his sister, June 1865.

Also included are pages from his diary, December 1863 and a couple of brief entries from his memorandum book found in his writing desk. Other materials include military related records including rolls for clothing pay; a request for leave in June 1865; a handwritten note charging a soldier for being too drunk to perform his guard duty; and printed general orders, 1864–1865. There are also printed items including *The Soldier’s Journal*, Augur General Hospital, Virginia, 31 May 1865; and a poem *Sherman’s March through the Carolinas*.

The collection also includes items regarding Nilson’s daughters, Anna DeGarmo Bigler (1871–1941) and Eva Haley (1867–1920). There is a tintype of Eva from 1875 and a tintype of Anna and her marriage announcement to her first husband, William F. DeGarmo (1860–1906) from 1892.

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Correspondence, 1851; 1861–1867

Loose pages from Diary, December, 1863

Memoranda, 1862

Writing Desk, ca. 1862

Official Records and Correspondence, 1862–1865

General Orders, 1864–1865

Official Records and Printed Materials, 1864–1865

Instructions for Officers on Outpost and Patrol Duty,
1862

Anna Nilson's wedding announcement, 14 December
1892

Tintypes (2): Eva Nilson, 22 March 1875; Anna
Nilson, ca. 1885

CONTAINER

Box 1, Folder 1

Box 1, Folder 2

Box 1, Folder 3

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Box 1, Folder 4

Box 1, Folder 5

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Box 1, Folder 6

Box 1, Folder 7

Photographs:
Tintypes, Box 1