

Collection #  
M 0208

**R. H. (ROBERT H.) CROWDER  
PAPERS, 1859–1908 (BULK 1864–1865)**

Collection Information	1
Biographical Sketch	2
Scope and Content Note	3
Contents	4

Processed by  
Charles Latham  
15 October 1994  
Updated 9 December 2004

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

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

**VOLUME OF COLLECTION:** 1 manuscript box, 1 photograph folder

**COLLECTION DATES:** Inclusive 1859-1908; bulk 1864-1865

**PROVENANCE:** Ms. Louise Crowder, Sullivan IN, 22 September 1994

**RESTRICTIONS:** None

**COPYRIGHT:**

**REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:** Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society.

**ALTERNATE FORMATS:**

**RELATED HOLDINGS:**

**ACCESSION NUMBER:** 1994.1005

**NOTES:** Artifacts in collection transferred to Artifacts as out of collection scope.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Robert H. Crowder (fl. 1859-1913) was born in Sullivan County, Indiana, the son of Dr. William H. Crowder and Hannah Cox. He began the practice of medicine in Graysville about 1860, in partnership first with Dr. W. L. Greene and then with Dr. A. N. Weir. When the Civil War broke out, he did not immediately join the service, but in 1863 he was elected captain of the Graysville Guards.

On 30 December 1863 Crowder was commissioned captain of Company G in the newly formed 11th Cavalry Regiment (126th Regiment). The regiment was organized during the spring of 1864 at Camp Carrington in Indianapolis. From May to October 1864 it was on guard duty at Scottsboro, Alabama, along the line of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. In November and December it was engaged around Nashville, and then pursued Hood's forces to Gravelly Springs, Alabama. It remained there and at Eastport, Mississippi, until May 1865, when it was transferred first to St. Louis, then to Rolla, Missouri (to guard a stage line), and finally to Fort Riley, Kansas. Crowder was promoted to regimental assistant surgeon in January 1865, and to surgeon in May. The regiment was mustered out in September 1865, and at the final ceremonies Major Crowder made one of the responses.

After being mustered out, Crowder reentered Rush Medical College in Chicago. Graduating in 1866, he set up practice in Sullivan, and remained there until his death. In the early 1880s he was Sullivan County health officer. In 1882 he amputated the arm of Mrs. James Slaughter, whose bone had been consumed by a tumor; "the bones were soft like cheese." He headed a county association of physicians in 1895, and was director of a savings and loan association. In 1904, a decade before most of his colleagues, he wore rubber gloves when performing an operation.

Son of a doctor, Crowder had two sons who were doctors, Tom and Joe. His daughter married a dentist, Dr. Lafayette Stewart. For two years after his death, his residence was operated as Robert H. Crowder Memorial Hospital.

Sources: Materials in collection

Wolfe, *History of Sullivan County* (1909)

J. R. Maple, *A Medical History of Sullivan County* (1936)

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection, filling one manuscript box, contains mainly correspondence, with a few bills and receipts and three photographs, from the period 1859-1908. It is arranged chronologically.

The bulk of the correspondence (Folders 4-17) is from Robert H. Crowder to his wife Juliet during his Civil War service in 1864-1865. Particularly in the spring of 1865, there are a few replies from Mrs. Crowder. Crowder wrote almost weekly. While a good deal of the subject matter is about longing for home, there are some interesting pictures of regimental life, such as his dealing with a violently drunken soldier (9-23-1864), his "breaking in" an assistant surgeon (6-25-1865), his going on a buffalo hunt (8-3-1865), and the delays he encountered in being paid and being promoted. Transcripts of most of his 1865 letters are in Folder 24.

Folder 18 contains letters from Crowder when he was attending Rush Medical College in the fall of 1865. In Folder 19 are one letter from Mrs. Crowder and three from a family friend, Carrie Holmes, to a Crowder daughter-in-law. In Folder 20 are receipts and bills for Crowder's fuel, electricity, and telephone in 1908.

The collection concludes with three photographs: a tintype of two children, and two portraits of a young man, probably Crowder, one in civilian clothes and one in uniform.

## CONTENTS

### CONTENTS

Correspondence, 1859

Correspondence, 1860

Correspondence, 1861-1862

Correspondence, 1863

Correspondence, 1864-- January-March

Correspondence, 1864-- April

Correspondence, 1864-- May-June

Correspondence, 1864-- July

Correspondence, 1864-- August

Correspondence, 1864-- September

Correspondence, 1864-- October

Correspondence, 1864-- November-December

Correspondence, 1865-- January-February

Correspondence, 1865-- March

Correspondence, 1865-- April

Correspondence, 1865-- May-June

Correspondence, 1865-- July-August

Correspondence, 1865-- October-December

Correspondence, 1869-1887

Correspondence, 1908

n.d. in Crowder's hand

### 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

Box 1, Folder 9

Box 1, Folder 10

Box 1, Folder 11

Box 1, Folder 12

Box 1, Folder 13

Box 1, Folder 14

Box 1, Folder 15

Box 1, Folder 16

Box 1, Folder 17

Box 1, Folder 18

Box 1, Folder 19

Box 1, Folder 20

Box 1, Folder 21

n.d. in Hands other than Crowder's

Box 1, Folder 22

Photocopies

Box 1, Folder 23

Transcripts-- February-November 1865

Box 1, Folder 24

Photographs: children, portraits of a young man, ca.  
1861-1865

Visual Collection:  
Photographs, Folder 1

## FOLDER LISTING

### FOLDER CONTENTS

1	1859
2	1860
3	1861-1862
4	1863
5	1864 -- January-March
6	1864-- April
7	1864-- May-June
8	1864-- July
9	1864-- August
10	1864-- September
11	1864-- October
12	1864-- November-December
13	1865 -- January-February
14	1865-- March
15	1865-- April
16	1865-- May-June
17	1865-- July-August
18	1865-- October-December
19	1869-1887
20	1908
21	n.d. in Crowder's hand
22	n.d. in hands other than Crowder's
23	Photocopies
24	Transcripts-- February-November 1865

25

(VC) Photographs--tintype of two children; 2 portraits of a young man ca 1861-1865



## 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 0208).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.