

Collection #
M 0246

**THURMAN FAMILY
PAPERS, 1858-1883**

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 box

COLLECTION DATES: Inclusive 1858-1883; bulk 1861-1865

PROVENANCE: California Book Auction, 220 San Bruno Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94103, 26 October 1994; Brian and Maria Green, Inc., Kernersville, North Carolina, May, 2018

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: SC 0264 Floyd Thurman

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1995.0012; 2018.0152

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

This collection centers on the Civil War letters of members of the Thurman family of Spencer County, Indiana. Though it is clear that several of the correspondents are related, the exact relationship is sometimes unclear.

The parents of several of the correspondents were **William R. Thurman** (d. 1877) and **Anna (Shrode) Thurman** (d. 1854), who came to Spencer County in 1818, bought property in Ohio Township, and remained there through their lives.

One son, **Marion Thurman**, stayed home in Grandview during the war.

Another son was **Floyd Thurman** (b. 1837), who began teaching school in 1859, but two years later enlisted in Company F, First Indiana Cavalry (28th Regiment), serving until September 1864. This regiment, organized at Evansville under Conrad Baker, served in Missouri and Arkansas at Pilot's Knob, Helena, and Pine Bluff. It went on at least one expedition into Mississippi. In February 1862, Floyd was responsible for distributing twenty-five tons of forage. Returning home after his service, he farmed for a year, delivered coal for three years to customers along the river from Rockville to Cannelton, and then returned to farming. He married Ellen Gilson and they had six children.

A third son, **Wayne Thurman**, enlisted as a corporal (listed in Terrell as Wayne Sherman) in Company C, 42nd Indiana Regiment, in October 1861. The regiment served in Tennessee at Stone River, Chickamauga, Chattanooga, and Lookout Mountain. Wayne does not appear in the correspondence after mid-1863.

Francis M. Thurman, probably a younger son, served as a second lieutenant in the Spencer County "Rough and Ready" Home Guards, organized in September 1862. In May 1864 he enlisted in Company I of the 136th Indiana Volunteers, a 100-day regiment. In February 1865, he enlisted as first sergeant in Company K of the 146th Indiana regiment, serving until he was mustered out in August 1865. At one point this regiment was stationed in Dover, Delaware. Francis was a member of Grandview Lodge I.O.O.F when it was founded in February 1868. In 1866-1869, he signed several promissory notes.

Several letters in the collection were addressed to **Nancy (Nanie) Ingram** in Rockport. **John W. Ingram**, possibly her brother, enlisted in Company K of the 25th Indiana Regiment in August 1861. He was promoted to 1st lieutenant in October 1864 and mustered out in July 1865. The regiment served under Fremont and Pope in Missouri in 1861, fought at Fort Donelson and Shiloh, marched with Sherman to the sea, and ended active service in Raleigh, N. C.

Sources:

Materials in Collection

WHH Terrell *Report of the Adjutant General, Indiana History of Warrick, Spencer, and Perry Counties* (1885)

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection, filling one manuscript box, contains correspondence and notes, 1858-1883, mainly Civil War letters among members of the Thurman family of Spencer County, Indiana. It is arranged chronologically.

The letters are both between home and the front and between soldiers at the front. Floyd Thurman's letters from Missouri and Arkansas give a considerable amount of information about troop movements, and a letter of 10-9-1862 indicates that officers have been engaging in cotton speculation. On 7-15-1862 he describes a skirmish and also a great crowd assembled to see a steamboat land, the first in some months. On 3-4-1863 he makes reference to Butternuts and the Golden Circle, and says that he wants the war fought out now, with no thought of a six-month armistice. In an undated letter he says that a scout has come in "with sixty Negroes and nearly as many mules."

There are interesting views of the home front. Early in 1862 R. Thurman Sr. asks Floyd what has become of "the Warwick County deserters" just sent back to the regiment, and mentions a chivaree. In March 1862 A. J. Bunner describes bad conditions at Camp Morton in Indianapolis (in another letter he uses the phrase "all talk and no cider"). In April 1862 Mat S. tells Wayne Thurman that there is "no corn planting, but every pleasant day there is a log-rolling," and in June Marion Thurman tells Wayne that there will be "more wheat than ever was knowen." Lincoln's assassination is mentioned in two letters of April 1865.

There is also a folder of letters mostly between Francis Marion Thurman and Nanie Ingram. Thurman writes these while serving in the 136th Indiana, May, 1864-May, 1864. Letters are written from Indianapolis, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia. Transcriptions are included.

The collection ends with several promissory notes signed by Francis M. Thurman in 1866-1869, and a subscription offer of 1883 to the Toledo *Blade*.

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