

Information Sheet

R **Reilly, Philip A., 1830-1864.**
84 **Letters, 1858-1863.**
 Two folders.

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

These are Civil War letters, with annotated typescripts, of Philip A. Reilly of the 29th Missouri Infantry. Reilly served in the operations against Jackson and Vicksburg, Mississippi, and was captured at Ringgold, Georgia. He died at Andersonville, Georgia, on 24 May 1864. The collection includes a letter written by Reilly's father at Jackson, Missouri, 16 August 1858.

Philip A. Reilly was born in England of Irish parents. The family emigrated to the United States in 1852, and came to Missouri in 1857. Reilly was a carriage-maker at Cape Girardeau, Missouri, in 1860. He enlisted in the 29th Missouri Infantry at Cape Girardeau on 8 August 1862. After initial service at Cape Girardeau, the regiment moved south on the Mississippi River to participate in the operations that culminated in the surrender of Vicksburg on 4 July 1863. After the fall of the city, the 29th Missouri was assigned to Gen. William T. Sherman's command. As part of the 15th Army Corps, the regiment led the advance on Ringgold, Georgia. The Confederates took advantage of their strong defensive position and routed the Federal column. Philip A. Reilly was among the Union troops captured. He was sent to Richmond, Virginia, and then to Andersonville Prison near Americus, Georgia, where he died of disease on 24 May 1864.

Folder 1 of the Reilly collection contains photocopies of Reilly's letters to his parents and brother. The first two letters were written at Jackson, Missouri, and Jonesboro, Illinois, before he entered the army. Folder 2 contains annotated typescripts of the letters prepared by the donor, Jane Reilly Purcell, and published in the *Bollinger County Historical Society Echo*, IV (Oct. 1981), 85-101.

During his time in the service Reilly wrote about the campaigns against Vicksburg, Jackson, Corinth, and Iuka, Mississippi. He also commented on the army to which he belonged, claiming that the troops were generally Democratic politically, with "Black Republicans" enjoying little favor. He wrote frankly, and wondered if his letters were reaching their destinations. He supposed in his letter of 19 March 1863 that they were not, "... because they told too much." Reilly's last letter was written from Waterloo, Alabama, just three weeks before his capture at Ringgold.

r103 (folder 1) 7 December 1981
r099 (folder 2) 16 November 1981

Jane Reilly Purcell
Blanche Reilly

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Folder 1: Letters, 1858-1863.

1858, August 16. John Reilly, Jackson, Missouri, to his son, John A. Reilly, Greencastle, [Pennsylvania?]. Discusses the best means of travel from Philadelphia to Missouri.

1862, July 13. Philip Reilly, Jonesboro, Illinois, to William A. Reilly, Bollinger County, Missouri. Talks of his employment as a carriage maker in Jonesboro, and mentions

McClellan's Peninsula Campaign in Virginia. The letter also reveals that Reilly had marital problems.

1863, February 14. Philip Reilly, "In Camp Before Vicksburg," to William Reilly, Bollinger County, Missouri. Describes the fortifications around Vicksburg and operations against the city.

[1863, February 15-18]. Five-page fragment of a letter from Philip Reilly to his brother. Contains a detailed description of the passage from Cape Girardeau to Vicksburg and the assault on the city, 27 December 1862--1 January 1863. The army then moved against Fort Hindman, Arkansas. After the surrender of that fort, the regiment was posted below Vicksburg.

1863, March 19. Philip Reilly, Vicksburg, to his parents, Bollinger County, Missouri. Wonders if his letters home are being delivered, and why he hasn't heard in return.

1863, March 31. Philip Reilly, Vicksburg, to his brother, Willie. Discusses the political preferences of the troops. Advises his brothers to join the militia to avoid conscription.

1863, June 22. Philip Reilly, "Battle Field, Vicksburg, Miss.," to his parents. Contains little war news.

[1863, July 10-19]. Five-page fragment. Contains a description of the siege and capture of Jackson, Mississippi.

1863, November 3. Philip Reilly, Waterloo, Alabama, to his parents. Description of Corinth, Mississippi, and mention of fight at Iuka.

Folder 2: "In Camp Before Vicksburg: Civil War Letters of Pvt. Philip A. Reilly," edited by Jane Reilly Purcell. *Bollinger County Historical Society Echo*, IV (Oct. 1981), 85-101.

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