Tallman-Brown families, letters, 1861-1868.  
Two folders, photocopies and typescripts.

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

This is correspondence of related families of Miller County, Missouri. The principal correspondents are John, Martha, and Matthew Tallman, who wrote to their brother, Jeremiah, while he served in the 1st Missouri Light Artillery, and John D. Brown, of the same regiment, who wrote to his sister, Hannah M. Brown. Topics include military activity in Miller County and southern Missouri, farm life, and family matters.

The Tallman-Brown correspondence is a useful collection for research on Miller County and the Richwoods community. In addition to news directly related to the principal families, the letters contain details on neighbors in the Richwoods, including the Bennage, Carroll, Long, and Moore families. The collected letters are the result of the marriage of Jeremiah W. Tallman and Hannah M. Brown in 1869. The papers passed into the possession of a collector of postal history, from whom they were acquired by the donor.

Matthew Brown brought his family from Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, to Miller County, Missouri, in 1859. The Browns were followed to Missouri shortly thereafter by their neighbors, Charles and William Tallman, and their families. The Browns and Tallmans were among a number of families from east central Pennsylvania who removed to the Richwoods area south of Iberia in Miller County, Missouri, just before the Civil War.

The Civil War disrupted the Richwoods neighborhood and a number of the former Pennsylvanians joined the Union army. Among them were two of William Tallman’s sons, John B. and Jeremiah W., and Charles Tallman’s son, William B. Tallman. Matthew Brown’s son, John D., also enlisted. John D. Brown and Jeremiah W. “Jerry” Tallman both enlisted in the 1st Missouri Light Artillery and served in Missouri and Arkansas. John D. Brown received a medical discharge from the army and returned to Miller County in 1864, while Jerry Tallman secured a commission as a first lieutenant in the 48th Missouri Infantry and served to the end of the war.

The collection consists of forty-four letters beginning on 10 November 1861 and continuing through 24 December 1868. The separation of the families caused by the war accounts for most of the correspondence in the group. Of the total, thirty-two of the letters were written to, or by, family members in military service. Seventeen were addressed to Jerry W. Tallman, of which sixteen were written by his brothers, John B., Matthew, and Robert T., his sister, Martha, and his father, William Tallman. The letters from home contain a considerable amount of news about Miller County and the Richwoods community, including the health of family and friends, the activities of secessionist and Confederate guerrillas, the countering measures undertaken by Union forces such as the organization of the militia, and news regarding activities on the family farm. John B. Tallman, serving in a Missouri cavalry regiment, wrote his brother and comrade-in-arms from army camps at Springfield and Cassville, Missouri, and Austin and Brownsville, Arkansas. He recounted camp rumors and incidents of army life, and confessed that he was very impressed by the ladies in the vicinity of Brownsville, even though they were all “Rebs.”

The other letters in the collection are addressed to Hannah M. Brown, the daughter of Matthew and Nancy (Tate) Brown. Many of the letters are from her brother, John D. Brown, from camps at Georgetown, Otterville, Sedalia, McCulloch’s Farm, Mount Vernon, Cassville, Bloomington, and Lake Spring, Missouri. His letters report on army movements and operations, including the activities of his artillery battery during the Battle of Newtonia, Missouri, in 1862. Hannah also
received letters from relatives in White Deer Valley and Pleasant Valley, Pennsylvania, from her sister, Jane, who was attending school in Jefferson City, and from relatives and friends who had left the Richwoods neighborhood. Among the latter was Jerry W. Tallman, who apparently began courting Hannah Brown sometime after the Civil War ended. The postwar items include three letters written by Tallman from Tuscumbia, the seat of Miller County. Along with endearments to his future wife are descriptions of people and events in Tuscumbia, and of Tallman's appointment as county treasurer.

Jerry Tallman and Hannah Brown married in 1869. The 1870 census lists them and their six-month old son as residents of Equality Township in Miller County. Tallman was active politically and served terms as Miller County treasurer, sheriff, and probate judge. The Tallmans moved to Crocker in Pulaski County, Missouri, in the 1890s, where Jeremiah engaged in the furniture business. By 1910, he was back in Miller County. The Missouri veteran's census of that year lists him as widower.

The collection has been filed in chronological order. Two letters on which the year is not noted have been placed at the end of the file. A register of the correspondence is available.

Shelf List

This is correspondence of related families of Miller County, Missouri. The principal correspondents are John, Martha, and Matthew Tallman, who wrote to their brother, Jeremiah, while he served in the 1st Missouri Light Artillery, and John D. Brown, of the same regiment, who wrote to his sister, Hannah M. Brown. Topics include military activity in Miller County and southern Missouri, farm life, and family matters.

Folder 1: Letters, 10 November 1861—24 December 1868 (44 items, photocopies).

Folder 2: Letters, 10 November 1861—24 December 1868 (44 pages, typescripts).

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