

C Audsley, Francis Fairbank (1835-1922) and Harriet Elizabeth (1840-1924), Papers,
2374 1862-1912, n.d.
.2 linear feet

PARTIALLY DIGITIZED in Civil War collection

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INTRODUCTION

The papers of Francis Audsley, a farmer in Saline and Carroll counties in Missouri and a Union soldier during the Civil War, and his wife Harriet E., consist of the Audsleys's correspondence during the Civil War, 1863-1865; letters from Francis's cousins, Sarah Ann Audsley, living in Australia, and Mary Ellen Harding, living in England, 1876-1903; and miscellaneous.

DONOR INFORMATION

Donald Ballew of Hale, Missouri, donated photostats of six Civil War letters to the State Historical Society in January 1961 (no accession number was assigned).

Shirley S. Scott of Carrollton, Missouri, donated Civil War letters and the letters from Francis Audsley's cousins to the State Historical Society on May 30, 1990 (SHS Accession No. 2786).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Francis Fairbank Audsley was born in Yorkshire, England, May 26, 1835, the son of Joseph and Mary Hodgson Audsley. His family emigrated in 1846 while Francis remained in England with relatives to finish school. He came to America at age 16, settling on the family farm in Saline County, Missouri.

At age 25 he married Harriet Elizabeth Sullivan. Harriet Elizabeth was born in Saline County, Missouri, May 29, 1840, youngest of the eleven children of Samuel W. and Mary Mayfield Sullivan. Her father was a native of Pennsylvania, her mother of Virginia.

Francis and Harriet had eight children. Their first child, Edward, was born and died in 1861 in Saline County. In 1864 the family moved to a Carroll County farm in Pleasant Park.

When the Civil War erupted, Francis enlisted in Company F, 71st Regiment, Missouri Militia, which was reorganized May 10, 1863 as the 5th Provisional Regiment. He was stationed at Lexington, Marshall, Arrow Rock, and finally Clinton, Missouri, where he was discharged in November 1863.

On August 25, 1864, Audsley reenlisted in Company F, 44th Missouri Volunteers, St. Joseph. Sent to Rolla, Missouri, he left shortly thereafter for Tennessee and fought in the Battle of Franklin (November 30, 1864) where he was wounded. At Nashville, December 15-16, he was in the battle where General Hood's army was nearly annihilated. He later was stationed at East Port, Mississippi, where his unit was merged into the 16th Army Corps, commanded by General A.J. Smith.

Upon his return from the army, he resumed farming on the 290 acres of rich farmland he owned in Carroll County. The Audsleys lived in Carrollton as well as on the farm. In 1866 and again in 1872, Francis, a Republican, was elected a judge of the Saline County Court. He served as judge from 1866-1867 and from 1872-1874. From 1867 until 1871, he served as county clerk. He was also postmaster at Pleasant Park.

The Audsleys were members of the Pleasant Park Church, Methodist Episcopal Church

South. Francis was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic Post #178. He died August 4, 1922, and his wife Harriet died two years later on August 23, 1924.

A genealogical and narrative history of the Audsleys was published in 1985. A copy of this family history is available at the State Historical Society of Missouri.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

These papers contain 53 Civil War letters and five letter fragments; seven letters from Australia and England dated from 1876 to 1912; biographies of Francis Audsley; and a two-page reminiscence of the capture of Spanish Fort in Mobile, Alabama. The letters are arranged chronologically. Letter fragments and biographies are in folder 1. Folder 3 contains the reminiscence.

The majority of the Civil War letters are from Francis Audsley to his wife Harriet with only six letters and one letter fragment to Audsley from his wife. There is one letter to William Hyland, his brother-in-law. Audsley's letters are lengthy and richly detailed, tracing the activities of the Missouri Militia, 5th Provisional Regiment from July of 1862 in Lexington, Marshall, Arrow Rock, and Clinton; and the 44th Missouri Infantry Volunteers, Company F, from St. Joseph, Rolla, and St. Louis to Paducah, Kentucky. The 44th participated in battles at Franklin and Nashville, Tennessee; camped near New Orleans, and before the Spanish Fort in Mobile, Alabama; marched through Montgomery and Tuskegee, Alabama, and Vicksburg, Mississippi; and traveled to Cairo, Illinois aboard the Steamer Niagara. The 44th was back at Benton Barracks, Missouri, in August of 1865. His unit moved slowly south on the Mississippi, mostly by steamboat, to the Gulf of Mexico.

Audsley was involved in taking care of the payroll. He tells of leaving Nashville, the battle and heavy losses at Franklin, Tennessee; high prices; conditions of the houses and farmland; sightseeing in New Orleans; and the fighting ability of Black troops. He expresses concern over the farming effort of his brother-in-law Will, care of the farm animals, and his daughter's schooling; mentions the arrest of his quartermaster and his clerk; describes war activities in Saline and Pettis counties, and troop movements; and writes on his views of various religious denominations, and prospects for Missouri. His reminiscence of the capture of Spanish Fort, Mobile, Alabama, includes descriptions of camp life, cost of food, and steamboats.

Civilian life during the war is described in the six letters and one letter fragment from Harriet to her husband. Pregnant and alone on the family farm with only their two year old daughter Mary Ellen, Harriet expresses her fear for her husband's safety, bemoans the scarcity of reliable news of the war, and describes conditions in the county including sickness and deaths of children. She speaks of their infant son's death, family news, and describes her purchase of a spinning wheel and spinning flax.

Harriet's sister Mary and brother-in-law Will were frequent visitors during the war. Harriet speaks of her fear that Will would be forced to join the militia, describes bushwhackers in Saline County, and mentions Captain Bingham and Jim Rider's men.

Letters from Sarah Anne Audsley, Francis Audsley's cousin in Australia, are dated from 1876 to 1878, and 1903. Miss Audsley, a spirited young woman in her 20s during the 1870s, discusses their mutual relatives, including the exploits of her uncle Tom Audsley; and describes her family's farm, orchards, and gardens; livestock; dairies; typical foods; the opening of railway lines; news of neighbors; marriage prospects; the latest political crises in Victoria; and the 1903 railway strikes.

Letters from Francis's cousin Mary Ellen Harding, living in England, are dated from 1899 to 1901 and 1912. Mary also discusses mutual relatives, the settlement of their uncle's estate, and the suffrage movement and suffragettes in 1912; and describes her travels and reactions to

Queen Victoria's death.

FOLDER LIST

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f. 3	1864 December 7-1865 April 14 [DIGITIZED]
f. 4	1865 May 12-August 14 [DIGITIZED]
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