

Collection: CLEWELL, AUGUSTUS, Letters
Salem, N. C.

P.C. 1496.1

1862-1882, n.d.

Physical Description: 40 items; letters, certificates, diploma, and miscellaneous.

Acquisition: March 23, 1972, gift of Miss Louise Akehurst, [REDACTED] Baltimore, Maryland (per Dr. Clewell Howell, Baltimore); accessioned March 29, 1972.

Description: Augustus Clewell was born about 1844 in Salem, North Carolina, one of eight children of David M. and Dorothy M. Clewell. When the Civil War broke out, although he was not yet 18 years of age, Clewell enlisted in the 11th Regiment, North Carolina Volunteers. He was in the Shenandoah Valley early in 1862, in camps near Gordonsville and Swifts Run Gap, and was involved in the Battle of Winchester on May 25, 1862.

Clewell was released from the Army sometime prior to 1863, and located in Raleigh where he worked for the Raleigh Sentinel. On April 1, 1864, he re-enlisted in Lenoir County for the duration of the war. Although camped at Kinston, he commuted to Goldsboro where he spent five hours each day working, sometimes in the office of the State Journal as a typesetter.

On October 1, 1864, Clewell's unit, Co. B, 1st Battalion North Carolina Sharpshooters (to which he had been transferred from the Volunteers) received orders to move. By mid-October he was back in the Shenandoah Valley, near Staunton, Virginia. The remainder of Clewell's Civil War service as recorded in this collection took place near New Market, Lacy Springs, and Petersburg, Virginia.

At the end of the war Augustus Clewell lived for a time in Kansas City, Missouri (1866), and then attended Bethel College in Russellville, Kentucky, after which he studied medicine at the University of Louisville Medical Department (ca. 1869-1870). Upon graduating he was offered a physician's post in Bethania, Forsyth County, North Carolina; but by 1878 he had settled with his wife and daughter in Baltimore, Maryland, where he established himself

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as a druggist and physician.

All but three of the letters in this collection were written by Augustus Clewell to his parents and two of his sisters, Anna M. and Margaret E. Clewell, and most were written between 1862 and 1866. The letters are largely concerned with family matters and simple conversational information, although some of them contain interesting descriptive and historical data.

Three letters to Clewell's parents written from Virginia early in 1862 describe military activities in that area. One of them (June 13, 1862) tells about the Battle of Winchester and his participation in it, and mentions General Jackson's "foot cavalry" marches. Letters from Raleigh in the following year discuss scarcity of provisions in the area, and Clewell's fear that great hardship would have to be faced in the future. He told his sister Anna (April 8, 1863) about his dissatisfaction with the war and the Confederate government, and that he wanted to leave the South at the end of the war.

After his re-enlistment, Clewell's letters were largely concerned with camp life. He mentions the boredom and dreariness of Kinston and Goldsboro, and living conditions in general. One letter (August 14, 1864) describes a duel between a surgeon and a lieutenant; another mentions a yellow fever epidemic in New Bern (October 9, 1864). After moving with his unit back into the Shenandoah Valley there are more descriptions of camp life, and in a letter to his sister Margaret he spoke of the damage that had been done in the Valley since 1862 (October 19 and 29, 1864).

The collection contains one letter written while Clewell was in Missouri (April 16, 1866). It mentions the political skirmishes between the Copperheads and Radicals, and gives a good description of the area's settlers and of the Wyandotte Indians. An undated letter, presumably from this period, was written on the way to Salt Lake City.

The remainder of the letters deal with Clewell's career as a physician. The two letters written from Baltimore in 1878 tell about his business as a druggist and the work he was doing as a physician.

Miscellaneous items in the collection include Augustus A. Clewell's certificate of enlistment; admission cards for Clewell to attend lectures at the University of Louisville (1869-1870); certificate of membership in

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the Raleigh Typographical Society, 1864; diploma from Bethel College, Russellville, Kentucky (name and date faded and illegible); professional card of Dr. A. A. Clewell (1871); and, a menu for St. John's Lodge No. 34 to Lebanon Lodge No. 7 (undated).

Finding Aids:

Main Entry Card

Geographic Cards

Baltimore, Maryland
Goldsboro
Gordonsville, Virginia
Kansas City, Missouri
Kinston
Lacy Springs, Virginia
New Market, Virginia
Raleigh
Salem
Staunton, Virginia
Swift Run Gap, Virginia

Date Cards

1863-1869
1870-1878
1882

Subject Cards

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA--living conditions, problems confronting
INDIANS--Wyandottes in Missouri
JACKSON, STONEWALL--mentioned ("foot cavalry" marches)
NEW BERN--Union occupation of, mentioned
 --yellow fever epidemic mentioned
MISSOURI--description of settlers around Kansas City
POLITICS--Missouri--Copperheads and Radicals
WAR--Civil--Battle at Winchester, May 25, 1862
 --Camp life and living conditions, descriptions of
 --Shenandoah Valley campaign

See also: P.C. 140, Francis C. Clewell Papers.

Finding Aid completed on September 29, 1972, by Suzanne Smith.