

**Guide to the Austin Thompson Letters, 1863
MS0076**

The Mariners' Museum Library

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DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Repository: The Mariners' Museum Library

Title: Austin Thompson Letters

Inclusive Dates: 1863

Catalog number: MS0076

Physical Characteristics: Two letters (correspondence), pictorial lettersheets

Language: English

Creator: Thompson, Austin David, 1841-1918

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Austin David Thompson was born in September 1841 in Bristol, Connecticut. He served with Company K 16th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry. He was a resident of Bristol, Connecticut, and enlisted in the Union Army on August 11, 1862. Thompson mustered as private on August 24, 1862. In 1863 he was promoted to corporal, and again to the rank of sergeant in 1864. He was captured at Plymouth, NC, April 20, 1864, during a Confederate attack on the Roanoke River port town that the Union had captured in 1862. He was discharged from the Army June 8, 1865. He died in Bristol, Connecticut in 1918.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The collection consists of two letters written by Austin David Thompson, 16th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry, to his fiancée, Electa Churchill, in February and March of 1863. Both letters were written while Thompson's regiment was in Newport News, Virginia. The later one is written on a pictorial lettersheet that features a lithograph entitled "Encampment of U.S. Troops at Newport News, VA" by Casimir Bohn. The letters consist of information about his stay at Newport News and what he is doing, as well as information about other regiments and his wishes to be with his fiancée soon.

The letters are organized into folders, and arranged in ascending chronological order.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Accession number

CA100-101

Accession date

1994

Restrictions

Collection is open to all researchers.

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Preferred Citation

Austin Thompson Letters, 1863, MS0076, The Mariners' Museum Library.

Note to Users

Due to the fragile and rare nature of the collection, researchers are requested to handle the materials with caution and in accordance with prescribed archival practices. When using these materials, please preserve the original order of the collection.

RELATED MATERIALS

The Connecticut Historical Society houses a collection of correspondence from Austin David Thompson to Electa Churchill, consisting of 94 items. Cataloged as MS 94610, the collection also contains two diaries written by Electa Churchill, and letters from Charles Churchill, Jr. to his sister, Electa.

FILE GUIDE

BOX 1

Folder 1 Finding Aid

Folder 2 2 February 1863, correspondence

Letter from Thompson to his fiancée Electa Churchill. He writes about his hurt thumb and that Newport News is the most pleasant place he has been so far. He also mentions wishing he was with her.

Folder 3 4 March 1863, correspondence

Letter from Thompson to his fiancée Electa on a pictorial lettersheet which has the scene "Encampment of U.S. Troops at Newport News, VA" by Casimir Bohn. Thompson writes about the duties of an orderly, his plans to visit Fortress Monroe, and various punishments that men are serving. He also mentions that his thumb is better and that he will never get drunk.

MATERIALS REMOVED

No materials were removed from the collection.

SOURCES CONSULTED

MS 94610, "Thompson, Austin David (b. 1841)" in K. Nolin, Civil War Manuscripts Project, The Connecticut Historical Society, https://chs.org/finding_aides/kcwmp/cwst.htm. (accessed 7/31/17).

Ancestry.com, Austin David Thompson in Churchill Family Tree.

<https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/6311318/person/6721942468/facts> (accessed 7/31/17).

SUBJECTS

Thompson, Austin David, 1841-1918

Churchill, Electa M., 1843-1880

United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865—Personal narratives

United States. Army. Connecticut Infantry Regiment, 16th (1862-1865)