

Augusta County Historical Society
Acc # 3
William Henry Harman Letters
1862-1863

Size: 1 folder (3 letters)

Historical/Biographical Note: William Henry Harman was born at Waynesboro on 17 February 1828. After attending Lucas P. Thompson's law school in Staunton, Harman began practicing law in Augusta County. He served as commonwealth's attorney for the county from 1851 to 1861. A Mexican War veteran and a brigadier general in the Virginia militia before the Civil War, Harman was commissioned as lieutenant colonel of the 5th Virginia Infantry Regiment on 7 May 1861. He was promoted to colonel of the regiment on 11 September 1861 after Colonel Kenton Harper resigned. He was dropped as colonel during the regiment's reorganization on 21 April 1862 but later volunteered as an aide to Edward "Alleghany" Johnson and Jubal Early. He also served as a colonel of reserves at the battle of Piedmont, 5 June 1864. He was killed on 2 March 1865, near his birthplace at Gallagher's Mill.

Asher Waterman Harman was born near Waynesboro on 24 June 1830. He operated a stage line in Staunton before the Civil War. He joined the 5th Virginia Infantry Regiment on 28 April 1861, as the captain of Company G. He eventually became commander of the 12th Virginia Cavalry Regiment and was wounded at Brandy Station on 9 June 1863. Captured near Harpers Ferry on 14 July 1863, Harman was confined at Fort McHenry, Fort Delaware, Johnson's Island, and Fort Monroe. After the war, he was a railroad executive in Staunton. He died on 9 April 1865, in Richmond, and was buried in Thornrose Cemetery, in Staunton.

John Alexander Harman, Quartermaster for Stonewall Jackson, and Thomas H. Harman, of the Staunton Artillery, were also brothers of William and Asher.

Scope & Content: Consists of three photoprints of letters written by William Henry Harman to his brother Asher Waterman Harman during the Civil War, on 19 February 1862, 7 March 1862, and 15 March 1863. The 1862 letters were written from William, at Winchester, to Asher, in Staunton. At the time, William was commanding the 5th Virginia Infantry Regiment, which was assigned to Stonewall Jackson's Army of the Valley, while Asher was detailed on quartermaster duty in Staunton. These letters mainly concern William's thoughts on the state of the army and the prospects of being promoted to brigadier general. The 1863 letter was written by William, in Staunton, to Asher, commanding the 12th Virginia Cavalry Regiment and most likely in Rockingham County.

Organization/Arrangement: Chronological