

BRIGHAM, ALFRED MILO, D. 1864.

Alfred Milo Brigham letters, 1860-1864

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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Brigham, Alfred Milo, d. 1864.
Title: Alfred Milo Brigham letters, 1860-1864
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 365
Extent: 1 microfilm reel (MF)
Abstract: Microfilm copy of the letters of Massachusetts Union soldier Alfred Milo Brigham, who served first in the 39th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment and then in the 4th Regiment Infantry, U. S. Colored Troops during the Civil War.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

Source

Loaned for microfilming, 1961.

Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Alfred Milo Brigham letters, 1860-1864, Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book Library, Emory University.

Processing

Processed by EK, May, 5, 1961.

Collection Description

Biographical Note

Alfred Milo Brigham was from Milford, Massachusetts. He entered the Union Army in the fall of 1862 as a Corporal in the 39th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment. In September 1863 he took an examination and was commissioned lieutenant in the 4th Regiment Infantry U. S. Colored Troops. His first service was in Maryland and northern Virginia. After joining the Colored Regiments he served under General B. F. Butler on the Virginia Peninsula. He was hospitalized for a short time late in 1863, owing to a leg wound received when one of his soldiers accidentally discharged a musket. He was mortally wounded on June 15, 1864 in the attack on the Confederate lines near Petersburg.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of a microfilm copy of 20 letters, all written by Alfred Milo Brigham to his wife Caroline. The first, dated May 5, 1860, from Milford, Massachusetts, was written before he had joined the Union Army; the remaining nineteen, dated November 1, 1862-June 11, 1864, were written while he was serving in the army in Maryland and Virginia. His morale fell to a low point after Burnside's repulse at Fredericksburg. He thought that politicians were dictating military policy and that Union troops were being led to useless slaughter by incompetent commanders. He held Burnside in contempt, but was a great admirer of McClellan. His morale improved in 1863. He was a patriotic man, thoroughly devoted to the Union. He makes surprisingly little comment about Negro troops and his service with them. He did comment on the industry of his young Negro body servant. Emancipation seems to have held no more than secondary importance for him as a war objective. He seems to have been fighting primarily to save the Union.

